



megapodium

FEBRUARY 2006

**Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland
Brisbane Branch Inc.**

Mail: The Secretary, PO Box 2134, Ashgrove West, Qld 4060
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Meetings at the Queensland Museum, South Bank, at 7.30pm the last Wednesday of every month except January and December. Entrance through the Dinosaurs gate, Grey Str. from 7 to 7.30pm

Calendar

<u>Su 12 February</u>	Batty Boat Cruise
<u>We 22 February</u>	Meeting: "What is a wetland" by Greg Miller
<u>Su 5 March</u>	Batty Boat Cruise
<u>Su 12 March</u>	Environmental walk, Bayside Parkland
<u>We 22 March</u>	Meeting: Graham Phegan, BCC, Environmental Planning Branch
<u>Fr 24-Su 26 March</u>	Camping on Moreton Island
<u>Sa 8-Tu 11 April</u>	Camping at the Clarence River Wilderness Lodge (NSW)
<u>We 26 April</u>	Meeting: "Extreme passions & flying foxes" by Carol Booth
<u>Sa 29 April-Mo 1 May</u>	Woodford Tree Planting weekend
<u>Su 28 May</u>	Environmental walk, Brisbane Forest Park - Araucaria walk
<u>We 31 May</u>	Meeting: "Come and experience Africa" by Jeremy Thompson
<u>Fr 9-Mo 12 June</u>	Camping at Sundown National Park
<u>We 28 June</u>	Meeting: "Habitat fragmentation: lessons from the lizards" by Melanie Venz

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The President's page

Christmas and New Year are well and truly over, with 2006 offering us old and new challenges. I hope every one has a great break, getting together and spending quality time with family and friends.

My involvement with the Queensland Folk Federation required that I spend some time at the Woodford Folk Festival site, staying after the event for the clean up. It is amazing how quickly wildlife (wallabies, goannas, magpies...) reappropriate the site which is theirs for most of the year. It is heart-warming to see the changes brought to this previously empty dairy land by the planting of thousands and thousands of trees. More than 5,000 were purchased by patrons during the festival and they will be waiting for you to be planted on the site during the May long weekend (see further in the newsletter).

The Festival is not only songs and music, a number of speakers, experts in their field, were there to talk about the environment and their message was sadly clear: global warming is well and truly upon us and the wildlife is likely to pay a heavy tribute to it with a number of species being wiped out. Unfortunately, we are all contributing to it but there are many ways to reduce our impact. So before you leave that room with the lights on, think about the coal being burnt at the power station, releasing poisonous gases into the atmosphere and, please, flick that switch off. It would be a good

start.

We have a new committee at the Brisbane branch: John and Leonie Markwell, Greg Miller, Leanne Bowden, Jenny Keys and Stephanie Beames. We have already been back at work to provide you with an attractive programme for the first half of the year. I think we have done well, but I let you be the judges on that: feel free to write to us or send us emails to let us know what you think and offer your suggestions.

You must have heard of the barbaric methods used by some fruit growers to protect their crop from the flying foxes, namely electrocution. Our dear friend Carol Booth and a team of supporters are involved in legal battle with one of them and urgently require our financial assistance. This court case is important as a positive result might influence the way wildlife laws are interpreted in the future. Thank you for your generosity. And Carol has agreed to come and talk to us, don't miss it!

But enough of me, time for you to read what follows. We, at the committee, hope that you will like our programme and join us at one or more of the events it contains.

Jean-Pierre

2005 CHRISTMAS BREAKUP

On Sunday 4th December, Brisbane Branch had its Christmas Breakaway party at John and Leonie's place at Chapel Hill. The white cockatoos swooped down the slopes from Mt Coot-tha and watched the proceedings from their perch on the guttering above the verandah, heads bobbing down over the edge amid raucous calls. The human species at play beneath them consumed superior nibbles, reminisced about the events of the past year and made plans for 2006- more batty boat trips, bird watching excursions, trips to Moreton Island and fascinating guest speakers.

Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland - Brisbane Branch Inc.

