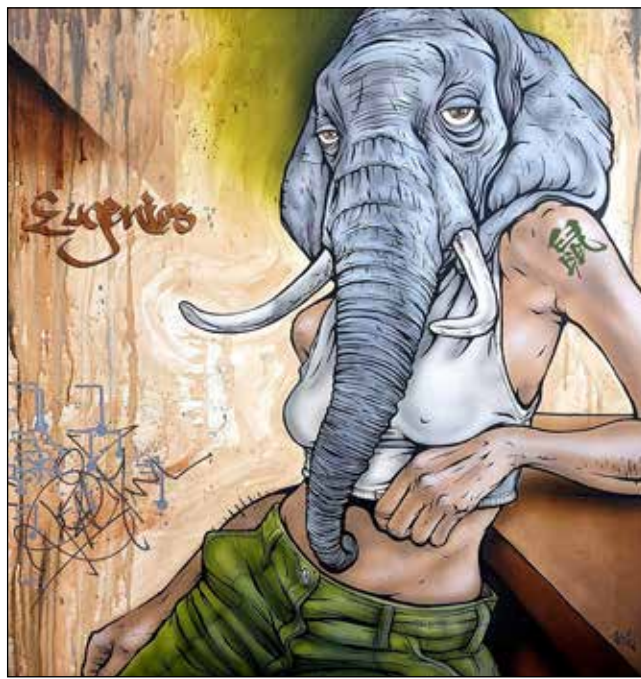


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www.nimbinartistsgallery.org
nimbinartistsgallery@gmail.com



'Eugenics #1'



'Eugenics #2'

THE ART OF NATHAN DAWSON

by Tonia Haynes

Nimbin Artists Gallery is featuring the intriguing works of Nathan Dawson through to mid-October.

Nathan Dawson grew up reading MAD magazines, fell in love with the art of Mort Drucker and Sergio Aragones and developed his style without any formal training.

His imagination weaves through the blurred boundaries of social equity and race with a restless, uncompromising and gritty visual narrative.

His work combines an urban surrealism with sexuality, gender and an identity that shows the reality of people who are falling through the cracks of life.

Nathan was accepted into the

national NIKA Art and Design Award exhibition at the Japanese National Art Centre, Tokyo.

In January this year, he won the First Nations Artist Prize in the 2024 Blacktown City Art Prize exhibition.

Many works are untitled, so the viewer is free to place their own interpretation on them.

Worth a look at 49 Cullen Street.

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'Forest Rhythms' by Warwick Wright (Pan Exhibition)

by Corinne Batt-Rawden

Time has flown by, and our Serpentine Community is celebrating 18 years of supporting local artists.

Subversion is a group exhibition by local artists that challenges the status quo, exploring themes of culture, politics, and freedom.

This powerful show invites viewers to engage with topics often left unspoken, reflecting on the global fight for environmental and social justice.

Witness raw and unfiltered artworks, like Theresa Mason's depiction of a battered 'Liberty' fighting for her rights (pictured) and Rick Molloy's work 'The People United Will Never Be Defeated' (pictured).

Subversion will be on exhibition until Friday 20th September.

Serpentine stands for unity and inclusivity, creating a space where all are welcome. Join us for a night of bold, thought-provoking art.

Our team have put together a special opening night including performances by Nini Nahri Gali, Secrets of the Flame fire twirling, with live music by Tilly Jones, dancer Paul Walker and light projections by Michael Rogowski, and of course delicious food, including birthday cake.

On Friday 27th September from 6pm to 9pm, we'll host the opening of *Seasonal Tales*, a group exhibition by the Practising Artists Network (PAN) of Byron Bay.

Seasonal Tales reflects the changing seasons and our journey from pandemic restrictions to new found freedoms. It explores themes of family, relationships, and the environment, celebrating the shifting tides of life and the unconfined future we look towards.

Seasonal Tales is a



'The People United Will Never Be Defeated' by Rick Molloy (Subversion Exhibition)



'Grey Headed Flying Fox' by Carmen Hogue (Pan Exhibition)

thoughtful and a physical experience, with the land and people within our orbit.

This show runs until Monday 7th October and features works in various media, including oils, acrylics, pastels, ink, and sculpture. All welcome. You can find Serpentine at 104 Conway Street in Lismore, phone 0492-964-819.

PAN is a non-profit organisation committed to visual arts in Northern Rivers, offering group exhibitions and social events like Life Drawing and Plein



'Liberty' by Theresa Mason (Subversion Exhibition)

Air activities.

For more information, check out PAN's website: www.panbyronbay.com or email: panartists@gmail.com

We would also like to thank the Nimbin GoodTimes for their support over the years and holding space for our community, this is such a great newspaper. Thanks for all you do.

Reflecting on the places we inhabit



'Flood Moon' by Hiske Tas Bain



'Midday Rush at Murwillumbah Station' by Helen Douglass

The Magic of Nature by Hiske Tas Bain is the new exhibition in The Solo Space at Blue Knob Hall Gallery.

