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For your diary...

All welcome!!

Join our happy group of weedbusters and tree planters. Bring hat, sturdy shoes, sunscreen, water, gardening gloves (if available). Our sessions conclude with a convivial cuppa.

Sunday, 1 August

8:00 to 10:00am

Meet at Barcoorah St riverfront, Westlake (or park in Balaton St and walk up to Barcoorah St).

**Sunday, 5 September
(with Middle Park School!!)**

8:00 to 10:00am

Joint working bee with the Middle Park Primary School Trees 2000 Project. Meet at Callabonna St riverfront, Westlake (between Nisbet St and Gidgi Close).

Weedbuster Day

Sunday, 10 October

8:00 to 10:00am

Meet at Fig Tree site, cnr Tennent St and Westlake Drive, Westlake.

**Sunday, 7 November
(with ATCV supporters!!)**

8:00 to 12:00noon

A group of ATCV weekend volunteers will be joining us for this special event. Meet at Balaton St riverfront, Westlake.

Breakup for 1999

Sunday, 5 December

8:00 to 10:00am

Meet at Balaton Street.

Enquiries: Maree 3376 5803
(BH) or

Blooming Wattles

In the cold, wet winter we have been experiencing, the wattles currently in full bloom herald that Spring is just around the corner. The great display and fragrance of the various species of wattle in full bloom in the riverfront bushland are a delight to behold! Along the Barcoorah Street bushland can be seen some magnificent specimens.



Team members celebrate project completion and their graduation with ATCV's David Sharpe (left) and Supervisor Brendan Taylor. Photo by Geoff Rudd

Green Corps team Graduation Day

On 28 May, 1999, it was an occasion of pride and sadness as the Westlake Green Corps team members celebrated their graduation from the six-month program they commenced the previous December. Pride for a job well done and much appreciated by the local community; sadness for the fact that the partnership between the local community and the team of enthusiastic young Green Corps people had come to an end.

Parents, friends, TAFE teachers, ATCV* representatives, BCC staff and Councillor, and residents from nearby and afar joined in the celebration with the Brendan Taylor, Supervisor, and his young charges. The young people of the Green Corps team graduated, both with their formal qualifications and with a great life experience, as attested in the page 2 article by Jenny Camp, one of the team.

WRBG was represented by a number of members, and Ed thanked the team on behalf of WRBG and the local community. *(See stories, pictures, p.2, 3)*

**ATCV stands for the 'Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers', the organisation contracted to manage the Green Corps Program in Queensland. Green Corps is a Federally funded program for projects aimed at protecting and improving the environment.*



Team members, with Supervisor Brendan Taylor, cutting ribbon to launch the Coucal Trail.

Photo by Geoff Rudd

We hear from Jenny, one of the Green Corps team ...

A Green Corps experience

... by Jenny Camp

In December 1998 a group of ten enthusiastic 17-20 year olds joined a project designed to teach them new skills applicable in the work force and to gain experience in the field of conservation. Six Months later we, the Westlake Green Corps team, have completed our project and have gained valuable experience both within the conservation field and on a personal level. Our learning processes have been fostered both by various TAFE instructors and our Project Supervisor, Brendan Taylor.

During our project, we were provided training in Occupational Health and Safety, First Aid, Use of Hand and Power Tools, Introduction to the Conservation Industry, ... etc. Along with this formal training, the members of the group learned important skills pertaining to working within and for a group. This element in particular is of great use to the participants as it can be applied to just about any other working environment, whether it is related to conservation or not.

The main thrust of our project lies at the river end of Balaton Street, Westlake, where we built pedestrian access to an area of bushland that runs alongside the Brisbane River. Included in the project was the construction of four timber bridges and two boardwalks. Within this and all other areas of the project, all members participated in every part of the construction.

During our time at Green Corps, we were lucky enough to be granted two one-week residentials at Pottsville and Old Bonalbo, both in New South Wales. These experiences helped strengthen the group both professionally and personally. All members of the group have initiated and maintained

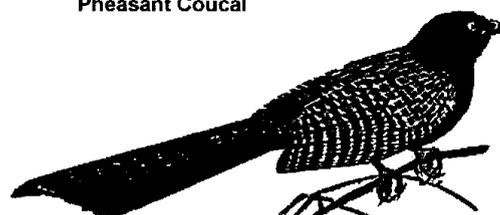
friendships with each other. This makes the work day more than just work, it gave us a chance to mix with others of a similar age and interest - it is a prerequisite of entry into Green Corps that one has a respect for and interest in conserving the environment. The Westlake Green Corps team had the opportunity to work alongside the picturesque Brisbane River. Though we have been working closely and in amongst a weed infestation, we are still able to appreciate our surroundings, especially when the resident Pheasant Coucal shows itself. Our track has been named after this bird: The Coucal Trail.

