



Spring 2008

In this issue

Edgbaston Station, The wallabies of Gondwana Link, Bidjara people at Carnarvon Station Reserve, The Kaanju Ngaachi Indigenous Protected Area



Edgbaston Station – a ‘terrible place’ teeming with life

Dr Rod Fensham from the Queensland Herbarium reports on his first visit to Bush Heritage’s newest reserve

‘It’s a terrible place, the worst in the district,’ was the opinion offered by the grazier as he looked over his fat bullocks, up to their bellies in buffel grass. I had asked him what he knew about a property I had been looking forward to visiting – Edgbaston

Station near the central Queensland town of Aramac and Bush Heritage’s newest reserve.

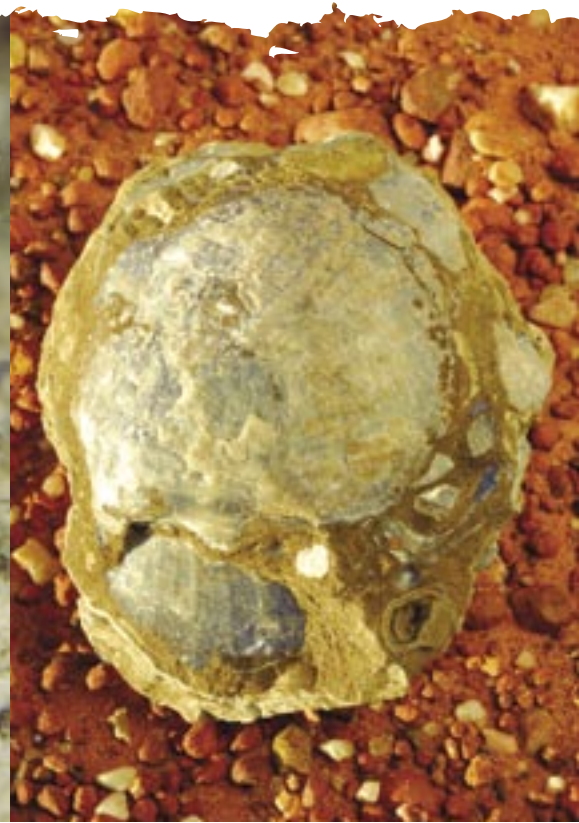
The words of the grazier seemed to ring true as I wound up the driveway and through the wrought-iron gate. Great, nasty hummocks of porcupine spinifex provided only sporadic cover on the station’s bare floodplain. And Lake Mueller could not look less like a lake, populated as it was by dry spindly

shrubs just tall enough to block any view. This was not a landscape for the faint-hearted, nor for those seeking the romantic heartlands of Tasmania or New England. It was a desert in which it seemed life could surely not prosper. But life was what had drawn me to Edgbaston, for evolution has gone ape in this devilish landscape!

Edgbaston occupies the upper catchment of Pelican Creek, a system



Clockwise from top: Mountain yapunyah open woodland on the escarpment of the Alice Tableland at Edgbaston Station, Qld, showing extensive woodlands and grasslands beyond. An artesian spring on the property is frequented by grey teal. Red kangaroos in open gidyea woodland. Australian bustards inhabit native mixed grassland. PHOTOS: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX



of diffuse drainage channels that carry water for only a few days after flash flooding. The creek separates landscapes that represent the extremes of Queensland grazing country. To the east, an escarpment rises steeply to a red sandy plateau clothed in eucalypt woodland, country that is difficult to manage and, if you are a pastoralist, fit only for the breeding of cattle. To the west, a plain of Mitchell grass reaches towards the interior of the continent.

Nestled within the braided channels of Pelican Creek are a series of artesian springs, fed by very special water indeed. This water has spilled out of the ground over a timescale that spans

multiple ice ages. It has seeped through the porous rocks of the Great Artesian Basin on its journey from a distant source and acquired its own distinctive chemistry, forming an ancient habitat that has borne a myriad of life forms. What first made an impression on me were the wetland plants, nearly every species of which is unique to such rare desert springs. But a closer inspection revealed a host of small creatures within the pools, muscling about in crystal-clear water only centimetres deep.

