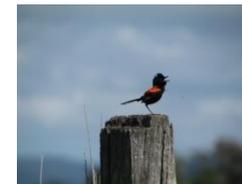




NEWSLETTER

Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.

"Our Community Caring for Our Common"
June 2022 - Number 45



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday 28th August 2022
FOOCC Bird walk 6.30am
Morning Tea and
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 – 9 am Tools provided
For information call 0429911555

Bushcare and Beer
3rd Sunday of the month at 2.30
Weed before a beverage at
Helios Brewery.

OCCA Meeting
Tuesday 28th June, 6 – 8pm
Speakers: Will Charlton and Annika
Werny on the OCCA Biodiversity
Unit.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT for the 2022 AGM

Hugh Possingham

As always, the accounts are in good order (thanks Matt) with people paying for longer-term membership. We now have four Life Members and more people are taking the 5 year membership option from the web site - <https://www.friendsofoxleycreekcommon.org/membership.html>. One of our sister groups, the Friends of Sherwood Arboretum are about to start using an automated membership scheme and we will see if that is successful.

Sadly, Walter Taylor South Action Group <https://wtsag.mycommunity.org.au/> is winding up. We are grateful that they have transferred their remaining funds to us. We will assist other local groups with common interests in the protection of the values of the area.

Tuesday Common Carers are as active as ever with hundreds of hours of work (thanks Mary Lou). They have been kept busy with the rampant weed growth over the first half of the year.

The February 2022 flood killed some trees and did a fair bit of damage to the creek vegetation, but

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.

recovery has been fast. One unexpected bonus of the flood is that it lifted all the Water Hyacinth out of Jabiru Swamp. Stilts, dotterels, ducks, grebes, egrets and herons are now back.

I am grateful to the entire committee for their attendance, contribution and steadfast support.

We continue to lobby the state government to hand the land over to the council so that the Oxley Creek Transformation can progress.

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, Therese Lynch and Erica Heaton.

BIRD REPORT – June 2022

Hugh Possingham

Oxley Creek Common now boasts over 5000 eBird lists and a spectacular array of bird photos - <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L967148/media?yr=all&m=>. Based on my regular counts I estimate that the number of birders coming every week is now well over 100, or 5000 per year. Based on a two-hour visit this represents a million dollars of benefit to the city of Brisbane per year.

Recent cold weather has brought our favourite winter visitors in abundance – both whistlers and Grey Fantails. There has been an unusual number of Spotted Pardalotes in May, mingled in amongst the Striated Pardalotes. These tiny jewels of the

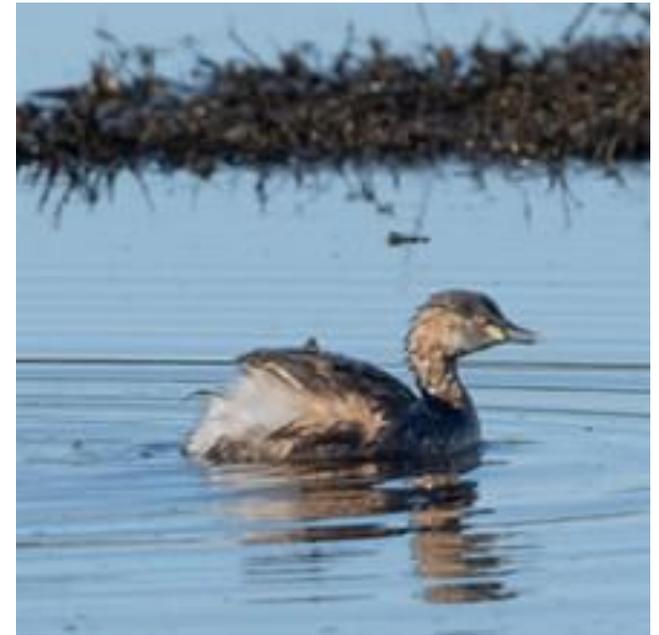
canopy are essential for ecosystem health. A very friendly Fan-tailed Cuckoo has been frequenting the creek.

Now that Jabiru Swamp is clear of Water Hyacinth, the diversity of waterbirds on the Common has risen. It is now easy to find over 20 species in a single trip with Yellow-billed Spoonbill, Black Bittern and Black-necked Stork recent highlights.

