



FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

Wednesday 2nd October 2024



Visit from Lions District Governor, Yvonne Kearns

On Thursday, 26th September the new Lions District Governor, Yvonne Kearns, paid a visit to the Barraba Lions Club. A great night was had by all and she was very taken with the welcome and friendly atmosphere. There was an exchange of banners with President Mal and Lions Trent, Jesse and Liam received badges.



The Bi-Monthly and AGM meetings to be held on Friday 11 of October at the Workshop, Clifton Lane, at 10.00am. Attendance is essential in order to have a Quorum

The Vic Barraba

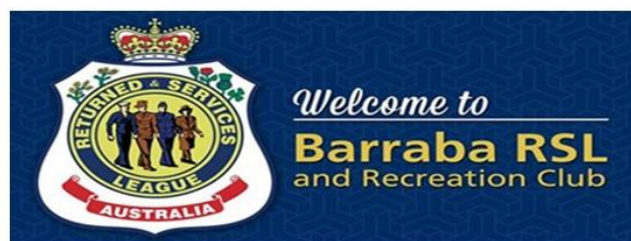
Opening times this week

Wed 2nd – 4.30-9pm. Thurs 3rd – 4.30-9pm

Fri 4th 11am-9pm. Sat 5th 11am-9pm

Regular hours coming soon. Phone 02 67825375

Thank you for your patience



BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

THIS WEEK

THURSDAY 3rd October

Bingo from 6pm

FRIDAY 4th SOctober

MEAT RAFFLES

Tickets on sale from 5.30pm

MEMBERSHIP DRAW \$1000

SUNDAY 6th October

ANGLER CLUB RAFFLES

Raffles on sale from 12pm, drawn 1.30pm

Membership Draw \$1500

MONDAY 7TH OCTOBER CLUB IS CLOSED

BISTRO HOURS

Phone 0427330808

DINE IN OR TAKEAWAY

DAILY BLACKBOARD SPECIALS AVAILABLE

ALSO PIZZAS MADE TO ORDER

MONDAY/TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY: CLOSED

THURS/FRI/SAT: Lunch 12-2pm. Dinner from 6pm

SUNDAY: 12-2pm

There are several happenings coming up for historical society members as we venture into busy October. There is a street stall, then the markets and then the annual general meeting and then of course we have to put our clocks forward one hour next Sunday.

Last week I mentioned the accident to the Finn family in 1861 on the Manilla road which occurred just over Barraba Creek. It seems that DNA has solved the relationship of the Finn family with the early Reading family but there is still the puzzle as to the name Reading being used.

The Reading family lived at Glen Riddle in the 1870s so I decided to chase up their history in our records to find out if and why the name Reading appears in families at Woods Reef.

Henry Thomas Reading is thought to have been born at Windsor in England about 1808. In 1825 Henry was arrested for theft and condemned to death.

Fortunately, his sentence was commuted to transportation for life - apparently this was not his first brush with the law but he was put aboard the Midas for the voyage to Sydney.

After his arrival he was assigned to the Cox family and appears to have stayed with them for some time working at properties up the Hunter River to Muswellbrook where he met Pheobe Irwin who had arrived in Australia with her brother as an assisted migrant in 1842.

Henry Reading and Phoebe Irwin were married at Singleton on 23rd August, 1844. The first two children were born at Muswellbrook and then in 1848 Henry was granted his Conditional Pardon. This allowed him to travel north to work for the Cox family on their property "Burindi" in 1853.

At the end of 1855, the family moved again, this time to become squatters on land at the junction of Ironbark Creek and the Manilla River. This area was only a few kilometres downstream from Barraba Creek Station and with only three surviving children it seems that they may have adopted two year old Finn. Henry and Phoebe lived at Glen Riddle for the rest of their lives and were buried there in 1877. The Reading children grew up and Henry married Emma Neal, Elizabeth married William Faddy and Mary Ann married William Douglas at 18 years of age in 1873. I wonder where John Robert Finn spent the years before he married.



NSW Rural Fire Service Tamworth District

FIRE PERMITS REQUIRED

The BUSH FIRE DANGER PERIOD will commence 1st October 2024 and fire permits will be required to burn. Landholders wishing to light and maintain a fire on their land in the

Tamworth Regional Council area will be required to have a permit to light a fire in the open. Fire Permits help ensure that fire is used safely. A permit sets out the rules around how a fire is lit and maintained, and lets firefighters know when you are conducting burning activities on your property.

