

Newsletter

July 2015

The Month Ahead.....

Next Meeting.

Friday 31st July at 7:30 PM

Redlands Indigiscapes Centre – 17 Runnymede Rd, Capalaba

Jessica Walker | Wild Macadamia

Jessica is an energetic environmental professional working at the interface of conservation and sustainable agricultural practices.

She has worked with community groups across the South-east Queensland region in the development and delivery of environmental projects, and loves getting outside and getting her hands dirty.

At the Macadamia Conservation Trust, we're passionate about wild macadamias. While the sight of rows upon rows of trees in macadamia orchards might give the appearance they are plentiful, all of the four species are actually listed as threatened or endangered in the wild. What's all the fuss about 'wild'? Join us for a discovery talk about all things macadamias, learn how Redlands is lucky enough to have two of these species still existing in the wild and hear how we can work together to keep these uniquely Australian trees for our grandkids.

Have you ever thought of joining the Wildlife Land Fund Ltd ?

WFLF was set up in 2001 by the WPSQ to acquire a block of land in central Queensland (now known as Bukkulla Regional Park) with important biodiversity and environmental values.

The principal means of achieving WFLF's vision are:

- To acquire or bring about the acquisition of land with significant conservation and natural heritage values.
- To protect and enhance those values through wise and ecologically sustainable management. They now have four properties, under management Bukkulla Regional Park, owned and managed Witta Nature Refuge, Reesville Nature Refuge and Rosevale Nature Reserve.
- To become a member of WFLF, enquire through the website listed below.

There is a joining fee of \$5.00, membership annually costs \$20.00, donations are welcome. Find out more about this great cause from their website.

<http://www.wildfund.org/>

GOING DIGIT@L

Have you considered receiving your newsletter by email?
If you would like to see the full colour version of the newsletter each month, please let us know by emailing wildlifebb@bigpond.com
It will save paper, envelopes and postage.

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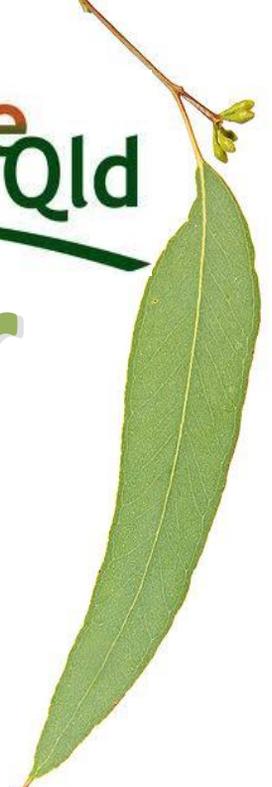
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From the Executive Team...

Presidents Report

At the end of the month we celebrate national tree day, trees aren't mostly considered when we think about the environment and species that are facing extinction. Trees are under threat not only from developers who clear the land of mature trees, use various offset means to satisfy limp environmental controls but from drought, invasive species, climate change and farming.

In our urban landscape, trees also often pruned heavily for "safety reasons", removed to facilitate solar power, landscaped to provide better views or street trees replaced with a smaller version. New housing developments often do not have space for trees which used to provide shade, reduce erosion, feed and house our wildlife.

Trees are a critical resource and bring an array of ecological roles, they provide habitat in the form of hollows, fruits and flowers, for a large percentage of our animals and wildlife, they store huge amounts of carbon, they enrich our soils and they direct water into our catchments and reduce erosion.

It is critical that we support efforts to not only preserve old trees but plantings on our creek corridors and catchments, conservation areas and parkland.

To celebrate National Tree day, Indigiscapes has organised a planting on Sunday, July 26th 9.00 am at Tingalpa Creek Conservation Corridor, Catherine Street, Birkdale and our speaker this month is talking about the endangered Native Macadamia tree.

Below photos from a recent visit to Bunya National Park, where trees are now revered.

On September 12th this branch is hosting the WPSQ AGM on Coochiemudlo Island there is a range of activities cumulating with dinner in the evening. Information will be out shortly, keep this date free in your diary.

