

WOOTTON VALLEY NEWS

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2015 NO 94
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BUNGWAHL BUNYAH BULAHDELAH

Dollar Bird (*Eurystomus orientalis*)

With dark brown upperparts, washed heavily with blue-green on the back and wings, the Dollar Bird's most striking features are its copper-red short, thick-set bill, tipped with black and its wings, flashed with dark blue & the turquoise coin-shaped patches that give the bird its name. The male and female are similar although the coloring of the female is slightly duller. A migratory bird originating in New Guinea & sighted in Japan and Indonesia, the Dollar Bird visits northern & eastern Australia to breed, arriving in Sept/Oct and remaining here until March /April. It is a member of the Roller family of birds, so called because of their rolling courtship display flight. They may be seen flying around in forests and woodlands, especially near rivers and wetlands where bare branches extend above the forest canopy or over water. They launch from these perches in pursuit of flying insects, which are grabbed in the bill and brought back to the perch, where they are eaten. Local sightings: Waterways adjacent to Coolongook River, Wootton and from heights above Wingham Brush.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Sat 7 Feb	WCN Meeting 3pm, Brush Turkey Café, All welcome
Sat 14 Feb	Sustainable gardening field event, Wootton, 3.00 pm Food swap, Wootton Community Hall, 5.00 pm Light supper and movie night, Brush Turkey Café, 6pm for 7pm
Sun 15 Feb	Wootton Fire Brigade Meeting and Working Bee, commencing 9.00 am
Sat 28 Feb	Community dinner, Brush Turkey Café, theme: Cajun, 7pm \$20
Sun 1 March	Wootton Fire Brigade training at the Fire Shed 10-12 am
Mon 9 March	Oyster farming field day at Wallis Island
Sat 14 March	Light supper and movie night, Brush Turkey Café, 6pm for 7pm
Sat 28 March	Community dinner, Wootton Hall, bring a plate to share , 6.00 pm, \$5
Sun 5 April	Wootton Fire Brigade training at the Fire Shed 10-12 am
Sat 11 April	Food Swap, 5.00 pm, Wootton Community Hall. Short Film Festival, Brush Turkey Café, dinner and short films, 7.00 pm, \$25.

Published by Wootton Community Network Inc Editors Carole Robinson 0428009952
and Caro Badcock 49977337 Join our group on Facebook: Wootton Community
brushturkey@live.com.au Visit our website @ www.wootton.org.au

Editor's note

After an amazing 15 years of nurturing and developing the Wootton Valley News, founding Editor Pat Tate is taking a well earned break. Carole Robinson has now joined co-editor Caro Badcock in bringing you news and information of Wootton. Thank you Pat and welcome on board Carole.

Wootton Community Network

Membership: We now have 67 members! Membership is NOW DUE!! \$12.50 for the 2015 calendar year. All membership, renewing and new, should be paid to the Treasurer, Leanne Wright.

2015 Projects: Some of the projects planned at our last meeting are new flyscreens for the windows and plastic flyscreens for the doors.

Wootton Community Christmas Party

The Christmas party was held as usual on the last Saturday before Christmas. Although numbers were down on previous years for various reasons, we still had an excellent time catching up with friends, some of whom we hadn't seen in Wootton for some time. Everyone's contributions to the food table ensured we had the usual Christmas feast. Santa arrived on the big red fire truck decked out with tinsel and reindeer antlers. Susanne's grandchildren were all there to greet him but were a bit overwhelmed with the big event! All the children were happy when Santa handed out the bags of lollies, drinks and ice creams and the older ones were able to pit themselves against the fire hoses on the truck. The event was jointly organised by the Wootton Hall Committee and the Wootton Community Network. Thanks to Jim for organising the music and to Leanne for organising the chicken, raffle prizes and Santa bags. Thanks to Julie for providing a huge jar of pretzels and the iced Christmas cakes and to everybody else for their contribution to the salads, nibbles and any other items I may have forgotten.



Caro (on behalf of the Wootton Hall Committee and the Wootton Community Network)

Crown Land Site

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the Council has decided to follow-up with its plan to hand back management of the Wootton Community Trust to the Crown. The Trust covers that lot of land that the hall, café, toilets, tennis courts and school house sits upon. A Wootton Community Facilities Working Group has been set up to investigate various options that may be open to us. This group consists of four members from the Wootton Community Hall Committee that is responsible for the hall, toilets and tennis courts and two members from the Wootton Community Network that is responsible for the café. It is meeting monthly and has started collecting information to allow them to forecast expenses and income under the various “what if” scenarios. This will assist them in determining the viability or otherwise of these options. The group will keep the community updated with its progress through this Newsletter. *Caro Badcock (on behalf of the Working Group)*

