



# LAND FOR WILDLIFE

## SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

NOVEMBER 2023 VOL. 17 NO. 4



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Land for wildlife

# SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND SNAPSHOT



**5,547**  
TOTAL  
PROPERTIES



**4,411**  
REGISTERED  
PROPERTIES



**1,136**  
PROPERTIES  
working towards  
RESTORATION



**79,466<sup>ha</sup>**  
RETAINED HABITAT

**9,287<sup>ha</sup>**  
Habitat Under  
RESTORATION

**45,182**  
iNaturalist  
OBSERVATIONS

**11,977**  
Facebook Followers

[www.inaturalist.org/projects/lfwseq](http://www.inaturalist.org/projects/lfwseq)

To join contact your local LfW Officer

*Land for Wildlife South East Queensland acknowledges this Country and its Traditional Custodians. We acknowledge and respect the spiritual relationship between Traditional Custodians and this Country, which has inspired language, songs, dances, lore and dreaming stories over many thousands of years. We pay our respects to the Elders, those who have passed into the dreaming; those here today; those of tomorrow. May we continue to peacefully walk together in gratitude, respect and kindness in caring for this Country and one another.*

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:** Tailed Emperor and Evening Brown butterflies drink sap from a split in a Brushbox tree. Photo by Deborah Metters.

**Front Cover Inset Photos:** Collared Delma, photo by Stephen Peck; Norm Morwood and Stephanie Keys, photo by Nadia Joyce.

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Land for Wildlife South East Queensland Team, December 2022

It is a curious time to be in the conservation sector. We are seeing an overhaul of Australia's national environment legislation and the rapid growth of new forms of conservation.

Taking a broad-brush view, community-led conservation, like Landcare, was formalised in the late 1980s. Shortly afterwards, government-led conservation, like Land for Wildlife, gained momentum. The last few decades have seen the rise in NGO and philanthropic-led conservation, especially through the acquisition of land to complement public conservation estates.

It seems that we are entering the age of industry-led conservation. More and more the private sector is recognising its dependence on nature and is looking to invest in restoring nature. About half of Australia's GDP is reliant on ecosystem services and natural capital. This includes the thousands of businesses within the mining, tourism, food and fibre sectors.

Globally and domestically, businesses are opting-in to disclose their nature-related impacts, dependencies and risks. They are also looking at what actions they can undertake to restore nature, given that their business depends on it. Examples are already at play in Australia where businesses are buying Cassowary and Sugar Glider credits not just because it is a legislated offset requirement, but because it is the right thing to do, and they are voluntarily making that investment.

Understandably, this movement towards a market solution for the biodiversity crisis comes with concerns. The privatisation and commodification of bits of nature, like a Koala, make me cringe, and putting a price on the complex and ever-changing entity that is nature seems impossibly simplistic. Can the same system that created the problem, actually fix it? I don't know.

In addition to industry investment, I am hopeful that the near future will also bring more First Nations-led conservation. By restoring Indigenous cultural practices and land management obligations, conservation follows. There are heartening examples of this from Indigenous Protected Areas in this country and also in Canada where actions to recover bison and caribou populations are more successful if Indigenous collaborations and cultural traditions are foremost.

All forms of conservation are valuable and necessary if we are going to live in a nature positive world. We all do our own small part and I hope this newsletter reflects some of the incredible restoration projects that are underway by LfW members in SEQ.

Finally, I wanted to acknowledge two long-term LfW Officers who are leaving their positions within Sunshine Coast Council. Alan Wynn has been a cornerstone of the program for over a decade, and I am sure many readers have valued Alan's considered, practical conservation advice and his vast knowledge about the natural world. He is taking a much-deserved year-long break. De-Anne Attard would be known to many LfW members in both Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast areas where she has worked for over seven years delivering LfW with a wonderful mix of enthusiasm and professionalism. Thank you Alan and De.

**Deborah Metters**  
Land for Wildlife  
Regional Coordinator

We welcome all contributions.

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## Climate & Weather

### REGIONAL OUTLOOK Nov 23 - Jan 24



#### Daytime and Night-time Temperatures.

Above average daytime and night-time temperatures are very likely, with unusually high temperatures expected.



**Rainfall.** Below median rainfall is likely.



**Streamflow.** Low streamflows are likely.

#### Climate Influences

- An active El Nino.
- A positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)
- Record warm ocean temperatures globally.

#### Sources

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

[www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/](http://www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/)

## Weeds to Watch

Nov - Jan 2023

### Rusty-leaf Pittosporum

(*Pittosporum ferrugineum*) is an Australian native plant outside its range in SEQ. In coastal SEQ, it can form thick stands with weedy potential. It can be mistaken for the native *Pittosporum undulatum*. Unlike *P. undulatum* which is hairless with wavy leaf margins, *P. ferrugineum* is Latin for 'ferruginous, rust-coloured' and refers to the distinctive, rusty brown hairs covering new shoots, leaves and flowers. It is a small, slender-trunked tree to <10m. Control with herbicide using cut-stump or basal bark methods.



### Ming Asparagus

(*Asparagus retrofractus*) is a garden ornamental that has recently become established in bushland in SEQ. It is a scrambling shrub to 3m with silver, zig-zagged stems. It has needle-like, small cladodes (leaves) in clusters along stems, resembling pom-poms, hence its other common name, Pom-Pom Asparagus. This is an emerging weed and has the potential to become a serious environmental weed like other weedy asparagus species. If you see *Asparagus retrofractus*, it should be reported and targeted for eradication.



Article and photos by Nadia Joyce, Sunshine Coast Council





## STUDENTS HELP THE SEARCH FOR

# Spotted-tailed Quolls

Our property has potential habitat for quolls with rocky outcrops and gullies.

I am a year 6 student at Hills International College, Jimboomba. Last term, our class spent ten weeks researching, inquiring, investigating and finally presenting to our school community on a topic that each of us is passionate about. I chose to study the Spotted-tailed Quoll because I recently found out that they haven't been seen in our local area since 2004 and I wanted to see if I could find evidence of their existence in our local area and create awareness in our local community of how and why they are disappearing.

