BREMER CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

**September 2020**

around the bremer

**Special points of interest:**

**On the 15th October will be our AGM**

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## President's Corner by Bill Steentsma

This Newsletter aims for pasture/property management. BCA members and Friends of BCA are people devoted to the health and economic sustainability of the Bremer Catchment.

One of these many people and his family, their Project can be followed on one of the pages. It also highlights the cooperation of the local Shires, Scenic Rim and Ipswich.

Balancing conservation, ecotourism and production is structured in many facets of good land management. Throughout the twenty-four years, BCA members have been involved with several projects i.e. riparian, agriculture/ horticulture and grazing land.

Pasture management has a mention, including fire management. Manage pasture for production and to maintain the variety of plants and animals,

Extreme grazing regimes can run down the soil resources and change the composition of the grasslands.

Fitting with these months seasonal affects on pastures, we are alerted to fire we tend to call it "The Fire Season". The Indigenous fire practitioner and author, Victor Steffensen says, "the only reason we are seeing all this degradation to landscape is not just because of climate change, but it's because of bad management". Let us, the Bremer Catchment Community do it right.

Recently BCA has been fortunate receiving a Healthy Land and Water (HLW) Grant for one of our Members. It has been, towards its receiving, hard work by our Secretary and –in particular—the very experienced landholders. I have made a visit to the property and discussed the fencing of a severe gully.

Mark Waud (our HLW representative), invited me on a property inspection tour. Visiting one of our Members in Mid Warrill Catchment, where we assessed the rehabilitation measures needed for a gully erosion. Continuing to other properties in the Aratula/Tarome area inspecting HLW projects. I was fortunate to be involved with expertise discussion.

Till next time stay healthy and hopefully the Bremer Catchment area will receive some rain before too long.

# Are you prepared for bushfire season?

An unprepared property is not only at risk itself, but may also present an increased danger for neighbours. Here are some things you can do:

Bushfire season started early, and it's important to be prepared.
You might not live anywhere near bushland, but bushfires can affect you while you're commuting, holidaying or travelling for business. It's important to tune into warnings and local media, so you know what's going on around you during bushfire season.
If you live in an area that could be affected it's even more important to be prepared.
You can take action to prepare yourself and your family by discussing what actions you'll take if there's a bushfire nearby.
Firstly, you can check your postcode to see if you are in a bushfire hotspot.

Firstly, you can check your post-code to see if you are in a bushfire hotspot.

**Structure**

- Clear leaves, twigs, bark and other debris from the roof and gutters.
- Purchase and test the effectiveness of gutter plugs.
- Enclose open areas under decks and floors.
- Install fine steel wire mesh screens on all windows, doors, vents and weep holes.
- Point LPG cylinder relief valves away from the house.
- Conduct maintenance checks on pumps, generators and water systems.

Seal all gaps in external roof and wall cladding.

**Access**

- Display a prominent house or lot number, in case it is required in an emergency.

Ensure there is adequate access to your property for fire trucks - 4 metres wide by 4 metres high, with a turn-around area.

**Vegetation**

- Reduce vegetation loads along the access path.
- Mow your grass regularly.
- Remove excess ground fuels and combustible material (long dry grass, dead leaves and branches).

Trim low-lying branches two metres from the ground surrounding your home.

**Personal**

- Check that you have sufficient personal protective clothing and equipment.
- Relocate flammable items away from your home, including woodpiles, paper, boxes, crates, hanging baskets and garden furniture.
- Check the first aid kit is fully stocked.
- Make sure you have appropriate insurance for your home and vehicles.

Find out if there is a nearby **Neighbourhood Safer Place**.
Review and update your household **Bushfire Survival Plan**.

# Grazing Livestock in a Changing World

**By Tony Pressland (from DPI), Friend of BCA.**

In the early days of Australia livestock, grazing used to be a simple operation – you put animals into an area (fenced or not), and once or twice a year you mustered, selected some animals for sale, removed them, then put the remaining animals back out to pasture. Alternatively, you took the wool off the sheep's back – indeed, Australia was said to "ride on the sheep's back"!! Markets – often local – weren't an issue, costs were not high (limited attention to animal welfare, supplementary feeding or biosecurity), and life was simple. Families tended to be the main operators. Those were the days!! Long gone now. Mind you, there were none of the so-called luxuries we have now – power and tele-communication that hopefully work; fast and reliable transport - usually; access to social and sporting networks; access to health and education services; and availability of on-line ordering of foodstuffs, clothing etc etc.