Fire permits are available for free from your local Brigade Fire Permit Officer. To apply for a permit please go to www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/notify to arrange for a Fire Permit. Once you have obtained a Fire Permit you will need to provide at least 24 hours notification to adjoining landholders (including those separated via road or waterway) and the NSW RFS.

Notification to the NSW RFS can be done: Via the QR code on the front your permit, www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/notify or by phoning 02 5778 3600. Further information regarding the Bush Fire Danger Period and Fire Permits is available via the NSW RFS website: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/BFDP

Street Stall

**Near the Chemist Friday 4th October 9am till sold out.
Cakes, vegs, Roma tomato and other plants and a raffle.
Fundraising for the Barraba Potters and Craft Guild**



Senior Citizens' Annual General Meeting

Will be held on Friday 25th October 2024 at 1pm at Seniors Centre, 50 Fitzroy Street.

All financial members are urged to attend. Nomination forms for office bearers will be available next week.



Work Experience Applications NOW OPEN



Exciting Opportunity Alert!

We're thrilled to announce that applications for the November Work Experience placements at Tamworth Regional Council are now OPEN!

This is a fantastic chance for students and individuals seeking to gain hands-on experience in a dynamic and supportive environment. If you're eager to learn, contribute, and explore various aspects of local government, we want to hear from you! To find out more or to register your interest, please follow the link below:

<https://shorturl.at/6B63e> #workexperience

#TamworthRegionalCouncil #TRC

From Kevin Anderson's Website –

SUPPORT FOR MIDWIVES, BUT STILL NOT ENOUGH

Our community has been raising the alarm about a severe shortage of midwives at Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital. At times, expectant mothers have been told they may have to leave the area to have their babies, forcing them away from their support network. This is an unacceptable situation for a hospital the size of Tamworth and the community deserves better. I recently met with local nurses and midwives led by passionate advocate Jill Telfer, as well as oncology and gynaecology specialists who were deeply concerned by shortages at Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital.

As a result of these meetings, I contacted the Minister, urging him to act and to meet the demands of local midwives. As a result of our strong advocacy, today the Labor Government announced a \$20,000 incentive for midwives who move to regional and rural areas like Tamworth and Gunnedah.

While these measures are welcome, this is just the start and more needs to be done to support our nurses and midwives. Nurses, midwives and our community deserve better.



Australian Electoral Commission Website at 6pm
Monday 30 September 2024.



TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

Elected were:

Candidate	Group	Count
MEARS Stephen	A	LABOR 1
RODDA Mark		1
NORTH Brendon		16
BUDD Jeffrey		18
WEBB Russell		18
SHARPHAM Matt		18
IMPEY Charles		19
SUTHERLAND Marc		20
BROOKE Ryan *	BTHE GREENS	21



GWYDIR SHIRE COUNCIL

Elected were:

Candidate Name	Count elected
CRUMP Sarah	1
GALVIN Tiffany	1
COLLINS Mick	1
BISHTON John	7
DIXON Marilyn (Mashy)	9
COLEMAN Sean	9
SHERMAN Rachel	9
WILLMOT Adrian	10
CRISPIN Scot	10

Recent Anniversaries

- the birthdays of Roald Dahl (1916) and Shane Warne (1969)
- the release of Nintendo's first-ever Super Mario Bros game (1985)
- the deaths of Princess Grace of Monaco (1982)
- Malcolm Turnbull ousting Tony Abbott as PM and leader of the Liberal Party (2015)
- the birthdays of Marco Polo (1254) and Agatha Christie (1890)
- Scottish bacteriologist Alexander Fleming discovering penicillin (1928)
- google.com being registered as a domain name (1997)
- the Sydney Olympic Games (2000)
- Dutch scientist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek becoming the first to report the existence of bacteria (1683)
- the premiere of M*A*S*H (1972)
- the signing of the Camp David Accords - the frameworks for peace in the Middle East and between Egypt and Israel (1978)
- Tiffany & Co being founded by Charles Tiffany and John Young as a stationery and fancy goods store (1857)
- the premiere of The Addams Family (1964), Get Smart (1965) and I Dream of Jeannie (1965)
- New Zealand becoming the first country to grant all women the right to vote (1893)
- the first documented use of emoticons by computer scientist Scott Fahlman (1982)
- the premiere of Goodfellas (1990)
- the death of Slim Dusty (2003)
- US President George W Bush declaring a "war on terror" following the 11 September terrorist attacks (2001)
- the passing of a proclamation announcing the formal abolition of the French monarchy during the French Revolution (1792)
- the publication of JRR Tolkien's The Hobbit (1937)
- the proclamation of the People's Republic of China by the Chinese Communist Party (1949)
- the publication of a genomic study finding Indigenous Australians are the oldest known civilisation on earth in Nature (2016)
- the founding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1932)
- the founding of Nintendo Koppai (later Nintendo Company) by Fusajiro Yamauchi to produce and market the playing card game Hanafuda (1889)
- the death of Sigmund Freud (1939)