Wootton Community Food Swap

The January Wootton Hall Food Swap was the biggest so far. Along with the regulars, we saw a couple of new faces, which is always nice. Along with the usual lot of zucchini, cucumber, spinach, amaranth, pumpkin, eggs and chillies, we had a bucketful of plums and crab apples, an array of garlic and shallots and some rare-ish apple varieties, as well as breads and cakes. The Swap trials have been so popular that the events are definitely going to be a permanent fixture. Holding them on the movie night seems to be a good idea, with a fair few of the swappers heading down for the movie and supper afterwards, along with any left-over food. The next Swap will be held on 14 February at 5 pm at the Wootton Hall, rain or shine. If anyone has any ideas about the Swap or would like to help out, please contact Peter Dixon at bushregenerator@gmail.com or 0437655658.

Surprise Visitors

At our last supper & movie night we were delighted to receive three young guests visiting Australia from Malaysia. They were just passing through, looking for something to eat, saw the café sign and lots of happy people so they pulled in and joined us. This photo has arrived with the message “it was a pleasure meeting you guys from Wootton. We have been talking to all our friends back home about the joy we had spending the evening with you”.



Wootton Hall Happenings

The Committee was looking for a quiet year in 2014 with plans to consolidate. Our ideas appear to be resonating with the community as we are engaging them in a variety of activities, including the library, food swaps, quarterly dinners in the hall and the annual Christmas party.

We didn't manage to hold any impromptu games nights but we are going to rectify that with our first games to celebrate the library being open for a year. If anyone has any ideas for events they would like to organise or see happen, come and talk to us - we are always looking for opportunities to collaborate.

As we did in 2014, we will be holding our AGM prior to the Hall dinner being held on 28 March, commencing 5.30 pm. Anyone is welcome to attend. The dinner will follow from 6 pm for a 6.30 pm start. The Chair's and Treasurer's Reports summarising 2014 achievements and plans for 2015 will be presented. Members of the 2015 committee will be introduced. As usual we are still looking for new members for the committee. If anyone is interested, please contact Caro.

Wootton Community Library

Who would have guessed it? Our library has been open for a year! Thanks to everyone who has donated books. Quite a few people have been using it, but, as always it would be great if it was used more often. Don't just donate but please, also come and borrow. To celebrate our first year we are planning to have a games night in the library on 18 April, starting at 6 pm with a light supper (cost \$5/head), followed by games from around 7 pm; BYO alcohol and nibbles. Four to six tables will be set up. If anyone would like to provide their favourite board game and host a table, please contact Caro. The games will be suitable for all ages and interests. Hopefully there is enough time for us to play a couple of games, but if not, we can try a different game next time. Don't worry if you are not a games person, just come and watch and sit and chat with other like-minded people. **Everyone is welcome.** So far, Sue Williams has volunteered to host a table with *Pandemic*, a collaborative game where players work together to treat and cure diseases.

The library is open during any events held in or on community facilities. For example, the 2nd Saturday of every month from 5 pm during the Food Swap and movie/supper night; the last Saturday of every month from 6 pm during the community dinner; Sundays when the café is open (just ask for the key at the Café); after attending Thursday's yoga class and if you are desperate, just call Caro and she can organise for you to get in.

Interpreting the Night Sky

Looking for Lovejoy—by Fran O'Connor

Googling, as one does to see where to find the recent green comet Lovejoy in the Australian night sky, I was advised to search on a line between the magnificently flamboyant constellation, Orion, and its complete opposite, the tiny cluster of seven stars (nine with the aid of a telescope) that is known in the Northern Hemisphere as the

Pleiades. Although tiny in comparison to the giant constellation, Orion, once seen, the Pleiades is unmistakable. Googling further, this is what I found ...

"It seems that the Pleiades were distinguished as a separate cluster by nearly all Aboriginal nations in the Australia, but the ways in which they were and are interpreted, varies. The "Dance of the Pleiades" was performed by Pitjantjatjara Aboriginal women from the Central Desert at the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney Olympics in September 2000. When you are out camping in the bush in Australia, you know that the Pleiades women have visited your camp overnight when you wake up with an extremely cold nose and the canvas of your swag covered in white icy crystals. The Pleiades women first appear in the southern hemisphere in the early hours of the morning and they flamboyantly sweep across the sky excreting frost.

The image of the Seven Sisters, travelling together across a landscape, hastening away from the unwelcome advances of a man, is common to many cultures, with the motif of the fleeing women being highly associated with the Pleiades. The story has captured the human imagination for as long as we have been looking up and trying to make sense of the night. This exquisite cluster is as significant in the mythologies of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as it is to those whitefella-Australians who know the night sky and so choose to live their lives still steeped knowingly or unknowingly in the mythologies of the ancient Greeks and Romans."

