

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

**June meeting: 13th June at 7pm at the
Mangrove Room.**

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

Next Bird Observers' Group Outing.

14th, 15th, 16th June

Mini extended outing to Crows Nest

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

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Maroochy Wetlands facebook.

President's Column

Folks,

This month has seen the development of the Cane Cutters' Building display progressing well again. Cat has completed the first draft of the early settlers storybook and this has been sent to you for your input. We will be having a discussion about this at our next meeting.

Have you checked the latest editions to the website? Why not slip in and have a look after you finish reading the newsletter.

The next birdo outing is the mini extended outing to Crow's Nest starting on Friday the 14th of June. There is still some room at the caravan park and at the motel across the road so, as it looks like it is going to be a fine weekend, if you would like a weekend in the country and enjoy the activities that Judy has organized you can still get accommodation.

The council has started the 'Fig Tree Walk' and it is looking great. It will be a great place to sit and enjoy the rainforest area. It is expected that this will be open within the next couple of weeks. Work on the main boardwalk is expected to start in about a month or so, so there are a few more weeks when you and your friends can access the wetlands. It is looking great and the birds are in abundance.

You might see activity on Sports Road because the council is taking up the old disabled access boardwalk. Because we have disabled access now at the Sanctuary this material is being recycled, in part, to other parts of the Sanctuary and other wetlands locations. You will also see some new signage at the Sanctuary soon. To enable visitors to gain an understanding of the facilities at the Sanctuary new signage will be erected to give guidance on how best to use the Sanctuary when one arrives. This should be in place within the next few weeks also.

Don't forget, if you have the capacity to encourage some new members then it would be great. One way to show support for the wetlands, not only at Bli Bli but also throughout the Sunshine Coast and Queensland is to join our group. That's it, nothing more and by doing this we are then able to show a groundswell of support for the protection of wetlands.

Big thanks this month to Robyn Howard for the display at the Nambour Library. Reports are that the library staff were very impressed by her efforts. Well Done, Robyn!!!

Our next meeting will be on the 13th of June at the Mangrove Room.
Hope to see you there.

Derek

Through the Sanctuary
with
Robyn Howard
Scrambling Clerodendrum (*Clerodendrum inerme*)

Robyn Howard

This shrub has an untidy, straggling growth habit, sometimes scrambling over other plants and reaching as high as six metres. It grows only at, or just above, high tide level, usually situated behind the mangroves or beach forest, resulting in its alternative common name of Seaside Clerodendrum.

In Australia, it grows from northeastern NSW, around coastal Queensland and the Northern Territory, into northwest West Australia. It is also native to South East Asia and some Pacific Islands. At the Wetlands Sanctuary, examples of this shrub are found in the Casuarina Forest. Its health and appeal vary with the seasons, sometimes appearing to be green and handsome, and at other times becoming “leggy” and losing leaves.

Flowers appear at almost any time of the year, and are attractive and unusual. Flowers are structured in groups of three to seven blossoms on small stems, originating where a leaf joins a main stem. They are white, about 15 mm in diameter, at the end of a tube up to 40 mm long, and with four long protruding maroon to purplish stamens. Flowers are followed by oval green fruit which turn black when ripe. Eventually, the ripe fruit separate into 4 portions. Birds eat and disperse the seeds.



Visit to the Wetlands Sanctuary – 26th May, 2013

Robyn Howard

After some quite cold weather over the previous week, the expectation of mosquito plagues was low. How wrong! Rain and one or two relatively warm days meant that the mosquitoes were thriving again; however, that did not stop me from enjoying some time there.

As always, the bird song was just lovely. Small birds were especially prevalent including Brown Honeyeaters, Brown Thornbills, White-browed Scrubwrens, Large-billed Scrubwrens, White-throated Treecreepers, Mangrove Gerygones, Brown Gerygones and many more. I missed one of the birds I had hoped to find – the Noisy Pitta – but perhaps it had not yet arrived. It seems to move down from the hills for the winter and departs again by spring, so we must enjoy it while we can. It is such a magnificent little bird, and although brightly coloured, is cryptic on the ground as it hunts for its food.

There must have been good falls of rain during the previous week as surface water lay everywhere, right through the Melaleuca Forest, the Casuarina Forest, and the Mangrove and mudflat areas. Many fruit of the Grey Mangrove had dropped, but they were very undersized. Perhaps the strong winds had affected them. It is normal for the fruit to mature and fall in summer.

Crabs do not particularly like cold weather and we never find large numbers above ground in winter, but it was a good day for crab viewing. The Orange-clawed Fiddlers were showing off in several areas, and Scarlet Three-spined Mangrove Crabs, Semaphore Crabs, and some of the Sentinels were happily feeding. One of the crabs I find only occasionally is Ward's Hairy-legged Crab, and I was fortunate enough to find one of them. I also found two completely yellow crabs out near the far crab hide, so they must have been aberrant specimens. Common Toadfish, the spotted ones, were the type in the water near the crab hide, not the more commonly found Striped Toadfish, and on the far bank were several Mudskippers, but not one was longer than about 3 centimetres.

Every visit is different!



Brown Thornbill



White-throated
Treecreeper (Female)



Scarlet Three-spined
Mangrove Crab



Night Walk – 6th June, 2013

When planning a night outing in early June, the weather could be expected to cooperate and remain dry, even if cold.

On our planned “Night-Stalker” and “Night-Researcher” outing, we were aware of clouds, but retained the hope that we would still be able to spend time without getting wet. The Night-Researchers headed down the track before five o’clock sunset, identified the individual hollows we each were going to watch, and the four of us set up our chairs, with torches and binoculars at the ready to see and identify whatever creatures emerged. The Night-Stalkers were to come down an hour and a half later.

A couple of birds still flitted around as it darkened, well after the time when most birds have tucked their heads under their wings and settled down for the night. We disturbed a Grey Fantail right beside the boardwalk, and a White-browed Scrubwren darted into the Mangrove Ferns. We listened to the Scrubwrens singing for quite some time, with intermittent calls from Grey Fantail, White-throated Treecreeper, Fantailed Cuckoo, and Eastern Yellow Robin. The last birds calling were the White-browed Scrubwrens. The call had changed to a softer tone, but also with a gentle “tchk-tchk-tchk” sound more reminiscent of their scolding call, but not done in that method. The calls suddenly stopped once all were settled. As the bird calls ceased, the insect noises gradually increased.

Misty rain had commenced, but not enough to stop our observations, but just at the time when we may have seen some creatures, the rain started in earnest. We tried to be brave and wait for a break, but it became obvious that it was a vain hope. We were unable to see through the rain curtain, and the leaves were bouncing so much from the rain-drops, we could not have identified anything! Several insectivorous bats flew by, some movement was noticeable in the undergrowth, and Ailsa was attacked by a large moth! At that stage, we decided that coffee, wine and cheese in the Mangrove Room sounded really great.

Robyn Howard



White-browed Scrubwren – Photo: Birdlife Australia

William Pledger

***Reptile Handling
and Possum
Relocation.***

Call

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