

WINTER 2016

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Shell-lined shoreline of Panatana. Photo: Heath Holden

It's very exciting to be so close to protecting Panatana as a Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) permanent reserve forever. As always, a proportion of the funds raised through the Panatana campaign will be secured in the TLC Foundation as a long-term, sustainable finance stream. This will help cover the effective costs of managing Panatana into the future, including weeding, fencing, fire management, and the science that underpins all of the work we do.

I would like to personally thank all of our wonderful supporters who have

already made a generous donation to help protect Panatana. I would also like to thank David and Jennie Sutherland for their wonderful pledge to match every dollar raised to help reach our goal. It's a fabulous opportunity to double the impact of every gift.

It's also exciting that we can now be immersed in the sounds of Panatana through acoustics recordings. These not only give us important conservation information, they also mean we can all experience the property, no matter where we are in the world.

Lastly, the TLC's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan has been finalised and can now be viewed on the TLC's website. Thank you again to all who contributed, helping take yet another step towards our vision for Tasmania to be a global leader in nature conservation.

I hope you enjoy reading more in this edition of the newsletter.

Jane Hutchinson, CEO

HIGHLIGHTS



Male scarlet robin (*Petroica multicolor*). Photo: Sarah Lloyd

Page 2 The protection of Panatana is within our reach, thanks to your great support. Read about the generous donors who are helping us reach that goal, and learn about the power of sound in ecological management.



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

Page 3 The effects of the ecological burns held at the Vale of Belvoir in 2015 come under the microscope in this story about the Ptunarra brown butterfly and its response to fire.



TLC's James Hattam chatting with supporters at the Flat Rock Discovery Day. Photo: Chris Crerar

Page 5 The TLC's discovery days are a great way to get into the bush and make contact with the conservation work that you are supporting. Read about our latest event at Flat Rock Reserve, and find out how to make sure you are receiving TLC invites.



THE HEAR AND NOW OF PANATANA

Silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*). Photo: Sarah Lloyd

The chorus of bird calls at Panatana is like a roll call of bird species. Ranging from the sweet calls of the yellow-throated honeyeater and the swift parrot, to the urgent echoes of black cockatoos, the birdlife that makes its way from the woodlands to the shell-lined shores of the Rubicon Estuary reveals a multitude of voices.

Sarah Lloyd and Ron Nagorcka are local naturalists who have been capturing the sounds of Panatana and surrounding Marshall Hills. Their recordings encapsulate the beauty of bird songs, but more importantly, they reveal the identities of the bird populations that are present in the region.

Acoustic monitoring is a rapidly developing method for registering the presence of birdlife. According to TLC Conservation Ecologist Matt Taylor, it is a highly effective way of knowing exactly what birds are present.

“You can spend all day on a reserve and only see five birds, but hear thirty. Setting up acoustic monitors is a great way to obtain valuable information about which species of birds are present, and what times of the day or year they are there,” says Matt.

Acoustic monitors can be set to record at the same time every day, allowing scientists to chart changes in movements and patterns across time. This kind of monitoring can provide critical longitudinal data.

The challenge lies in analysing the data, because while hundreds of hours of sound recordings can be collected, identifying the individual birds present requires skill and patience. Thankfully, Australian

and overseas universities are working on software that aims to automate the recognition of sound signatures.

According to Matt Taylor, there will come a time in the near future when we can plug all the existing data into software to shine a light on bird presence and movement, revealing so much about preferred habitat and species movement about the state.

“We will gain incredibly valuable insight into which birds are at our reserves and when. We know there are birds visiting our reserves from other parts of the state, or migrating from across the world, but we just don’t have the full picture. Acoustic monitoring can help remedy that.”

Acoustic monitoring is not exclusive to birds; the TLC has hosted this kind of research at the Vale of Belvoir Reserve for bats, which call at different frequencies, making it somewhat easier to discern individuals by ear. The TLC also hopes to conduct acoustic monitoring for frogs and the Australasian bittern at The Big Punchbowl Reserve in the future.

The protection of Panatana will provide valuable opportunities to learn more about the rich birdlife of the area, the ecological links to the rest of Tasmania, and wherever else those wings might go.