Hiske Tas Bain was born in The Hague, Netherlands and attended The Hague Academy of Arts and London Regent College of the Arts.

After spending years in London, Paris, New York and Antwerp, she emigrated to Australia, and to the North Coast.

Hiske has exhibited in The Netherlands, Belgium, USA, Germany, Spain and Australia, received national and international awards, and has been published and collected.

Her work shows how beautiful and interesting the world really is: the fleeting moments of memories, dreams, nature, different places, and cultures.

Hiske is also interested in changing reality into a positive experience by showing the positive side of what is and could be instead of destruction.

Where We Live is the new artists

and members exhibition in the main gallery space. The theme for this show suggested looking at the essence of our environments.

Artists were invited to reflect on the spaces we inhabit, the landscape around us, the communities we build and the personal or collective experiences that define our belonging. Whether physical or emotional, where we live has an impact on our lives.

Blue Knob Cafe has been going strong with gourmet toasties, soup specials, cakes, coffee and drinks.

With the weather warming up we look forward to seeing you on the verandah and continuing to support this adventure that is Blue Knob Hall.

Blue Knob Writers Group meets weekly at Blue Knob Cafe on Sundays. For more info contact Alex 02 6689-7268 or Helen 0487-385-134

Blue Knob Choir meets on Thursdays from 3.45-5.15pm at Blue Knob Hall. Everyone is welcome, just turn up, or for more info call Peter 0458-487-865.



'Hopes and Dreams' by Amanda Doran

For more info, email: bkhgallery@iinet.net.au phone 02-6689-744, Facebook page: Blue Knob Gallery, Cafe & Ceramic Studio, web: www.blueknobgallery.com

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'Rain Witches'

Local photographic artist R J Poole is exhibiting his work simultaneously on both sides of the globe this month.

At the Villa Spinola Narisano in Genova, Italy a solo showing of his signature

body of work, the *Anima Series* will be opened from 28th September, curated by Corrado Leoni.

Concurrently, the same images will be displayed in digital form in the shopfront of Paul Meccenico at 133

Keen Street Lismore, on a 24-hour basis.

Over many years, R J's work has won recognition at the National Portrait Prize in Canberra and been shown in places throughout the globe including the US,

United Kingdom, Italy, Mexico, Portugal and Brazil.

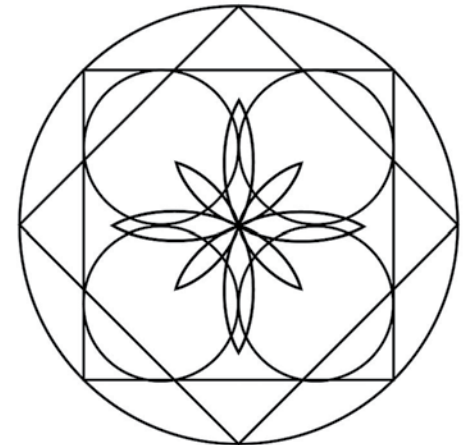
For anyone interested, feel free to visit Keen Street, Lismore or view examples of the Genoa Exhibition at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNZAsksESJ4



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David and Goliath



Eddie Lloyd with David McBride

by Eddie Lloyd

It's been just over 100 days since David McBride was taken into custody to begin his 5-year 8 month sentence in Canberra's Alexander Maconochie Centre, but who is counting? His best friend and assistant dog Jakey for one. His former wife Sarah and their two daughters, James and Georgie are counting. David McBride is also counting, especially since the death threats he recently received which led Correctives to move him into segregation and isolation "for his own safety." For David, and for so many who know him as a man who stands for courage and truth, and for me, his lawyer, his freedom cannot come soon enough.

But as we all know too well, the wheels of justice move at a snail's pace and for some, justice comes too late or not at all. For others, history is rewritten to tell a tale of a new truth that conveniently exculpates the real perpetrators, making them heroes whilst demonising those that dare speak truth to their power.

Here in Australia, the real perpetrators are the powerful, the politicians and their donors, big corporations and their lobbyists who will stop at nothing to ensure their skeletons are kept in the cupboards. And if that means aligning with their duplicitous enemy to keep their duopoly power base alive, then that is what must be done.

McBride's case shows us that the cornerstone of our democracy, our freedom to speak out against corruption in the government or at our workplace without being silenced by gaol, is crumbling. Now is the time for each of us to put on our head torches and shine a bright light onto the thieves that are carjacking our democracy, hoping to take the wheel. We, the citizens must arrest these criminals before they drive us into an apocalyptic autocracy, with cinders of our democracy evaporating around us.

Much has been written about the complexities of David McBride's case. Some in the media have sought to fill the large gaps

in the case from the evidence removed (shoved into a safe that the Judge wasn't allowed to see – under spurious "national security" grounds) with their own preferred narrative. But the truth of the matter is much simpler than you will read in the mainstream media. There is nothing complex about the case of David McBride. It is a tale of David and Goliath that has been told many times in the past. As a lawyer for the military, David's job was to uphold the law. When he saw those above his rank bending the rules and breaking the law, he stood up and said something.

