



Marbled Frogmouth a threatened local

This 'near threatened' bird species, an icon of the Conondales, was first sighted and recorded in the area in 1976. It is a beautifully plumaged bird with mottling or marbling giving the appearance of rough bark.

Like other frogmouths, it freezes motionless when disturbed, relying on camouflage to conceal its presence. This bird is also called the plumed frogmouth due to barred bristles or 'plumes' protruding above its bill. It is distinguished from the more common tawny frogmouth which has paler eyes and unbarred plumes.

The marbled frogmouth lives in patches of subtropical rainforest. It is listed as vulnerable in Queensland due to habitat clearing but its distinctive guttural 'gobble gobble' call and bill-clapping are occasionally heard in this rainforest. It is most active at dusk and dawn and takes prey such as insects and frogs from the mid-canopy.

Research in the Conondales

The southern subspecies of the Marbled Frogmouth (*Podargus ocellatus plumiferus*) – the Plumed Frogmouth – is a shy and cryptic territorial nocturnal species that inhabits the canopy of well-developed subtropical vine forests of south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales.

It is considered to be one of the hardest of the night birds of Australia to study owing to its secretive behaviour.

Extensive Marbled Frogmouth (*Podargus ocellatus plumiferus*) studies were carried out by Dr Geoffrey Smith for the Queensland Government in the 1990's in the Conondales. This resulted in a number of scientific publications on this very interesting bird. The most recent is a paper that appeared in the scientific bird journal *Emu*.

The 1993-96 study showed that responses to call-playback were similar across years, but with some variation that could have been explained by rainfall or habituation. There was typically a short peak in response in August (owing to territorial behaviour associated with the onset of breeding), a lull in September (associated with laying and incubation), a peak from November to March (coinciding with brooding, nestling development, fledging and dispersal) and then a lull during the cooler months of April to July (the non-breeding season). Monitoring for Marbled Frogmouth is probably best undertaken from November to March to maximise the likelihood of detecting the species.



Kay McKee

Sound Search for Unique Frog

Gastric Brooding Frog (*Rheobatrachus silus*) was first discovered in 1973 in the Conondale Ranges and disappeared around 1981.

The frog is unusual for living underwater. It does not hop or jump on land but swims strongly to get around. It is most famous, however, for being the first animal ever known to carry its young in its stomach.

Dr Glen Ingram, one of the first people to discover and study the frog writes, "The frog apparently went extinct in the early 1980s, even so, I still pray that this is not so. That somewhere, in the large swathe of rainforest in the Conondales, the females are still sitting in their rock pools with their big tummies full of babies waiting to be birthed by vomiting".

Queensland University of Technology researchers could soon have sound reason to believe this unique frog still exists in the Hinterland.

Using world-first, QUT-developed environmental acoustic sensor technology, a QUT team of researchers is placing the continuous recording devices near creeks in ten locations on private land in areas around the Conondales in the hope of recording the frogs' call. The unassuming, small, brown frog has a strange way of parenting, the female gastric brooding frog swallows the fertilised eggs which secrete a substance that turns off her gastric juices. The eggs then gestate in her stomach and are born as fully formed froglets.

With the help of Queensland Parks and Wildlife staff, the team has already placed some acoustic sensors around the two creeks in the Conondale Ranges where the frogs were last spotted. The call of the gastric brooding frog sounds like "a washboard in a bush band", says QUT's Dr Michael Towsey, who has built software that can scan and identify the call of the gastric brooding frog.

"South-east Queensland has 71 species of frogs and of those, seven have a similar call to that of the gastric brooding frog. We can identify the gastric brooding frogs' call, however, because its dominant frequency is two and a half octaves above middle C." Dr Towsey said.

"The software can filter out the sound of the water and automatically home in on the frogs particular frequency".

The acoustic sensors capture all the sounds of the bush and is also being used to study the diversity and numbers of native birds around Queensland.