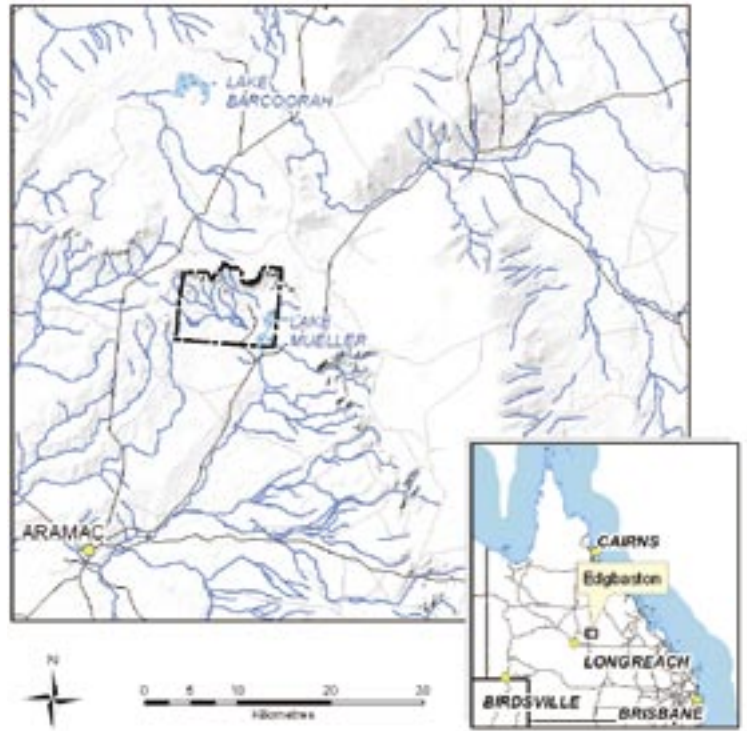
By my reckoning, the artesian springs in the upper catchment of Pelican Creek are the most important conservation site in arid Australia. This may seem an

audacious claim, but in this one small area there are at least two species of endemic fish, four plant species, twelve species of snails and a number of other invertebrate species known to no other locality. And no doubt there are many more unique creatures awaiting discovery by specialists who know how to sample and identify them.

Those who want to join the long line of eccentric biologists who have visited the station will need to enlist the help of its residents Allan and Fay Wills. It is foolhardy for novices to venture alone onto the floodplain; the springs are not always obvious and can swallow a Toyota LandCruiser. As a guide, Allan



Clockwise from top: Endangered male and female redfin blue-eye (male above). PHOTO: GUNTHER SCHMIDA Fossil shells in rock that was once beneath the sea. A brown falcon surveys native mixed grassland from its vantage point on Edgbaston Station, Qld. Mitchell grass. Artesian spring. PHOTOS: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX



is generous in sharing his intimate knowledge of every hummock. I wanted to go trapping spiders in the middle of the night and Allan came along to make sure I got about safely.

Bush Heritage faces many management challenges at Edgbaston. Many of the springs have dried up as flowing bores have lowered pressure in the aquifer. The redfin blue-eye, probably the most endangered fish in Australia, with a population numbering only a few thousand within four small pools, is being extinguished by the spread of the plague minnow through the network of springs. Pigs can churn up an entire spring wetland in a single feeding frenzy

and must be diligently controlled. And thorny exotic legumes – prickly acacia, parkinsonia and mesquite – have proliferated over a vast area, their seeds having dispersed downstream from the headwaters at Edgbaston all the way to Lake Eyre.

But hope is in sight. Through intensive and dedicated management, Bush Heritage can make a great contribution to Edgbaston, one that can extend beyond the property's boundary and the local community to the region at large. This prospect is immensely exciting and I trust Bush Heritage to be an exemplary custodian of this 'terrible' yet wonderful place.

The purchase of Edgbaston has been assisted by a significant contribution from the Australian Government's recently concluded Maintaining Australia's Biodiversity Hotspots program. This program also supported the purchase of Yourka Reserve in Queensland. Such support is recognition of how critical these properties are to the protection of threatened species and systems of high conservation value in Australia.



Clockwise from top: A spreading mature river red gum flanks an artesian spring at Edgbaston Station, Qld. Allan Wills pointing out the landmarks from the Alice Tableland escarpment overlooking the property. Brolgas in open woodland. PHOTOS: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX



wallaby was not eaten by the Noongar people because of the astringent taste of its meat, but its numbers have dwindled since the 1980s for reasons that are unclear.

Because of their susceptibility to introduced predators, the destruction of their habitats and their overall decline, these two wallaby species have together been chosen as one of the six 'conservation targets' for the Fitzgerald River to Stirling Range corridor of the inspired Gondwana Link project. This project, supported by Bush Heritage in partnership with Greening Australia (WA), aims to reconnect ecosystems from the woodlands of Western Australia's drier interior to the tall, wet forests of the state's south-western corner.

Preliminary work on the Wallaby Project over the past year has involved trialling the use of non-invasive sampling techniques, including spotlighting, filming with remote-sensing cameras and identifying species by means of their tracks and scats. This year a system of 20 monitoring sites is being set up across the Corackerup subcatchment, including on Chereninup Creek and Peniup Creek reserves, where these techniques will be used to determine the presence of the wallabies.

The ultimate aim of the Wallaby Project is to increase the populations of both species by removing foxes and making more habitat available. This will help the Tammar and black-gloved wallabies to once again become a common part of the ecosystem, and perhaps the subjects of modern-day poetry.