Over his 11-year march to his prison cell, McBride continued to complain, exhausting every internal avenue and when there was nowhere left internally to go to, he turned to the Defence Minister, then the Attorney General, the AFP. But when all those trusted bureaucratic agencies of our democracy failed him, refusing to investigate his complaints, he went to the fourth estate, the mainstream media, believing, as the law told him, that he would be protected by the whistleblower laws. But as Bernard Collaery and now ATO whistleblower, Richard Boyle have discovered, those laws don't protect the whistleblower, they protect the powerful from being exposed.

Alas, in these dark days of McBride's incarceration awaiting his appeal, it is trite to remember that it is always darkest before the dawn.

One Judge of the ACT Supreme Court tried to rewrite the tale of David McBride but thankfully, that chapter of injustice will not be the last chapter as we prepare for his appeal, full steam ahead.

To help David McBride in his fight for freedom, please donate to his David v Goliath chuffed fundraiser or send him a postcard so he can fill his dark cell with bright pictures to remind him that we haven't given up on him and we won't, until he is set free.

Fundraiser: <https://chuffed.org/project/davidmcbride>

Write to him here: David McBride, PIN 134463, Alexander Maconochie Centre, Locked Bag 7775, Canberra ACT 2600

DISRUPT LAND FORCES EXPO

by Miriam Torzillo

People from around Australia are preparing to travel to Naarm (Melbourne) on 8th-14th September to disrupt LandForces, the largest weapons expo in the southern hemisphere – a one-stop genocide shop.

Weapons events like LandForces are the pointy end of the military industrial complex. They are where generals, diplomats and defence ministers meet with CEOs of multiple weapons and engineering companies, have conversations and make the deals that are going to cause massacres and result in the deaths of thousands of



people.

This grassroots anti-militarist movement will be acting to make the world a better place. There will be:

- Radical teach-ins, performance arts interventions,
- Disruptive direct actions, vigils,

- Visual art and projections,
 - Marches/pickets, culture jamming.
- Find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/wagepeaceau or on Instagram at: www.instagram.com/disruptwars or contact Miriam on 0404-593-312 for more info.

McBride's first one hundred days

by John Jiggins

Afghan War Crimes whistleblower, David McBride, chalked up an unwelcome century on Thursday 22nd August, which marked his 100th day imprisoned for releasing evidence of Australian war crimes in Afghanistan.

In May this year, McBride was sentenced to five years and eight months for revealing the murder of scores of Afghan civilians by Australian Special Forces. One hundred days done, two thousand more to go, for disclosing the shameful truth our military and political leadership tried to hide.

Greens Senator David Shoebridge used the occasion to call on Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus, in Parliament to pardon David McBride.

Senator Shoebridge said: "Acting Deputy President, today marks 100 days since David McBride was gaoled for telling the truth. I've visited him two times. The last time I wasn't even able to take him a book. He's been repeatedly moved inside the prison because of safety issues. The Attorney General must end this persecution and pardon David McBride. The crime here was not David telling the truth. The crime is a government that promised transparency in opposition, then taking office and gaoling whistleblowers. And that's a crime that touches us all."

When I interviewed him after his speech, Shoebridge said "Australia's whistleblower protection laws were broken," and, he added, after putting one whistleblower, David McBride, behind bars, the Albanese government was doubling down by prosecuting another whistleblower, Richard Boyle, who blew the whistle on the Adelaide tax office.

Australia's whistleblower protection laws were totally broken, Shoebridge said. They were a legal minefield where to get the protection of the whistleblower laws, the whistleblower had to navigate an almost impossible path.

"Every time a whistleblower tries to go down that path, they make some small technical mistake and just the slightest little slip along the way means they lose all of their legal protections. And the case that's really highlighted this, apart from David McBride, is the case of Richard Boyle," he said.

Richard Boyle made a public interest disclosure about maladministration at the Adelaide debt collection centre of the Australian Tax Office in 2017. Although his concerns were vindicated by an Australian parliamentary inquiry and by the inspector-general of taxation, instead of being rewarded for his



David McBride with David Shoebridge

whistleblowing, he was prosecuted.

Boyle's case was the first major test case of protections available under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (2013), and he lost. After six years of persecution, he is awaiting trial, facing 23 charges, which could result in substantial prison time.

Senator Shoebridge said, "The Commonwealth has now created a new attack against Richard, where they say look, even if Richard can prove that when he finally went to the media that he was covered by the whistleblower protection laws, what they say is when he was photocopying the evidence and downloading emails in the course of preparing what he sent to the media, every time he photocopied a document or downloaded an email, he breached the law."

None of that is covered by the Whistleblower Act. So, they want to put him into gaol for preparing the case and preparing the material to give to a journalist. And they argued that case successfully and if that's true, then we have no Commonwealth whistleblower protection laws. I mean it's obscene what the Labor government is trying to do here."

