

SUMMER 2015

NL 46

PANATANA -A NATURAL PARTNERSHIP



Shining bronze-cuckoo. Photo: Sarah Lloyd

We are delighted to feature our newest reserve ambition, Panatana. I would like to thank everyone who has already given so generously to our efforts to safeguard this ecological gem. Panatana's natural significance is crowned by its important Tasmanian Aboriginal legacy and we are very excited to be partnering with the Indigenous Land Corporation to own and manage the reserve.

Our collective efforts over the last year to protect The Big Punchbowl have been successful, so thank you for all your contributions to this fantastic outcome which we hope to repeat at Panatana!

You may have heard that I was recently chosen as Tasmanian Australian of the Year, an honour which I am truly humbled to receive. I believe this award is an endorsement of TLC's important conservation work and a tribute to the incredible TLC community. I relish the chance to spend 2016 talking about conservation on private land, and extolling the efforts of the amazing land owners and supporters who achieve terrific outcomes for nature. Thank you to you all.

Jane Hutchinson, CEO

HIGHLIGHTS



Collybia sp. Photo: Sarah Lloyd



Carpobrotus rossii at Long Point Reserve. Photo: Heath Holden



Ecological burning at the Vale of Belvoir. Photo: Heath Holden

Page 2 Read more about Panatana, the TLC's new fundraising campaign. We are partnering with the Indigenous Land Corporation to secure the property of Tasmania's north coast that is home to environmental and cultural treasures.

Page 3 Ten years ago the TLC set out to purchase and protect Long Point on Tasmania's east coast. This became our first permanent reserve. Do you remember the campaign?

Page 4 The TLC reserves require careful management to minimise risks to their special values. Read how fire is being used at the Vale of Belvoir for ecological management.



PANATANA

Panatana is a 231 hectare property on the Rubicon Estuary in Tasmania's north. With Narawntapu National Park just five kilometres to the east and the township of Port Sorell across the water to the west, Panatana forms part of a landscape that features coastal vegetation, woodlands and wetlands, an estuarine environment and the flourishing life it supports. Panatana also retains valuable remnants of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, which is why the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) are joining forces to purchase and protect this important pocket of Tasmania.

RICH AND DIVERSE

Sarah Lloyd, local naturalist and author of eight books, has been exploring Panatana and the adjoining Marshall Hills for many years. She can attest to the beauty and ecological importance of the land, not least for its remarkable intact and fully-functioning environment.

Sarah describes Panatana as a naturalist's dream:

'What a wonderful surprise to see a male pink robin in a wet gully surrounded by dry coastal vegetation on my first visit to Panatana – an indication that the area forms an important corridor for birds as they move between their wet forest breeding habitats to the warmer coastal regions where they spend the winter. Other surprises were in store: the track was littered with Tasmanian devil scats and a wedge-tailed eagle soared overhead; top order predators that indicate a productive, intact functioning ecosystem.'

According to Sarah, the plethora of fungal species that appeared over autumn and winter confirmed the ecosystem's integrity. Fungi are vitally important for a healthy ecosystem, because approximately 80–90% of plant species have a mutually beneficial relationship with mycorrhizal fungi; relationships that are especially important to the health of native plants in impoverished sandy soils such as those at Panatana. In a nutshell, the fungi get access to vital minerals and, in exchange, the plant increases its water absorption capabilities.

In the warmer months, Sarah observed many reptile species – mountain dragons, White's skink, eastern three-lined skink and delicate skink – basking in patches of sunlight or emerging from the numerous burrows dotted along the sandy tracks. Feeding on nectar, seeds of the flowering plants and each other, were invertebrates such as pollinators and predators including flower wasps, butterflies, grasshoppers, robber flies, beetles, bugs, damselflies and spiders.

At Panatana the breadth of life – the diversity, the integrity and the health of the ecosystem – is what makes it such a valuable addition to the TLC's array of permanent reserves. The location in the Port Sorell area also offers huge potential for supporter and community visits, and the proximity to Narawntapu National Park and Bass Strait marks Panatana as an excellent addition to the protected landscape.

ANCIENT STORIES

Due to this wealth of life, the areas around Panatana made a logical home for Tasmanian Aboriginal people for over 10,000 years before the pressures of colonisation drove them from their country.