Man doesn't plant a tree for himself. He plants it for posterity ~ Alexander Smith

Swap weeds for free trees: 9am – 2pm 1st August at Indigiscapes. 17 Runnymede Rd, Capalaba



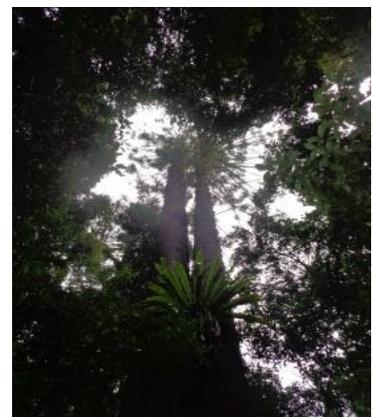
Coomba Falls, Maidenwell Bunya
Photo Steve Homewood



Forest walk Bunya
Photo Steve Homewood



Coral Fungus *Ramaria gracilis*, Bunya
Photo Steve Homewood



Forest walk Bunya
Photo Steve Homewood



A greener plastic bag... or nappy?

By Chris Doyle

Pick any product off a supermarket shelf and there's a good chance it's either made from plastic or packaged with it in one form or another. Not surprisingly, all this plastic adds up. Australians send more than a million tonnes of plastic waste to landfill every year, where it will sit for generations as it ever-so-slowly breaks down.

In an effort to tackle the growing waste problem, some plastic products are now being made so they break down more readily. But do these so-called 'biodegradable' plastics really give you a chance to outlive a muesli bar wrapper? Or is it just clever spin aimed at grabbing your green dollar?

More than just grocery bags

The conversation on biodegradable plastics has so far focused on supermarket shopping bags, and for good reason. As a nation we use nearly four billion of them every year, according to Planet Ark.

But there are many other products in which biodegradable plastics are already being used. "You can find them in almost anything out there, it just depends on the region you are in and the brands that are available to you," says Teresa Clark from US-based plastics manufacturer ENSO.

Clark says biodegradable plastics are targeted at replacing those items you usually use once and throw in the rubbish bin, like the plastic that holds your breakfast cereal or the packaging on kids' toys. Some products already available in Australia include bin liners, cling film, sandwich bags and nappies, with more products expected to roll out in the near future.

Can I put compostable plastics in my rubbish bin?

You sure can – but it will be of little benefit. Most of the general (non-recyclable) rubbish in your bin ends up at the local landfill, and the idea behind compostable plastic is to divert the plastic from landfill altogether. "They may eventually biodegrade in landfill, but it will

be very slow and there would be little point in doing that," says Williams. "It is a feel-good factor, in terms of buying the compostable plastic, but it's not something that you should do if that is where it will end up." And if compostable plastics end up as litter, there is also no guarantee they will break down.

Reduce your plastic waste

The best way to reduce your plastic waste is to use as little plastic as possible. Here are our top tips for reducing your plastic waste:

Say no to plastic bags, not only at the supermarket checkout but also when picking up your **takeaway** from local restaurants and food outlets. Check out our guide to **sustainable shopping bags**.

Buy your fruit and vegetables loose and avoid pre-packaged ones. Don't put your fruit in the small plastic barrier bags at the supermarket – it might take a little longer at the checkout but the plastic you save will be significant.

Store leftovers in a reusable container rather than covering them with cling film.

Choose products that have as little plastic packaging as possible. For example, if you buy **rolled oats**, look for brands that use cardboard packaging rather than plastic.

Use a lunchbox and ditch sandwich bags and cling film altogether.

If your local council doesn't require you to wrap your rubbish, try not using a bin liner. Wrap wet food scraps in a small amount of newspaper before putting them in the bin and hose your bin out regularly.

Also remember to **recycle your plastic waste** where possible.

Read More:

https://www.choice.com.au/shopping/packaging-labelling-and-advertising/packaging/articles/biodegradable-plastic?utm_source=et&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Biodegradable+plastic&utm_campaign=choice_informer_15July15_fortnightly

Losing bees will sting more than just our taste for honey

Marianne Peso

Changing wildlife: this article is [part of a series](#) looking at how key species such as bees, insects and fish respond to environmental change, and what this means for the rest of the planet.

We may lose a lot more than honey if bees are unable to cope with the changing climate and increasing demand for agricultural land.

Your morning coffee might be a thing of the past if bees disappear, and if coffee isn't your thing, you undoubtedly eat many of the fruit and vegetables (and chocolate) that rely on bee pollination for survival.

