



URIMBIRRA

Monthly newsletter

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Urimbirra is an Aboriginal word meaning 'to take care of' or 'to preserve'.

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NEXT DEADLINE FOR URIMBIRRA CONTRIBUTIONS: SUNDAY 6th 2019

Emailed contributions should be sent as attachments in JPEG and/or Word, please, not PDF or other format.

EMAIL for Urimbirra material. Send to Frank Truscott - mongrove@bigpond.com
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AUSTRALIAN
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NETWORK



DISCLAIMER

Urimbirra is the journal of the Chinchilla Field Naturalists Club Inc. The authors of the material used in it seek to maintain the highest standards of accuracy, but if inaccuracies occur, every endeavour will be made to correct them in future editions. With the exception of official club notices, all other material in Urimbirra represents the views, opinions and records of contributing members. Such material is edited as little as possible in an effort to encourage members to contribute. The onus is placed on members to voluntarily edit and cross-check their own material, thereby easing the burden on the Publication Officer.

MANAGEMENT MEETING SEPTEMBER 2018

Date: 5TH September 2018

Venue: Truscott Residence

Time: 5.30pm

Present: J and H Mason, F and K Truscott, D Kanowski, L. Plant

Apologies: H and B Rennick

Minutes: L. Plant read the minutes of the previous meeting. J. Mason moved that the minutes be accepted as a true and correct record. Seconded by F. Truscott.....Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes:

- ATO Form completed and mailed.
- Painting of the CWA rooms has been completed. K. Truscott thanked those members who assisted to move the library items to allow painters access.

Correspondence:

Inward:

- Domain Name invoice
- Phone call and email from Birds Queensland
- Newsletters

Outwards:

- ATO Form – Change of Registration Details
- 2017 Urimbirras – State Library of QLD

L. Plant moved the inward correspondence be accepted and the outward endorsed. Seconded by H. Mason...Carried

Business Arising from Correspondence:

Email from Birds Queensland enquiring about camping in the area in 2019. Their first camp out was held 50 years ago at 'Rockwood'. They would like to recognise the event with a visit in 2019. Kath Truscott has suggested accommodation at Possum Park. The dates being suggested are 19th-22nd April.

Treasurer's Report:

H. Mason presented the Treasurer's report and moved her report for adoption. Seconded by D. Kanowski.....Carried

Accounts for payment: Domain Name invoice \$249.00

H. Mason moved the account be passed for payment. Seconded J. Mason.....Carried

General Business:

Denver Kanowski is investigating the outing for October. Proposed dates are 20th-21st October.

H. Mason moved that she advise staff at the Tourist Information Centre that the price of the Wattle book be set at \$14.50 and that the centre add their commission to reach a sale price. Seconded F.

Truscott.....Carried

Program:

20th & 21st October 2018

Outing – Proposed area in the Lockyer Valley – Details to be advised. Leader D. Kanowski

General Meeting – to be held at outing.

F&K Truscott – Ecuador

17th November 2018 Breakup – BBQ at the Mason Residence Chinchilla

Management Meeting 3.30pm

General Meeting 5.00pm

BBQ – BYO Meat and drinks – Salad and dessert to share

19th, 20th & 21st January 2019

Outing – Bunya Mountains – Leader K. Truscott

General Meeting and Management Meeting to be held at the outing

15th February 2019 AGM – 7.30pm

CWA Rooms Chinchilla

16th February 2019 Outing – local ramble

March 2019 Management Meeting – date to be advised

No outing planned for March

19th - 22nd April 2019 Possum Park with Birds Queensland

Details of outing to be advised

Meeting Closed: 6.30pm

VALE PETER MC RAE.

Contributed by By Rod and Wendy Smith

What a sad loss Peter's death is to the community and everyone who knew him. Peter, the Bilby man, zoologist, scientist, guitarist, absent minded professor, gentleman and friend spent many a night with us in Windorah on his way to and from Astrebla Downs National Park, where he kept watch over the Bilbies, or when he was a member of The Scary Bears band playing at a function in Windorah.

We camped with Peter at Astrebla Downs N.P. when the bush rats were particularly bad and the Letter-winged Kites were flying above. We shared his open air bath tub at No. 1 flowing bore and saw the Yellow Chats as well as Bilbies and Kowaris.