In the 21st century, livestock grazing is a complex business. There are diseases and pests to counter, nutrition to manage, and there are controlled breeding, animal behaviour factors, and animal health regulations to consider. Market requirements – and what and to whom we sell – change. No longer is the farmer in total control – there are on and off-farm environmental issues to deal with; transport needs; water availability issues; carbon storage issues; labour availability and cost issues; and over the top, climate change. A huge number of balls in the air at any one time for the average livestock producer to deal effectively with. It is no wonder that corporates are now involved in a big way with animal production in this country.

**"Indeed, Australia was said to "ride on the sheep's back"!!**

Despite the complexity, there are still many family run enterprises successfully negotiating the way forward despite the burdens of bureaucracy and needs. Indeed, there are many real opportunities for families to fill niche markets, to put a name on their product, and make a quid.

But there are some fundamentals of animal production that continue to be really important like stocking rates; animal distribution; season of use of pastures and pasture rest; drought response; quality of livestock. To get the most from our soil and vegetation resources, we need to ensure that we can match the number of livestock to the availability of forage – or at least accept that if we run too many head of livestock for the present resource base, we will need to supplementary feed, and look after and rest the pastures later. We need to ensure that the quality of livestock we are running, is the best we can afford.

Rotational grazing offers many benefits →

# SEQ Mexican bean tree project

The South East Queensland Cecropia (Mexican bean tree) Eradication Project is using a novel combination of on-ground and vehicle-based surveillance, drone surveys, dispersal studies, sentinel site monitoring and genetics research to find, map, study and control the Restricted (Category 2,3,4,5) species *Cecropia peltata* in south east Queensland.

Biosecurity Queensland currently coordinates the Project in partnership with the Council of the City of Gold Coast Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Logan City Council, **Scenic Rim Regional Council** and the Queensland Herbarium.

If left uncontrolled, Mexican bean tree could become a major weed in south east Queensland, threatening valuable riparian habitats and sub-tropical rainforests, including those of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area. Fortunately, the combined efforts of all project partners is achieving positive results.

If you think you have seen Mexican bean tree growing in your region, please contact the Queensland Herbarium on **(07) 3199 7671**, email a photo to: Queensland.Herbarium@qld.gov.au or contact Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23**.

Mexican Been Tree

## Herbicide control

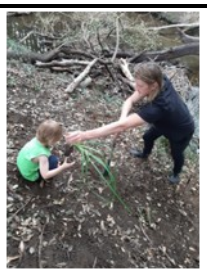
Permit no. PER11463 allows triclopyr 240g/L + picloram 120g/L to be applied using basal bark or cut-stump method, and glyphosate 1:1 to water to be applied using frill or stem injection method.

Basal barking or cut-stumping with access in diesel at 1:60. If felling tree for cut-stumping, take care that trunk and stems in contact with ground do not coppice and give rise to new plants.

Vigilant Herbicide Gell (Active: 43g/kg Picloram as potassium salt) and cut-stump is also effective.

## Report from Mid – Warrill Creek by John Petersen, BCA Member

We are John and Sue Petersen and together with our son Simon and his son Arlo we are in the process of revegetating approximately 200 metres of the banks of Warrill Creek which adjoins our small property. We are clearing away thick infestations of Chinese Elm, Cats claw creeper, cestrum and various other non-native invading plant species that have substantially choked out and replaced the native Flora that was once there. But of course the roots of the feral vegetation we are now cutting out are helping to hold the banks of the creek together, especially in times of fast moving high water levels. For this reason we are also planting native replacement trees and shrubs as we go. In this we have been very fortunate to have received 250 free tubes (small pots) of native and endemic trees and shrubs through the Scenic Rim Councils "One Million Trees" initiative. The goal of this initiative is for one million native trees to be planted across the Scenic Rim region by 2025. By arrangement with Scenic Rim Council a wide range of tree species were supplied to us by "Ecological Connections Pty Ltd" in Kalbar. This has included a number of Koala food trees which we are planting to create a habitat corridor of around 200 metres from the top of our property down to the creek and then continuing along the creek. We are also planting various plants to attract birds, bees and butterflies.



