

Bayside Newsletter

February 2013

Next Meeting: Friday 22nd February 7:30pm at Redlands Indigiscapes Centre

Speaker: Martin Fingland

Martin Fingland from Geckos Wildlife Presentations will bring to us a fascinating display of live animals and an informative talk on our unique and wonderful Australian wildlife and the value they bring to our lives. Martin has an easy and educational way of presenting, it will be a chance to be very close to our native wildlife, an opportunity to touch and take photographs. This is a presentation for all ages, children and older folk and should not be missed. Gold coin donation always appreciated.

Presidents Report

Steve Homewood

Welcome back to our first newsletter of 2013, we have a new editorial format and welcome any comments you may have about it.

This year is the International Year of water co-operation. The objective of this is to raise awareness, both on the potential for increased cooperation and on the challenges facing water management, in light of the increase in demand for water access, allocation and services. When you think of struggles that the states have had trying to achieve a sustainable plan for the Murray –Darling river basin in a country that prides itself on some environmental values, issues internationally where water crosses across national boundaries will take considerable diplomacy to achieve meaningful outcomes.

2013 has started in a rugged fashion in Queensland we have had the warmest January since records began and rainfall has also set some new levels in many

parts of the state. Of particular concern are consistent increases in night time temperatures over the past few years this must be increasingly affecting our nocturnal wildlife and changing ecosystems that support them.

Unfortunately our politicians do not see the Environment as a vote winner and in an era of so called prosperity, it would appear we will not invest heavily in long term solutions that could improve or maintain our ecosystems. It is an opportunity lost!

Wildlife Queensland continues to highlight issues, lobby, educate and inform the community, foster and nurture support for our flora and fauna. Bayside Branch will be holding its usual monthly meetings, conducting walks and displays.

Make sure you look at our website, blogs, local newspaper for current information

"We are living on this planet as if we had another one to go to."

Terri Swearingen



Are You on Email?

Would you prefer to receive your Bayside Newsletter by email?

If you would like to exchange your paper copy of the newsletter for the full colour email version please let us know by emailing -

wildlifebb@bigpond.com

It will save paper, envelopes and postage.

Special reports from the floods

Dugongs Under Threat

Tony Moore

Queensland Environment Minister Andrew Powell admits dugongs could be under threat from thick sediment now being washed down the Brisbane River.

More than 80 per cent of Moreton Bay's seagrass beds were lost in some areas after sediment flowed into the bay in 2011.

Mr Powell said some dugongs could die as a result of the sediment, but said others would leave.

"It's true that if the sea grass is in short supply, a small proportion of the population can be expected to die," he said.

"But most of the dugongs will move away from the area and return as the sea grass beds recover."

Two Griffith University ecologists yesterday told Fairfax Media they believed the sediment – four times as dense as river sediment after January 2011 floods – were now pushing Moreton Bay close to an environmental tipping point.

Mr Powell said flood plumes from the 2010-2011 flood events which caused significant damage to Moreton Bay's seagrass beds, could be higher this time around.

"Sediment washed into Moreton Bay after the Australia Day long weekend storms may be higher than two years ago, given the sediment load in the Brisbane River is four times higher than then," Mr Powell said yesterday.

"We lost more than 80 per cent of sea grass in some locations and marine life was affected for more than a year afterwards."

Mr Powell said he understood the turtle and

dugong populations would recover.

"Indications at the end of last year were that they were recovering fairly well," he said.

However Professor Rod Connolly this week disagreed with Mr Powell.

"What I think is that seagrass beds that were fine last time are now tipped over the edge of what they can cope with," he said.

Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, the chairman of the South East Queensland Council of Mayors, said the sediment flowing into Moreton Bay was on the agenda at the next meeting of the council.

The higher level of sediment came from soil from Lockyer Valley small crop farms, he said.

"The level of sediment there is considerable greater than what you get from the grazing lands around the Stanley (River) through the Wivenhoe Dam," Cr Quirk said.

Healthy Waterways Partnership chief executive Peter Schneider said he supported "a lot" of the issues raised by the two ecologists from the Australian Rivers Institute.

"For the past 12 months or so, we have been saying sediments are our really big issues," he said.

Mr Schneider said the Healthy Waterways Partnership believed a full-day planning workshop – with all levels of government, industry and ecology group at the meeting – could put forward plans.

"If we could get all levels of government there, yes. You can't lose because everything starts with a conversation," he said.

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/environment/animals/dugongs-under-threat-20130201-2dqj3.html>

A GOOD TIME FOR MANGROVE AND SEAGRASS WATCHING

With the high levels of sediment and nutrients which have already and continue to pour into the bay from the aftermath of the recent flooding. Our next round of Seagrass Watch and Mangrove Watch will be very important to build on our understanding of the effects of flooding events such as this. If you have adopted a site or are interested in doing so please contact us our Coordinator Debra Henry debra@oceanwatch.org.au and the team at seagrassmb@gmail.com

Cleared Creeks alert ignored

By Brian Williams
Courier Mail 3/2/2013

Aggressive creek clearing in the wake of the 2011 floods has contributed to silt problems at the Mt Crosby water treatment plant and may have added to flood levels.

