

Pilungah Reserve

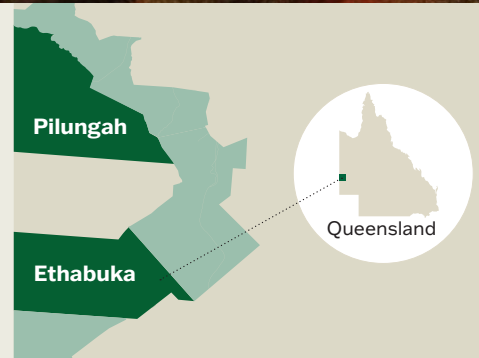
Scorecard 2010 - 2021



Our vision

We are working with Wangkamadla Traditional Owners, neighbours, and partners to protect this unique desert landscape and ensure that Country and people are healthy.

Pilungah is an extraordinary cultural landscape for the Wangkamadla people. Pilungah protects some of the most extensive intact arid and desert ecosystems in Queensland. The reserve supports a high diversity of reptiles and small mammals. Gidgee woodlands contrast with productive grassy plains in the north and the rocky Toomba and Toko ranges in the west. The headwater of the Mulligan River and ephemeral wetlands represents a small but highly productive area of refugia for terrestrial fauna and birds.



Reserve size: 233 hectares

Acquisition year: 2005

Traditional Owners:
Wangkamadla people

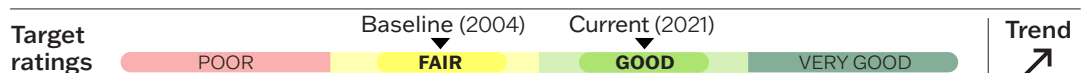
Our conservation targets

This section summarises the long-term health rating of each target and trend since acquisition. Ratings are based on ecological monitoring data and expert knowledge.



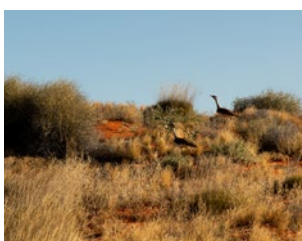
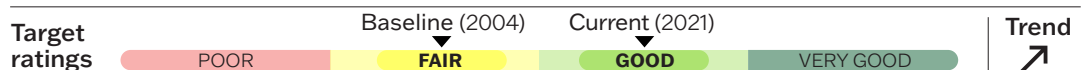
Mulligan River, floodplains, and wetlands

Floodplains and larger wetlands (large claypans and lignum swamps) are important breeding and nesting sites for birds. Ongoing weed control along the headwaters has helped protect habitat and reduce weed threats downstream.



Gidgee woodlands

Acacia georginae woodlands occur patchily in the landscape, providing habitat for terrestrial fauna such as the Pygmy Mulga Monitor and Gidgee Skink. Gidgee act as a refuge for many animals during drought. Buffel management is critical to ensure protection from wildfire.



Spinifex grasslands

Hummock-forming spinifex grasses occur across 57% of Pilungah. Old-growth spinifexes provide critically important habitat for arid-inland mammals, such as the Brush-tailed Mulgara and Spinifex Hopping Mouse, and reptiles.



Managing threats

Threat	Recent rating	Trend	Resource investment	What are we doing?
Increased temperatures (climate change)	VERY HIGH	↗	👤👤👤 \$\$\$	Temperatures are expected to increase, with more frequent drought and extreme rainfall events, requiring increased investment in on-ground management of fire, weeds, and feral predator control.
Inappropriate fire	HIGH	↗	👤👤👤 \$\$\$	Upgrading of fire breaks and tracks has supported prescribed burning (aerial and ground) and protected long-unburnt spinifex, Gidgee woodlands, and infrastructure from wildfire.
Buffel Grass	HIGH	↗	👤👤👤 \$\$\$	Successful Buffel Grass control has focused on the western grassy plains and along tracks. Challenges remain for managing buffel in more remote areas of the reserve and mapping is a high priority.
Feral cats and foxes	HIGH		👤👤👤 \$	Management of feral predators remains a persistent challenge. Regular trapping and spotlighting has been conducted, with investigation into Felixer traps to maintain pressure on feral predators at key sites.
Herbivores (camels, stray stock, feral pigs)	LOW	↘	👤👤 \$	We've invested significantly in infrastructure upgrades, replacing damaged boundary fencing to protect wetlands and floodplains and minimise incursions. While there is already a clear difference due to ongoing efforts to keep stray cattle out, it is expected to take several decades for vegetation to fully recover in areas of historic heavy grazing.

Strategy highlight: Buffel Grass

Buffel Grass was introduced to Pilungah by aerial seeding during the 1960s and is a legacy of the reserve's pastoral days. Buffel Grass is a highly resilient species that can transform ecosystems, often replacing native vegetation and contributing to increased fuel loads.

Over the past decade, Buffel Grass control has been a key focus. Our efforts have focused on tracks to mitigate seed spread and prevent risk of buffel around infrastructure and fire-sensitive values such as Gidgee. However, managing buffel on Pilungah is challenging due to the reserve's remote nature and short spraying period. We remain committed to investing in buffel control and are actively working to map its presence in more remote areas of the property. A more strategic approach and use of novel technologies will help us to better protect and manage cultural and ecological values.



3
Threatened fauna species



8
Bat species



161
Bird species



25
Native mammal species



62
Reptile species



9
Amphibian species



14
Bush Heritage supported research projects



10,772
Volunteer hours (since 2017)

Bush Heritage acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the places in which we live, work, and play. We recognise the enduring relationships they have with their lands and waters, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We are deeply grateful to our partners and supporters who are a core part of our conservation work.