



Voluntary Conservation Program Newsletter - August 2023

Welcome to the new-look format for the Voluntary Conservation Program newsletter!

As ever, there are plenty of activities happening throughout the region. Bushcare is going strong, Land for Wildlife is continuing to grow, and there are a number of interesting workshops coming up over the next few months. And of course, the 2023-24 grants program is currently open - so get your bid in before it closes on 1 September.

Read on!

Contents

- Voluntary Conservation Program Newsletter - August 2023
- What's on for VCP
- Voluntary Conservation Program Grants 2023-24
- Land For Wildlife Connections Workshop - North
- Glossy Black Cockatoo Workshop
- Strangle that Weed - Fig Workshop

- Two Powerful Owls Sitting in a Tree
- Bush Restoration Tips
- Fire Workshop
- Save the Koala Volunteer Weekend
- Wattle Day - 1 September

What's on for VCP

Here is a rundown of what's happening over the next few months.

Voluntary Conservation Program Grants 2023-24

Council offers annual grants for environmental conservation projects: up to \$2,500 for Voluntary Conservation Agreements, \$1,000 for Land for Wildlife and \$500 for Backyards for Wildlife properties.

Applications open from 9.00am Tuesday, 1 August and close midnight Friday, 1 September 2023. Grants will be assessed against the criteria set out in the guidelines and can be submitted online here: [VCP Grants 2023-24](#).

Senior Environment Officers will be on hand to discuss your project and assist with your application on **Thursday 24 August** at Caboolture Region Environment Education Centre (CREEC), 150 Rowley Rd Burpengary



Land For Wildlife Connections Workshop - North

This workshop presents a relaxed networking opportunity for LfW and VCA property holders in the Bellthorpe region. Mingle with Council officers responsible for animal pests and weeds, cultural heritage as well as the VCP Senior Environment Officers.

Keynote speaker, **Matt Cecil**, will discuss the ecological significance of the Bellthorpe region, and take a closer look at endangered species that move through the area such as the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly, the Greater Glider, and the Quoll.

If you can't make this final session and still would like some assistance, please feel free to contact your Senior Environment Officers by calling our Call Centre on 3205 0555 or send an email to ESMailbox@moretonbay.qld.gov.au

Matt is also a pioneer in citizen science and iNaturalist and can give some tips on how to register your own sightings for the benefit of research as well as provide advice on how to create and maintain essential wildlife habitat.

Hinterland Bushlinks will also be in attendance, talking about the benefits of tackling ecological issues collectively.

Specialist Council staff will also present on issues surrounding weeds, pests and cultural heritage, and will be on hand to answer all of your questions over morning tea.

For more information and to book your place, please contact Debbie McQuattie on 3205 0555 or by email:

Debbie.McQuattie@moretonbay.qld.gov.au

Glossy Black Cockatoo Workshop

The South-eastern Glossy Black-Cockatoo is listed as Vulnerable in Australia and is at risk of further population decline after losing large areas of feeding habitat during the bushfires of 2019–20.



Source: Andrew Peacock

The Great Glossy Count 2023, taking place on **Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 September 2023** is a citizen science event coordinated by BirdLife Australia, in collaboration with other organisations working to conserve Glossies. Volunteer citizen scientists will explore their selected survey site to collect data on Glossies and their feeding habitat. The Count can be conducted in a group or with a friend, and it is a great opportunity for people to enjoy time in nature while supporting the recovery of threatened birds. Citizen scientists can also participate in training workshops leading up to the event.

Data collected during the Count will support vital bushfire recovery and conservation work for Glossies.

Council will be hosting a free training workshop at our CREEC Environment Centre in

Burpengary on Sunday the 20/08/2023 from 9:00-11:00am. The workshop will feature a presentation from Geckoes Wildlife with a live glossy black and red tailed black cockatoo, as well as a presentation from Eric Anderson from Birdlife Southern Queensland.

If you are interested in registering for the workshop or the Great Glossy Count, please find the links below:

CREEC training workshop registration: [Great Glossy Count Training Workshop Tickets, Sun 20/08/2023 at 9:00 am | Eventbrite](#)

Great Glossy Count registration: [The Great Glossy Count - BirdLife Australia](#) (Please note you do need to create a Birddata account (if you don't have one already) and answer some questions relating to glossies to register).