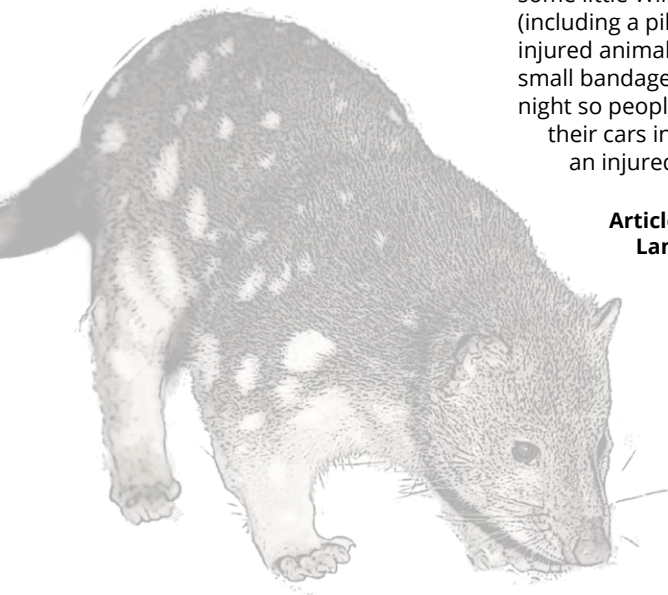
As a part of this project my parents helped me set up trail cameras on our 85 acre Land for Wildlife property. Unfortunately, we didn't find any evidence of quoll activity but it was

great to see footage of so many native animals including bandicoots, brushturkeys, possums, wallabies, kangaroos, bush rats, bearded dragons and birds.

I spent a lot of time researching quolls and their behaviour. I even contacted Paul Revie from the Quoll Society of Australia and was able to join him for an overnight trip to Girraween National Park to see and learn how they trap and document quolls to learn more about them. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in trapping any quolls on my stay, but it was an amazing experience to be able to learn on the job.

My exhibition night was a great success. I enjoyed being able to educate our local community on everything about quolls! I made up some little Wildlife Rescue packages (including a pillow case to put any injured animals into, gloves and a small bandage) to hand out on the night so people can keep them in their cars in case they come across an injured animal on the road.

**Article by Joey Swatton**  
Land for Wildlife member  
Mundoolun, Logan





# SIMPLE STAIRCASES FOR *Steep Slopes*

The eruption of Mount St Helens in Washington State in 1980 created a scree slope on the side of the mountain. When I visited some years later, tourists were able to climb the mountain via an ingenious staircase, which was like a rope ladder laid on top of the scree. On return, I adapted this system to use on my properties and have constructed many such staircases which have worked well for decades. It is suitable for any steep slope, like a creek bank or the side of a gully.

This type of staircase has many advantages over a more conventional one. It is much easier, cheaper and faster to construct and is very stable and long lasting. As it requires no digging, it leaves the ground intact.

## Materials

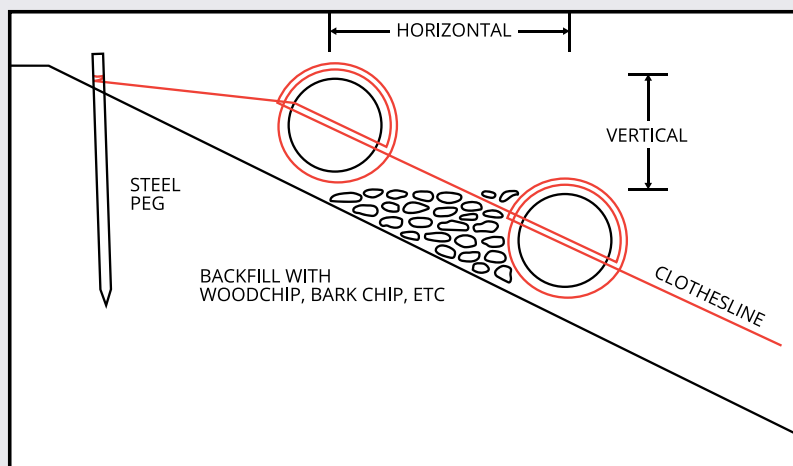
- Round treated timber "treads" 100 mm diameter. Cut to 480mm minimum length. Treated pine poles are usually sold in 2.4 and 3m lengths.
- Plastic coated clothesline with multifilament nylon core. This is sold in 30m lengths.
- Two steel 10mm pegs about 200mm long.
- Woodchip or leaf litter or similar.

## Method

1. Clear the area to be traversed of sticks and branches.
2. Cut the treads to length (minimum 480mm).
3. Drill a 10mm hole about 25mm from each end of the tread.
4. Drive two steel pegs in the top of the slope at the same distance apart as the holes in the treads. Leave about 30mm of the peg out of the ground.
5. Cut a length of clothesline six times as long as the length of the staircase. Wrap the middle of the clothesline around the two pegs a few times at ground level (leaving the clothesline intact).
6. Thread the clothesline through each end of the first tread, wind it right around the tread (one and a half turns) and thread it through again (see diagram).
7. Repeat with the next tread.
8. Use a spirit level and steel tape to ensure that the horizontal distance between treads, plus twice the vertical distance (see diagram), is 600-650mm (this is an architectural formula).
9. Continue to the bottom of the slope tread by tread using the same formula.
10. If you run out of clothesline, add more with a reef knot.
11. Backfill the treads with woodchip or leaf litter.

The pegs at the top of the slope will prevent the staircase from slipping downhill. The vertical and horizontal formulas ensure that the staircase will be easy to walk up and down.

**Article and photos by Trevor Sauer**  
Land for Wildlife member  
Flaxton, Sunshine Coast



Staircase Section





# Collared Delma

## HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

Good delma habitat has lots of surface and embedded rocks, fallen timber and leaf litter.

