



# LAND FOR WILDLIFE

SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

FEBRUARY 2020 VOL. 14 NO. 1

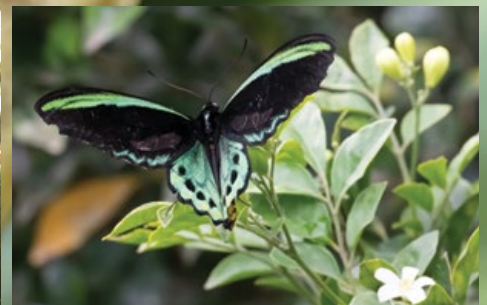


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Land for Wildlife South East Queensland Team, November 2019

# 2019 SEQ PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS



**271**

New Land for Wildlife properties



New Habitat under Restoration  
**588** hectares



New Retained Habitat  
**2,988** hectares



**Over 18,000**  
 Native plants provided



**Over 700**  
 Revisits to existing Land for Wildlife properties



\*Please note that these figures do not include Fraser Coast or Gympie Land for Wildlife data.

Land for Wildlife is a voluntary conservation program that encourages and assists landholders to provide habitat for wildlife on their properties.

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**Front Cover:** A Scarlet Honeyeater drinks from a bird bath on a Land for Wildlife property in the Gold Coast hinterland. Photo by Todd Burrows.

**Front Cover Inset Photos (L-R):** A Lace Monitor drinks from a small waterhole in western Brisbane. A male Richmond Birdwing photo by Deborah Metters.



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# Welcome TO THE FEBRUARY 2020 ISSUE

**T**his summer has been tough. Hot, dry and unrelenting. For some it has also brought fear and heartbreak from fire and drought.

Despite our appliances and supermarkets, we are feeling the pinch. As are our wildlife and the ecosystems on which they depend. The first part of this edition shines a spotlight on local impacts of our drying climate combined with summer weather systems that have caused temperature and rainfall records to tumble.

From all the Land for Wildlife team, please stay safe this summer and do what you can to support your loved ones, neighbours, community and wildlife.

Despite the difficulties, these summer conditions have been favourable to select plants and animals. The Silky Oaks (*Grevillea robusta*) and Flame Trees (*Brachychiton acerifolius*) have flowered profusely attracting all kinds of nectar-feeders including birds, flying foxes, butterflies, bees and gliders.

I visited O'Reillys at Lamington National Park in December and was surrounded by waves of Richmond Birdwings congregating around flowering Flame

Trees. It was truly breathtaking. I wondered if such a spectacle would have been possible if it were not for the courage and foresight shown by scientists and others decades ago. They spearheaded a campaign that not only raised awareness about the decline of the Richmond Birdwing, but importantly created a recipe for its recovery.

Now, governments, community groups and landholders are working together to restore and re-create habitat for this magnificent butterfly. And I, a mere visitor to Lamington NP, was able to watch in awe as Richmond Birdwings sipped nectar and chased each other. Tourists walked past oblivious to their proximity to a truly successful, and on-going, conservation triumph. Read more inside about the recovery of this butterfly.

I would like to send a big thanks to Kylie Gordon for sharing Regional Coordination in 2019. It was a privilege and pleasure to work with her as she brought new energy to this role. I wish her all the best working now with the Sunshine Coast Land for Wildlife team.

For those of you in the Scenic Rim, please be aware that your local officer

Keith McCosh is taking extended leave for six months and his replacement should soon be appointed.

I hope 2020 brings much-needed rain along with much-needed action required to address our warming climate. Just like the Richmond Birdwing, recipes exist for the recovery of ecosystems including our climatic systems. They just need to be enacted globally for the sake of everyone and the ecosystems on which we all depend.

Thank you to all contributors and Land for Wildlife members who are on this journey of conservation and learning about our wondrous natural world.

**Deborah Metters**  
Land for Wildlife Regional Coordinator

**We welcome all contributions.**  
**Please send them to:**

The Editor

✉ [deborah@seqlfw.com.au](mailto:deborah@seqlfw.com.au)

☎ 0437 910 687



## REGIONAL OUTLOOK *Climate & Weather*

January-March 2020



**Temperature.** Daytime and night-time temperatures - warmer than average.



**Rainfall.** Near normal - neither drier nor wetter than average.



**Root-zone soil moisture.** Very much below average - leading to dry vegetation and landscapes.



**Streamflow.** Low flows forecast - the dry soils will absorb most rainfall resulting in little overland flow.

### Influences

- Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) - neutral. It was positive for most of summer, which brought below average rainfall.
- Southern Annual Mode (SAM) - neutral. It was negative for most of summer, which brought warmer and drier conditions.
- El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) - neutral. Having limited influence on climate.
- Long-term increasing global air and ocean temperatures.

### Over the past 30 years in SEQ

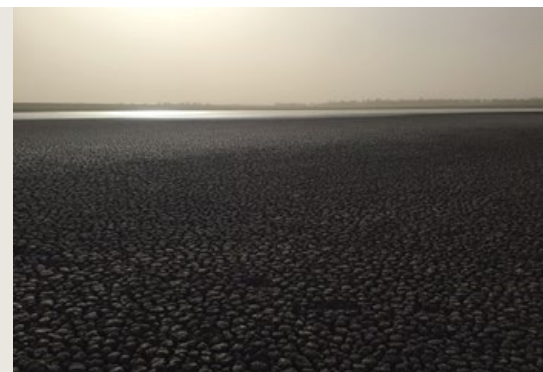
- Annual rainfall has decreased by 8%
- Decrease in winter and spring rainfall
- Moderately reliable summer rainfall
- More frosts and they are occurring later
- More hot days.

### Sources

[www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/)

[www.bom.gov.au/climate/climate-guides/](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/climate-guides/) (south east Queensland)

[www.eldersweather.com.au](http://www.eldersweather.com.au) (12-month rainfall forecast)



Lake Atkinson (top) and Austinville Valley. Images both taken in Nov. 2019 showing the variability of ecosystems across SEQ. Photos by Deborah Metters.