Strangle that Weed - Fig Workshop

by Stefan Hattingh and Adam Richardt

Sometimes you can't get rid of a large weed tree for a range of reasons. For example, it might support a creek bank or create habitat. In those situations, you may want to strangle the weed tree over a long period with a native fig instead. We held a workshop in April 2023, showing VCP members some methods which, after much trial and error, have shown to be successful on how to propagate and install figs. The idea is to accelerate the strangling process from 20+ years to 2 years.



Established fig tree in a PVC pipe attached to weed tree

The first part of the workshop was on how to propagate figs from cuttings, although you can also use fresh seed or seedlings. Cut a small branch - preferably with aerial roots - and dab the stump with rooting powder. This gives the best strike rate for successful growth. Gently bury the aerial root in the soil as you pot it up, as you would a normal plant.

We let our fig sit for 40 days before transplanting it into a PVC drainpipe, whereupon we waited for the roots to reach the bottom. We used a very rich mix of cow manure and potting mix (figs love nutrients), but you can use most potting mixes as a medium. The purpose of the drainpipe is to allow the fig tree to grow at a height off the ground while the roots grow down the pipe. This method accelerates root growth, enabling the fig to strangle your weed so much quicker! The drainpipe is cut open on one side to allow the

fig roots to push open the pipe over time and for easy removal of the pipe afterwards. The pipe also retains moisture - essential for fig growth.

The second part of the workshop was how to prepare the weed tree for its host. In nature, strangler figs start off as a seedling in the canopy of trees as it has a high demand for sunlight, so it is vital that the fig receives light. To create light, we treat the weed tree with glyphosate on the side for which we wish to create some light. The aim is to not kill the weed tree, but to allow gaps to form in the canopy so sunlight can reach the fig tree.

The drainpipe with the fig is then planted into the ground at a depth of about 15 cm and firmly attached to the weed tree. (We used drain connectors and screws, but a sturdy rope would also suffice). This will enable the fig to grow through the pipe into the ground and form strangler roots around the main stem of the weed tree. Depending on the growth rate, we would expect to remove the PVC drainpipe anywhere between 6 months and 2 years. By which time, the weed tree is doomed, and the strangler is well on its way to providing native canopy, food and habitat for native fauna.



Council officers Stefan and Adam showing how to attach a prepared fig to a weed tree

Bush Restoration Tips

by Nicole Byrne

When you are weeding a large property or reserve it can be hard to work out where to start and how large the area should be. You can't do it all at once! In these situations, it is recommended that you start in a healthy and intact area and work towards the weedy area. Aim to have regular weeding sessions,



Two Powerful Owls Sitting in a Tree

by Nicole Byrne and Daniel Jonas

At the beginning of May while walking through the Hunt Road Bushcare site (Burpengary) the noisy mynah population (*Manorina melanocephala*) were excessively raucous near an old growth *Eucalyptus racemosa*. Looking up, Dan spotted a pair of powerful owls (*Ninox strenua*) commanding an overhanging branch yet unfazed by the commotion.

Powerful owls are listed as Vulnerable under the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, so it was wonderful to see a pair looking down on us. The species mate for life and require large tree hollows for breeding (which is from April to September). Their diet mainly consists of small to medium mammals including possums, gliders and sometimes even koalas!

For more information on Powerful

either once a week or once a month and start in the same location each time.

During the first weed treatment, the weeded area may be small. When the next weed treatment occurs, weeds that were initially missed will be captured and any weeds that have germinated between treatments will be weeded before they can flower and set seed. With each visit, the weeded area expands, and the weed seed bank reduced. As you progress you start to slowly chip away at the weedy areas and continue to consolidate your restored areas.



Starting at Samford EcoCorridor 2013

Owls:

Powerful Owl - The Australian Museum

Fire Workshop

by Wendy Heath and Debbie McQuattie

On Saturday 1 July, the City of Moreton Bay partnered with the *South-East Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium* headed by Healthy Land and Water, and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to present a fire management planning property workshop at Samsonvale. The focus was on landholders using fire as an effective land management tool whilst being bushfire prepared. The workshop provided practical bushfire information and guidance to enable landholders to develop a Fire Management Plan, individually designed for their property. Other topics included bushfire preparedness and how to protect your property, landowner rights and responsibilities, fire ecology, reducing bushfire risk and practical advice from experts in the implementation of fire management and control.



