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FLOTSOM

Issue 7 - May 2013

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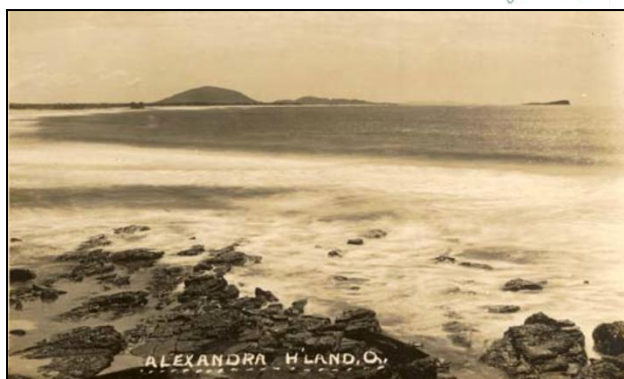
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Welcome!



As usual, our members have been out and about, actively enjoying our local region. We are an adventurous bunch, so many of us regularly travel further afield to see what the rest of Australia has to offer too. This month we have stories about our local treasures, as well as some snippets from members who have packed up a tent or caravan and headed out into the beautiful wild bits of Australia.



View of Mount Coolum & Mudjimba Island in the 1920's



Wedge-tailed Shearwaters or Mutton Birds

Calling all birders, naturalists & photographers ...

by Genevieve Jones

A conversation about bird life and shore birds or waders on the Maroochy North Shore was a point of interest at the last monthly Coast Care meeting. This stemmed from a recent conversation with Aboriginal Traditional Owner, Kerry Jones, about his historical observations of hundreds of shore birds, a number of decades ago, around Pincushion Island at Maroochy (River) North Shore. Another conversation with Les Donald of Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service, Maroochydhore, revealed that not only Mudjimba Island, but Pincushion Island itself was a nesting area for the Mutton Bird or Shearwater. Mudjimba Island protects the southern-most, Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Puffinus pacificus*) colony in Queensland.

If you have historical photos of prolific birdlife on Maroochy North Shore from past decades I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by email at gjones.biodiverse@gmail.com.

If you would like more information or photographs on a range of shorebird species, or maps of habitat areas around Maroochy North Shore, check out these websites:

- <http://aussiebirding.wildiaris.com/trips/10665-Beach-Stone-curlews-at-Maroochydhore-Sunshine-Coast>
- <http://sunshinecoastbirds.blogspot.com.au/2013/03/beach-stone-curlew-huge-tern-flock-at.html>
- <http://keunea.blogspot.com.au/2013/04/birding-in-maroochy-river-at.html>
- <http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/sitePage.cfm?code=shorebirds>



Beach Stone-Curlews at Maroochydhore



Beach Stone-Curlew - huge Tern flock at Maroochydhore



A big day out at Double Island Point ...

by Edwin Hammet

Thanks to an invitation from Surfrider Foundation Sunshine Coast, on Sunday 21st of March, six of our weeders took on a different challenge and headed to Double Island Point to assist with a beach clean-up.

We rendezvoused at Tickle Park at 8.30am to meet Sally and Aaron from Surfriders. The day started well, as it was clear and fine. We then proceeded to the river barge at Tewantin, where we met more willing helpers, for the drive up the beach toward Double Island Point. Armed with our safety gear and collection bags, we were told to head north and stop where we thought it was worthwhile (i.e. where the beach needed TLC) but get to the Freshwater camping grounds by 12.30pm for a BBQ lunch. Regrettably, we had not gone too far before it was evident that there was rubbish a-plenty. The CDCCG members then leap-frogged our way north collecting plastic, styrofoam and other assorted rubbish. Sadly, this also included many glow sticks from fishing nets. Some of the more notable items found were: rubbers thongs (mainly the right foot), toothbrushes, plastic toys, a toilet lid, fishing lures, a stash of water bottles behind the fore dune, and lengths of rope. After what seemed no time at all, we realised we needed to get a wriggle on if we wanted to make the lunch on time. So it was into the vehicles for a quick dash north to the Freshwater camping grounds. The only slightly difficult part of the journey was at the beach exit for Freshwater, due to the depth of loose sand.

Courtesy of the Surfrider Foundation, who picked up all costs of the day, we enjoyed a very hearty BBQ lunch, including some kangaroo steaks. We were entertained by several largish goannas who prowled the site for any food scraps.

The entire crew then assembled on the beach to see the fruits of our labours - half a tonne of rubbish was collected! Due to the rising tide, we decided that we would return home via Rainbow Beach and Gympie. This is when an olde fashionede mappe would have been useful as our GPS was not on speaking terms!

