

BUSH NEWS

from the Natural Areas of Kedron Brook & Environs

No 8, Autumn 1991

GreenBrook Association

EDITORIAL

The Brisbane City Council has selected the Grange Forest Park/Sparkes Hill corridor as the first site on which to implement it's new bushland maintenance policy. They have allocated a considerable amount of money to be spent this financial year, with the promise of more to come next year.

At a meeting called by Council before Christmas, we were told that this selection was in response to the work carried out by the GreenBrook Association during the past 8 years.

We have recently initiated discussions with Council about setting up a mechanism for allowing the community a genuine input into decisions made about the park. This is progressing slowly, with a major stumbling block being the Parks Department's insistence that advance planning for anything of detail is "totally unrealistic". Our approach is that the success of any project lies in the planning that is done up front.

Nevertheless this is a major initiative of Council. Especially satisfying is recognition that the Sparkes Hill and Grange Forest Park remnants should be considered as one, with presumably an intention to strengthen the wildlife link between them.

These areas combined cover over

40 hectares, and with the clearing of bushlands that is still occurring are now significant in the context of the whole city.

Frank Box

THE FROGS RETURN !

The second of a 3 part series. This issue concerns the future for frogs along Kedron Brook.

The previous article contained the results of a survey of frog numbers along the Brook. Reports since then confirm that frogs are returning all over Brisbane in remarkable numbers.



Reasons for Decline

Cane Toads are commonly thought to be responsible for the original decline in frog numbers. However at Dalby, where there have never been Cane Toads, the frogs have disappeared just the same.

Nevertheless Cane Toads must have had a significant impact. Other causes must be kerb and channelling (where have all the puddles gone?), pesticides and the widespread and totally abominable Bug Zapper - insects are the

staple diet of frogs.

The recent drop in Cane Toad numbers may auger well for frogs. However if the cause of the decline is starvation (and no one seems to know), then the future may still be bleak.

Reintroducing Frogs

Several people reported attempts to reintroduce frogs from tadpoles. Results seem to be variable, with perhaps more fascination with the process than long term success. However frogs tend to move around so it may be too early to tell.

Probably the person with most experience in raising tadpoles locally is Pat Comben, and his successes have been startling. He may still have tadpoles to give away (356 0107).

Tadpoles can also be collected locally during spring and summer after heavy rain. Grinstead Park is a good spot. Look out for Cane Toad tadpoles, which are black, have a large round body, and no significant separation between the head and the body.

References

- . "Wildlife of the Brisbane Area", W Davies.
- . "Frog Calls of S.E.Aust" (an audio cassette), Prof G Grigg, Zoology Dept, Uni of Qld.
- . Lex Morley, President, Brisbane Frog Society, ph 353 2001.

GREEN TREE SNAKES

The way a Green Tree Snake moves through trees is one of the wonders of nature. It is a shame that this shy and retiring animal is so seldom seen.

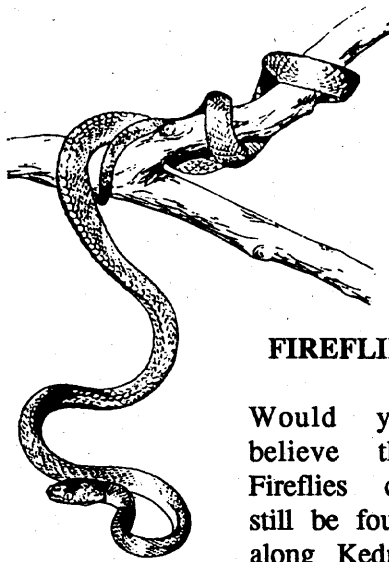
Green Tree Snakes are entirely harmless, and are generally recognised as such. However their skin is frequently very dark, particularly when being shed, and they are often killed through being mistaken for venomous snakes.

They prefer the wetter areas along creeks, and doubtless are still widespread along Kedron Brook at least as far as Webster Rd. They can grow to 2m in length, and feed on mice, small rats and fish. Frogs are a particular favourite.

It would be lovely if the current resurgence of frogs was to bring back more of these marvellous animals.

Colleen Crosthwaite

[The National Parks and Wildlife Service will relocate unwanted snakes and other reptiles. They may be contacted on 202 0200.]



FIREFLIES

Would you believe that Fireflies can still be found along Kedron Brook, even as far down as the Grange.

Brisbane has only one species of Firefly, which is actually a small beetle. Both male and female emit flashes of light, although only the males fly. As with many insects the adult stage is not long-lived, and is said not to feed at all. The larvae feed in the ground on small snails. Fireflies typically live along creeks and rivers, and the most recent sighting was about 3m immediately above the Kedron Brook.

Apparently the best time to see them is 15-30 min immediately after dusk. Best of luck.

Doxiadis

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SCRUB TURKEYS - A SOLUTION !

You may recall the dilemma of the Dorrington family who had the good fortune to share their neighbourhood with Scrub Turkeys, but the bad luck to host a Turkey heap in their front yard.

From Bardon comes the story that if one disperses the mound, and places a mirror against a tree in the vicinity of where the mound was, the male will move. Apparently he sees his reflection as an intruder, but since he cannot deal with it in the normal Turkey way, he becomes discouraged and moves on after a couple of days.

Marilyn Box

CAN YOU HELP US ?

Land on the Stafford side of Kedron Brook was first sold around 1860, and was subsequently used for farming, resting paddocks, small abattoirs and tanneries. Little information is available on the original vegetation of the area, and our plantings are guided by what remains in a few small remnants.

Our next working bees are on -

- . 14 April
- . 19 May
- . 7 July

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

Bob Devine

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Pilidiostigma rhytispermum (or *Eugenia zehrii*)

This is a plant for in-filling that hole in the garden where nothing much will grow. It is especially useful in that, while it will grow to 2-3 metres, it does not spread. Mine would be less than 1 metre across.

It carries small glossy leaves, and develops a small black fruit which the Figbird finds attractive. It will also grow in the sun, most likely with a bushier habit.



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