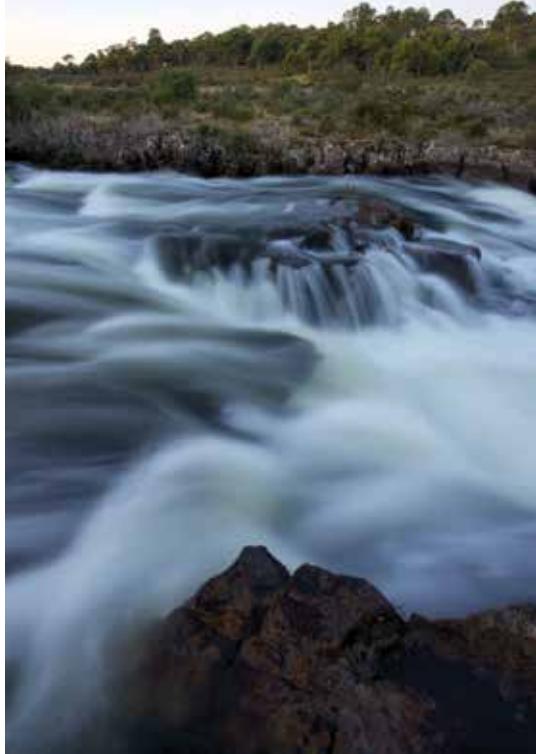
The Rubicon Estuary was home to the trilingual north nation peoples. The land indicates a rich lifestyle, a diet of shellfish and vegetables, and a thriving trade with neighbouring nations in food, minerals, and shells for necklace making.

Local tea tree was used for making spears and torches, and fire was used to maintain open tracks to adjoining territories and for hunting kangaroo. Cutting and pounding instruments were fashioned from local rock and traded with neighbours. Red ochre from nearby mountain ranges was a precious resource used by the men for hair dye.

Like the seasonal bounty of Moulting Lagoon in Tasmania's south-east, groups of the north nation converged on Panatana in early spring to enjoy the estuarine bounty of the eggs of swan, duck and other water birds.

The ILC and the TLC leapt at the opportunity to join forces and protect a part of the landscape harbouring such tangible expressions of Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural heritage. Panatana covers three titles, two of which will be held by the ILC, and one by the TLC.

If fundraising is successful, a conservation covenant will be registered over all three titles to protect Panatana's natural values in perpetuity. The two organisations will share the respective management of the cultural and natural assets.



LONG POINT – TEN YEARS ON

THE TRAWTHA MAKUMINYA PARTNERSHIP

Protecting Panatana will not be the first time that the TLC and ILC have collaborated with great results.

The TLC and the ILC worked together in 2013 to secure trawtha makuminya, (previously known as Gowan Brae). The historic partnership was formed with the ILC to purchase and protect the ancient Aboriginal cultural elements and conservation values in Tasmania's Central Highlands.

Earlier this year the TLC, in partnership with the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, enabled a conservation covenant to be registered against the title of the property to protect its natural values in perpetuity.

This highland property with exceptional ecological values is now owned by the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania and managed for the community by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre. It is an outstanding example of how cultural and natural values can be managed in harmony, with benefits for the community who can experience land in a truly meaningful way.

The trawtha makuminya partnership has been described as a model for reconciliation. We hope to build on that incredible partnership and apply the model elsewhere, in places just like Panatana.

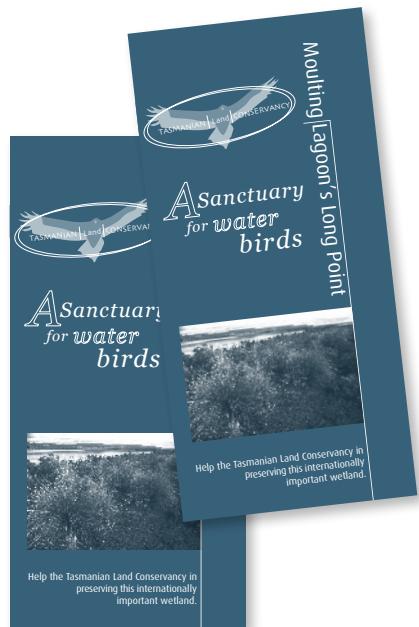
Has it really been a decade since the TLC raised funds and purchased its first reserve at Long Point? This 386 hectare peninsula reaches into the waters of the Moultling Lagoon, a Ramsar-listed wetland, and there is something lovely in the fact that in 2015 we are celebrating both the ten-year anniversary of Long Point Reserve and the protection of The Big Punchbowl to which it is now connected by this waterway that calls in migratory birds from around the globe.