Scientists warned after 2011 that clearing, widening and removal of vegetation from Lockyer Valley creeks had the potential to worsen floods and increase silt levels. Brisbane's major water treatment plant Mt Crosby on the Brisbane River had to be shut down last week when silt reached unprecedented levels due to Lockyer Creek.

Australian rivers Institute deputy director Jon Olley said yesterday it was impossible to quantify the precise effect tens of kilometers of clearing land had on the Lockyer, but there was only one place for floods and sediment to go, and that was downstream.

"The more we clear these streams, the faster water flows and the more sediment is moved," Professor Olley said.

"There's tremendous scouring of stream banks, and this is threatening infrastructure." Healthy Waterways scientific expert and institute director Stuart Bunn in 2011 predicted problems at Mt Crosby, warning clearing would increase sediment and nutrient levels – in turn raising water treatment costs.

The warning was ignored by Natural Resources Minister Andrew Cripps, who this week urged landholders and local authorities to clear waterways.

Professor Bunn said the key was to boost stream-side vegetation, slow flows and dissipate stream energy.

Prof Olley said calls for \$2 billion spent piping water to Mt Crosby from Wivenhoe Dam were wrong. It was a cheaper fix to spend \$500 million revegetating streams.

Will the recent floods bring silt and threaten the health of Moreton Bay?

Simon Baltais

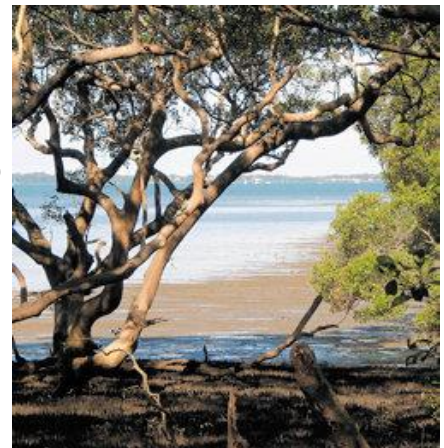
While Moreton Bay seagrass meadows seemed to fair well after the 2011 flood, another major flood could put even a resilient system to the test.

Silt is a killer. While a certain amount is naturally to be expected and abundant during floods, it is poor catchment management that is the culprit behind massive erosion and life smothering mud.

It's too much silt in the system that killed over 1000 ha of seagrass in Bramble Bay north from the mouth of the Brisbane River. While Moreton Bay has shown resilience after the 2011 flood, another event could be pushing the system too far. As was the case for the River Mangroves along the Brisbane River which were wiped out in that flood.

We know turnings creeks into barren spoon drains will ultimately harm fish habitat such as mangroves and seagrass and will produce life threatening and destructive flows. Surely then with climate change and the extreme events it brings upon us shouldn't we be urgently repairing our catchments?

Photo © Wildlife Queensland



So there's nothing
wrong with the
weather?

January shatters Australian heat records

Last month was not just the hottest January on record for Australia – it was also the hottest for any month, smashing peaks that had stood since January 1932.

January temperature anomalies

Figures out this afternoon from the Bureau of Meteorology show Australia's average daily maximum for January came in at a sizzling 36.92 degrees, 2.28 degrees above the long-term norm and 0.11 degrees more than the previous record. The mean of daily maximums and minimums came in at 29.68 degrees, 1.77 degrees above normal and 0.27 degrees more than the previous high, also set in January 81 years ago. There was also little relief from the daily heat, with the average minimum coming in at 20.43 degrees, 1.26 degrees above the norm, and the third highest on record for that measure. Read on

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/environment/climate-change/january-shatters-australian-heat-records-20130201-2dq33.html#ixzz2JzCkrdUy>

Get involved in Climate Watch

Through delivery partnerships with Australian universities, Climate Watch is engaging the next generation of scientists, science communicators and computer scientists in projects that make a difference and build Australia's citizen science capacity.

Why not make a difference and get involved so you to can help improve our knowledge about our changing climate.

<http://www.climatewatch.org.au/>

Quoll Discovery Experience

Did you know that only 1 in 10 Australians know what Quolls are? Yet they are the largest marsupial carnivores on the Australian mainland.

Quolls are still endangered in the Scenic Rim and nationally and need our help! Recent evidence suggests they are still persisting. Join us in this conservation initiative supported through an environmental grant with the Scenic Rim Council.



This is your opportunity to learn about Quolls, and help us protect them by sharing your knowledge and sightings. They need protecting – and fast!

