

Environmental Walk, Kalinga Park - Wavell Heights Cressey Street Wetlands on Sunday 18th May 2008

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Sunday morning dawned fine, but very windy and chilly. We were a small group which included members from three WPSQ Branches (Brisbane, Kedron Brook and Boondall Tinch Tamba) arriving to enjoy this joint Branch environmental walk.

This area of Brisbane is now very much in the news, following the release on 19th May of the changed plan for the Airport Link, a mainly underground toll road planned between Brisbane's northern suburbs, the airport and the inner city, which impacts on the park area between the rail line and Sandgate Road.

We viewed one of Brisbane City Council's Storm Quality Improvement Devices (SQID), along the creek at the eastern side of the park, filtering water leading into Kedron Brook.

This is in the Brooks upper salt water tidal reach just west of Sandgate Road, as observed by the mangroves along the banks. The railway bridge crossing used to be the upper salt tidal limit but during the drought, lower down stream flow pressures allowed salt intrusion above this mark and now a handful of mangrove trees grow along the banks there. These are only a few years old and it will be interesting to see if they continue to survive now that there is a freshwater flow in this area.

We were surprised to note the unprofessional and radical tree clearing that had occurred around the remnants of the old Coal Mine on the northern side of the Park. Both weed and native plant species had been hacked down with no obvious plan. This coalmine operated from 1895 to 1905 supplying coal mainly to Queensland Rail and the Virginia Brickworks.

Usually turtles, eels and fish can be seen within the creek, but at this time of year, there wasn't a lot of activity to be seen. The water was also quite murky, following recent rain.

The Council has been doing a lot of weed clearing work along the Huet Street side of the park, with signs indicating that revegetation will be occurring in the near future.

The Wavell Heights Cressey Street constructed wetlands, one of the BCC's Water Sensitive Urban Designs, has also had some BCC clearing and weeding occurring around it, and there were plenty of ducks and dusky moorhens enjoying the habitat.

We noted a turtle, glimpsed a few skinks, no evidence of mammals and identified a total of 39 species of bird. Highlights included viewing a Little and Intermediate Egret side by side, enabling an appreciation of the differences in size; watching Rainbow Lorikeets and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets in pairs popping in and out of nesting hollows in a couple of the few remaining trees large enough to have such hollows; and seeing Superb Fairy-wrens utilize the isolated tiny gardens of 1 shrub plus some lomandra that the BCC has planted along the brook.

The birds we saw included: Australian Brush-turkey, Australian Wood Duck, *Mallard*, Pacific Black Duck, Little Pied Cormorant, Pied Cormorant, Australian Pelican, White Faced Heron, Little Egret, Great Egret , Intermediate Egret, Striated Heron, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Purple Swamphen, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Rock Dove, Spotted Turtle Dove, Galah, Corella spp, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Laughing Kookaburra, Superb Fairy-wren, Striated Pardalote, Noisy Miner, Magpie Lark, Willie Wagtail, Spangled Drongo, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Grey Butcherbird, Pied Butcherbird , Australian Magpie, Pied Currawong, Torresian Crow, Welcome Swallow, Silvereye, Common Mynah.