- Kentucky Fried Chicken opening its first franchise in Salt Lake City, Utah (1952)
- the release of the BBC's Pride and Prejudice starring Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth (1995)
- the birth of the remote control after engineer Leonardo Torres Quevedo successfully guided a boat (1906)
- Henry Ford announcing an 8-hour, 5-day work week (1926)
- Cathy Freeman's famous 400m Olympic win at the Sydney Olympics (2000)
- Operation Jaywick, the action that became the starting point for Australia's Special Forces (1943)
- the first publication of comic book Tintin (1946)
- Saudi Arabia announcing the overturning of its ban on women driving - the last country in the world to do so (2017)
- French scholar Jean-François Champollion announcing he had deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphics using the Rosetta Stone (1822)
- the physics journal Annalen der Physik publishing Albert Einstein's paper which introduces the equation $E=mc^2$ (1905)
- SpaceX launching the first ever private spacecraft, the Falcon 1 into orbit (2008)
- American oil tycoon John D Rockefeller becoming the world's first billionaire (1916)
- the Dow Jones Industrial Average falling 777.68 points, its largest single-day point loss after the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers and doubts over the futures other financial institutions, which sparked the Global Financial Crisis (2008)
- the death of iconic Aussie singer Helen Reddy (2020)
- anaesthetic ether being used for the first time by American dentist Dr William Morton (1846)
- 22 Nazi leaders being found guilty of war crimes at the Nuremberg war trials (1946)
- the premiere of the cartoon The Flintstones (1960)





BARRABA TENNIS CLUB NEWS

Barraba Town and District Tennis Club, with the newly resurfaced courts, has a busy program coming up in October.

1). BARRABA TENNIS CAMP for juniors – next week - book now!

Dates: 8 – 11 October 2024 (4 days), 9am to 12pm, at the Barraba Courts

Cost: \$45/day or \$140 for four days. Family discounts available and Active Kids Vouchers accepted.

Contact: Coach Jarrod Campbell 0421 287 004.

2). Barraba Town and District Tennis Club Annual General Meeting.

This will be held at 6pm on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at the Barraba Bowling Club.

To have a competition that everyone enjoys, the committee needs regular feedback from the players. So, rather than having a quick AGM on a competition night, we've decided to hold this year's AGM in the relaxing atmosphere of the Bowling Club, with refreshments provided. You can ask questions and talk about some ways of improving the competition; and have an enjoyable evening at the Club!

We would like all current and perspective Members to attend.



TUESDAY NIGHT LIGHT COMPETITION IS BACK!

**NOMINATIONS ARE NOW BEING TAKEN FOR
THE TERM 4 TUESDAY NIGHT LIGHT TENNIS
COMPETITION.
STARTING ON TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER**

**PLEASE CONTACT HEATH WHITE (0427 070 374) OR
THE FACEBOOK PAGE TO PUT YOUR NAME DOWN**

3). 2024 TUESDAY NIGHT LIGHT COMPETITION

This is our regular team competition – runs 6.30 – 9.30pm every Tuesday evening through to December.

All ages and abilities - a friendly, social competition with a BBQ each week.

Contact: Heath White 0427 070 374 for more information or to put your name down,

OR: Come along to the AGM (see above) on 15 October.

Put your name down then and meet some of the other players.