Peter was a guest speaker at a well-attended C.F.N.C. meeting and after a gentle reminder we were all able to have a close encounter with his precious Bilby. He was absolutely fascinated that we all had a cuppa, homemade bikkies and a chat after the meeting.

DOWN MEMORY LANE – NOVEMBER 1983

By Frank Truscott

The October meeting was held on the 21st. Guest speaker was Dr. Ron Atkinson from the D.D.I.A.E (now USQ) Toowoomba. He was there in response to a request from the club for a list of spiders in our area and gave us a key to the Spiders of the Greater Darling Downs area as well as a good talk about spiders generally.

Quite a few new members were accepted as well.

The Secretary, Roy Hando, brought to the attention of the meeting that a recent Golden West Tourist Council brochure contained the suggestion that people could “pick wildflowers in the Miles area”.

The outing on the 22nd was a spider-hunting visit with Dr. Ron Atkinson to the Rifle Range in the morning and “Sandy Bend” (on Charleys Creek near the railway bridge) in the afternoon. Spiders were collected and a microscope was used to help identify them. Heather Mason produced a good bird list for each area as well!

Dr. Atkinson provided a good list of 49 spiders for “Urimbirra” many of which were new to him.

The club had another outing in October. This was held with the Murgon Field Observers Club from Friday PM of the 28th to Sunday PM of the 30th at the property “Nindah” of Neil and Elwyn Perkins and, from mid-morning on Sunday, on the property Oakdale” of Lloyd and Shirley Sakrzewski. The trip home was via Proston. Val Hando produced a good plant list for the “Oakdale” scrub.

DOWN MEMORY LANE – NOVEMBER 1983

By Frank Truscott

The November meeting was held on the 18th and the guest speaker was Lindsay Dickman. His topic was "Cultivating a Native Garden". It was well reported in the write up.

The Christmas break-up was held on the 26th at Pam and Albert Fawcett's property "Yuwandi". Janice Carlyle was first to arrive, before morning tea! John showed slides of the "Western Spree" trip.

early on Sunday morning there was a brief shower and those who had camped had breakfast and departed.

SPICERS – HIDDEN VALE – OUTING – SUNDAY 21 OCTOBER 2018

By Denver Kanowski

A total of 25 members and associates gathered at the Billabong around 9am. The area is drought affected and water levels are low. The weather was foreboding, but held off for us. Ben Kanowski has a very interesting job revegetating the area around the Billabong, providing an aesthetically pleasing venue for guests of the resort, a bird hide, a gazebo, erosion control, and co-ordinating contractors. The Billabong



(LEFT) was created many years ago by diverting the flow of a natural watercourse. It has now been upgraded to form a large dam which provides water for the resort. Surplus water flows through a pipe to another dam which contains an island and then flows through another pipe to re-join the original watercourse.

The first pipe is under a large earth bank which is being used in experiments to evaluate different types of soil mediums and planting methods. This soil project is being run through the University of Qld., Gatton. The level of co-operation between the University and Spicers is

impressive.

Ben gave us a brief history of, and aspirations for, the project. Then we went for a walk around the complex. Along the way we saw a few hundred young trees which have been planted. Considering the difficult conditions since planting, the trees are doing well. A lookout is being built on the western side – already the outlook is quite impressive. There are a number of pitfall traps around the circuit which are being used for monitoring wildlife and insects. Further on a bird hide is partially built on a promontory with views through 180 degrees. The main inflow to the dam is a stone gabion reinforced with wire. It seems to



be working well. We couldn't access the gazebo as a mob of Kangaroos had taken refuge there from the warm sun (LEFT). The local mob is very quiet and accepts people as co-inhabitants. It was a treat for our German visitors to see the Kangaroos at close range and watch them idle down to the water for a drink. We

completed the circuit by 11am and car pooled from the Billabong to the Wildlife Centre.