In his parliamentary statement, Senator Shoebridge talked about not being able to give McBride books in prison. Senator Shoebridge said he visited David McBride twice in prison, and the first time they talked about books that McBride wanted to read. When Senator Shoebridge tried to take those books in the second time he visited, the authorities refused the books.

Prison was not a safe place, he said. It was not safe for David McBride, and it was not safe for anybody. McBride had faced a number of security risks. As a result, he had been moved multiple times.

Shoebridge summed up McBride's situation, "He's doing the best he can, but you know, I think anyone would have trouble adjusting to going to prison, particularly when your

government sent you to prison because you thought you were doing the right thing."

Shoebridge was critical of several of the rulings of Justice David Mossop, McBride's trial judge. McBride's team planned to run a public interest defence, but Justice Mossop wouldn't allow McBride to argue before a jury that what he did was in the Australian public interest.

Mossop ruled that David McBride's oath of allegiance was to the King of England, not the Australian public.

To become a senator, David Shoebridge also had to swear an oath of allegiance to the British crown. But he also chose to swear an oath to the Australian people.

What do Australians expect, Shoebridge asked, "Who do they expect my loyalty to be to? If there's a conflict between some well-resourced family on the other side of the planet, or the Australian people, I can tell you where my loyalty lies, unambiguously to the Australian people. And David McBride sought to say that as well."

Justice Mossop made several rulings that Shoebridge found deeply problematic. Mossop ruled that McBride shouldn't have told anyone about a series of war crimes committed by Australian soldiers in Afghanistan.

Shoebridge said that what the world learned from the Nuremberg Trials after World War Two and the investigation of war crimes by both Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan was that simply obeying orders is not a sufficient defence if you are covering up murder or engaged in appalling crimes.

What Mossop said was your statutory obligation is to follow orders, and follow orders means follow orders, even if involves covering up the crime of murder.

"I find that a very disturbing conclusion by Justice Mossop, and I know this, and a number of other matters are going to be challenged on appeal by David McBride," Senator Shoebridge said.

Forbidden fruit

by Scott O'Keeffe, ecologist

Australia is one of the 11 countries in the world with the highest rates of deforestation. We tut-tut about the Amazon, but we're just as bad. In NSW, 40% of the land area has been cleared of natural vegetation, and every year we clear another 95,000 hectares.

Most of us have some understanding of the devastating impact this has on fauna. I won't go into that in any depth in this article. Here, I'll describe how some of our fauna cope in the altered landscape.

Australia supports 29 species of pigeons and doves. Many of these are adapted to open country, where low-growing plants like grasses and herbs that produce small non-fleshy seeds, are abundant. These are a big part of the diets of pigeons and doves that live largely outside forests.

Larger fruits with fleshy parts are consumed by the pigeons and doves, informally referred to as "fruit doves". Plants with these types of fruits are mostly associated with moist forests.

These sorts of fruit are a large part of the diets of the fruit doves

native to those forests. As these forests have been cleared and degraded many of the natural foods of these birds have dwindled.

One way in which "fruit doves" cope with this is to move between isolated patches of forest, often seasonally, to take advantage of food that appears in new locations as it wanes in the home patch. Another way that they cope is by adding new foods to their diets.

Some species do both. Topknot pigeons and white-headed pigeons, both common species in the Northern Rivers, are good examples. Both species have adapted by incorporating privet and camphor laurel fruits into their diets. This accounts for the seasonal appearance of large roving flocks of these species.

At the moment in our region, another species of dove is conspicuous. You're likely to see it if you are near patches of tobacco bush (*Solanum mauritanium*). This invasive weed, a native of South America, colonises disturbed areas, especially on the fringes of rainforests. Tobacco bush flowers and fruits from autumn to spring. They're laden with fruit at the moment.

Brown cuckoo-doves (*Macropygia*



Brown cuckoo-doves are easily seen in Northern Rivers, but their NSW population is only 15,000.

phasianella) are taking advantage of this abundance, and if you've a patch of the weed, you're likely to see them. These beautiful, slender doves (BCDs), with long elegant tails and rich brown plumage, are a delight.

They are medium-sized doves; about 240mm long and weighing around 240 grams. They're fairly quiet, but when they're vocal, the call is a two-note, soft cooing.

Their natural diet consists of fleshy fruits from a variety of plant families such as solanums, ginsengs,

ruies, and euphorbs.

Because they have a muscular crop which can grind hard material, BCDs can consume fruits with less flesh and harder seeds. The tougher seed component can be partially digested after passing through the "grinder". Tobacco bush has fairly hard seeds embedded in a soft pulp. BCDs relish these. The hard seeds are processed in the crop but some remain intact, passing through the digestion, to be voided.

So, although the tobacco bush helps sustain the BCDs, the doves are dispersing the seeds of an invasive plant. BCDs also consume lantana fruits, so of course lantana is also dispersed by BCDs. They have had to increase their reliance on invasive plants but thank goodness they have something to eat!