The previous landowners, John and Jane Cotton, were keenly aware of the importance of the low-lying salt marshes, coastal grasslands and sand dunes, but they could also see the impact that grazing was having on the delicate habitat. Since the protection of Long Point in 2005, TLC volunteers have spent countless hours removing gorse, planting seedlings to mitigate the effect of grazing and undertaking restoration work.

John and Jane's foresight in selling Long Point to the TLC for conservation had two big impacts: the protection of an ecological jewel and the launch of the TLC as a powerful agent for conservation. Many who contributed to the Long Point fundraising campaign continue to support the TLC's conservation efforts.

The birthday celebration of Long Point Reserve is for everyone who has been part of the TLC's extraordinary journey since our humble beginnings all those years ago!

Thank you for putting your continued trust in the TLC and thank you for acting with the future in mind.



Remember this? This Long Point fundraising brochure helped the TLC raise \$140,000 to protect Long Point.



ON THE RESERVES

Patience is a virtue. Or at least, that's how the saying goes. When you're trying to undertake ecological burns, without patience, you'll never get anything to happen. Persistence helps too.

On Friday 25 and Saturday 26 September, the TLC conducted the first ecological burn in the Vale of Belvoir grasslands. Eight years after securing the purchase of this spectacular property, four years of developing a fire management strategy with specialist fire ecologists, 18 months to secure all the necessary permits, and four weeks of waiting to get the optimum weather window with two false starts.

The 28 hectare burn was scheduled for late winter/early spring to maximise the potential for dry grass and wet ground, which allows for a cool, low intensity fire, as well as minimising the likelihood for the fire to spread into the surrounding woodlands and rainforest.

Grasslands have evolved to be at their best under a steady level of disturbance, allowing high species diversity to occur between the grass tussocks. Prior to the arrival of Europeans in Tasmania, this was done through burning by Tasmanian Aborigines and grazing by native animals. After colonisation, cattle graziers moved into the Vale of Belvoir each summer and continued the mosaic burning practiced by the Tasmanian Aborigines. This continuation of disturbance has helped the condition of the grasslands at the Vale of Belvoir to rank among the best highland grasslands in Tasmania.

160 years after stock grazing began, the TLC is researching how best to manage the grasslands to maximise species diversity and minimise the impacts on

other special values, such as wetlands and sphagnum bogs. Burning will be a critical tool in managing the grasslands into the future. So, despite this burn being our first in eight years, our patience and persistence in getting this far will certainly pay off.

Denna Kingdom, Reserves Manager

Ecological burning is just one of the management tools put to use on the TLC reserves such as the Vale of Belvoir and Flat Rock. Science and management work extends across all of the TLC's reserves, including those that are destined to be purchased through the Revolving Fund program. Winter presents the perfect opportunity for reflection on the effectiveness of management methods and evaluation of the priorities for the next six to twelve months.

Reducing threats to natural values drives the agenda, such as threats that might occur through weather events, or wear and tear on infrastructure such as road culverts and gates. Other priorities are identified through the reserve science projects that highlight habitat issues. For example, during a routine visit to Brown Mountain Reserve, signs of lyrebirds were detected, prompting the establishment of monitoring cameras to determine if those sweeping round circles of cleared ground were indeed a lek, or a bird courtship display area, of the introduced birds. Analysis of those images will help inform how Brown Mountain (and our fraudulent feathery friends) should be managed into the future.



Reserve science activities over winter have included habitat surveys for Clarence galaxias at Skullbone Plains and the Chaostola butterfly at The Big Punchbowl, with more summer assessments to come at Silver Peppermint, Brown Mountain and Five Rivers. Long-term monitoring is now in place at Recherche Bay, Egg Islands, Lutregala Marsh (for cats) and the Vale of Belvoir to observe the results of the ecological burn.

Meanwhile, TLC volunteers have assisted in the painstaking analysis of images gathered from Lutregala Marsh, Vale of Belvoir and Five Rivers. More surprises may yet be in store following the analysis of sound recordings hoping to detect the elusive Australasian bittern at Egg Islands.

Now that the snow has melted at Skullbone Plains we are donning boots with the start of the snake season. The TLC's reserves never cease to present amazing opportunities to study nature, and to learn how best to manage it.

