

Tool Topics.

Bow Saw

Bow Saws are simple, inexpensive and effective tools for trimming and lopping trees, plants and thick weed stems.



Examples of Bow Saws

When selecting a bow saw –

- Check that it has a guard to protect your fingers and that your gloved hand fits comfortably around the grip.
- Look along the blade (end to end) to see if the alternating saw tips are about twice the width apart as the width of the blade material. (This enables the cut width to be wide enough to reduce the risk of jamming the blade while cutting.)

When using a bow saw –

- Wear gloves to protect your hands (**Caution** - Avoid skin contact with the blade)
- **Ensure that the area is clear**
- Hold the saw by the grip only
- Grab the material with your free hand if it is likely to move or vibrate
- Cut square to the material and use the full length of the saw for maximum results
- Avoid applying pressure into the cut. Simply keep the saw moving full length, allowing the saw do the actual work
- If the blade starts to jam after cutting half the stem or trunk apply pressure to the material away from the cut to free the blade again
- For most weeds, quickly apply Round Up solution (50%) (**within 10 seconds**) to the exposed cut surface to kill the remaining stem by allowing the poison to be drawn towards the roots of the plant. (**Note** - Any delay is likely to reduce the uptake of the poison and subsequent regrowth which may occur will be a lot harder to remove latter.)

If the saw blade is jamming too much, you can probably fix the problem by using a pair of pliers to bend each of the single tips in alternating directions to provide enough clearance around the blade again.

Greg Lukes (FEP)

Parkcare Groups.

Parkcare groups are volunteers doing rehabilitation on these days.

Would you like to get involved?

Prince Henry Heights (3rd Sunday)

This group is caring out bush rehabilitation activities along Prince Henry Drive on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

(February to November, look for parked cars).

Echo Valley South Park (Ramsay St) (Saturday & Monday mornings each week)

These groups are active on both Saturday and Monday each week from 9am - 12. (Look for parked cars near the container or near the bottom gate.)

Rehabilitation may include weed removal, propagating and planting native species as well as monitoring plants and wildlife.

For more information on Parkcare groups or to confirm details, please contact –

Kristie Jenkinson (TRC)

4688 6514 or 0408 714 215

kristie.jenkinson@toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au
www.toowoombarc.qld.gov.au

FEP News.

Year 10 students and staff of Concordia Lutheran College Redlands Campus provided valuable assistance with weeding in Redwood Park.

The students targeted the area on the uphill side of the walking track from the bridge across Gatton Creek to the interpretive side near the large Crows Ash further up the hill.

Now much of the Coral Berry, climbing asparagus and the small amount of privet has been removed from the targeted area.

It would be worthwhile following up this gallant effort with a community response to target the weeds on the other side of the track as well as to make a concentrated effort on the Cats Claw Creeper and Madeira vine that is taking over.

**Friends of the Escarpment Parks
Toowoomba Inc.**

Newsletter Editor Greg Lukes
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Would you like to support FEP? Membership is only \$5 per year (\$10/Family)



The
**Escarpment
Park Friend**
Sep – Oct 2010

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FEP, Caring for Toowoomba's Bushlands

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Savings Option.

HERITAGE COMMUNITY SAVER PROGRAM

As part of its commitment to the community, Heritage Building Society has a scheme to assist local community groups to raise money.

Friends of the Escarpment Parks has registered with this scheme making it possible for members to open a personal Community Savers Account that will not only provides the account holder a high rate of interest but Heritage will also anonymously transfer a further 1% interest to your *chosen community group*. Members can benefit both themselves and their chosen community group.

A community account can be opened: -

- On line through www.heritageonline.com.au
- Through the Heritage On-line internet banking or at your local branch.

**Friends of the Escarpment Parks
Community Group Identification No is
1719 (quote when opening an account).**

Interest rates as at September 2010 are:-

\$1 - \$249,999	3.95% p.a.
\$250,000 - \$749,000	4.30% p.a.
\$750,000 +	4.55% p.a.

(Calculated daily and paid monthly)

Locust Muncher.

Have you ever been so passionate about something you drove around a paddock for days on end? Terry Bediavis has. He's a farmer from Paringa in South Australia's Riverland, and when a swarm of locusts started attacking his crop, he sprung into action. Modifying a contraption he had previously invented to dry hay, he created '**The Locust Muncher**'. Many of it's bits and pieces he found at the tip, in particular a high-powered fan. Fastening the thing to the front of his ute, he started tearing around his paddock. He managed to suck up and mangle thousands of locusts gnawing at his crop. See Terry revving up his invention and hear his story by going to the ABC web site below.

www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2010/s3014486.htm

Natailie Oliveri from Renmark, SA

National Tree Day.

Toowoomba Regional Council National Tree Day was held Sunday 1 August at the Water Bird Habitat, Mackenzie Street.

Council staff and FEP members helped coordinate over 140 volunteers to plant over 3000 native trees and vines for National Tree Day 2010.

Council staff had prepared the site for the planting including laying down a mulch base for the plants to go in. The mulch will help to retain moisture in the soil and to provide weed suppression.

The event provided a good opportunity for individuals and families to experience the great outdoors while helping our wildlife. After the activities participants were treated to a BBQ in the park.

Echo Valley South Park.

