Upcoming workshops

1. **Bushfire Management Information Session**
   - Date: 11 March 2020
   - Time: 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm
   - Location: Bellthorpe Community Hall, 1 Keir Rd, Bellthorpe
   - Description: This information session explores how to plan and manage your property for bushfire. Presenters include the Queensland Rural Fire Service, South East Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, Moreton Bay Regional Council and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. This session is a mandatory pre-requisite for landholders attending the Bushfire Property Management Workshop (see below). No RSVP is required.

2. **Bushfire Property Management Workshop**
   - Date: 28 March 2020
   - Time: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
   - Location: Bellthorpe Community Hall, 1 Keir Road, Bellthorpe
   - Description: Following on from the Bushfire Management Information Session, this workshop explores how to plan, prepare, and manage bushfire risks and hazards on your property as you develop a Bushfire Management Plan. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP your contact details and dietary requirements to esmailbox@moretonbay.qld.gov.au by Friday 13 March 2020. A mandatory prerequisite is the Bushfire Management Information Session (Wednesday 11 March 2020).

3. **From Farm to Forest: Managing multiple land uses on your property**
   - Date: 12 May 2020
   - Time: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
   - Location: Dayboro Community Hall, 6 Bradley Street, Dayboro
   - Description: This workshop will be a discussion forum where we provide an introduction on how to manage your property's conservation values with other land uses. Expert on conservation and land management and Senior Environmental Scientist, Bruce Lord (Healthy Land & Water), will assist in facilitating this workshop and answering your questions. If you would like to attend this workshop, please RSVP your name, contact number and dietary requirements to esmailbox@moretonbay.qld.gov.au by COB Thursday 30 April 2020. If you have any specific management questions or queries you would to discuss as a group, please include a maximum of 3 questions in your email.

**Australia Day Environment Award - Fred Palin**

From leading marine environmental initiatives to reconnecting indigenous youth with their sea country, the dedication of Joondoburri Elder Fred Palin to preserve Moreton Bay’s marine ecology is something worth celebrating.

Acting Mayor Mike Charlton has awarded Fred Morton Bay Regional Council’s Australia Day Environment Award.

Fred’s passion to reconnect indigenous youth with their sea country is evident in all the work he does.

“It’s great to be an Aboriginal person who’s connected to their country,” said Fred.

“And it’s great to see that when we do make inroads to the community for help, in restoring some of these degrading systems, that the community will come to the call and help make a change.”
Richmond Birdwing Butterfly Vine Corridor

It’s six months since 50 Richmond Birdwing Butterfly vines were planted in the Samford Parklands, Samford Valley, and it is already evident that the vines are growing well. During a working bee in October 2019, one of the vines was already in flower with five flowers in bloom (see Photo 2).

Richmond Birdwing Butterfly vines are the host plant to the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly, classified as Vulnerable under the Nature Conservation Act 1994.

The planting is a collaborative project between the Richmond Birdwing Conservation Network (RBCN), Samford Eco-Corridor and Council. The project aims to create habitat corridors between isolated populations of butterfly habitat. Extra vines planted in strategic locations will restore former corridors, as well as create new corridors to allow for the dispersal and ongoing breeding of butterflies.

The Samford Eco-Corridor Bushcare group will maintain the planted vines, as part of their monthly Bushcare events.

If you would like to attend a working bee and become a group member, please come along from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm on the second Sunday of every month, or sign up online here.

Fauna Profile: The Eastern Whipbird - Sound of the rainforest

This interesting and unique looking bird is often heard, more than seen in rainforests, riparian areas and eucalyptus forests; it’s the Eastern Whipbird (Psophodes olivaceus).

Males and females appear near identical, although males can be slightly larger in size, with the typical size range being 25 - 31 cm. Their body is olive green, while the head, crest and chest are black, with white patches on the cheeks and throat, plus a long tail. They have red-brown eyes. Juveniles appear to have smaller crests and white patches, which may be absent in some instances.

