

# Maroochy Wetlands Sanctuary Support Group Inc.

P.O.Box 32 BLI BLI Q.4560

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## Wetland Sanctuary News



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Support Group Inc.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Next Meeting: Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 4pm at the Wetlands**

**Please note this change of date for May meeting.**

June meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2012

### **Bird Observers' Group Outings.**

The next outing will be from 7<sup>th</sup> May until 10<sup>th</sup> May,  
staying at the Lismore Palms Caravan Park Lismore New South Wales.

### **Meeting Agenda May 2012**

Reports.

Outcomes from Advisory Meeting.

Display Trailer.

Constitution Revision

Curtains.

Use of Mangrove Room

Strategic Plan.

Water Mouse

Small Grant Application

Keith Williams Book

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To receive your newsletter / meeting minutes by email please send contact details to [jlh36@westnet.com.au](mailto:jlh36@westnet.com.au)

## From the President

Hi all!

Well it's just one month away from the winter season and all things are moving ahead as planned. The group heading down to Lismore is getting things organized, the Trailer has come over from the Landcare group and is at Ken Perrin's place ready for work to commence on it and the council are progressing the new section of boardwalk.

The first gathering that will need all of us to pitch in and help will be our display at World Environment Day that is normally held in the first weekend of June. Debra Wedmaier and John Tealby are organizing this and we will get more details from them about what we can do to help as they become available.

Last meeting was very successful and all six Council candidates were in attendance. We had a good role up of members and a lot of very stimulating conversation ensued. All candidates gave great assurances about the ongoing importance of the wetlands and members I spoke to said that the meeting was very useful in giving them more information to guide their decisions about who to vote for. Many thanks to the members who brought food for snacks before, during and after the meeting.

**Next meeting is on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May is one not to be missed**, Les Donald will be giving a talk about the rare and endangered Watermouse that can be found in our sanctuary. He is also in the process of inviting some special guests, so be there for an interesting afternoon.

We are still looking for curtains for the office, so if you have some old curtains that might be useful please let me know.

I have got some caps done with our logo on them and they are for sale at cost price of \$20.

Please feel free to ring me at any time if you have some curtains or would like a cap (would make a great pressie for someone!!!) and I hope to see you at the meeting.

Warm regards

Derek Foster

0402352077



maroochy wetlands  
bird observers outings



Current Friday  
Forum.pdf



publicity april  
2012.pdf



Ann Ridd April 2012  
report.pdf



MWSSGI Bird  
Observer outing April :

## ***Mangrove Vine***

*Robyn Howard*

The Mangrove Vine (*Cynanchum carnosum*) is an uncommon plant which grows at the Wetlands Sanctuary, where it finds the necessary habitat at the edges of the mangroves, especially amongst the Swamp Oak (*Casuarina glauca*). It is a small delicate creeping vine, often climbing on reeds or casuarinas. The leaves are up to 12 cm long, generally a slightly palish green, and with a semi-succulent appearance. It mostly produces pale yellowish-green flowers in summer, but can flower at other times if conditions are right. The Swamp Tiger Butterfly is completely dependent on the Mangrove Vine for its breeding cycle.



Mangrove Vine.



Swamp Tiger Butterfly on Mangrove Fern

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## ***Native Spinach***

*Robyn Howard*

One of the Aboriginal food plants which has been adopted into the diet of some “bush tucker” enthusiasts is the Native Spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonoides*), but perhaps it is appreciated more by our native rats. In the Wetlands Sanctuary, it is found beside the boardwalk near the river where it is able to tolerate salt in soils. It is a semi-succulent with light-green leaves, pale yellow insignificant flowers in spring and summer followed by small brilliant red fruit.



Photos: R. Howard.

## Hermit Crabs

Robyn Howard

Why? Why? Why?

Why evolve with an exoskeleton on the front half of the body, but a soft, delicate abdomen? Why evolve to be dependent on a different type of aquatic fauna to provide a protective shell? Why choose to drag around a heavy structure? I'm afraid I have the questions, but not the answers to this riddle of nature.

Hermit crabs are found on rocky shores and headlands, intertidal zones, and mangrove wetlands on the Sunshine Coast. At the Wetlands Sanctuary, I occasionally find Yellow-striped Hermit Crabs (*Clibanarius taeniatus*) or Yellow-footed Hermit Crabs (*Clibanarius virescens*). They usually appear when the mud is soft, especially after floods, and generally where there are fallen twigs or branches. At times, they may be seen clinging on to floating debris. Both species are more commonly found on rocky headlands or in shallow subtidal areas. Both species are relatively common and easily recognized. The Yellow-striped Hermit Crab has longitudinal yellow stripes on dark green legs, claws, and body. The Yellow-footed Hermit Crab is dark green and has yellow on the ends of its walking legs and white spines and fingers on its claws.

The Yellow-striped Hermit Crab eats only the soft material of the detritus whilst other species are opportunistic and omnivorous, having a more varied diet. They can be somewhat social, and it is not unusual to find many animals together feeding on a rich food source. They are, of course, decapods [literally meaning having ten feet]. The ten appendages in this case are actually one pair of chelae [claws], three pairs of legs, and one pair of "grabbers", the rear legs having evolved into small abdominal appendages to hold its acquired shell. The second and third pairs of legs are used for locomotion. The chelae are used for both feeding and locomotion.

Having an exoskeleton on its thorax, head, chelae, and legs, this crustacean must moult to grow. However, its soft vulnerable abdomen must be protected by use of an acquired structure. There must be additional protection or benefit to the crab in dragging around a heavy shell rather than providing the extra body resources to produce an exoskeleton on the abdomen. The mollusc shell it uses is a dead frame, so must be exchanged when outgrown. The hermit crab firstly selects a potential shell, and examines it by turning it over and around. If it seems a satisfactory replacement, only then will the hermit crab leave its old home and test the new shell for fit and comfort. If it proves not to be satisfactory, the hermit crab moves back into its original shell and continues the search. The shell it selects must allow it to withdraw inside when danger threatens, securing the entrance with its hardened claws.