# Let's Talk About DROUGHT



A Musk Lorikeet takes a drink on a Land for Wildlife property in western Brisbane. Photo by Vicky Mills.

**M**ost Land for Wildlife members, especially in the Lockyer, are seeing first-hand the grip of drought on our wildlife and their habitats.

Drought is a normal part of living in Australia, it is not easy, but it is normal. We also must acknowledge that our current climate is different to the recent past. Southeastern Australia is undergoing a large-scale drying trend and has been since national rainfall records started in 1900. Plus, our continent has warmed by 1°C since 1910.

The question is, as Land for Wildlife members who care about our wildlife and ecosystems, what can we do?

This article looks how wildlife are coping with, or trying to, this drought, and what we can do to help, albeit in small ways.

## Feeding Wildlife

The Land for Wildlife program generally does not suggest feeding wildlife, instead we recommend conserving and restoring high quality habitat for wildlife and encourage the complexities of nature to play out. However, in times of drought or other extreme weather events, assisting wildlife in small ways can sometimes help them survive tough times. This is especially applicable in highly modified landscapes that no longer provide a natural suite of habitats for wildlife.

If you choose to feed wildlife, we recommend purchasing correct foods and offering them in such a way that does not place the recipient fauna in a position of danger. Make sure your pets cannot

access wildlife feeding/watering points and be aware that pest animals may visit if you start supplementary feeding. Both pets and pest animals could harm wildlife that come to feeding/watering points.

Food should be suited to the native animals such as pellets for macropods, possums and bandicoots and can be obtained from reputable suppliers. Never put out bucket loads of food, instead scatter food around so that wildlife do not become reliant on us. Never feed bread, sugar water or mince meat to wildlife.

Extensive research presented in Darryl Jones' book indicates that responsible feeding of wildlife can assist wildlife through difficult periods such as drought. Responsible feeding means providing appropriate fresh food, maintaining good feeder hygiene and feeding intermittently or ceasing feeding when good times return.

The feeding suggestions provided here are for extremely dry times, like this summer, and may give our wildlife a helping hand. Outside of drought, please only supply fresh clean water in diverse ways on your property for wildlife. The best thing we can do for our wildlife is to protect bushland and restore degraded ecosystems.

## Nectar-feeding Birds

These birds (e.g. honeyeaters, lorikeets, friarbirds) are not getting ample nectar or pollen in dry bushland areas because the trees are stressed and are conserving their resources; thus, reducing their nectar and pollen production. Many honeyeaters are dying of starvation or are stressed by hunger, which can make them more susceptible to diseases. It can be difficult

to see how poor a bird's condition is because their feathers often mask their slimness. Over the past few months, we have found lorikeets and honeyeaters that have simply starved and they have no fat around their breastbone.

Helping our nectar-feeding birds can be difficult as they ultimately require a landscape of resources to survive. However, gardens that are mulched or watered possibly provide more nectar and pollen during these dry times. A powdered honeyeater mix that must be watered down can be purchased and provided in accordance with product instructions.

## Flying Foxes

Our poor flying foxes are coming into care in record numbers, often with young. The recovery rate of young drought-stressed flying foxes is very low. Flying foxes are extremely reliant on a high sugar diet through nectar and fruit. They primarily get their food from flowering eucalypts and fruiting native trees. When they can't find enough high-sugar food to eat, they perish. Drought is also the time in which flying foxes will try to obtain food from more dangerous sources, such as low-hanging fruit or trees in backyards with dogs, which can lead to more unwanted contact with humans.

Some Land for Wildlife members are making apple or fruit wreaths for flying foxes. These are simple wreath-type arrangements where fruit such as apples are threaded onto sturdy wire and lifted as high as possible into trees or other structures. It is basically an aerial fruit wreath or feeding tray for flying foxes.

Wildlife take advantage of fresh water in a variety of ways on Land for Wildlife properties in western Brisbane this summer. Images from top right: A Brown Fruit-dove; Eastern Yellow Robin and Lewin's Honeyeater; Red-necked Pademelon ; and, two Short-eared Brushtail Possums.



Flying foxes are doing it tough this summer. Many have been found simply dead from starvation.



Silvereyes like shady water sources close to protective vegetation, which they can dart into if they sense danger.



### Koalas

Unfortunately, many Koalas are coming into care in poor condition. During drought, the eucalypt leaves that Koalas eat often lack the moisture and oils required by Koalas to keep them healthy. Koalas often need to drink water during drought and fire and unfortunately, we have seen many fires here in the Lockyer this summer. Place fresh water out for Koalas in sturdy, clean dishes on the ground. Do not offer Koalas water from raised containers (i.e. water bottles) as they can drown.

### Echidnas

Some echidnas have been found dead on Land for Wildlife properties in the last few months and it is probably due to the lack of surface water. Echidnas primarily consume ants and termites and need regular amounts of water to aid digestion. On the sandy soils where the termites live in the Lockyer there is little to no surface water. Again, the provision of fresh water in sturdy containers on the ground may help echidnas.

### Frugivores

Fruit-eating wildlife such as fruit-doves, parrots and possums may benefit from the provision of fresh chopped fruit in a clean dish, ideally well off the ground.

### Providing Water

The provision of fresh, reliable water for fauna, especially during drought, is one the easiest things landholders can do to help wildlife. Ideally, water sources should be varied – dishes on the ground, above the ground and dishes full of water with large gravel so that invertebrates can drink.

Water down low on the ground may be used by echidnas, macropods, lizards and bandicoots, whereas water up high such as in bird baths or hanging containers may be used by possums, gliders, birds, and climbing snakes and lizards.

Always remember to provide an escape or egress for wildlife from any water container to save them from accidentally drowning. A log, branch, heavy wire mesh or shade cloth draped into the container will provide easy egress options for wildlife. Dishes on the ground with rocks or gravel make it possible for invertebrates such as bees, wasps and butterflies to take a drink without falling in.

Many landholders have come up with ingenious options to keep their wildlife dishes topped up, such as inverting a two litre drink bottle. If you have a clever idea for managing your bird baths or fauna water dishes, please let us know.

