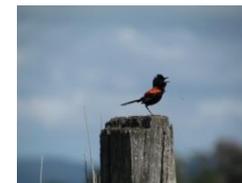




# NEWSLETTER

## Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.

"Our Community Caring for Our Common"  
November 2020 - Number 39



### SAVE THE DATE

#### Friends of Oxley Creek Common Birdwalk & General Meeting

led by Hugh Possingham  
Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 6.30 am  
Followed by morning tea and a General  
Meeting 10 am

#### OCCA Christmas party

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 5 – 7pm  
9 McDevitt St, Coopers Plains  
RSVP 3345 5541

#### TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

gather every Tuesday in the car park to  
begin at 7 am.  
New members welcome.



Sacred Kingfisher Photo: Kevin Fairley

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hugh Possingham

#### What is in a name?

Names are an important way to connect people with places. There will be historians and Indigenous Australians reading this who know far more about the topic than I. That said, the FOCC Committee is thinking about naming some of the special places at Oxley Creek Common, partly for utilitarian reasons and partly for our connection to place.

This is inspired by the activities of the Tuesday Common Carers who use names to help direct weeders and planters. For example: Tuesday Common Carers call the "First Dip" (the first place with a small bridge) Fern Gully because of the Mangrove Ferns growing there - and the "Second Dip" – Snake Gully. Before Mangrove Fern Gully is a prominent ant mound which has been there for 20 years, so I think we can call that "The Ant Mound". Many of you will also have noticed the fabulous sign on the track out to Pelican Lagoon labelling it "Willie Wagtail Way", where there is almost always a pair or two of Willie Wagtails.

### BECOME INVOLVED IN OXLEY CREEK COMMON

**JOIN** Friends of Oxley Creek Common.

**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.

**SIGN** your friends up to receive the newsletter.

People are already using this name in discussions around the Common.

For those interested in maps and birds, the <https://friendsofoxleycreekcommon.org/> web site has a link to a bird guide - <https://friendsofoxleycreekcommon.org/images/bird-places-OxleyCommon.pdf>, which contains a detailed map of the whole Common. Some of

those names on the map we know well – Pelican Island (and Pelican Lagoon), Jabiru Swamp, The Neck and the Secret Forest. Also on the map are names like “Big Gum” (which I would like to call the Drum Gum) as it still contains the 44 gallon drum from the 1974 flood and “First Dip” and “Second Dip”, for which I think we have better suggestions above.

If you have some interest in names, send me an email – [hugh.possingham@tnc.org](mailto:hugh.possingham@tnc.org) – or text 0434079061. This is just the start of a conversation which will include wide consultation.

## TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

Mary Lou Simpson

It is timely, as 2020 comes to an end, to reflect on our achievements for this year – one which presented unique difficulties: there was massive weed and grass growth after the summer rains, which swamped new plantings; until the October rain, this year has been very dry, so a lot of time was spent watering; COVID 19 meant that our normal weeding bees were interrupted.

Despite these set-backs, much has been achieved. Most of the plantings have been rescued from the grass, which has been used as mulch and replacement seedlings have been planted.

Several new areas have been tackled. An area just before Fern Gully was cleared of Commelina and Asparagus Fern and then planted. Most of the 25 seedlings have survived the dry weather and the scrub turkey. The 25 tubes planted just below the

Casuarinas were not so lucky. It seems something was looking for moisture and found it by digging up the plants. A large area just before Snake Gully has been cleared of Rivina, Glycine and Asparagus Fern.

We are now working between Fern Gully and the large eucalyptus. It is rewarding to discover that underneath the Asparagus Fern there are sedges and new mangroves just waiting for space. Often, we find Brown Quail busily working over the newly cleared spaces and then darting off into the grass. One morning, a Buff-banded Rail was seen strolling through a new planting on its way down the creek.

Brian McDonald completed the job of painting the posts, so we can more easily define where we are working. These are now marked on a mud map, a copy of which is on the notice board.

The contribution of other volunteers at the Common is invaluable. Thursday Creek Care have worked at the Common 3 times since weeding resumed after COVID. They planted nearly 100 tubes, just south of Tank 3, which Tuesday Common Carers have been watered weekly. OCCA Business Unit visits the Common once a month and tackles the difficult tasks. The work of Belong volunteers has been greatly appreciated. John Mansell has donated another 30 plants.

Thanks to all the wonderful people who regularly turn up on Tuesdays ready and willing to do battle with invasive species. We hope that the residents (and visitors) are enjoying the changes.