From April 2022 to March 2023, numerous Brisbane Land for Wildlife members were involved in surveys and habitat recovery for the small legless lizard, the Collared Delma (*Delma torquata*). This cryptic lizard is only 19 cm in length but is a priority species under the national Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032 and was the focus of a recent project delivered by Pullen Pullen and Kholo Creek Catchment Groups, thanks to funding from the Australian Government.

The Collared Delma lives in open eucalypt forest and depends on a grassy understorey mixed with an open midstorey with scattered habitat rocks that are 10-30 cm average diameter, with a flat base. These habitat rocks ideally sit directly on the ground, not imbedded, as the Collared Delma slides under these rocks for warmth and protection. It would seem that Collared Delmas prefer west facing slopes and can have a very small home range across a 10x10 metre area.

The western suburbs of Brisbane such as Kenmore, Pinjarra Hills, Anstead, Mt Crosby and Karana Downs, are one of the remaining strongholds for the Collared Delma. Its historical, and possible present, distribution extends from Blackdown Tablelands through to the Bunya Mountains and Toowoomba Range.

In Brisbane, the key threats to the Collared Delma are urban development and ground-covering weeds such as Creeping Lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*) and predation by pets, namely cats and chickens.

Surveys for the Collared Delma were undertaken on 20 properties by skilled

ecologists. Two confirmed sightings were made on two Land for Wildlife properties in Pullenvale. Even though Collared Delmas were not found on the other properties, most of the properties contain suitable habitat and have good populations of ground-dwelling skinks and small invertebrates.

Surveys for Collared Delmas are time-consuming as every suitable habitat rock is lifted to look for animals or for shed skins underneath the rocks. All rocks were placed back in the same position as they were found. The surveys recorded a total of 25 other reptile species. Despite this intense survey effort, the detection probability for this species is quite low, given their small size and shy habits.

In addition to the survey efforts, a community workshop was held as part of this project to raise awareness about the Collared Delma, its habitat requirements, threats and actions that landholders can undertake to reduce threats. Threats to Collared Delma are similar to the threats faced by many other small reptiles, so efforts to improve and protect delma habitat will also help other species.

Habitat restoration works were also conducted on private properties with known or likely Collared Delma populations and in Anstead Bushland Reserve. Creeping Lantana was the target of weed control efforts using chemical-free techniques. Over 900 person hours of weeding work was devoted to this project. In addition to weed control, augmentation of habitat via the introduction of rocks, mulch, native grasses and grass seed was undertaken on eight of the project properties.

Thanks to Dogwood Ecology for undertaking surveys, Bushtekniq and Oxley Creek Catchment Association for weed control activities, Friends of Anstead Bushland for ongoing bushcare activities and Brisbane City Council for liaising with Land for Wildlife members and for securing access to council reserves.

Overall, the project contributed to improving Collared Delma populations by enhancing habitat and educating local landholders about weed control and habitat maintenance. The surveys conducted provide a baseline for follow-up research and the habitat assessment tool will be invaluable for future projects. We hope to be reporting habitat improvements and an increasing number of Collared Delma sightings in the years to come.

The Collared Delma Survey Report and the Native Ground Cover Plants of Kholo Creek Catchment booklet are both available on the Pullen Pullen Creek Catchment Group website (go to Groups & Projects > Collared Delma Habitat Enhancement) at [www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au](http://www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au)

### References and Further Information

Dept of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Species Profile and Threats Database – *Delma torquata*. [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)

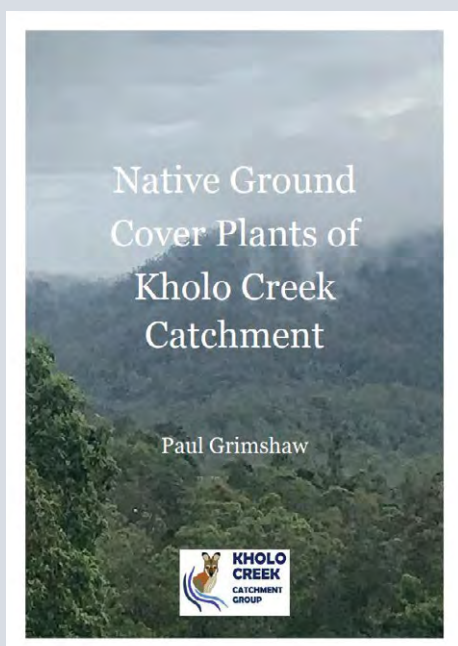
Land for Wildlife South East Queensland (2010) *Landholders help protect the threatened Collared Delma*. October, 4:4. Newsletter of the LfWSEQ Program.

**Article by Deborah Metters, Regional Coordinator and Gillian Whitehouse, Pullen Pullen Creek Catchment Group**





Collared Delmas found at Anstead Bushland Reserve.  
Photos by Stephen Peck.



#### GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Clearwing Swallowtail Creeper – *Aristolochia meridionalis* ssp. *meridionalis* ARISTOLOCHIACEAE



This slender, delicate vine has stems to 3.0 m long (often much shorter), usually scrambling across the ground amongst grasses and other ground cover species on stony hilltops. Leaves alternate, to 9cm x 5cm but usually smaller. Single greenish brown flowers to 22mm long in summer to autumn. After pollination opening, ribbed fruit form to 20mm x 4mm. This vine is the prime larval food plant for the Clearwing Swallowtail butterfly in Southeast Queensland. This butterfly's larvae will often devour all the plant until there is nothing of the plant remaining above ground. However, the vine has an underground tuber, from which it regrows after good seasonal rains.



Dwarf Morning Glory – *Evolvulus alsinoides* var. *decumbens*

CONVOLVULACEAE



A delicate trailing plant to 40cm width, widespread and often in open spaces. It can have prostrate to ascending stems. Leaves narrow, alternate to 30mm x 5mm. Blue to purplish blue flowers to 8mm across in spring to autumn. Round seed capsules to 4mm. There are other varieties, which have broader leaves and a more upright form, but *decumbens* is the variety in this catchment.