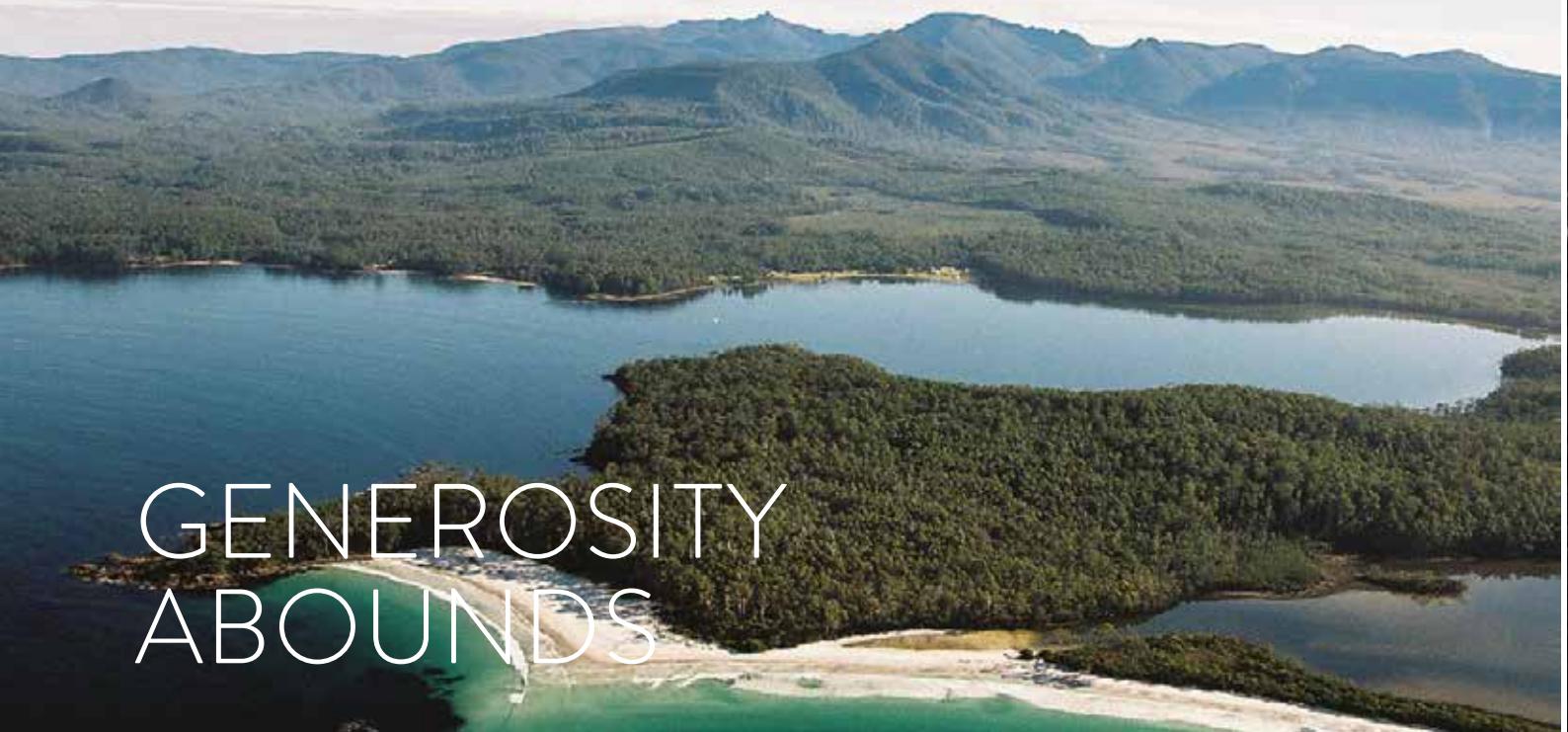
Images left to right:

The estuarine shore of the Rubicon Estuary.
Photo: Heath Holden

The Nive River flows through trawtha makuminy.
Photo: Matthew Newton

Long Point Reserve, looking east across Moulting Lagoon and the Hazards. Photo: Heath Holden

Ecological burning at Vale of Belvoir.
Photo: Heath Holden



GENEROSITY ABOUNDS

In September a group of 37 Tasmanian Land Conservancy bequest supporters boarded the boat Odalisque at Dover to motor south to Recherche Bay. The wind and seas picked up quietly, but the group were unruffled as they took in the stunning coastline and views of the Southern Ranges, and just got to know each other.

