

## Weeds Forum – MC and Speakers profiles (1d)

(Last updated – 19 April 2023)

### Master of Ceremonies - Kate Reardon-Smith



Kate is Senior Lecturer and Program Director for the Bachelor of Environmental Sciences within the School of Agriculture and Environmental Science and Senior Researcher with the UniSQ Centre for Applied Climate Sciences. Kate has a particular interest in disturbance ecology – the way in which plant communities respond to a range of disturbance events, including invasion by novel species, and the effect this has on ecosystem function and resilience. Her PhD research, conducted in riparian woodland communities of the Upper Condamine Floodplain, involved an extensive study of the ecological impacts of lippia, *Phyla canescens*, in these systems. Kate has over 20 years of professional and community experience as an ecologist and environmental scientist, spanning a range of fields including agro-ecology, climate risk management and sustainable land and water management policy. She also manages a small farm on the eastern Darling

Downs and is chair of the Cambooya Landcare Association, and as such is well acquainted with the challenges of managing pervasive weed species such as lantana, tree pear, Johnson grass and Coolatai grass.

---

### Speakers' profiles



**Janet Barker** has been an active member of Invasive Species Queensland, formerly the Weed Society of Queensland for over twenty years. Janet first became involved when undertaking the role of Parthenium Weed Project Officer for the Queensland Murray Darling Committee, managing to gain the role of Secretary at the first AGM she attended. Since then, she has held a number of roles on the executive, sat on the organising committee of two symposiums and was contracted by the organisation to produce their publications, Weeds of Southern Queensland 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> edition, as well as Weeds of Central and North Queensland, first edition. Janet will speak today about Invasive Species Queensland, their history, membership, the publications and the

upcoming Queensland Pest Animal and Weed Symposium in Dalby, August 2023.



#### **Andrew Davidson:**

Profile - Andrew is a Knowledge and Information Support Officer working on the new landscape management plan for Southern Queensland. Andrew has over 25 years of experience in community engagement and natural resource management planning having worked for Landcare and catchment management groups, regional bodies and state government. Andrew is a musician, loves to garden, plays cricket and watches a lot of sport.



**Isabella Murphy, Bachelor of Science (Biology)**

Issy is one of our Project Delivery Officers, based in Toowoomba working throughout the company to build her skills after graduating university. Issy kicked off her environmental career in the mining industry, helping to ensure legal environmental boundaries were adhered to. Through her love of travel, she has also been involved in research and field work in the Okavango Delta, Botswana to contribute to improved natural resource management there. Issy loves to play sport, hike, and explore the world around her.



**Bio – Bruce Lawrie, CCMA**

Bruce was born in Victoria, before moving with his family to “Croxley” near Biddeston, Queensland in 1968. He studied at Qld Ag. College (now UQ Gatton). In 1973 he started as a cadet with the Fauna Conservation Branch of DPI which has since evolved into the **State Department of Environment and Science**.

Bruce spent his working years in Emerald, Townsville and Toowoomba (to name a few places)- covering many areas around these centres, with various studies, surveys, resource assessments and extension activities with Landcare groups.

When transferred to Toowoomba, Bruce had involvement with the formation of leasehold and freehold vegetation management guidelines; tree clearing guidelines and tree management plans for rural properties. He was also heavily involved in the Natural Heritage Trust funding rounds as a Bushcare officer before becoming a Nature Refuge extension officer to round out his career.

On the personal side, Bruce is married; has 3 children; and he managed a purebred Droughtmaster herd for 14 years on a 1000-acre scrub and forest block near Peranga, and sold purebred commercial bulls from an agistment property at Upper Pinelands Crows Nest. During this period, he became acutely aware of the time consuming and expensive challenge of addressing a range of established weeds together with new weeds incrementally invading any given area.



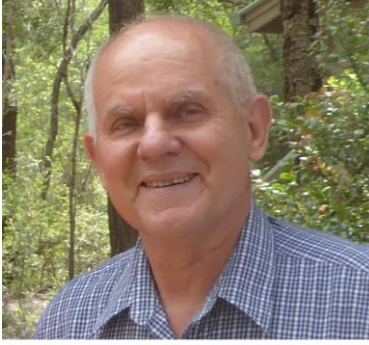
**Mary-Lou Gittins OAM**

Educator and irrigator from Goomburra Valley in the Upper Condamine catchment. Mary-Lou has a strong background in community participation and representation. Over thirty years she has represented Agriculture, Landcare and Natural Resource Management groups at a local, regional, state and commonwealth level.

At the local level in South East Queensland and now Darling Downs she has supported landcare organisations, planted thousands of trees, facilitated Waterwatch and Landcare education for children and adults.

Currently she is the Chair of Queensland Water and Land Carers. Locally secretary to the Condamine Catchment Management Association.

Mary-Lou has been recognised by her peers and won an individual State Landcare Award in 2003. Then in 2019 for service to conservation and the environment Mary-Lou received an OAM.



### **Hugh Krenske Profile**

A Past president of the Friends of the Escarpment Parks (FEP) Toowoomba Inc., he is currently the coordinator of the Redwood Parkcare group, having taken on this role in July 2011. The Redwood Group, working mainly in the lower section of the semi-evergreen vine thicket or dry rainforest, has been instrumental in removing a significant amount of cat's claw creeper, madeira vine and other minor weeds. One notable achievement has been the return of the threatened black breasted button quail seen again in 2017 with their platelets regularly found on the forest floor after an absence of more than 20 years.

He has been involved in a number of environmental organizations including the Richmond Birdwing (butterfly) Recovery Network. In this role, he was responsible for assisting with workshops throughout Southeast Queensland and Northern New South Wales, and recording the numerous plantings of birdwing vines and the sighting of butterflies. He is FEP's representative on the Darling Downs Environment Council and is currently a member of Toowoomba Regional Council's Environment Advisory Committee.