A booklet on ground cover plants written by local ecologist and Land for Wildlife member, Paul Grimshaw, was another useful and impressive outcome of this Collared Delma project. It details 58 species of native grass, lily, sedge, herb, fern and low shrub and is relevant for not only Brisbane, but across SEQ. Paul has been studying plants and ecosystems for decades and this booklet contains his first-hand understanding of these plants and their role in ecosystems and as butterfly host plants.

It is available online for free via the Pullen Pullen Creek Catchments Group website.



# FROM WORKING TOWARDS TO *Registered*

*"For me I do what I do because I've found it the most personally satisfying activity to be creating habitat for wildlife while hopefully improving the planet for the humans. It provides me personally with lots of exercise, so I have no need for gymnasium fees. It is very satisfying to see the effect that restoring habitat in this location close to a major town is having. It's a small project in some ways but makes a major contribution to joining up patches of remnant bush and also fills a major need in restoring forest in the local creek."* Norm Morwood



A dense planting of lomandras are growing successfully in the grey water disposal area.

A recent visit to a Land for Wildlife property in Palmwoods showcased the wonderful conservation outcomes that can be achieved through dedication, hard work and long-term goals. Wandering through the young forest, many would be surprised to know that all of it has been carefully planted as it emulates natural bushland with its structure, diversity and wildlife within.

Norm Morwood has spent the last ten years undertaking revegetation and weed control on his daughter Karen's property, which is positioned in a fragmented semi-rural landscape. Much of the surrounding area was cleared historically for farming and livestock. Purchased in 2012, and currently shared with four inquisitive alpacas, the property was previously a pineapple farm and was totally cleared, aside from one large fig tree. It is ten acres in size, some of which was also leased out for ginger farming and used for grazing.

Regional ecosystem mapping indicates most of the property would have been tall open eucalypt forest with some vine forest and a section of wet eucalypt forest in the lower gully. Due to previous land usage, disturbance and lack of remnant vegetation, Norm found that there was next to no natural regeneration occurring.

Thanks to Norm's ongoing revegetation efforts the property is now well on its way from bare paddocks to native bushland, providing a home not just for wildlife, but where Karen and her family can live "surrounded by forest". With the ever-increasing pressure of urbanisation on the Sunshine Coast, and the many threats to wildlife that come with it, creating refugia in these landscapes is of great importance to provide habitat and a safe haven for wildlife passing through.

Norm has a wealth of knowledge in bush regeneration and is a valued member of the bushcare community on the Sunshine Coast. He is currently a volunteer coordinator and the founder of not just one, but three bushcare groups. Norm first became involved in the bushcare program back in 2002 after joining and then coordinating the newly formed Moore Park Bushcare group in Indooroopilly.

As a mining engineer with a background in mine rehabilitation, Norm is passionate about restoration and moved from Brisbane to the Sunshine Coast in 2007, where he enjoys his one-acre property in Woombye. Much of his time is spent transforming Karen's property which thankfully is located only a short eight-minute drive away!

The plantings have been undertaken in manageable stages with a focus on canopy cover, allowing for the necessary follow up maintenance and weed control crucial to any successful revegetation project. Supported by the Land for Wildlife seedling incentive program and Landholder Environmental Grants provided by Sunshine Coast Council, the property is a wonderful example of what can be achieved through successful partnerships, collaboration, and commitment.

The first planting consisted of 50 mixed eucalypts in 2012, followed by infill planting and continuation up to the house and to the property boundaries. With stage 10 of the revegetation project recently completed, it is thoroughly rewarding for both Norm and Karen and the Sunshine Coast Land for Wildlife team to see the diversity of species and different age structures doing so well. As connectivity between areas continues to improve it is evident that Norm and Karen's vision of restoring the property back to healthy native bushland is well on its way to becoming a reality.

Norm's key learnings and interesting observations:

- Wire guards are best – cost effective and reusable. He previously used cardboard guards but found they caved in due to rain.
- White Cedars don't need tree guards – the wallabies don't like them.





Norm proudly receives his Land for Wildlife sign from Stephanie after years of restoring his daughter's property from bare paddock to forest.

- Native Hibiscus isn't used in their plantings anymore due to plants falling over as they mature and unpleasant scratches and difficulty when mowing.
- Previously did staggered plantings, but now plants in rows to enable easy mowing and maintenance.
- Spray squares instead of circles for prep and maintenance – easier to mow.
- Dig an additional hole next to where the seedling is planted to capture water.

Wildlife observed on the property includes wallabies, bandicoots, gliders, possums, quails and a variety of other birdlife. The complex forest floor structure in the older revegetation plots provides lots of woody debris, logs and leaf litter for wildlife, with Rufous Fantails often seen hopping from branch to branch through the understory. The familiar and peaceful calls of Eastern Whipbirds provided a lovely backing track during our property walk, and Hoveas and Dogwoods were bursting with flowers, providing an eye-catching pop of colour as we walked through the revegetation areas.

Norm's story is a fantastic example of a property that has successfully moved from 'Working Towards' registration to full 'Registration' with the Land for Wildlife program. With approximately half of the property revegetated and no signs of slowing down (stage 11 is underway to continue planting out the paddocks), we look forward to continuing to work with Norm and Karen on their Land for Wildlife journey.

When presenting Norm with the coveted Land for Wildlife sign, we also had an unexpected guest of honour join us - a striking Pacific Baza flew down and perched on a nearby tree to help celebrate this special occasion. What a wonderful and fitting way to finish off the visit!

**Article by Stephanie Keys**  
**Land for Wildlife Officer**  
**Sunshine Coast Council**



Norm currently uses previously controlled (sprayed with herbicide) weedy grasses as mulch around plantings rather than paper or purchased mulch.



Many family planting days have been enjoyed over the years, with friends and relatives being rewarded with a campfire and barbeque after a day's work.



