



NEWSLETTER

Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.

"Our Community Caring for Our Common"

March 2023 - Number 48



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday 21st May, 2023

FOOCC Bird walk 6.30am

Morning Tea and

Annual General Meeting 10 am.

Tuesday Common Carers

Tuesdays 7 – 9 am. Meet in the car park. New members welcome.

Walk and Weed

1st Saturday of the month. 7-9am

Reconvenes March 4th, 2023.

Tools provided.

For information call 0429911555

Bushcare and Beer

3rd Sunday of the month at 2.00

Weed before a beverage at Helios Brewery.

OCCA General Meeting

28th February Red Shed

Speaker is Brett Malcolm on frogs. 5.30 for 6pm start.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Hugh Possingham

Secretary: Karen Gillow

Assistant Secretary: Zina Dinesen

Treasurer: Matthew Mendel

Newsletter Editor: Mary Lou Simpson

Committee: Robyn Mulder, Lynn Whitfield, Simon Murray, Trevor Armstrong, Carolyn Jones, Dave Kent, Rob Hollingworth, Cath Tavatgis, Bill Cootes, Theresa Lynch and Erica Heaton.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hugh Possingham

This is the letter I sent to the relevant State Government ministers, the local member and to Dave Kent, the President of OCCA, on behalf of the Friends of Oxley Creek Common. So far there has not been a reply. I will send a follow up letter in a few weeks' time.

Dear Minister Furner,

I am the President of the Friends of Oxley Creek Common. I don't know if you know the site well Minister Furner, but I did take

Mark Bailey for a quick tour about 8 years ago. I have also talked about the site with Minister Hinchliffe.

For over 15 years we have worked, voluntarily, to:

1: protect the site from development (which in part failed when the high ground was transferred to the market).

2: ensure the site is well managed for biodiversity and pests - but we only have the people power and access to weed and plant the first 1.5 km along the river.

3: advocate for the transfer of Oxley Creek Common to the Brisbane City Council so that the Brisbane Sustainability Agency can deliver the Oxley Creek Common Bird Sanctuary <https://www.sustainablebrisbane.com.au/programs/oxley-creek-transformation/>. This email is focussed on the third issue.

For over a decade the State Government has been negotiating with the local government to transfer the land to the local government. Neither the bird sanctuary, nor the Oxley Creek Transformation

project, can proceed without this transfer.
Can you tell us when this will happen, and if there is anything we can do to speed it up?

I attach a rough bird guide to the site to orient you. This guide is partly responsible for the 50-fold increase in birdwatchers to the site. Pre-pandemic it was generating many millions of dollars each year in tourism and amenity for Brisbane.

This is an open letter, 12 Feb 2023.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Possingham



A peaceful moment on the creek bank.

BECOME INVOLVED IN OXLEY CREEK COMMON

JOIN Friends of Oxley Creek Common.

JOIN one of the weeding groups to help maintain the natural bushland.

LIKE the **Facebook Page** of Friends of Oxley Creek Common to keep in touch.

CHECK bird sightings on **Oxley Creek Common Birds Facebook Page and eBird**.

VISIT the Friends of Oxley Creek Common website:

<https://friendsofoxleycreekcommon.org>

CHECK you have paid your membership fees. See the form below.

TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

Thanks to the member of Tuesday Common Carers, who worked at the Common over the Christmas break, usually working between 15 and 20 hours a week. This has made a huge difference to the section from the gate to Stony Gully, where native ground covers have returned.

Several other people came before the official start, which was the 7th February. 16 people mustered for our first foray into the summer

growth, so although we have met only 3 times, an enormous amount of work has been done. One morning, weeders bagged enough *Dyschoriste* to fill a vehicle.

Green Panic has returned throughout the site, with new growth sprouting from apparently dead clumps. The flood effects have well and truly been overtaken by summer growth. Scotch thistle has exploded throughout the site, the seeds having been brought by the flood. Blackberry nightshade has reached over a metre high and wild tobacco has seeded in places it has never been seen before. Fleabane has managed to reach 2 metres. Surprisingly, the mass of balloon vine in the paddocks has not produced the number of Wanderer butterflies that one might expect.

