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Bush regeneration is rewarding

WEED WORDS

by Triny Roe

Whoopsa daisy. I hope many noticed the photo in last month's article was not *Miconia calvenscens* but was actually Pencil Cedar, *Polyscias murrayi*, a vigorous sapling naturally regenerating and thriving after lantana was cleared back. It hoped to showcase an example of what can be achieved when you clear weeds. Bush regeneration does not occur underneath a smother of lantana. Lantana effectively prevents germination of all other species by exuding allelopathic chemicals from its roots. It is a myth that lantana is especially good for the soil. This idea stems, perhaps, from reports of experiments conducted in India to improve soil structure and increase the production in rice paddies. Lantana was used because it was readily available, growing as a weed on roadsides and waste lands. It was not trialled against any other species.

Bush regeneration is a rewarding activity as you watch the bush return, as well as bringing personal health benefits. Exercise in the fresh air and breathing in phytoncides, antimicrobial allelochemical volatile organic compounds, which are exuded by plants, is good for you. These chemicals, which protect plants also have a beneficial effect on humans. Studies have shown these compounds can increase activity of human natural killer



Miconia

cells thus boosting the immune system. Forest bathing has long been considered an efficacious mode of healing. Combine it with some judicious weeding and it's a win-win situation for both you and the environment.

One method is slow and steady. You don't have to do it all at once. Mindful that lantana provides food and shelter for numerous bird and animal species, a gradual return to a more diverse ecosystem allows the wildlife currently inhabiting that patch to adapt. Natural recruitment of natives can occur on the edge of a lantana patch, though the snaking branches will quickly seek to climb anything that's emerging, thus delaying its potential and perhaps in time, killing it completely. Smash the lantana back and the forest triumphs. Eventually a dense canopy will form as the trees soar and lantana will be no more.

Other weeds may emerge during the

process so follow up is essential. Get 'em while they're small. Hand weeding is much easier after rain when the soil is moist. Rainfall will also stimulate a new bout of germination. Check for species like giant devil's fig a few weeks after a rain event of 12 – 15 mm. They will be a lot easier to deal with when they are only a few centimetres high than when they reach a couple of metres.

Last chance is in August to pull or slash crofton weed to reduce its spread. Toxic to horses, this plant will flower in September, each one producing up to 100,000 seeds. The light seeds can blow large distances. Crofton mostly only pioneers bare or disturbed ground as it requires light for germination. It is less likely to establish in well managed pasture with a dense sward but it has become a problem in state forests and national parks where it colonises creek banks and forest edges.

Like many of our weeds, crofton and lantana were once considered lovely ornamental garden plants. Both these species and many others were brought into Australia early during European settlement and have since become big problems. It's important to prevent more species with invasive potential escaping and causing more problems.

Plants like miconia, (see pic) with a track record of devastating behaviour in other countries must not be allowed to entrench here. It can grow in the shade and has the potential to flourish in the rainforests. If you see it, report it.

Happy Weeding

Life at the roundabout

by Simon Thomas

What is it about Kathmandu? I think to myself at times, especially if I am struggling along a footpath which looks more like an obstacle course than a sidewalk.

The roads are a dusty shemozzle, getting even simple tasks done can be frustratingly time-consuming, and the sky is often thick with choking brown smog.

Ah, but there is something about this mystical kingdom which even the worst afflictions of modern society fail to overwhelm.

Picture the highest, most hazardous mountain chain in the world, which cuts the Indian sub-continent off from China. Imagine then, a green valley which rolls gradually from the highest passes down to the plains of the sacred Ganges; one of the safest routes between the world's two most populated countries.

It's high enough to avoid the crippling heat of the Indian summer, but low enough to avoid the winter frost. With such geography, Kathmandu has been a centre for trade, culture, and religion since time immemorial.

The city boasts thousands of temples, palaces, and holy sites which were built when the human psyche was very different to today, when people had no doubt that magic lurks around every corner. Those links to the past have been nurtured with offerings of flowers, food or incense in an unbroken lineage stretching back over millennia.

It feels as though these beautiful places have been charged with a tangible spiritual presence, which evokes a sense of the supernatural. Some of them are tiny: a nook in the wall with a relief carving, or rock statue twisted into the serpentine roots of a banyan tree. Others take the form of multi-storey pagodas, intricately carved by people who lived 20



generations ago.

Where I stay, my local spiritual powerhouse is the Great Stupa of Boudhanath. This earthly representation of the Buddha's enlightened mind has a base the size of two football fields, an enormous whitewashed dome, and a gilded, square-based tower which rises 100 feet into the sky. The iconic eyes of Buddha, which hold their transcendental gaze in each of the four directions, have become a symbol for Nepal itself.

Encircling the structure is a wide flagstone pedestrian zone, contained by a ring of temples, shops and restaurants. Each morning and evening, Buddhists both local and from around the world, stream down to The Stupa to perform the devotional act of *khora* (walking around a holy site.)

I love to join the throng of practitioners, circling in laps, with their rosary in hand, humming Sanskrit mantras. The air is thick with the scent of burned offerings, and devotional music spilling from the doors of the temples and shops adds to the

overwhelming sense of tranquillity.

Street vendors hawk all kinds of wares, from wheatgrass juice to feed for a huge flock of wild pigeons.