### Safety First

It is important to put your safety first when providing any support to wildlife. Stressed wildlife can be dangerous, and they do not know you are trying to help them. Do not encourage wildlife onto or into your house. Do not touch dead or dying wildlife. Contact a registered wildlife carer or the RSPCA if an injured or sick animal comes into your care.

**Martin Bennett**  
Land for Wildlife Officer  
Lockyer Valley Regional Council &  
**Deborah Metters**  
Land for Wildlife Regional Coordinator

**Reference:** Jones D (2018) *The Birds at My Table: Why we feed wild birds and why it matters*. NewSouth Publishing.







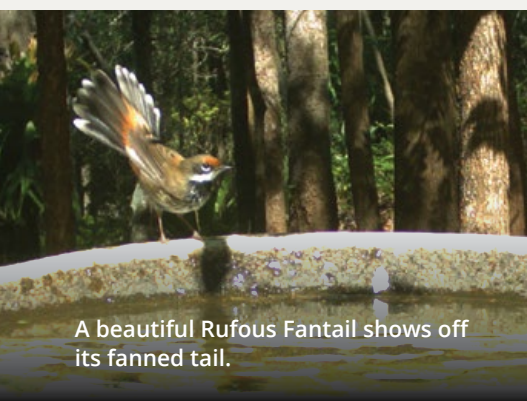
A honeyeater haven with Scarlet, White-naped and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters gathering at this bird bath.



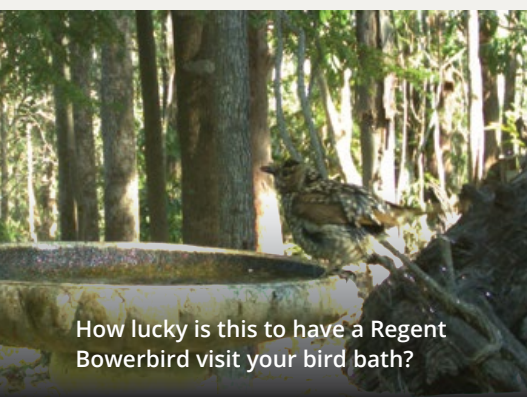
Even Squirrel Gliders need a drink.



Common Brushtail Possums seek out water in dry times.



A beautiful Rufous Fantail shows off its fanned tail.



How lucky is this to have a Regent Bowerbird visit your bird bath?

# LOOKING AFTER *Your Bird Bath*

**A**s I write this, we are in the middle of one of the worst droughts recorded. Most waterholes, creeks and dams are dry, or if not, very close, and our fauna is suffering.

Providing a bird bath or two is a sure way to help them survive the hot, dry summer until dams fill up and our creeks trickle again. It is not only the birds who enjoy a quick dip, but also our scaly and furry friends; they may be a bit more discreet and often under the cover of darkness.

Over the last few years, several Land for Wildlife members have installed fauna cameras next to their bird baths to identify the visiting bird species. To our surprise, once the sun goes down, a number of other animals have shared this neighbourhood facility. Gliders, possums, pademelons, goannas, echidnas, phascogales, Koalas and wallabies have been caught sipping from a well-placed, clean bath.

There are many benefits to providing water for our wildlife. During dry times, you may be saving their lives if there is no permanent water nearby. It is also a great way to get closer to nature, to observe and identify species that are often only seen fluttering through the tops of eucalypts. It is also a great way to witness seasonal changes in bird populations. I find nothing more gratifying than enjoying a coffee with one of my Land for Wildlife members while watching the daily activities in the local bird bath - like a bustling morning market.

When providing a bird bath/s, there is a bit more to consider than you might think. Below are a few suggestions to attract a variety of animals to your bird bath, whilst ensuring it is accessible, safe and simulates the natural environment.

## Location

As they do in your bushland, different species require different habitats. It is no different when installing a bird bath. Echidnas, Koalas, other smaller mammals and reptiles will find it difficult to use a bird bath off the ground, and so something at ground level will suffice for these creatures. Gliders, possums and Koalas can access a bird bath placed close to the trunk of a tree (as per pictures). To attract smaller shy birds, such as

honeyeaters, placing a bird bath close to a bushy shrub or hedge will allow them to safely dart in and out of the bush.

## Shade

Keep your bird bath away from full sun to keep the water cool.

## Pets

If you have pets, make sure a bird bath is out of reach. Domestic and feral cats will lurk around bird baths looking for an easy feed.

## Safety

I have seen birds and small mammals drown in deeper plastic or non-porous water sources. Using a shallow porous bird bath or placing a stick or rock in deeper non-porous bird baths will give struggling animals a chance to climb out.

## Regularly-filling bird baths

On a dry, hot day there's often a big queue for the bath. Bathing birds often splash most of the water out. Regularly filling bird baths once or twice a day is often needed.

## Hygiene

Hygiene is very important. Bathing birds can potentially put diseases in the water. There are records of various avian flus spreading from unhygienic bird baths. Cleaning (with a soft brush) and regularly changing the bath water will help eliminate the spread of disease.

## Weeds

As they do throughout bushland, birds can spread weeds around bird baths. Climbing Asparagus, Ochna and Brazilian Nightshade are a few common weeds that may be found under bird baths. When young, they are easily hand-removed. If you are having trouble identifying or controlling weeds, contact your Land for Wildlife Officer for advice.

There are many Land for Wildlife members in Brisbane who have been providing water for their local wildlife for years. Renee Chamberlin from Kholo is one of many and in the facing article she offers her experience with bird baths.



**Cody Hochen**  
Conservation Partnerships  
Officer  
Brisbane City Council



White-throated Honeyeaters and Rainbow Lorikeets are just some of the birds visiting Renee's bird baths

# THE IMPORTANCE OF Water

## ATTRACTING FEATHERED, FURRY, SCALY AND OTHER FRIENDS TO YOUR PROPERTY...



Various wildlife visited our plastic water trough. It is interesting to see how some animals are happy to share water resources with other species during tough times. They seem to become more tolerable to other species that may usually be treated with caution.



