



# TASMANIAN | Land | CONSERVANCY



Photo: Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office: Ernie Bond & his dog on the Rasselas Track n.d., 1840. (Series Ref: NS3251)

## Gordonvale is protected!

home of iconic Tasmanian is now TLC's 12<sup>th</sup> permanent reserve

The legendary Tasmanian bushman, Ernie Bond, captured in a candid moment with his beloved dog on the Rasselas track near his home at Gordonvale

### Issue 38 spring 2013

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### Story by Jane Hutchinson | CEO of TLC

I'm sure that many of you are keen to hear how our efforts to secure the wild and remote property of Gordonvale are going. I am absolutely delighted to let you know that thanks to the generous help of many supporters, together we have been able to acquire Gordonvale as the TLC's 12th permanent reserve. Thank you so much to all who donated!

When the opportunity arose to acquire the 80 ha property, we knew instantly that it fitted strategically into our overall, long-term conservation science goals.

The TLC has long identified Gordonvale as a World Heritage gem. It's one of only a few private properties included in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (World Heritage Area), and is completely surrounded by the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. Securing Gordonvale for conservation makes a very important contribution to protecting the integrity of the World Heritage Area as a whole. It is flanked by the spectacular vistas of Great Dome and Wylds Craig. The undulating buttongrass plains, riparian vegetation, scrub and forest of Gordonvale are habitat for some of Tasmania's iconic and fabulous animals. The nationally

endangered Tasmanian devil and the threatened ground parrot are but a few.

Because of its high altitude, responsible management of the property is critically important in light of the effects of climate change. Responsible management also means working collaboratively with our neighbours to protect the surrounding World Heritage Area.

Our team of conservation scientists will now roll up their research sleeves to develop a Reserve Management Plan for the efficient and effective conservation management of Gordonvale. That means every dollar spent by the TLC is spent wisely on protecting the wonderful plants and animals that live on and around the property.

We have made some very special new connections over the past months with family members of Ernie Bond, bushwalkers and descendants of Gordonvale enthusiasts who have shared their personal memories. Thanks to all who told us a ripping yarn or two about the enigmatic Ernie Bond over a cup of tea or who sent in newspaper clippings, images and stories. Those anecdotes make the journey to protecting Gordonvale so much richer

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protecting Tasmanian land for biodiversity



Photo: Matthew Newton

An aerial view of the wild and remote location of Gordonvale with the snow-capped mountains of the Denison Range nestled in the background

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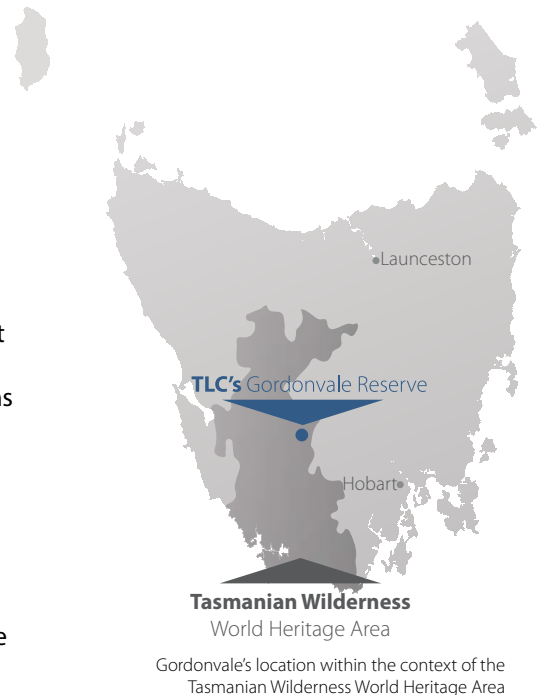
and more joyful and some can be found on our website at [www.tasland.org.au](http://www.tasland.org.au)

The incredible history of Ernie Bond's eighteen years at Gordonvale has permeated through people's accounts and, when setting foot on the property now, it is clear that the site has strong cultural and heritage values. Its unique history qualifies the property for registration in the Tasmanian Historic Archaeological Sites Catalogue. It is the traditional home territory of the Pangerninghe clan of the Big River nation and though the remnants of Ernie's settlement have largely been reclaimed by vegetation, the foundations and some farm equipment remain.

For many bushwalkers, memories of Gordonvale are of passing through the property en-route to Lake Rhona. Some were lucky enough to have experienced the hospitality of Ernie Bond, including wallaby stew, home-grown vegetables and brew!