Golf Notes

It came down to a three way countback to decide the winners of John Hartley and Tim Bucknell's 4BBB VPar trophy today. Graham Bowman and Dave McMurtrie carding 5 pluses over the last 6 holes carded a total plus 7 to win the event. The runners up were Dan Lott and Kieran Darlington, plus 7 and the brother pairing of Chris and Nick Sweeney also on plus 7. Last balls went to Liam Johnston and Jesse Phillips plus 5. NTPs went to Neil Smith on the 6th and Bevan Benson on the 18th.

In the only singles matchplay game Josh Austin defeated Kerrie Smith 4 and 3.

Next Sunday 6th October is a Club trophy for our last season program event.

Friday Oct 11th is the start of our twilight competition so can you please contact Ian to confirm teams.

A reminder Sophie Cusack, NSW Northern Region Golf coach will be conducting a ladies "Try Golf" lesson at the Barraba Club, 11am on Saturday October 12. You don't need to have your own sticks or balls, just come out and get the basics of trying golf.



S

Looking for a career in Healthcare



Australian Unity
Real Wellbeing



Support Worker positions available for Entry Level & Experienced Applicants

Do you want a job that ticks all the boxes?

- ✓ Payrates between \$29.06-\$32.56* + paid travel + 0.92c km allowance
- ✓ Part Time or Casual contracts available
- ✓ Paid induction including First Aid Certificate & traineeship options
- ✓ Uniform & work iPhone provided
- ✓ Build your career with ongoing opportunities to train & upskill
- ✓ Staff discounts across Banking, Insurance & Retail products!

What you require:

Drivers License
CTP insured vehicle
Minimum 2 doses COVID19

New England area including:
Armidale, Ashford, Barraba, Bingara, Deepwater, Glen Innes, Gunnedah, Guyra, Inverell, Manilla, Narrabri, Quirindi, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Walcha, Wyallda & surrounding area.



SCAN ME

To find out more or to apply scan the QR code or visit
<https://www.australianunity.com.au/careers/support-worker-jobs>
 For a confidential discussion reach out to Krystle at
kcagallaghan@australianunity.com.au

* Based on experience and/or qualifications.



XMAS TIME WITH YOU

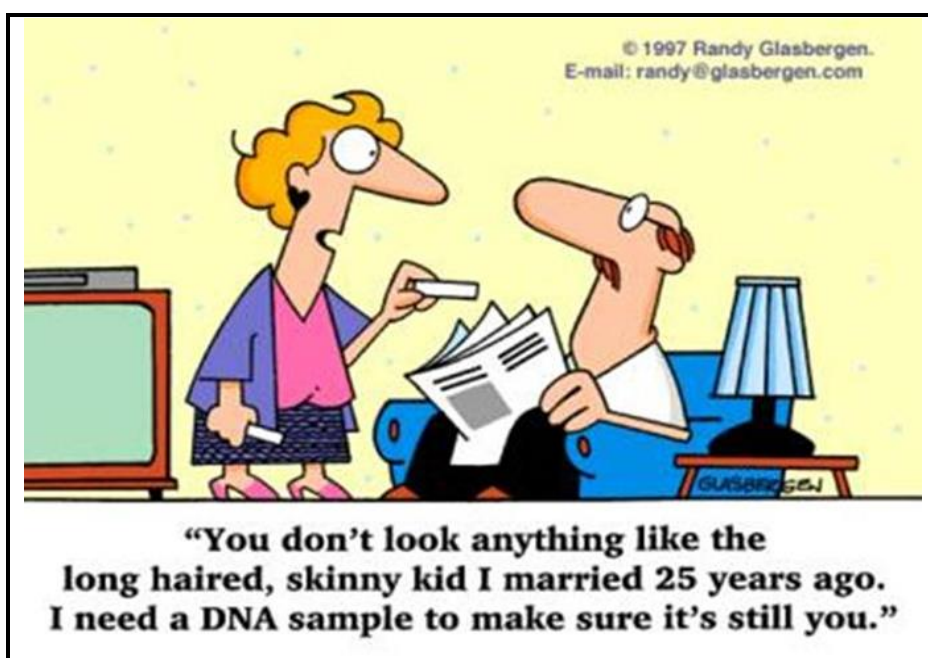
I'd like to stroll with you, my dear
 O! Would it not be nice
 Just you and I together again
 In a dream of Paradise
 You were heaven sent my lady
 To guide me through this life
 And nobody knows in this old world
 How much I miss my wife

When night time turns to darkness
 And I am all alone
 You brighten up my lonesome mind
 When Your voice is on the phone
 For I know while ever you're alive
 I'll always be wanting you
 There's nothing in this whole wide world
 I would not do for you

It was not my intention
 For us to separate
 But my internal sickness
 Was something that would not wait
 But I could not have carried on
 Being so far away and alone
 If I had not heard your voice
 Every night on the telephone

I wait for every night to come
 And for your voice on the phone
 I know you've done a great job
 Looking after everything at home
 And Xmas time is drawing near
 The best Xmas gift it's true
 For me to share my Xmas time
 At home my dear with you.