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President: Jean-Pierre Jacquet

Committee members:

Treasurer: John Markwell

Leanne Bowden

Secretary (correspondence): Jenny Keys

Greg Miller

Secretary (minutes): Leonie Markwell

Stephanie Beames

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Sunday 12 February 4.30pm: Batty Boat Cruise

A rare opportunity to meet these interesting animals face to face. See the attached brochure for details.

Bookings are essential, through WPSQ Head Office: 07 3221 0194

Wednesday 22 February 7.30pm: "What is a wetland?" by Greg Miller

Greg Miller's presentation will focus on one of our world's most diverse and widespread ecosystems. Case examples will define what a wetland is using illustrations throughout Queensland and some within Brisbane. Greg will showcase the variety of wetland types, and cover a few that are not yet fully recognized. Wetland management is often dependant on international and national agreements. The origins of this will be explained, particularly why wetland classification depends on its ability to support migratory birds. Wetlands also provide support for humans and are a major aesthetic presence in the landscape. Therefore wise management of wetlands is essential to maintain both their biodiversity and significance. During this presentation, Greg will raise awareness of the importance of wetlands and link wetlands to our biodiversity, to land and water issues and also as a source of enjoyment in our environment.

At the Queensland Museum, entrance through the Dinosaurs gate, from 7 till 7.30pm

Sunday 5 March 4.30pm: Batty Boat Cruise

If you missed the previous Cruise or just would like to do it again. See the attached brochure for details

Bookings are essential, through WPSQ Head Office: 07 3221 0194

Sunday 12 March: Environmental walk - Bayside Parklands

Meet at 7.30 am, Whites Rd and park opposite Arakurta Street, Lota (UBD map 163 M13)

After the walk: picnic facilities on the Esplanade, Lota, opposite Alexander Str., Lota (UBD map 163 R10)

To increase our knowledge of Brisbane's Wildlife habitats, join birdos Greg and Leanne for an educative walk in a section of mangroves, saltmarshes, dry eucalypt and paperback forests near Moreton Bay. Wear a hat, comfortable walking shoes and sunscreen. Bring water to drink, insect repellent (just in case), binoculars and bird field guide (if you have them) and morning tea to snack on while we're out observing the wildlife and the wetlands. For after the walk, bring a picnic lunch and folding chair and we'll drive to the Lota foreshore where there are picnic tables and facilities to join together and discuss what we've seen.

Contact: Greg or Leanne 3357 9009

22 March 7.30pm: Graham Phegan, Principal Planner, Environmental Planning, Natural Environment & Sustainability Branch, Brisbane City Council

Graham will talk about the BCC's biodiversity programme and steps taken to secure land for conservation.

At the Queensland Museum, entrance through the Dinosaurs gate, from 7 till 7.30pm

Friday 24 to Sunday 26 March: weekend on Moreton Island

The most eagerly expected of our outside activities! Our weekend is expertly organized by Alan Gennings, of Moreton Experience fame and for those of you who have not done it yet, here is his own description of what is waiting for you to discover: "We camp at Blue Lagoon on the ocean beach side. The Moreton Experience camp is located under Casuarinas on the beach front just 5 minutes walk from the fresh water Blue Lagoon. (Idyllic swimming) Accommodation is in large canvas tents (4 by 6 metres). Stretches are provided. Please bring your own sleeping bag (and pillow if required) and your own plates and cutlery... The price includes a tour to the Little Sandhills with sand tobogganing (3 hours) and a tour to Cape Moreton (3 hours) . Travel on Moreton Island is on sand tracks and beaches and so four wheel drive buses are used. Schedules are adapted on the day to suit tides and weather conditions... Lake Honeyeater and its surrounding heathland is only 30 minute walk from our camp and is a must for those interested in wildflowers and nature..."

Bookings essential: see page 7 for details

Saturday 8 April - Tuesday 11 April: Camping at the Clarence River Wilderness Lodge

Note: this is the week before Easter, the start of Queensland school holidays

Our past president, John Morison has booked for us this great place. Situated in a forgotten pocket of Australia, where nature reigns supreme, four thousand hectares of river crafted country has been preserved in a Wildlife Refuge noted for the diverse abundance of its native animals and the wild splendour of its scenery. Now canoeists and nature lovers can experience this scenic wilderness for themselves. Visitors have a choice between camping, bushman's huts or staying at the lodge.