TLC now has a network of 12 permanent reserves across Tasmania, protecting globally significant values on ecosystems spanning from estuarine wetlands, coastal woodlands and wet forests to high altitude grasslands and sphagnum peatlands.

Thank you to everyone who has supported TLC to protect Gordonvale as part of this important network of private land reserves forever.



Gordonvale's location within the context of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area

## We're celebrating Gordonvale!

The fact that this special place will now be protected forever as a permanent reserve is truly something worth celebrating... so we are!

We would like to warmly invite you to join us on **Friday 27 September** for evening drinks and nibbles at the Founders Room, Salamanca Arts Centre. We'll be showcasing the extraordinary history, beauty and conservation significance of our newest, World Heritage listed property, Gordonvale.

If you would like to attend you must register at [www.celebratinggordonvaleevent.eventbrite.com](http://www.celebratinggordonvaleevent.eventbrite.com)



Photo: Parks and Wildlife Tasmania

The threatened ground parrot in Tasmania is one of only three ground-dwelling parrots in the world and can be found at Gordonvale



"It is a sign of our maturity that we can partner in a significant land acquisition without having to be title holders. It is no less significant that through this collaboration the TLC has the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as neighbours, partners and friends."  
Jane Hutchinson on the Gowan Brae partnership



Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania president Clyde Mansell with Jane Hutchinson at Gowan Brae



A wedge-tailed eagle doing its best diva impersonation

Photo: Graeme Gardener

Photo: Bill and Els Wakefield

## The TLC has had a fantastic year, here are some of our highlights

Story by Jane Hutchinson | CEO of TLC

Before I begin to describe the achievements for another fabulous financial year in the TLC's history, I must start with a heartfelt thank you to every one of our wonderful supporters and partners who make what we do possible. Thank you all so very much.

In accordance with our 2011–2015 Strategic Plan, TLC's mission, in partnership with other organisations, communities, individuals and governments, is to:

- 1. Take a leadership role** in building a landscape-scale approach to conservation including a world-class system of reserves complemented by sustainable development.
- 2. Demonstrate excellence** in management for biodiversity conservation.
- 3. Contribute to Tasmania** becoming a centre for knowledge and expertise for nature conservation and planning.
- 4. Develop and implement** innovative mechanisms for achieving sustainability and biodiversity conservation.
- 5. Provide opportunities** and mechanisms for communities and individuals to achieve conservation.
- 6. Demonstrate organisational leadership** through exceptional governance, a positive working

environment and financial sustainability.

TLC has made solid progress in each of these key areas as well as laying the foundations for achieving significant conservation goals for the coming financial year.

### A selection of highlights for the financial year include:

- The conservation and ongoing management of the Five Rivers Conservation Area comprising 11,000 hectares of New Leaf land in Tasmania's Central Highlands.
- The protection of Gowan Brae in Tasmania's Central Highlands for its important cultural and natural values.
- The official launch of the Midlands Conservation Fund - an innovative mechanism for a working landscape to achieve perpetual conservation outcomes in the Tasmanian Midlands - a National Biodiversity Hotspot.
- Robust criteria to define a "world-class system of reserves" developed by the TLC's Conservation Science and Planning Advisory Council in a significant body of work.
- Significant growth in the TLC Foundation established to support the essential management costs of being custodians and caretakers of our permanent TLC reserves.

- Strategic additions to Tasmania's network of private protected areas through the acquisitions of permanent TLC reserves in the Blue Tier and at Gordonvale.
- Further revolving fund reserves created; the successful completion of the incentive based Woodland Bird Program protecting habitat for Tasmania's important woodland birds; and outstanding results in the PAPL (Protected Areas on Private Lands) program.
- The contribution of our extraordinary science and planning, reserve management, governance, fundraising and community engagement volunteers who generously gave 871 days of their time, both on and off reserves, equivalent to \$209,040 worth of donated time.

With ongoing support from our supporters and partners we will continue to work towards achieving the TLC's 2050 vision for Tasmania to be a global leader in nature conservation and sustainability.

For more information on these highlights and much more, remember to visit our website at [www.tasland.org.au](http://www.tasland.org.au) to download our Annual Report when it is released in October.



Ross farmer and MCF participant Julian von Bibra at his property, 'Beaufront'



Photo: Matthew Newton - courtesy of Bush Heritage

Photo: Diana Cameron

A highlight of the day was the guided walk across 'Beaufront'

## Launch of the Midlands Conservation Fund

**Story by Andrew Cameron | TLC**  
Midlandscapes Coordinator

On one of those crisp, sunny midwinter days in June, which starts with the sound of frost crunching under your feet, TLC and Bush Heritage Australia officially launched the Midlands Conservation Fund (MCF) on a 'bush run' in the heart of the Midlands.