Norm and Nadia Joyce (Land for Wildlife Officer) inspect a nest box on Karen's property.



# Cane Toad Collaboration

## WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The introduction of the Cane Toad in 1935 to Australia to control agricultural pests brought a whole range of negative impacts into our natural environment and our wildlife. Cane Toads are continuing to spread across the landscape and there is no sign of reprieve. If we are to attack this problem head on, we all need to collaborate and reduce numbers in our own backyards.

In Queensland, everyone has a general biosecurity obligation under the law to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive animals under their control. Here are some tips on how to do this.

You can toad bust in your own patch and make a real dint in the toad population. Within a short period of time, you should see a decrease in Cane Toad numbers and an increase in frog numbers.

Humane disposal of toads is essential. After collecting toads, it is recommended to follow the stepped hypothermia method. This involves placing the toads in a container in the fridge for 12 hours followed by placing them in the freezer for a further 24 hours, then placing them in the bin, on bin day.

Remember Cane Toads have poisonous glands, so if you are handling them, you must wear appropriate personal protective equipment like surgical gloves. Also, please keep your pets safe and do not allow them to have access to Cane Toads. It isn't just the large paratoid gland on adult toads that contains toxins, even dried out toad eggs and tadpoles also contain toxins. These toxins, if ingested by pets or wildlife, can affect the nervous system, heart and gastrointestinal tract, and can be fatal if eaten



The Cane Toad Toadinator Trap.



One of the Cane Toad Busting Groups in the Redlands.

in large amounts. If you suspect that your pet has eaten large amounts of toad material, it is best to get them to a vet as soon as possible.

Redland City Council (RCC) is toadally excited and in the planning stage for their third year of Cane Toad education and busting. Over the last two years RCC has held workshops for the community in collaboration with Watergum. These talks were followed by toad busting events held at Capalaba and Mount Cotton. These events were all well attended, and the results spoke for themselves with 2,020 Cane Toads removed from the environment. We have participants who tell us they can't wait to join us again for the third year running.

Many participants have installed a toad-proof frog pond or frog hotel and it doesn't take too long before they are inhabited with native frogs.

We have been working with private property owners across the Redlands for 24 years through our Environmental Partnerships Programs such as Land for Wildlife. We have found that the best control method for pest management is integrated control using multiple approaches. The following is a four-stage control program that has been proven to reduce Cane Toad and tadpole numbers and increase frog numbers.

### 1. Creation of a thick planted barrier to prevent toads from breeding in waterways/waterbodies

Working in partnership with landholders, we have managed to increase the native vegetation surrounding a large number of water bodies. By creating a thick vegetated buffer, we are keeping the Cane Toads out of the water body where they would otherwise reproduce. This practice has also shown to significantly increase habitat for aquatic/terrestrial wildlife and has improved water quality.

### 2. Regular collection and disposal of toad eggs

Cane Toad eggs will hatch within two or three days. We recommend to all our participants that they regularly check their dams for toad eggs (look for small black eggs in long, clear, jelly-like strands), and remove them out of the environment and place them away from wildlife and pets.

### 3. Regular collection and disposal of tadpoles

Female Cane Toads can produce up to 70,000 tadpoles per year. The tadpole stage of the life cycle lasts 4-8 weeks. The third part of an integrated control program is the use of funnel traps and lures. The lures are made from toxic Cane Toad glands to attract toad tadpoles that are drawn to the chemical attractant released from the lures. The traps are placed in shallow water where the toad tadpoles congregate. One lure can attract thousands of tadpoles in just a few hours.

RCC, and several other Local Governments in SEQ, have purchased a number of tadpole traps to loan out to Land for Wildlife members upon request. Please check with your Land for Wildlife Officer if you would like to borrow a toad trap. Alternatively, you can purchase the funnel traps and lures yourself from Watergum via <https://watergum.org/canetoads/>.

### 4. Regular collection and disposal of adult toads

Regular collection of adult Cane Toads can be undertaken in a few different ways. It is surprising just how quickly toad numbers can be reduced by manual collection on small properties. For some years now, RCC has been purchasing and loaning out Toadinator traps to landholders who have had good success in capturing juvenile and adult toads with very little effort. One participant collected over 200 Cane Toads in just one night.





Theo Owen with his collection of toads.

Toadinator traps are designed to attract and catch adult female Cane Toads, which can then be removed and disposed of humanely. One-way doors on three sides of the trap allow toads to enter but not exit. The traps are solar powered with a light to attract insects and a Cane Toad caller to call in the females. The caller and lights come on at night when toads are most active and then automatically turn off during the day while charging. By attracting female toads into the trap before they lay hundreds of eggs, you are effectively having a bigger impact on toad numbers than catching single Cane Toads.

Australian Control Technologies (Australia) (ACTA) Pty. Ltd. worked with James Cook University to research and test the Toadinator Cane Toad Traps which can now be purchased from ACTA via <https://animalcontrol.com.au/products/toadinator>.

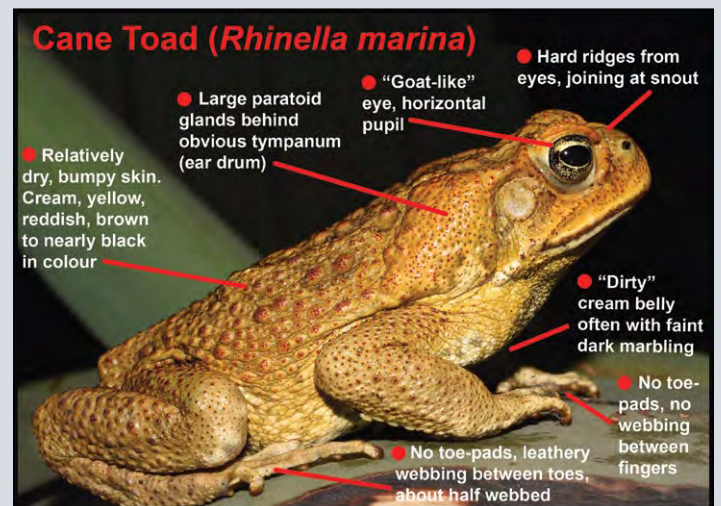
The Australian Museum has a fantastic Frog Identification app which is easy to download and use. The Museum is very keen for people to record and submit their frog and Cane Toad calls on this app. This project will assist in adding more frog and toad records to those already mapped and assist in keeping an eye on their populations. The large number of Cane Toads, particularly from September to April, can have a direct impact on native frog populations, as toads compete with frogs for food and suitable breeding locations.

