

Subscriptions.

FEP subscriptions are due 1st July. Your subscription helps us to continue our activities to promote and maintain healthy native environmental parks in our region.

Enclosed is an application form. Please also advise us if your address or phone numbers have changed so we can update your contact details.

Pests Travelling Park to Park.

Sometimes we wonder if we can love our bushland parks too much. If visiting a number of bush areas in the same day there is a high risk of transferring pests or seeds on clothing across to the next park. Ideally we only visit one bush area each day or change clothing including socks before going onto the next area. Seeds that can easily be transported include Cobblers Pegs and African Love Grass which is a grass species that is very hard to control once introduced.

FEP Funds.

As a number of FEP groups are getting going we could do with more funds to help ensure that each group has access to the equipment required and possibly fund other projects within these parks. If you would like to donate money towards the operating costs it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Hugh at info@fep.org.au.

Getting Started in a Park.

We would recommend that you check with the site coordinator to confirm starting time, location, etc.

As the primary activities are in the bush we also recommend that you wear suitable protective clothing including long sleeved shirt, long trousers, comfortable sturdy shoes or boots, gloves, wide brim hat and sun glasses.

Drinking plenty of water before taking on physical activities will help to maintain fluid levels.

Tools and gloves are provided as required.

Parkcare Groups.

Parkcare groups are volunteers carrying out bush rehabilitation in bushland parks.

Would you like to get involved?

DugganPark

(Leslie & Collier Streets, Rangeville)

We are launching a new Parkcare Group **Sunday 9th June** from 9am till 12noon. The launch will include a range of activities followed by a free BBQ. **All are invited.**

First group activity **Saturday 15th June.**

(Contact Rod Spalding 0418710232)

Redwood Park (Each Monday 8:30am)

(Plus 2nd & 4th Saturday each month)

(Warrego Highway below the saddle)

This group is active on Monday & every second Saturday from 8:30am. Access to the park is through the bottom car park on the down section of the Toowoomba range crossing, on the left just after the 100km sign.

(Contact Hugh Krenske info@fep.org.au)

(or call Hugh 0418 748 282 or 07 4635 1758)

Hartmann Bushland Reserve

(Alderley St near Rowbotham St)

(Wednesday from 7:30am each week)

This group is active Wednesday mornings each week from 7:30am – 11am.

(Contact Greg Lukes 0428 288 077)

Panorama Crescent Park

(1st Saturday each month now from 3pm)

We would like to get more Prince Henry Heights residents active carrying out bush rehabilitation activities each month.

Pedestrian access is down the laneway between 4 & 8 Panorama Cr, Prince Henry Heights.

(Kathy Gouldson 4613 0195 or 0437920936)

Nielsen Park (Tarlington St off Ramsay St)

(1st Saturday each month from 9am – 12)

(Plus 3rd Sunday of the month from 2pm)

(Contact Rob Brodribb 0407 124 863)

(rwbrodribb@ozemail.com.au)

Echo Valley South Park (Ramsay St)

(2nd to 5th Saturday from 9am each month)

This group is active on most Saturdays each week from 9am – 12. *(Greg Lukes)*

Friends of the Escarpment Parks Toowoomba Inc.

Newsletter Editor Greg Lukes

glukes@bigpond.com

Would you like to support FEP? Membership is only \$5 per year (\$10/Family)



The
**Escarpment
Park Friend**

May – Jun 2013

Hugh Krenske 4635 1758

info@fep.org.au

www.fep.org.au

FEP, Caring for Toowoomba's Bushlands

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Duggan Parkcare Group.

J.E.Duggan Park, Leslie and Collier Streets Rangeville eight hectares is one of Toowoomba's smaller bushland parks overlooking the escarpment. It's a rejuvenation area for local eucalypt forest and is a good spot for gentle bushwalking.

We will be having a launch for the FEP Bushcare group for this park to be lead by local resident Rod Spalding. The launch will be Sunday 9th June from 9am till 12 noon. There will be a range of activities followed by a free BBQ. All are invited to attend.

In 1999, the Friends initiated and worked with Toowoomba City Council to plant a very successful Millennium Forest which forms an extension to Duggan Park. The Millennium Forest was completed by the turn of the century and is now well established bushland, which is home to many species of birds and a colony of wallabies.

The park also has some notable ground orchids growing in it that are vulnerable in the event of a hot fire. Effective weed management by volunteers will reduce the likelihood of a severe fire event in future.

TRC Bushcare Workshop.

TRC are holding a free, 2 day, **Bushcare Workshop** for the general public as well as current and prospective volunteers. The workshop will be held **4th & 5th May** covering bush regeneration theory as well as practical applications. Saturday 9am to 12:30pm, Sunday 9am to 3pm. For further information and to register for both days, please visit any TRC customer service centre or phone 131 872.

(Nielsen Parkcare activity also Saturday 4th will start later than usual at 1:30pm)

Fern Gully Walk.

We are organizing a walk for FEP members and families who are interested in seeing Fern Gully at Redwood Park. It is a fairly long but worthwhile trek for people with good mobility. The gully also features a small waterfall which is very striking. The whole walk would take a leisurely 1.5 hours. The walk is planned for **Saturday 27th April** leaving from the picnic area at 8:30am followed by a BBQ (BYO meat).



**Fern Gully, Redwood Park
Hugh Krenske (FEP)**

Hello Parks.

