



MARCH 2021

From the President

CCC is definitely getting a bit of a shake up by our new coordinator Coral – the tail is definitely wagging the dog, and a good thing too!

It feels like we are at a critical time in history as we start to acknowledge climate change and its impacts on our way of life. CCC will be soon inviting you to a Climate Change Symposium where notable experts will share their knowledge and advice. No politics - just the facts.

I'm no scientist but I love fungi, mostly sauteed in butter with a hint of garlic. Turns out our former coordinator, Sherie, is a fungi genius. She's helping us run a citizen science project with the support of a Rockhampton Regional Council grant. If you are at all fascinated by fungi, join our Fungi Blitz team and learn how to collect and identify our local fungi species.

Have you ever seen a platypus in the wild? It's a beautiful sight and a very cute and accurate indicator of ecosystem health. No one has really surveyed our local area for these critters so sign up to help us look in your backyard or local creek.

Paul Bambrick
President



Out of sight should not mean out of mind for our elusive platypus.

Please help put the platypus back in our sights and minds by participating in Platypus Watch Capricornia.

See page 4 for more

CQ Climate change symposium – 14 May 2021

Climate Change in Central Queensland seems to be the elephant in the room. We all know about it, but discussing it can be uncomfortable as we all sit in different places on the “thoughts about climate change” spectrum.

As French philosopher, Voltaire wrote back in the 1700's, “Men argue. Nature acts.” We argue about climate change and global warming, but nature does what nature does, acts, be it drought, flood, fire or other natural disasters. Argue as we will, we inevitably enjoy and suffer the acts of nature.

The CQ Climate Change Symposium is going to be an information-packed day which ignores our differences. In the CCC President's words, “no politics – just the facts”. In the CCC Coordinator's words, “no doom and gloom – just ideas on how we can be prepared and be resilient”.

The symposium is a must if you are interested in hearing directly from recognised experts covering topics from using science to predict the long range weather forecast, to what we can do to slow, stop or reverse the progress of warming, through to how we can prepare and become resilient to change as our future unfolds.

Further details including the program and the speakers are available on the CCC website at: cccqld.org.au/events.



Fungi Blitz



Are you fascinated by fungi?

Is Fungi Blitz for you?

Fungi fanatic, Sherie Bruce, is fascinated by fungi and has a passion that she is keen to share with everyone! While in the Capricorn Conservation Council Coordinator's position, Sherie had this idea to run a citizen science project to improve our knowledge about our local fungi. Rockhampton Regional Council liked the idea and kindly provided some financial support to get the project started in the Rockhampton region.

Fungi is an enormous group of living organisms which come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Some are tiny, but the ones we are interested in are the ones that you can see with the naked eye – the macrofungi.

Please join Sherie and the rest of the CCC team to learn more about the different types of fungi living around us and how to identify them both in the field and through using DNA technology.

To find out more about CCC's Fungi Blitz, check out our website at cccqld.org.au/fungi/ and sign up to be a part of the Fungi Blitz team. We'll then keep you informed about the fungi workshops, field outings and provide you with the information you need to be a citizen science mycologist!



Boletellus deceptivus (maybe!)

Step up, clean up Australia day



Photo: Malcolm Wells

The first Sunday in March is the official "Clean Up Australia Day" and our community certainly stepped up with events held along the coast, the waterways in towns and in parks.

Not surprisingly, most of the waste collected was single use food and drink items and cigarette butts. And there was a lot of plastic fragments on the beach clean ups.

Clean Up Australia Day is now the nation's largest community-based environmental event. But still, the one day a year isn't enough to solve our growing waste problem.

So this year, we are being asked to step up and make a pledge towards reducing our waste. If many people step up, together we can make a big difference. There are many ways to reduce your waste, so choose one that works for you.

I'LL COMPOST
ALL MY FOOD
SCRAPS SO
NONE GO TO
LANDFILL

I PLEDGE TO
RECYCLE MY
SOFT PLASTIC
WRAPPING

I'LL USE THE
REFUSE,
REUSE,
RECYCLE
ORDER ALWAYS

I'LL TRY TO
REPAIR THINGS
BEFORE I CHOSE
TO REPLACE
THEM

Rocky and Yeppoon to become plastic free!



From September, single-use plastic items such as straws, plates, bowls, cups, cutlery and stirrers will be banned in Queensland.

This is a massive win for the environment. It will mean less waste going to land fill and less litter on our streets, beaches and public places.

But, the change might be a challenge for some of our local businesses as they make the transition to more environmentally friendly products. No fear – help is here!

Jo Stoyel is the new coordinator of Plastic Free CQ - one of Boomerang Alliance's Plastic Free Places program. Jo will be working with food retailers to help them work out which products they need, where to find them and provide help and support to make the transition process quick and easy. It won't cost businesses anything and it might even help them reduce costs.

Plastic Free CQ won't only focus on the banned items. Jo will help businesses to eliminate all single-use plastics and help them become certified Plastic Free Champions.

To find out more, visit



www.plasticfreecq.org

Climate change comment

United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, has called on all governments, private companies and local authorities to take three climate action steps:

1. Cancel all global coal projects in the pipeline
2. End coal plant financing and shift investment to renewable energy projects
3. Jump-start a global effort to a just transition away from coal.