Elli Schlunke

Presidential Ponderings

It's a sobering thought that the Conondale Range Committee has been around for more than 35 years (and Mark Rickett's dubbing me President-for-life seems to be coming to pass).

I've often reflected on that momentum generated by earlier members of the CRC and the sound basis it provided for those of us who've come later.

We've been through historic national park expansions, gold mine sagas, regional forest agreements, Great Walk planning and construction, changes in forestry practices and changes as a result of the privatisation of much of the forest (both plantation and native forest) in our area. We've watched the cycles of politics play out in George Street, bringing both threats and opportunities to the Conondales. We have concerns when the present government takes a knife to environment funding, talks of opening up national parks and starts cutting back ranger positions, already considered inadequate.

One of our greatest strengths I've always thought is our constancy of commitment and the experience borne out of that, along with our widespread public support.

As our motto says....

Still... watching over the Conondales.

What got me thinking about long-term, low-turnover groups was that I was nominated for Chairman of MRCCC, the Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee, and was subsequently elected to that position.

While a mere youngster at only twenty years old, MRCCC has an excellent track record and a commitment to decisions being made on the basis of sound science. MRCCC is a wonderful organisation with a number of full and part-time staff, and while I've been a Waterwatch delegate for a number of years, I look forward to being involved at a deeper level.

It just seemed illogical to fight for the forests and streams of the Conondales and not be involved in the river into which they flow, a river Tim Flannery has recently called "one of our most interesting".

Wish me luck.

Ian Mackay

Wyaralong Dam an expensive 'mistake'

The Courier Mail recently carried an article with the above heading about the dam that was to have been the "twin" for Traveston, announced at the time of the "water crisis" back in 2006.

Wyaralong was built, Traveston was relegated to "now-defunct", thanks to a veto by then-federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett under the powers of the EPBC act. At a cost of \$380 million, Wyaralong dam still hasn't been connected to the water grid as its water is reportedly so mineralised and "hard" that it is cheaper to produce desalinated water than to treat it.

While the present government points the finger at the governments of Peter Beattie and Anna Bligh, no-one has pointed out that the architect of both fiascos, the man who insisted on steaming ahead with property purchases prior to the necessary federal approval, continues to hold a high position within the Queensland government.

You might have thought that Traveston, and now Wyaralong, might hang around his neck like an albatross.

Maybe some people just lead charmed lives.

CONNECTING THE CONONDALES

HINTERLAND BUSH LINKS by Susie Duncan

The forests of the Conondale and Blackall ranges share an amazing diversity of native plants and animals.

But if you look at a satellite image on Google maps you will see that the vegetation of the Blackall Range is much more fragmented. This has a big influence on wildlife such as bandicoots and gliding possums that do not readily cross cleared country. Even birds such as fruit doves won't fly to isolated rainforest patches so they are unable to spread rainforest seed there. For this reason Hinterland Bush Links is focused on restoring key vegetation linkages between the Blackall and Conondale ranges.

That way the many plant and animal species in this region will have access to more habitat, and the decline of some species will hopefully be reversed.

One such link is the Cambroon wildlife corridor between the Conondale National Park and Maleny National Park. Several landholders in this wildlife corridor are already enhancing existing vegetation along creeks, often with the assistance of Sunshine Coast Council landholder grants. Restoring vegetation often means getting on

to P3

Poets' Breakfast a great success

Our Poets' Breakfast each September is our contribution to the Kenilworth Celebrates Festival, but it's more than that. True it's also our annual fundraiser that's kept us from having to hold chook raffles in the pub, but it's also become a fundraiser for other groups as well, not to mention being a beautiful and much-awaited morning of poetry.

We'd like to thank the great line-up of poets that entertained us this year. Seasoned supporters Mark Feldman and Harry Donnelly were back, as were Irish Joe Lynch and Robin "Archie" Archbold. John Major ventured down from Mapleton and Barry Betts made it over from Valdora. The ever-popular Hagar was able to be with us along with special guest Greg Young.