There is much debate on the positives and negatives of feeding backyard wildlife. The truth is, many of us Land for Wildlifers do feed our wild neighbours.

The simple provision of a water source can attract and assist a surprising variety of wildlife without causing problems associated with feeding such as malnutrition and aggression.

Not long after moving to our ten acre Land for Wildlife property at Kholo west of Brisbane, we purchased a basic netball hoop fitted with a 'replicotta' (plastic coloured to replicate terracotta) plant saucer and installed it on our veranda as a bird bath. With surprising speed some common birds began using it almost straight away. Before long, many smaller and shyer species also became regular visitors.

We have noticed the smaller birds are comfortable in using this water source because of its height (6m off the ground) and the cover of nearby vegetation which provides a place of speedy retreat when danger is sensed (not to mention nesting material and food too!).

This set up was cheap (under \$50) and simple to install. Most importantly, it is easy to remove the saucer and take it inside for a good scrub which must be done regularly. It provides us with many hours of entertainment and much joy to watch the birds drinking and bathing.

15 years later, we have added a second water source made from the same materials only a few metres away. Both are more popular than ever. We have observed that having two 'baths' allows different birds to access without getting too close to other species that may take exception to their presence in close quarters.

With the recent dry period, we have also added a large, plastic trough for wallabies to drink from. Images captured with our fauna camera have shown this water point to be just as popular, being visited by Lace Monitors, bandicoots, possums, phascogales and several species of birds. We have also added some smaller water bowls on

the ground for small reptiles, frogs, bees, etc. One Lace Monitor hopped in and was photographed leaving a whole hour later!

If you haven't already considered providing water for your non-human neighbours, I urge you to give it a go. Not only are you giving them a guilt-free helping hand, but you also have the opportunity for hours of entertainment watching their antics. We often get the privilege of observing birds bathing and frivolously splashing about.

Some considerations when putting water out for wildlife:

- Non-porous containers are more hygienic and easier to clean.
- Scrub and refill containers regularly so that any diseases or parasites are not being spread between individuals via the water.
- Provide a variety of water sources in different parts of the environment that are suitable for different species (consider animals of all sizes and shapes).
- Keep the water points safe by providing sticks or vegetation for animals to climb out so they cannot drown.
- Endeavour to prevent Cane Toads, mosquitoes and other pests from breeding. Toads can be kept out by having containers with smooth walls at least 50cm off the ground.

Species we have photographed at our bird bath include: Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Australian King Parrot, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Noisy Friarbird, Little Friarbird, Scarlet Honeyeater, White-throated Honeyeater, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Fuscous Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Silvereye, Pied Currawong, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Spangled Drongo, Grey Shrike-thrush, Olive-backed Oriole and Australian Magpie.

There are many more species of birds that frequent this area and we suspect some of them use the water bath; we just haven't caught them in the act yet!

Article and photos by Renee Chamberlin  
Land for Wildlife member  
Kholo, Brisbane





# BIRDS IN THE *Drought*

**W**ith no substantial rain since Easter, and groundwater reserves depleted from the absence of a wet season last summer, Pine Mountain is currently in its worst drought since 2000 (the famous 'millennial drought'). All the creeks, and most people's dams, are dry. In response, almost every leaf in the vine scrub has curled up and died. The oranges and browns reminiscent of a temperate autumn are not so welcome in a subtropical spring.

Lots of my free time is now devoted to watering my most recently planted trees. I'm currently hand-watering (using 25 litre bottles) some four tonnes of water per week! So far, I've managed to keep most seedlings alive, but my biceps and quadriceps are very much looking forward to rain.

It is a very stressful time of year for much of our wildlife. Unsurprisingly, we've seen a massive increase in the popularity of our bird baths. We even bought a third bath to cater for the increased traffic. Yet all three (a combined capacity of approximately 20 litres) are close to bone dry each afternoon. Admittedly, much of this ends up being splashed about, rather than consumed.

There is a cycad (*Cycas revoluta*) growing beside the bird baths, which is currently seeding. Brown Honeyeaters have been busily collecting the felt from around the seeds to line their nest. Clearly, no drought is going to stop the spring urges of some of our birds. I actually suspect the honeyeaters are among the least affected by the dry weather. That is because Silky Oaks (*Grevillea robusta*), a favoured food source for nectar-feeding birds, are currently flowering profusely, regardless of the drought. This tree provides a crucial food source in what is always an otherwise grim season.

Coinciding with the drought, we have received quite a few visits from bird species we don't usually get. Over the last week or so, we had our first pair of Speckled Warblers in two years, along with our first ever Little Bronze-cuckoo. Australian King Parrots usually visit us a couple of times per year, and they also stopped in recently. All of these were transient and only stayed a few hours. I suppose as resources ran out in their usual territories, they were forced to search for greener pastures. If green pastures were their target, it's unsurprising they were disappointed with what they found at our property!

Article and photos by Chris Wiley  
Land for Wildlife member  
Pine Mountain, Ipswich



During their brief visit, the Australian King Parrots actually drank from our bird bath and visited a nearby possum box. We thought they might stick around. Clearly, the box wasn't to their liking.



Brown Honeyeaters (top) collected felt from around the seeds of a cycad while Lewin's Honeyeaters (above) enjoyed bathing in one of our bird baths.



# WEST BRISBANE LAND FOR WILDLIFE *Catch-ups*

Once a month at the Upper Brookfield Hall a group of Land for Wildlife (LfW) property owners from all over Brisbane come together for an informal catch-up to talk all things conservation. It is a time where people can meet others and share ideas and strategies over a coffee. I always encourage people to celebrate successes and to share what they have achieved by being in LfW.

I have noticed during my years of being a LfW Officer that as the program has grown and our collective knowledge about conservation and restoration has expanded, people's thirst for sharing their knowledge has also grown. It is important that the LfW program offers opportunities for landholders to share. So with this in mind, it was time to start an informal gathering in Western Brisbane where there are many very active LfW members.

Our gatherings have no formal structure but are always focussed on the positive activities and achievements occurring on LfW properties. About 20-40 people show up each month and these catch-ups will be run throughout 2020.