On 2-4 March 2021, the first-ever virtual Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) global summit was held. Leaders from national governments, regions and cities, banks and investors, energy majors and grid operators, academia and NGO, youth and health groups convened to discuss and plan the phase-out of coal by 2030 in the OECD and EU, and by 2050 for the rest of the world.

At the end of March, the International Energy Agency will hold another global gathering also to strengthen efforts to accelerate clean energy. This Summit will see the world's major economies (which are also large greenhouse gas emitters) coming together to agree on how they can work together to make the transition towards net-zero faster, cheaper and easier for all.

There is a growing realisation that this must be the decade of action if we are to have any chance of keeping temperature rises to well less than 2°C targets set in the Paris Agreement. Given that around half of greenhouse gases come from the burning of coal, the transition away from coal is one of the essential actions.

There is no doubt that the global pressure for Australia to step up its climate actions. We have enough coal mines to service our needs and the world's needs for many years to come – both thermal and coking coal, particularly as the our export trade is not going to be around for much longer. At the beginning of 2020, only 20% of Australia's international trade was with countries committed to net zero emissions. Today, that figure has shot up to more than 70%.

It is time to get serious about the transition away from coal, and saying 'no' to new coal mines is a logical start.

Fun(?) facts about plastic

One million tonnes of Australia's annual plastic consumption is single-use plastic⁶



Australia uses around **70 billion pieces** of soft 'crunchable' plastics, such as food wrappers, each year⁷

By 2050, it is estimated that **plastic in the oceans will outweigh fish**⁸



Our use of plastic is increasing, and across the world **will double** by 2040⁹

Australians used **3.5 million tonnes of plastics** in 2018 to 2019¹ of which around **60% was imported**²



Australia is missing out on an estimated **\$419 million of economic value each year** by not recovering all PET and HDPE³

84% of plastic used is sent to landfill and **only 13% is recycled**⁴



In Australia approximately **130,000 tonnes** of plastic leaks into the marine environment each year⁵

Central Queensland Coal Project – one to say no to?

The Central Queensland Coal (CQC) Project, a proposed coal mine near Ogmoo in the Styx River Basin, is one of the new coal mine proposals which should be rejected on many levels. If approved, this will be the closest coal mine to the Great Barrier Reef at just 10km away with direct riparian linkages to the reef and State-significant wetlands.

The Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining Development (IESC) expressed numerous concerns about the "very significant risks to nationally and internationally recognised assets with high ecological values, including the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the Broad Sound Fish Habitat Area". The IESC cannot see how the project will not have significant environmental impacts on the reef and wetlands.

Queensland does not need any new coal mines, particularly ones which will have significant and irreversible damage to internationally valued estuarine and near-shore ecosystems. There are many people in our communities that depend on the reef and wetlands for their livelihood. Should we jeopardise their employment for the sake of 250 coal mining jobs?



Tooloombah Creek – likely to have fewer and smaller permanent pools during the dry season.

Platypus Watch Capricornia



The platypus is one of Australia's most fascinating animals.

With a bill like a duck, a tail like a beaver, and feet like an otter, it is definitely an unusual animal. And, it is one of only two egg laying mammals – the echidna is the other one.

Unfortunately, there is growing evidence that its numbers are declining through its east coast of Australia distribution.

In Capricornia, we know from anecdotal evidence that there are still platypus in a number of our waterways, including waterways in built up areas. But when it comes to formal records, there are very few recent records.

Capricorn Conservation Council has partnered with Wildlife Capricorn in a new project, "Platypus Watch Capricornia". Platypus Watch is a community-based program that aims to improve our understanding of the local distribution and habitat of the platypus. If we identify where platypus occur, we can identify where conservation actions are needed to protect this very special animal throughout Capricornia.

Find out more about Platypus Watch Capricornia at www.cccqld.org.au/platypus/. If you are interested in becoming part of Platypus Watch Capricornia, please register your interest by email to ccc@cccqld.org.au



Meet the CCC Committee

Committee Executive:

- ★ President: Paul Bambrick
- ★ Secretary: Doug Crossman
- ★ Treasurer: Ian Herbert

Committee members:

- ★ Tom Sjolund
- ★ Anna Hitchcock
- ★ Bob Newby
- ★ Willy Newman
- ★ Maryanne Smith

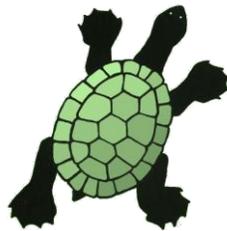


Fungi expert and volunteer, Sherie Bruce, Anna, Tom, Paul and Ian.

Get involved - Make a difference

Help Capricorn Conservation Council and help the environment

- ✦ **Join:** \$5 session, \$10 individual \$15 family, \$20 group.
- ✦ **Donate:** All donations are tax-deductible with funds going to worthy environmental projects in the region.
- ✦ **Become a citizen scientist:** Fungi Blitz and/or Platypus Watch Capricornia.
- ✦ **Volunteer:** CCC is always keen to have help. What ever your skills, we would love to have you onboard!
- ✦ **Visit our website for more information:** www.cccqld.org.au



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