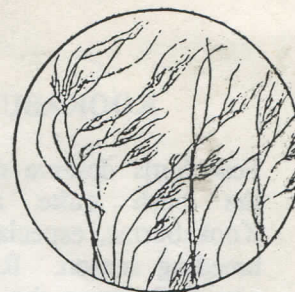


BUSH NEWS

from the Natural Areas of Kedron Brook & Environs



Winter 1989

GreenBrook Association

AN INTRODUCTION

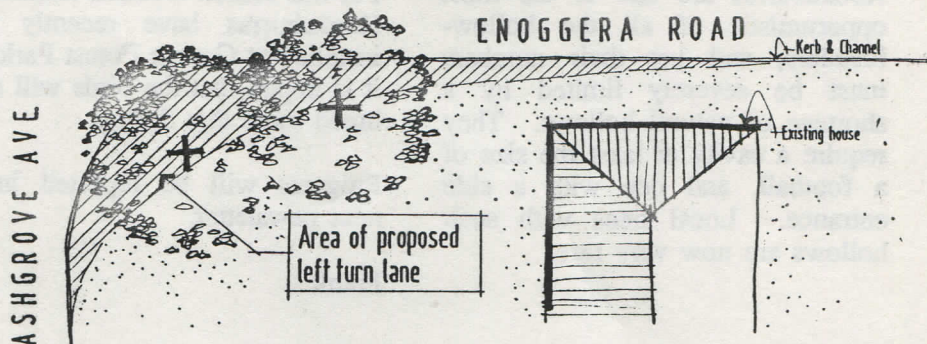
Two hundred years ago, Kedron Brook was described as having "an average breadth of from 15 to 20 feet, and a depth of 1 to 2 fathoms; its banks are formed of a reedy marsh extending some distance". There remain sufficient remnant plants to indicate that riverine rainforest also lined some of its length, and that paperbarks fringed billabongs along its tributaries.

None of this has survived, of course, but older residents testify that the surrounding suburbs are now greener than at any other time in living memory.

This is heartening, but perhaps also deceiving. A forest is more than a collection of trees. If we also want the animals that once lived here to come again, then we need to look closely at the types of trees that form our new urban forest; to address the problems of pollution in the creek and the lack of breeding sites for wildlife; and to form wildlife corridors between our remaining natural areas, and from there out into the suburbs.

This is all possible, and it is the purpose of this Newsletter to explore possibilities, to solicit and share information, and ultimately to improve the quality of life for us all.

Editor



PLATYPUS RETURNS

The launch of this newsletter is probably the appropriate time to announce the return of Platypus to Kedron Brook. For obvious reasons its location will be kept secret, but it is below Brookside Shopping Centre.

It seems incredible that Platypus could survive in what must be fairly polluted waters, and indeed the animals may be only casual visitors. Nevertheless there have been two sightings by different people over the past 18 months, one of them indisputable.



And a Koala

Somerset Hills State School recently found itself hosting a Koala. Most likely a stray from the bush to the NW of Raven Street Reserve, it remained in the gums along Webster Road for over a week before disappearing.

FIGS THREATENED

With the release of the Main Roads Dept plans for road widening at the corner of Enoggera Rd and Ashgrove Ave, it looks as though more large Fig trees will face the chainsaw. This follows the loss of Figs and other trees last year for the widening of the bridge over Enoggera Ck.

In this project MRD propose an extra turn-left lane into Ashgrove Ave (see sketch), which would mean that the Figs on the SW corner would have to go.

Already exasperated residents have signposted the corner with "Save Our Trees". If enough messages of this nature reach the Main Roads bureaucrats they may listen.

If you think that it is time that something has to be done, then write to the Minister for Main Roads, Mr W. Gunn, c/-Parliament House, George St, Brisbane, 4000.

Peter

KOOKABURRAS

Few birds deserve the solitude of the bush quite as much as Kookaburras, especially during the breeding season. Rising before 4 a.m. in Summer, the combined calls of 3, 4 or even 5 birds can be deafening for minutes on end.



Kookaburras are one of the most opportunistic of all the hollow-breeders, and yet their numbers must be severely limited by a shortage of natural hollows. They require a cavity at least the size of a football, and one with a side entrance. Local trees with such hollows are now very rare.

For this reason artificial hollows for Kookaburras have recently been installed at Grange Forest Park, and it is hoped that the birds will again breed there this Spring.

Progress will be reported in the next newsletter.

Frank

For a great many years Grange Forest Park was a neglected area subject to regular fires and weed growth. Over the last few years this has been reversed with a voluntary community effort on tree planting and bush regeneration. The park is now starting to show signs of this care and attention.

The next working bees will be held on -

- . 6 August
- . 3 September
- . 8 October

Start time is 8.30am (until about noon). Meet at the Blandford St entrance to the park.

Drop in and see what happens.

APPROPRIATE PLANTS

Natural areas within the near-northern suburbs of Brisbane are now very scarce. All are threatened with invasions of weeds, most of which are introduced plants which lack natural controls. Nearly all of these weeds have escaped from gardens.

This segment of the newsletter will be a regular feature, in which one or two garden escapes are discussed, with suitable alternatives proposed by Bruce Perrott of Perrotts Nursery.

Camphor Laurel

Hardly a garden plant, Camphor Laurel was once popular as a street tree. While it's aggressive root system soon caused it to fall from favour, there remain some magnificent avenues from that era (eg Laurel Ave at Chelmer).

It is included because Camphor Laurel is the outstanding example of a garden escape. In the Northern Rivers area of NSW it now forms a continuous canopy over hundreds of hectares of land. Within Brisbane it is now out of control beside the Centenary Hwy at Fig Tree Pocket, and on Enoggera Ck at the Gap.

While not yet established along Kedron Brook, it's potential to suddenly explode in numbers is always there.

Harpullia pendula (Tulipwood)



Harpullia pendula is a local rainforest tree which is ideal for small gardens and as a street tree under power lines. While naturally a tall tree in its native habitat, it adopts a small, rounded shape when planted in the open. Each year it produces a large crop of red fruit containing glossy black seeds.

A fine specimen of this tree occurs on the footpath in Evelyn St, Grange, outside the Grange Library. This particular tree was planted in 1947.