The TLC bequest community is quietly flourishing. Bequestors are people who pledge to leave a portion of their estate to the TLC, the money from which is usually held in the TLC Foundation and invested to generate interest. This forms a vital income stream for the ongoing management of the TLC's permanent reserves. It is also a powerful way for individuals to contribute to the TLC's conservation efforts, especially for those who might not have the ready means to do so through single donations or regular giving.

Every year, bequest supporters are invited to visit one of our sixteen reserves, so that they can gain insight into how their gift will be used for ongoing reserve management. This year saw the group heading to Recherche Bay, which was acquired by the TLC in 2006 after a long and high-profile community campaign to prevent logging across the whole peninsula. Recherche Bay is also the site of the early meeting between Tasmanian Aboriginal people and Europeans, famous for the peaceful and convivial exchange that took place between the locals and French explorers.

Some guests stayed on board the Odalisque to admire the breathtaking view, while others left the boat to get a taste for the magnificent Recherche

Bay peninsula. While onshore they received a moving welcome to country from Tasmanian Aboriginal Ruth Langford. Ruth offered an insight into the Aboriginal connection to place that resonated immensely with the supporters who have thought long and hard about their legacy to the environment. French historian Annick Thomas provided interpretation about the site thought to be the remains of the garden planted as part of the Labillardiere expedition to Tasmania in 1792-1793. Sib and Keith Corbett explained the geology and flora of the reserve, once again displaying their profound understanding of Tasmania's natural assets.

As ever, such excursions would not be possible – and wonderful – without the input of these generous volunteers. A very special thank you must go to the owners of the magnificent Odalisque, Pieter and Jo van der Woude and their trusty crew Matthew and Sharon, without whom the bequest party would never have arrived at Recherche Bay in such style and comfort. Travelling by water from Dover enabled the group to study the visual impact of current logging, affirming the protection of Recherche Bay which was originally slated for clearing from end-to-end.

The overwhelming spirit of the day was all about generosity, and we thank the volunteers who gave their time and expertise. We also really thank those supporters who have the foresight to think of how they can give back to conservation long beyond their time.

BEQUESTS

Are you interested in finding out more about leaving a bequest to the TLC? Call Sophie Marshall on 0419 389 390.

DON'T KEEP IT A SECRET!

Have you already left a bequest to the TLC in your will? Please let Sophie know if you are a bequest supporter so we can invite you on our next bequest supporter reserve trip!

THIS CHRISTMAS, HELP PROTECT PANATANA

Why not solve your Christmas shopping dilemmas with a donation to protect Panatana?

Please fill out the donation form enclosed and we will send you a card to pop under the tree. Or we can post the card directly to the person you wish to receive the gift.



WHAT'S ON

TLC CHRISTMAS BBQ

Thursday 17 December 1.00 – 4.00 pm at Waterworks Reserve (site 2)

Let's celebrate all the wonderful things that we have achieved together as a conservation community in 2015.

Please join us for a BBQ at Hobart's Waterworks Reserve and hear from CEO Jane Hutchinson who will talk about the great year past and the very exciting year ahead!

All food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks provided. Please make a donation on the day to help cover costs.

For catering, please RSVP by Monday 14 Dec at tlcxmasbbq2015.eventbrite.com.au or call the Hobart office on (03) 6225 1399.

VALE OF BELVOIR DISCOVERY DAY

Saturday 30 January 2016

The ever-popular Vale of Belvoir discovery day will take place again in early 2016. Remember that these events seem to fill up faster each time. We will send out an invitation in early January, so if you would like to come, please register early to avoid disappointment.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WEEDING

3-7 February, 17-21 February, 29 February-4 March

We have three great chances to volunteer on our reserves. These events are always great fun and incredibly rewarding. To find out more email Phill Roach at proach@tasland.org.au

For more volunteering opportunities visit tasland.org.au/volunteering or call Phill Roach on 0438 826 606

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP OUT?

The TLC always welcomes new volunteers, with a range of activities to suit your skills. Our volunteers help out by working on the reserves, assisting in science projects, and helping with our fundraising efforts.

If you are interested in receiving volunteer invitations or would like to learn more about getting involved with the TLC, register at tasland.org.au/volunteering/ or call our Community Engagement Coordinator Phill Roach on 0438 826 606.

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Departing wombat at Long Point Reserve. Photo: Heath Holden
Pied oystercatcher eggs at Panatana. Photo: Heath Holden