

# BUSH NEWS

from the Natural Areas of Kedron Brook and Environs

No 5, Winter 1990

GreenBrook Association

## MADIERA VINE - THE ULTIMATE WEED ?

It seems that South America, the source of Prickly Pear and Cane Toads, is about to give us another headache - this time in the form of a vine.

Madiera Vine has fleshy, bright green leaves, and the ability to cover the tallest tree like a huge curtain. The tree dies since it can no longer photosynthesise.

It grows incredibly quickly, but its most dangerous characteristic is its means of propagation.

Madiera Vine forms pairs of tubers, like small potatoes, along its stems. There could be over 10 000 of these on a large plant. These tubers strike wherever they fall, and typically form a carpet of young plants underneath.



Undoubtedly Madiera Vine has been around for quite a few years, and yet it now seems to be exploding all over S.E. Qld.

My belief is that there was no Madiera Vine in Grange Forest Park just 2 years ago. Now the western end is so badly infested that it will take years of spraying to eradicate.

This vine undoubtedly has the potential to cause enormous devastation, not only within Brisbane but to our National Parks and State Forests as well.

## BIRDS, BIRDS, BIRDS

A recent study published by Griffith University has found that bushlands have no influence on bird populations in surrounding suburbs!

Their study was based on Toohey Forest, and involved systematic counts of birds inside the forest, in suburbs right beside the forest, and also in suburbs 2-3 km away.

They found no difference between numbers and types of birds between the near and far suburban sites.

However the study concluded that the types of birds found just inside the forest are quite different to those found just outside.

Forest species which rarely visited the suburbs included the Grey Fantail, the Rufous Whistler and the Striated Pardalote.

Other forest species, such as the Wrens and the Peaceful Dove, were not recorded at all in the suburbs.

The common Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike, Silvereye and Crow were some of the few birds which were equally prevalent in the bush and the suburbs.



## CAN YOU HELP US ?

The next working bees will be held on -

- . 8 July
- . 5 August
- . 9 September

Meet at 8.30 am at the Blandford St entrance to Grange Forest Park.

Bob Devine

The results of this study come as something of a shock, as we had previously assumed that forest birds would "spill out" into surrounding suburbs.

The question of why this is so has not yet been answered, nor has the question of how big bushland "islands" need to be to support viable populations of different species of birds.

What this study does do is to guarantee that the next time you visit your local bush, you will be sure to see birds quite different to those at home.

## CALL FOR INFORMATION

Frogs seem to have almost disappeared from the suburbs along Kedron Brook, and yet I know of 2 recent sightings of the Green Tree Frog at Stafford.

Are there any places where frogs remain common ? And has anyone tried to reintroduce them ?

I would love some information for a future article.

Frank Box

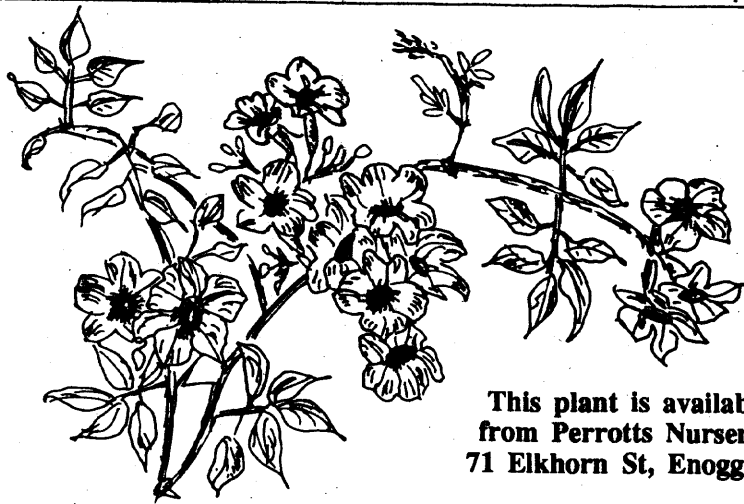
## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### *Pandorea jasminoides*

Although in its natural habitat it can reach to the tops of trees, this vine is not really very vigorous.

It has the rich, dark green leaves so common among rainforest plants, and bears clusters of quite large pink flowers with crimson throats.

Grown on a trellis in a sunny position, it makes a magnificent plant, but it will also scramble over the ground to form a sparse ground cover.



This plant is available from Perrotts Nursery, 71 Elkhorn St, Enoggera

## WATTLES

Wattles are the most widespread of all Australian plants, and Winter is the time of year to see them in bloom. If you would like to see some local wattles I suggest a short walk into Grange Forest Park.

Four wattles that are typical of the district are *Acacia aulacocarpa*, *A. falcata*, *A. fimbriata* and *A. leiocalyx*.



Enter the park at the Blandford St entrance. About 150m down the track on the right is a thicket of *A. aulacocarpa*. This wattle grows as a large, bushy shrub or small tree. It has long rods of yellow flowers and large sickle-shaped leaves.

On the other side of the track is a clump of *A. falcata*. This is a spindly shrub, typically with only a single stem, that has long, sickle-shaped leaves and small pale-lemon flowers.

Continue down the track for another 20m and the track is flanked with *A. fimbriata* - the Brisbane Wattle. This is a beautiful plant with fine, dark-green foliage. When it is in bloom the flowers cover the shrub, often arching the branches under the weight.

About halfway to Mornington St the track crosses the clay flats - a broad

expanse of sparse grasses that was once a quarry.

This is the stronghold of *A. leiocalyx*. This wattle has large leaves, rod-shaped flowers, and most characteristic of all - reddish tips to its stems.

All of these wattles are commonly found throughout the district, particularly where there has been some disturbance.

Colleen Crosthwaite

## SCRUB TURKEYS NO 2

*Scrub Turkeys were once common throughout Brisbane. This article, the second of two, discusses their current distribution along Kedron Brook.*

As the name implies, the Scrub Turkey is essentially a rainforest bird. As one of the mound builders, it needs plenty of leaf litter to form the mounds which it uses to incubate its eggs.

The bulk of the catchment of Kedron Brook was originally open Eucalypt forest, with a minimum of leaf litter, and hence it is likely that

the Scrub Turkey population was never very large.

The Brisbane Wildlife Survey of 1981 reported sightings in the Oxford Park/Everton Hills area, and also at Mitchelton north of the Enoggera Army Camp.

There was a single sighting in 1988 in the area between Brookside and the Everton Park Shopping Centre, and at about the same time a number of sightings in Grange Forest Park.

Undoubtedly the most intriguing discovery is of a turkey mound on the creek behind Allkind Glass and Joinery, in Rode Rd opposite Prince Charles Hospital.

This mound produced young during the last summer, indicating that there is at least one pair of birds in the area!

The explanation for these widely separated sightings lies in their lifestyle. Scrub Turkeys are territorial birds, and the young are driven off as soon as they emerge from the mound. The male's goal is to carve out a new territory, build a mound, and then hope that a female finds him.

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