



# NEWSLETTER

## Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.

"Our Community Caring for Our Common"  
August 2021 - Number 42



### SAVE THE DATE

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2021**  
FOCC Bird walk 6.30am  
General Meeting and  
Morning Tea 10.00

**Tuesdays 7 – 9 am.**  
**Tuesday Common Carers**  
Meet in the car park.  
New members welcome.

**Walk and Weed**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month**  
7 – 9 am Tools provided  
For information call 0429911555

**OCCA General Meeting**  
**28<sup>th</sup> September, 5,30 for 6 pm**  
Speaker: Carla Catterall on  
restoring riparian rainforest in  
Brisbane.

**OCCA Weeding at The Common**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month**  
Begins October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2 – 4 pm  
Come along and earn a Helios  
Brewing voucher for a free drink.

### THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hugh Possingham

The FOCC general meeting was held at 11am on 29 August 2021.

Meetings will now always be on the last Sunday of February, May, August and November at 10:00am, preceded by a bird walk at 6:30am. Some highlights from the meeting include:

**Mary Lou Simpson** reported on Tuesday Common Carers (every Tuesday at 7am) and the FOCC newsletter. A new volunteer group, "Walk and Weed", is being established for the first Saturday of each month from 7-9 am. The Carers group goes from strength to strength and the benefits to the birdlife are now obvious.

**Matt Mendel** provided the Treasurer's update. FOCC's financial reserves are exceed \$5,000. Matt is organising with the bank for an electronic system for approving payments. Most ongoing expenses are plants and weeding equipment. There are about 30 financial members, many of whom have 5-year memberships. There are three life members.

**Zena Dinesen** mentioned that she had put in an individual submission on the proposal by St Aidan's school for a Ministerial Infrastructure

### 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.

Designation for development at the Ambiwerra sportsgrounds, which included comments on the need to restore/widen riparian vegetation. Lynn Whitfield mentioned that OCCA had also put in a submission which included emphasis on riparian vegetation enhancement.

**Lynn Whitfield** reflected on the resounding success of the Peaks to Point festival. FOCC had

10 people sign up for the newsletter, with several registering an interest in bird walks and meetings. Lynn also discussed the recent butterfly surveys, with Nosworthy Park and Oxley Creek Common both having good range of butterflies. Another survey is planned for 28 November.

The Oxley Creek Corridor Restoration Strategy (Draft version for limited stakeholder consultation) was discussed briefly. FOCC members noted that social values connected to nature (not just recreation activities such as walking) need better consideration, as do cultural values. OCCA is starting a weekend working bee at Oxley Creek Common on the third Sunday of the month – more to follow.

**Hugh Possingham** provided feedback from his recent onsite meeting with Sustainability Brisbane who now oversee the Oxley Creek Transformation Project. There is a strong commitment to making Oxley Creek Common a Bird Sanctuary, pending the transfer from state government. There is a great deal of bird data for The Common, both on eBird and in the Birds Australia database “Birdata” to evaluate any conservation management.

Hugh has been writing to Amanda Nutt from the **Queensland Government Accommodation Office | Building Division** to see what is being done about the weeds and feral mammals which are expanding rapidly. We have news from the Council that foxes and deer are being controlled. The noxious weeds are out of control and the state government has not given us any information about their plans to manage them despite repeated requests. Pelican Lagoon is overrun with

exotic fish and has lost much of its attraction to birds. Hugh will continue working on this issue.

**Future meetings:** It was agreed that we would continue to provide morning tea at FOCC meetings. In future the urn, mugs etc should be able to be stored in the lock-up facilities at Oxley Common. Zena and Fasenya agreed to help organise morning tea for future meetings, when possible. We will tell Amanda about future meetings to avoid clashes with other events. The next meeting is November 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 preceded by a 6:30am bird walk.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**President:** Hugh Possingham

**Secretary:** Karen Gillow

**Treasurer:** Matthew Mendel

**Newsletter Editor:** Mary Lou Simpson

**Committee:** Zena Dinesen, Fasenya McPhee, Lynn Whitfield, Simon Murray, Robyn Mulder, Justine Ward and Erica Heaton.

## The birdlife at Oxley Creek Common, Winter 2021

The waterbirds at Oxley Creek Common are much diminished. Sadly, weed infestation has ruined Jabiru Lagoon. Pelican Lagoon is full of exotic fish that have made it turbid. We are

hoping the state government will soon attend to these matters. It is sad to see the dramatic effects of poor management on wildlife. The best water body is the one below the high ground because cattle grazing has kept it open and clear of weeded stilts and black-fronted dotterel have bred there successfully.

On a positive note, there was a large number of winter migrants such as Grey Fantail, Scarlet Honeyeater and Golden Whistler. The Brown Quail have put on a wonderful display, enjoying the varied ground cover provided by the Tuesday Common Carers weeding group. The haunting call of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo has been a feature of The Common all winter.

The last three bird species that have been added to the official eBird site list are all inhabitants of mangroves: **Shining Flycatcher** (at the very south end of their range), **Mangrove Honeyeater** and **Torresian Kingfisher** (formally Mangrove Kingfisher). This is indicative of an expanding and healthy mangrove population. These additions bring the total list to 224 species  
<https://ebird.org/australia/hotspot/L967148?yr=all&m=&rank=lrec>.

### FOCC at Peaks to Points Family Day

Passers-by stopped to inspect the weeds, and chat. Complete strangers behind masks, hats and sunglasses, often turned out to be friends and acquaintances.