Join us at The Outlook – 4001 Ipswich-Boonah Rd, Boonah Sunday 24 February 10am – 1.00pm includes morning tea. Leading quoll researcher Dr Scott Burnett will give a presentation and answer questions about quolls, threats to their survival and what can be done to prevent these animals from becoming another extinction statistic.

Come and meet a live spotted-tailed Quoll courtesy of Martin Finland from Geckoes Wildlife Presentations. RSVP: 20 Feb, to quoll@wildlife.org.au or phone Alina at Wildlife Queensland on 3221 0194

What would you say?

We are interested in what you would say if Redland Council removed tree protection orders and opened up the Redlands for urban expansion

Visit our blog at:

<http://wildlifebayside.wordpress.com/2013/02/03/have-your-say-would-you-want-tree-protection-weakened-and-urban-expansion/> to have you say!

Taxpayers bailing out Japanese whalers

By North Asia correspondent [Mark Willacy](#)
From ABC News



Japan has begun injecting new tax-payer-funded subsidies into its whaling program in a bid to keep the fleet afloat, the ABC has learned.

It is believed the "profitable fisheries program" is helping to keep the so-called scientific research program's ongoing debts at bay and to help refit the whaling fleet's flagship.

With the Japanese fleet now entering Antarctic waters, the annual whale wars are again expected to flare any day. Read on

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-02-04/taxpayers-bailing-out-japanese-whalers/4498602>

Wildlife Bayside in Action

[Wildlife Bayside](#) has made a submission to proposed changes to the Port of Brisbane Land Use Plan. This plan will result in the filling in and destruction of a freshwater wetland utilised by hundreds of protected species so the Port of Brisbane can turn it into a car park. To learn more go to ...

<http://wildlifebayside.wordpress.com/2013/02/06/wildlife-bayside-submission-to-the-port-of-brisbane-2013-land-use-plan/>

Wildlife Bayside is also involved in the Biomass Court action. While the Birkdale Progress Association is raising a number of legal points we have opted to improving the conditions.

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Keep up to Date online!

Wildlife Bayside Blogs

<http://seagrassmb.wordpress.com/>

<https://wildlifebayside.wordpress.com/>

<https://curlewwatch.wordpress.com/>

Wildlife Bayside Websites

<http://branches.wildlife.org.au/bayside/>

<http://mgwmb.azurewebsites.net/>

<http://sgwmb.azurewebsites.net/>

<http://rainbowfish.azurewebsites.net/>

Cleanup Australia Day

Let us get this shoreline looking pristine again.
Bottom end of Peel Street, Redland Bay
8:00am Sunday 3rd March. Wear wellington boots or strong footwear, (will be muddy) gloves, hat, water and sunscreen. bhomewoo@bigpond.net.au
www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/Jack+Gordon+Pathway

Curlew Watch

Do it from your smart Phone

If you have an iPhone you can now contribute in a big way to monitoring the status of Bush Curlews.

WPSQ Bayside Branch is calling for locals to capture their Bush Curlew's on their iPhone and then send their photographs to us. Ensure your Location function is turned on for your photographs and it will record the exact location you took the picture.

The photo with these coordinates will be stored on database providing us valuable information about the health and wellbeing of our Curlews. See :

<https://curlewwatch.wordpress.com/report-a-curlew-sighting/> for more details

Committee & Contacts

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bayside@wildlife.org.au

Web:

<http://www.branches.wildlife.org.au/bayside>

Walk with Wildlife

Don and Christine Burnett Conservation area

When: **Sunday 24th March 07.30am**

Designated parking area on the bend left hand side, near 346 Avalon Road, 5.5 km approx if you are coming from Mount Cotton Road. We will do the circular walk around the disused Quarry should have plenty of water in it after recent rains. Bring water, good footwear, sunscreen and hat.

Around 1.5 hours.

Bring you camera and binoculars

Paths are reasonable. \$2 coin appreciated.

Phone **Steve** on **38240522** or email to indicate attendance

Meeting Information

When: LAST Friday of each Month

Where: Redlands IndigiScapes Centre

17 Runnymede Road Capalaba

Time: 7.30pm

Membership Application

Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland

Memberships Types

- \$30.00 Single
- Concession (Pensioner/Full Student)
- \$45.00 Family or Non Profit Group
- \$12.50 Junior

Optional Wildlife Magazine Subscription

- \$47.00 per year inc GST (Four Issues)
- \$90 for 2 years inc GST (Eight Issues)
- \$70.00 per year (International Post)
- \$135 for 2 years (International Post)

Optional Donation \$ _____

For Campaign _____

(Bayside does not tax deductible status)

Name _____

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Special Interests _____

Pay by Credit Card

Card Type: VISA Mastercard

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Forward to WPSQ Bayside, PO Box 427, Capalaba Q 4157