It is gratifying to see such a lot of regeneration of native plants: native oxalis is appearing everywhere, new grasses are beginning to return, acacias and *Alphitonia* readily self-seed, and *Cupaniopsis parvifolia* is frequently noticed, as are new mangroves.

Much of the planting beyond Fern Gully did not survive the summer. Most of it has been dug up. It appears that the culprits (Scrub turkey/bandicoot/?) moved the guards sideways to get to the moist soil around the plant. The best survival has been in areas where the native groundcover has already returned. We believe that the absence of

chemical spraying has hastened the return of groundcovers, such as native glycine.

Apart from maintaining our regular sites, our aim is to clear a track along the creek from Stony Gully to Jagera Corner. Thursday Creek Care and BSU have already begun work on this challenging project.

Our newest member is a high school student, who cycles from Sherwood train station and back in time for school. This cheerful and hardworking group is doing wonderful work. Come and join them to learn more about life at the Common.

THE CREEK BANK

Visitors to the Common currently do not have access to the creek bank, which is a treasure trove of different plants.

The flat area beside the creek is subject to tides with the main species being mangroves: *Avicennia marina* (tree to 20 metres) and *Aegiceras corniculatum* (small tree to 4 metres). There are several very old mangroves that possibly predate white settlement of the area. Mangrove fern *Achrostichum speciosum* can also be found along the bank. This is a very dense, robust plant, with fronds growing to 1.5 metres.

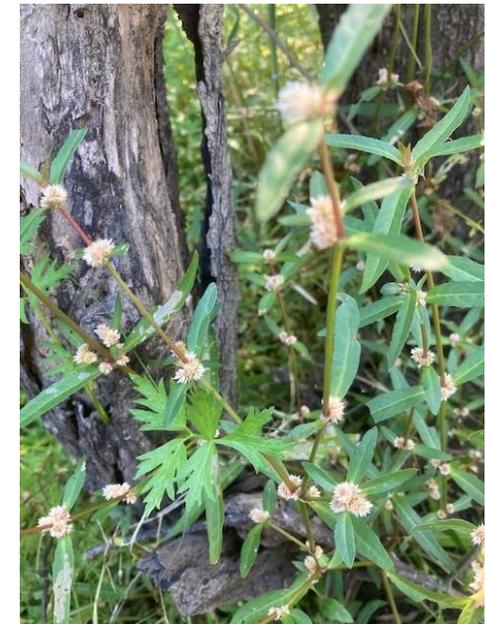


This very old mangrove has plenty of aerial roots (pneumatophores). The kookaburra is busy watching the weeding in case food appears.

Another common Creekside plant is Saltwater Couch, *Sporobolus virginicus*, which grows at the base of *Phragmites australis*. *Tetragonia tetragonioides* (Warrigal Greens) *Commelina difusa* and *Eclipta spp* are common groundcovers. *Crinum* is less frequently found.



Apium prostratum, Sea celery. A new patch of about 3 square metres took advantage of the removal of weeds.



Eclipta found a spot amongst the celery.

The big survivors of the flood were silky oaks, melaleucas, some pittosporum and sandpaper figs.

Once the weeds have been removed there will be an opportunity to establish a path along the creek and encourage the revegetation of sections of rainforest.

BIRDLIFE

Under Hugh Possingham's guidance a full complement of people participated in the birdwalk on the 19th February. 65 species were sighted. Check on ebird to see the list.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S128819784>

Thanks to **Kevin Fairley** for these photos of wildlife at Oxley Creek Common.



Baby Pacific Black Duck.