Overall the Green Corps experience for this team whose members dwindled from ten to seven, has been very positive. While it has not been without problems, our attitudes have remained always positive for the future.

We have gained valuable skills which we hope will aid us in further employment, we have learned to work within a group, and we have made lasting friendships with those who we can relate to.

Our case is an example of how successful a Green Corps project can be. It has become a valuable asset to this group of young people, and we hope it will continue to do so for others who are looking for a full time training position within the field of environmental conservation.

Pheasant Coucal



Out of Africa...

... and into the Australian Bush

by Anita Wurfl

Almost three years ago Peter and I immigrated to Brisbane from Africa. We thought we were very privileged to find a house in Westlake and it was only after we moved in, that we discovered we were so near the river. What a stroke of luck!! We then met our good neighbours, Ed and Glenda Parker, who told us about the Westlake-Riverhills Bushcare Group and its work in caring for the environment by planting trees and weeding the river frontage. "Oh yes, we would be happy to join and give back to the community a little bit of what we were receiving in terms of a beautiful environment and cared for streets and pathways."

So, first Sunday of the month, off we went with our gloves, hat and sturdy shoes to weed our little corner of forest. "Oh, what a pretty flower", I say, "I grow that in my garden." "Noxious weed," says Ed, "get rid of it. Every little one of those stems will grow into a pest." Literally dozens of bags later, all full of mother of millions, we realised we had a lot to learn.

We were keen nature lovers in Africa. We were used to leopards and elephants, learned to recognise the tracks of these and many more. But by making friends in the Bushcare group we learned that the flora and fauna of Queensland can also be exciting. We learned about green tree frogs and blue-tongued lizards, and how frogs are an indicator of a healthy environment. We learned to appreciate the importance of indigenous vegetation and why it is important to keep exotics out of the bush. We also learned that the humane way of doing away with cane toads was to catch them and freeze them!! (ugggh!) and that ticks are as vicious and also give you ricketsia.! More insect repellent the next time.

I look forward to the first Sunday in every month. I cannot recall one instance when the weather was bad. In fact, the special quality of the light in Brisbane is something that few seem to be aware of. So I sometimes cheat, leave the weeds for a moment and just take in the clean air, the intense light and listen to the call of birds, always present, always entertaining us. It lifts my spirits and I am happy to be part of it all.

By joining the Bushcare group we discovered also that within that small group of people there are artists, scientists, botanists, and quite a few just plain old nature lovers like us.

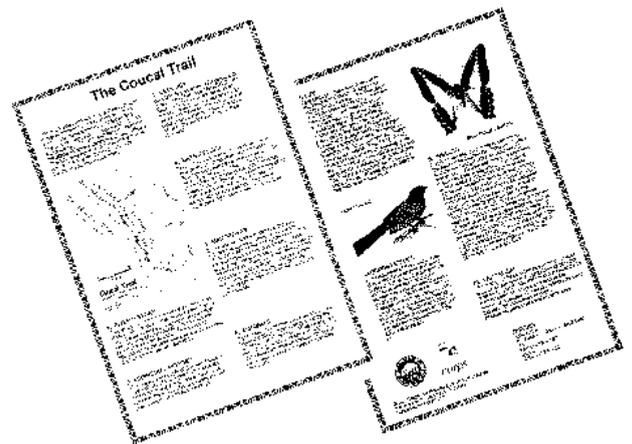
I hope that my grandchildren will one day be able to take their children to our little corner of forest and say: "Those trees were planted by our Grandpa and Grandma".



The Coucal Trail guide brochure

The Westlake Green Corps team not only did a great job with the path and bridge construction, and bushland rehabilitation. The team also conceived, researched and published a trail guide which they titled 'The Coucal Trail'.

The guide describes various interesting aspects of the local natural environment through which the track traverses, supplemented with sketches and locality map.



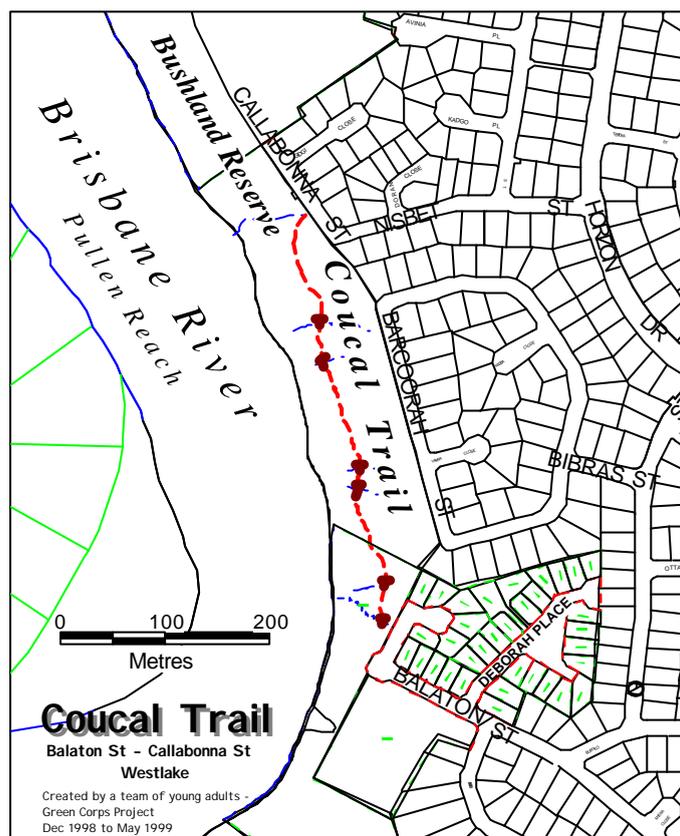
Copies of the Coucal Trail guide are available by contacting WRBG committee members (refer foot of last page).