When I join that river of pilgrims milling around the monument, it feels like I am entering a special mind-stream as well. As though spun by the whirlpool of the stupa's vortex, the ring of worshipers moves together in one great stream. Some walk fast, rolling the mantras off their tongues at breakneck speed, while others progress by prostrating their bodies on the ground all the way around, but somehow everybody weaves around one another harmoniously.

There are young people chatting together while taking selfies, and elderly Tibetan women in gaily-coloured tunics with long, black plaits and faces lined with a spider's web of wrinkles.

With the daily ritual done, we sit around soaking up the atmosphere with a cup of chai or coffee. Maybe I do know what it is about Kathmandu: it's just purely magical.

Gromit

On 30th January we received a rescue call from a Lismore Council worker who sighted Gromit on the ground and drinking from the gutter beside Rous Road in front of Caroon Retirement facility in Goonellabah.

This is a classic sign of a koala that may be dehydrated and needs to be rescued, so our Luke Kane set off immediately to get him.

He appeared to have no energy, in fact was very dehydrated and we thought he might be beyond treatment, so he was taken that day to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital where he had an IV catheter for fluids inserted and had PCR swabs taken.

These came back positive for chlamydia so we brought him back to the Care Centre and he was treated with doxycycline for five weeks.

Gromit is a beautiful four year old male weighing 5.96 kgs when rescued, with stunning grey fur.

He became a great favourite with our carers as he's very vocal and

'chats' whenever volunteers enter his run.

He was released on 19th April in a park with many koala food trees, about a kilometre from Caroon.

Gromit is an excellent example of how quick action by members of the public can lead to great results. The members of the public saw something that wasn't right, recognised it wasn't right and made a call to our Rescue Hotline immediately.

They also stayed with Gromit until Luke arrived, which meant that Gromit didn't move on and was able to be captured quickly, was treated effectively and then released, which is what we want for all koalas we rescue.

If Gromit hadn't been rescued when he was, he could have suffered from organ damage due to dehydration and died.

But this wasn't the end of the story for Gromit, and it illustrates both the attachment koalas have to their ranges and food trees and the challenge for us given the high density residential development



Gromit on his first release

within the Region in urban areas where we rescue many koalas.

We're required under our licence to return a rescued koala as close to their rescue point as possible and at most, no more than 10km from that point, provided there are no barriers, such as a river, that koalas don't normally cross.

In Goonellabah and other Regional centres residential development has seen much koala habitat removed and what remains generally lacks safe corridors for them to move to other food trees.

Over the following months members of the public reported seeing Gromit right back in front

of Caroon, and possibly hit by a car, but he was too high for us to flag him.

Then we got a call on 3rd July to say he'd been hit by a car outside Caroon and had bolted up a tree – amazing what they do even with significant injuries.

Luke went to rescue him but he was too high in the tree to be flagged.

As he'd been hit by a car, we called Essential Energy to see whether they could rescue him with a cherry picker, and then Courtney and John arrived and

Koala Kolumn

by Susannah Keogh,
Care co-ordinator



were able to retrieve him from the tree.

He was off to Currumbin again, but thankfully his injuries were only to soft tissue, and after several weeks with us he is progressing well.

Provided there are no setbacks, Gromit should be released again soon although finding a spot that has decent habitat not too far from Caroon will be a bit tricky.

As always, we encourage members of the public to put our Rescue Hotline number (6622-1233) into their phones, so that if you see a koala on the ground or behaving unusually for a koala you can call immediately and get help for it.

For information about koalas and conservation, or to book a tour, please visit:

www.friendsofthekoala.org

or email: info@friendsofthekoala.org

Follow us on Facebook.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat, ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.

Release is in sight for Iksha the squirrel glider



On 7th May the WIRES Hotline received a call for an injured glider, found lying on the ground in bushland at Mountain Top, between Jiggi and Nimbin.

WIRES volunteer Julie picked the glider up. It was a female Squirrel Glider – a threatened species – and it was covered in very small maggots and eggs, just hatched and hatching.

Julie transported her to WIRES volunteers, Don and Renata, and the three dedicated carers spent an hour removing maggots and maggot eggs from all over her.

The infestation was so bad that the only hope of getting rid of the maggots was to give her a bath in an appropriate medication.

Sadly two dead embryonic joeys were found in her pouch. They were removed post haste.

The glider was exhausted and hydration and rest were the main priorities, with regular checks for re-hatching of maggots, but the bath had solved that problem.

The glider was closely observed and neurological issues were suspected but it soon became evident that she had an eye injury, with one eye now displaying a large ulceration.

After examination by Lismore Central Vet Clinic and consultation with Currumbin Wildlife Hospital it was agreed that,

although the eye was bad, it was worth trying to treat. Recovery was possible.

Iksha (meaning 'sight'), as she was named, required intensive treatment with eye drops given eight times a day. This was a difficult task for her carers as gliders are feisty, difficult to handle and can deliver a very nasty bite.

For three weeks she was kept in a smaller cage and was transported to the vet for several checkups. However, the improvement was considerable, and once her eye treatment was decreased to four times a day, she was transferred to a larger aviary where she could regain strength.

Iksha's future looks bright and we hope she will be ready to release back to her family at Mountain Top very soon. Many thanks to the vets and vet nurses at Lismore Central Vet for treating Iksha – despite her biting!

An all-volunteer organisation, WIRES relies heavily on the generosity of caring people for support. All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

Now is also a great time to join WIRES and start learning to be a wildlife rescuer.