Mardi, along with the Pool committee made great breakfasts, Save the Mary did beautiful coffee and cakes while the Anglican ladies produced delicious scones and Devonshire teas.

When the breakfast crowds evaporated at the conclusion, the venue became a workshop for print and puppet-making in the lead-up to this year's Mary River Festival.

Huge thanks to all involved, and not overlooking all those who annually turn up to help set up beforehand and dismantle afterwards.

Great job all.

from P2

top of the weeds, particularly canopy-smothering vine weeds such as Madeira Vine and Cat's Claw which damage remnant and regenerating bush. Another weed vine of major concern is Dutchman's Pipe which mimics the caterpillar food plant of the threatened Richmond Birdwing Butterfly. Dutchman's Pipe contains a toxic chemical which kills the caterpillars, limiting the recovery of the butterfly population.

Friday 2 November LITTLE YABBA PARK BUSHCARE

Little Yabba Park,
Cambroon, 8am-11am

On the first Friday of each month, these bushcare group members are restoring vegetation along the banks of Little Yabba Creek. Work activities are followed by a cuppa and a short bushwalk. New members very welcome. Contact Susie on 5429 6622.



Hinterland Bush Links
connecting restoring protecting



Ian Mackay
MC of Poets Breakfast
Well known Local Poet

Robin "Archie" Archbold
Poet from Mapleton

Mining Exploration Permit (EPM) Walli Project

An EPM was granted in 2007 and has just been renewed.

This permit covers most of Walli Creek properties from Platz road back to the southern end of Walli Creek that joins on to the Maleny National Park (Walli Section). On the western side it joins on to Lot 129 at the top end of Chinamans Creek Road. This area is part of a Restricted Area 384, under the Mineral Resources Act, because it is in the area bounded by the SEQ regional plan.

In any event, this particular EPM block (**should be**) entirely excluded from ever being able to be granted a mining permit, under the Environmental Protection Act, because most of the area is inside, or within 2km of the boundary of a category A environmentally sensitive area (Maleny National Park).

This is all very puzzling and very concerning for the landholders concerned and environmentalists in general in respect to State Government departments enforcing or changing mining and environment law and regulation.

This permit application was disallowed last year due to the above environmental conditions.

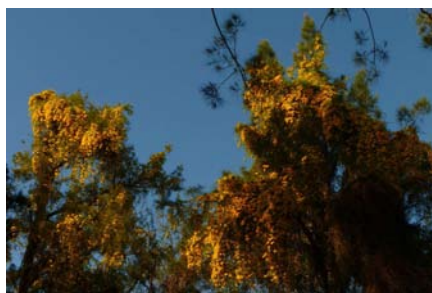
Infrastructure has been built and machinery is on site at Lot 129, loud blasts have been heard in the past week.

Copies of the EPM and permit are available from admin@exploreconondales.com

Cat's Claw Creeper

This brightly flowering spectacle masks an environmental scourge.

A brilliant display of bright yellow flowers high in the tree tops may look attractive but it also marks the extent of the colonisation of Cat's Claw Creeper. In the last twelve months Cat's Claw Creeper (and Madeira Vine) have been declared Weeds of National Significance" (WoNS); their invasive and destructive nature at last being formally recognised.



Cat's Claw Creeper is well established along sections of the Mary, particularly between Kenilworth and Walker Road, Moy Pocket, a significant amount being on government -owned land purchased for the now-defunct Traveston Crossing Dam.

It is also prolific along Amamoor Creek (including Cedar Grove and the Muster site), around Glastonbury, in many gardens in Gympie, with a particularly well-entrenched presence in the Widgee area.

It really stands out at flowering time, September and October, when the bright yellow flowers serve as a very visual marker of its domain. As plants take several years before they flower, the early presence of Cat's Claw is often well ahead of the flowers.

