



# Brisbane Ranges Friends News



Waterwatch at Sutherlands Creek  
Photo: Judy Locke

## Activity Reports

### March FOBR Activity: Waterwatch - Judy Locke

For last month's activity, there were two planned events: water quality monitoring along Sutherlands Creek at Steiglitz, and removal of the weedy Sallow Wattle in the Lower Stony Creek area of the national park north of Ballan Road. Due to time constraints we only completed the water monitoring so following a lunch at Bert Boardman's reserve, some of us went home, went for a bushwalk or in my case continued to patrol the park.

We have been water quality monitoring along Sutherlands Creek, downstream from the Meredith bridge, for a number of years now, at a rather picturesque rock pool. Some years ago, FoBR were encouraged by Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) to take on regular monitoring of Sutherlands Creek, testing for water quality to reflect the general health of stream.

Our task for the morning was to collect water samples from the stream and, while Deirdre and Kristen tested for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, electrical conductivity, phosphorous and turbidity, the rest of us gently collected and attempted to identify the tiny critters hiding in the water plants and natural debris.

Due to the recent dry conditions the rock pool was just that. But, as evidenced from the macroinvertebrates collected and chemical tests done on site, the rock pool water was in reasonably good health. During past water quality monitoring the endangered Yarra Pygmy Perch has been located in this area of the creek which makes maintaining stream health even more important.

Following a successful morning playing in water collected from a rock pool bounded by steep rocky cliffs, huge boulders made smooth by flowing water over millions of years, grass trees and other interesting shrubbery, we vacated this idyllic site to Bert Boardman reserve for a leisurely lunch. Following lunch we all went our separate ways.

### Birding in the Brissies - Carolyn Edwards

On Sunday 29 March a mixed group of Geelong Field Naturalists, FOBRs and friends went on a bird walk led by Grace Lewis. The walk took in sections of Quarry Track, Stable Track, Wallaby Track and Kangaroo Track. We also spent some time exploring the near end of Old Thompson Track in search of the elusive Spotted Quail-thrush which proved, well, elusive...

It was rather a quiet day as far as birds go, but we still managed to put together a respectable list. White-throated Treecreepers seemed to be everywhere, as did Grey Fantails, with numerous Crimson Rosellas and Honeyeaters of several species. One of the beauties of an outing Field Nats is that people have a wide range of interests and knowledge. As well as birds we noticed spiders, caterpillars, grasshoppers and leaf insects; tried to identify the Eucalypts we saw (this would have been easier if the leaves, buds and fruits weren't so high up!) and looked for fossils in the rocks along Quarry Track. Also, we unexpectedly discovered a geocache, leaving a note in the book to let people know

we'd been there. *Morning tea along Quarry Track*  
Photo: Carolyn Edwards



APRIL 2015

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## Upcoming Events

**Sunday 12 April, 10am at Anakie Depot**

Grass tree monitoring with VNPA Naturewatch.

**Saturday 9 May, 10am at Staughton Vale Hall**

Training session on the use of NatureShare and plant ID, followed by farewell for Judy.

## FoBR Membership Fees

Annual fees \$11 for single and \$22 for families are due  
Pay straight into FoBR bank account - BSB: 633-000  
A/c No. 115314882

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## Park News

The new Area Chief Ranger, Stuart Lardner, is settling in whilst trying to understand the complexity of the PV managed areas within the Geelong area. Hopefully soon he will have some time to meet with the Brisbane Ranges and Steiglitz community and volunteer groups.

Boxy is busier than ever spending a large amount of time travelling his patch from Anglesea to past Portland, attending meetings and coordinating staff employed for fire management.

Whilst on weekend patrol recently, Ranger Scotty discovered that some people had set up camp at The Crossing picnic area, complete with their own fireplace on the ground, ignoring the fireplaces provided. Well, Scotty, as a Compliance Ranger, issued a fine of \$700 for an illegal fireplace. Obviously they not happy but hopefully they have learnt their lesson!