A rewarding day was enjoyed by all. Thanks to the Surfrider Foundation Sunshine Coast, Cleanwater Constructions and Burnett Mary Regional Group, who made this all possible.

One of the most disappointing aspects of the trip was the amount of human waste, principally plastic containers of all descriptions and a car battery, just behind the fore dunes. It astounded us that people who obviously went to enjoy the magnificent beach and natural environment, could at the same time, diminish this by not being more responsible. This despite the many rubbish skips provided along the beach. Perhaps the responsible authority should issue ALL beach goers with a rubbish bag? (This happened when I went to Fraser Island some years ago. Edwin). Perhaps also a sign that says:

Leave behind nothing but footprints ...



Crossland travels ...

by Jan Crossland

Jan and Chris Crossland are away on a caravanning trip through north and western Queensland from late April until late September/early October:

Our travels so far have delivered rain to almost everywhere we have stayed, including Townsville, Paronella Park near Innisfail, Hughenden, Richmond and Julia Creek. Not a lot of rain in some places, more than enough in others – Townsville friends were complaining about the lack of a real wet season, but the few days in early May made up for that, while Paronella Park had “a few wet days on top of a few wet weeks” according to staff there.

Paronella Park is a magical place, originally the dream of a Spaniard named Jose Paronella, who created a castle complete with ballroom for the benefit of local residents. He showed movies, had an ice-cream stand, a tennis court and a picnic area beside the lake, and built a hydro-electric power system using the powerful waterfall on the property. He also planted thousands of trees and plants, most of them native and many still standing. There are amazing vistas along its several paths, most of which look back up to the waterfall, and Jose replicated the main waterfall shape at another, smaller one. The park was left to nature for a few decades, until the current owners discovered it and decided to continue the dream, discovering hidden secrets as they began rebuilding. Two recent cyclones damaged the structure but didn't dampen the spirit – even the staff are upbeat and seem to have ownership of the complex, as they show visitors around or answer questions.

From Paronella Park we went up to the Atherton Tableland and inland to Mt Surprise for a few nights, including a visit to Cobbold Gorge. This narrow gorge is carved out of basalt and sandstone, only navigable for 600m but worth a visit. There had been a fire on the upper levels of the Gorge, and weeds had moved in, which horrified me – I was itching to remove them, except that most of them had nasty spines along the stems, a strong deterrent. I did do some weeding around the resort buildings, and would have warned the staff about getting on top of the weeds before they took over, but the staff weren't fussed. The horizon pool was a comfort!

The van has survived a couple of rough roads, including the Kennedy Development Road between The Lynd and Hughenden. We free-camped two nights at Pyramid Campground at Porcupine Gorge in misty rain, and made the climb down and along the creek at the bottom. It's really pretty despite being black after a recent fire – we can't win! We did see a flock of budgies and had several visits from a bettong (we think!).

Our next stop, Richmond, was to visit Kronosaurus Korner, a museum funded by the local shire council and displaying several large fossilised marine mammal 'dinosaurs' that lived in the Cretaceous inland seas out here. The museum is to be envied, but the town is depressed and depressing, brown and dry with lots of empty blocks between buildings along the main street. Julia Creek, 142kms west, is a bright, cheerful contrast, although just as dry outside the town. From here we head north to Lawn Hill and more fossils, then on west to the Northern Territory.





A weekend out west ...

by Tony Gibson

Girraween National Park would have to be most people's favourite, with granite sculptures and amazing fauna and flora. Chris, Alison, Gay and Tony spent the ANZAC Day unofficial long weekend walking in the most southern National Park in Queensland about five hours' drive from the Sunny Coast.

We were able to walk to Mount Norman, the Pyramids and the Underground Creek. There was plenty of sunshine to warm us up - after 4°C overnight at Applethorpe, it was not much above freezing. The red wine from local wineries helped us enjoy our cosy camp at Castle Rock Camping Area.



The reflections in Bald Rock Creek at dawn were magical with mist rising. The New Holland Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robins, Black Cockatoos and Crimson Rosellas were among the birdlife early in the morning and throughout the day.

When doing a little off track tramping we came across a friend, Steve, from Southern Cross University with eight of his outdoor education students from the USA. Our friend

encouraged the students to take a swim in the creek as their only bath over the five day adventure – chilly! They were in and out very quickly!!!



Someone is watching you ...

by Genevieve Jones

Can the illusion of being observed can make you a better person?
Even a poster with eyes on it changes how people behave.