The wallabies of Gondwana Link

Sandra Gilfillan, Wallaby Project Officer with Gondwana Link, explains the conservation effort to boost wallaby numbers in the South West

The Tammar wallaby *Macropus eugenii derbianus* was once so common throughout south-western Western Australia that it was a reliable food source for the local Noongar people. It was also consumed and used as pet food by Europeans in the first half of the 20th century, with reports of up to 40 animals shot in a night. This poem, recited by a long-time resident of the region's wheat belt,

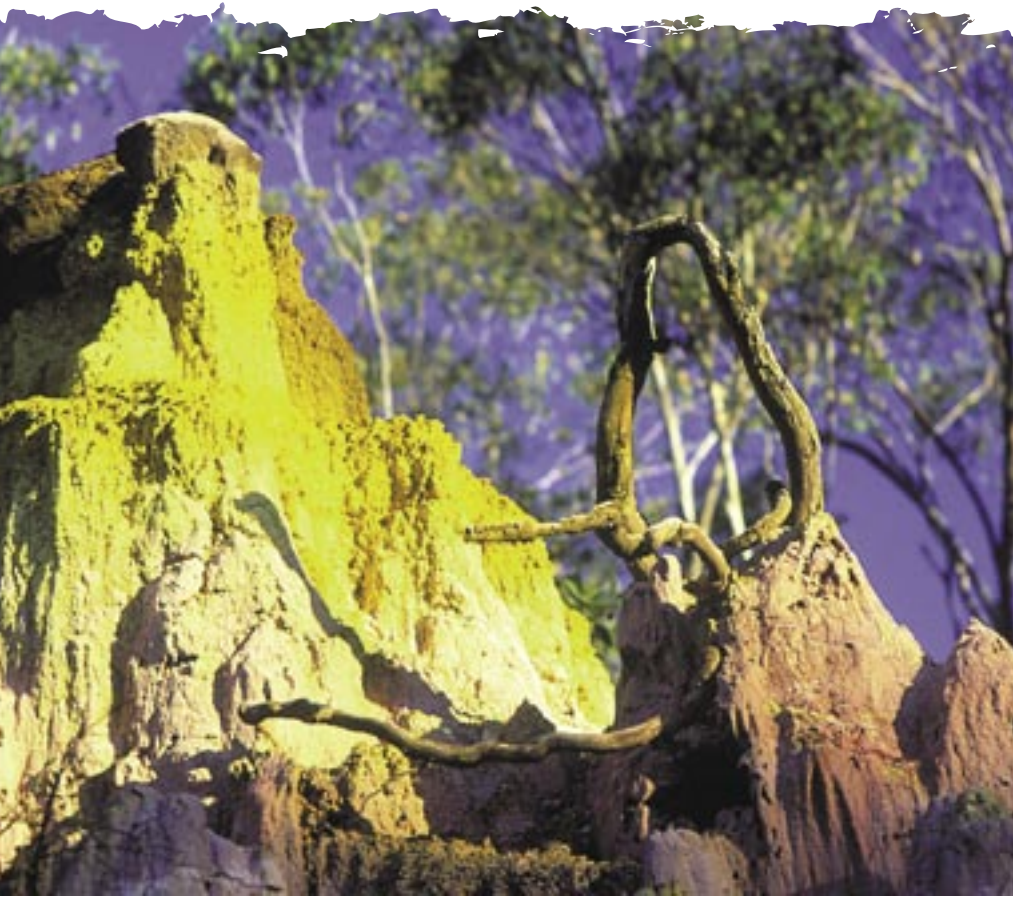
Neville Beeck, illustrates the prevalence of this medium-sized wallaby up until the 1950s:

*Tammars young and Tammars old,
Tammars hot and Tammars cold,
Tammars tender, Tammars tough.
Thank the Lord we've got enough!*

Today, however, the species is uncommon, restricted to isolated populations in fragments of suitable habitat that provide refuge from feral predators. Another local animal to have experienced such decline is the black-gloved wallaby *Macropus irma*. Unlike the Tammar wallaby, the black-gloved



Clockwise from top: Black-gloved wallaby. PHOTO: ALECIA CARTER/UG MEDIA Moort woodland on the Gondwana Link property Nowanup is Tammar wallaby habitat. PHOTO: SANDRA GILFILLAN Tammar wallaby. PHOTO: JIRI LOCHMAN/LOCHMAN TRANSPARENCIES Mallee heath in Corackerup National Park is prime habitat for the black-gloved wallaby. PHOTO: SANDRA GILFILLAN



Bidjara people looking after their cultural sites at Carnarvon Station Reserve

Indigenous Programs Manager **Sarah Eccles** reports on the partnership between Bush Heritage and the Bidjara people in Queensland

Carnarvon Station Reserve, acquired by Bush Heritage in 2001, lies within the traditional lands of the Bidjara people and is situated within the Queensland Uplands and Brigalow Belt anchor region. In May 2007 Bidjara community representatives and Bush Heritage staff began working together at the reserve to record and manage its rich cultural sites and values.