More vandalism to the BBQ facilities at Stony Creek picnic area. This is the third time vandals have tried to remove the inner compartment of the gas BBQ. They were not successful but in retaliation made a thorough mess of the toilets. The gas BBQ no longer functions and has been removed.

A small wildfire of approximately 3 ha occurred near Lease Road and Bracken Track on Sunday 22 March. It appears to have been deliberately lit by someone with a illegal camp fire. Investigations are continuing. Fortunately there was little wind or the fire could have become much larger fuelled by regrowth, Bracken and Grass-trees.

### Finally.... there's my news

Sadly, this is my last contribution to the FoBR newsletter as a PV ranger – yes, I am retiring as from the 1 July this year. I will take annual leave as from 4 May through to end of June so this next April Sunday activity will be my last whilst wearing my PV uniform. We have sold our Anakie property and have purchased a 2 and half acre property at Uki, northern NSW. We will have lots to discover and learn as the rainfall is measured in metres, there is rainforest with lots of interesting plants, green grass (lots of mowing therefore have to learn how to use a mower as all we currently have are rocks and sand!), bandicoots, no rabbits, wallabies, birds and lots of other creatures and critters such as carpet snakes, ticks and cane toads!

So, it is with truly mixed emotions that we leave Anakie, sadness to leave all our wonderful friends yet excitement in planning for our next phase of our life. The Northern Rivers area will create new challenges such as learning about semi-tropical plants, birds, animals, pest animals and weeds. And of course meeting people with environmental interests. We will keep in touch with FoBR and would welcome a cuppa with anyone who comes our way up there (not far from Tweed Heads/Coolangatta).

I have enjoyed and learnt much due to my almost 19 years association with FoBR, and like many of us can reflect on the changes and success's that have occurred within the group. I hope FoBR continues to contribute to park management and believe success is to provide opportunities for a diversity of projects associated with the Brisbane Ranges as well as, the monthly activities in the park weeding, rubbish collecting, track clearing etc. This is currently happening, e.g. the Botanic Gardens Project, as well as the VNPA Naturewatch and Waterwatch projects. And of course, above all FoBR must allow time to enjoy and share all the wonderful attributes of our special national park.

I will be introducing Alex Shellard, a young female ranger who will be your next "go to" person for a time after I leave. She is keen to meet the group and will take on the responsibility of the PV contact ranger (I paid her heaps to say yes J). If she is available, Alex will join us at the next Sunday activity.

Finally, for all of you who I won't see at the next activity, thank you for all your help and friendship. We will keep in touch!

Judy

## For your diary! Join us

### Sunday 12 April, 10am at Anakie Depot

Grass tree monitoring with VNPA Naturewatch. This will be Judy Locke's last FoBR activity as a Ranger. BYO tissues.

### Saturday 9 May, 10am at Staughton Vale Hall

A training session on the use of NatureShare, as well as identification of significant plants of the Brisbane Ranges. A farewell for Judy Locke, with morning tea and lunch catered. Please RSVP to Colin Cook, including any dietary requirements, [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au)

**Your articles:** We would love to publish your stories of bushwalking in the Brissies. Send in your contributions to [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au)

## Landcare Award

Elsbeth Swan, a member of FOBR, has been nominated for the Landcare Hero Honour Roll.

Elsbeth has been a member of the Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group since its inception in 1989. She has filled roles on the Executive committee since then, and is currently the group's Moorabool Landcare Advisory Committee representative, which means she meets with the local council once a month on behalf of our Landcare group to advise on issues. She also works for DELWP and is the local Land for Wildlife officer for the region. Elspeth has also volunteered with a number of other regional groups, including the Ballarat Field Naturalists and Friends of Brisbane Ranges, helping to organise events and trips. She provides our group and other groups in the area with conservation advice, and is the person to go to for plant and animal identification. Elspeth is always enthusiastic, and is truly an asset to our local and regional community.

<http://landcarelife.com/nomination/elsbeth-swan/>



Elsbeth Swan  
Photo: Landcare L.I.F.E.