Stumpy "Vic" Turner





New presidential team set to tackle critical health system issues

Investment in general practice — the cornerstone of Australia's health system — will be one of the priorities for the Australian Medical Association's new presidential team, with President Dr Danielle McMullen and Vice President Associate Professor Julian Rait beginning their terms today.

Dr Danielle McMullen, a Brisbane-based general practitioner, was elected President unopposed in July. She has been AMA Vice President for the past two years. Associate Professor Julian Rait is a specialist ophthalmologist and past president of AMA Victoria. Dr McMullen said boosting investment in general practice is essential, with GPs looking after Australians from birth to death and through all the ups and downs in between.

"Patients need a usual GP working in a team to ensure they can access care when they need it, to prevent their illness deteriorating to the point they need to be in hospital," Dr McMullen said. "Investing in general practice will also contribute to keeping people out of our public hospitals, which are in logjam. We know our public hospitals are continuing to struggle with performance against emergency department and elective surgery measures dropping year-on-year. We welcomed the additional investment in hospital funding announced last year for the new National Health Reform Agreement that followed our logjam campaign, but we need immediate additional funding to tackle the huge waiting lists across the country and help get patients the treatment they desperately need."

Associate Professor Rait said the AMA would continue its advocacy in private health, with plenty of challenges facing the sector. "The AMA has been calling for reform of the private health sector — a vital pillar of the health system — for some time now," Associate Professor Rait said. "We need a sustainable private health system that delivers value for patients, protects patient choice, and maintains clinical independence for practitioners. Many of the policy settings for the private health sector were established a very long time ago and it's been a case of set and forget. We need to rethink those policies, and we need an independent single authority that can oversee the entire sector."

Dr McMullen also highlighted the need for investment in preventive health, which she said was also key to improving Australia's healthcare system.

"Prevention is key to an effective health system, with the burden of chronic disease in an ageing population impacting the healthcare sector across the board. Healthcare is still viewed as a cost rather than a strategic investment. This creates a system that responds to poor health outcomes rather than preventing them. We need to change this thinking."

BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**Published by Community College Northern
Inland Inc.**

Cnr. Alice and Fitzroy St Barraba

Contacts: Bronwyn 0447 165 008

Office: 02 67821662 Email

news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au

Printed on site at the Community College. Free publication by email or collection from local Barraba main street businesses

ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES

St Laurence's Barraba

Sunday service at 10.00am

Woodsreef service 2nd Sunday of the month,
11:30am

BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES

Sunday 6 October 2024 services at Barraba

Return to 10:45am for all services.

All Welcome.

CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES

Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday

evening Mass 5pm

All other Sundays 9am



Lic No. 306630C

- Plumber
- Drainer
- Gasfitter
- Polywelder
- Roof Welder

Ph0408117358 wardsplumbing@bigpond.com

Rod Bonner

**Your local Plumber, Drainer, Gasfitter
and Handyman**

Lic No. L8791

plumberdrainer@gmail.com

Text is best 0447 052 140



Phone 02 67 821 107

From The Free Range Butcher.

A couple of quick salads to go with your next

BBQ

Beetroot Salad



Ingredients:

- 2 Beetroot – washed, unpeeled, quartered
- 2 Carrots – washed, unpeeled, roughly chopped
- 2 small red apples – quartered
- Small bunch Mint
- 2 tbsps Basil
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Juice of Half a Lemon

Method:

- Add all ingredients to a food processor / Thermomix and blitz for 5 seconds on medium speed.
- Scape down bowl and repeat until it reaches your preferred consistency.