It has two mechanisms for spreading. The first is by lateral growth from its underground tubers which makes for a dense and tangled root system that is difficult to eradicate. The second is from the pods of winged seeds produced after flowering. The seeds are spread by wind and water and possibly birds as the pods may make attractive nesting material.

The recommended way to slow the spread of Cat's Claw is to stop the seed from setting which involves cutting the vine preferably during flowering. There is no need to try to remove the section above the cut (impossible anyway for mature vines; they can be up to 15cm in diameter) as it will die in the tree.

The threat of Cat's Claw is that it can completely smother and kill mature trees.

Thank You – Tool Repair Guy

Over a number of years the Tool Repair Guy in Nambour (behind Mitre 10) has been Testing & Tagging our electrical items that we use for the Poets Breakfast. He does this free of charge and we are extremely grateful. The different groups that have benefited by fund-raising from the event include, Kenilworth First Response, Kenilworth Community College, Swimming Pool, Save the Mary, Anglican Ladies group and of course, Conondale Range Committee.

They also have a very good reputation with tradesmen as well as handymen for repairing all sorts of tools.



The Tool Repair Guy

8 Court Road
NAMBOUR Q 4560
Ph/Fax 5441 4900
Mobile 0403 464614

When this happens along rivers and creeks, it offers more resistance to fast-flowing floodwaters with the tangled mass often being uprooted, resulting in bank erosion.

Not all Cat's Claw areas look like infestations. As cattle often eat leaves at ground level, the result is that sometimes the only Cat's Claw evident is mature vines running up trees.

These are precisely the ones that flower and seed most prolifically and that provide the greatest potential for dispersal to other areas.

Gympie Landcare has produced an excellent brochure "Cat's Claw Crusaders" outlining the problem and describing the method of reducing seeding and freeing up trees. They also have a facility for breeding a biological control (the Tingid bug) and hope soon to have a second control agent on offer.

This article comes with a simple plea to help slow the insidious advance of Cat's Claw. The simple act of identifying one of the vines in flower and cutting it off can stop millions of potential seedlings. It is when Cat's Claw flowers and rains seeds that the pace of takeover accelerates dramatically.

It is important to correctly identify Cat's Claw as there are any number of native vines that it could be mistaken for. Cat's Claw tends to run straight up the sides of trees (there are exceptions where they form a loose spiral) and attach to the tree firstly by little tendrils, when young, and later by a mass of fine roots.

When cutting the vine it is important not to cut the tree as well, adding to its woes. A sizeable screwdriver can be handy to prise the vine away from the trunk to allow safer sawing. Secateurs, loppers or even a pruning saw will be needed.

The complete removal of Cat's Claw from an area is an enormous task and often proves daunting and demoralising. Stopping or reducing seeding is readily achievable and an effective strategy.

For more information contact Ian on 54 460 124



Poets Breakfast audience using the large 3 tiered stand

Thank You - Clem Hassal

Clem from the Hall Committee kindly lets us use the Hall's chairs. He is always there to lend a hand when we are setting up or pulling down. We are most grateful for his help dragging heavy stands. He is an expert relocating stands with the mower.

It's Mary River Festival Time!

All paths will lead to Kandanga on Saturday November 10 for this year's Mary River Festival. Patron feedback from last year's event invariably described it as "the friendliest festival you'll find", "a truly magical day" and "something very special" and the organisers are planning something even more special this year.

There's the new addition of a film tent, a local history tent, recycled instruments, heaps of information tents and stalls, an acoustic jam tent and chalkboard, but the anticipated highlight will be the "Sounds of Mary" performance and light show early in the evening.

Imagine, if you will, a performance involving a giant lungfish, a huge Mary River Cod, a 3-metre Mary River Turtle woven from that insidious environmental weed Cat's Claw Creeper, huge puppets of the Mary's frogs (word has it that even the Gastric Brooding Frog from the Conondales, generally regarded as extinct, will be making a very special appearance) all tied together with a laser light show for which the Mary River Festival has become famous.