There are numerous ways in which you can track and manage toads on your property and deter toads from breeding in your dams and other waterbodies, especially using the recently-developed traps mentioned above.

**Article and photos by Maree Manby**  
**Land for Wildlife Officer**  
**Redland City Council**



A packet of lures and a funnel for trapping toad tadpoles.  
 Image by Debie Brett.



Not toads, but similar looking native frogs!  
 Images by Jodi Rowley.



# Using Blaze Trees

## TO PROVIDE AN ESTIMATE OF TREE AGE

I have an interest in reference trees that were blazed by early European surveyors. I have located several trees in the southern Moreton Bay region. Not only are these trees of historical significance, they can also be used to estimate tree growth and age.

At our property at Wamuran, there is a mahogany tree growing in similar soil and country to the two trees shown here in this article, and it has a diameter of approximately 800mm (radius 400mm). So using growth estimates based on the measurements I've taken from local reference trees, I estimate that our mahogany tree is at least 1000 years old.

**Article by Col Moorhead**  
**Land for Wildlife member**  
**Wamuran, Moreton Bay**



Reference tree at Zillman's Crossing, 1872.



This reference tree was cut at Station 69 Plan No C311041 at Fritz Rd, Wamuran by Surveyor Delisser in 1887. It is on a mahogany and has not grown enough to cover the chiselling. The tree has grown about 35mm in radius in that time.



This reference tree was cut by Surveyor Geddes in 1874. It is on a mahogany tree at Station 7 on Plan S311061 south of Oakey Flat Rd near Burpengary Creek.

The tree was still growing in 1980 when I was there, but has since died, probably in the dry years 2000-2005. Since 1980, the wood around the blaze has been trimmed. The growth is about 35mm in radius.



It is a great time to be a young reader. There are so many books now available with a focus on the natural world here in Australia. We have an incredibly rich natural environment that can be understood through various lenses such as science and through the eyes of First Nations people and their deep connections and cultural obligations with nature. The books reviewed here are all relevant to the ecosystems of south-east Queensland.

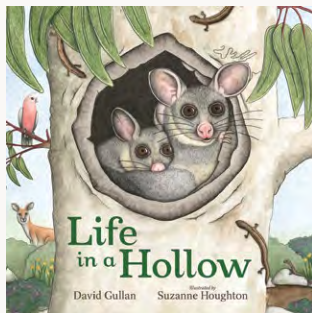
I would recommend all the books to those that have an interest in understanding fire in the landscape, plant and animal interactions with fire, the very important role hollows play in the ecosystem, and the story about where have all the Christmas beetles gone.

## Life in a Hollow

By David Gullan

Illustrated by Suzanne Houghton

The book has lots of interesting facts, including about a branch falling off and bugs eating, then skinks moving into the cracks. I never knew that bugs help to create hollows and help to make it bigger. The book makes me feel happy as I know all sorts of animals have homes. I loved it when the rosella moved in. The baby rosella was cute. I would recommend this book to my friends and especially like the possum, galahs, skinks, kangaroos, actually everything about it.

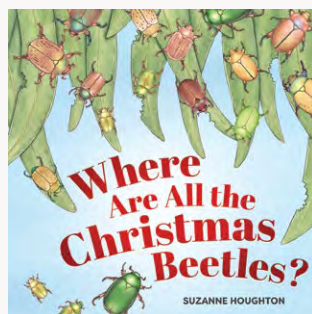


Hardcover | 2023 | \$25  
32 pages | 25 x 25 cm  
Also as ePDF and ePUB  
CSIRO Publishing  
[www.publish.csiro.au](http://www.publish.csiro.au)

## Where are all the Christmas Beetles?

By Suzanne Houghton

It was fun to read because it has beetles in it and I like beetles. The book made me think a lot. It had a lot of other beetles in that I didn't know about. It was a very interesting book and my favourite part was the beautiful drawings. I would recommend this book to the whole universe. (Pippa has been learning about poem structure in school and was thrilled to be able to teach her Dad about poem structure using the book).



Hardcover | 2023 | \$25  
32 pages | 25 x 25 cm  
Also as ePDF and ePUB  
CSIRO Publishing  
[www.publish.csiro.au](http://www.publish.csiro.au)

My 8-year-old daughter, Pippa, read all the books to me and found words in some books more challenging than in others. This was an opportunity for me to explain various concepts. I would recommend that parents read the glossary first to have some answers to questions at the ready. Pippa especially loved the books that had a lot of rhyme. The illustrations were amazing in all the books.

Craig Welden

Land for Wildlife Officer, Logan City Council

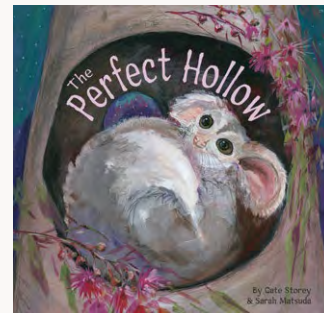
Land for Wildlife member, Brisbane

## The Perfect Hollow

By Cate Storey

Illustrated by Sarah Matsuda

It was fun to read as it was a poem and poems are fun to read. I thought when the owl first offered the home to the glider, she was being nice, but actually she wanted to eat the glider. That made me feel sad. As I read on, I was happy as the glider found a home. I would recommend this book to my friends.