Our 24-hour hotline is for all rescue, advice or membership calls in the Northern Rivers – phone 6628-1898 or go to <http://wiresnr.org/Helping.html> to find out how you can help.

Plant of the month

by Richard Burer,
Bush regenerator



Cabbage Tree Palm
Livistona australis

If there is one tree from my childhood that I can take with me on my next journey, it's the Cabbage Tree palm, *Livistona australis*.

A tall slender crowned palm, *Livistona australis* grows to around 25m, making it up there with the group of the largest Australian native plants.

This hardy palm grows along the east coast of Australia and is quite common.

Thriving in rich moist soil often in open forest and rainforest, this elegant and attractive species is culturally rich and important in Australian culture.

Indigenous Australians had many uses for this palm. The new shoots are an important food source, and could be eaten raw or cooked.

The heart of the palm is used medicinally, and the leaves are important for shelter and fibre.

In colonial Australia, the Cabbage Tree hat was an important fashion item.

In Nimbin, Cabbage Tree palm is endemic to Cabbage Tree Creek at Stony Chute, and some large old specimens can still be spied up at Mountain Top and some smaller palms on the edge of town to the west on Goolmangar Creek.

In the garden and in your revegetation areas, Cabbage Tree Palm is hardy and often slow-ish but rewarding. It's also frost and drought hardy.

Animals and the five Reiki precepts

Animal Talk
by Donna Connolly

Anyone who has studied the system of Reiki understand the concept of the Reiki Precepts.

They are the foundation of Reiki, and are a basic guidelines to live simply, harmoniously and create a balanced life.

The principles themselves can vary Master to Master. However, the underpinning messages are very similar.

These are the ones that resonate with me the most, due to their simplicity.

- Just for today:
- * Do not anger
 - * Do not worry
 - * Be humble
 - * Be honest in your work
 - * Be compassionate to yourself and others

Here is a small explanation of each of the precepts and how the animals teach them to us in daily life :

Do not anger

This precept can have multi layered meaning. Becoming angry is a natural emotion. It is okay to get angry, just don't dwell on it. Animals get angry. However, they leave it in the moment. For example: one dog wants the ball, the other one gets

it. The first one growls, accepts what has happened and looks to the human to throw the ball again. Animals do not hold on to anger.

Do not worry

Worrying is a lot of wasted emotion. Animals choose to live in the moment. They don't worry about tomorrow. Animals are masters at conserving energy. I think it is important to mention that anxiety is a different story and usually brought about by a traumatic experience, learned behaviour and reinforced habits.

Be humble

There is distinctly a hierarchy between animals, this leads to an understanding where everyone fits in. This is especially noticeable in a herd of pack animals. It makes sense and denotes an underlying social structure. In these situations you will often see the younger or less able animals showing submissive behavior. And at the end of the day they all work as a team. No ego.

Be honest in your work

I take this to believe to be honest in everything you do.



Animals and children nail this. They are honest in all that they do. If they don't like you, you will be the first to know. Ironically, they will usually react due to the human masking their true feelings or being dishonest in some way. They pick up on the vibrations and act accordingly.

Be compassionate

Animals are great at this. Have you ever seen a mother with her babies. She knows that she has to keep up her strength to care for her young. Although she will make sure they are cared for, she will always eat enough

for herself too. And interspecies relationships are amazing. That's the true essence of compassion.

The Reiki Precepts are the cornerstone of my life and practice. I still stray from the path, occasionally. However, you can guarantee it will be an animal that reminds me to get back on track.

Seeking perfect place

I am currently looking for a space and venue that has animals, to hold Reiki courses and animal communication workshops. It would also have space, a room or shed where we can achieve the theory

component of the courses.

I'm aware that it will come with all the smells and sounds that animals create. That's part of the charm.

- Ideally,
- * A rescue centre or sanctuary, NFP (willing to consider private B&B's etc);
 - * Animals are treated with kindness, compassion and respect;
 - * Easy access;
 - * A variety of animals;
 - * located in the Northern Rivers or SE Qld (open to other areas in the near future);

My reassurances :

- * All classes will be respectful of the space and I will reinforce any rules, guidelines or policies you may have;
- * Animals will only be touched and interacted with express permission;
- * These classes can be at times that suit you;
- * Animals really benefit from Reiki and Animal Communication so it's a win on both sides;
- * These will be one and two days in length, with a frequency of about once a month;
- * A good percentage of the course fees will be donated to the venue for ongoing care of the animals and

facilities;

- * Smaller groups;
- * Fully insured;
- * Opportunity for catering gig (if desired); and
- * Fully qualified trainer and assessor.

Please feel free to email me any questions. I already have people interested in participating in the training and I'm still taking expressions of interests.

All the details will be finalised when I find the perfect venue.

Upcoming event and locations

I will be facilitating a Q&A session on animal communication and reiki at Ballina Pet Shop "Scratch and Sniff" on 18/8 between 11-1 pm.

Working out of a room in Lismore CBD every second Friday starting 10/8, offering readings, reiki and reflexology for animals and humans.

And I'm available at a Pet Resort three days a week

I also offer in-house consultations.

Please contact me for appointments and availability.

Email: rivergem88@gmail.com
Web: www.rivergem.com.au

A century of learning and teaching

T. Krishnamacharya (1888 - 1989) is widely regarded as one of the most influential yoga teachers of modern time.

Underlying all of his teachings was the principle "Teach what is appropriate for an individual." He authored four books: Yoga Makaranda, Yogaasanagalu, Yoga Rahasya, and Yogavalli as well as several articles.