One of the cultural areas that has been identified during this collaboration is the colourful Ochre Pits, often referred to as the Paint Pots because of the array of ochre colours found there, from rich purples to reds, yellows and oranges.

The Ochre Pits have traditionally been used by the Bidjara people for rock art, ceremonial purposes and the painting of members of the Bidjara Dance Troupe, as well as for contemporary artworks. One of the major concerns of the Bidjara people was that the pits were being damaged by feral horses.

The horses were eating the ochre, thereby undermining the pit face and causing erosion and the collapse of the fragile substrate.

The management recommendation was to fence off the site and this work was completed in June 2008 by Bidjara Carnarvon Station trainee Richard Mailman, Carnarvon Station trainee Matt Warnock and Bidjara fencing contractor Victor Coulahan. The fencing will protect the Ochre Pits from further erosion by feral horses and ensure that this valuable resource continues to be available to the Bidjara people.

This project is just one example of how the Bidjara people and Bush Heritage staff are working together to protect and conserve Carnarvon Station's significant cultural values.

Bush Heritage would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Thyne Reid Foundation, which made this work possible.



Clockwise from top: Ochre on Carnarvon Station Reserve, Qld. PHOTO: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX Bidjara trainee Richard Mailman shows off the new fence. The new fence protects the Ochre Pits from feral horses. PHOTOS: MATT WARNOCK Another of the ochre outcrops on Carnarvon Station Reserve. PHOTO: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX



The Kaanju Ngaachi Indigenous Protected Area

David Claudie and Sarah Eccles celebrate the partnership between Bush Heritage and the Kaanju people of Cape York

On 4 June 2008 a ceremony was held in the Kaanju Ngaachi (Kaanju homelands) in central Cape York Peninsula involving community members, neighbours and partners. It was a celebration of the hard and tireless work of the Kaanju people in looking after their country, which has culminated in the declaration of Stage One of the Kaanju Homelands Indigenous Protected Area (IPA).

'The deterioration of the land is felt by Pianamu (Rainbow Serpent) and under Kaanju law if proper land management is not carried out, Pianamu will not allow the land to be sustainable,' explains David Claudie, a Kaanju Traditional Owner and chairman of the local Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation.

Bush Heritage congratulates the Kaanju people on their declaration of Cape York's first IPA.

The Kaanju Homelands IPA is located approximately 700 kilometres north of Cairns. It covers 197 500 hectares and is centred on the Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers. The Kaanju homelands feature open savannah, riverine environments with extensive lagoon systems, and upland tropical and subtropical rainforests. There are also pockets of open bushland, sand ridge country and areas that feature vine thickets and sinkholes. The homelands are rich in biodiversity and provide a habitat for a number of rare and endangered fauna species, including the north-eastern tree kangaroo, the cassowary (*kutani*) and the palm cockatoo (*kila*).

The Kaanju people became greatly concerned about the deterioration of their homelands through weed and feral-animal infestations and a lack of proper fire management. Their cultural sites were also being desecrated due to prolific and unregulated public access.

As a result of these concerns, the Kaanju Traditional Owners identified a

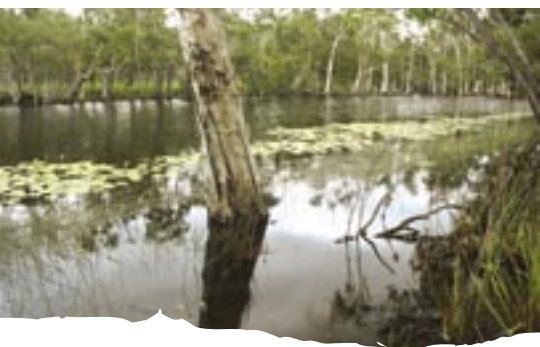
number of options for the protection and development of their land, people and culture, one of which was to establish an IPA on their homelands.

In 2005 the Kaanju people developed the Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers Kaanju Homelands IPA management plan to articulate their aspirations and how they would realise them. David Claudie approached Bush Heritage and requested assistance to implement the plan. Since then, the Kaanju people (through the Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation) and Bush Heritage (as part of its Conservation on Country program) have been working in partnership to put the plan into action.

Thanks to the kind support of the Andyinc Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, Bush Heritage has been able to provide assistance to David in his role as IPA coordinator and to the Kaanju and other local Indigenous people in undertaking high-priority land-management activities.

Rangers have surveyed weeds, removed olive hymenachne infestations from sensitive lagoon systems and put monitoring systems in place to prevent further outbreaks of this invasive plant. They have established firebreaks and performed back-burning, conducted patrols to limit prohibited access, and built and maintained designated camping grounds to prevent further erosion of river areas and damage to Kaanju cultural sites.

As well as ensuring the conservation of significant habitats for threatened species, the Kaanju Homelands IPA provides meaningful local employment and training opportunities and allows the Kaanju people to retain their cultural responsibility for looking after their country.



