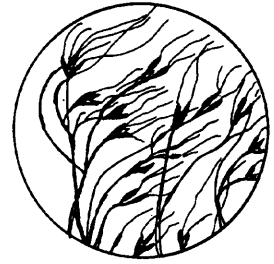




BUSH NEWS

from the Natural Areas of Kedron Brook & Environs



No 21, Winter 1994

GreenBrook Association

EDITORIAL

At a public meeting in early May, 13 members of the community were elected to the Brisbane City Council's Grange Forest Park/Sparkes Hill Management Committee.

One of the major roles of this committee will be to ensure that these natural areas are managed in a coherent and thoughtful manner. With the advent of this new era, it may be opportune to list the sort of incidents that the committee will have to target.

Like the time a sewerage main in the middle of Grange Forest Park needed repair. A KATO excavator cut a roadway in through bushland from Blandford St, after which the foreman was most surprised to learn that an all-weather access track already existed from the other end of the park.

Or the time that a gang turned up, complete with caravan, and cut down all of the she-oaks which had been planted to control erosion on a sharp bend in Kedron Brook. The plan was to build a horse trail from Toombul to Lake Manchester near Ipswich. No-one had yet thought about how the horses were to get to, or from, the Grange.

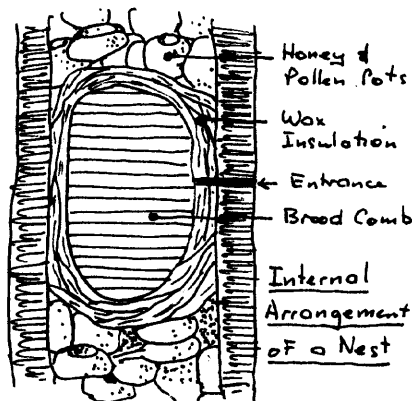
Or the last time that Kedron Brook was dredged, when 2000 cubic metres of gravel was taken 1km upstream, and dumped back on the banks of Kedron Brook.

The list goes on. In each case the community was forced to take a reactive role, and considerable damage was caused before things returned to normal.

Hopefully this new initiative will harness local knowledge to produce the sort of long range plans that these areas deserve. We wish the new committee well in their endeavours.

Frank Box

NATIVE STINGLESS BEES



A nest of native stingless bees was recently reported in bushland along the Brook. These are valuable pollinators with none of the hazards associated with honeybees.

While there are over 2000 species of native bee, only 15 of these are social bees that store provisions in nests. Of the two species found in SE Qld, *Trigona carbonaria* is the most common.

Native stingless bees look more like flies than bees - small and almost black. They live in tree

hollows, and are widespread in eucalypt forests.

Their nest behaviour exhibits some striking differences to the honeybee. The brood comb, where the young develop, resembles the honeycomb found in honeybee hives. Each cell contains one egg, plus honey and pollen for sustenance.

The eggs hatch into larvae, which, unlike honeybees, grow, spin cocoons, and develop right through to bees in the sealed cell, all without any assistance from worker bees.

The rest of the nest consists of large 'pots' of honey and pollen. The honey of this species is thin and somewhat acid, although the honey of some other native stingless bees is excellent.

The colony expands by starting a daughter colony close by - often only about 10 metres away. The workers find a suitable hollow, and set about waterproofing and stocking it with food.

Only when the nest is ready does a queen move across from the old nest to the new. There is constant communication between the nests for months afterwards.

This, also, is completely different to honeybees, where 'swarming' results in a total and immediate cutting-off from the old nest.

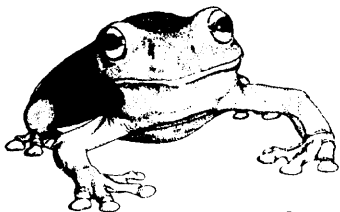
(Information supplied by Tim Heard)

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FROGS

Over the past four years I have been reintroducing frogs to the Stafford Heights area, in particular Large Green Tree Frogs and Graceful Tree Frogs.