BCDs are usually seen singly or in pairs, but they congregate in small groups where food is abundant. That's why I'm seeing them in the tobacco bushes around my home.

BCDs are found in wet forests and associated ecotones from Victoria to Cape York. They generally remain beneath the tree canopy, foraging in small trees, shrubs and sometimes on the ground. Regionally they are mostly resident but become locally nomadic in response to the availability of food.

In the Northern Rivers region, BCDs breed from September to January. In common with many pigeons and doves, BCDs construct flimsy nests of twigs and sticks. These are constructed in forks of tree branches or in tangled vine stems. Apparently, BCDs sometimes construct their nests in the crowns of tree ferns. How decorative!

Usually, the female lays only a single egg, rarely two. The egg(s) are incubated for about 18 days. The chicks fledge in 16 days and acquire adult plumage in about 70 days. I couldn't find any information suggesting how the work of incubating is divided.

BCDs have been assigned the conservation status of 'least concern'. It's a rubbery term that doesn't tell us much about BCD abundance. A cynic might see this as an administrative category rather than an ecological one.

'Least concern' does sound a little like shorthand for "We're not allocating resources for this one", especially when you consider that the entire NSW population is thought to be 15,000 birds. Or perhaps the category 'least concern' just implies that its numbers are not declining.

Perhaps it's the abundance of invasive fruiting plants that keeps the numbers stable. Somebody's got to do it.

Satisfaction

by Scott O'Keeffe, ecologist

The eastern yellow robin (*Eopsaltria australis*) is a small insectivorous bird that is part of the family of birds known as Australasian robins. About 50 species of small insectivorous forest-dwelling birds comprise this family, found in Australia and the PNG region.

Eastern yellow robins are small birds, about 16 cm long and weighing about 25 grams. Both sexes have bright yellow underparts and are slate-grey above with a greenish "wash". They are found in Eastern Australia from southern Cape York to southern Victoria.

They occur from the coast to inland areas, wherever there are forests with an open ground layer and a sub-canopy of large shrubs and tree saplings. They occupy landscapes as far west of the Dividing Range as suitable forest types occur.

EYRs are able to survive in small forest remnants, including those that are highly disturbed and infested with invasive trees, shrubs and vines. It's a common species throughout the Northern Rivers.

Their diet consists mostly of insects and a

limited range of other small invertebrates. Like other members of the genus *Eopsaltria*, they capture their prey on the ground. EYRs pounce on their prey from perches on the upright trunks and stems of tree saplings and shrubs.

If you walk regularly through local forests, you've probably noticed the weird posture of these grey and yellow birds clinging at odd angles to tree trunks close to the ground. The robins also hunt for prey by sifting through leaf litter on the forest floor.

EYRs are pretty much sedentary, although in some areas they move short distances, mostly less than 20km, from highland areas to valleys and plains. These birds could be juveniles searching for new territories, or perhaps they are birds moving in response to seasonal changes in prey abundance.

EYRs breed from July to January and can raise up to three broods in a season. Females build the nests. As you can see in the photograph, these are very elaborate, beautiful structures. The cup-shaped nests are woven from strips of pliable bark, very fine twigs and grass held together with spider webs.

The outside of the nest is "decorated" with small pieces of bark and lichen. The interior is lined with soft grass, fine bark and tiny roots. These masterpieces take between 10 and 15 days to build. It's a lot of effort for

the females, especially if they build three in a season.

About three days after the nest is finished, the female lays two (or rarely three) light blue eggs with brown speckles. The nests are sometimes parasitised by shining bronze-cuckoos, another common bird in Northern Rivers. While I photographed the nest for this article, one of these cuckoos was calling nearby. It will be interesting to see whether a young cuckoo turns up in the nest later.

The robin eggs hatch in about 16 days. The male and female of the pair raise the chicks, aided by "helper birds". I looked into this phenomenon, but could not find any information about how these "helpers" are sourced. Perhaps they are related in some way to the breeding pair? An interesting research topic for an ecologist.

There is a reason why I chose this bird as the subject for this month's species profile. The nest in the photo is in a small patch of badly degraded forest that I am restoring. In this area, I cleared away some exotic privet and planted three hoop pines.

This season, the hoop pines attained a height of two metres. Just the right height for a yellow robin nest.

Bake a cake! A bird that I love moved to a wood that I restored and built a nest in a tree that I grew from seed and then planted.



A female eastern yellow robin incubating eggs in its meticulously constructed nest.



Eastern yellow robins usually lay two eggs in elaborate woven nests. This nest was seen at Stony Chute. Photos by the author

Workshop: From garden to frog haven

Richmond Landcare Inc is excited to invite the community to its 'frog-friendly gardens' workshop on Thursday 19th September, from 5pm to 8pm at the Education Centre, Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens.

In collaboration with a local business dedicated to restoring our local ecosystems, Flo Gardens, this event is a chance to learn how to create a garden sanctuary that supports our native frog species.

