

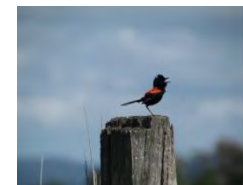


NEWSLETTER

Friends of Oxley Creek Common Inc.

"Our Community Caring for Our Common"

December 2021 - Number 43



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday 27th February 2022
FOOCC Bird walk 6.30am
General Meeting and
Morning Tea 10.00

Tuesday Common Carers
Tuesdays 7 – 9 am.
Recommences 1st February 2022
Meet in the car park.
New members welcome.

Walk and Weed
1st Saturday of the month
Recommences 5th February 2022
7 – 9 am Tools provided
For information call 0429911555

Bushcare and Beer
19th December, 2.30
Weed before a beverage at
Helios Brewery

Butterfly Survey Oxley Creek Common
Sunday 19th December, 9 am
Meet at the Red Shed.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hugh Possingham

About 30 people enjoyed a pleasant **bird walk** at 6:30 on Sunday December 12th. We were surrounded by Martins and Swallows darting over the grass around the mound at the Red Shed. All the grassland species were in full voice along the whole walk – Tawny Grassbird, Golden-headed Cisticola and Brown Quail. Fairy-wrens and finches were common, all enjoying the lush growth following heavy early rain.

The lagoons at the end of the walk continue to disappoint us because of the water hyacinth choking Jabiru Swamp and the exotic fish in Pelican Lagoon. We are hopeful that the state government will act on these pests as the impact on bird diversity and abundance is large.

As you will see from Mary Lou's report, Tuesday Common Carers are more active than ever, and given the rapid growth of vegetation, they need to be! It will be a challenge to keep on top of the weeds this summer, but as the native trees and shrubs grow, life for weeds will be harder.

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.

We were very fortunate that Tom Bates of Corinda State High School - tbate9@eq.edu.au joined our meeting. Tom noted that the past 18 months had been challenging, but the school's commitment to the agriculture and environment programs on The Common is increasing under his leadership. Native trees

are being planted and he welcomed our ideas about future revegetation options. The finances are in good order and Matt Mendel has succeeded in sorting out internet banking with the Bank of Queensland so the task of paying bills is much improved. We now have four life members, and an increasing number of five-year members – I chose life membership because my memory is so bad – see

<https://www.friendsofoxleycreekcommon.org/membership.html>.

Lynn Whitfield gave a comprehensive overview of Oxley Creek Catchment Association activities, all of which can be found at

<http://www.oxleycreekcatchment.org.au/upcoming-events/> .

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Hugh Possingham

Secretary: Karen Gillow

Treasurer: Matthew Mendel

Newsletter Editor: Mary Lou Simpson

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

TUESDAY COMMON CARERS

Mary Lou Simpson

Our focus this Spring has been to plant areas with no canopy. The first area was in the fence strip, just before Stoney Gully, where 30 species were planted. A huge effort was made to remove glycine the Pale Green Zone. Thursday Creek Care planted this area with 60 seedlings. Another 15 plants were added to the site just before Fern Gully, where weeds had become rampant. The rain has been a welcome bonus, with both weeds and plantings flourishing.

A major effort over several weeks was to disable glycine with seed pods. There are still large areas, dubbed 'Glycine Central', (thanks Robyn) but we have destroyed thousands of potential plants. Some dense infestations of invasive Commelina have been covered in black plastic, while bags and bags of this weed have been removed.

Thanks to **Alex Willmott**, who has sourced 3 tanks, erected them on pallets and installed taps. These will be invaluable when we plant the more distant areas. Thanks also to **John Mansell**, who donated another 60 plants and to **Mick Richardson**, who sourced 20 Tuckeroos. **Marie Hollingworth** kindly brought a tray of plants from the Norman Creek Nursery.

Tuesday Common Carers go from strength to strength, with 10 – 12 regular workers. The morning's weeding is punctuated with the warble of birdsong, the sound of conversation and laughter and the discovery of new plants. Our well-earned Christmas Party was on the 14th December. Photo below: Lynn Whitfield



Introduced species

- An estimated 30,000 plants have been introduced into Australia.*
- 10% have become naturalised.*
- 500 species have been declared noxious and under some form of control.*
- 32 weeds are declared of National Significance (WoNS) because of their negative environmental impact.
- The WoNS sighted at the Common is: *Lantana camara*.
- There are 24 weeds in our area that by law, landholders must eradicate from their land. Many of these are not prevalent.

* Source: *Wildlife Matters*, Issue 42/November 2021, p 20.

FUNGI

Some of the unusual fungi hiding under the weeds.



Photos below by Quoc Hung Le



NOISY MINERS

Most people interested in the environment are aware of the prevalence of Noisy Miners, who co-operate to exclude almost all smaller bird species. Research published in the two papers listed below may indicate that the negative effects of increased Noisy Miner populations may be worse than imagined.

