

Frenzy over rare bird

Brilliant photo brings visitors full of hope

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And they have not been disappointed.

Last week, Springfield Nature Care Group president Luise Manning said people had seen the bird on and off all week.

Mr Gelding said he really just stumbled on the bird, which feasts on iron-bark currently in flower at Springfield.

"I nearly fell over in shock," he said.

"I was expecting to see a Little Friar Bird."

"People flew up from Adelaide and there was a man here from Peru during the week," Ms Manning said.

The Moreton Bay Figs and eucalypts on the lake foreshore are the bird's favourite haunts and sightings all week, possibly of a pair of the birds, have kept the visitors in a frenzy.

According to the federal Environment and Energy Department there are between 800 and 2000 found alive in Australia.

Ms Manning said many bird watchers had given up hope of ever seeing one because of the drastic loss of habitat nationally.

"They were once quite common, seen in flocks of hundreds from Adelaide north to Brisbane," Ms Manning said.



Springfield bird watcher Peter Gelding with Esme Ross, from Maryborough, Lynelle Abrahams, from Redbank Plains, Ann Love-Hoskins, from Bellbowrie, and Phoebe Chapman, from Daboro. Photo: Luise Manning. INSET: Peter Gelding's amazing photo of the Regent Honeyeater

One bird watcher described it as "a carnival type atmosphere" at Spring Lake as bird watchers staked out the park trying to capture a photo or video of the rare birds.

Esme and Trevor Ross, who have been keen bird enthusiasts since 1980, travelled from Maryborough to photograph the bird.

Mr Gelding said he was "just so pleased" that he happened to be "in the right place at the right time". Ms Manning said the birds were important pollinators of eucalypts.

"We need more funding to help these beautiful endangered birds make a comeback, and we should be doing everything possible to protect their habitat," she said.



Schools go for smart water use

FOUR schools in Brisbane's southwest are part of a trial launched by the Queensland Urban Utilities to help schools conserve water.

The program will make it easier for Middle Park State School, St Augustine's College (Augustine Heights), St John's Anglican College (Forest Lake) and Good News Lutheran School (Middle Park) to monitor their water usage and identify leaks.

Queensland Urban Utilities spokeswoman Michelle Cull said the trial provided schools with the technology and tools to be more water efficient.

"A smart water meter is a small device that attaches to the existing meter and transmits the readings wirelessly," she said.

"Water consumption data can then be monitored live by teachers and students from an online portal.

"Alerts are received if the smart meter detects irregular water use that could indicate a leak, so issues are found early on, saving water and money."

It was good news for the Good News Lutheran School, which discovered and repaired a large and potentially costly leak on their school grounds.

Business manager William Cusance said the smart meter had allowed them to detect the problem at night.

"Investigations revealed a toilet cistern was stuck in the flush position," he said. "The leak ran for four