

WILDLIFE DIARY

July 2016

Great Finds

Skinks, *Scincidae* despite the cooler weather a number of skinks are still seen around the garden. Some interesting species have been found under those outdoor tiles left lying around the yard.

Population

It's coming home to roost over the next 50 years or so. It's not just climate change; it's sheer space, places to grow food for this enormous horde. Either we limit our population growth or the natural world will do it for us, and the natural world is doing it for us right now.

David Attenborough

http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/d/david_attenborough.html

Winter frogs

Copper Backed Brood Frogs, *Pseudophryne raveni*, is a 35mm long frog found throughout the Redlands and Bayside side in forested & marshy areas. Its back is pink to red in colour, has a black band along its reddish sides and has black and white marbling on its underside. Laying its eggs in clumps on the moist earth, they time it with the coming of rain so their eggs are washed into shallow water. Can now be heard calling, making a drawn out "eaak"

Foxes on the move

Foxes have been having an impact on local wildlife and domesticated fowl in the Redlands.

Foxes were introduced into southern Victoria in 1855 for hunting. These animals soon spread from their original home to become one of Australia's most widely-spread feral animals. Its quick spread was remarkable. By 1893, some shires in Victoria had a bounty on foxes and by 1917 foxes had reached west of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia.

Usually nocturnal, the fox rests during the day in a den, thicket, hollow log or leaning tree. Availability of food and shelter mostly determines where a fox can live.

Mainly a meat-eater, the fox is an opportunistic predator and scavenger. Food will vary depending on the season, with wild fruits and insects important in summer and small mammals important in winter. Foxes have been known to raid loggerhead turtle nests on the beach. Source: <https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/threats/fox.html>

Did you Know?

Did you know 10,000 hectares of mangroves across Northern Australia have died across a stretch of coastline reaching from Queensland to the Northern Territory, a 700km stretch of NT and QLD between the mouths of the Roper and McArthur Rivers in the Northern Territory. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-10/unprecedented-10000-hectares-of-mangroves-die/7552968?WT.ac=statenews_qld

Did you know Bureau of Meteorology provides a climate outlook summary with monthly and seasonal updates. <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary>

Did you know that the south east Queensland populations have been found to be genetically distinct from other populations and have suffered a 64% decline in numbers in the last ten years. Cars, dogs and disease are their biggest threats, with increasing urbanisation meaning that much of their former habitat is now gone, and their future is in doubt. http://www.koalaresearch.net.au/Fast_Facts.html

Great Walks



Spend a day with coast and marine wildlife experts
Saturday 16th July 2016
12.15 – 3.00pm Guided Activities
Offshore at King Island
Conservation Park via Wellington

Point Recreation Reserve. For more details contact bayside@wildlife.org.au

Web Sites

WPSQ Coastal Community Science

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

Shocking images' reveal death of 10,000 hectares of mangroves across Northern Australia

http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-10/unprecedented-10000-hectares-of-mangroves-die/7552968?WT.ac=statenews_qld

Koala Research

<http://www.koalaresearch.net.au/Welcome.html>

Greenspace

The urbanisation process causes loss and fragmentation of natural habitats and places high pressure on the remaining areas of nature in urban regions.

Today only 17 per cent of South East Queensland (SEQ) is national park or state forest, compared with 43 per cent of the equivalent land mass in the greater Sydney region. A more disturbing figure is that based on a 1993 regional scale analysis of landscapes in SEQ, which showed that less than 7% of this region can be classified as available for recreation. It is most likely considerably less than 7% because during the analysis tenure was not considered and therefore some of this land may be in private ownership and not available for recreation. Clearly there is insufficient greenspace or recreational space for the current human population let alone wildlife.

Further, 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 as 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.

It is of little surprise then that we have seen a decrease in open woodland and forest birds as this is consistent with lowland land clearing due to land clearing and suburbanisation. Consequently human well-being and the future of our urban wildlife are under great threat.

Greenspace and the lack thereof is becoming a major issue in our over crowded urban centres. Greenspace is an important part of complex urban ecosystems and provides significant ecosystem services. It benefits urban communities environmentally, aesthetically, recreationally and economically. A big natural and semi-natural forest area can act as an ecological buffer and protect the environmental quality of a city and provide habitats for wildlife. At the city level, a green network system of green wedges, parks and green corridors helps to limit future urban expansion, improve urban environmental quality and serve as habitats and migration routes for wildlife. At the neighborhood level, green extensions and connections of riverside greenway, road greenway, parks and vertical greening permeate into the built-up areas. They provide open space close to residential areas and offer places for recreation. This three-level green system can constitute an integrated ecological network for urban sustainable development for a city.

With respect to wildlife there has been plenty of work undertaken on the value of wildlife corridors in conserving native fauna. A number of identified general principles for the design and management of corridors are:

- Corridor networks must connect larger habitat patches;
- Design and establishment of wildlife corridors must be based on explicit restoration and conservation goals;
- Evaluation of a corridor's role in establishing and maintaining connectivity between wildlife populations must be the criteria for evaluating its effectiveness;
- Ongoing management, protection and monitoring to assess effectiveness; and
- Corridor networks developed within a framework of landscape management to integrate native conservation with production.

What must also be addressed is fragmentation. This can be achieved by expanding the area of habitats protected for nature conservation; maximizing the quality of existing habitats; minimizing impacts from surrounding land uses; and promoting connectivity of natural habitats.

Clearly if we are to develop sustainable cities in the future it will require more use of ecological principles in the design, planning, construction and management of cities.

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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