

TOPIC : “WILDLIFE FRIENDLY GARDENING”

GUEST SPEAKER : SPENCER SHAW

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 26 JUNE 2018 UNDER THE OLD WITTA SCHOOL

Wildlife friendly gardening means working with nature to preserve biodiversity, provide habitat and with a bonus of natural pest control in your garden. Your backyard is the Biodiversity Frontier! It's all about sharing.

South East Queensland is a Biodiversity Hotspot where 57% of Native Ecosystems have been cleared endangering many species of plants and animals. In the region there are 3,500 species of native plants; 43 of frogs; 6 of turtles; 59 of lizards; 32 of snakes (most are venomous); 350 of birds; 29 of mammals; plus thousands of insects, spiders, molluscs, crustaceans etc and lots of fish.

We are the major threat and solution to biodiversity loss – there is room to share.

Local Sunshine Coast Biodiversity embraces 1,600 species of native plants; 91 endangered plant species; 700 species of vertebrate fauna; 68 endangered fauna species. Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve in your backyard contains 300 species of native plants; 7 endangered species; 76 species of vertebrate fauna.

Adopt wildlife friendly gardening and share your space, save biodiversity and learn.

Is there too much grass? Grow local natives – there are 3,500 SEQ native plants to choose from. Structure is important, from ground covers to grasses and vines to small trees. This will encourage small bird diversity. Leave small patches of bare earth for lizards and birds to bask on. Provide Resources – (1) Food: fruit, nectar, seeds and insects. (2) Water: be sure to regularly clean containers. (3) Nest Boxes: for possums and birds. It takes approximately 150 years for eucalypts to develop hollows for nesting. Pale headed budgerigars are kicked out by possums and lorikeets so don't mind nesting close to human activity. (4) Perches: Crimson lorikeets are edge dwellers and prefer high perches. (5) Ponds: for frogs and birds. Toads can't get in if pond edges are raised.

Backyard Hazards – (1) Domestic Pets: cats and dogs. Need to make a large caged area for cats. (2) Fences and Netting: Use a very fine net over fruit trees so birds and flying foxes are not entangled. (3) Swimming Pools: Leave an escape route for wildlife – a tree branch or hose over side of pool or pond. (4) Poisons and Baits: Reduce pest habitat. Don't use systemic Rodenticides – dangerous for domestic pets. Use live traps. Restore ecological balance. (5) Feeding the Wildlife: Spreads disease, creates aggression, antisocial behaviour and dependency. (6) Weeds: Madeira Vine, Cats Claw Creeper, Backscratcher Ginger, Morning Glory, Wandering Jew, exotic grasses. (7) Ferals: Indian Mynah, Toad, Rat.

Benefits to you – Natural Beauty, Pest Control, Connect with Nature, Low Maintenance.

Backyard Biodiversity is in your hands!

CONTACT : Spencer and Karen Shaw, Forest Heart Nursery, 20 Coral Street, Maleny. Phone 07 5435 2193. Email : nursery@forestheart.com.au Web : www.forestheart.com.au END