

BUSH NEWS

from the Natural Areas of Kedron Brook & Environs

No 9, Autumn 1991

GreenBrook Association

EDITORIAL

A recent television campaign had the theme that "individuals can make a difference" in the campaign to protect the environment.

GreenBrook Association's work in Grange Forest Park is a local example of this.

It is only ten years since a handful of locals commenced planting trees and 'cleaning up the bush' at the Grange. In this time substantial progress has been made.

To date five thousand trees have been planted and thousands of manhours have been spent removing weeds and rubbish.

Although the impact of this work has made a noticeable difference to the park we have barely scratched the surface in addressing the major problems of weed infestation and pollution in the creek.

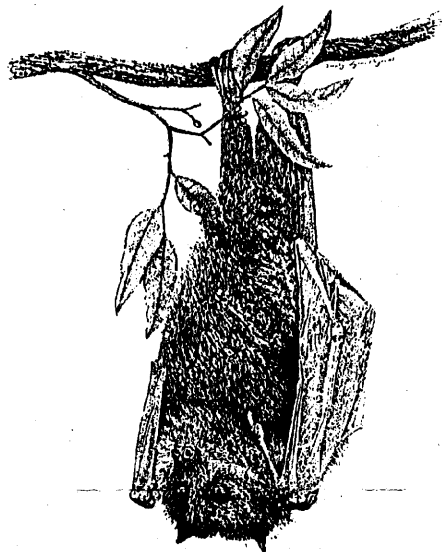
How long does it take to reverse years of neglect and abuse? Certainly a long time when it applies to urban bushland. All work is performed manually by a few volunteers on about eight occasions a year. More help is needed if we are to achieve our aim of preserving and improving the remaining natural areas along Kedron Brook.

Colleen

FLYING FOXES MOVE IN

Without doubt, the arrival of the flying foxes at Sparkes Hill is the most outstanding return of wildlife to the district.

This article is the first of a 3 part series on flying foxes. The next two issues will refer to the organisation of flying fox society and their migration patterns.



A large local camp of around 40,000 flying foxes has moved in on the edge of Kedron Brook. The "little red" flying fox and 'black' flying foxes are roosting at the site.

Indooroopilly Island in the Brisbane River has been the main local colony for many years. Just before Easter flying foxes

unexpectedly deserted their camp there. Spring 1990 had been hard for flying foxes and thousands died from starvation. A few have now returned to Indooroopilly, but remaining local populations seem to be concentrated at the Kedron Brook colony and at a colony at Norman Park. Local numbers will drop dramatically with winter migrations. Although a small proportion of the population will winter over.

Flying fox conservation is tied to their survival, not as individuals, but as large social groups, in which behaviour can be learnt and group knowledge passed on. It also depends on their ability to migrate over vast distances with native food sources available.

For further information, or for assistance with injured or orphaned flying foxes:

Janey O'Shea 352 5634

FLYING FOX OR BAT- ARE THEY THE SAME?

The common use of both terms often has people wondering if they are the same animal.

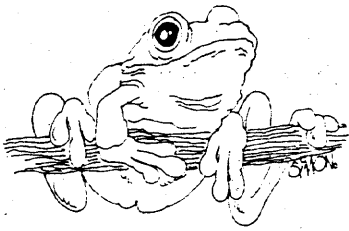
Bats are roughly divided into two main groups, the insect-eating bats and the fruit-eating bats.

The fruit-eating bats are also called flying foxes.

FROGS -THE FUTURE

Throughout the world, some 3000 species of frogs, toads and salamanders have been identified so far. Of these more than half are in danger of extinction.

The decline in frog numbers has snow-balled in recent years. Suddenly, the world's frogs are dying out. Something is happening to them - but no-one is quite sure what it is.



Scientists are debating the cause for these declining numbers. One aspect that is troubling them is that frogs are disappearing from pristine wilderness areas as well as populated areas. Airborne toxins are thought to be a possible explanation for this phenomenon but as yet the hard evidence to prove this is lacking.

Frogs are extremely sensitive to environmental contamination. During their life-cycle they are more vulnerable than most other animals to pollutants. Their skin is moist and permeable and absorbs any surrounding pollution from both the air and water. Paradoxically, they are also tough survivors and have outlasted countless other species.

In days gone by, frogs were used to predict the weather. Is their disappearance an indication of major changes to the condition of the world's water and air?

Colleen

HISTORY OF SPARKES HILL

Sparkes Hill is the hill between Shand St and the Everton Park High School. It now contains the largest isolated remnant of bushland on Kedron Brook.

The southern side of Sparkes Hill has never been cleared, except for the taking of Hoop Pine, Bunya Pine and Red Cedar in the earliest days of settlement. This type of vegetation grew right down to the creek throughout the Grange area.

Chasing wild cattle along rough tracks through the scrub was apparently a favourite pastime for youngsters in the 1930's. Only well-rotted eucalypt stumps remained on the east and north slopes when the area was recleared for glider launching.

Immediately to the east of Shand St, Chinese market gardens extended from the creek to Stafford Rd. These show up as covering 1.6 hectares in a 1936 aerial photograph. Apparently they closed soon after.

Information courtesy of Robert Dunlop

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LOCAL HISTORY CORNER

Can you help fill in the gaps in our local history? We would love to hear from anybody who has information about any aspect of life along Kedron Brook from years gone-by.

Information can be forwarded to Mrs June Neumann on 356 6218.

CAN YOU HELP US?

The next working bees will be held on -

7 July

4 August

8 September

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

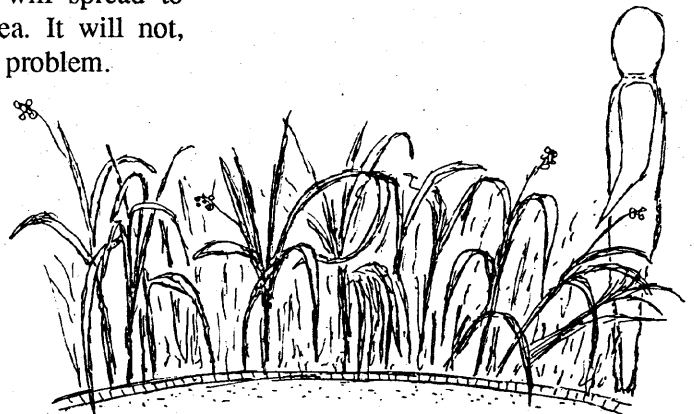
Bob Devine

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Dianella laevis

Imagine replacing a part of your lawn with a low thicket that stays rich green - even in the dry. *Dianella laevis*, which grows to less than a metre, will spread to cover any sized area. It will not, however, become a problem.

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Acknowledgments: frog graphic Simon McLean; flying fox Lynn Pryor