In dealing with litter and the theft of bicycles in public places, a study and trial undertaken through a field experiment, showed that a low-cost measure such as merely hanging up posters of staring human eyes is enough to significantly alter people's behaviour.

Could such findings be further developed to produce signage that would invoke better public behaviour in our 'commons' or recreational areas along our coastline?

For more information, check out the following web articles:

Why keeping eyes on litter promotes better behaviour

<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20120525-keeping-eyes-on-litter>

How the Illusion of Being Observed Can Make You a Better Person

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=how-the-illusion-of-being-observed-can-make-you-better-person>

Did the eyes really stare down bicycle crime in Newcastle (UK)?

<http://mindhacks.com/2013/05/16/did-the-eyes-really-stare-down-bicycle-crime-in-newcastle/>



Flotsam and jetsam ...

Vale Cath Matthews ...

One of our precious members passed away very unexpectedly in April. Cath Matthews and her husband Bill have been Coast Care members for at least a decade. Both have worked tirelessly to weed and revegetate the dunes in Cooloom in particular, and throughout the rest of our region as part of regular Group Weeds and special events. Cath could always be found working quietly in the background, without making a fuss, pulling out asparagus fern. She was also a weekly volunteer at the Cooloom Community Native Nursery, usually in the background again, washing out tubes ready for a new batch of little native plants. Cath and Bill could always be relied to be there when extra help is needed for special events.

Cath will be deeply missed by our Coast Care community.



Recognise these weed-busting warriors?
Photo courtesy of Ben McMullen at SCC



Edwin spotted these mushrooms, while everyone else was hard at work weeding.



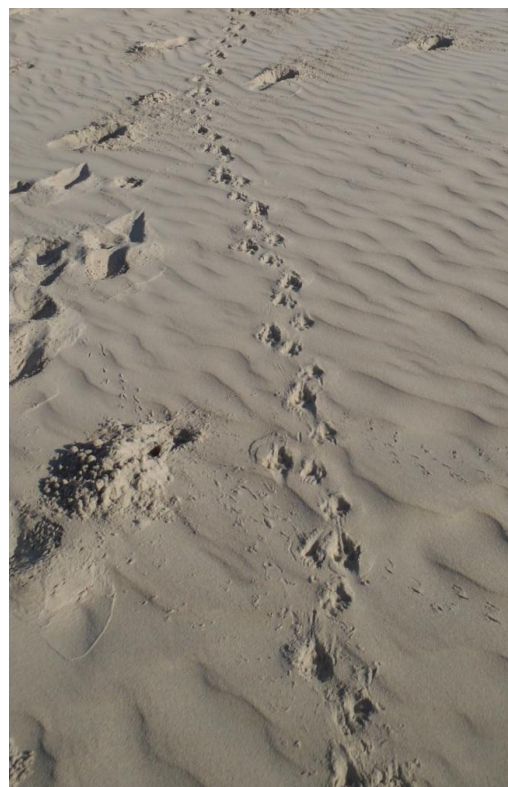
In April, the Yinneburra group hosted 27 Sunshine Coast Grammar School students. Leigh did the talk, walk, and inspirational stuff with half of the students while the rest of us cracked the whip to get some worthwhile work done. Everyone then dug in for a bit of supplementary planting at Pt Arkwright.



Coast Care members and SCC Community Conservation staff (Nadia and Ash) undertook a survey of nest boxes in the Yinneburra Bushland Conservation Reserve. Some boxes were inhabited, and some needed replacing. Thanks to all who helped out with this valuable work for our local native hollow-dwelling creatures.



At about 4 pm on 13th May, one of our vigilant members spotted an echidna crossing Stumers Creek Road just west of the watercourse. This is not the first time that an echidna has been spotted in this area – keep an eye out for tracks on the beach – you may be very very lucky and spot an echidna too!



Weekly Weeding Groups

Stumers Dunes Bill - (07) 5446 4916 Peter - (07) 5446 5819	Lions Park Watercourse Lineise - (07) 5446 5116 lineise5@bigpond.com	 Tony Gibson 0419 791 860 tony.gibson@spirit3h.com.au
Yinneburra and Yerranya Dunes Silva - (07) 5446 5549 Leigh - (07) 5446 1600	Yaroomba Bushland Park Sherida - 0403 370 157	
Mudjimba Bushcare Helen – (07) 5448 9604	Marcoola North Dune Care Alan Hayes - 0419 526 347	



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Tues-Fri 7:30am – 3:30pm
 Sat 8:30am – 12:30pm
 Jake Hazzard & Ben Pearce

*This newsletter has been produced with the support of all Coolum District Coast Care Group members and
 /Sunshine Coast Council.*