Stephenie Cahalan
Media and Communications

LISTEN

You can immerse yourself in the sounds of Panatana, recorded by local naturalists Sarah Lloyd and Ron Nagorcka at www.tasland.org.au/panatana



David and Jennie Sutherland. Photo: Jean Rothero

THE DAVID AND JENNIE SUTHERLAND FOUNDATION

David Sutherland’s love affair with Tasmania began fifty years ago when he walked the Overland Track, while Jennie Sutherland joined the adventure later on, in the 80s.

The Sutherlands have watched the TLC grow and evolve over the years. As they’ve done so, their support of the organisation has gradually grown too. This recently culminated in their contribution to the Panatana campaign of an offer to match, dollar-for-dollar, the amount raised in the closing months of the fundraising effort.

This is no small commitment, given the generosity of TLC supporters and their track record for getting us over the line. With \$140,000 to raise, we feel confident that both the Sutherlands and our supporters will soon be raising a toast to the guaranteed protection of Panatana forever.

After living and working for decades in remote and regional Australia, Jennie and David have strong bonds to the Australian landscape and Aboriginal culture. They have recently started their own foundation, through which they aim to support worthy causes, while also encouraging others to do the same. The TLC is honoured to be the first recipient of major support from the David and Jennie Sutherland Foundation.

The symphony of sounds tell the story of the many birds that make their homes in Panatana’s forests and woodlands.



AFTER THE FIRE

Ptunarra brown butterflies (*Oreixenica ptunarra*) Vale of Belvoir Reserve. Photo: Denna Kingdom

Research at the TLC’s Vale of Belvoir Reserve is shedding light on how an endangered Tasmanian butterfly copes with fire.

High intensity bushfires are a major threat to Ptunarra brown butterflies (*Oreixenica ptunarra*), but little is known about how the butterflies respond to ecological burns.

That could soon change though, as the TLC embarks on a new burning regime at its Vale of Belvoir Reserve – home to one of the largest and most secure populations of the butterfly in the state.

The first management burn at the Vale of Belvoir Reserve was conducted last September. TLC staff returned to the reserve this March to find that the butterflies were still present in the burn areas, and in numbers that appeared comparable to the pre-burn population.

Although many more years of data will be needed before concrete conclusions can be drawn about how the butterflies respond to management burns, the finding is a promising step in the right direction.

“What we can now say is that the Ptunarras are looking good, and the burning program is looking good for Ptunarras as well,” says TLC Reserve Manager Denna Kingdom.

The Ptunarra brown butterfly is a Tasmanian native and nationally endangered species that lives only in the grasslands of the Midlands, Northwest Plains and Central Plateau.

For Ptunarras, native grasslands provide shelter from predators, food, and a place to lay their eggs, deep in the bases of *Poa* tussocks. However, native grasslands are a locally threatened ecological community in

Tasmania due to land clearing, grazing and the introduction of exotic grasses.

In order for the grasslands on the TLC’s reserves to remain as such – and not turn into forest – they need to be disturbed. This can be achieved through low-level grazing or burning.

“We know that stock grazing has impacts on the wetlands, so we’re trying to see if we can manage the grasslands just with fire,” says Denna.

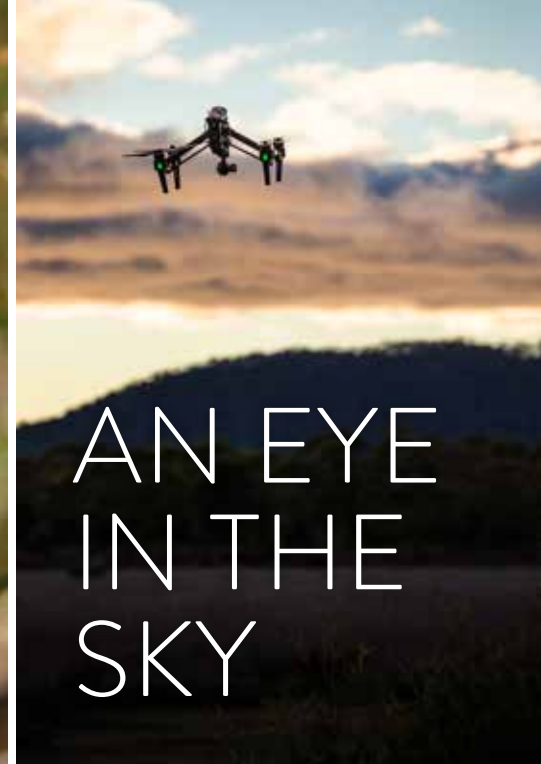
The TLC planned to minimise the impact of the September burn on the butterflies by timing the burn to coincide with their larval stage.

