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## CONSERVATION NEWS: 491, June 2008

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~Next Meeting: Thursday 19 June at 7 pm~

Parish Centre (hall), Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, Edmund Street, Caloundra

### Branch Update

From Jill Chamberlain

1. Many thanks to everyone who helped at the various display stalls last month. Your assistance was greatly appreciated. The Maleny Wood Expo, especially, generated a good deal of interest in both the Branch and Faunawatch. The weather was perfect, and I think the fact that the Expo wasn't held last year encouraged more people to visit this year, as there was certainly a very good crowd over the two days.
2. Head Office has provided us with two "banners" with the new logo to put on the top of our display boards, and they are certainly very colourful and eye-catching.
3. Head Office has also recently appointed a community conservation officer, Fiona Maxwell, with the aim of raising environmental awareness, and supporting community-based conservation in local communities. Her role will focus on helping the network of branches to increase participation by members and the community in local and regional campaigns. She has already sent out a survey form basically asking for branches' input on areas where they would like some help.
4. The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has started its rotational meetings, (between the former Caloundra, Maroochy and Tewantin Council Chambers) and I attended an Ordinary Committee Meeting at the Maroochy Shire Chambers. The meeting had a very relaxed and informal atmosphere, although a good deal of business was attended to. The public entrance to the chambers is through a narrow passageway, certainly less imposing than the entrance to the Caloundra chambers.
5. President Arnim attended the Golden Beach State School 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations on May

10<sup>th</sup> and saw the new signage for the Kathleen McArthur Wallum Habitat. The school certainly provides its students with a great example of living with the environment.

6. We have been notified that our application for funding for the Q150 project has been received, so all we can do now is wait and hope.

7. Interesting, and rather distressing information is coming out of the fauna survey being undertaken at Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve. It appears that many species seen in the Reserve some years ago have now disappeared. More work is being done, and the results have yet to be collated and confirmed. A case of loving the park to death? On a less serious note, one new BBQ shelter is finished, and looks great, with the actual gas BBQs soon to be installed. A real step up from the old wood burning ones.

### Faunawatch

From Keith Hickman

#### OUTINGS

#### **MAROOCHY BUSHLAND BOTANIC GARDENS 8 am**

Wednesday 11 June

Wednesday 9 July

An opportunity for anyone to come along and find out more about Faunawatch while enjoying the pleasant surroundings and company. BYO morning tea.

#### **FOURTH MONDAY OUTINGS**

23 June, 8 am–**Witta Conservation Land, Witta**

This is the 18-acre reserve owned and managed by The Wildlife Land Fund Limited (WLFL), which was founded by WPSQ. The steeply sloping block, much covered in rainforest, supports endangered regional ecosystems and is a key link in a wildlife corridor and

home to the Richmond Birdwing butterfly and two endangered frogs species.

We attempted a visit here last year but heavy rain during the week before made the track a little dangerous, so an alternative was found. Let's have another go this year. The main track is steep but there is a level alternative route around the hill.

Meet opposite the now closed Witta Store at the junction of Gumland Drive and the Maleny-Kenilworth Road. UBD Page 73 ref P9, prior to driving the extra 2 km to the site.

BYO morning tea and chair.

**Provisional future Monday outing dates:  
28 July-Floydia Bushland Conservation Reserve,  
West Woombye**

Watch for details in future newsletters.

**Report of Outing to Sheepstation Creek**

It was disappointing that *no* Caboolture WPSQ or Faunawatch members turned up for this outing. Many thanks to those few others who did make the effort to support this activity.

It was an excellent morning birding with good sightings of fuscous honeyeaters and white-bellied cuckoo-shrikes plus many others, and a good selection of butterflies. Overall 51 species of birds and 15 butterflies were identified during the visit, including a half asleep tawny frogmouth (well one eye was shut!) on guard near the entrance.

**GRANTS**

June is a very busy month for grant activity. Two of our three grants need to be completed and acquitted, which is a heavy workload as many reports need to be produced and financial records checked and double-checked. It also means that we are moving into our less-funded part of the year. We still have our Maroochy Shire Council grant, even though Maroochy Shire no longer exists, but this, of course, restricts activity to the Maroochy region. We are also waiting to hear what effect the council amalgamations will have on grant programs on the Sunshine Coast.

