

## HISTORY OF THE Pine River - Qld

The Pine River catchment is situated some 30 kilometres north of Brisbane and drains in a generally easterly direction from the relatively steep D'Aguilar Ranges towards the flat coastal plains of Bramble Bay between Sandgate and Redcliffe. North Pine River and South Pine River join some 7 km upstream from the mouth, where the combined system forms an extensive coastal estuary. The tidal influence extends upstream in the North Pine to Young's Crossing and in the South Pine to the Bald Hills Railway Bridge. The rivers flow through rural residential areas before entering the urbanised lower catchment where Petrie, Strathpine and Kallangur comprise the major urban centres. The Pine Rivers have a catchment area of 825 km<sup>2</sup> and stream network of 1770 km.

The North Pine River is approximately 54 km long and rises near Mt Pleasant towards the northwest corner of the catchment while its major tributary Laceys Creek flows from the south. The upper freshwater reaches of the North Pine subcatchment is largely disconnected from the lower reaches by dams. The North Pine Dam was constructed 5 km upstream of Petrie in 1976 and forms Lake Samsonvale. Major streams feeding into the lake include Rush Creek, Kobble Creek, Terrors Creek, Laceys Creek and Mount Samson Creek. The total catchment area of Lake Samsonvale is 347 km<sup>2</sup>. Just downstream, Sideling Creek was also dammed for water supply purposes in 1959 and forms the smaller Lake Kurwongbah. Fish are unable to migrate between the lower North Pine River and Lake Samsonvale due to the dam wall.

The South Pine River is approximately 41 km long and rises in the D'Aguilar Ranges to the south and flows in an easterly and north-easterly direction towards Bramble Bay. Cedar Creek is the major tributary which joins the river 4 km upstream of Cash's Crossing. At this point the river forms an extensive floodplain area which extends through the urban areas of Albany Creek, Strathpine and Bald Hills.

The freshwater region of the Pine Rivers catchment includes undisturbed streams in Brisbane Forest Park and the D'Aguilar National Park. Clear Mountain, Bunya and Mount Mee State Forests also lie in the catchment. Many of the creeks in the catchment carry only intermittent flows and can remain dry for long periods. Streams in the mid catchment are impacted by the clearing of the riparian zone for grazing and rural residential land uses, while the lower catchment is highly disturbed due to urban development. The hydrology of the North Pine River is also significantly altered by Lake Samsonvale and Lake Kurwongbah.

Increasingly, the major pressures facing the Pine Rivers catchment is residential development, especially moderate to high-density urban development. The current population of the Pine Rivers catchment is approximately 77 000 people. This population is expected to increase to 94 500 over the next 10 years. Agricultural land is increasingly being developed for rural and residential purposes. These land use changes increase the pressure on waterways in the catchment by altering the natural process of runoff during storms and increasing pollutant loads.

At Dohles Rocks, the Pine Rivers, Hays Inlet and Freshwater Creek finally meet the ocean. This area is rich in marine and bird life with dense strands of mangroves lining the shores. Hayes Inlet is designated a marine Reserve, providing an important breeding and nursery habitat.

Young's Crossing and Kobble Creek were favourite collecting sites for early native fish enthusiasts. Members of the Aquarium & Terrarium Society made regular excursions to both areas during the 1933-36 period. Fish species collected included Sunfish (Rainbowfishes), Smelt, Blue Eyes, Olive Perch, hardyheads, small catfish and gudgeons. Waterplants reportedly collected were *Aponogeton*, *Vallisneria*, Hornwort, *Myriophyllum*, Snowflake, *Elatine sp.* and *Ottelia ovalifolia*.

Lieutenant John Oxley, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, had been instructed by the Governor, Sir Thomas Brisbane, to assess Moreton Bay, Port Curtis and Port Bowen as potential sites for convict settlements. While on an exploring expedition in H.M. Cutter *Mermaid* he rowed up the Pine River on 1 December 1823. Oxley later referred to it as the Deception River. The following day, Oxley's party discovered and named the Brisbane River. As a result of Oxley's favourable report on his expedition to the Moreton Bay area, Governor Brisbane decided to establish a convict settlement there.

Oxley returned to Moreton Bay nine months later to select and chart suitable sites for the convict settlement. During this visit, on 30 September 1824, he also returned to the Pine River to collect samples of logs of the Hoop Pines which he had sighted on his first trip to the area. Allan Cunningham, the botanist and explorer, accompanied the party. As it was Cunningham who identified the Hoop Pine as a species of *Araucaria*, it was subsequently named *Araucaria cunninghamii* in recognition of his work.

Although there is no record of Oxley naming the Pine River anything other than the Deception River, the former name was in popular usage by the early 1840s. One of the first surveyors of the district, Robert Dixon, in 1842 named the North Pine the "Eden" River, an indication of the great beauty of the riverine forests and their numerous emergent hoop pines. Many early settlers of the Pine Valley turned to timber cutting instead of agriculture. Natural stands of mature hoop pines are now rare in the Pine Shire. Similarly, the once common giant red cedars, white beech and silky oaks have all but disappeared, as they have from other parts of eastern Australia.

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