Redwood Park Open Day

The open day, part of the Toowoomba Regional Council's "Hello Parks" program, went ahead on the 9th of March. Thankfully the foggy Toowoomba weather and light drizzle which discouraged many people from attending the event, was not present a couple of kilometres away below the range in Redwood Park.



The bird walk led by Michael Atzeni, took people around the circuit walk through the rainforest and back up the track into the picnic area. While there were plenty of birds to be heard, spotting them was a bit more difficult. Among the nearly 30 species recorded were fig birds, eastern whip bird, eastern yellow robin, white browed scrub wrens, spectacled monarch and rufous fantail.

The plant walk and the butterfly walk were combined into one. Jointly led by botanist Kym Sparshott and Butterflies and Other Invertebrates Club member, John Moss, and supported by local botanist Geoff Sharp, participants were brought to realize the high diversity within the plant community in the rainforest in Redwood Park.

Redwood Park is significant in that it contains both elements of the subtropical rainforests of the coast and the dry rainforests of the Bunya Mountains, and all of this within 5 kilometres of the centre of Toowoomba. Redwood is home to a large diversity of native animals including the long-nosed bandicoot, commonly seen on wildlife cameras, the mountain brush tail

possum (bobuck), not to be confused with the common brush tail possum regularly seen in Toowoomba's residential suburbs, and swamp wallabies. It is home to several endangered animals and plants, amongst them being the blotched sarcophilus orchid, the black breasted button quail and the koala.

Back in the picnic ground local environmental groups, Toowoomba Field Naturalists, Toowoomba Bird Observers and Friends of the Escarpment Parks, manned informative displays about their groups and the role they played in the community.

Spotlight tour Nielsen Park

Despite the damp conditions earlier and fog that rolled in from time to time during the evening, we had enough people along to form three separate tours.

Pleasantly, about half were children, while parents and an elderly couple made up the rest. There is nothing like a spotlight tour to see the animals of the night and to realize the importance of our bushland parks to our native fauna.

Unfortunately, Nielsen Park is now an island, completely surrounded by suburbia and isolated from the escarpment bushland. Surprisingly, it still has a large variety of animals that call it home. Most of animals that we saw in the array of spotlights, sometimes with the assistance of binoculars were just as curious about us as we were of them.

Brush tail possums were plentiful, with one female posing for us while no more than a couple of metres away. There was a lot of excitement with the discovery of a ringtail possum, much smaller than the brush tail possum. Some of the larger ground animals decided to seek refuge in the centre of the park, well away from the intruders into their nighttime domain. One tawny frogmouth was spotted and a family of kookaburras looked down on the proceedings from a lofty perch above the entrance to the park. A great time was had by all.

Hugh Krenske (FEP)
Michael Atzeni (TBO)

Species Watch.

Blotched Sarcochilus Orchid *Sarcochilus weinthalii*

The Blotched Sarcochilus is a rare and threatened orchid from around the Toowoomba area. This orchid grows on rainforest trees, either projecting or partly hanging from the trunks. It has fleshy aerial roots and short stems with several leathery leaves. The flowering stems are up to 7 cm long with as many as 12 flowers, which usually hang. Each flower is 15 mm across, and is cream to greenish with purple to reddish blotches.



Blotched sarcochilus orchid

www.flickr.com/photos/kkopicki/5053331247/

Blotched sarcochilus orchid can be found in rainforest and drier scrubs, often in isolated patches, from 400m to 700m altitude. Distribution is in the coastal and sub-coastal ranges in southern Queensland and north-east NSW.

Commonwealth status is Vulnerable 

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/prifile.aspx?id=10746

One of the major factors identified which contributes to orchid rarity is a dependency on specific mycorrhizal interactions. Mycorrhizas are associations between fungi and plant roots that can be beneficial to both the plant and the fungi. *Sarcochilus weinthalii* interacts specifically with a single species called *Ceratobasidium*.

Species Watch.

Yellow-faced Whip Snake *Demansia psammophis*



Yellow-faced Whip Snake

McKenzie Street (about 100m from the bush)

Photo Geoff Sharp

The Yellow-faced Whip Snake is a slender and fast-moving snake, active during the day. It is often confused with the Eastern Brown Snake, and it is hard to observe closely, being alert and fleeing quickly when disturbed.

It is pale grey to brown in colour, with reddish colouring on the head, and sometimes on the tail as well. The belly is grey-green to yellowish. ***A dark comma-shaped streak runs from the eye to the corner of the mouth.*** The face is usually but not always yellowish, with a narrow, yellow-edged dark bar around the front of the snout from nostril to nostril. The average length is 80cm, with a maximum of 1m. Males are larger than females. It can be distinguished from the Eastern Brown by its facial markings, and smaller size (80 cm - 100 cm).

The Yellow-faced Whip Snake is common throughout most of Australia in a wide range of habitats from the coast to the arid interior, except swamps and rainforest. They feed mainly on small diurnal (active during the day and sleeping at night) lizards, lizard eggs and frogs. ***They have good eyesight, and can chase and capture lizards on the run.***

During winter they may shelter beneath rocks, and have been observed aggregating (gathering together) with several other individuals on occasion. The females lay eggs in early summer in the south of its range, with clutches of 5-20 eggs (the average is six) being recorded. Communal egg-laying of up to 200 eggs, in deep soil or rock crevices, has also been reported.

The Yellow-faced Whip Snake is a venomous snake, but is not considered dangerous. However, if disturbed, a bite could be extremely painful, with local swelling.

australianmuseum.net.au/Yellow-faced-Whip-Snake