The FEP Monday morning group is working through the lantana and privet in the south-eastern section of Echo Valley South Park.

We have already cleared the tall dense lantana from inside the fence line beside the roadway and the gully below the gate until it exits under the fence, as well as most of the lantana on the ridge to the north of this gully. North of this gully there is a wide flat ridge with an excellent stand of dense kangaroo grass, small wattles and young and mature eucalypts.



FEP Monday group in action

We have also removed the broad-leaved privets from the roadside and the gully below the gate at the south-eastern corner of the park. The stand of older, larger privet along the roadside was associated with the greater soil moisture due to runoff from the road and seepage from the roadside drain. TRC staff have controlled several large firethorns for us.

Our current working area is the dense privet on the steep eastern slopes above the creek. The largest and oldest privets occur along the creek line. This area would have been favoured for initial privet germination by the greater level of soil moisture and reduced wind drying effect in the bottom of the gully. Some of these plants are 5-10 cm thick and many metres tall, and between them the ground is largely bare and is covered with a moist mulch of decaying privet and eucalypt leaves. Small privets struggle to remain

alive under the dense shade and with the strong root competition from their larger neighbours. Higher up the slope we find younger privets, and above them seedlings and quite young plants. What seems to be happening is that established privets create the conditions necessary for the germination of privet seeds in their shade – moist slowly decomposing leaf litter, and shelter from the wind – so that the infestation is creeping up the slope.

We are killing privets by pulling up seedlings, by lopping smaller and sawing larger plants followed by 50% glyphosate stump sprays, and by frill ringing large plants with 50% glyphosate. Under these plants we are seeing new privet seedlings emerging from the moist leaf litter. Most of these seedlings will be from one and two year old seed, since experiments have shown that privet seed usually only lasts one year in the soil. After we have controlled the larger plants many of these tiny seedlings will survive and establish in the increased light conditions, and we will need to go through the area again in two to three years time to remove them and any others that we have missed this year. After that the rate of privet seedling regeneration should drop off rapidly, as we have seen in the areas that we have cleared at the top of the park.

Seed-eating birds will always bring in new privet seed from outside the park, but seedlings will be more confined to below perching trees and much reduced in numbers because of the more open and drier conditions without the dense moist mulch of old privet leaves.

We are grateful for the help that we are receiving at Echo Valley South Park from the Toowoomba Youth Justice Service, TRC staff and the FEP volunteers.

If you would like to get involved on Monday and/or Saturday mornings you would be welcome to join in. Activities are from 9am till noon at the southern end of Ramsay Street.

John Swarbrick (FEP)

Species Watch.

Grey Butcherbird

Cracticus torquatus

Family: Artamidae



Grey Butcherbird

Photo: K Vang and W Dabrowka

©[Bird Explorers](#)

Description

The adult Grey Butcherbird has a black crown and face and a grey back, with a thin white collar. The wings are grey, with large areas of white and the underparts are white. The grey and black bill is large, with a small hook at the tip of the upper bill. The eye is dark brown and the legs and feet are dark grey. Both sexes are similar in plumage, but the females are slightly smaller than the males. Young Grey Butcherbirds resemble adults, but have black areas replaced with olive-brown and a buff wash on the white areas. The bill is completely dark grey and often lacks an obvious hook. Minimum size: 24 cm. Maximum size: 30 cm. Average size: 27 cm. Average weight: 100 g. They are sometimes mistaken for small kingfishers.

Did you know?

Butcherbirds get their name from their habit of hanging captured prey on a hook or in a tree fork, or crevice. This 'larder' is used to support the victim while it is being eaten, to store several victims or to attract mates.

Distribution

Grey Butcherbirds range from mid-eastern Queensland, through southern Australia, including Tasmania, to northern Western Australia. There is an isolated population in the Kimberley and the northernmost parts of the Northern Territory. Conservation status in all states of Australia is classified as secure.

Grey Butcherbirds are found in a range of wooded habitats, including suburban areas. In inland areas, the birds tend to favour the denser forests.

Feeding

Grey Butcherbirds are aggressive predators. They prey on small animals, including birds, lizards and insects, as well as some fruits and seeds. Uneaten food may be stored in the fork or a branch or impaled. Grey Butcherbirds sit on an open perch searching for prey which, once sighted, they pounce on. Most mobile prey is caught on the ground, though small birds and insects may be caught in flight.

Feeding normally takes place alone, in pairs or in small family groups.

Breeding

Breeding season is from July to January. Clutch size is 3 to 5, incubation in 25 days.

The Grey Butcherbird's nest is bowl-shaped, and is made of sticks and twigs, lined with grasses and other soft fibres. It is normally located within 10m of the ground. The eggs are incubated by the female and the young birds are fed by both parents. Time in nest is 28 days. The young birds will remain in the breeding territory for about a year and help the parents raise the young of the following season.

Calls

The song is a lovely rich piping with some mimicry and harsher notes.

[Call in MP3 format](#) (313kb)

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[Birds in Backyards Website](#)

(Date accessed: 03/10/10)

<http://birdsinbackyards.net/species/Cracticus-torquatus>



At Echo Valley a Grey Butcherbird regularly likes to join us to collect biscuit crumbs near the container at smoko time.

Greg Lukes (FEP)