BIRDWALK

About 20 people braved the chilly weather for a very rewarding walk down to the lagoons. As usual, Hugh Possingham led the walk and shared a wealth of information. 76 species were sighted. We were rewarded with a cluster of honeyeaters just inside the gate (7 in all) plus a Spotted Pardalote. Hugh's list can be found at:

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S111554696>



White-headed Stilt and Australasian Grebe, enjoying the clear water at Jabiru Swamp. Photos: Leanne Giret.

A name no longer on the Committee is **Faseny McPhee**, who is relocating to Canberra. Friends of Oxley Creek Common owe a great debt of gratitude to Faseny for her long commitment to FOCC and to her active preservation of the Common. For many years Faseny has been a committee member and an office bearer, notably as President for several years. We wish Faseny well in her new adventure.

TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

Mary Lou Simpson



Floodwater was powerful enough to re-locate a shipping container from upstream.

What was the immediate effect of the flood at the Common? Huge areas of Green Panic were washed flat, Glycine seemed to have disappeared and many areas looked desolate and empty, with dead sticks instead of flourishing trees. The lower sections of the creek bank were littered with dead fish and rubbish.

After several weeks, the weeds returned. Rivina has flourished and is now producing seeds. Although some large infestations of Glycine were washed away, there is a considerable regrowth of Glycine throughout the site. The pathways close to the creek bank

have been obliterated, but can be discerned where new Green Panic is germinating. Some of the apparently dead Green Panic is reshooting, and the sections that weren't affected are lush and dense.

Very few of the 200 seedlings planted between September and Christmas 2021, have survived. The stakes are still there (well done Creek Care volunteers) and there are some surprising survivors under the dead grass. There seems to be no clear pattern of survival. Trees two metres high, such as Native frangipani, *Hymenosporum flavum*, *Auranticapa rhombifolia*, *Dodonea viscosa* and Native hibiscus died, as did *Pandorea jasminioides*. Practically all the rainforest species planted along the creek have died. Most *Acacias* have died but occasionally there is a survivor.

Inexplicably, some relatively small trees survived: (e.g. Whalebone Tree, *Streblus brunonianus* and an *Acacia myrtifolia*). One *Tabernaemontana pandacaqui* is re-shooting, while others remain leafless. The big survivors are the Tuckeroos, Eucalyptus sp, Mallotus, Native holly (*Alcornea ilicifolia*) Lomandras and Sandpaper figs. We are not removing any 'dead' sticks, as occasionally we find a tiny green shoot at the base. This has been especially so with *Breynias*. Some *Einardia* is re-shooting and clumps of Emu foot are flourishing. Warrigal Greens are re-emerging.

On the positive side there is extensive native re-generation, mainly Tuckeroos and Acacias. The long-term effects may not be apparent for some time, but the initial effects may give us the opportunity to regenerate areas that have been impassable until the flood did its work.

Congratulations to the hardy band of volunteers who were back working at the Common as soon as we were given the go-ahead. There is plenty of work ahead. Undoubtedly, the flood has changed many of the areas we have been tackling.

THE mini-FLOOD

After significant rain during May, the lower areas of Oxley Creek were again under water on the weekend of the 13th & 14th May.



Oxley Creek, twice its normal size at Jagera Corner, with the flat riparian section under water again.

This inundation seems to have removed large areas of Saltwater Couch (*Sporobolus virginicus*) and *Eclipta prostrata* and has damaged plants that survived the February flood. However, further up the bank the native *Commelina difusa* has really enjoyed these conditions and is a metre high.



Casuarina Gully. The stakes indicate a planting.



Water extended from the culvert to the creek.

FEATURED BIRD Pale-headed Rosella



Photo: Leanne Giret

HABITAT: Lowland woodland, parks, treed farmland and watercourses.

NESTING: Hollows in tree trunks.

RANGE: From Cape York to Northern NSW, west to central Queensland. Cape York species has paler head and dusky yellow rump.

FOOD: Seeds and berries. Often inconspicuous while feeding on the ground.

FLIGHT: Strong, rapid wing beats, interspersed with short, undulating glides.

HABITS: Usually in pairs or flocks of juveniles. Wary and easily disturbed.

Source: Menkhorst, *The Australian Bird Guide*.

