WILDLIFE DIARY
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Great Finds

Little Broad-nosed bat, *Scotorepens greyii*, snuggled up on beach towel hanging on clothes line in Capalaba.

Swamp Wallaby

The Swamp Wallaby, *Wallabia bicolor* is a species found in our thick scrub and riparian corridors. Its upper body fur dark brown with underparts yellow to orange-brown. Face dark, often with a white stripe. Hops with head and shoulders low, and tail held horizontal. Body up to 85 cm, tail up to 86 cm. This species feeds on the leaves of shrubs, ferns and grasses. They are active during the day, but are shy and usually solitary. While generally black brown in colour a golden form exists on North Stradbroke Island. You can readily see these wallabies along Eprapah Creek in particular the Eprapah Scout Environmental Centre.

Population

Ending world population growth as soon as possible is critical if the world is to limit global warming to 2oC.

http://www.population.org.au

Trees in flower and fruit

White bolly gum, *Neolitsea dealbata* are about to flower. This is a small tree to 10m, a common understorey species in all types of rainforest, as well as tall open forest. From Illawarra, NSW to Cairns. Cream to pale brown flowers in Feb to June. Fruit a purple/black fleshy drupe. Ripe Feb- July. An attractive plant for a shady position. Fragrant flowers, attractive drooping new foliage. From fresh seed, removed from the flesh. Fruit eaten by Brown Cuckoo Dove, Green catbird, Topknot pigeon, Wompoo fruit dove and White headed pigeon. Fruit bats or flying foxes also eat the fruit. http://www.brisrain.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=104

Davidson's Plum, *Davidsonia jerseyana*, are in fruit.

Termites stopping desertification

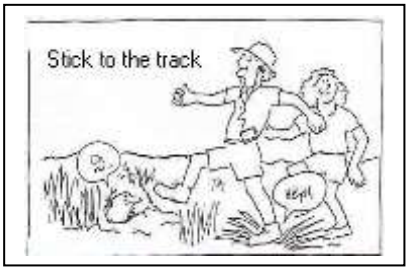
Termite mounds are something like oases in the parched drylands of much of the equatorial world — working to modulate the immediate environment via the nutrients and moisture stored in the extensive internal tunnels (which allow water to better penetrate the soil). Owing to this, termite mounds are often surrounded by abundant vegetation — and can work to counteract the wider environment's desertification. http://cleantechnica.com/2015/02/08/fighting-desertification-termites-insects-crucial-stopping-spread-deserts-research-finds/

Did you Know?

The study on Patch Occupancy and movement patterns of koalas (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) in urban areas of South East Queensland found the future of the koala is reliant upon protecting urban bushland. The report summary said. This study has highlighted the resilience of the urban koala population in Redlands and southern Brisbane, while also warning of the likely continued demise of this regional population under the current conservation and management strategy. Unless changes are made to the way urban areas are developed and maintained in Redlands, it is expected that koalas will become restricted to only large habitat patches, as is the case in Brisbane. (Amir, 2010).

Similarly at QLD State Govt. report said the largest declines occurred in bushland areas which showed a 59% reduction in koala numbers compared with a 30% reduction in urban areas. The large reduction of koalas in otherwise secure bushland was found to be a flow on effect from excessive habitat loss and mortality in urban areas. The reduction in adequate recruitment to these bushland areas, confirms a dynamic process operating between the urban and bushland koala populations. Bushland koalas are not protected from the consequences of the high levels of anthropogenic mortality and habitat loss impacting on the urban koala population. In the absence of conserving a viable urban koala population, adjacent bushland koala populations will continue to decline with consequences for the viability of the entire Koala Coast koala population.

Great Walks



Some of the best open forest, heath and wetland habitat is readily accessible from Weippin Street, Cleveland. A walking trail found at the Western end of Weippin Street. The flora and fauna are varied and abundant. Fish species and frogs are also readily found.

Web Sites

WPSQ Coastal Community Science
http://wpsqccs.wordpress.com/

Loss of wildlife at Mt Cotton

http://redlands2030.net/?p=7170

Fishy video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFdUGV1pCRM

Urban sprawl

Within the past 10 years private amenity space has largely disappeared from the rear of new suburban houses in Australia. This is characterised by an increase in plot coverage from 30-40% to 50-60% or even more. The change appears both permanent and uniform, as it is to be found in all major Australian cities, except Adelaide. It appears to be confined to Australia, in other parts of the world where back gardens have been standard features, North America, New
Zealand, Northwest Europe, this trend is not to be found. The outer suburban landscape in Australia has ceased to be one of large gardens with trees. Such landscapes are now confined to the inner suburbs. This trend represents a loss that has serious ecological implications. It also raises important questions about lifestyles changing for the worse, a trend rendered permanent by the changes to the housing stock. (Hall, A. C & Griffith University. Urban Research Program, 2007).

Urban sprawl is a post-World War II phenomenon. Several decades of unchecked urban sprawl have resulted in a host of environmental, economic, and social problems. It has resulted in the loss of agricultural lands, loss of forests, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, alterations in hydrology and increased air and water pollution.

There is also the obvious increase in petro use and CO2 release and increased infrastructure costs.

We know as a consequence of ongoing urban development, koala populations are increasingly under pressure from habitat loss and the additional threats associated with vehicles, dogs and disease - compounded by the stress of living in an urbanising area. Read the Koala Report.
http://devwatchredlands.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/decline_of_the_koala_coast_koala_population_population_status_in_2008.pdf

Urban sprawl also encourages the Urban Heat Island effect (UHI) a phenomenon in which ambient air temperatures are higher in urban areas than surrounding rural areas (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2012)? UHI have been measured for many cities including Melbourne, where a peak temperature differential of up to 7°C has been observed in the central business district. Urban heat islands arise through characteristics of cities that include replacement of vegetation and soil with impervious, heat absorbing surfaces such as concrete and bitumen, installation of tall buildings that reduce airflow and ventilation, and generation of heat and greenhouse gases through human impacts.

Studies around the world have demonstrated a correlation between species richness and human population density.

Studies compared the distribution of species richness for birds, mammals, amphibians, butterflies and reptiles, with human population density, and found a positive correlation for them all, except reptiles. Most reptiles live in sparsely populated desert regions, but all other taxa are strongly correlated with human settlements in both countries. Researchers say this correlation arises because both people and animals are attracted to the most productive landscapes. Early settlers were probably initially drawn to sites with fertile soil and easy access to water, later spreading outwards from these hubs.

Where we find lots of species, we also find lots of people; and in Australia, that's the east coast.

Urban sprawl also results in fragmentation. This is the division of forests, bushland or grasslands into smaller, disconnected pieces. Instead of a large continuous landscape it is broken into a patchwork mosaic: small sites of original habitat separated by lawns and houses. Wildlife can no longer travel from one patch of habitat to another without coming into contact with humans. The effect this has on wildlife varies from species to species.

So what does this mean for conservation?

It seems the answers lie in how we choose to approach future conservation efforts.

Right now we can 'save as much as We can' by retaining habitats in suburbs,

but in the future researchers say we should consider two major issues: human population growth and conservation of maximum biodiversity within future development frameworks (Luck & ECOS, 2004).

Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

- *Margaret Mead*

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