Themes change from month to month. In the beginning I brought along topical material such as restoration tools, fauna cameras and city-wide maps to kick start the conversation. We have also focussed on weed control projects, significant flora or fauna sightings or restoration methods.

Having a point of focus makes people feel more comfortable and able to interact easily with each other. To take the time to chat with like-minded people and share achievements is incredibly motivating. Our first catch-up was somewhat quiet, but nowadays they are a hive of laughter and constant chatting with more and more people sharing their project ideas, bringing in plant samples and sharing great tips with each other.

Any current or former LfW members are welcome, as are landholders who may be interested in joining LfW. Catch-ups are advertised via the LfWSEQ Facebook page or just contact me on 3403 8888 if you are interested in joining us.

**Catherine Madden**  
Conservation Partnerships Officer  
Brisbane City Council



L-R: Gordon Wilkinson, Tom Connors, Catherine Madden (BCC Land for Wildlife Officer), Kees Heybroek and Vicky Mills at the December 2019 Catch-up.

Note the map on the table showing the cluster of Land for Wildlife properties (in yellow) in western Brisbane.

"We spend hours and hours working on our property. The morning speeds past under lantana bushes cutting asparagus vine, pulling legumes out of trees and keeping access tracks open. Weeks turn into months and years go by.

But the first Friday of every month, no work gets done! On that morning we head to the dear old Upper Brookfield Hall for coffee and chat with fellow Land for Wildlife participants. Council Officers join us, providing a wider perspective, focussing in on issues of interest, identifying vegetation specimens, encouraging us in our challenges and applauding our successes. Gathered together, we compare, complain, listen, learn, sympathise and share.

The morning speeds past and soon we all drift away. But we know we are not alone, that others are out there devoting hours and hours to making their properties better places. Yes, there are other people out there who believe that all this really matters, while also being something to enjoy."

Tina Heybroek, Land for Wildlife member, Upper Brookfield (pictured above)





# HOME AMONG THE *Gumtrees*

**M**y love of gardening started at the ages of 2-6 when I was in care with my elderly grandparents. My Nanna tasked me with dead heading marigolds and I learnt to count by being told how many runner beans to go snip off for tea. My grandad had a glass greenhouse and I watched seeds grow and we tinkered about together. My room had a view of a castle ruins first built in the 11th Century. I spent a childhood growing rhubarb near the muck heap, rubbing dock leaves on nettle stings, imaginative play with snap dragons, and the first tricky word I learnt was *Digitalis purpurea*, the Purple Foxglove.

Fast track over 40 years on and I have called Australia my home for many of those years. We are a family with two boys living on 5 acres in West Brisbane. Life was busy bringing up boys and so most of the 'gardening' was tackling weeds and trying to plant a house garden, and often failing at both.

Three years ago, we had two Koalas visit, they were rescued but sadly didn't make it. It was quite confrontational to realise the cute Australian icons in our backyard were actually very sick, in pain and one had even lost a kidney. We visited the healthier one in the Koala hospital for many months, it was very sad. I had to explain to my boys why these Koalas had become sick (loss of habitat causing disease) that it was we humans who had done this.

For me it struck a chord, and I felt a responsibility to be a good custodian for our patch of Earth we called our home. I felt it important to do this as the land was there before me and will be there after me and I wished my impact to be only positive. I started out raising Koala awareness and collected towels to

take to the hospital for the Koala baths. Many people visited and someone mentioned the Land for Wildlife program. I wasn't sure I was up to the task, but I gave them a call.

They came out to visit and I casually said I'd like to look after our 5 acres of bushland a bit better and needed some guidance. I was actually terrified of any creepy crawlies and snakes and had not ventured much past the house yard. Also having had a knee and couple of shoulder joint surgeries, the forest terrain was tricky to manage. My Land for Wildlife Officer patiently showed me how to find wallaby trails and flag trees to follow access paths so I could walk around the property with more confidence.

I enthusiastically called them back at every opportunity to show them what I had done and get the next step of advice. They gave me books, resources, links and free plants. Mainly they were there to support me. It was like having a teacher and guide on hand always. I learnt so much, I started to see the land change, the weeds diminished, new things grew, I was starting to confidently identify some things without carrying the book about. I shared what I learnt with others and encouraged them to join the awesome program.

My youngest son has also taken to the garden and has made a few recycled nest boxes and habitat hotels, some garden stairs and turned our lawn into a native bush garden.

Once our native garden is finished, (we have already been rewarded with a Tawny Frogmouth nesting just next to it) the next big project is clearing two gullies of lantana and regenerating a small gully of dry rainforest back to its former pre-logging / grazing glory. I keep telling my family I might find a fossil treasure



One of the Koalas that visited our property. We named her Crosbette. She had a very dirty bottom and looked quite unwell. Staff from the Moggill Koala Hospital came and took her into care. Unfortunately, she was later put down.



My two sons, Reuben (left) and Neo with bags full of stuffed toys and towels we collected and donated to the Moggill Koala Hospital. Stuffed toys are cuddled by joey Koalas and endless towels are used by wildlife carers.





#### Our Habitat Hotel.

We made this out of old pallets, bamboo sticks, PVC pipes, sticks and palm fronds. Hopefully some reptiles, small native mammals, native bees and other invertebrates find it useful. We placed it close to one of our bird baths.

when we clear the gully! As the gully is weathered down to bedrock, this might sound silly, but the reality is the land was here a long time before us and will be here a long time after.

If only the gullies and trees could speak and tell us all they have seen. I hope what the land experiences during our custodianship is that of positive regeneration so it can be here and healthy for all life to enjoy as the years continue to pass by.

I can highly recommend Land for Wildlife for the knowledge it brings, the free resources (great for families on tight budgets), the friendship, the support, even the fitness! It's also great for your mental health and stress level to go clear some weeds, watch plants grow, see animals visit them and feel the warm fuzzies that you have done something good.

