

WILDLIFE DIARY

May 2016

Great Finds

Missing birds

Over 20 years ago **Dollarbirds**, *Eurystomus orientalis* and **Spangled Drongos**, *Dicrurus bracteatus* were very common throughout the Redlands. Did you see them last summer? They are visitors from the North in our summer but this year they seem to have been absent from many of their usual stomping grounds.

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 brings new friends

With the cooler weather approaching new winter friends will arrive. **Silvereyes**, *Zosterops lateralis*, move North in the Autumn. The Tasmanian sub-species being a regular visitor to the Redlands. What an amazing fete for such a diminutive sweet bird? The rainforest birds, The **Rose-crowned fruit dove**, *Ptilinopus regina* and **Noisy Pitta**, *Pitta versicolor* can be seen for a short period in our mangrove forests as they move further a-field to Peel Island and North Stradbroke and other coastal locations. The **Rufous Flycatcher**, *Rhipidura rufifrons* can be seen in our conservation parks. Likewise, with the **Golden Whistler**, *Pachycephala pectoralis*.

Human population Growth is Killing off our koalas

More people means more land is required to accommodate them and to provide the goods and services they require. It means more habitat loss, roads and cars and dogs. All noted as key threats to the koala's survival. Its little wonder our koala populations has been decimated.

Did you Know?

Every human activity demands natural resources and produces waste. The measure of that impact on the environment is called our ecological footprint.

Regardless of what resources we need, we expect planet Earth to provide them, and to also be able to consume our wastes. But do you ever stop to consider how great an impact you are having and whether the planet can cope with those pressures?

Even our most simple choices – of our morning beverage, our electricity supplier or the source of our evening meal – relate back to the consumption of Earth's precious and finite resources. Sometimes these choices inadvertently contribute to the degradation of our natural world.

We need to be more informed so that we can make better choices that help to conserve our natural world.

Spend 1 minute and 30 seconds to watch this video about what goes into making your morning coffee a reality. It graphically shows that we need to change the way we think about everything, from our smallest choices to the very large. We can all do more by using less of our natural resources. http://www.wwf.org.au/our_work/people_and_the_environment/human_footprint/

http://www.wwf.org.au/our_work/people_and_the_environment/transforming_markets/

Great Walks



“Those who contemplate the beauty of the Earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”

— Rachel Carson

Web Sites

WPSQ Coastal Community Science

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

Human Population

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/population-and-sustainability/>

Urban Wildlife

http://daily.istor.org/wildlife-in-cities/?utm_source=marketing&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=twitter

Redland Planning issues?

<http://carp-redlands.org/>

Human Population

In an era of changing climate and sinking economies, Malthusian limits to growth are back—and squeezing us painfully. Whereas more people once meant more ingenuity, more talent and more innovation, today it just seems to mean less for each. Less water for every cattle herder in the Horn of Africa. (The United Nations projects there will be more than four billion people living in nations defined as water-scarce or water-stressed by 2050, up from half a billion in 1995.) Less land for every farmer already tilling slopes so steep they risk killing themselves by falling off their fields. (At a bit less than six tenths of an acre, global per capita cropland today is little more than half of what it was in 1961, and more than 900 million people are hungry.) Less capacity in the atmosphere to accept the heat-trapping gases that could fry the planet for centuries to come. Scarcer and higher-priced energy and food. And if the world's economy does not bounce back to its glory days, less credit and fewer jobs.

It's not surprising that this kind of predicament brings back an old sore topic: human population and whether to do anything about it. Let's concede up front that nothing short of a catastrophic population crash (think of the film *Children of Men*, set in a world without children) would make much difference to climate change, water scarcity or land shortages over the next decade or so. There are 6.8 billion of us today, and more are on the way. To make a dent in these problems in the short term without throwing anyone overboard, we will need to radically reduce individuals' footprint on the environment through improvements in technology and possibly wrenching changes in lifestyle.

But until the world's population stops growing, there will be no end to the need to squeeze individuals' consumption of fossil fuels and other natural resources. A close look at this problem is sobering: short of catastrophic leaps in the death rate or unwanted crashes in fertility, the world's population is all but certain to grow by at least one billion to two billion people. The low-consuming billions of the developing world would love to consume as Americans do, with similar disregard for the environment—and they have as much of a right to do so. These facts suggest that the coming ecological impact will be of a scale that we will simply have to manage and adapt to as best we can.

Population growth constantly pushes the consequences of any level of individual consumption to a higher plateau, and reductions in individual consumption can always be overwhelmed by increases in population. The simple reality is that acting on both, consistently and simultaneously, is the key to long-term environmental sustainability. The sustainability benefits of level or falling human numbers are too powerful to ignore for long.

In the U.S., this discussion remains muted all the same. Population concerns may lurk within the public anger over illegal immigration or over the unwed California mother of octuplets earlier this year. But to the extent that the news media address domestic population growth at all, it is through euphemisms such as “sprawl” (the theoretical culprit in pollution of the Chesapeake Bay, for example) or the economy (the theoretical driver of increased greenhouse gas emissions). You are more likely to read about population growth in a letter to the editor than in a news story or editorial.

The bitterness of the immigration debate has helped keep U.S. population growth off-limits in the national conversation. In industrial countries outside of North America, however, population is creeping back into public and even political consciousness. In the U.K., an all-party parliamentary panel issued a report called “Return of the Population Growth Factor” and called for stronger efforts to slow that growth. And the concern in the U.K. is not just about the people “over there” in developing countries. In early 2009 Jonathon Porritt, chair of the government's Sustainable Development Commission, whacked a hornet's nest by calling parents of more than two children “irresponsible” and blasting mainstream environmental groups for “betraying” their members by fearing to call for small families. “It is the ghost at the table,” Porritt said of population in an interview with the *Daily Telegraph*, a London broadsheet. Blog comments on his remarks, most of them supportive, soared into the thousands. Read full text here: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/population-and-sustainability/>

With President Obama in the White House and Democrats dominant in Congress, the signs are good that the U.S. will support the kind of development abroad and reproductive health at home most likely to encourage slower population growth. Like almost all politicians, however, Obama never mentions population or the way it bridges problems from health and education all the way to food, energy security and climate change.

Bringing population back into the public conversation is risky, but the world has come a long way in understanding that the subject is only one part of most of today's problems and that “population control” can't really control population. Handing control of their lives and their bodies to women—the right thing to do for countless other reasons—can. There is no reason to fear the discussion. Source: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/population-and-sustainability/> By Robert Engelman on June 1, 2009

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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