In fact, the world's [25,000 bee species](#) are responsible for pollinating a third of the food humans eat. If we lose bees, then we risk the food security of ourselves, and all the other animals that depend on bee-pollinated crops for survival.

While European (managed) honey bees steal the limelight, other wild (non-honey) bees are just as important for pollinating crops and will also be impacted by climate change. Data from all over the globe suggest that [both groups are in decline](#), but since we do not have a global integrated and complete monitoring system of bee populations, these data do not describe the full extent of the problem.

So how well equipped are bees to survive a warming climate, and is there anything we can do to help?

Bees and plants: it's a long-term relationship

Bees and flowering plants share a long evolutionary relationship and depend on each other for survival. Plants provide bees with food and habitat, while the bees feeding on pollen and nectar provide the plants with pollination.

To orchestrate this beautiful exchange, plants and bees rely on environmental cues (such as temperature) to coordinate their seasonal activity. However, climate change can disrupt these relationships so that [bee activity periods will no longer time with flowering periods](#). This will cause the bees to lose a food source and plants that fail to fruit, potentially leading to extinctions of both. Some plant-bee relationships are highly specialised. These species have evolved together so closely that a plant can depend on a single bee species in order to reproduce and vice versa.

Bees in specialist plant-bee relationships (such as [this one](#)) are most susceptible to climate induced extinction, as the loss of one will inevitably lead to the loss of the other.

More generalist bee species, that can collect food from more than one plant species, may fare better

than their specialist counterparts. As the climate changes, animals and plants evolve new genetic traits to adapt to the new environment.

However, when the environment changes at a faster pace than evolution can produce new traits, species that already have the physiological and behavioural abilities within its genetic code to cope with the changes will have an advantage.

A bee species that can already access more than one food source ([such as the honey bee](#)) can quickly adapt to changing plant communities and survive when other specialist species cannot. **'Beehaving' differently in the heat**

Bee species that can alter their behaviour to cope with high temperatures (for example by changing their activity periods to avoid the hottest part of the day) will tolerate climate stress. But these adaptive capabilities have their limits.

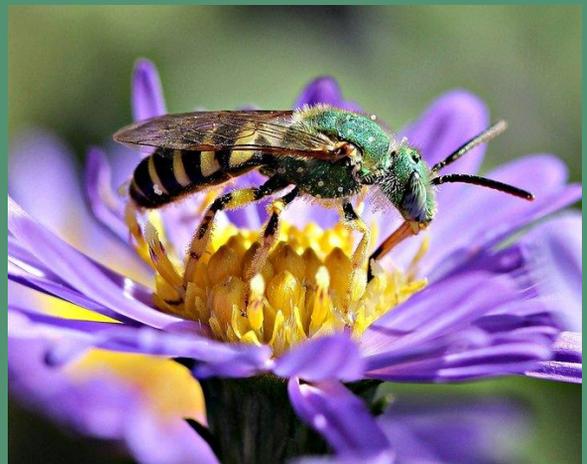
Increasing heat waves can directly kill bees by overheating them and/or melting wax-based nesting structures. [Drought can also kill bees](#) indirectly, by causing dehydration or starvation through the death of food plants.

Alternatively, it is possible that bees will change their range in response to changing climatic zones. As one area gets too hot, the bees can move to more tolerable climatic conditions.

However, a study on bumble bees conducted in North America and Europe using data spanning the last century indicate that bumble bees do not move in a way that "tracks" warming. [Rather, they stay in the same place despite the changing climate](#).

While most of us think bees live in colonies, most of the world's bees are actually solitary. In solitary species, female bees generally live alone in nests they've built, in which they raise their offspring. Most bee species are also fixed in their social structures, with some species living alone while others have varying degrees of social behaviour.

<http://theconversation.com/losing-bees-will-sting-more-than-just-our-taste-for-honey-42765>



National Parks exceed five percent!

July 2015

It's been a long time coming but the milestone has finally been achieved: National Park Estate areas in Queensland now exceed five percent of the state. The Palaszczuk government is to be commended on gazetting some three properties - Boorara, Werewilka and Oolamon - as part of Currawinya National Park in the state's south-west. These properties total some 189 000ha bringing Currawinya National Park to an approximate total of 344 000ha and making the park one of Queensland's largest. These new areas, purchased by the previous LNP government for national park purposes, include the upper catchments of creeks that feed the RAMSAR listed lakes and wetlands of the original national park section. They also capture a network of active artesian springs and significant examples of Indigenous cultural heritage. Heading north from the original Currawinya section the landscape becomes drier and more rugged from the sandy floodplains to the low hills and escarpments of the Werewilka and Oolamon sections.