For more information on the Kaanju Homelands IPA, please visit www.kaanjungaachi.com.au For an explanation of Indigenous Protected Areas, please go to www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa

Clockwise from top: Sarah Eccles (right), David Claudie and partners at the launch of the Kaanju Ngaachi IPA on Kaanju homelands. Grasslands in the Kaanju Ngaachi IPA. Lagoon systems in the IPA are rich habitats for wildlife. PHOTOS: MATT APPLEBY



Handing over a work in progress at Boolcoommatta Reserve

Charlotte Francis talks to outgoing reserve managers Paul and Bec O'Leary about their two years at this South Australian reserve

When Paul and Bec O'Leary arrived at Bush Heritage's newly acquired Boolcoommatta Reserve in July 2006, they had swapped the rustling of palm trees on a Pacific island for the vast, rugged beauty of a former sheep station in South Australia. They were to spend two years managing this arid-zone reserve and its outstanding examples of saltbush plains, a habitat that is extensively grazed throughout the surrounding region and poorly protected in conservation reserves.

Paul recalls that they started out by building good relationships with neighbouring farmers and land-owners, including the managers of Bimbowrie Conservation Park to the west.

Boolcoommatta had been a sheep station for 150 years, so one of the first management actions was to reduce grazing and begin to control feral pests. Ecological monitoring sites around the reserve enabled Bush Heritage to gauge the effectiveness of such activities. Encouragingly, there are already signs that the land is starting to recover; a second round of survey results from 2007 has shown an overall increase in ground cover and an increasing abundance of shrubland birds such as the white-winged fairy-wren and rufous fieldwren.

However, Paul emphasises that it takes time to restore ecosystems to health: '100 years is not long in land-management terms. The combination of heavy grazing and drought conditions depletes the land and strips it of resources'

The O'Learys acknowledge the key role played by volunteers in the monitoring and management activities at Boolcoommatta. A visit by the Scientific Expedition Group of South Australia in September 2006 helped gather vital baseline data on the reserve's flora and fauna. A separate survey carried out by volunteers from the Mammal Club of the Field Naturalists Society of South Australia discovered the skeletal remains of threatened and extinct species such as the mulgara, golden bandicoot and Gould's mouse. The survey also found evidence of the nationally vulnerable yellow-footed rock wallaby that still occurs on neighbouring Bimbowrie Conservation Park. We are hopeful that the rock wallaby may return to Boolcoommatta as the habitat continues to improve.

Rabbits threaten many species of native flora but, with the help of volunteers from Australia and overseas, Bush Heritage is mapping their warrens. Using quad-bikes fitted with GPS equipment, it can take a month to map a tenth of the reserve but this information is critical to the development of strategies to control the rabbits. During a working bee in April this year, volunteers also helped to repair boundary fences and treat with herbicide 500 pepper trees, which are invasive pest plants in semi-arid zones.

Paul and Bec also acknowledge the support of the Bush Heritage operations team and ecologists in helping them to establish Boolcoommatta over the past two years. They have enjoyed being the custodians of this beautiful landscape and are now passing on to their successors a work in progress.



Clockwise from top: Paul and Bec O'Leary with a wheel from explorer Sir Douglas Mawson's vehicle, left behind when he crossed the property. PHOTO: JULIAN FENNESSY A distant Dome Rock glows in the sunset on Boolcoommatta Reserve, SA. Gould's monitor. Flower of the punty-bush.

PHOTOS: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX White-winged fairy-wren. PHOTO: GRAEME CHAPMAN



Parri Estate supports Bush Heritage

Bush Heritage is thrilled with the growing number of companies showing an interest in, and directly supporting, our conservation efforts. Among those is Parri Estate, a family-run winery in South Australia, which produces high-quality estate-grown wines while remaining committed to its consumers and the environment.

'We are very excited about our partnership with Bush Heritage and impressed with their pragmatic, results-focused approach to the conservation of Australia's plants and animals,' said Parri Estate Director John Phillips.

Each year Parri Estate will make a significant donation to Bush Heritage, contributing to the conservation of Australia's unique and abundant diversity of life. It will also promote Bush Heritage's work on Boolcoomatta Reserve by having our newsletters and other material available at its cellar door.

'By supporting Bush Heritage, Parri Estate makes a tangible contribution to protecting Australia's natural heritage and encourages others to appreciate the value of such conservation work. It's about looking after our future together,' John Phillips said.



Action for climate change

Richard MacNeill, Spatial Information Coordinator, tells of Bush Heritage's involvement with the Planet Action program

Bush Heritage is proud to be a participant in the Planet Action program, an international initiative that makes use of spatial information systems and products to identify and study the effects of climate change across the world.

The program is fostered by Spot Image, the worldwide distributor of French SPOT satellite imagery and a recognised world leader in the provision of such imagery to private industry and government land-management agencies. Satellite imagery yields high-definition images of the landscape that assist a broad range of conservation and land-management activities across the planet.