Krishnamacharya began studies, at the age of six, with his father who was a strict teacher of the Vedas and learned Sanskrit, asanas, pranayama and the chanting of the Vedas.

He began formal schooling at a Sanskrit College in Mysore where he made a practice of debating on the subjects of the Shastras with the professors and visiting Pandits and passed his Vidvan examination which included Vedanta.

At the age of sixteen, Krishnamacharya had a strange dream in which his ancestor, the legendary yogi Nathamuni directed him to go to the town of Alvar Tirunagari.

He obeyed the dream, travelled there, and later said, "When I arrived I fell into a trance and found myself in the presence of three sages. I requested the sages to instruct me in the Yoga Rahasya, a long lost yogic treatise by Nathamuni. One of the sages, Nathamuni himself, began reciting the text. When I later awoke I could recall all the verses of this legendary treatise."

At the age of eighteen, Krishnamacharya left Mysore to attend the University at Benares



by Cameron Storey

focusing his studies on logic and Sanskrit. In 1909, he returned to the University of Mysore to study Vedanta again and learned to play the vina – an Indian stringed instrument.

In 1914, Krishnamacharya attended Queens College Benares where he eventually earned a number of teaching certificates.

During the first year, he had little or no financial support from his family and in order to eat, he followed the rules that were laid down for religious beggars: he was to approach only seven households each day and was to offer a prayer in return for wheat flour to mix with water.

He studied the six darshanas of Vedic philosophy at Patna University and where he received a scholarship to study Ayurveda.

Krishnamacharya studied with a yoga master and passed the Samkhya Yoga Examination of Patna. He then sought to further his yoga studies by seeking a master

who was rumoured to live in the mountains beyond Nepal.

After two and a half months of walking, he arrived at a remote cave at the foot of Mount Kailash, where the master lived. Krishnamacharya spent seven and a half years studying the Yoga Sutras, asanas, pranayama, studied the therapeutic aspects of yoga and memorized the whole of the Yoga Kuruntha.

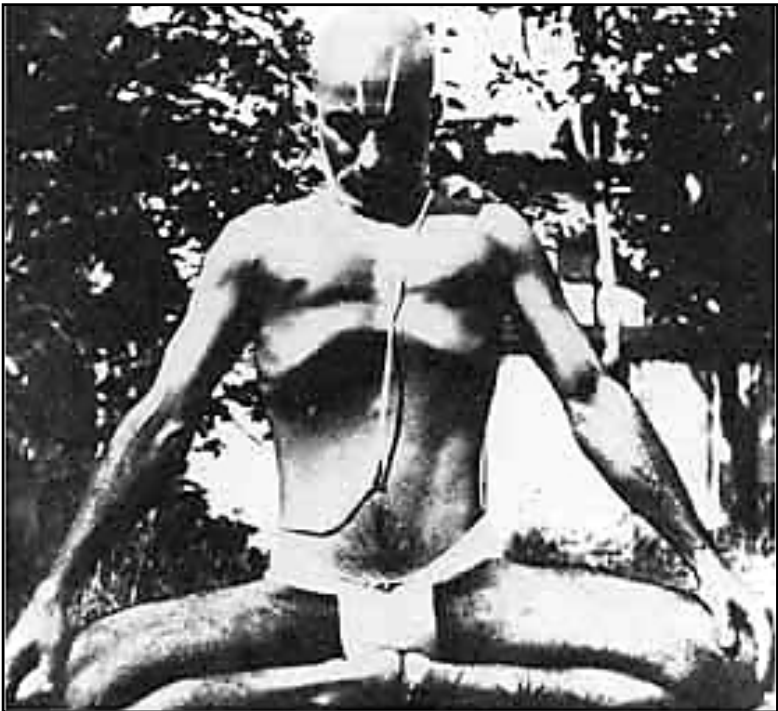
Krishnamacharya then returned to Varanasi, married, and was forced by circumstance to work in a coffee plantation.

In 1926, the Maharaja of Mysore met Krishnamacharya and was so impressed by the young man's demeanour, authority, and scholarship that he engaged him to teach yoga at the Mysore Palace.

During the 1920s Krishnamacharya held many demonstrations around the country to stimulate interest in yoga and demonstrated the stopping of his heart for short periods. In 1931, he began teaching at the Sanskrit College in Mysore and two years later opened his Yoga Shala.

Following political changes in 1946 the school struggled and, at the age of 60, he was forced to travel extensively to find students and provide for his family. The Yoga Shala closed in 1950 and soon after he relocated to Madras and accepted a job as a lecturer at Vivekananda College.

Krishnamacharya believed Yoga to be "India's greatest gift to the world." His yoga instruction reflected his conviction that yoga could be both



a spiritual practice and a mode of physical healing.

Although his knowledge and teaching has influenced yoga throughout the world, he never left his native India. Many considered him a yoga master, but he continued to call himself a student because he felt that he was always "studying, exploring and experimenting" with the practice.

Throughout his life, Krishnamacharya refused to take credit for his innovative teachings but instead attributed the knowledge to his guru or to ancient texts. At the age of 96 he fractured his hip, refused surgery, and he treated

himself through a course of practice that he could do in bed.