Apple, Cucumber and Mint Salsa



Ingredients:

- 1 green apple, chopped
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, finely diced
- 1/4 bunch coriander, chopped
- 1/4 cup mint, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp honey

Method:

- Mix all ingredients together in a bowl

Warm winters are waking snakes early. Here's what that means for them and us

Damian Lettoof, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Wildlife Ecotoxicology, CSIRO

Chris J Jolly, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in behavioural ecology and evolution, Macquarie University

Timothy N. W. Jackson, Research Fellow and Co-head, Australian Venom Research Unit, The University of Melbourne

For people in southeast Australia, springtime means soaking up the sun and getting our vitamin D levels back to baseline. But we're not the only ones likely to be basking. Snakes are getting out and about, too.

A flurry of snake sightings in southern states during spring is nothing new. Snakes emerge from their winter hiding holes when the weather warms.

But we are often asked: will climate change lead to more encounters with our scaly neighbours? It's a fair question.

Evidence suggests climate change could make snakes come out of hiding earlier. But it's also likely to cause population declines or shifts in the long run, as snakes adjust to the new conditions.

So what conditions do snakes like?

Snakes are "ectotherms". This means their internal body temperature depends on the surrounding environment and varies throughout the day and the season. People, on the other hand, are endotherms. We maintain a constant body temperature around 37°C.

Many snakes prefer a lower body temperature of 28–32°C. Cooler-climate species like to keep their bodies cooler still. But even then, they aren't really "cold-blooded" if they can help it.

Unless it's really hot, snakes need to chase the heat as soon as they wake up. This enables them to rapidly raise their body temperature to the optimal level so they can go about their daily or nightly routine. They can't cool themselves by panting or sweating, so they need to shelter from the heat if it's too hot.

In Australia, snake activity follows distinct patterns in the tropical north and more temperate south.

In the north, where temperatures are consistently warm, snakes avoid the harsh heat and are most active during early

mornings, night time, and following the wet season (April to June).

In the south, snakes go into hiding during the cooler months. They slow their metabolism to almost zero and essentially sleep (or "brumate") through the winter.

These southern snakes get ready to hunker down in autumn as the days begin to shorten. Sensing shorter days in winter keeps them asleep, preventing them from using fat stores or eating food they will not be warm enough to digest. That's why even a warm sunny day in the middle of winter may not wake them up.

A combination of daily temperatures and daylight hours in spring then triggers southern snakes to wake up and begin the breeding season.



How will climate change modify snake activity?

Australia is likely to warm up to 5°C by the end of this century under a high-emissions scenario. What would that mean for snake activity?

When wild tiger snake body temperatures and activity were measured in Perth's spring, the snakes only emerged from shelter once their bodies reached 16°C – provided it wasn't raining. An increase in daily temperatures would mean these tiger snakes start (and end) their days earlier. They may also, at least initially, emerge earlier in the season.

Studies around the world have found snakes becoming active for more days of the year, and feeding more as daily average temperatures increase.

Does this mean we should be concerned about increasing snake populations?

No. The increase in temperatures means most snakes should be avoiding the peak summer heat and we may see less of them. We may also find more snakes become nocturnal.

Even if we do see more snakes, this may not mean the snake population has increased – perhaps the opposite. As snakes generally don't want to be seen, increased visibility could indicate snakes are stressed. This may be an early warning sign of population decline.



A western tiger snake (Notechis scutatus occidentalis) from an urban wetland in Perth. Damian Lettoof

Does climate change threaten Australian snakes?

Ten years ago, one study assessed the potential impact of climate change on Australian elapids (front-fanged venomous snakes) — the most common family of snakes in Australia. The range of most (65%) species was expected to shrink. A smaller proportion (13%) of species was predicted to expand their range, these being the semi-arid and arid-zone species.

Among commonly encountered species, red-bellied black snakes and tiger snakes were expected to suffer range contractions under four different models and scenarios. But the eastern brown snake could go either way.

Climate change is also increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme wildfires across the globe. While many Australian animal species are adapted to fire, some already on the brink might be pushed over the edge by climate change-driven shifts in fire regimes. For example, the Black Summer fires razed more than 70% of the endangered broad-headed snake’s habitat. These fires caused population crashes of 26–34% in this imperilled snake species.

Ultimately, snakes may become active earlier but may suffer declines in the long run as they adjust to the new climate.



The range of red-bellied black snakes is likely to decrease as the climate changes. Ken Griffiths, Shutterstock

What does this mean for snake bite risk in Australia?