Ben's former lecturer from UQ Gatton and associate in this project, Peter Murray, had agreed to take us through the Wildlife Centre. Peter told us about the history of the centre. The Turners, who own the Spicers chain of resorts, as well as Flight Centre, have actively supported the natural environment here by building the Wildlife Centre and guaranteeing funding for 30 years of research and conservation. It consists of 12 large cages (RIGHT) that are big enough to allow gliders to live in a relatively natural environment. The complex consists of a large reception area, conference room, office, access to the cages, laboratories (RIGHT) and upstairs walkway. One of the nesting boxes upstairs contained two Mahogany Gliders. These little guys were considered extinct for a while and reside in North Queensland where a small population is struggling to survive clearing and other manifestations of human intervention in the local environment. In a previous



life Ben had worked on the Mahogany Glider conservation project funded by Powerlink. Due to ill health he was forced to leave the project prematurely. Megan Brady, who was instrumental in this weekend happening, took over from Ben and completed the project. Megan now works for Gainsdale – the company administrating Spicers resorts. She is also an associate professor at UQ Gatton. Another interesting co-incidence this weekend was the arrival of Jan and parents from Germany. Jan had been a volunteer for the Mahogany Glider project at Innisfail. In the meantime he has progressed through studying ecosystems in the Black Forest, Germany and is now investigating the impact of chemicals on the natural environment in Europe for his Ph.D. Jan and his parents had the opportunity to see, up close, a pair of sleepy Mahogany Gliders (LEFT). They weren't the only ones impressed by this experience.

On completion of the tour, Peter fielded a number of questions and suggestions and we showed our appreciation with applause. I think he made an exceptional contribution to the day. Chris Reinhart moved a vote of thanks for Ben for his excellent presentation and work done at the Billabong. I hope that everybody else enjoyed the day as much as I did.

It is encouraging to see such a considerable financial contribution being made to the betterment of the natural environment. I hope that it will inspire governments to lift their game.

After dispersal from the official outing a number of us pulled up in a park in Laidley to chew the fat. Then the rain came. Excellent!

Ed. RIGHT Clever way to check on the animals in the cages-a through-wall pipe leads into the nest box in the corridor.



MATA HARI – JUDAS by Denver Kanowski

Amongst the research projects being undertaken at Spicers Hidden Vale Wildlife Centre is exploration of control of feral animals. The estimated 20,000,000 + feral cats in Australia are making a huge impact on the native wildlife, and along with foxes, pigs and dogs are out of control. Cats are estimated to kill approx. 1,000,000 birds A WEEK!

The Judas concept presents a feral animal with a tracking collar. Mammals being mostly social creatures will tend to congregate. The tracking device will allow hunters to eliminate animals associating with Judas. Ultimately, when Judas has no more friends, then it is time for Judas to go.

Mata Hari adds spice to the equation. A female of the species is injected with a slow release hormone to ensure continuous raised oestrogen levels. She is very popular socially and combined with the tracking collar this may prove to be another useful tool in the war to protect Australia's native animals.

The Hidden Vale Wildlife Centre is doing research into this process.

HIDDEN VALE WILDLIFE CENTRE

By Kath Truscott

This privately funded research and teaching facility was opened in March 2017 at a cost of around \$4 million. The Hidden Vale project spans a number of properties west of Brisbane and includes three large native refuges. This 4.5 thousand hectare property has 3.1 thousand hectares dedicated to the conservation of native animals. Among the numerous species of plants and animals, there are brush-tailed wallabies and 22 radio-collared koalas roaming the property.

The centre works in partnership with the University of Queensland and students and researchers gain hands-on access to learn and develop new wildlife management and conservation techniques. Studies include:

- Ecological and habitat restoration
- Captive breeding and release of native wildlife
- New technologies in wildlife conservation
- Interactions between native and introduced animals
- Rehabilitation and release of native wildlife
- Predator avoidance training.

At the time of our visit there were several species present at the centre. These included:

- A breeding pair of Eastern Bristlebirds
- Micro-chipped Blue-tongued lizards being trained to use automatic feeders
- Breeding pairs of Mahogany Gliders
- Fat-tailed Dunnarts (gestation period 16 days.)
- Northern Brown Bandicoots (gestation period of only 12.5 days!).

The Turner Family Foundation has contracted UQ for this conservation project through the provision of funding for 30 years.

CLUB NOTICES

November 17 Break up. Venue: John and Heather Mason's place. Management meeting at 3.30 p.m. and General Meeting and BBQ at 5 p.m. Please BYO meat and drinks and a salad and dessert to share.

January 19, 20, 21. Bunya Mountains. We will invite Bunya NHA members and Toowoomba Nats.

February 15th 2019 AGM – 7.30pm
CWA Rooms Chinchilla

February 16th 2019 Outing – local ramble

March 2019 Management Meeting – date to be advised
No outing planned for March

April 19th - 22nd 2019 Possum Park with Birds Queensland
Details of outing to be advised