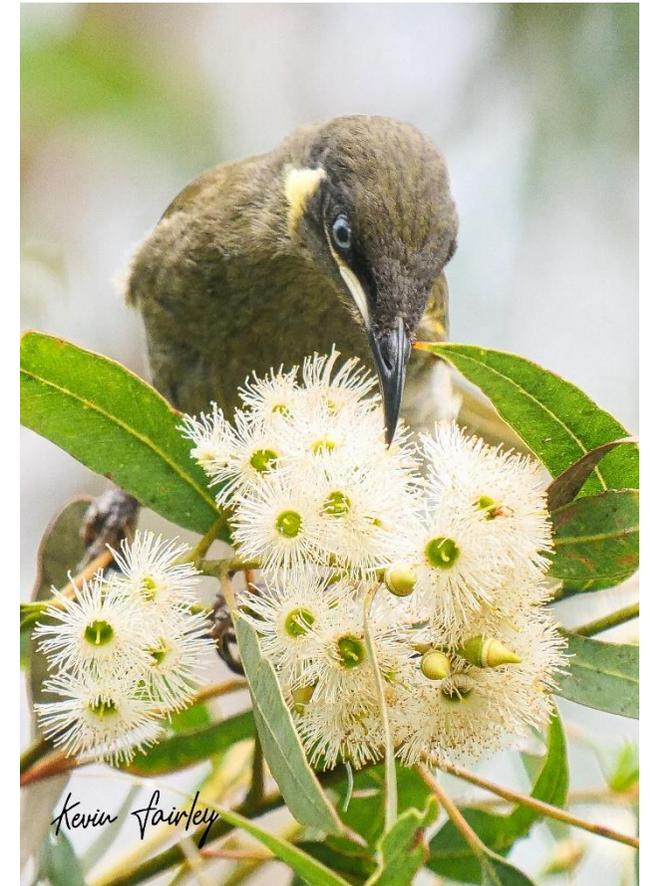


Golden headed Cisticola.



Male and female Red-backed Fairy wrens.

Right: Striated Pardalote.



Eucalypt dinner for the Lewin's Honeyeater.



LIVING AT THE COMMON



Photo: Mark Gillow.

Dollarbirds are visitors to the Common over summer where they come to breed in tree hollows. They seem to favour the bare branches across the creek at Nosworthy Park. Their presence is announced by the loud throaty 'Ack Ack Ack'. In flight they are distinguished by the whitish circle on their wings. A lucky birdwatcher might see the glorious blue/green plumage in the sun.

Two were recently sighted playing chasing games. One bird, perhaps the male, would do a neck stretching performance, for the benefit of the other bird, who called with beak wide open.

Dollarbirds can fly to extreme heights. Their frozen bodies have been found in the ice of a glacier at 4,500 m above sea level in New Guinea. Another was hit by an aircraft at

2,600m. Dollarbirds incubate between 2 to 6 white eggs, with both parents attending the nest during the day. It seems the female is on duty during the night.

Source: *Wingspan Vol 16 no 1, 2006.*

**Friends of Oxley Creek
Common
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

Sunday, 21st May 10am
Following the 6.30 bird walk.

All positions will be vacant.
To nominate contact Karen Gillow
friendsofoxleycreekcommon@gmail.co



Please send contributions, comments and corrections to Mary Lou Simpson

marylouit@hotmail.com

Photos: Kevin Fairley, Mark Gillow.

Sources:

Field Guide to Australian Birds, Michael Morecombe.

**Friends of Oxley Creek Common
Inc.**

**is dedicated to preserving this
natural habitat for wildlife.**

Become a friend of The Common

Pay your membership directly into our BOQ account BSB 124017 – Ac 20161909 and send the appropriate details to:
friendsofoxleycreekcommon@gmail.com

or

Return a cheque with this form or the appropriate details

PO Box 319, SHERWOOD, Qld 4075

You will automatically receive the Newsletter.

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

P/code: _____ Date: _____

Membership:	1 year	5 years	
Single	\$15	\$60	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concession:	\$12	\$48	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family:	\$20	\$80	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group:	\$30	\$120	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate:	\$80	\$320	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Membership	\$400	Concession \$320	
Donation:	\$...		