Thanks to Mark Gillow for his amazing **Scavenger Hunt App** and to Karen Gillow, Robyn Mulder and Mary Lou Simpson for their contribution.

## TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

Mary Lou Simpson

Since autumn, our work has been mainly removing grass, glycine and commelina that have swamped previous plantings. This has been our object at the following sites: the planting just inside the fence, Casuarina Gully, the St Aidan's planting, Commelina Gully and both Rotary plantings.

We have gradually been working along the creek bank to create a track close to the creek. For some time, the track went no further than Tank 2. Thanks to Brian McDonald, the Cockspur and the glycine have been tamed and the path now reaches Stoney Gully.



A new species? Just glycine smothering a dead tree.



The creek bank is somewhere under this.

We have also worked opposite the gate in the Brown Zone and in the area close to Snake Gully, where the weeds have been rampant. The grass has been cleared and 30 seedlings planted on the fence strip just past Casuarina Gully.

As part of the Peaks to Points Festival, we celebrated our 6<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was a very successful occasion, with 3 extra weeders and several other guests at the party. Thanks to Nicole Johnston, who funded the beverages and to Lynn Whitfield for organising the occasion.

Visitors to The Common will see that there is still plenty to do. New members are welcome.

## LIVING AT THE COMMON

### The cycle of life



This bee, busy doing excellent work as a pollinator, is unaware he will soon be breakfast. Photos: Tanja Schueler.



# MANGROVES

## Habitat

Mangroves fringe a significant proportion of the creek bank at Oxley Creek Common. This is important for the health of the creek, as well as providing habitat for hundreds of creatures, many of them rarely seen.

Striated herons are sometimes perched above the mud; honeyeaters, especially the Mangrove Honeyeater, live in the mangroves; water dragons shelter under the branches; the Whipbirds love the secret places between the Cockspur and the mangroves and the unusual sighting of the Shining Flycatcher was close to the mangroves.

## Carbon storage

Recent research has highlighted the importance of mangroves in capturing carbon, with some studies showing coastal wetlands can store carbon up to 40 times faster than rainforests. The restored mangroves on the Richmond River captured 11.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per hectare, per year in the first 25 years.

## Viviparous

Mangrove seeds are retained on the tree until they germinate. These new plants are then supplied with nutrients and fresh water by the parent plant. When the seedling breaks, it immediately takes root or drifts to a new site.



*Acrostichum speciosum* Mangrove Fern

## Propagation

At Oxley Creek Common there are several very old mangroves, *Avicennia marina*. A very windy storm earlier this year, dislodged hundreds of seeds. Many of them fell out of the tidal zone. An attempt at propagating these seeds (propagules) has been partially successful and it is hoped they will be able to be planted in some of the bare patches in the tidal zone, where the mangroves are not naturally regenerating.

## Tips for propagation

- Select healthy seeds, recently fallen
- Keep the seeds dampish until planting
- Insert the furry end into the mud or soil, leaving half the seed above the soil. The segments of the seed will widen and

hopefully the leaves will sprout from these divisions.

Mangroves are complex plants that have specific needs. In the Gulf of Carpentaria, 7,500 hectares of mangroves died because of heat, reduced river flow and a subsequent drop in the sea level. The photo below shows the devastation.



Fallen and standing dead mangroves, outside Karumba. Some natural regeneration is occurring.

Anything that can help increase the density of mangroves along Oxley Creek is creating important habitat and helping reduce the carbon emissions that we create in our everyday life. Sources:

Norm Duke *Australia's Mangroves*, 2006 UQ

Colin Field (Ed) *Restoration of Mangrove Ecosystems*, 1996

[www.natureaustralia.org.au](http://www.natureaustralia.org.au)

Peter Miles [www.medium.com/age-of-awareness/mangrove-restoration](https://www.medium.com/age-of-awareness/mangrove-restoration)





Foliage of an *Avicennia marina*.

## SPRING FLOWERS



*Acacia fimbriata* in full bloom.



Seed pods of *Acacia podalyrifolia*, Silver Wattle also known as Brisbane Wattle.

Left: *Jagera pseudorhus* seeds reminding us to be careful touching them, as the hairs are sharp and difficult to remove. Photo: Tanja Schueler



*Hovea acutifolia* was first named by botanist Robert Brown after Polish botanist, Anton Hove, during the mapping expedition of Matthew Flinders on the *Investigator*, lasting from 1801 – 1805.



*Hardenbergia violacea*, also known as Native Sarsaparilla, was named after Franziska von Hardenberg, the sister of Baron Carl Hugel, a patron of horticulture

and visitor to Australia, by George Bentham, whose study of plants became the foundation for modern systems of plant taxonomy.

Source: Dick Burns *Pathfinders in Tasmanian Botany*.





*Tephrosia brachyodon* not to be confused with *Tephrosia glomeruliflora*, with grey leaves that are finely hairy on top. The weedy species has more leaflets and fewer pinkish flowers.

Source: Trevor Armstrong

## Glossy Black-Cockatoo Birding Day

11-12 September, across Southern Queensland

Find details of this initiative

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1445896569085882/>

Find out about the work of the Conservancy on <https://glossyblack.org.au/>



Thanks for the perch, Robyn. Photo: Tanja Scheuler.

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

Thanks to Tanja Schueler for photographs.

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](mailto: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.

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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:	\$...	

## Be a citizen scientist

Reports of dead and dying frogs have increased along the east coast. Scientists are unsure of the cause of this spate of deaths.

If you have seen listless, shrivelled or dead frogs, register your sighting, with a photo at: [calls@frogid.net.au](mailto:calls@frogid.net.au)