Hardcover | 2023 | \$25  
32 pages | 25 x 25 cm  
Published by Wet  
Season Books  
[wetseasonbooks.com.au](http://wetseasonbooks.com.au)

## Alight

By Sam Lloyd

Illustrated by Samantha Metcalfe

I found the book very interesting, and my favourite part was seeing the Antechinus having babies. (Pippa stopped and then remembered that we have an Antechinus in the freezer for the Museum). Pippa was curious and asked why didn't the damselflies and dragonflies just fly away instead of sheltering from the fire. I love the fairy wrens on top of the log but didn't like the fox creeping up to the Antechinus. My friends would love to read this book.



Hardcover | 2023 | \$25  
32 pages | 25 x 25 cm  
Also as ePDF and ePUB  
CSIRO Publishing  
[www.publish.csiro.au](http://www.publish.csiro.au)

Book Reviews by Pippa Welden

Land for Wildlife member, The Gap, Brisbane



# THE SLOW JOURNEY FROM A BLANKET OF WEEDS HIDING A *Wealth of Mature Trees*

I agree with Mark Twain who is credited with the wisdom, "All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence, and then success is sure."

We certainly had plenty of ignorance and confidence when we bought Claremont at the beginning of 2016 with 52 precipitous acres of weed haven. The success part is surely coming, but so slowly! While we had come off a cattle property in the Central Tablelands of NSW and had been involved with Landcare for many years, the differences between there and Upper Brookfield are profound. A totally different environment, topography, rainfall, land use (past and present), flora, fauna and particularly weeds.

Historically, Claremont had grown bananas and 250 custard apple trees. These were abandoned about 25-30 years ago judging from the aerial maps. For a while a few horses and ponies were kept, and the weeds crept in, sometimes mown on the flatter areas, but the steeper slopes went untended. Part of the property, thankfully, has never been farmed, although I suspect that it was originally logged. We call this the Western Forest. It has a wonderful selection of mature trees with some understory species. It suffers to a degree with lantana, asparagus fern (climbing and basket) and other goodies but responds very well to spot spraying and hand clearing. Sadly, we have not been able to give it the time it deserves because the remaining property is Class Red Urgent.



A future area to target - there's a Red Kamala somewhere in there to rescue.

By the time we arrived the Banana-lands (as we called the rest of the farm) was under a head height and/or house height blanket of asparagus ferns, lantana, glycine, ochna, yellow bell, Easter cassia and every other conceivable weed. Part of the garden was also hidden under the lantana et. al. and for the first couple of years, as we slowly cleared it, we discovered the brickwork, paths and rock walls that were part of the original landscaped garden.

Our obvious focus needed to be the Banana-lands. We had several issues.

How not to get overwhelmed by the task ahead. This is a crucial point. It is easy to dive in with wild enthusiasm only to run out of puff at the first hurdle. We suffered from this to some extent but



An exciting find, *Sophora fraseri*, a threatened species.

now we realise this is a 5-year, 10-year, lifetime project and that nobody is going to wave a magic wand.

We learned how to roll with the punches. Just when we think we are making progress with the weeds, we have a wet summer and they all come back. It's having to accept the two steps forward, one step back philosophy. A wet summer brings landslips and erosion even in areas that have been carefully reconstructed with dam walls, slipways, gully reconstruction and roads.

When to plant trees is a bit of a gamble. A good planting season can be followed by a dry time when the trees struggle to survive. Mind you, that was one thing we were used to in our previous life when seasons were a lot drier on average. A very wet summer can find the weeds exploding and growing all over the new trees unless we are quick to eradicate them. I am sure everyone has their own comparable stories.

Bush regeneration, land rehabilitation, weed control, mowing and the plethora of chores that are associated requires manpower. No question. We were so fortunate that two of our daughters and their husbands stepped up to the plate and have become as passionate about the Claremont Project as we are. It has become a concerted family team effort and without their input we would struggle.

Other assistance has come from Land for Wildlife, especially our ever helpful, enthusiastic and knowledgeable program officer, Cody Hochen, and the Moggill Creek Catchment Group. We have been grateful to receive several Community Conservation Assistance grants from Brisbane City Council, which have been an enormous bonus both because there is extra work done on the ground and because there is a great feeling of support knowing we are not in this alone.



Machinery can make hard yakka a bit easier.



On a more practical level we had to decide where to start. The Banana-lands, yes. But they were virtually inaccessible. From talking to previous owners and reviewing the aerial maps we could see there was a system of roads and tracks under the lantana. Identifying and clearing them would give us access to more of the property.

We had a contractor come in to mow around the house, sheds and the dam, but it wasn't until we purchased our own tractor, mulcher and bucket that we made real progress. We were fortunate that Alan's experience with farm machinery could be put to effective use.

It was still slow going and we were really working blind. We had to push through firstly by foot with the old machete getting a real work out. The country for the most part is very steep with some of the roads having an unforgiving drop-off on one side. Miscalculation of the route could have unfortunate results. This has made a real difference even though there are still places we have yet to get to.

We have developed a flexible approach to weeds involving a combination of mowing, mulching, spraying, hand grubbing and whatever seems appropriate at the time. At times we take extra care because we get a feel if a certain area is likely to have native species struggling under the blanket of weeds. Trees completely obscured with a curtain of suffocating vines need care. Probably the most satisfying aspect is to clear the vines and see the trees underneath start to thrive.

Some of the land doesn't have much of seed bank for native species and so we have embarked on a planting program as well. But it is interesting that in other areas we can see pioneer succession in play: black wattles, silky oaks, red kamalas, red ash, native hyacinths, some wonderful stands of Moreton Bay ash and more recently foambarks, celerywoods, and smaller understory species. And with Cody's assistance we are slowly discovering that we have a wealth of mature trees and other smaller species particularly in the Western Forest.