Currawinya National Park supports mainly mulga and gidgee communities. Several endangered species including the painted honeyeater, Australia's red-throated and painted snipes, as well as the Major Mitchell cockatoo call Currawinya home.

Reaching the five percent milestone, however, does not afford our state government the luxury of resting on its laurels - much more must be done. Twelve holdings purchased between 2010 and 2012 await gazettal. These 'future' parks make up some 400 000ha in total and are located in regions where national park coverage is low. Their gazettal is urgent and action is required.

Wildlife Queensland suggests budgetary provisions of at least \$20M for new national park acquisitions in the 2015-18 term of state government. Furthermore, additional funding for management is required.

Queensland governments of all political persuasions have long provided less funding for the management of its national park estate than governments of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

The Palaszczuk government made a pre-election commitment to restore the cardinal principle of management. The cardinal principle for managing national parks is to provide, to the greatest possible extent, for the permanent preservation of the area's natural condition and the protection of its cultural resources and values. Natural condition means protection from human interference-allowing natural processes to proceed. Though Wildlife Queensland is well aware of the Palaszczuk government's honouring of its pre-election commitments and, on occasion, going beyond, the Society would welcome action in this area. Cattle grazing continues within many of our national

parks. Minister Miles has indicated that this is not what national parks are for but action beyond words is required. There is no doubt that cattle disperse weeds, destroy understorey vegetation and can have negative impacts on native fauna.

Of further concern is the apparent increase in the number of non-passive commercial activities allowed in our national parks, areas designated primarily for the conservation and protection of flora and fauna and secondarily for people to enjoy and commune with nature, leaving only their footprints and taking only their memories.

While national parks will always be the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation, their existence alone will not arrest the established decline in our biodiversity. Granted, Queensland's national park estate is increasing, but it is highly unlikely that the rapid dynamic growth of the late 80s and early 90s from two percent to almost four percent will ever be seen again.

Required now is growth in the entire protected area estate. Blich's government in 2010 set a target of 20 percent of Queensland by 2020. In recent times the most significant increase in the protected area estate has been in the Nature Refuge category. In November 2012 the area under nature refuge tenure was 3.335Mha. As at June 2014 the area had increased to 3.887Mha and was anticipated to grow by a further 0.389Mha by June 2015. While the expansion of the nature refuge has merit, such tenure may be subject to mining and development pressures. Wildlife Queensland is of the view that at least three categories of Nature Refuge should be implemented: one being equivalent to national park status, where the prime purpose is the conservation and protection of biodiversity; a second where complementary industry or use may continue together with the conservation focus: and a third category resembling the current situation.

Continue reading here:

http://www.wildlife.org.au/news/2015/NationalParks_exceed_five_percent-July2015.html



Currawinya National Park - Photo © Robert Ashdown

Resources

- Page 3: <https://www.choice.com.au/shopping/packaging-labelling-and-advertising/packaging/articles/biodegradable-plastic>
Page 5: http://www.wildlife.org.au/news/2015/NationalParks_exceed_five_percent-July2015.html
- Page 2: Photo. Steve Homewood
Page 4: Photo. The Conversation
Page 5: Photo. R Ashdown

Swap weeds for free trees: 9am – 2pm 1st August
at Indigiscapes. 17 Runnymede Rd, Capalaba

Committee & Contacts

President	Steve Homewood	3824 0522
V President	Vacant	
Secretary	Simon Baltais	baltais@bigpond.net.au
Treasurer	Maureen Tottenham	0418 197 160
Executive	Don Baxter	
Bayside Newsletter Editor	Alix Baltais/Simon Baltais	
Wildlife Diary Editor	Simon Baltais	

Email: bayside@wildlife.org.au

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

Keep Up to Date Online!

Blogs:

Wildlife Queensland Coastal Citizen Science

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

Wildlife Bayside

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

Curlew Watch

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

Websites:

Wildlife Bayside

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

Ornate Rainbowfish

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

Membership Application

Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland

Memberships Types

- \$30.00 Single
 \$20.00 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)

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