In 1989 he slipped into a coma and died at one hundred years of age. His cognitive faculties remained sharp until his death. Some of his students include: Indra Devi (1899–2002), K. Pattabhi Jois (1915–2009), B.K.S. Iyengar (1918-2014), T.K.V. Desikachar (1938-2016), Sriyatsa Ramaswami (1939) and A. G. Mohan (1945).

The Dharma Centre and Medicinal Gardens is available for overnight accommodation on AirBnB. Call (02) 6689-7120 or Facebook Dharma Centre – Lillifield



by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

Humanity has come a long way in terms of respect for animals. We now have animal rights written into our government policies and animal groups looking after the interests of those who can't speak for themselves. I feel we are moving forward towards living in a more compassionate and caring world. But recently I had a glaring reminder of the work still to be done in the horse world. I was at an Antiques Fair and came across the piece in the photo. This brass statue depicts a rearing horse and a man. The man has reins attached to a bit in the horses' mouth in one hand and a whip in the other hand. It is depicting the strength and courage of the man controlling the wild beast. With both hands he is

What is 'normal'?

using pain to control the horse. These types of artworks are common and admired. But to me it is not beautiful and powerful, it is a sad reflection of the level of acceptance people have to the mistreatment of horses.

To put it into perspective, imagine that instead of a horse the animal was a dog. The man would have a metal bar strapped inside the dogs' mouth to which he applied pressure to make the dog do as he wants. If the dog didn't comply the man would hit the dog with the whip in the other hand.

If this statue had depicted a dog instead of a horse, I doubt it would have been sitting there on public display. People would have been horrified at the level of brutality.

So why is it ok to do this to a horse? Lots of people walked by and looked at this statue and all of them accepted it as a normal thing.

But I believe using pain to control another being is wrong. At horse events you can see horses being controlled using pain with open, foaming mouths trying to escape the pain of bit pressure and riders with whips and spurs. To any animal empath it is a nightmare.

How did this become normal? How did it seep into the human psyche that horses are the receivers of pain, that we need to hurt them to make them do as we want? Because the thing is it's just not true.

When I first went bitless I had a number of people question my choice. After talking to them I found out

the reason was most of them were afraid of their horses, that's why they were using bits. I had to ask myself the question, 'Why are people riding horses they're afraid of?' If you think about it this is a crazy situation.

I don't ever sit on an animal I'm afraid of, I work with the horse until we reach an understanding and no-one feels threatened. People think they need to use pain because the horse is dangerous, not realising that it's the pain they're inflicting that's creating the danger.

Horses are naturally very peaceful animals, herbivores with a high degree of sociability. It is possible to relate to them on this level and not use pain.

When a horse feels no fear it is easier to work with and willing to please. The fear created by the pain creates the problem and it's a perpetuating situation going around and around in a circle.

Many people are now opening their eyes up to this in the horse world which is wonderful, but this statue reminded me that the general population still accepts this pain based status quo for horses.

The message of consideration and compassion is not just for the cute, furry little animals we share our homes with, but also for the noble beasts in the paddock.

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Cross-species communication

by Les Rees,
Equine naturopath

We recently brought home a cute little border collie dog to join the family on our property. Like all puppies, Molly has the capacity to lure most people into a state of puppy bliss, switching on our nurturing instincts with cries of delight and inducing the need to cuddle and pat her. She has only been with us for two weeks and has already imprinted on her new family. When you think about it, it's a tall ask from a puppy that had only been on the planet for 12 weeks before coming to live with us.

The animal behaviourist in me is interested in how she learns to make the connections between the things that keep her safe and those she needs to avoid. There is a certain amount of trial and error involved such as learning to keep away from the electric fence. But she is also learning to make the link between her choices of action by putting her trust in me. This helps her ascertain whether her actions may get her into trouble and having been zapped a couple of times, she now listens to me when I say no, come, sit and stay. She has also learnt to communicate with



me, in terms of telling me when she's hungry, thirsty, wanting reassurance or to stroke her favourite spot on her tummy, wanting to play a specific game. I find it amazing that she can convey so much in such a short time of living with us. All this and she also has to learn the house training rules like toilet training and what she's allowed or not allowed to chew as well as socialising with other dogs and the other animals in our family.

It's a huge demand on one so young, yet there is an instinct within all animals that drives us to learn how

to survive in the world. The quicker the rules are learnt the better their chances of reaching adulthood.

I recently read that KoKo the gorilla had died at the age of 46 years. She was taught American sign language and could understand 1,000 different signs as well as others she'd created to converse with humans. She also made several complex signs that suggested a more developed degree of cognition demonstrating the ability to communicate about objects not currently present.

It seems to me that humans spend a lot of time

disassociating themselves from the rest of the animal kingdom failing to understand their humble beginnings in the family tree. The word anthropomorphism is bandied about to quash "uneducated" ideas about nonhuman animals but we are all animals and we are discovering that we share far more common traits than was originally thought.

Horses have been found to have facial recognition and can detect our emotions and react before we have uttered a single word. They are not alone, many animals share this ability. Dogs watch television and have favourite shows they like to engage with. My dog tried to take a biscuit that was being offered to a dog on screen, I ask myself, is this not an indication that they have rational thought processes?

It's time we opened up our current thinking patterns and treatment towards fellow animals sharing our planet and treated them with the respect they deserve. We still have such a long way to go but with thought and effort we can communicate with them to a much greater extent than is commonly credited.