## LIVING AT THE COMMON



This red-bellied black snake was heading out of the small pool near Pelican Lagoon. **Photo: Kevin Fairley.**



A dragonfly captured by **Kevin Fairley.**



When this snake emerged from a hollow steel gate-post, it was a metre long. **Photo: Kevin Fairley**



This immature White-breasted Woodswallow is still showing the buff tips to the upper feathers. This species of woodswallow is the only one that has a white rump and a dark undertail, without any white tips. **Photo: Kevin Fairley**

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*Australia is home to six of the world's 11 woodswallow species. Rachel Sims, in her PhD research on co-operative breeding, noticed that the parents of three fledgling woodswallows urged their offspring to clumsily move more than 100 metres to join another family. Both sets of parents then provided coordinated care to this newly formed 'creche'. 'Wingspan' Vol 16, No 4 2006.*

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Black-winged Stilts enjoying some of the weed-free water. **Photo: Kevin Fairley**

### **Water Hyacinth Bio-control**

**Trevor Armstrong**

Two weevil species and two moth species from South America have been introduced into Queensland, and have been multiplied, ready for distribution, at the old Sewage Treatment Works, Bowhill Road, Durack. These insects are being distributed by officers of Bio-security and the Brisbane City Council to infestations across Brisbane, including Jabiru Lagoon at Oxley Creek Common.



This photo of a Royal Spoonbill captures the rarely seen yellow patch above the eye and the textured bill. **Photo: Kevin Fairley**



A Superb Fairy-Wren. **Photo: Kevin Fairley**

## HABITAT

Wattle trees sometimes produce these knobby growths, called Acacia Flower Gall. It is a reaction to tiny wasps and does no harm to the plant. This specimen can be seen on Willie Wagtail Way. Source: Acacia Gall Gallery.



Gisela Kaplan in *Bird Minds*, says there is plenty of evidence that birds need to be innovative to build nests. She has observed a Willie Wagtail, detach a spider's web, from its mooring. The bird then flew backwards to the nest site, against the direction of the wind, using its foot to gather the loose ends. This technique ensured the sticky filaments did not adhere to its feathers. Such a feat requires considerable skill. P 64.



This flowering *Rhodosphaera rhodantha* is a pollarded specimen, which may have regrown after storm damage.



These expectant parents spent some time attacking a kookaburra, they thought was too close to the nest.



In flower, this *Austroteenisia blackii*, or Blood Vine demonstrated just how far it has wound its way through the neighbouring trees.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF WEEDS

Bushland regeneration is dependent on the hard work of weeders, whose aim is to eradicate invasive species which are retarding the growth and germination of native plants. However, many of these plants are vital for the survival of our bird populations, until replacement food and habitat reach maturity.

These bees are finding nectar in the Scotch



Thistle. Green panic is used by Evening Brown butterflies and can be a home for Fairy Wren nests. Its seeds support finches. Broad-leafed pepper, a scourge along the creek bank, provides shelter and food for small birds such as Fairy Wrens, Silveryeyes and Honeyeaters. Even the dreaded Asparagus Fern is used for nesting and shelter.



Both photos by Kevin Fairley.

## WHAT CAUSES BIRD STRIKE?

According to **Birdlife Australia**, window collisions injure or kill a third of Australian bird species each year, from Powerful Owls to Pardalotes. Transparent glass is invisible to birds, especially when there is a line of sight through the window to landscape. A bird may even mistake an indoor plant as potential refuge.

Suggestions for the home and office:

- Bird feeders and bird baths should be within 0.5 metres of windows, to slow birds down and reduce the chance of collision.
- Cover the entire window to reduce transparency. The detail of a repetitive pattern should be no more than 5 cm apart. Birds focus on the size of spaces between objects, so the pattern isn't important, it is the spaces in between that matters.
- Make sure indoor plants aren't visible from outside.
- Close blinds and turn off the office lights after hours and at the weekends.

For more information about the Bird Strike Project, visit:

<http://birdlife.org.au/projects/urban-birds/bird-strike-project>

Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc. represents a broad range of individuals and community groups that have shared visions in educational, social, ecological and agricultural sustainability.

Become a friend of The Common

Pay your membership directly into our BOQ account – BSB 124017 – A/c 20161909

Return this form or the appropriate details to: friendsfofoxleycreekcommon@gmail.com

or

PO Box 319, SHERWOOD, Qld 4075

Tick the box to receive our newsletter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

P/code: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership:

Single	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concession:	\$12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family:	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group:	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate:	\$80	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donation:	\$...	

Please send Contributions, Comments and Corrections to Mary Lou Simpson [marylouit@hotmail.com](mailto:marylouit@hotmail.com)

Unattributed photos by: M Simpson