**WPSQ Head Office**

Initial discussions have taken place with representatives of Head Office about promoting Faunawatch throughout WPSQ and Queensland. Interest is promising and discussions will continue. There would obviously be the need for much planning, more financial and personnel resources to be sought and many changes/updates to the Faunawatch database. It could be a very interesting future for this project which

has already proved its value through its 10-year life span on the Sunshine Coast.

**Response!**

**Jumping the gun re the applicability of Caloundra City's Local Growth Management Strategy, and an intention to move into designated greenfield areas were targets in Jill's letter of objection to a proposal at Sippy Downs:**

**Re: File No MCU07/0112 & REC07/0076**

Proposal: Development Application for Preliminary Approval overriding Planning Scheme and Reconfiguration of a Lot (2 Lots into 286 Lots)

Applicant: Clarendon Residential Group Pty Ltd

On Land at: Bruce Highway & 6406 Bruce Highway, Sippy Downs, Qld, 4556, (Lot 3 RP 165747 & Lot 4 RP 208592)

'We have concerns over this application, notwithstanding that it is apparently intended as a continuation of a Master Planned Community.

The proponents refer to the application as representing a natural extension and 'infill development form given the adopted Caloundra LGMS'. We understand that, while the Caloundra LGMS may have been adopted by the former Caloundra City Council, it has yet to be ratified by the Local Government Minister, may be subject to review, and is therefore not current legislation.

In any case the LGMS suggests that the subject land should only be considered for urban development around a timeframe of 2012, with a number of preconditions set for development, such as assessment against planning scheme amendments, open space requirements and infrastructure provision.

The proponents seek to establish a Supplementary Table of Development Assessment so as to establish revised levels of assessment for development over the subject land.

The intention is to assess future development against this Supplementary Table of Development assessment. We contend that this should not be permitted and that the proposal should be assessed against the provisions of the current development assessment process.

In regard to 'infill development' we maintain that this is not infill but greenfield development. The land was formerly undeveloped caneland, and should therefore be assessed as a greenfield site.

We also disagree with the statement that the release of this land for residential development will relieve housing affordability issues on the Sunshine Coast. The cost of developing this land will be passed on to prospective buyers by way of the final allotment prices. The proponents state, as an example, that land within the existing Bellflower Estate currently averages between \$165,000 and \$170,000 per block, and is the cheapest land east of the Bruce Highway. Prices for allotments in this proposed subdivision will inevitably be at a higher level, due to the increasing costs of land development.

We understand that two tributaries of Sippy Creek, a northern arm and a southern arm, traverse the site in an east-west direction, and are subject to regulation under the Waterway Code of Maroochy Plan 2000, and that the water quality, vegetation and water flows associated with this creek are regulated under the *Water Act* 2000 and the *Fisheries Act* 1995.

We note that these areas have been designated as open space/parkland/ rehabilitation areas on the Plan of Development, presumably to comply with those regulations, and to serve as mitigation measures against likely flood problems, and maintain east-west ecological corridors along the vegetated channels.

However, the whole area is subject to flooding due to its low-lying nature and the fact that this former caneland forms part of the floodplain of the Mooloolah River. This floodplain, in times of heavy/continuous rainfall, mitigated the effects of flooding of the River, by allowing it to spread and dissipate over the land.

Flood modelling by consultants, Cardno (QLd) Pty. Ltd., apparently demonstrates that proposed Stages 6,7, and 8 are entirely above the 100-year ARI flood level *once filled*. (The italics are the writer's).

They maintain that minor changes of additional fill to raise the level of proposed Lots 40, 41 and 55 above the 100-year ARI flood level are justified on economic and technical grounds.

We maintain that these measures are not justified on social or environmental grounds. Raising the level of the land by adding fill and drainage culverts is likely to intensify problems with downstream and back-up flooding of the river, which could affect the subdivision, and cause environmental harm.

The consultants do not appear to have factored in the probable effects of climate change and increased rainfall events to their modelling.

They acknowledge that upgrading, apparently proposed for the existing Department of Main Roads culverts under the

Bruce Highway, will result in increased flood flows past the development.