In February 2008 Spot Image offered Bush Heritage the opportunity to participate in Planet Action by developing the program's first project dealing with climate change in the Australasian region. Significantly, Spot Image considered Bush Heritage to have the resources and skills necessary for this task.

Bush Heritage will collate and analyse a time-based series of satellite images, supplied by Spot Image, of four

reserves. This information will greatly enhance Bush Heritage's ability to understand the environment across its largest reserves, highlight areas requiring specific intervention and evaluate the results of this intervention.

Over the past five years Bush Heritage has developed a sophisticated and technically complex set of spatial information systems and products to support operational management and ecological recovery programs on its reserves. The Spot Image offer is a clear recognition of the level of scientific and technical capability that we have developed in the areas of spatial information and mapping.

With Bush Heritage now managing 31 properties across Australia, with a total area approaching one million hectares, satellite imagery is becoming an increasingly important source of information. Participation in the Planet Action initiative will allow Bush Heritage to continue to meet its many ecological and management responsibilities as the number of properties it owns continues to grow.



Clockwise from top: Wildflowers lit up at sunset on the sand plains of Charles Darwin Reserve, WA. Rock bridge formed by years of weathering on Charles Darwin Reserve. PHOTOS: JIRI LOCHMAN/LOCHMAN TRANSPARENCIES Wildflowers at Eurardy Reserve, WA. PHOTO: JULIAN FENNESSY

From the CEO

On the same day in July that Bush Heritage announced the acquisition of Bon Bon Station (see *Bush Heritage News*, Autumn 2008), I was gazing into one of the extraordinary springs at Edgbaston Station, our most recent and 31st acquisition. The warm sun flashed off a tiny redfin blue-eye, Australia's smallest freshwater fish, swimming in water that had bubbled up from the aquifer of the Great Artesian Basin. The entire global population of this fish resides in only a few springs on Edgbaston. This is remarkable enough, but the property also boasts four freshwater plants and snails that are likewise found nowhere else in the world.

The springs and the Wills family's Edgbaston home are in Iningai country to which I have now travelled many times. It is a vast flat landscape that can flood after rain, and with a variety of vegetation types such as spinifex, woodlands and forest. Allan and Fay Wills' knowledge of this country and their place in it forms part of a long and important tradition. They will remain at Edgbaston and guide Bush Heritage in its conservation work and the preservation of the property's cultural heritage.

In August I spent three days visiting Carnarvon Station Reserve with former Deputy Prime Minister and Bush Heritage Ambassador Tim Fischer and other guests. Mr Fischer, recently appointed as the country's first resident ambassador to the Vatican, travelled to Carnarvon to gain first-hand experience of our reserve management practices.

'Although my commitments in the Vatican will impact on my ambassadorial role with Bush Heritage, my belief and passion for the work you are doing has not diminished,' Tim said. Tim will use his remaining months in the country to help raise Bush Heritage's profile.

Tim particularly applauded the work being done by staff and volunteers to repair the cluster of mountain springs



at the northern and eastern tips of the Murray Darling Basin. We have now identified more than 30 springs on the reserve, twelve of which have been fenced to keep out feral animals but allow in native fauna. It is a thrill to see Carnarvon, our longest standing large reserve, in such excellent condition. You can view a media release about our visit at www.bushheritage.org.au

With your help we can secure the funds necessary for the long-term management of Edgbaston and Carnarvon and all our other reserves. Continuing financial support is essential as the number of reserves increases. Over time, the costs of property management become much greater than the costs of each acquisition, but they are necessary if we are to meet our conservation objectives. Your financial assistance will enable our growing, effective team at Bush Heritage to continue to meet the ambitious goals we have set to extend our work and influence. Thank you!

Doug Humann

In memory

The late **(Betty) Louisa Elizabeth Crutchett** was honoured by her friend Ruth Geneff for her voluntary work with the Forrest Park Croquet Club. Susan Ambler gave in memory of **Judith Ambler**, Lesley Vick donated in memory of **John Phillips** and Margaret Allen honoured the life of her sister-in-law **Elsie Baker**.

Benjamin Earle was remembered by a friend, Trevor and Pat Jewell donated in loving memory of **Graeme Jewell** and Leilani gave to honour her son **Scott Piper**, an ecologist and dedicated conservationist who died at the age of 40.

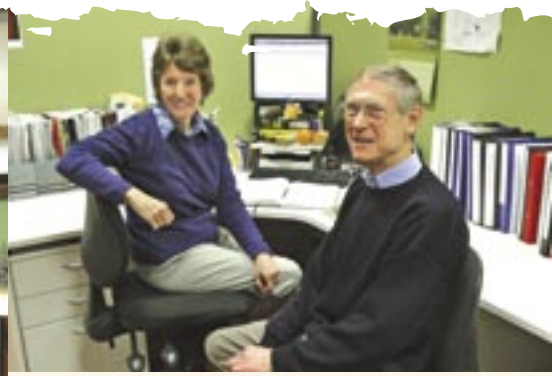
Wendy and Philip Whitham gave in memory of their father **Lindsay Shield Whitham**, 'a keen bushwalker, conservationist and long-time supporter of Bush Heritage'. Friends of **Hazel Savage** honoured her memory and Kevin Lee donated in memory of **Yee Boon Ngho**.