We were generously hosted by farmers Julian and Annabel von Bibra on their Ross property 'Beaufront'. The 'bush run' was 190 hectares of grassy woodlands and endangered lowland poa grasslands, which the couple recently nominated to be protected via an agreement under the MCF.

Many may be aware that the MCF has been a work in progress since 2009, however in this last financial year our accumulated efforts came to fruition as both the fund and conservation stewardship program became fully operational. The launch event provided a great opportunity to celebrate the beginning of a new era for private land conservation in the Midlands. It was also an opportunity to thank the farmers, philanthropic organisations and ecologists who have supported the development of the MCF over the last four years.

With donations from three major philanthropic foundations, and one private donor, the fund now has \$3.3 million invested and is earning a reliable income. TLC and Bush

Heritage, with funding assistance from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program, also completed a major conservation project (Midlands Biodiversity Bids) resulting in ten landholders signing up to MCF Conservation Agreements.

More than 2,600 ha of critically important lowland native grasslands and woodlands will be protected and managed for conservation. Earnings from the MCF will fund the annual fees paid to landholders for stewardship services from 2014 onwards. Initial agreements are for up to ten years whereby after the first five years farmers can extend their agreements for an additional five years, and keep rolling over those agreements into the future.

About 40 people attended the launch, including farmers who had recently signed up to the first round of MCF's Conservation Agreements. There were also representatives from the Sidney Myer Fund and John T Reid Charitable Trusts and several ecologists with a long association with the Midlands.

Guests at the launch heard presentations from Julian von Bibra, Andy Myer and Jane Hutchinson. Bush Heritage ecologist Matt Appleby demonstrated the monitoring methods that will be used by both field staff and farmers to annually track conservation management performance, as well as changes to vegetation and habitat condition.

Julian talked about the challenges of farming and conservation in this unique working landscape and the importance of the MCF as a reliable long-term funding mechanism for conservation on working farms.

"The MCF means that we now have a model that is committed to conservation and farmers working together for shared goals. Essentially, conservation now has a place on the balance sheet," he said.

Andy Myer MCF Chairman, Bush Heritage vice president and a trustee of the Sidney Myer Fund was enthusiastic to build on success so far, and reminded everyone that the next great challenge for MCF was to raise \$10 million by 2020.

After lunch it was time for a walk through the woodlands down to the poa grasslands. Matt and Julian provided a running commentary on the farm management history and ecology of the area. Echoing Julian's earlier comments, it is moments like this that confirm the reality of what we are trying to achieve with the MCF... community and farmers working together to understand and share the responsibility for protecting the unique natural landscapes of the Midlands.

*We gratefully acknowledge the very generous support of the Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund 2009 Commemorative Grants Program, the John T Reid Charitable Trusts and the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation.*





Photo: Matthew Newton

Dr Sally Bryant at the TLC's Serpentine property entering data into our GIS mapping system



## Exciting start to Tassie devil monitoring

**Story by Dr Sally Bryant |**  
TLC Conservation Research & Planning Manager

The TLC was recently successful in gaining a grant from the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program to help monitor free-ranging Tasmanian devils in the wild.

Monitoring of wild Tasmanian devils was identified as a high priority action in the Tasmanian Devil Recovery Plan and the Bronte Region was listed as a 'data poor' area. These two deficiencies provided a perfect opportunity for us to make our Five River properties available for devil conservation.

Monitoring will involve deploying motion sensing (sentinel) cameras along a network of roads and tracks across 11,000 ha of Skullbone Plains



Photo: Matthew Newton

What's not to love about, arguably, the cheekiest face and the biggest mouth in Tassie?

Reserve and Bronte properties. The data we will be collecting is information on distribution, population structure, trends and prevalence of the deadly devil facial tumour disease.

The grant of \$27,000 is based on 50 cameras operating in the field at all times, with additional cameras used for devil den monitoring, latrine monitoring and for rotation when camera repairs are required.

By adopting survey methods consistent with the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program we hope to contribute robust data that will improve knowledge on the status of the species state-wide.

Some key questions we hope to answer include:

- Is there local extinction of any diseased devil population in Tasmania?
- Is DFTD still prevalent in the Bronte region?
- Is there any change in status of devils, quolls or feral cats in the Bronte region?
- Is there value as a potential detection and surveillance method for European red fox?