Exciting finds have been an area of the threatened *Sophora fraseri* with its delicate yellow pea blossom, and a healthy Scrub Turpentine (*Rhodamnia argentea*) one of the species that are highly susceptible to myrtle rust and is listed as Critically Endangered. There is always the expectation that there is more to discover. A wish is to someday have a detailed inventory of all the flora.

Fascination with our new environment contains other elements. Wildlife is elusive but present, particularly the birds. With binoculars to eyes and the willing help of Cody, Deborah Metters and other friends (not to mention books and apps) we are slowly building up our sightings. To date we have logged 84 species over the last seven years and know there are more to be identified. We are ever hopeful that, as we rehabilitate Claremont more fauna will find their way in and make a home, or a visit, here.



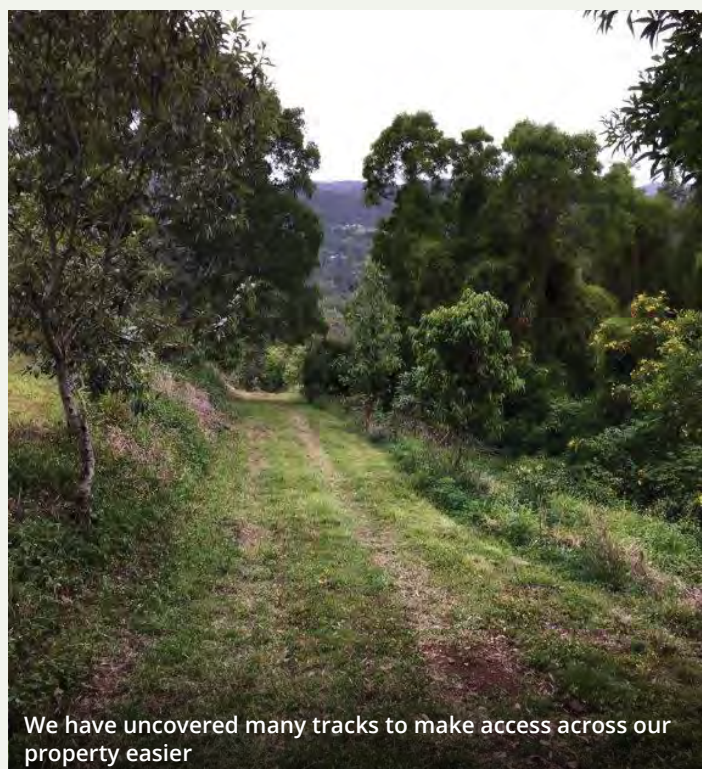
One of the best views in Brisbane!

Claremont and the work our family does here has become a life-absorbing project. To see small successes mount up is extraordinarily pleasing and they are sufficient to keep us motivated - that and the wonderful community and Land for Wildlife support. I continue to be hopeful that Mark Twain's "success" will indeed come to pass.

**Article by Colleen Watts**  
**Land for Wildlife member**  
**Brookfield, Brisbane**



Rescuing native plants from curtains of weeds and complementary planting has started to reclaim some of the land.



We have uncovered many tracks to make access across our property easier



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**GOLDCOAST**



## BRISBANE'S BIG

# Butterfly Count

**B**risbane's Big Butterfly Count (BBBC) has been running now for four years and has helped broaden the understanding of butterflies and their distribution in Brisbane and beyond.

Organised and delivered by the Brisbane Catchments Network (BCN), the BBBC organises butterfly surveys on various council reserves and Land for Wildlife properties across Brisbane every year. The aim is to survey each site three times per butterfly season (summer) with sites representing different habitat types, and therefore, different butterfly species. Properties with open eucalypt forests, wetlands, dry vine scrubs and mangroves are all involved.

All surveys are open to the public and are advertised on the BBBC website. They are a great way to learn about how to identify butterflies and how to survey for them using butterfly nets and other survey equipment. Entomologists Dr Justin Cappadonna and Dr Trevor Lambkin, and butterfly specialist Cliff Meyer assist with the survey methodology and in verifying identifications.

Each year, up to 50 surveys are conducted with an impressive tally of 110 species encountered so far. All confirmed survey findings are added to the Atlas of Living Australia database ([ala.org.au](http://ala.org.au)).

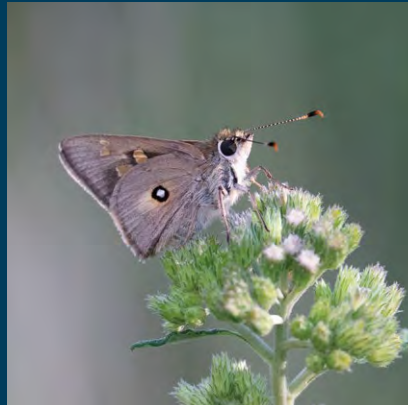
The BBBC is a great way to engage the community and to improve awareness of the essential role that invertebrates play in ecosystems. BCN is currently investigating expanding the count to other Local Government areas in SEQ, so stay tuned.

Learning about butterflies opens up a world of understanding about their larval host plants, nectar feed plants, and an understanding of what landholders can do to conserve and encourage butterflies.

Thank you to the Land for Wildlife members in Fig Tree Pocket, Carindale, Upper Brookfield and Brighton who have welcomed surveys onto their properties.

Check out the BBBC website ([brisbanebigbutterflycount.org](http://brisbanebigbutterflycount.org)) for butterfly resources and a list of survey dates and locations (see Diary page).

Article and above photos by Deborah Metters.



Small butterflies can be tricky to identify, so having an expert on hand in the field, like during the Brisbane Big Butterfly Count, can be very helpful, especially for skippers (Family Hesperidae) shown above, and blues (Family Lycaenidae) shown below.



One highlight of Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count was finding a Tawny Coster at Boondall Wetlands in Feb 2021. This species has been moving southward over the past few decades, presumably in response to a warming climate. It originates in India and Sri Lanka and moved through Asia during the 2000s to arrive in northern WA and NT in 2012. It reached Cairns in 2017 and, in 2021, was first recorded in Brisbane.

Photo by Hari K Patibanda, Flickr.