The evening promises to be filled with inspiration and practical tips on how to make your garden a welcoming home for local frogs.

Flo Gardens experts will share their knowledge on the specific needs of our native frogs, the threats they face, and how you can help safeguard their habitats.

Event highlights

- ♦ **Expert presentations:** Learn from the pros about designing effective frog habitats, understanding what frogs need to thrive, and addressing environmental challenges.
- ♦ **Guided tour:** Explore the Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens with a guided tour, where you'll see existing frog habitats and gather ideas for your own garden.
- ♦ **Light refreshments:** Enjoy complimentary refreshments while mingling with fellow nature lovers.

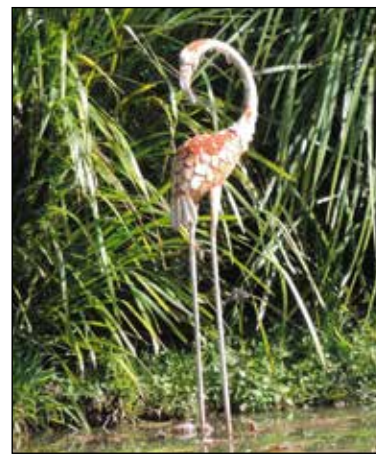
The cost is \$10 per participant, and it is open to all ages. Register now at: <https://events.humanitix.com/frog-friendly-gardens-workshop>

Spaces are limited, so reserve your spot and help contribute to the conservation of our native frogs.



Nimbin Garden Club notes

Garden, sculpture and a view of Nimbin Rocks



by Peter Brooker

The name Bacchus comes from Bacca, the word for berries, and the name Bacchus is that given to the son of Jupiter, a Greek God, and the mortal, Semele.

Semele was killed by a lightning strike at the hands of Juno, the jealous wife of Jupiter. Fortunately, Bacchus is saved by Jupiter who sews him to his thigh until he is born, then sends him to be cared for by the Nymphs of Nysa. He is hidden in a cave concealed behind a grapevine and survives by eating the grapes, hence he becomes the god of wine, festivities, dance, pleasures

and vegetation.

But it is not Bacchus who waits at the top of the driveway with a cold glass of champagne nor is it Dionysus or even Osiris, it is Mac, with his partner Chris close by and, like Bacchus, they know the joy wine can bring and they know vegetation. What other attributes of Bacchus they share I don't know.

So, as we sip our wine and gaze out across the lake towards a stunning view of Nimbin Rocks, Mac tells us they have rented the property for more than 22 years and that when they first came to it there was nothing but bare paddocks, where horses had once grazed, and that lake, which now has tables

and chairs covered in bright cloths, standing at its edge. As beautiful as the garden now is, Mac says it has cost very little, "every living thing," he tells us, "has come from garden clubs or friends. Very little is bought."

The lake is the focal point, so Mac and Chris took full advantage and ringed it with gardens and a path to follow that branched off at several points. The lake is called Duck Lake, although it rarely sees a duck, but it does attract Swamp Hens that eat the sap of the banana trees causing them to collapse. On the far side of the lake there are flamingos and a place to sit and watch the bubbles rising from the expensive aerator.

The lake had at one time, become overrun by a weed that needed to be removed by hand, and the boat that once plied these waters now lies

peacefully beneath its surface. The walk took us past a purple hedge, to break up the green that stood near a contrasting hedge that displayed red flowers in season. Lomandra grows on the flood plain along with aloes and euphorbia. Water lilies spread far out into the lake and when the water becomes too deep for them to reach the bottom, they build their own platforms and become a pest.

A feature as we moved through the garden were the many and varied sculptures made and placed in their alcoves by Mac; they stood like sentinels watching all that happened, standing as eternal guards.

Then we left the lake and climbed toward the pergola where we came across what Mac likes to call

Alhambra, though he admits it bears no resemblance to the Citadel and was once a swimming pool. Now it is a walking meditation spot filled mostly with succulents close to Mac's working moon dial, Chris's orchids and bromeliads. At the folly, near the pergola, is a Moreton Bay fig, a wisteria and the entrance into the rainforest, the path wandering back to Duck Lake.

On the descent back toward the lake we pass a forest of walking iris, Mary's grotto and three birch trees, cross a bridge that falls foul of floods and emerge at the lake's edge before walking to where tables groan under the weight of food, grab a tea or coffee then drift back down to sit at the tables by the jetty and watch, as William Stanley Braithwaite observed "Long drawn the cool green shadows steal o'er the lake's warm breast, and the ancient silence follows the burning sun to rest."

Our thanks to Mac and Chris for opening not only their wonderful garden, but also numerous bottles of sparkling wine on a warm and sunny day.

The next meeting is at Russell and Cherie's home at 6 Neem Road, Jarlanbah. Please park at the hall and walk across with your plate, chair and something to share on Saturday 28th September at 2pm.

Don't stop the rot



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

Imagine dragonflies with close to a metre wingspan hovering around in huge swamps full of lush vegetation.