Creating a fire management plan

A very chilly start to the day still saw full attendance by all registered landholders who were keen to know more about how to manage their properties by using fire how to respond in potential bushfire emergencies. After introductions by Senior Scientist and Fire Ecologist Hannah Etchells from Healthy Land and Water, Council Senior Environment Officer, Wendy Heath presented information on Regional Ecosystems, how to identify them and relate this information to the fire frequency guidelines and property management.



Fire Management Planning Property Workshop

Next up was Safety Officer for the Brisbane Region, Mick Watego, who discussed his role in the fire service, what to expect in an emergency and how to best prepare for a bushfire. Lastly, Hannah who has extensive experience in bushland fire recovery, explained what to expect in the upcoming fire season, how to adapt to changing conditions and ecosystem recovery after fire.

When presentations concluded, the landholders went straight into practical planning with their individual property maps with Council's Emergency Management Fire team remaining available for Q&A throughout the entire day. It was fantastic to see the majority of the people in attendance on the day were registered LfW and VCA landholders.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) have excellent information and planning tools for Bushfire preparedness at:

[Prepare for Bushfire Season](#)

For local advice in rural and semiurban areas contact your local fire warden by using the following tool:

[QFES Fire Wardens](#)

There is also excellent information in the Land for Wildlife Note series - Fire Section which covers topics including Fire in the Australian Landscape, Flora, Fungi and Fauna, and Fire and Your Property:



Friends removing weeds

Save the Koala Volunteer Weekend

by Richard and Mischa Wiseman, LfW members

Since moving to our new 44 hectare property 'Allambi' at Cedar Creek we have spent a huge amount of time cutting Cats Claw Creeper from creek lines and dragging Climbing Asparagus vine from the treetops to expose the property's amazing beauty. It is very hard work, and we spend multiple hours working on the property. It was so amazing when a few friends organised a group of volunteers to come and help out.

On Saturday 27 May 2023 our first 'Save the koala volunteers weekend' happened and what an amazing effort by all involved. Amazing people from all walks of life showed up to help. We picked an area of the creek line that was completely overgrown with Ochna (some 2 m high), plus huge amounts of Climbing Asparagus Vine and Easter Cassia. After 2 hours we had exposed



Acacia macradenia - Zig-zag wattle with bees. Tree up to 6m with narrow leaves and prominent spherical yellow flowers.

Wattle Day - 1 September

by Daniel Jonas

There are over 1,350 different Acacia species in the world with close to 1,000 found in Australia (74%). Of these, there are roughly 80 species described in the South East Queensland bioregion. They are a diverse genus that supports a wide range of wildlife like gliders, flying foxes, possums, birds and bees.

The specimen pictured above is *Acacia macradenia* (Zig-zag wattle) which was recently seen blooming at Hunt Road

an amazing Fig Tree that could hardly be seen before, and we also provided access to the creek through all the Grey Gums that run up the mountains. This is an area where our koala habitat meets the creek line. Many hands made the job easier, with some cutting and others on herbicide application, and others dragging the branches and weeds out into a pile.

We all camped at our campgrounds and sat around the fire pit at night and had lots of fun. Some of the volunteers had never been camping before and loved it. Everyone slept really well that night and the kids were worn out too.

The volunteers said they are happy to arrange at least 4 weekends a year and have people wanting to come back already. The property is slowly transforming as the trees start to breathe again. Everything we are doing is improving the vegetation for the wildlife we have, and we are so lucky to regularly see koalas.



Bushcare in Burpengary. Native to Queensland's western arid areas, it is considered an environmental weed in SEQ. However, it's providing a vital food source for the animals and insects that use this corridor.



Acacia suaveolens - Sweet wattle. A common shrub up to 2 m found on sandy soils with fragrant creamy-white flowers.

Keep an eye out, particularly at this time of year for acacias in full bloom!

For more information:

[Australian National Herbarium - Wattles](#)
[Acacias of Australia - Identification Tool](#)

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Country across our region. We also acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kabi Kabi, Jinibara and Turrbal Traditional Custodians, and their elders past, present and emerging.

moretonbay.qld.gov.au