We understand that the major culverts draining to the northern channel of Sippy Creek have already been upgraded and increased in total width from 11mm to 45mm, with the culverts draining to the southern channel increasing from 9mm to 55mm, a massive increase in capacity.

They suggest that a minimum of 16,500m<sup>3</sup> of material should therefore be excavated from the western end of Sippy Creek to compensate for this increase in flow, so that flood levels adjacent to all stages of the development will not be adversely affected by the upgrading of the culverts.

We contend that this excavation could lead to erosion of the channel banks, scouring of the channel itself, and siltation downstream, compounding flood problems.

We ask that Council consider the concerns raised in this submission, the likely ramifications of possible flooding on future residents, and refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

Jill Chamberlain  
Hon Secretary

(Note: This application has yet to go before Council, yet yesterday afternoon, April 23, the writer saw that the proposed development land had been recently slashed and there appeared to be a team of surveyors working there).

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## From the Meeting

- Jill reported that the Management Committee responded to a Head Office survey regarding branch strengths and weaknesses, designed to identify ways the newly appointed Community Conservation Officer, Fiona Maxwell, can assist branches. The Committee saw strengths in our longevity, Faunawatch and advocacy, and a weakness in our ageing membership.
- The success or otherwise of the Q150 grant application will be known by 6 June. The next meeting at Jill's, in anticipation of a good result and to table initial work on converting newspaper articles, etc, to computer-based documents, will be Monday 30 June at 1 pm.
- It was reported that Andrew McNamara, Queensland's Minister for Climate Change, Sustainability and Innovation, announced that the government will stop issuing permits to shoot flying foxes from 1 September, on grounds that it is inhumane.
- Phil Day approved the sympathetic mixed planting along Tooway Creek in Andrea Ahern Park, in contrast to an indifferent attitude within the golf course.
- Applications for Telstra Environment Awards are now available and Jill has applied for a form.
- **Did you notice?** The editor apologies to Phil Day and members for a significantly incorrect date in the *From the Meeting* review of Phil's talk in April. The correct date (*not 1875*) and text is:  
'In **1785** James Hutton put forward his *Theory of the Earth*, a mind-shifting realisation that earth features can invariably be interpreted as the result of long continued natural processes such as those that operate today. (In other words the earth is as it is through evolution by natural causes, not through capricious miracles or magic.)'

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## Marinewatch

with Alan Durbidge

Local fishermen are working with Ocean Watch Australia, the Friends of Splitter's Creek Group, the Burnett Shire Council and a local Greencorp group to clean up rubbish illegally dumped on the banks of Splitter's Creek near Bundaberg. The project aims to work with the local fishing industry to identify, protect and rehabilitate important fish habitats, and so secure a sustainable seafood industry.

Members of the community have been using the area as a rubbish dump, and Greencorp's inventory identified the waste as dozens of tyres and wheels, corrugated iron sheeting, TVs, parts of fridges, air conditioners, car chassis, bottles, wire, crab pots and a large amount of plastic agricultural pipe and plastic sheeting. The Council is providing a truck and will correctly dispose of the rubbish at its waste facility.

**Courtesy of the *Queensland Fisherman***

## Diary Dates

**Wednesday 11 June, 8 am.** Faunawatch outing to Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Tanawha. Everyone welcome to come along to this always interesting walk in pleasant surroundings. Please BYO morning tea.

**Thursday 19 June, 7 pm.** Monthly meeting at the Parish Centre, Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, Edmund Street, Caloundra.

**Saturday 28 June, from 11 am.** Display stall at 'Celebrating Tooway', Eleanor Shipley Park, Moffat Beach. Helpers needed.

**See Faunawatch above for outing dates**

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### MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER!

Here's the details for payment again in case you've mislaid last month's newsletter:

To pay:

- Phone 07 3221 0194 and provide your details over the phone (also to check when your subscription is due)
- Mail to WPSQ, 1/95 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
- Go to the Head Office Secure Online Payment area at <http://wildlife.org.au/member.html>

While we ask that you now pay your subscription directly to Head Office, the amounts have not changed:

- \$30.00 WPSQ Single Membership
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- \$20.00 WPSQ Concession Membership
- \$12.50 WPSQ Junior Membership

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