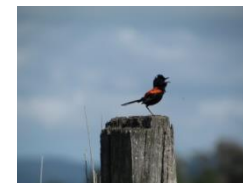




NEWSLETTER

Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.

"Our Community Caring for Our Common"
May 2023 - Number 49



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, 27th August 2023

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. 7-9am

Meet in the car park. Tools Provided.

For information call 0429911555

Bushcare and Beer

3rd Sunday of the month, 2.00pm

Weed before a beverage at Helios Brewery.

OCCA General Meeting 27th June at the Red Shed, 5.30.

Speakers are Peter Johnson of the Australian and New Guinea Fish Association and author Stephen Baines.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hugh Possingham

FOOCC has had a successful year with growing membership and increasing bush care activities.

We wrote a polite letter to Minister Furner (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, agriculture@ministerial.qld.gov.au) on 12th February 2023, urging the transfer of the land from the state government to the local government so that the bird sanctuary and other improvements (e.g. woody weed management and track development) could proceed. We are still waiting for a response.

Because we have been asking this same question for about ten years, we are urging all concerned members to write asking the same simple question "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?"

The popular ABC Catalyst program on Brisbane birds by Dr Ann Jones has drawn more and more visitors to the Common

<https://iview.abc.net.au/video/SC2203H002S00>.

The increase in visitation is wonderful but comes at a price, because of the very limited track network. The carpark is usually more than full, and the one track has become quite crowded. The logical solution is more tracks to separate nature lovers from runners, cyclists and dog-walkers – but this requires the transfer of land and cooperation and communication from the state government, something which has been inadequate for several years.

Tuesday Common Carers (every Tuesday morning at 7am) are as active as ever with hundreds of hours of work (thanks Mary Lou). FOOCC membership is at an all-time high (44) with most people taking the 5-year membership option from the web site - <https://www.friendsofoxleycreekcommon.org/membership.html>.

Our accounts are in good order thanks to Treasurer Matt.

Communications and social media have increased thanks to Cath and Karen – the Facebook page has become increasingly active, have a look -

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfOxleyCreekCommon/>.

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

Hugh Possingham, President, May 21, 2023

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.

BIRD WALK

Hugh Possingham

Before the Annual General Meeting, 26 of us enjoyed a cool but sunny walk out to Pelican Lagoon. We found 66 species – my favourite was an excellent view of a White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike. These are much less common in suburban Brisbane than the Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, but a single bird has been around for a couple of months this winter.

We were lucky to see the unusual Pink-eared duck (aka “zebra duck”) on Jabiru Lagoon. Some interesting waterbirds should start turning up as inland areas dry out. An Australian Hobby gave us a spectacular display of aerobatics (I am still not entirely sure what it was chasing) while we walked back along Willie Wagtail Way, and a Whistling Kite soared low over our heads. Mistletoebirds were frequently heard calling, but they were very hard to see – highlighting the importance of learning your calls 😊. You can find the full list for the morning here

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S138593748> .

Many thanks to Hugh for leading the walk and sharing his wealth of knowledge. These walks are very instructive and are full of tips for birdwatchers.



White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike

Photo: Katie Howard

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Hugh Possingham

Secretary: Karen Gillow

Assistant Secretary: Zina Dinesen

Treasurer: Matthew Mendel

Newsletter Editor: Mary Lou Simpson

Media Secretary: Cath Tavatgis

Committee: Simon Murray.



Australian Hobby
Photo: Katie Howard

TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

This year, we have had between 10 and 15 weeders each week. Thanks to this energetic group of people, we have managed to clear large areas of weeds, which have returned since the flood.

We have been mainly working between Mangrove Fern Gully and Snake Gully, where *Rivina* (Coral Berry) and *Commelina benghalensis* are major problems. We continually return to some sites (opposite Box Gate), where the seed bank has been building up for years and responds to every shower of

rain. Currently, there are carpets of new weed seedlings.

As well as weeding, we have been busy planting and watering. The flood washed away about 200 plants and another 30 plants have been dug up. Perhaps Scrub Turkeys or bandicoots are the culprits. They cleverly move the guard away from the plant and start digging.

Thanks to Thursday Creek Care who planted about 80 seedlings near Cockspur Halt and to the Bushcare and Beer workers, who weeded and planted around the nearby seat. OCCA's workers are often on site, doing difficult jobs.

It is encouraging to have walkers comment positively on our work, because weeders often only see what needs to be done, not what has been achieved. Oxley Creek Common is becoming increasingly popular, so hopefully our work enhances the experience of visitors, as well as providing natural habitat for birds and other wildlife. Additionally, Tuesday Common Carers have an enjoyable and productive morning, removing invasive species, finding native regrowth and spotting the birds. When you can spare the time, come and join us.

Seeds on a *Pittosporum revolutum*, a species that has survived the flood.

NATURAL REGENERATION

The flood of 2022 has had some surprising effects. Apart from destroying both good and bad vegetation, it has brought masses of weeds (Scotch thistle, wild tobacco and fleabane, to name a few) but it has also brought new plants and revived others.