The carboniferous period (359-299 million years ago), when massive amounts of atmospheric CO₂ was locked up by forests made of newly evolved lignocelluloses (wood), left us the coal seams we have today, as they could not be broken down.

Then about 295 million years ago, an adaptation in a group of fungi allowed for the breakdown of lignocelluloses.

This group of fungi, known as the Agarimycetes, can be divided into two groups, white rot and brown rot fungi. These fungi specialise in turning wood back into carbon to start the carbon cycle again.

Composting toilets require additional carbon to add to the nutrients in our byproduct (such as nitrogen and phosphorus).

To successfully make compost, a ratio of about 30 parts carbon to one part nitrogen must be adhered to.

We add this by sprinkling a cupful of dry wood shavings, sawdust, dry leaves, rice husks, etc. over the last deposit of humanure.

This allows the moisture in the toilet to be absorbed and made available to micro-organisms, and fungi to live.

Just the right amount of moisture will promote the growth of one of the Agarimycetes and start to breakdown the wood into carbon for the nitrogen to bond with and turn into compost.

Some compost toilet aficionados may have noticed that when using pine shavings, not a lot of breakdown of wood occurs inside the chamber. I have noticed this often when servicing units for clients.

Pine shavings are easy to source and sustainable as they are from plantations. Most major brands recommend using them.

However, I have rarely seen the expected fibres of fungal hyphae running through it to break down that carbon.

To find out why this may be so, I have had to investigate the types of fungal rot that might be required.

Most brown rot fungi are

generalists or gymnosperm (pine) specialists, whereas most white rot fungi are angiosperm (flowering plants) specialists.

It may very well be the case that the most prevalent fungal species we have in our region are white rot fungi, therefore not very good at breaking down pine.

Having said that, we do have some native pines and one would expect the fungal spores to be present if not ubiquitous.

My advice to those that want quality compost is to source your bulking agent from locally sawn hardwood, such as the mill at Kyogle (or any timber mill) where a trailer load is still only \$20.

Use a piece of rotting hardwood from a wet forest somewhere near you and throw this into your toilet to inoculate it with the correct type of rot.

If you wish to pursue the softwood option, then perhaps experiment the same way with some rotting pine from a plantation.

Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions Compost Toilet and Waste Water Services
Phone 0427-897-496
<https://poohsolutions.com>

A varied month of weather



Goonengerry creek view

by Peter Moyle, Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

A varied month of weather and it looks like this is the norm these days.

Early August saw 12 walkers meet up in Mount Jerusalem National Park. We had been tipped off that more progress has been made on the new multi day walk from Unicorn Falls to Minyon Falls.

National Parks have been busy upgrading roads and tracks and building new trails through the beautiful bush and along the local creeks.

When this is finally finished and promoted, this will be very popular with the overnights walking the four days, as well as day walkers who will be able to access some of the tracks as shorter sections.

The Whiskey Creek section will complement the popular Unicorn Falls section already open and well visited.

And then the rains came again, but with a three-day dry out we tackled our popular Goonengerry National Park.

On top of the ridge, it does not get too muddy, the creeks and waterfalls on display are always popular especially after some rain, Ron took our group over a variety of tracks he has discovered over many years. A great day was had.



Whiskey Creek

Walks programme

Friday 20th September to Monday 23rd September
Green Pigeon via Kyogle

Leader: Member only trip. The Nimbin Bushwalkers have been invited to spend a few days on Bill and Marsha's private property. Camping in the front paddock at minimal cost and some nice walks that back onto the Border Ranges National Park. We have been guaranteed decent firewood, facilities, and great walks.

Grade: 4. The walking will be on both old logging tracks as well as off track, there will be some rock hopping and creek crossings; slippery conditions will be encountered if wet. **Bring:** Usual camping gear, walking footwear and a hat.

You are welcome to come out Friday and camp 'til Monday. We will be walking on Saturday from 9.30am, and 9.30am Sunday. Come for a day walk or stay. This is our third visit normally over Anzac weekends. Always popular with wonderful hospitality and some lovely walks. Ring Bill Williams to register. 0427-159-811

Sunday 6th October – 38/38 and the Hidden Valley, Whian Whian State Conservation Area

Leader: Peter Moyle 0412-656-498
Meet: 9am Rummery Park camp area near Minyon Falls. We were out this way earlier in the year and have decided to return to these beautiful valleys. There will be some scrambling over rocks and some steep climbs, suitable for experienced walkers only. If in doubt ring Peter for advice.
Bring: water, lunch, and hat. Good walking footwear essential.

My horse doesn't like...

by Suzy Maloney

Horses, like all animals, have preferences and aversions influenced by their individual experiences, genetic predispositions, and environmental factors.

Understanding whether horses like, or dislike certain things is crucial in ensuring their well-being and addressing behavioural and health issues. The other side of the coin is ensuring we don't use this idea as an excuse for not acting.