The TLC's existing monitoring programs, funded by our wonderful supporters, enable us to bolster knowledge on threatened plants and animals, which often feeds into science-based conservation management programs both locally and nationally.

This is just the beginning of an exciting journey to leverage existing skills in monitoring, as well as doing our bit to help save the Tasmanian devil.

## Upcoming TLC AGM

**10am Sunday 3 November 2013**  
**Rosny Barn - Rosny Park**

*This year our AGM will feature a photography exhibition highlighting a great year of activity for the TLC. Special thanks to Clarence City Council for generously supporting us by providing the space for the AGM.*

It's almost time for the TLC's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and we hope you can all join us for an afternoon to review and share in the year's achievements.

This year's AGM will be held at 10am on Sunday 3 November 2013 at the historic Rosny Barn, set amongst the beautiful grounds of Rosny Farm on Hobart's eastern shore. It will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate how far we've come in achieving our vision for Tasmania to be a global leader in nature conservation and sustainability.

At the AGM will we display a series of photographic works taken over the year including fabulous images across the full ecological range of TLC reserves.

The exhibition will be a visual journey of documentary-style works and landscape photography, capturing fascinating moments from TLC events and conservation science and monitoring activities and, of course, showcasing our spectacular TLC reserves.

Lunch will be available for purchase following the meeting formalities.

If you would like to attend the TLC's AGM please find out more at our registration page [www.tlc-agm-2013.eventbrite.com](http://www.tlc-agm-2013.eventbrite.com) or call us on 03 6225 1399.



International Student Volunteers battling gorse at our Long Point Reserve



Close-up of one of the Blue Tier fungus photos from our slide night in Hobart

## Back page briefs

### Permanent reserves for future generations

TLC supporters often ask how the ecological values of our permanent reserves will be protected for future generations.

It's a great question. We have been working hard to build a capital fund called the TLC Foundation. That fund is prudently and ethically invested. The interest earned from the fund helps to support our highly skilled scientists and reserve managers to carry out their conservation work.

In the last 12 months the TLC Foundation has performed well and is now worth nearly \$3,500,000. With continued effort, our goal of reaching \$5,000,000 by 2015 is achievable.

We grow the fund through generous gifts and bequests from supporters who understand that looking after our permanent reserves is a long-term investment.

Excellence in on-ground reserve management starts with the process of research, analysis and development of a unique reserve management plan for each permanent reserve. This science-driven, collaborative process is conducted by the TLC's conservation staff, with expert input and assessment from the TLC Conservation Science and Planning

Advisory Council and a range of other specialists. During the last financial year, management plans were finalised for the Vale of Belvoir and Skullbone Plains reserves and the Bronte properties.

On-ground management activities often focus on the eradication of invasive species which are specific to each reserve, for example our long-term work at Long Point to eradicate gorse and annual work at Egg Islands to remove Spanish heath. Wherever possible, we use the willing hands and expertise of our growing army of volunteers, whose labour efforts are invaluable in helping to keep our costs to a minimum.

As the TLC Foundation grows, so will our capacity to work on collaborative research projects, thus expanding our scientific knowledge about endangered flora and fauna across our reserves.

Whilst we are not yet able to fund such research directly from the foundation, our conservation staff have been successful in gaining external grants that have enabled us to undertake a number of important projects. These include the survey of nationally endangered Miena cider gum across the Bronte properties, the aging of sphagnum peatlands at Skullbone Plains Reserve, threatened stag beetle surveys on Blue Tier Reserve, and woodland bird conservation in south-east Tasmania.

Increasingly, the TLC plays a national and international role in sharing knowledge and best-practices for reserve management. Each new bequest or foundation fund gets us closer to achieving our goal of financial sustainability for our permanent reserve management by 2015. If you are interested in finding out more about the work of the TLC Foundation, we would welcome the opportunity to talk with you.

### Thank you for making the Blue Tier slide nights a success!

We want to extend a big thank you to everyone who took the time to join us at our Blue Tier slide nights and winter feast on Saturday 22 June and Saturday 3 August in Hobart!

Both nights were held at the Picnic Basket cafe in Taroona who kindly donated the space for us to run the event. It was a great opportunity to share a mulled wine or hot chocolate with everyone who was able to attend, enjoy the lovely winter fare on offer and show off the stunning images of our Blue Tier Reserve as well as shots from the Blue Tier field day, held earlier in the year.

If you're keen to see a few pictures from the night, be sure to jump onto our Facebook page.

We are grateful to the following organisations for their recent support:



CARING  
FOR  
OUR  
COUNTRY

The TLC uses **free software or programs** for its online event registrations and communications.