I am also a big fan of the monthly Land for Wildlife catch-ups at Upper Brookfield (see page 9 for more information). I have learnt so much through the group who have such an array of knowledge to pass onto newbies like myself. I have gained a heap of knowledge on the plants and wildlife but also felt very supported by a like-minded bunch of people. It's a great confidence boost if you feel lost in how to manage your land.

How my life has changed since joining Land for Wildlife - many nights I fall asleep with a book of plants and twigs in my hair, very happy of the achievements on my property.

Article and photos by Vicky Mills  
Land for Wildlife member  
Karana Downs, Brisbane



We have a range of bird baths (hanging and on the ground) for wildlife as well as nest boxes installed. There are not many natural tree hollows in our area, nor natural watering points, so we do what we can to help wildlife.

Neo is a budding engineer and has made several nest boxes and native bee tubes out of recycled PVC pipes and hollow bamboo sticks.





# Death OF A DUSKY

A collage of birds photographed at our property.

*We live on a 5-acre remnant rainforest block in the Mary Valley. When we moved here a decade ago about 80% of the property was covered with feral vegetation. Our blood, sweat and tears have now more than reversed that figure to around 90% natives. This has enabled us to record 159 species of native birds, 14 species of native mammals, more than a dozen snakes, reptiles and amphibians and countless invertebrates.*

It may be a sentimental trait of human nature but, for most of us, our favourite birds are those with colour. At our place, a Land for Wildlife property in the Mary Valley amongst rainforest remnants, we are lucky enough to get the occasional sighting of birds with spectacular plumage, from the Rose-crowned Fruit-doves and Wompoo Pigeons to the Noisy Pitta and Regent Bowerbirds.

Yet our special favourites are the little honeyeaters that flutter busily from one grevillea or callistemon (melaleuca) to another.

We have taken delight in watching more than ten honeyeater species that are regulars on our acreage. These include Lewin's, Dusky, Scarlet, White-throated, White-naped, Yellow-faced, Blue-faced, Brown and New Holland Honeyeaters as well as the Eastern Spinebill. We adore them all. Their colours and antics are the stuff of Walt Disney.

And, in keeping with the Disney theme, they dance and sing and mischievously chase each other around. All is sweetness and light...or so we thought.

Our son, an almost obsessive birder, rarely to be seen without a telephoto lens camera draped around his neck, was a study of patience on a recent visit as he waited and watched to capture that elusive perfect shot of one of the duskies that was feeding among the grevillea flowers.

He saw, as we had on many occasions, the little chocolate duskie being chased away by some resident New Hollands. Of course, these episodes were harmless enough. They were just friendly territory reminders. All of the birds seemed to do it. They dashed after each other. The chased honeyeaters were never caught, just shooed away to another flower. We had seen it ourselves too many times to even begin to count.

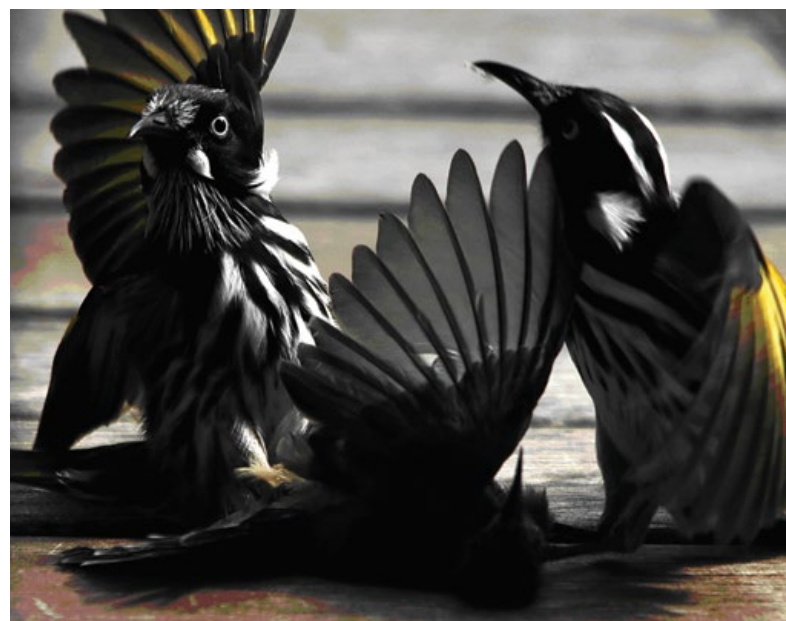
But then something sinister happened. More in keeping with a Stephen King novel than Walt Disney. My son's camera captured a moment of terror in this otherwise fairytale world. Two New

Holland Honeyeaters actually caught a fleeing Dusky Honeyeater and savaged it.

He couldn't help but stop filming and intervene. The New Hollands flew off but the distressed little chocolate creature was prone, clinging on to life. Sadly, the bird expired some time later.

The lesson? Maybe there isn't one. If there is, it for us alone. We may well delight in our wild fauna being there, living their lives around us, but it is a mistake to try to impose an anthropomorphic worldview on them. Words and thoughts such as cute, cuddly and endearing are products exclusively of our imaginations. Wild creatures don't exist for our entertainment and delight. But they ARE wonderful nonetheless. They are to be revered for what they are, not as de facto pets.

**Diane and Allan Pratt**  
Land for Wildlife members  
Brooloo, Gympie



The moment of impact. Photo by Steven Pratt.



# Wattle: Acacias of Australia

## Lucid Mobile

Wattles are a diverse and iconic group of trees and shrubs that dominate the Australian landscape, and can be found across SEQ. This application describes 1,057 species of wattle. It allows the user to identify species using a Lucid key that details plant features including foliage type; phyllode (leaf) length and width; rachis length; pinnae number; and, presence of petiolar and jugary glands. Don't worry – all these technical terms are described and illustrated.