In celebration

Peter Pratt celebrated the birthday of **Ally Pinnock** by donating to Bush Heritage, Jayde Williams made a donation as a gift to **Briony Badke** and Elizabeth and Robert O'Shannessy gave to celebrate the birthdays of **Sarah and Peter Dixon**.

Keith Lemon celebrated the 11th birthday of his granddaughter **Elizabeth Bauleh** and many gifts were received from family and friends celebrating the 21st birthday of **Belinda Christie**.

If you would like to make a gift to Bush Heritage in memory of a friend or to celebrate a special occasion, visit www.bushheritage.org.au or call 1300 628 873.



Burrin Burrin Reserve in the spotlight

Jill Dobkin, Bush Heritage supporter, tells of the field trip to Burrin Burrin Reserve on 19 April

We had an incredible day in April when we went on a Bush Heritage field trip to the forest outside Braidwood in New South Wales to visit a protected piece of bushland called Burrin Burrin Reserve. 'Burrin Burrin' is thought to be an Aboriginal phrase meaning 'many trees' and it is a very fitting name for the property. No camera could truly capture the immensity of the forest canopy.

We arrived at noon and took a guided walk through the reserve. We learnt an incredible amount about the area's biodiversity and its flora and fauna from our guides Reserve Manager Owen Whitaker, his partner and Bush Heritage volunteer Alison Elvin, Burrin Burrin neighbour Julian Davies and Bush Heritage Visitation Officer Belinda Coutts. We then enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea served in the middle of an outrageously beautiful tree-fern gully; it was very special.

We returned to the entrance of the property for a picnic dinner and an informative talk by Owen and the team. Night-time arrived gently as the light diminished and the moon appeared in the sky above the Budawang Ranges, and then we were off again, back into the bush for some exciting spotlighting.

As we stepped carefully over logs and other forest litter, we searched for the animals of the night, keeping one eye (sometimes two) on the forest canopy. We saw about ten greater gliders high up in the eucalypts. They were hiding as best they could from our lights, swaying in the wind as they held on to trees approximately 20 metres above the ground, their long bushy tails keeping them balanced – absolutely amazing! We also heard powerful owls calling in the distance, but were not fortunate enough to see one. It was a wild night.

We certainly are very lucky to have such a beautiful piece of bushland, thankfully protected by Bush Heritage.

A gift to the future

Jill and Bill Mack, long-term office volunteers in our Conservation Support Centre in Melbourne, reflect on their commitment to Bush Heritage's work into the future

We joined Bush Heritage as volunteers as soon as it moved to Melbourne, and quickly learned how immensely satisfying it is to be involved with such a committed group of people working together to protect our remaining wild places.

Our visit to Cravens Peak Reserve – a great privilege for us – strongly reinforced our view that Bush Heritage is the most effective organisation in Australia working to conserve and manage our unique natural environment.

Working side by side with staff members we became aware that we could support Bush Heritage in the long term through a gift in our will. We realised that this was something anyone could do – there's no need to be super wealthy or prominent in society – so one day we took the step and made a bequest in favour of Bush Heritage.

It gives us a lovely warm feeling to know that we have supported Bush Heritage in this way. Sometime in the future our bequest will play a small part in helping to preserve another piece of this wonderful land of ours. We know future generations will love it as much as we do.



You too can help Bush Heritage's work into the future by leaving a gift in your will. For a copy of our bequest brochure, which includes a recommended wording, please call **Anne Peedom** on 02 9967 3701 or **Merrilyn Julian** on 03 8610 9120 or email bequests@bushheritage.org.au

Clockwise from top: Burrin Burrin Reserve Manager Owen Whitaker. PHOTO: BELINDA COUTTS Jill Dobkin, Bush Heritage supporter. PHOTO: COURTESY JILL DOBKIN Jill and Bill Mack. PHOTO: PAUL EVANS Fungi growing among leaf litter at Burrin Burrin Reserve, NSW. Brittle gums at Burrin Burrin Reserve. PHOTOS: WAYNE LAWLER/ECOPIX

Visiting and volunteering at Bush Heritage reserves

There are several ways in which Bush Heritage supporters can get involved at our reserves. Some are recreational, while others involve working as a volunteer. Bookings are a must for everyone. Upcoming opportunities are listed on the back page of our newsletter and often book out quickly, so please book early at info@bushheritage.org.au or telephone **1300 NATURE (1300 628 873)**.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Guided tours: Organised day trips and overnight visits are guided by Bush Heritage staff. Day trips are to reserves close to regional towns where there is 2WD access. Bush Heritage usually supplies morning tea. Overnight trips are generally to more remote reserves and are most often catered for. On overnight trips, you will need a high-clearance 4WD and sometimes camping gear.

