

Maroochy Wetlands Sanctuary Support Group Inc.

P.O.Box 32 BLI BLI Q.4560

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Wetland Sanctuary News



Support Group Inc.

DATES TO REMEMBER

April meeting: 11th April at 7pm at the Mangrove Room.

Note change of time!!!!!!!!!!

Next Bird Observers' Group Outing. 0700am start.
21st April, 7am, Maroochy River Conservation Park, Mudjimba

President: Derek Foster 5448 5025 mob: 0402 3520 77

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Lyn Ireland, 0404371362

To receive your newsletter / meeting minutes by email please send contact details to email:

mwssgi@gmail.com

Email: mwssgi@gmail.com

Website: www.maroochywetlandssupport.com



Maroochy Wetlands facebook.

President's Column

Folks,

Please note that we have changed our monthly meeting times to be a little more convenient for members. The meetings will now be at **7.00pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month**. Next one will be on the 11th of April.

As you can see on the front page of the newsletter there are still vice president and secretary positions vacant – any takers??? (The jobs are not that arduous).

Our planning for the year's activity is closer to being finalized. One of the planning items is the refurbishment of the displays in both the Cane Cutter's Building and the Mangrove Room. We have a new member who has been working on a plan for the Cane Cutter's Building. This plan has been developed in conjunction with the Sunshine Council and Bilai Environmental Education Centre and is looking great. We should be able to progress this soon. This will be vital for this year's interpretation of the wetlands as we will not be able to utilize the boardwalk during winter. I'll keep you posted on the development of this.

Did I mention that it is planned to put a metre wide walkway around the base of the Cane Cutter's Building to alleviate the water incursion problems we have been having? This is also planned to be done soon. Once it is completed we will be able to progress the development of the theatre so we can show videos on Sundays.

We had a very useful advisory meeting in the morning of the 14th of March. We spoke at length about the display development and about signage at the Sanctuary. Peter Nagel is looking into developing a signage system that will allow people clearer directions on how to best use the sanctuary when they arrive.

Please note the birdos' outing coming up on the 21st of April.

OK all for now.

Hope to see on Thursday the 11th.

Derek

Through the Sanctuary

***with
Robyn Howard***

Bladder Cicada

Generally, by March, the majority of cicadas are no longer active, but 2013 has been different. I'm normally aware of 2 or possibly even 3 species at home in March, but this year there have been 6 to 8. Cicadas spend from 1 to 17 years underground in their nymphal phases according to species, but affected by availability and quality of food resources. Four to seven years is common for our local species.

My assumption of the reason for this year's variation in timing is that nymphs which should have been ready to emerge in November, December and January had not found sufficient resources during the extreme dry to develop to maturity. They feed on sap from their preferred plant's roots, and dry conditions would have created poor sap flow. With the improved rainfall in late January, February and into March, tree health and sap flow would have increased dramatically, producing rich feeding for the cicada nymphs, thus allowing late completion of the nymphal cycle and emergence into adulthood.

One of these late species was the Bladder Cicada (*Cystosoma saundersii*). Although they mostly perch and call from a height of 1.0 to 1.7 metres in shrubby plants, they are so well camouflaged, they are difficult to spot. Singing occurs in the short interval between dusk and dark, and this is normally the only time for their short flights. They are not built for speed or agility and probably move just inches from the daytime feeding position to a more prominent perch to chorus. They do not congregate in the huge numbers of some species, and prefer to have no more than 2 or 3 males in a shrub.

The male (see photograph) is an attractive and fascinating insect. It is approximately 40 mm in length, with the abdomen largely hollow providing resonance for its loud call. The female abdomen is smaller, not hollow, and houses mainly its digestive and reproductive organs, with room for egg storage. The male's ribbed sound-producing membrane (tymbal) can be seen just behind where the wings join the body. The call is so loud that the insect relaxes its hearing organs (tympana) as it calls so they become ineffective and it does not deafen itself! The Bottle Cicada is also green and is sometimes mistaken for the Bladder Cicada, but its abdomen is bottle-shaped, whereas the Bladder Cicada has a definitive apex to the abdomen.

Cicadas are "bugs" in the strict sense of the word, and therefore have sucking mouth parts, not chewing mandibles. They syphon liquid from the plant, extract the nutrient, then excrete the watery remainder. Large numbers in trees can give the effect of gentle rainfall!

Although Bladder Cicadas are endemic creatures, most of the known plant species in which they lay eggs are exotics. The female uses the ovipositor at the rear of the abdomen to cut a slit and insert eggs in living plant tissue of Lantana, Camphor Laurel, Mango, Privet, Jacaranda, etc.



Photo: R Howard.

Photography competition 2012

Last year we held a very successful photography competition. The winner of the competition was Heather Tucker and one of the prizes was a photography workshop held by Andrew Goodall. Heather has sent us a report of her experience at Andrew's workshop.

Dear Derek,

I have just completed the Natures Image two day Photography Workshop which I won in the Wetlands Photography competition last year.

I really enjoyed the workshops and thought you might like to know a little about what I did.

Classes are held in Maleny and Andrew Goodall has a nice teaching style which he follows up with practical sessions in the afternoon.

On Saturday morning he led us through sessions on aperture, shutter speed, light meters, depth of field & lenses.

All cameras were then set to manual mode and we learnt how to control these settings manually. Following the lunch break we all head off to Maleny Showground where we put theory into practice.

On Sunday we learnt lots more, including photo composition and how to take the best shots in difficult situations such as dark rainforests and bright subjects against dark backgrounds.

The group then headed to Mary Cairncross Park for lunch and the opportunity to put our new found knowledge to the test. Andrew basically left us to do our own thing for the afternoon, but with him available to help if required.

Andrew asks all his students to keep their camera set on manual for thirty days and take photos every day. He has emailed instructions for eight photographic exercises for us to complete and he will shortly send an invitation to all students to join his Student Flicker Group. We can post photos on this site and may receive comments and positive feedback from other members.

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the workshop and I look forward to another photo competition, maybe next year!

Regards,

Heather Tucker

World Environment Day

9th June 2013, 10am - 4pm

**We have received all of the details for the festival and how
to book a stall.**

Calling for a coordinator for our display at this event

Call Derek

0402352077

**There will be a
Maroochy Wetlands Sanctuary Support
Group Inc.**

*Display at the
Nambour Library*

**Nambour Library 6th to 17th May.
Anyone interested in helping with this
display???**

Call Derek

0402352077

William Pledger

*Reptile Handling and
Possum Relocation.*

Call

0414 075 314