Horsetail Herbs 0437-586-705
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Treatments \$25
 Lismore Community Acupuncture will not be open 3rd – 10th August, but will be open for an extra day on Saturday 11th August, 11am to 2pm.
Appointments: 0431 702 560

Beyond the Rainbow
 Back copies available at Nimbin Visitor Centre

Do you need to prepare for birth?

In this day and age, when it comes to preparing for birth, do you risk knowing too little or too much? Even if you aren't actively preparing for birth, you already know a lot. Beliefs and ideas are formed from hearing stories and being exposed to media. Depending on where you grew up, your exposure to birth culture will be different and this affects how you feel about labour and parenting.

Birth can be beautiful

Imagine saying that you loved giving birth. Some women enjoy birth so much they say they could do it over and over again. It can be hard to believe, when popular culture often portrays birth as scary and painful. It can be overwhelming to sift through the information and stories being told to you and it can be a challenge to stay positive. But I want you to know that birthing your baby can be one of the most empowering and joyous moments of your life.

You do have a choice

There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach when it comes to giving birth and parenting. Through holistic preparation, you can discover your options so you can choose what feels best for you. For example, would you like to birth with a midwife or obstetrician? Would you like to birth at home, in hospital or a birthing centre?

Birth runs more smoothly when you feel safe and secure. Wherever you choose to birth and whoever you choose to support you, it's important that you feel comfortable. If you feel like your care provider isn't on the



Birth and Beyond

by Kirrah Stewart, Doula wisdom

same page as you, try to find someone that you can connect with and keep researching your options.

Ask for guidance

Often partners can feel that birth is 'womens business' and they feel quite under-prepared for what is to come during labour. I think it's important to have an understanding of what labour can look and sound like and to know how to be helpful. With adequate preparation, partners can feel more confident in their role and can have a positive impact on the birth.

However, Pam England from Birthing From Within says "Asking your husband to be your sole guide through labour is like asking him to lead the way on a climb of Mt Everest. He may be smart and trustworthy, you may love him, but in the Himalayas you'd both be a lot better off with a Sherpa!"

It is for this reason that there is

a growing trend for women to also hire a doula for extra support during pregnancy, birth and postpartum. I have over ten years experience helping couples to feel more confident about birth and parenthood. This holistic support helps you to understand your options and to feel well supported throughout your entire journey.

Understand your needs

The nine months of your pregnancy are perfect to prepare for birth and postpartum. It's an opportunity to understand yourself better and tune into your intuition. What do you need as a person? Are you someone who prefers to be alone or surrounded by people? What makes you happy? What do you feel you need to know to give birth?

If I could wave a magic wand and give you any quality you desired, what would you choose? Many women choose 'confidence'. I now invite you to ask yourself 'how am I being confident right now?' What can you do to start fostering your chosen quality in your day to day life?

If you want to dip your toes into birth preparation or are ready to fully submerge, please get in contact to receive your natural birth checklist which will help you feel more excited about birth. Phone/text 0429-308-851 or email: kirrah@doulawisdom.com

Kirrah Stewart is a doula with 10+ years experience helping women feel confident about birth and nourished in early motherhood. She has a free postpartum cheatsheet to help you feel more prepared for after your baby arrives.

For more information, visit: www.doulawisdom.com

Therapy as magic realism

I had a friend, Tom, who I met at university when both of us were doing our PhD. He being far more organized than I. finished writing his thesis a couple of years before me. The locus of his work was on the magic realism in the early writings of Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986), the Argentinian author.

Tom's PhD thesis was examined and passed with flying colours. We spoke once, at the completion of it, and then he disappeared, literally. I couldn't find any information about where he went; even his parents and brother had no clue. No death notices, no life notices, nothing.

In a fantastical effort to discern where he went, I scattered, upside down, a set of animal druid cards. In that set are two blank cards, there to encourage its users to create a couple of animal narratives of their own.

The two blank cards came up. I picked up a third, and it was "the fox". The fox is an elusive being, known for hiding among grasses, and disappearing when he wants. I felt then that Tom just didn't want to be found, and no online searches could unearth anything. There are,

it seems, three men with the same name, but none of them living in our time frame.

How extraordinary, really, that his fox-like disappearance fits so well with the nature of his academic work! He, or rather I, made a myth from him simply being/not being there.

Magic realism is a genre of literary fiction characterized by the matter-of-fact inclusion of the richness of a psychological imaginary into an otherwise realistic and ordinary framework.

Tom's life had that quality: he showed me how to use a computer by playing with it, we ate meals together, we walked the campus together, and he tripped while walking downhill, somersaulted mid-air, and landed on his feet like a finely tuned cat, while I, on a different evening fell and broke both hands. We got on well, and once he celebrated passing his PhD, he disappeared.

Magic realism situates itself neatly in the discourse of psychotherapy. I note here that I am not talking of magical thinking. Magical thinking is defined as believing that one event happens as a result of another without a plausible link of causation.



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell
 M. Couns., PhD

This is unconscious thinking. Magic realism, on the contrary, is an actual and conscious tool in literature and, I suggest, in psychotherapy in order to engage a person more richly in a life not fully lived.

Active imagination, as practised by Jungians and others, including me, could be said to be a magic realism tool, and is used as a bridge between the conscious and unconscious mind.

It is a method for visualising and fleshing out unconscious issues by drawing upon the imagination. This is a very useful tool and has the capacity to build meaning, new memories and connection in the field in which the client lives.