Open days: Open days at reserves usually involve walks, talks and educational displays. A gold-coin donation is usually requested.

Self-guided day visits: Those who are happy to visit reserves without being accompanied by Bush Heritage staff can spend a day at one of four reserves: Currumbin Valley Reserve, Qld; Liffey Valley Reserve, Tas.; and Chereninup Creek and Kojonup reserves, WA. Camping and fires are prohibited, so a picnic lunch is the best option. There is no cost but booking is essential.



Camping: You can camp from April to October at Carnarvon Station Reserve, Qld, and Charles Darwin Reserve, WA. You can book in for up to a week and will have exclusive use of the campsite during your stay. Campers must have a high-clearance 4WD and other safety equipment, and be fully self-sufficient. Reserve staff may suggest daily activities but do not give guided tours. The cost is \$25 per vehicle for supporters, or \$100 per vehicle for non-supporters.

Accommodation, camping and caravan sites: Eurardy Reserve, WA, has good tourist facilities and is accessible by 2WD. There are wildflower tours in spring. Discounts are available for Bush Heritage supporters. Book directly on 08 9936 1038.

VOLUNTEERING

Our volunteer program puts people at the forefront of conservation. Bush Heritage volunteers offer

wonderful support to our reserve managers and ecologists. The energy and know-how they contribute increases the capacity of Bush Heritage to achieve results for conservation.

Working bees: At working bees, volunteers work together on significant conservation projects and make a real difference. Working bees are closely supervised and volunteers do not necessarily require specialist skills. Examples of working bee activities include constructing fences and eradicating weeds. Working bees are fantastic opportunities to assist on the reserves.

Volunteer Ranger placements: Volunteer rangers assist with a variety of essential reserve management and monitoring activities. Some of these activities may require specialist skills, experience and self-reliance. The challenge of such volunteering experiences increases the potential rewards for those involved.



Left to right: Volunteer rangers Margaret and Peter Calder fencing springs on Carnarvon Station Reserve, Qld; photographer Wayne Lawler is holding the other end of the rail. PHOTO: COURTESY ECOPIX Supporters taking a break during a guided tour of Ethabuka Reserve, Qld. PHOTO: KATRINA BLAKE Volunteers carrying out revegetation work during a working bee on Tarcutta Hills Reserve, NSW. PHOTO: JOELLE METCALF

Getting involved

Here are some current opportunities for getting involved with Bush Heritage, either as a visitor or a volunteer:

GUIDED TOURS

September: Nardoo Hills reserves, Vic. Day trip. Saturday 6, 11.00 am to 3.00 pm. 2WD access. Nearest town: Wedderburn, 12 km. Morning tea provided; BYO picnic lunch. Cost: \$20 per person for supporters/\$35 per person for non-supporters. Wait-listing only available.

October: Scottsdale Reserve, NSW. Day trip. Saturday 25, 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. 2WD access. The day will involve 5 to 6 km of walking. Nearest town: Bredbo, 4 km. Morning tea provided; BYO picnic lunch. Cost: \$30 per person for supporters/\$40 per person for non-supporters.

November: Liffey Valley Reserve, Tas. Day trip. Sunday 2, 10 am start. 2WD access. Nearest town: Deloraine, 25 km. Meet and greet Bush Heritage staff, walks and talks. BYO picnic lunch. Cost: gold coin donation.

SELF-GUIDED VISITS (see page 11)

WORKING BEE

October/November: Liffey Valley Reserve, Tas.

Project: Remove weeds and help to maintain tracks. **When:** Arrive on the evening of 31 October. Working bee on Saturday 1 November. Volunteers welcome to join the Open Day on Sunday 2 November. **Prerequisites:** Moderate fitness for outdoor activities and keen to do weeding. Places are limited. Please visit our website or contact us to find out how to take part.

VOLUNTEER RANGER PLACEMENTS

October: Carnarvon Station Reserve, Qld

Project: Erect exclusion fences around natural springs. **Who:** Two people. **When:** Monday 6 to Friday 31 October. **Prerequisites:** 4WD experience, fencing experience, ability to operate autonomously. **Warning:** High-clearance 4WD essential.

For more information about visiting our reserves or becoming a volunteer, please contact Bush Heritage on 1300 NATURE (1300 628 873), visit www.bushheritage.org.au or email info@bushheritage.org.au



From top: Max Tischler from the University of Sydney shows a small mammal to staff and supporters on a guided tour of Ethabuka Reserve, Qld. PHOTO: A. J. EMMOTT Volunteers planting seedlings at Yarrabee Wesfarmers Reserve, WA. PHOTO: AMANDA KEESING

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Yes, I want to help Bush Heritage to protect our threatened animals and ecosystems

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I want to join the Friends of the Bush and give \$ each month by automatic deduction

I will give via: the credit card below until further notice bank debit (Bush Heritage will send an authority form)

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