Contact: John 3870 8252

For more information or bookings: Stephen & Sharon Ross on 02 - 6665 1337

Wednesday 26 April, 7.30pm: "Extreme passions and flying foxes" by Carol Booth

Crop raider, pollinator, seed disperser, victim of human endeavours, despised neighbours, natural history delights, coddled in care, cute as...few animals trigger as much human hate and human love as flying foxes. With half the mainland species threatened and considerable community antipathy limiting conservation efforts, flying foxes need our care and strong advocacy. With a passion for flying foxes, Carol Booth has taken farmers to court, lobbied hard for reforms, and sought to learn as much as possible about both the creatures and the passions they engender. She will talk about some of the pressing conservation issues associated with flying foxes and the passions they engender.

At the Queensland Museum, entrance through the Dinosaurs gate from 7 till 7.30pm

Saturday 29 April - Monday 1 May: Woodford Tree Planting weekend

In May each year, a large group of people have gathered at the Woodford Folk Festival site intent on creating a wonderful environment for future generations and to enjoy some great company, music and song.

More than 66,000 trees have been planted on site since 1995 but much work is still to be done. While much of the May weekend is focused on tree-planting and maintenance, considerable time is also spent enjoying interesting bush walks, talks, forums and concerts.

Contact: Jean-Pierre 3372 4675

Sunday 28 May: Environmental walk, Brisbane Forest Part - Araucaria Walk

Meet at 7.30am at the Brisbane Forest Park headquarters, 60 Mt Nebo Rd, The Gap (UBD map137 G19)

After the walk, picnic lunch at Bellbird Grove (UBD map 136 Q6)

Join birdos Greg and Leanne for an educative walk along the Araucaria Walk to learn more about the variety of Brisbane's wildlife habitats. Wear a hat, comfortable walking shoes and sunscreen. Bring water to drink, insect repellent (just in case), binoculars and bird field guide if you have them and morning tea to snack on while we're out observing the flora and fauna. Also bring a picnic lunch and folding chair. After the walk, we'll drive further out along Mt Nebo Road to Bellbird Grove to join together to discuss what we've seen. Some of you may wish to visit the Walk-About Creek Wildlife Centre at the Park Information Centre (open 9am - 4.30pm, adults \$5.15, children \$2.55), before continuing on to Bellbird Grove.

Contact: Greg or Leanne 3357 9009

Wednesday 31 May, 7.30pm: "Come and experience Africa" by Jeremy Thompson

See the most highly engineered endangered species program in the world. Share the dilemma of choosing between environmental protection on the one hand, and economic growth on the other, in one of the poorest countries in the world. Jeremy Thompson will share his recent experience as a Technical Advisor helping the Tanzanian Government deal with the requirements of the global community (us)."

At the Queensland Museum. Entrance through the Dinosaurs gate from 7 till 7.30pm

Friday 9 - Monday 12 June: camping at Sundown National Park, Broadwater area

Sundown National Park is in "traprock" country, 250 km southwest of Brisbane, an area renowned for its low temperatures in winter. Be prepared! However, we'll have the opportunity to discover some different wildlife species, including some 130 species of birds as well as wallaroos, wallabies, gliders and possums. Conventional vehicles can be driven to Broadwater camping area at the southern end of the park via 77km of bitumen road from Stanthorpe and 4km of good gravel road. Camp fees are \$12 per person, with family rates available.

Booking essential, payment before 10 May

Contact: Greg or Leanne 3357 9009

Wednesday 28 June: "Habitat fragmentation: lessons from the lizards" by Melanie Venz

Keeping and conserving remnant native vegetation is often touted as the key to biodiversity conservation in rural areas, but what scientific is available to back up claims that habitat fragmentation is detrimental to wildlife conservation? Melanie's team conducted the sampling of reptiles at 60 different sites and was able to show that every species has slightly different needs in the environment and respond differently to changes...It was also found that the condition of the habitat in the remnants was also crucial, highlighting the importance of an integrated landscape approach to preserving reptile communities in remnant woodlands.