That familiar bird call we all know so well is a combined effort by males and females. As the Eastern Whipbird’s distribution covers such a wide range, from Melbourne, Victoria to Byfield, Central Queensland, your locality will dictate what call you hear, with some subtle differences heard along the east coast. The male calls with the characteristic drawn out ‘whip’ sound and if a female is present, she will quickly respond with a ‘choo choo’, ‘weece-weece’, ‘awee-awee’, ‘witch-a-wee’ depending on whereabouts you hear them.

Breeding pairs stay together for several years and protect their patch of vegetation throughout the year, not just the breeding season. A cup-shaped nest is made of bark and sticks, with a layer of grasses lining the inside. The nest is often close to the ground, usually within 1 - 2 m of the forest floor, often hidden in dense vegetation. Whipbirds are an example of why it is important to be mindful when managing species like lantana (Lantana camara), which can produce similar nesting habitat preferred by Whipbirds. Both parents raise their young and feed in family groups, as pairs, or individually. Their diet consists of insects and small invertebrates which they might find amongst the leaf litter on the forest floor. For more information, click here.

Don Perrin Environmental Bursary

Applications for the 2020 Don Perrin Environmental Bursary are now open, until 20 March 2020. The bursary provides the successful applicant with $2,000 to assist with education expenses during their first year of an environmental-based degree. So if you know someone who lives in the region and is starting an environmental degree in 2020, please get them to check the eligibility and selection criteria available online, click here.
Vines - Friend or foe?

Vines are one of the most maligned types of vegetation in South East Queensland. Thanks to our unique ecosystems and diversity of species, we have no shortage of vines across all our vegetation types. Sometimes associated with tree mortality, this misunderstood group performs many functions within the landscape. These functions include assisting the rehabilitation of rainforests, providing homes for wildlife, and food for many butterflies, birds and arboreal mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Whilst this article will describe a handful of the most common species and situations where they can be found, it’s only a small subset of the species you may encounter. For more of an insight into native and invasive vines of the region, please click here.

Despite some species being vigorous in their growth, vines typically do not grow to smother and outcompete native vegetation. Vines are essentially seeking sunlight in the tree canopy. Species such as the water vines (Cissus spp.) often occur in rainforests, riparian areas and wet eucalypt woodlands. The Cissus genus (most commonly C. antarctica and C. hypoglauca) are commonly observed in these ecosystems when large gaps in the canopy structure occur (potentially due to tree failure or die-off) or along edges of moist vegetation. Along forest edges, these vines will grow quickly into the canopy to create a curtain, which excludes sunlight from entering the forest interior. This re-establishes a closed canopy system within the surrounding forest. Where tree failure has occurred, vines close off the forest interior by growing around the edges created by the opening and funnel light down to the open forest floor and promote germination of tree species.

This is not the only way vine species assist with the restoration of our forests. Vines create curtains of vegetation that block out light within our rainforests, which gives the appearance of smothering trees. However, these vines are opportunistically growing on available trees and recreating a microclimate for the germination of trees, grasses, shrubs, and fungi to thrive within these diverse ecosystems.

Other species that are commonly observed in eucalypt woodland and forests include monkey rope vine (Paronsia straminea) and cockspur thorn (Maclura cochinchinensis), which are both vigorous in growth. Monkey rope vine particularly should not be planted near smaller trees and shrubs, such as in planned revegetation sites, as it can smother juvenile trees.

In a natural system with an established canopy, monkey rope vine produces aromatic flowers, sought after by the common crow butterfly (Euploea core). Its dense vegetation within the canopy also makes ideal protection for birds and arboreal mammals seeking a place to hide or sleep during the daytime.

Monkey rope vine prefers moist soil and direct sun and is often seen in disturbed areas. Typically, within disturbed areas, you will observe pioneer species, which have shorter life cycles of 20 - 30 years, such as many of our wattle (Acacia spp.) species. Due to pioneer species favouring similar conditions and vine species being more long lived, when death or damage to the pioneer trees occurs the cause is often incorrectly attributed to growth and interaction with the vine; and not the natural life cycle of the plant or surrounding local conditions.