I hear these types of phrases often: 'My horse doesn't like...' or 'My horse hates...,' and I started to really think about them, as I'd observed another side to these phrases.

Someone might say, "My horse doesn't like to be groomed." That seems fair enough, we all like different things. But when I check into this further, I find they're using a hard, stiff brush, or the horse has rain scald, or they are rough when grooming.

I've had people say, "My horse doesn't like that bridle." Again, fair enough, but then I see them riding and they never give with their hands, or they are inconsistent and confusing to the horse, or they're scared and holding



the horse super tight, or the bridle is fitted incorrectly.

There are so many possibilities to explore. One common scenario where horses' preferences can be misinterpreted is in their reactions to training and handling.

A horse might resist certain activities not because they dislike them per se, but because they associate them with discomfort, fear, or confusion. For example, a horse that balks at saddling might not necessarily dislike the saddle but could be experiencing back pain or might have had a negative experience with saddling in the past.

Dismissing this resistance as mere dislike without investigating the root cause can lead to persistent behavioural issues and

even exacerbate the horse's discomfort.

A horse that refuses to load into a trailer might be labelled as stubborn or difficult, when they might be fearful due to past experiences, or our approach might be causing unnecessary stress.

By attributing the horse's behaviour to simple preference, we can avoid taking responsibility for addressing the underlying issues, such as training techniques or the need for desensitisation.

Sometimes these types of phrases can indicate a block in the human. By saying our horse doesn't like it, we close the door to doing anything about it. It's an easy way to avoid dealing with something that's happening.

Also, it's a human trait to project things onto others. If we are having trouble with something, and say it's someone else's issue, then we don't have to look at a potential issue with ourselves.

When something happens with our horses there are three main locations for the origin of the issue: the horse, ourselves or the environment. If we can work out where the problem is originating from, we're halfway to solving it.

If our default setting is always saying it's originating

in the horse, we're missing two other great potential sources of information and solutions.

Also, there's a tendency among horse owners and handlers to anthropomorphise horses, attributing human-like emotions and reasoning to them. This too can sometimes lead to excuses for not addressing underlying issues that may arise in a horse's behaviour or condition.

Ultimately, addressing the issues that arise in horse behaviour and care requires a combination of empathy, knowledge, and a willingness to investigate and address the root causes of problems. While balancing that with the fact that sometimes it may be a genuine like or dislike.

By avoiding the trap of anthropomorphising horses and using their perceived preferences as excuses, we can ensure that we provide the best possible care.

Understanding horses' communication and addressing their needs holistically leads to better outcomes for both the horses and their human companions.

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by Les Rees

Currently there is a lot of discussion concerning the practice of being present with your horses. This allows the flow of understanding between horse and human enabling a bond to develop and ultimately aids the forming of a strong connection.

This however is not as easy as it may seem so I thought that it might be interesting to explore the notion.

I have a theory that the human mind isn't suited to being totally present when we want it to be. Our minds are constantly bombarded with incoming clutter all clamouring for our attention as we go about our daily lives.

Moreover, a huge amount of this clutter is caused by social media constantly pinging as new arrivals in our inboxes that need to be checked immediately.

It's hardly surprising that we find it so difficult to switch off to all this attention-seeking matter spinning around in our heads. But it really is important to initiate new ways to tune into ourselves in order to find that peaceful place of simply being in the moment without the dialogue of a busy mind.

Mindfulness of being with a horse involves being in the direct state of mind attending to the here and now. In other words, we should not be in the narrative state of thinking about everything other than being present with our horses. You cannot achieve transformation if you're fixated on the narrative going on inside of your head.

I personally find that the easiest way to find immediate presence is through being creative. When I'm playing music, painting, writing, or reading I am totally engaged in what I'm doing. This helped me to discover the process I needed to free my mind in order to engage with my



horses and other animals.

Meditation is often talked about by a number of leading horse gurus but it takes real commitment to learn the process of freeing the mind and many people give up at the first hurdle.

I tend to subconsciously prepare myself with being present before I reach my horse family. I do this because they are already engaged with me as soon as they realise I'm around. Horses pick up on the presence of another being far more quickly than we do due to the fact that being flight animals, they need to be conscious of their environment in order to keep safe.

My horses whinny when they hear me coming, so I whinny back imitating each one's individual characteristic voice to let them know that I've noted which one has called to me. Like humans, their voices are all different and this shows them that I'm already in the present and am happy to engage with each of them.

I love the conversations I have with my horses and have learnt so much

from all of them concerning their individual characteristics and the ways in which they view and comment on the environment we live in.

I believe that when something fascinates you, it engages the mind one hundred per cent, holding you in the present. Anything outside this engagement gradually slips away until you reach your full presence of the subject of your fascination.

Your internal dialogue is freed from satiating your ego, and the fears of inadequacy are left behind on the doorstep from which you entered this amazing state of being.

Once you've achieved the state of being present, the magic begins opening the doors to creating stronger bonds and forming deeper connections with your horses and you'll become an accepted and valued member of the herd.

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