There are now several species of native grasses:

- *Anthosachne kingiana* (wheat grass) a drift near Stoney Gully,
- *Eragrostis brownii* (Brown's love grass) near Jagera Corner,
- *Eriochloa sp* near Commelina Gully,
- *Capillipedium spicigerum* (Scented top)
- *Cullen tenax* (Emu Foot)
- *Themeda triandra* (Kangaroo Grass)
- *Microlaena stipoides* (Rice grass)





Cullen tenax (Emu Foot) is a host for the Chequered Swallowtail Butterfly. It seems to like growing in company. Nearby are *Einardia* and Warrigal Greens.



Jagera pseudorhus seeds. If you enlarge this picture you can see the irritating hairs on the capsules. Each one splits to reveal 3 seeds.



The ironbark near the junction of the tracks is covered in flowers, which are being visited by bees, and Brown and Scarlet honeyeaters.



This native glycine has the same trifoliate leaf structure as the invasive glycine, but is weak-stemmed and grows unobtrusively among the leaf litter.



Capillipedium spicigerum (Scented top) is easily confused with Natal Grass until the seedheads appear. Natal grass can be seen on roadsides and in the railway corridor and has a fluffy pink seedhead, which turns white as the seeds mature. Natal grass is classed as an environmental weed in Queensland. It has more knobbly nodes than Scented top, which has been planted at Cockspur Halt.

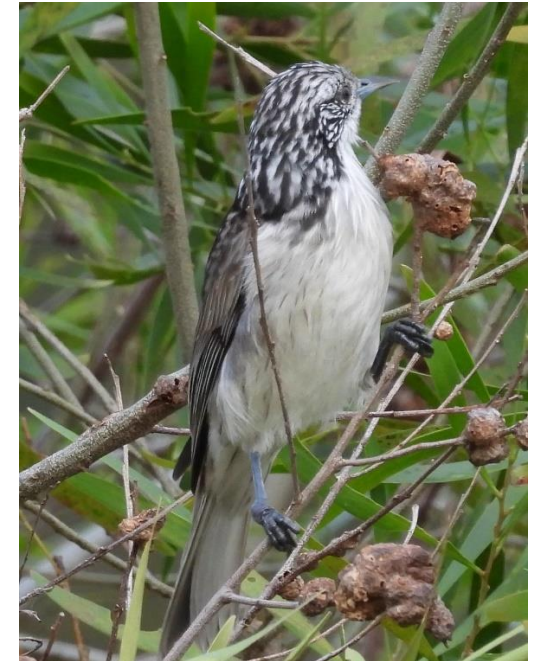
LIVING AT THE COMMON



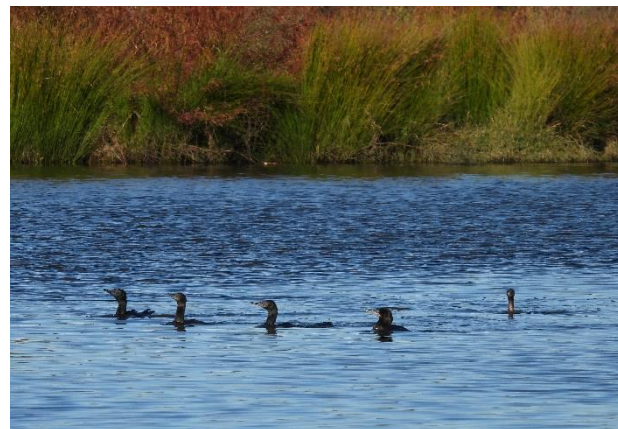
Carpet python nicely camouflaged.
Photo: Ian Read



Pink-eared duck, which has been resident for some weeks. Photo: Katie Howard



Striped honeyeater



Little black cormorants are currently plentiful at Jabiru Lagoon.

Azure Kingfisher
Photo: Katie Howard

Striated Pardalote
Photo: Katie Howard



FROG OR TOAD

FroggingAround.com is a campaign sponsored by the QLD Frog Society Inc to help people be sure they are dealing with a cane toad and not a native frog. Toads bigger than 5 cm can be recognised by the following features:

- A prominent 'M' shaped ridge between their eyes
- A black and white mottled underbelly
- A warty, leathery back and limbs
- A large brow over the eye
- No colour flecking on thighs or behind legs
- No finger discs or toe pads.



Photo: QLD Frog Society Inc

The newest native species to join the list of animals that have found ways to cope with the toxins in a cane toad, is the Australian White Ibis, which has been observed picking up a toad, flicking it about and throwing it in the air.

The toad, becoming stressed, ejects its poison from the gland at the back of the neck. The ibis then wipes the toad on wet grass or rinses it in water. Straw-necked ibises have also been observed doing this.



Striped marsh frog living in the *Dychoreste*.

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

Sources:

Australian Birdlife Vol 12 Autumn 2023.

'Be Toadally Sure', Pamphlet of the QLD Frog Society Inc. qldfrogs.asn.au

Field Guide to Australian Birds, Michael Morecombe.

Thanks: Carole Bristow for plant ID.

Photo Credits: Katie Howard; Ian Read; QLD Frog Society Inc; All unattributed photos by Mary Lou Simpson

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:	\$....		