FUNGI



EFFECTS OF FLOODING AROUND THE CATCHMENT

Cliveden Avenue from Carole Bristow

Consequences often don't appear for some weeks, when weed regrowth becomes apparent. Having experienced the 2011 flood, I think the Reserve got off lightly, but again young Acacias are the most vulnerable.

Interestingly, Green panic (*Megathyrsus pubiglumis*) growing in the lowest areas (therefore covered by water the longest) has died! A metre higher, it browned off completely, but is now re-shooting. The native groundcover Fishweed (*Einadia trigonos*) browned off and is now recovering. Another victim is the beautiful grass that loves shady places, Graceful grass (*Ottochloa gracillima*). I trust it will come back from seed, as it has always been present, and has survived all preceding floods.

We also had an enormous regeneration of "Dyscho" (*Dyschoriste depressa*) – more than ever before. The bushcare group put its head down and we have hand weeded about 95% of it... work still in progress! As we weeded, we were finding small signs of native groundcovers returning.

Nosworthy Park from Marie Hollingworth

As a result of the two episodes of flooding in the last 6 weeks and the continual drizzling rain and dull days, the soil in the park is saturated. Walking through the grassy areas means splashing through water that cannot get away or soak into the soil.

Nosworthy Park did not suffer erosion from the inundation of the riparian and lower slope in February. The strong presence of native ground-cover grasses (*Ottochloa* and *Oplismenus*) prevented this but there were many losses of small plants which were under water for several days and many small trees have fallen.

Fortunately, the top areas of the park remained free of inundation. Working bees have concentrated on controlling the considerable vegetation growth while observing species that have survived.

Gaddes Park from Ian Lees

Gaddes Park is on Stable Swamp Creek, which eventually flows into Oxley Creek. We only suffered a couple of bank collapses where the mud slides took some plants. Some Lomandras, however, seem to be thriving in their new locations!

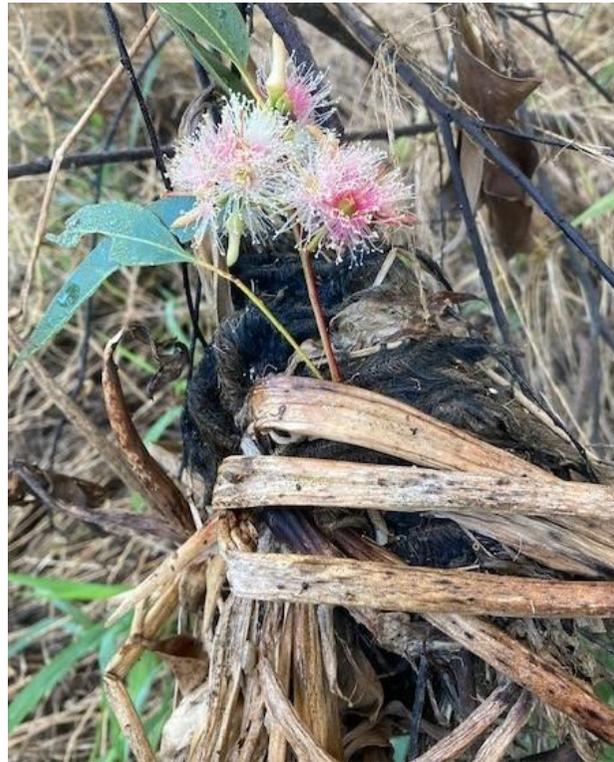


One positive from the rainfall has been the frog pond. Usually, it drains within days of a deluge, but this time, with the constant soaking rain, it has been full for over a month and there are frogs calling for the first time I can remember.



CATERPILLARS

After the flood waters receded at the Common, hundreds of caterpillars could be found climbing trees, posts and walls. These were thought to be Hawk Moth caterpillars.



These Eucalyptus flowers fell from a tree, landing beside Water Hyacinth debris – a reminder of the power of the flood and the amazing resilience of nature.

Please send Contributions, Comments and Corrections to Mary Lou Simpson maryloulit@hotmail.com

Thanks to Leanne Gilet for her photos and to Carole Bristow, Marie Hollingworth and Ian Lees for information about the flood in their areas.

July 31st is National Tree Day.

OCCA will be hosting a morning activity.
Look for more details in the OCCA July newsletter.

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:	\$...		