Festival coordinator Joolie Gibbs says she's delighted with the way this year's event is shaping up.

"This is a festival about what Tim Flannery has



Connection Road Corridor

While Susie Duncan has been doing great work with a Barung Landcare-based group Hinterland Bush Links, identifying broadscale links between the forests of the Conondales and other areas, a more northerly link has also been identified.

Straddling the boundary of Sunshine Coast Council and Gympie Council regions, the Connection Road Corridor identifies a number of parcels of public and private land that stretch from the Mary at Moy Pocket up to the Conservation Park on top of the biodiverse Kenilworth Bluff.

A number of the private properties are involved in the Land for Wildlife program and it's been a valuable exercise to put each in a broader context.

With a western extension of the corridor out to the Conondales, the linkage is one of just a couple of places where the forests can have connectivity to the river and, ultimately, to the Blackall Range in the east.

The proposal has been successful in attracting

dubbed 'one of our most special rivers', it's a joyous celebration of the resilience of those that live along it and in it, it's human and its ecological communities."

From midday till 8pm the Kandanga sportsground will come alive with music, entertainment, good food, dance, great children's activities and much more.

Highlights of the music line-up are Brisbane-based singer songwriter John Malcolm, the acclaimed Hat Fitz and Cara, as well as the return of The Floating Bridges, who last year left patrons calling for more and are back again to give it.

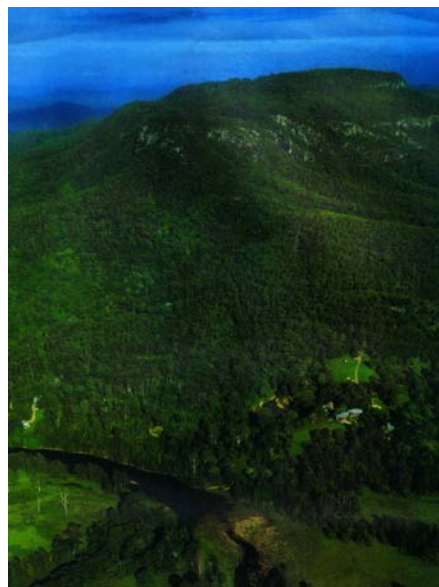
Martin Fingland will be back with his Geckoes Wildlife show that held rapt audiences last year while champion juggler Terry the Great will demonstrate why he so deserves his title.

For many it'll be a celebration of the Remembrance Day reprieve Peter Garrett gave the Mary three years ago. Its also about looking forward to increased recognition of the significance of "our" river and our role as custodians in both understanding it and better caring for it.

Like a river that starts out small at the extremities of the catchment but gets bigger the further on it flows, the Mary River Festival only goes from strength to strength.

Saturday November 10 Noon to 8pm
Kandanga Recreation Grounds
www.maryriverfestival.org.au

BMRG partnership funding to enable mapping as well as extending landholder work on dealing with Moy Pocket's Cat's Claw problem, an insidious environmental weed making inroads into some otherwise excellent riparian forest.





MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Conondale Range Committee
 PO Box 150 KENILWORTH 4574
 Email: admin@exploreconondales.com
www.exploreconondales.com

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STILL... WATCHING
 OVER
 THE CONONDALES



The Marbled Frogmouth
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- *Coop bookshop Sunshine Coast University
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- * Maple St Coop, Maleny
- * Barung Landcare, Maleny
- * Rosetta Books, Maleny
- * CRC Mail Order or on line

www.exploreconondales.com

A must for any visitor to the Conondales, this book includes history, a comprehensive bird list, description of walks, recreation and maps of the area. Plus lots of great photos.



Launching of boats at Black Bean boat race
 Held every year on the Mary River at Pickering Bridge Gheerulla