At the Queensland Museum, 7.30pm. Entrance through the Dinosaurs gate from 7 till 7.30pm

As our branch's special interest area is Brisbane, to raise awareness of its natural environment and local wildlife, our walks are focussed within its boundaries, utilising those areas that the Brisbane City Council has set aside for preservation. We started our 2005 walks in February with a visit to Tinchi Tamba, one of a chain of coastal wetlands on the edge of Moreton Bay; followed by other outings in July and September to Karawatha, one of the largest areas of remnant bushland in the city; and November to Toohey Forest, a refuge for more than 400 plants and animals.

For a Society that is committed to an "ecologically sustainable future for people and wildlife", these outings contributed greatly to our understanding of what this means and how we can contribute.

Other benefits gained included the opportunity to walk in areas that some hadn't visited before; observing and learning a little more about some of Brisbane's wildlife, particularly birds, and the habitats in which they live. For some, it highlighted that you often don't really need to drive too far at all to feel "away from it all".

Not only that – but an early morning walk followed by a picnic lunch is a great social activity, and allowed us to meet other members in an informal environment. Our members collectively hold and willingly share a wealth of expertise and knowledge. There are experts and hobbyists skilled in bird identification and habits, arid lands, botany, wetlands, sailing, four-wheel driving, camping, overseas adventure travel, Asian cooking, photography, teaching and printing – to name but a few. [not to forget astronomy Ed.]

It is important for the preservation of our wildlife (and ourselves!) that there are natural spaces kept for posterity, and for a group like ours to be aware of them and lend support to the Brisbane City Council if required to maintain such preservation.

This year, trips are planned to visit other Brisbane City Council reserves, including Sunday 12 March to Bayside Parklands and Sunday 28 May to Brisbane Forest Park.

If you haven't been on an outing or attended a meeting in a while – please come and join us.

Leanne Bowden and Greg Miller

For more information on the Web

Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland: <http://www.wildlife.org.au>

Batty Boat Cruises: <http://www.wildlife.org.au/news-batty-05.html>

Bayside Parklands: http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:STANDARD:543283962:pc=PC_1278

Moreton Experience: <http://www.moretonexperience.com/wildlife.html>

Clarence River Wilderness Lodge:

<http://www.cleanangreen.com.au/verone/accomodation/wildernessretreats.asp>

Brisbane Forest Park: <http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/projects/park/index.cgi?parkid=2>

Sundown National Park: <http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/projects/park/index.cgi?parkid=26>

and: http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/publications/p00144aa.pdf/Sundown_National_Park.pdf

Departs 8.30 am Friday and 6.30pm Friday

Location: Hawkins Transports, 14 Howard Drive, Lytton

Cost: member \$120; non-member \$130; children under 12: half-price

Booking and further information: Alan Gennings. NEW Phone number 0428 783780

WPSQ information contact: erikafish@optusnet.com.au

All bookings made direct with Moreton Experience require a \$30 deposit per person be sent to Moreton Experience within 5 days of booking.

Cheques payable to: Moreton Experience, PO Box 1668, TOOWONG 4066

Information on the Web: <http://www.moretonexperience.com/wildlife.html>

At the MICat ticket office please inform staff that you are travelling with Moreton Experience. Your Moreton Experience Price includes the MICat fare. Parking is in a locked up yard and costs \$10 (at owners risk). If being dropped off then be prepared to be dropped off at the ticket office - only passengers for MICat are allowed past the ticket office. Friday morning travellers will have their luggage loaded onto a vehicle before boarding. Friday night passengers will have to load their luggage onto the deck of the ferry. If being picked up on your return then your transport will not be able to enter the terminal until the MICat arrives.

Please arrive at least 30 minutes before departure to enable orderly loading of your luggage onto a vehicle or onto the ferry.

Catering On Saturday night a BBQ with salads will be provided. Those requiring special menu items (eg vegetarian burgers are asked to bring their own.)

Tea and coffee is provided at Blue Lagoon campsite.

Facilities for your food preparation. Gas stoves and tables are available for your food preparation. Several frypans and a small selection of small saucepans are provided. Ease congestion by bringing your favourite camping saucepan. Please bring your own utensils for food preparation and your own plate and cutlery.

Refrigeration. - None. Please BYO esky.