Much of what we do, as psychotherapists, is

pragmatic and here and now, and yet it merges the ordinary subtly into landscapes of the imagination and dreams, for a purpose.

The mind, decorated with elaborations of enriched memory, becomes a luminous space of possibilities and our exploration of these, transforms ordinary reality.

This is why I ask my clients what they love to do, and whether they paint, play music, write, dance. I want to know what magic they engage in and how can we use that for their healing.

There can be a danger in making myth of life events, but properly and ethically handled, it is a very powerful tool. I think once more of Borges' writing and his emphasis on containment and playful control of words and sentences. Nothing is wasted and nothing slops over into a messy unconsciousness, and yet...

And so, with Borges I say, "I know what the Greeks do not know, incertitude" for the bridge between this world and the world of the imagination is always open and what is learned in this here-and-now world and the imaginary is always magical and very real.

dr_mccardell@yahoo.com

Ticks and other taxing topics

A few weeks ago I was hit by two ticks. The arm quickly became a look-alike for elephantitis and very sore.

Too soon for paralysis ticks? Ha! If they were grass ticks it's a plastic bubble for me. I'm beginning to think the little f-ers have a Napoleonic complex and want to take over the world.

I reflected on the usual deterrents, from turps to tea tree, but ended up using cold blooded murder in the form of Aeroguard, which kills in seconds. Just a dab on their bum with a cotton bud works miracles. Mind you, the poor little things silently scream in agony for about thirty seconds before they die, so if you're a compassionate Buddhist being and into, "be careful flushing, ants may be surfing", use some type of Wart Off, that freezes them immediately without pain.

Not that they deserve it, but then, my big hoof probably wounds or kills a dozen critters every time I take a step.

After two nights of a throbbing arm and little sleep I remembered Ixodes homeopathic. Wonderful Ixodes, created right here in Nimbin. There has been many a pet saved from tick related death with Ixodes. The



by Tonia Haynes

trick is, one must follow the instructions to the letter and it's a bit love-intensive in that one needs to give the pet almost full attention for about four hours. Still, it may well save hundreds of dollars at the vet's.

I staggered out of bed, grabbed the Ixodes and applied it topically. The pain was gone in a flash. Quite frankly I was impressed. I've used the stuff orally for years, never topically. Just to be sure, I poured three drops down the throat and returned to a peaceful snooze. Did the same again, once, next day. Pain and much of the swelling was gone by nightfall.

I have written about Ixodes before, but it seems, from what others say, the good news is still to be absorbed into the grey matter of many, so I'm doing the sales pitch. "Tell 'em. Tell 'em that you've told them and then tell 'em again."

The other taxing worth a mention is osteoarthritis. If you have never had it, please, may I be your clone?

I'm not going to mention how painful it can be, because we have all heard that from those who suffer. Actually, all bone degenerative diseases should be banned, along with cancer, but osteoarthritis is a personal mate of mine. Long story short, what I have found that works:

Colloidal minerals: Because Oz soil is extremely mineral and trace element deficient, the goodies aren't in the soil. So we don't get them in our food unless the garden fairies mineralize the veggie patch before planting. Minerals and trace elements stop the elastic skin around the cells from fraying, so they're good for everything, not just muscle and bones.

Turmeric: Discovered this last year. Must be taken with some type of unsaturated fat and black pepper in order to be absorbed. I use yoghurt. And black pepper in the cooking. I am pretty convinced that turmeric works well, because this winter the pain has been less. Similar to the colloidal minerals, it took a while to have an effect, so don't give up.

Barley green: Alkalizes the body and gives the green veg we need in a glass. Drink it with apple juice. It is generally thought in the alternative healing scene that disease and also too much weight survive better in an acid environment. So the more alkaline our system the healthier and slimmer we will be. Sugar, and most saturated fats are baaad. Sniffle!

Fish oil: It appears them of the Allopathic medicine type believe that if one takes fish oil capsules and they need to cut you open, your blood will pour onto the floor like Niagara Falls. So if you are in for an op? Stop the fish oil.

Krill: No way. Those poor whales have enough problems.

Coconut oil: Mmmm. Is it grown in Oz, or is some poor bugger decimating the rainforest in order to grow their meagre crop of coconut palms?

Bowen Therapy, spinal realignment, massage and a touch of pranic healing to help clear away those emotional brick walls? Good stuff!

Phone for an appointment in Nimbin. 0439-794-420.

Love, light and giggles.

NATURAL LAW



by Helene Collard

*We are all self-governing.
Let us call upon our
ancestors and teachers
past and present,
to guide us in the
way of the Heart.
You are all my relations.
All is One.*

Mayan New Year greetings to all. In the midst of deep and profound changes, we are blessed with the herald of the Mayan New Year.

The frequency of this year invites purification on the deepest levels and a call to FLOW with the universal tides of life, embracing the creative qualities of the feminine to the fullest.

The eclipse on the 11th August will be the third eclipse in a month. A series of two eclipses is usual, three in a month is a rare occurrence. The energy generated by eclipses are powerful facilitators of endings and beginnings, so go with it, no matter how uncomfortable or painful.

With sustainable change, there is always an element of the unknown, so whatever comes your way, treat it with great respect and have patience. You cannot hurry things along, instead pay great attention to how things unfold and be

there to support the process in healthy and constructive ways.