**Planting Lomandra on the creek bank**

We found as we shared our vision with our family of improving our local environment for native flora and fauna they too caught the vision and have been visiting and helping with the project. Simon and Arlo especially have been our regular weekend warrior helpers. Arlo (3 years old) loves to help cut cats claw creepers that have been choking he back bean trees on the creek bank and he carefully plants the black bean seeds that he finds. So all and all this project has and continues to be good family time together as well as an inspiring and satisfying environment improvement venture. And with Scenic Rim Council expressed willingness to provide more native trees under their "One Million Trees" initiative we look forward to continuing our local environment improvement quest.

**Grandad digs holes for Koala food trees**

**Grandad digs holes for Koala food trees**

## Do your bit for the environment without even leaving your own backyard

**Brianna Walker** August 19, 2020

We all have a part to play in the future of Ipswich's natural environment, but for some it can be hard to know where to start.

The answer, according to Ipswich resident Chris Wiley, is in your own backyard.

Mr Wiley and his partner have made it their mission to restore their weed-ridden Pine Mountain property to its natural glory.

A seemingly daunting task, Mr Wiley says land restoration is actually something any-one can give a go.

Find out how in the latest instalment of Sustainability in the Suburbs, in which Mr Wiley shares his story and tips for people looking to get involved in land restoration at home. Check it out below.

Mr Wiley's story helps answer one of the biggest questions in this day and age: how can we make Ipswich more sustainable?

It's a question that Ipswich City Council last year put to the community to help shape a plan for sustainability in the region.

Residents' responses identified obstacles preventing them from becoming more sus-tainable in their everyday lives, including lack of knowledge and high cost.

Mr Wiley said focussing on small chunks of work can help residents tackle these barri-ers when first starting their own land restoration project.

"Break up your property into smaller units that are manageable and not overwhelming and only expand that area once you've got that under control," he said.

Stay up to date with Mr Wiley's land restoration journey for more tips and ideas via his blog, Life at World's End.

Sustainability IN THE SUBURBS

Sustainability in the Suburbs is all about sharing stories, knowledge and ideas help us all live, eat and play the sustainable way.

By working together we can protect and enhance our environment and its liveability for current and future generations.

Keep an eye out for more videos featuring sustainability tips and tricks from Ipswich residents or share your own using #sustainableipswich

Find out more at Ipswich.qld.gov.au/sustainability

## Climate Change vs Pasture Management Change

**By Tony Pressland (from DPI), Friend of BCA.**

It is important too that we utilise pastures in a way that considers the differing production potential of soil types – for example, while pastures growing on sandy and loamy soils may respond rapidly to rainfall, they may also deteriorate faster than those on clayey soils which have higher levels of nutrition and organic matter. There may also be different suites of pasture species present on different soil types. Thus, managing paddocks according to the soil type and vegetation community rather than simply focusing on the area of a paddock to provide an answer to "How many animals can I graze here?" is important as is managing the timing of livestock movements between paddocks.

So too is consideration of the type of year we are having – we need to alter animal numbers in response to rainfall. In some ways this is harder in southern Queensland, where pastures can benefit from summer and winter rain, than the north where it is unlikely that much out-of-summer rain will occur – there, what feed you have in April -May is probably all you will have till storms in October.

The bottom line for many is "what is my return on investment?". It is really important to maintain good financial records – fixed and variable costs and revenue – over a number of years. Capital improvement costs are high, and good records will help determine if the return on capital is worth the effort!

We need to continue to be aware that as the climate continues to change, so too will our management need to change. Climate change most likely means a more variable growing season for crops and pastures. The changing nature of extreme events – longer drought, more intense and prolonged rainfall events, higher temperatures (not only in summer, but the reduced incidence of frost in winter) will result in our needing to adjust. For example, lower frequency of frosts will allow the more frequent intrusion of pests (eg parthenium spread, mites in pastures) and diseases (eg fungal attacks in pasture) which may have been absent previously. There may of course be new opportunities too – crops which may not have been successful may now be so. So, be alert but not alarmed!!

The bottom line for many is "what is my return on investment?".

Editor's Contact details:

Email: msteent@ngvemail.com

Mobile: 0414 381 664

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