Accommodation is in canvas tents (2 m high, 4 by 6 metres). These are large enough for family groups of up to 5 comfortably. Your party of up to 40 persons will have at least 10 tents for your use. Tent selection is done on arrival by the patrons. If your party is 1 or 2 and you do not wish to share then BYO hike tent. Tents do not have a floor and so a small brush can be handy when getting into bed. The tents do not have insect screening. However biting insects are generally not a problem. Some weather conditions can result in biting insects arriving and staying, so come prepared, just in case.

Bedding. A bare stretcher is provided, so please bring your own sleeping bag, pillow etc. A sleeping mat on the stretcher can provide additional comfort and warmth.

Care of tents. If you wish to make more floor space in the tents then you are welcome to fold spare stretchers. Folded stretchers must be placed on another stretcher - not on the ground - And on departure please return stretchers to their original position. If unlacing a tent please relace before departure using a blanket stitch only. Please do not hang towels or wet cloths on tent poles.

Itinerary During the weekend we will visit The Little Sandhills and Cape Moreton area by bus.

Phones Patchy, but usable service is available at the camp for Telstra's CDMA and GSM service. To date other providers do not provide coverage.

Deposit \$30 is non-refundable and will be used to pay for the seats in the leased bus which could not be filled due to your cancellation.

BATTY BOAT CRUISES

Sunday, 22 January 2006

Sunday, 12 February 2006

Sunday, 5 March 2006

COST:

\$25 adult

\$17.50 concession

\$12 children (3-15 yrs)

\$70 family (2 adults, 2 kids)

TIME:

Late afternoon for 3 hours

FROM:

Mowbray Park, East Brisbane

Experience the Brisbane River and our wonderful wildlife on this special sunset cruise to see the magnificent flying fox fly-out.



To book contact
Wildlife Queensland
Ph: 3221 0194

www.wildlife.org.au

SEEKING YOUR SUPPORT FOR BAT APPEAL

Please help in the legal battle to stop electrocution of flying foxes by supporting the Booth v Frippery Pty Ltd appeal

Details of the case

Late last year, a judge in the Planning & Environment Court dismissed a case brought by Carol Booth against a fruit grower for electrocuting flying foxes. The grower admitted in court to killing thousands of flying foxes without any permit from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), but the judge decided that this was allowed under the Nature Conservation Act.

On legal advice that the judge made numerous legal errors in his judgement, Carol has decided to appeal it in the Court of Appeal. The case will be heard on 27 February before three judges. Carol is represented by barristers Stephen Keim SC and Chris McGrath and solicitors Jo Bragg and Larissa Waters from the Environmental Defenders Office Qld.

Because the appeal will examine key provisions of the Nature Conservation Act, and has great implications for the way wildlife is protected in Queensland, the EPA has decided to apply to join the appeal.



Why support this case?

Court cases can greatly advance nature conservation by deterring people from breaking wildlife laws, gaining a conservation-favourable interpretation of the law, and putting pressure on governments to progress reform. For example, the first case run under new federal environmental laws (Booth v Bosworth) was pivotal in having the use of electric grids banned, killings in orchards greatly reduced and attention focused on the plight of flying foxes.

The Booth v Frippery Pty Ltd appeal is an important test case. It is an appeal of the judgement in the first ever use of third party rights under the Nature Conservation Act and will require the court to interpret key provisions for the first time. It could strengthen the use of wildlife laws by clarifying when people are responsible for the death or harm of wildlife. The case is also important to preserve the capacity of the State to regulate the killing of wildlife as the judgement in the first case greatly undermined this capacity.

How to donate

Money is needed in this case to pay court fees, transcript fees and some legal fees. The legal work to date has been done pro bono and further work will be done at reduced cost. Although legal advice says there are strong prospects of success, there is obviously the potential for the case to be lost and Carol to be liable for the court costs of the other side.

Tax-deductible donations can be made to the Environmental Defenders Office Qld) via a donation form www.edo.org.au/edoqld/edoqld/new/membership%20form.pdf, or a cheque can be sent to EDO at 9th Floor, 193 North Quay, Brisbane 4000. Please note on the donation that you “prefer the donation to be spent for the bat case”.

For further information about the case or how to support it, please contact Carol Booth on 0402 701 276 or carol.booth@gmail.com, or EDO solicitor Jo Bragg on 3211 4466 or jbragg@edo.org.au.