Joint Green Corps and WRBG working bee, April 1999.
Below, a view of one of the completed bridges.



Westlake's new Coucal Trail



Refer to the lead articles on pages 1 & 2 for the story on this new trail.

Persistent Tree Vandalism

While WRBG and its community of supporters are working hard to ensure a healthy riverfront bushland, others seem intent on destroying naturally-regenerating tree saplings.

One of the worst instances is occurring below the south-west corner of Barcoorah Street, where persistent damage has been sustained over a period of time. The misguided vandalism of the naturally occurring saplings, apart from being ugly (in more ways than one), is merely opening up the area for incursion of weed species.

The area is being monitored and a special effort will be made at the August working bee to redress the effect of the vandalism through community working bees to re-establish the cleared natural vegetation. Refer Diary events for more details.

Qld Landcare Awards 1999

SORB, in conjunction with its WRBG bushland rehabilitation offshoot group, was recently acknowledged as a finalist in the Community Conservation Category of the Queensland Landcare Awards for 1999. SORB has been operating in local bushland conservation for 8 eight years.

Work for the Dole Project

WRBG and its counterpart, Jindalee Bushland Care Group, are jointly coordinating a local *Work for the Dole (WFTD)* project, in conjunction with BCC's Habitat Brisbane Officer, Mike Noble and Councillor Christine Watson. Some funding for materials is being provided by the Council's Ward parks trust fund.

The WFTD project, apart from providing work experience for young people, is aimed at providing assistance with weed control and bushland rehabilitation at various nominated sites at Westlake and Mount Ommaney riverfronts.

The WFTD crew have been working mainly at the Mount Ommaney walkway to date. They will shortly be moving to undertake weed clearing and mulching at a site off Callabonna Street, in preparation for planting in the spring of seedlings raised in a Tree 2000 project by Middle Park Primary School students. See next article on this Tree 2000 initiative by the school.

Trees 2000 Project

As noted in the last newsletter, Middle Park Primary School is undertaking a Trees 2000 project. The school is currently propagating local native trees and shrubs to be planted out in the local area.

The school has teamed up with WRBG to hold a joint working bee to plant out the seedlings in a specific area of Westlake's Riverfront bushland. The site will be at Callabonnah St, on the north side of the new Coucal Trail near Nisbet St. *Working bee 5 September* (see Diary, p.1)

Nature Watch column in Centenary News

WRBG has initiated a regular column in the independent newspaper, *Centenary News*, published by Wren Enterprises, a local printing firm based in Richlands. Under the heading of *Nature Watch*, the column seeks to give an insight into some of the natural wonders of our local bushland areas and its fauna and flora. The column commenced in April 1999.

Publication of this newsletter was supported by the Brisbane City Council's Environmental Grants Program.



TREE VANDALISM: The arrows indicate the cut stumps and debris of some seven mutilated saplings. The view is taken from the Coucal Trail towards Barcoorah St, Westlake. (See article at left)

Save Our Riverfront Bushland (SORB) is a Centenary Suburbs residents' committee established as a result of a public meeting on 1 Sep 1991 held to express concern at the clearing of large tracts of remnant riverfront bushland.

SORB embraces the joint goals of:

- protection of remnant bushland;
- retention of public access to the riverfront; and
- adequate provision of public open space in the Centenary Suburbs.

SORB formed the **Westlake-Riverhills Bushcare Group (WRBG)**, a community group operating under BCC's Bushland Care Program which supports community bushland rehabilitation activities in Brisbane. Established since 1993, WRBG's focus at present is the bushland remnant on the eastern flank of Pullen Reach of the Brisbane River.

Editor/Secretary: Ed Parker (3376 1389)

Convenor: Maree Norris (3376 6906)

Correspondence: c/- 3 Bibras Street, Westlake, 4074 Treasurer: Maria Delahunty (3279 4472)

Email: eparker@ozemail.com.au Committee member: Walter Wood (3376 3103 BH)

Web: <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~eparker/sorb.html>