“In the larval stage the butterflies burrow right down into the bases of the tussocks, and those tussock bases don’t burn under the right conditions, which they were last September,” says Denna.

When TLC staff returned to survey the population in March, the butterflies were in their flying season, which is the only time their population can be counted.

More management burns will be carried out at the Vale of Belvoir Reserve in coming years, and the TLC will continue to closely monitor the Ptunarra brown butterfly population there.

Amelia Caddy
Communications Volunteer



AN EYE IN THE SKY

Drone flying over The Big Punchbowl Reserve. Photo: Heath Holden

Drone technology gives a bird’s eye view of The Big Punchbowl Reserve, and the results are stunning.

Some things are so vast they can only fully be appreciated from above. The TLC’s Big Punchbowl Reserve – so named for the naturally circular wetland within it – is one of them.

New drone footage, shot in early April, gives a landscape-scale view of the Freycinet Peninsula property, which is a diverse mix of wetlands, heath, saltmarsh and woodlands.

Stunning imagery has for decades played an important role in capturing the public’s attention for the benefit of nature, from Ansel Adams’ iconic photographs, to David Attenborough’s famed wildlife documentaries.

The drone footage of The Big Punchbowl Reserve showcases the landscape in detail not possible from a helicopter, and from a perspective not attainable from the ground.

This is the first time the TLC has used drone footage, and the hope is that it will continue to inspire you to help us protect nature.

To see some of the footage, go to www.tasland.org.au/news/



BRUCE HAY – HIGHLAND LEGEND



FOR SALE

Bruce Hay supervising road works at Archers Whareham New Leaf property. Photo: Chris Crerar

Milkmaids (*Burchardia umbellata*) at Chimneys Lagoon Revolving Fund property. Photo: Matthew Newton

In April, Tasmanian Land Conservancy staff farewelled highland legend Bruce Hay, who is retiring after years' of dedicated work.

Bruce Hay joined the TLC in 2011 when it acquired approximately 28,000 hectares of land on the Central Highlands that was previously owned by the forestry company Gunns Ltd.

With the acquisition of such a huge area of land came the equally big responsibility of managing it, and it was clear from the outset that Bruce was the best man for the job.

In 1968, Bruce started off with what was then the Forestry Commission. He went on to work as a qualified forester for the next 25 years before, in 1994, becoming an area forester in the Central Highlands. Then in 2011 he received an unlikely employment offer from the TLC.

Bruce first met the TLC's then-CEO Nathan Males and Conservation Science Manager Dr Sally Bryant when he showed them around the Central Highlands properties that were for sale. According to Sally, Bruce was identified as being a pivotal person for the TLC to employ, in order to be on the front foot when taking over the management of the properties..

Sally asked Bruce to manage the properties' transition from working forests to conservation reserves. Bruce, already considering retirement, agreed to give the TLC four months of his time.

“When I first met Bruce at Bronte I knew we had a quality person on the team. He knew the landscape, he knew the history, he knew the management, and he was totally capable of understanding our needs and what he could deliver,” says Sally.

“Most of the time he used a map, a compass and a notebook, and he always had a hard hat. That was about the level of sophistication of his equipment, and with those basic tools he was amazing.”

Bruce knows the Central Highlands like the back of his hand, and, when forced to choose, says Skullbone Plains is his favourite TLC reserve. Its recent inclusion in the World Heritage Area makes him enormously proud.

The ease with which Bruce transitioned from working in forestry to working in conservation is a sign of what is possible in Tasmania.

“It wasn't an issue - crossing the fence. My love for the bush and the environment is unquestionable. I feel quite privileged to have walked through all those years, to see how things have moved in the industry and also in conservation,” says Bruce.

We will miss having Bruce on the team, and the humble excellence with which he carried out all his work. We wish him and his wife Robyn all the very best for the future.

CHIMNEYS LAGOON

Would you like the opportunity to own a holiday home on Tasmania's east coast, while also contributing to the conservation of threatened vegetation communities and species?