August holds powerful energies in the cycle of change, clearing the way for profound potential to emerge.

A Reiki treatment is a powerful reset button for your nervous system and can facilitate access to interdimensional aspects of yourself, providing insight and support during these remarkable periods of change. If you would like the support of Reiki during this time, I'd love to hear from you.

Coming up at the Yemaya Centre

- **Yogalates with Martha**
Wednesdays 5.30pm,
Fridays 9am & 11am
- **Holistic healing treatments** Reiki-aura treatments, healing heart attunements, refresher attunements, craniosacral energetics, reflexology, life alignment, shiatsu.
- **Reiki courses level 2:** Sept 22 & 29 (Two Saturdays). Currently taking expressions of interest for level 1 and Reiki master courses.
- **Room rental enquiries:**
Helene 0405-656-797

Helene has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing (Law & Justice), is a Reiki Master and has been practicing Reiki for over a decade and currently practices and teaches Reiki in Lismore. Helene is also employed as a Facilitator with We Al-li, delivering their Culturally Informed Trauma Integrated Healing Approach (CITIHA) around Australia. Helene's approach to wellbeing is focused in personal growth. For information, enquiries and bookings visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au or phone 0405-656-797.

Do you suffer from pain in your jaw?

Does your jaw click when you yawn or when you eat? If so, you're probably one of the 40% of the population who has experienced something called Temporomandibular Joint Disorder, more commonly referred to as TMJ disorder.

Usually this means that your jaw is out alignment. That includes the TMJ joint and the C1 (or Atlas), the very top vertebrae. TMJ and C1 create the jaw mechanism.

How can the jaw go out of alignment? It's usually caused by one of these reasons:



by Sonia Barton

- Whiplash injury;
 - Dental work;
 - Wisdom teeth removed;
 - Wearing braces; or
 - Head injury, etc.
- But not only that, a jaw misalignment can also create

unusual pain in various parts of your body. It's understandable that TMJ would trigger headaches, migraines, facial pain and referred pain to the teeth.

It's also logical that such pain and tension in the head region would result in misaligned muscles with shoulder and neck pain. But the lower back? How can this association, so consistently puzzling to dentists and doctors, be explained?

The body is constantly trying to bring itself into balance by over-compensating

imbalanced and painful areas. So when the jaw isn't "balanced" the misalignment affects the whole body because 40% of the nerves of the body go through the jaw, therefore it maybe trapping nerves and causing tension in muscles in various parts of the body.

Luckily, an easy solution to this problem is possible with Bowen Therapy. I will be practicing at the Apothecary in Nimbin at 54 Cullen Street. Sonia Barton is a Bowen Therapist and Reiki Master. Phone 0431-911-329, Email: soniabarton@yahoo.com www.BowenEnergyWork.com.au

The importance of the lungs

The first new moon after the solstice as has just occurred, signifies the turning from yin energy to yang. Traditions of the northern hemisphere, of which Chinese medicine is one, regard the time after the winter solstice as the beginning of the new year. Even though we celebrate the lunar new year in summer, in the southern hemisphere it would be more appropriate to celebrate it now.

As the days are lengthening the yang energy is slowly becoming more predominant. But this rebalancing takes a while, which is why the yin cold is still very obvious. As the yang leads, however, it is felt by all creatures, birds start building nests and new buds form on branches, new growth emerges.

"During the first month the yang qi frees the earth qi from its icy shackles, and causes it to emerge. There is not a single creature that does not respond to this lead."

In classical Chinese medicine the organ association is the lung. This is at odds with

more recent interpretations which has the lung associated with autumn, seemingly the opposite time of the year.

The lung is about balance, exhalation and inhalation. In this breathing cycle, everything is contained. Therefore, either association, whether that of coming to the end of a cycle (autumn) or starting a new one (spring), is appropriate.

Breathing while largely unconscious is the ceaseless cycle we share with all life forms. Being aware of this breath encourages balance in body and mind.

The lung in Chinese medicine contains balancing functions.

The animal associated with the first lunar month is the tiger. The tiger has a beautiful coat/skin which the lung controls. It is very good at conserving energy, stealthily stalking prey and conserving energy for the final part of the chase or lunge. Happy to rest for large parts of the day, but ready for a burst of energy if needed.

The lung energy encourages this kind of balance. It is the opposite of continually pushing, and feeling we need to continually be doing something in order to get a result. The tiger well exemplifies this balance, plenty of quiet time but always an awareness of what needs to be done and doing it at the right time.

The lung's balancing function is also seen in its balancing of both superficial and deep energy. The lungs are associated with the skin and surface immunity, protecting against colds, flus and allergies.

They are also vitally important in maintaining life and energy at a deeper level, governing the production of qi and respiration, as well as assisting the heart with blood circulation.

As well as being an essential organ, they are also delicate and sometimes vulnerable, being the connection between the body and the environment.

The lungs are also important in balancing damp and dryness. The lung does not like

excessive damp or dryness, or wind.

These can cause allergies among other problems, commonly seen at this time of year as seasonal rhinitis, also known as an external wind invasion.

Acupuncture and herbs are effective at both treating and preventing this condition.

Whether the first lunar month is seen as the New Year or not, it can be seen as a time of a new beginning and to look for balance as new energy emerges.



by Brigid Beckett

Brigid Beckett is a registered acupuncturist working at Lismore Community Acupuncture. She can be contacted on 0431-702-560.