Cockspur thorn is a large, woody vine, occurring in many ecosystems and is often removed or pruned due to its large thorns, up to 3 cm in length, but these thorns and its habit of forming dense thickets (similar to lantana), make it ideal habitat for many smaller species, that take up residence within due to the protection it offers.

While cockspur may share a growth habit with lantana, it is also a relative of figs and mulberries and perhaps unsurprisingly given those associations, produces large amounts of orange fruits that are popular with birds, mammals and some field naturalists.

You may encounter these commonly occurring vines on your property or local Bushcare site. They play many significant roles in our local ecosystems. So next time you are out in the bush, on your block or exploring the forests of our region, try looking at these vines with an appreciation and understanding of the important habitat function they fulfil.
Whack a Weed - Mistflower (*Ageratina riparia*)

A native to Central and South America, mistflower (*Ageratina riparia*) is a sprawling herbaceous species, typically 40 - 60 cm tall. The species is commonly encountered along riparian corridors, gullies, rainforest and bushland understoreys, and capable of growing in full shade or sun. Branches of this species are capable of advantageous rooting (producing roots along stems and branches), allowing for the sprawling growth habit. Mistflower gets its name from the dense white flowers it produces during July - October; however, in some instances it may flower year-round. Seeds are produced shortly after flowering and are wind dispersed, due to fine hairs occurring on the end of the seed.

The species spreads rapidly in South East Queensland, where conditions are optimal for vigorous growth and dispersal. Other key features include: red - purple stems with sparse hairs present; leaves are opposite and reach 3 - 11 cm in length and 0.8 - 3 cm wide; and, leaf margins are sharply toothed.

Control measures for mistflower:

- Manual removal is a viable option in smaller infestations where there are good levels of natural regeneration.
  - Ensure plant materials are bagged and removed or hung up so that no part of the root system is touching soil.
- Foliar application: there are several options for herbicides, including:
  - Glyphosate 360 g/L @ 50 - 100 ml/10L of water;
  - Metsulfuron-methyl 600 g/kg @ 0.5 - 1 g/10L of water;
  - Fluroxypyr 200 g/L @ 50 ml/10L of water.

For more information regarding the species and management techniques, see the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) factsheet [here](#).

Drapers Crossing Rainforest Bushcare Group

The Drapers Crossing Bushcare group commenced in 2000 with a passion to restore a patch of forest along the river in their local area. The site consists of Regional Ecosystem 12.3.16 ‘Endangered complex notophyll to microphyl vine forest’ along the South Pine River adjacent to the old Drapers Crossing site at Draper. Although small in size, this remnant community hosts a large diversity of rainforest species and the bird species count is currently at 109 species.

Small riparian rainforest pockets are often highly vulnerable to weed invasion on the edges from weed material entering via wind and flood-dispersal. Birds play a vital role in rainforest regeneration, dispersing native plant seeds in their droppings. However, this seed dispersal can include the spread of many large woody weed species such as camphor laurels (*Cinnamomum camphora*), Chinese elms (*Celtis sinensis*), and large and small leaf privet (*Ligustrum lucidum* and *L. sinense* respectively). Other weed challenges at the site include the exotic vines that often invade rainforest remnants including glycine (*Neonotonia wightii*), cat’s claw creeper (*Macfadyena unguis-cati*) and madeira vine (*Anredera cordifolia*). Many bags of madeira vine tubers have been removed by the group over the years. Some of the other challenges faced at the site include the aftermath of large flood events and refuse left by weekend visitors to the river at Draper’s Crossing.

The Bushcare group can be found weeding in the understorey every week, meeting on Thursdays from 8:00 - 10:00 am. There is always plenty of humour and Bushcare group leader Donna Farrell’s morning teas are legendary amongst the Bushcare group members past and present. After many years of baking for Bushcare morning teas, Donna has recently published a cook book called “Cooking for the Bush”.

To join your local Bushcare group or find more information, [here](#).