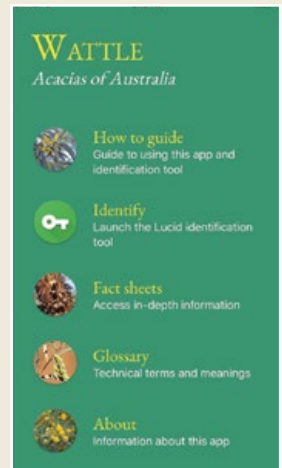
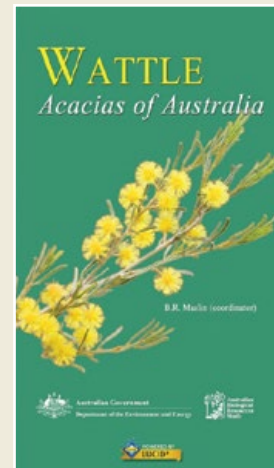
Working through these key features, the user can identify plants to a species level. The application allows the user to enter key features in any order, to progressively eliminate species without knowing all the key identifying features. Once identified, a description of the species is provided including coloured

photos to show form, flowers and leaf structure as well descriptions of the plant's distribution.

Whether you are a keen naturalist, amateur botanist or just interested in what wattles may be popping up on your property, this app is a useful tool for identification. Although it does take up storage space on your device (especially for Apple users), you will always have access to current Acacia nomenclature and new species as they become identified.

Android users can opt-in to downloading all media to their device if they are going somewhere without internet; hence the smaller product size. The iOS edition will have this feature in the near future.

Review by De-Anne Attard



Lucid Mobile available from:  
Google Play | Version 0.1.19 | 45MB | \$9.99  
Apple iTunes | Version 0.1.4 | 492MB | \$9.95

# iNaturalist

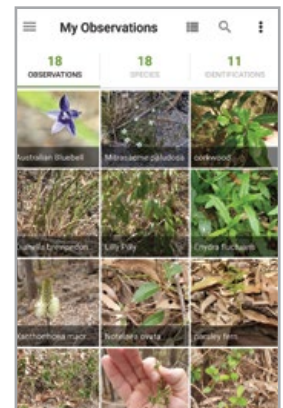
Just about anyone will find iNaturalist (iNat) useful, from the novice wanting to learn more about the flora and fauna around them, to professional ecologists wanting to record what they've seen.

The app enables people to upload observations of plants and animals to the iNat database for everyone to see. If you don't know what you've taken a photo of it doesn't matter, because the rest of the iNat community is there to help provide identification. Your observation can also contribute to science because once two users have identified the specimen it gets classed

as 'research grade' and is automatically uploaded to the Atlas of Living Australia.

The best part about the app is how easy it is to use so anyone with a smartphone can upload an observation within seconds. The app uses the geotag data on the photo to determine the location so all you need to do is select the photo to upload, identify the species (if known) and then submit. There's also a function that allows users to make an observation 'observed' or 'private' if preferred, however this can also be made visible to selected users.

Review by Nick Swanson



iNaturalist available from:  
Google Play | Version 1.15.1 | 20MB | free  
Apple iTunes | Version 2.8.6 | 37.5MB | free  
To explore observations visit [inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org)

# A Hollow is a Home

Abbie Mitchell and illustrated by Astred Hicks

This is Australia's first book for young readers dedicated to hollow-dependent wildlife. Tree hollows are home to more than 340 Australian species, including birds, frogs, bats, possums, gliders, rodents, snakes, lizards, invertebrates and many others.

This book focusses on vertebrates and delves into how wildlife live in tree hollows, which species use hollows, how hollows form and how to spot and monitor hollows in your local area.

Whilst the book is pitched for primary students Grades 3–6, I propose that other years (in particular, early to middle high school) can benefit from this text. The book is beautifully laid out with ample photos and diagrams to keep readers engaged (and excellent teacher notes). I also think it could be readily applied in Prep to

Year 2 to inspire and inform lessons around how animals live in the bush. Children (and adults alike) love photos of intriguing animals and that is exactly what this book provides.

The book takes the reader through some of the fundamental aspects of hollows, including why animals need hollows, what size they need, how long they take to form (about 200 years for one 11–15cm hollow), competition for hollows and key threats (e.g. land clearing). There is also a great section on artificial hollows (nest boxes).

If you have a child or teen (or adult) interested in animals and the Australian bush, this is the book for them! For other reviews of children's ecology and environmental books, search for me, Sam Lloyd, at <https://childrensbooksdaily.com>

Review by Dr Sam Lloyd



Paperback | Oct 2019 | \$29.99  
Colour illustrations and photos  
104 pages | CSIRO Publishing





L-R: Fflur Collier (Brisbane City Council Land for Wildlife Officer) with Sylvia Alexander and Ian Yeo standing next to a trellis of Richmond Birdwing Vines on their property. This trellis is part of over 250 vines planted across three Land for Wildlife properties known as the 'Foam Bark Gully Gang' in Fig Tree Pocket, Brisbane.

# Bringing Back the RICHMOND BIRDWING



Over 1500 Richmond Birdwing Vines, like this one at Fig Tree Pocket, have been mapped across Brisbane. It shows how much work has been done over 30 years to recover this rare butterfly.

**B**ringing back an animal from the brink of extinction takes time, resources and lots of collaboration. For over 20 years, the community and governments in SEQ have been working to recover the magnificent Richmond Birdwing. This is one of Australia's largest butterflies and used to be seen in clouds across SEQ, especially in and around rainforests, where its host vine grows.

The larvae (caterpillars) of the Richmond Birdwing are fussy eaters and only feed on two species of vine – both referred to as Richmond Birdwing Vines (*Pararistolochia* spp.). The protection of wild vines along with vine propagation and planting over the past few decades has arguably saved this stunning butterfly from extinction.

In collaboration with landholders and governments, the Richmond Birdwing Recovery Network is building corridors across SEQ for the butterfly. Corridors need to contain mature vines on which larvae can feed, and these vines must be within flying distance for an adult butterfly (< 20km). Two key corridors are the focus of recovery activities:

- Connecting the north-west suburbs of Brisbane to Samford and Mt Mee areas.
- Connecting Tamborine Mountain along the Albert River to Ormeau and Mt Cotton.

Recovery activities are occurring right across SEQ but this article just focusses on activities within these two corridors.