Green Tree Frog

These frogs used to be very common in Brisbane, but have lately been vanishing everywhere at an alarming rate.

Frog tadpoles will survive quite well on algae that grows in the pond, but they love boiled lettuce.

The size of the pond is not really important, but it should be in dappled shade. Mosquito wrigglers can be controlled with White Cloud Fish, available from some aquarium shops.

The Large Green Tree Frogs are now everywhere, and breed every year. The Graceful's are rarely seen, although we hear them in heavy rain, and they have laid eggs as well. The only problems that I have found are from drifting pesticide sprays, and from the chlorine in town water.

I have found raising tadpoles to be a delightful learning experience, and simple for young and old. If you would like the chorus of frogs in your garden, please contact me for some tadpoles.

Anna Arvoll (350 4031)

THE LITTLE-KNOWN SANDY CREEK

Until recently when a press article mentioned that the Wardell St overpass was being built over Sandy Ck, few people would have known that this creek had a name.

Sandy Creek rises behind the Army premises at Enoggera, and joins Kedron Brook in Grinstead Park.

It was originally a series of waterholes, and popular with children for swimming and fishing.

Like all urban watercourses, it now carries much more water than previously, and I can recall quite severe flooding to premises behind Pickering St and South Pine Rd.

Much of the creek has now been lined with concrete, and this problem appears to have disappeared.

Greg Early

HELP SAVE THE BUSH

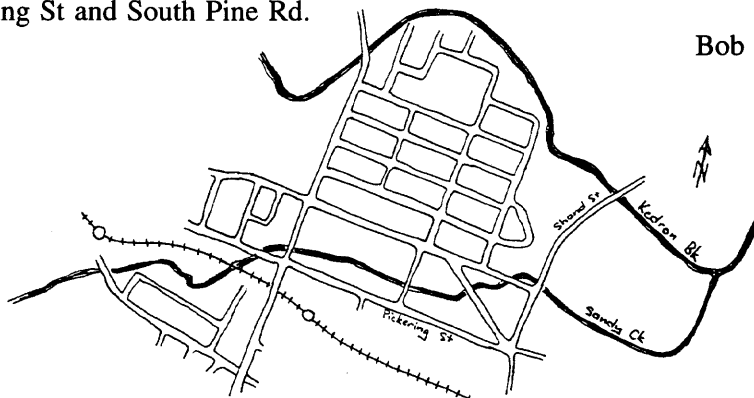
The wet summer that we have just had has really taken its toll - weeds everywhere, and several working bees washed out.

In fact, the weeds are so prolific that it will be next spring before we can start any new work.

If you can help us, meet at the Blandford St entrance to Grange Forest Park, at 8.30 am, on -

10 July/7 August/11 September

Bob Devine

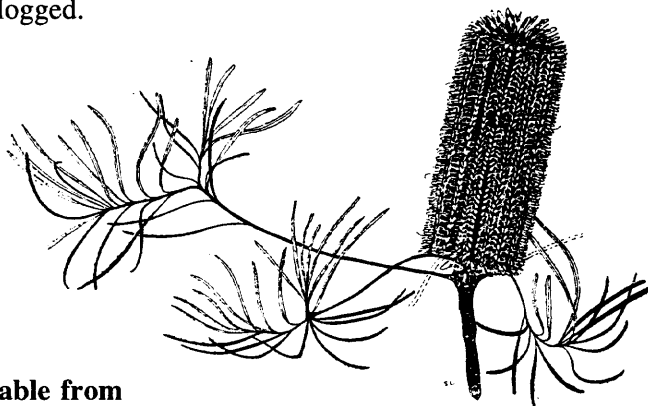


PLANT OF THE MONTH

Banksia collina - "Golden Candlesticks"

This is a beautiful shrub that is flowering now on the Chermside Hills, where it has always lived.

It can grow to 3 metres if left unchecked, and is a superb nectar shrub for birds. It is tolerant of most soils except those that are waterlogged.



Available from
Perrotts Nursery, Elkhorn St, Enoggera