If changes in climate do increase encounters between humans and snakes – and the jury is still out at this stage – there is always the possibility this could lead to more snake bites.

But we can influence the outcome by choosing how to behave around snakes. If we’re vigilant — alert but not alarmed — when we’re in snake habitat, the chances of a bite are low (just make sure you know first aid).

A snake seen and left alone poses little threat to humans. If we wish to avoid bites, we must also supervise children and pets (and keep dogs on leads, and cats indoors). Raise children to become snake smart as early as possible. Remember to look where you are stepping, listen, and leave snakes alone.

From The Conversation



How is eye colour made? And why are they different colours?

Michele Madigan, Associate Professor, Optometry and Vision Science, UNSW Sydney and Clinical Associate Professor, Save Sight Institute, Clinical Ophthalmology, University of Sydney.

When we talk about eye colour, we’re talking about the iris or coloured area around the dark dot (pupil) in the centre of the eye. Like our fingerprints, iris colours are unique to each person.

The most common eye colour is brown, then blue, and less often green or hazel. Pigment means a substance that adds colour. The amazing thing is the human body only makes brown iris pigment (melanin) but not blue, green or hazel iris pigments. So how come everyone doesn’t have brown irises?

‘What colour are your eyes?’

Iris colours can be brown, blue or green, or mixtures such as brown-yellow, greenish brown or blue-brown. The word “iris” comes from the Greek word meaning “rainbow”. In ancient Greek stories, a goddess called Iris carries messages across a rainbow bridge between Earth and the supernatural world.

Genetics – how physical traits and characteristics pass from one generation to the next – play a part in determining eye colour. In many cases, the genes that produce brown eyes are dominant, but how eye colour genes are passed on is complex. This can mean if one biological parent has brown eyes and another has blue eyes, their child is more likely to have brown eyes. But not always.

But what about all the other colours?

So, what is the iris made of? Our iris is inside the eye, behind a clear layer called the cornea. It’s circular and very thin (less than half a millimetre) and shaped like a donut with a hole in the middle for our pupil. The iris contains many cells, special muscles, blood vessels and nerves, surrounded by a gel material with millions of tiny crisscrossed fibres.

Iris pigment cells – melanocytes – contain pigment particles (melanosomes). Pigment cell numbers for all iris colours are about the same. But pigment particles inside the cells are different. For example, a blue iris does not have as many pigment particles as a brown iris.

The other iris cells make the tiny fibres and gel material in the iris, and other cells help protect the iris from damage. Special iris muscles with thin stretchy fibres can bunch up or relax the iris to control our pupil size in bright or dim light.

The back of the iris has a dark brown surface because of cells filled with brown pigment. This back surface pigment helps our vision as it stops light scattering through the iris.



Iris colours and patterns are unique to each person, like fingerprints. Shutterstock

White or visible light contains a rainbow spectrum of colours from blue to red. As light passes through the iris, the blue light scatters much more than other colours. So blue light bounces back, and this means that if there are fewer pigment particles, we see a blue iris.

Other colours in light, especially red, scatter less and get into the iris between the tiny fibres, gel and cells. Green, hazel or brown irises have more pigment particles that soak up this light.

So the eye colours we see are a result of the scattering of some light colours more or less than others, brown pigment particles soaking up more of some colours, and the number of pigment particles a person has in their iris.



Some people are born with two different coloured eyes and these don’t change over time. Shutterstock

Can eye colours change?

Iris colours can seem to change if different colours are near the eye. For example, different-coloured eye makeup can “trick” us as to the iris colour we see.

People with little or no iris pigment often have very pale blue irises. These can look reddish without the iris pigment to soak up the red light from inside the eye, which then passes through the iris.

Iris colour does not always stay the same during life. Babies born with blue eyes can have brown or hazel eyes by their second birthday because more dark pigment is made in iris cells after birth. Iris colour can also change because of rare diseases or injuries.

Some eye drops to treat eye pressure make more brown pigment in iris cells, and make eyes appear browner. Some people are born with one brown eye and one blue eye, but these stay the same with age – although we’re not sure why.

There’s still so much to discover about irises and eye colour!



I quite like camels in many ways but I have no desire whatever to own one.

Three pics of the camels in the 2007 Barrarbor which was an excellent event.
Posted by Brian Coote.