## Scenic Rim

The Scenic Rim is lucky to have pockets of remnant Richmond Birdwing Vines, some of which are so large and old that they have formed into vine curtains and are truly stunning to see. One curtain was

only discovered recently, tucked away on a Land for Wildlife property near Guanaba on the eastern escarpment of Tamborine Mountain.

To supplement wild remnant vines, Scenic Rim Regional Council has provided hundreds of free Richmond Birdwing Vines to landholders at Tamborine Mountain and Beechmont. In addition, Council has installed six core sites each with at least ten vines supported by trellises on Council reserves across the Tamborine Mountain plateau.

Tamborine Mountain State School has a new trellis with young vines that added to old vines planted as part of the initial Double Helix Birdwing Recovery in the 1990s. Together, these planted vines on public and private land will help secure the existing wild population of Richmond Birdwings in the Tamborine Mountain and Beechmont regions.

Over the past two years, adult Richmond Birdwings have been seen more regularly at Tamborine Mountain. This noticeable increase is probably the result of captive-bred butterflies being released and the expansion and maturity of planted vines. Last summer, many butterflies were also discernibly seen around Binna Burra and O'Reillys, which is not always the case. Again, this supports the theory that we may be witnessing a spike in numbers due to recovery efforts, or last summer may have just been a good season. Either way, it is great to see.

## Brisbane

Over 400 Richmond Birdwing Vines have been planted in the past few years across Brisbane, mostly on Land for Wildlife properties. This is all part of the *Bringing Back the Richmond Birdwing to Brisbane*





Male Richmond Birdwings (left photos) are slightly smaller in size than females but have stunning iridescent green upperwings, which can be seen in flight or sometimes when feeding. The male in the top photo has torn wings indicating that he is in the later stages of his adult life.

The female Richmond Birdwing (right photos) is the largest butterfly in SEQ. Photos by Deborah Metters.

*Project*, which builds on previous work done by various groups and individuals.

Firstly, mapping was done by Brisbane City Council to show the distribution of historically planted vines and to highlight the gaps in recognised corridors. Then, Richmond Birdwing Vines were strategically planted to fill in these gaps and create corridors along which adult butterflies could fly. There are three key corridors within Brisbane:

- West - Fig Tree Pocket to Upper Brookfield
- North - The Gap to Upper Kedron
- South - Sherwood to Burbank.

Every 2-3km within a corridor, at least 20 vines were planted to create a core site. All core sites are on Land for Wildlife properties because their owners can look after the vines with watering and maintenance. Council provides advice, materials, replacement of dead vines and annual site visits. Council is also mapping and strategically controlling infestations of Dutchman's Pipe (a weed vine that kills Richmond Birdwing larvae if eaten).

Historically, wild Richmond Birdwing Vines occurred in western Brisbane around Bardon and Brookfield, but unfortunately all remnant vines were removed over 20 years ago. There are positive signs for the return of the Richmond Birdwing to Brisbane with sightings of adult butterflies around Chapel Hill and Indooroopilly over the past five years, plus a female laid eggs on a planted vine in Sunnybank last year.

### Moreton Bay

The Moreton Bay region connects populations of Richmond Birdwing butterflies from the southern extent of the D'Aguilar Range to the northern extent of the Bellthorpe and Conondale Ranges.

The launch of the *Woodford to Dayboro Richmond Birdwing Vine Corridor Project* was hosted by Samford Eco Corridor in July 2019

and resulted in the successful planting and establishment of 50 vines in the Samford Eco Corridor Bushcare area in Samford Parklands, Samford Valley.

In 2020, Moreton Bay Regional Council will be working with the Richmond Birdwing Recovery Network and Land for Wildlife members to plant and establish over 1,000 Richmond Birdwing Vines on private properties throughout the Woodford to Samford Corridor. This project will also assist in mapping and cataloguing existing vine populations, as well as mapping new plantings corridors throughout the region.

### Redland

For several years Redland City Council has been working collaboratively with the community and other organisations to increase Richmond Birdwing butterfly habitat, remove Dutchman's Pipe and provide educational workshops for the community.

This summer there were sightings of Richmond Birdwings on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and at Thornlands where there is a 24 year old vine in very good condition on a Land for Wildlife property.

Redland City Council and the Indigiscapes Nursery at Capalaba have distributed well over 1000 Richmond Birdwing Vines. The Indigiscapes Nursery can provide vines along with information on where and how to plant vines to ensure they flourish giving the best chance to encourage this beautiful butterfly to your property.

Article by Keith McCosh, Scenic Rim Regional Council; Cody Hochen, Brisbane City Council; De-Anne Attard, Moreton Bay Regional Council; Maree Manby, Redland City Council; and, Deborah Metters, Land for Wildlife Regional Coordinator





# For Wildlife... A Sign for the Times

*You might ask why we'd affix a "For Wildlife" sign to the side of our front gate,  
Well I hope the idea catches on and lets the scheme mutate,  
To let the sanctuaries sparkle in the light of nature's plan,  
To keep us spellbound and immersed as only nature can.*

*When we saw that pair of peregrines making love in flight,  
And heard the whistling crack of the whipbird just at the fall of night,  
It's then we thought of our grandkids' grandkids,  
And we knew what we'd done was right,  
Before these living jewels were lost to time, to tide, and sight.*

**Robert Raftery (pictured left)**  
Land for Wildlife member  
Greenbank, Logan

## The Land for Wildlife Way

*There's 1000s of them out there  
On any given day  
People doing conservation  
The Land for Wildlife way*

*Restoring nature on their properties  
And not for any pay  
They're bringing back the bush  
The Land for Wildlife way*

*Growing local native plants  
And keeping weeds at bay  
Creating homes for critters  
The Land for Wildlife way*

*Plus Land for Wildlife officers  
Some young, some old and grey  
Promoting Land for Wildlife  
The Land for Wildlife way*

*So hats off to all these people  
And shout "hip hip hooray!"  
They're stewarding our future  
The Land for Wildlife way*

**Peter Hayes**  
Land for Wildlife member  
Ravensbourne, Toowoomba

(inspired by Keith McCosh's comments  
at a regional Land for Wildlife meeting,  
Sept 2019)



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