Prevalence:

South-east Queensland has especially high densities. A survey of 173 sites revealed a mean density of 2.88 per hectare, well above other areas in eastern Australia. Noisy Miners favour lower elevations, agricultural land and fragmented, thinned and remnant woodland and forests. Parks and gardens with spaced out eucalypts and nectar-bearing plants, such as grevilleas, are ideal habitats for Noisy Miners. Most studies have found increased miner abundance at forest edges.

Causes:

Natural woodland has been altered by agriculture, housing, grazing, the removal of the understorey and the thinning of trees, thus increasing and enhancing the habitat enjoyed by this species.

Where drought reduced the populations of woodland birds, the density of Noisy Miners increased. When better seasons returned, resident Noisy Miners defended their territory against the return of woodland birds.

Negative effects:

Noisy Miners' aggressive defence of their territory leads to a decline in the abundance of smaller birds, nectarivores and insectivores. An average decline of 49% of small birds was recorded, while in South-east Queensland there was a loss of 66%.

Small woodland birds are better pollinators and travel further than the larger nectarivores. Consequently, the absence of smaller birds may be reducing pollination and the spread of seed, thus limiting natural revegetation. This could potentially have profound effects on eco-systems. More research is required to assess this change.

The reduced population of smaller insectivores destroys the natural balance of the forest, which can have a negative effect on the health of trees. This is evident where large populations of Bellbirds have negatively affected eucalypts.

Removal:

Experimental removal of Noisy Miners has resulted in an influx of small birds, even in degraded woodland.

Thanks to Carla Catterall for her contribution to this article.
'Avifaunal disarray due to a single despotic species' Maron, Grey et al in *Diversity and Distributions* (2013) 19, 1468–1479
'Avifaunal disarray: quantifying models of the occurrence and ecological effects of a despotic bird species' Thomson, Maron et al in *Diversity and Distributions* (2015) 21, 451–464

LIVING AT THE COMMON



Small Grass-yellows(?) using a *Commelina diffusa* flowers.



Pacific Black Ducklings.

Golden Orb spider.



Monarch caterpillar.



Bee landing on a Scotch Thistle.



Water dragon emerging from the creek.

Kevin Fairley's photos illustrate the range of wildlife living at the Common.



SMALL BIRDS

Despite the problem of the weedy grass strangling new plants, many small birds rely on the seed the grass provides.

Photos by **Kevin Fairley**.



Male and female Red-backed Fairy-wrens.



Male Variegated Fairy-wren



Striated Pardalote



Red-browed Finch

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

Thanks to Kevin Fairley, Quoc Hung Le and Lynn Whitfield for photographs.



CSIRO'S DECADE REPORT

Each decade, for 40 years the CSIRO has published a report on Australia's birds. The latest report will be published as a book: *Action Plan for Australian Birds 2020*.

The good news:

23 birds have had their threatened status downgraded.

Eastern hooded plovers are still vulnerable but are 10 times more likely to produce young. Southern cassowaries are now in the 'least concern' category, 32 years after their habitat was given world heritage status.

Birds on Macquarie Island are less vulnerable since the eradication of feral cats, rats and rabbits.

The bad news:

Surveys of 1800 sites in north Queensland rainforests have recorded dramatic declines in birds.

It is estimated that there are 6 million fewer birds than a decade ago.

95 birds have become increasingly threatened during the last decade.

Destruction of shorebird habitat has increased the vulnerability of 10 million migratory shorebirds.

26 species have become more threatened because of the Black Summer bushfires.

The increase in the numbers of Australian birds closer to extinction is a result of climate change, destruction of habitat and competition with feral predators.

Source: Miki Perkins report in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2.12.21.



WORRIED ABOUT THE STATE OF THE LAGOONS?

The area beyond the gate at the junction of the track to the lagoons and the Secret Forest is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works. Now (Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Public Works). If you are concerned about the rampant weeds in Jabiru Lagoon and in the adjacent paddocks, you might like to write to the Minister or the local member.

The most obvious weeds of concern are:

- Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*);
- Chinese celtis (*Celtis sinensis*);
- Broad-leaf pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*);
- Leucaena (*Leucaena leucocephala*);
- Coral tree (*Erythrina variegata*)

Contact the Minister, Mick de Brenni.

Ministerial Office:

Phone: 3719 7270

Email: epw@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Electoral Office:

Phone: 3414 2110

Email: Springwood@parliament.qld.gov.au

Address: Shops 4-6 Springwood Rd Business Centre, 71-73 Springwood Rd, Springwood.

Oxley Creek Common is in Mark Bailey's electorate of Miller.

Contact Mark Bailey.

Ministerial Office:

Phone: 3719 7300

Email:

transportandmainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Electoral Office:

Phone: 34142120

Email: Miller@parliament.qld.gov.au

Address: 3/116 Beaudesert Rd, Moorooka.

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: _____

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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: | \$... | | |