From: Interpretations of the Pleiades in Australian Aboriginal Astronomies by Dianne Johnson, Australian Centre for Independent Journalism, University of Technology, Sydney, PO Box 123, Broadway, NSW 2007. **email:** dijohnson@pnc.com.au



Wootton Rural Fire Brigade

Call outs: The Christmas period was, fortunately, very quiet due to the frequent episodes of rain. The only call outs were a couple of minor motor vehicle accidents on the freeway.

Funding: The fire brigade would once again like to extend its thanks to our regular annual donor (you know who you are) for their cash donation. Funds are always an issue and we appreciate any help offered.

Members: The brigade would like to welcome Lyn Skipper who has recently joined as a non-active member. Lyn is going to co-ordinate our initial response to call-outs (when the pagers go off) by organising the crews and trucks, change-over crews, crew rosters, assisting with the requisite incident paperwork, etc. **However, we still need more active and non-active members**. If you would like more information, please call us.

Working Bee: A working bee has been scheduled for Sunday 15 February at 9.00 am. If you would like to help clean the trucks and gear, see how the brigade operates or discuss various issues, come and join us.

Property Inspections: As mentioned above, summer has been quiet but sooner or later, that will change. *Don't be fooled! You still need to have a Bush Fire Plan in place and you still need to have your property prepared for a fire. Street identification, truck access, water supply, etc are critical.*

If you would like an inspection, assistance with your Bush Fire Plan, Fire Permits, etc, call Mike Badcock.

Adam Garnett, President 0428 27 26 29

Mike Badcock, Captain 0409 448 330

A cautionary tale from Fran and Jim

While recently strolling along the south-east side of Forster bridge, it was a sunny afternoon with the happy sound of squealing young girls playing on body boards just at the end of the sandbank and older youths diving off one of the jetties. Seconds later, the happy sounds changed to frightened yells. At the turn of the tide, the current had suddenly increased, sweeping first one, then all the girls towards the ocean and some very rough conditions at the bar. The onlookers all reacted one way or another. One mum out with her family immediately ran off under the bridge and got hold of a bloke with a water ski, a nearby man rang the police on his mobile, three older boys started swimming towards them and a fisherman pulled off his shirt and shoes and dived in. By the time the water ski roared in, seven of the nine people in the water were in need of assistance! By this time two other boats were heading to the scene and everyone was pulled out. Fortunately, the girls had hung on to their boards, making the process relatively straightforward with no-one in serious danger. It could so easily have been very different. So, people of Wootton who have visiting family and friends who want to swim in the beautiful and seemingly calm waters at Forster bridge, please warn them of the dangers of that incredibly strong rip and how even those brave ones who dive in to help another can find themselves in trouble.

Topi Topi Sustainable Farming Group

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, The Wootton Sustainable Land Manager's Group has merged with the Topi Topi Sustainable Farming Group. This is an informal social group that meets once a month to share local knowledge and experiences throughout the parish of Topi Topi (that includes Wootton). The group warmly welcomes new members and there is no cost to join.

We already have a busy program for 2015 with our first event on Sustainable Gardening being hosted by Peter Dixon and Megan Kessler at their property in Wootton from 3-4.30 pm. On Saturday 14 February. Peter and Megan have planted many and varied fruits and vegetables and have a goal to achieve "TexMex sustainability". After the event, Peter and Megan will be hosting the regular Wootton Food Swap at the Community Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please contact Sue for further details.

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| Mon 9 March | Oyster Farming , at Wallis Island, hosted by Linda and Neil Clements with guest speaker Peter Pelist |
| Mon 13 April | Holistic Management , at Port Macquarie, hosted by Brian Wehlburg |
| Mon 11 May | Food Forest , at Minimbah, hosted by Dale Bowes-Hammond |
| Mon 15 June | Farming Cattle Profitably on a Small Scale , at Wootton, hosted by Richard Stubbins |
| Sat 25 July | Grants Workshop (How to write an application), at the Brush Turkey Café, hosted by Peter Dixon, |
| Mon 24 August | Dung Beetles , at Wootton Hall, hosted by the Karuah Great Lakes Landcare with guest speaker Dr John Feehan |
| Mon 21 September | Emergency Preparedness and Planning , at Wootton Fire Station, hosted by Mike Badcock and Sue Williams |
| Mon 19 October | Cheesemaking , at Bungwahl, hosted by Elena Swegen |
| Mon 16 November | Building Green , at Topi Topi, hosted by Richard Single |
| Mon 7 December | End of Year Gathering , at the Salty Dog Café, Coolongolook |

Please contact Sue Williams on 0438433063 if you would like to join the group, would like to host an event or would like more information.

Do you know we have platypus in the Coolongolook River?



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