

Naomi Wilson - Rainforest Talk

I got a chance a couple of weekends ago to give a talk on the "Impact of Building a Rainforest on a Small Acreage Block".

To be honest, it was the last talk of the day and I truly thought I would be talking to the tent flaps but there were a good number of people who kindly stayed.

As per usual my techy techy (or lack there of) meant that the presentation I had prepared stayed on the USB stick and I had to basically "wing it".

But I thought I probably should share some of my thoughts here with you.

Firstly: We have to stop thinking that our Govt is interested in saving us..... and the wildlife. To be honest - they see the problem as being too big and in typical Govt fashion if they can't have just one solution that gives immediate results - they are not interested. And saving the Planet has to come from a 37,943 pronged attack.

But we as individuals can have a huge impact and it doesn't have to be negative.... But first we need to stop thinking this Planet owes us AND that everything on this Planet is here for the taking.

Our first shift needs to be that we don't own the Block and I know I have covered this already in a previous Post but I am feeling the need to remind you of this.... Because it is a big shift in our mindset to think we spend most of our lives working to buy something that we should never own.

If we shift into the role of custodian of the Block - boy, how things can change.

Let's assume you are thinking like a Custodian not owner..... What if you plant out Rainforest? And I can hear some objections already and I will cover all of them in the next post.

For this Post I am assuming you can see the benefit of not having grass on your 5 acre block.

Let's look at the snow ball effect....What if you can lead from the front and start planting out and then you can get a single neighbour interested in planting out some of their block?

What if you can get another neighbour to plant out and you create a bit of a corridor?

What if you start a Friends of (your) Road Group and your efforts are a bit more co-ordinated?

What if your area only grows the Woot Woot (I made that up) tree and you could get a good sized stand of those up?

Well now you are talking.

Now you are creating homes for people who have been completely displaced.

Now you are providing food for birds that are migrating.

Now you are helping protect trees (like the Woot Woot tree) that are also looking at Extinction. We seem to forget that that are also under enormous pressure from extinction.

What if you can do some research and find endangered animals that used to live in your area.

Here is a terrifying statistic. 3 out of 8 of our Aust. wildlife species will be beyond levels of recovery in the next 10 years. We have already lost 32 since white fellas arrived. Leaving us with 288. So based on the numbers we stand to lose 78 species in the next 10 years.

Please read that again and let it sink in.

And I can give you a direct example here (and I shared this in my talk).

There is a little parrot called the Coxen Fig Parrot which was thought to be Extinct.

Long story but a bird watcher thought he saw one. Everyone had an opinion on his sighting (most not that polite) until he was walking around with a friend in the bush and his friend happened to hear the bird and managed to get an On The Wing photo of this little Coxen Fig Parrot. It was fuzzy but good enough for the Bird Watchers to identify him. Well there was at least one Coxen Fig Parrot left!!!!

They are only a little parrot. Smaller than a conure Parrot. But they migrate between sort of North Brissy and Gayndah (or thereabouts). I am no expert on them.

The issue (like a broken record on all our wildlife) is a loss of trees for them to feed on as they migrate.

So some years ago I decided that I could possibly help these little guys out. It was a bit of a long shot as I didn't even know if they flew over my block but what did I have to lose?

So I rang around and no one could give me a definite answer as to which figs these guys needed. I spent hours on the phone, and no one knew.

I went at it with my usual attitude: I just planted out heaps of Figs. Then I thought there is no point in me planting these up here if there are not any along the way.

So got a hold of a few farmers along the flight path to Brissy and told them about the Parrot and they too took a punt and planted out Figs.

I had a friend who is very into birds come out and they thought they heard the Coxen Fig Parrot somewhere in my trees.

We haven't confirmed a sighting, but I am thinking it could be a case of If you build it, they will come.

Let's just run a worst case scenario here: I planted a whole lot of tree for a bird that doesn't come as far North as my block. Terrible. No, really, think about it. I planted a heap of trees that someone can use even if it pans out not to be the Coxen Fig Parrot someone is going to use those trees.

At this stage people were clapping, which to be honest made me a bit uncomfortable.

I didn't plant Figs for any recognition.

I did it because when I look back at my life, how cool to think that I may have helped save a little bird that because of my species has been taken right the edge of survival.

Now my question to you is this...

Would you rather have a conversation with your grandkids where you explain that you built your portion of rainforest because you wanted to do your part to save this Planet and add habitat so those kids didn't have to go to a zoo or worse a Museum to see the stuffed version of an animal you saw as a kid wondering around in the bush OR are you going to be happy to explain that you knew what was coming and even though you had some land you did nothing to help. And how do you think your grandkids are going to feel about you then.

My driving force for me getting out most mornings through Spring, Summer and Autumn with my buckets of water is because I want to be on the right side of that conversation.

I am not losing this Planet without one hell of a fight.