This 23 hectare property features its own freshwater lagoon, and is close to safe swimming beaches, surfing and fishing opportunities, Town services are only seven kilometers away in lively St Helens, and connections to mains power, town water and telephone lines are all available close by. The multiple, generously-sized building envelopes would be well-suited to astute buyers interested in owning land for the purpose of building an amazing residence, or for those looking at eco-tourism opportunities (subject to council approval).

Money raised through the sale of these properties will help protect more land with high conservation value through the Forest Conservation Fund Revolving Fund, meaning your money will work twice as hard.

Interested?

Call Eliot Brennan on 0409 347 581 or Janine Waldron on 0409 429 660.

All our properties for sale can be viewed at www.tasland.org.au/properties-for-sale



TLC EVENTS

Supporters enjoying the Flat Rock and Chauncy Vale Discovery Day and more . Photo: Chris Crerar

DISCOVERY DAY AND MORE

The TLC's Flat Rock and Chauncy Vale Discovery Day was held on Saturday 16 April in conjunction with the Friends of Chauncy Vale, attracting over 120 people of all ages and interests.

The 455 hectare Flat Rock Reserve, located within a rocky dolerite range, protects conservation values such as silver peppermint and grassy blue gum forest. The Flat Rock Reserve combines with the Chauncy Vale Wildlife Sanctuary and nearby Pinnacle Conservation Area to create 1500 hectares of protected land.

Discovery Day visitors enjoyed a tour of the Day Dawn House led by Heather Chauncy, daughter of beloved children's author Nan Chauncy, who grew up in the magical natural environment. They also received presentations by TLC staff about the use of fixed-point photo monitoring and the use of remote cameras to monitor fauna such as Tasmanian devils and bettongs, plans for ecological burning, and the effects of fire on the local ecology.

PLANNING A GOOD EVENT

For the TLC, events such as the Flat Rock Discovery Day are an opportunity to welcome supporters and community members to its reserves, and to offer insight into how the landscapes are managed. The events are coordinated by TLC Community Engagement Co-ordinator Phill Roach.

Phill is no stranger to logistics, having

safely lead thousands of people up (and down!) the Sydney Harbour Bridge in his former job. Phill prepares for TLC events with the same seriousness as he would a bridge climb, planning activities to maximise the stimulation and enjoyment of visitors, paying close attention to safety and a smooth running-schedule. Supporters who have attended field days tell us they like the informative and relaxed atmosphere, seeing the tangible benefits of backing private conservation, and feeling part of a like-minded community.

Occasionally, things don't run to plan. It was with a great deal of consideration that the Vale of Belvoir Discovery Day was cancelled in February. With the Tasmanian Fire Service and Parks and Wildlife tending to fires burning in the Cradle Mountain National Park and on the nearby West Coast, the decision was made to stay clear of the area and limit unnecessary congestion in order to not potentially hamper the efforts of emergency services. Disappointment was great for supporters and organisers alike, but registered attendees expressed understanding and support, for which the TLC was enormously grateful.

The TLC holds several Discovery Days throughout the year, and there is a Panatana Discovery Day in the pipeline for later this year.

Event invitations are issued by email. Sign up to receive early event alerts at tasland.org.au/subscribe-to-our-newsletter



2016-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN



WWW.TASLAND.ORG.AU

Strategic Plan front page; Forty-spotted pardalote (*Pardalotus quadragintus*). Photo: Andrew Browne

STRATEGIC PLAN

After many hours spent in consultation with the community about the TLC's goals and aspirations, the TLC's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan is finished. Thank you to everyone who contributed their thoughts and expertise to this important process as the TLC navigates its course into the future of private land conservation.

The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan sets out the TLC's goals for the next five years, and outlines strategies for meeting these targets. Comprised of two parts, the full plan can be read at www.tasland.org.au/strategic-plan-2016-2020.

The accompanying Snapshot document outlines the TLC's values: nature, people, inquiry, collaboration, transparency and accountability, individual responsibility and autonomy, and efficiency, effectiveness and results. Clarifying the values that underpin the organisation has helped lay the foundations for the strategic planning process, so we think it is important to articulate them, as well as the intended goals and methods for meeting them.

Please read the plan and feel free to email info@tasland.org.au if you would like to obtain a hard copy.



WHAT'S ON

Visitors bird watching at The Big Punchbowl Reserve. Photo Heath Holden

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Week

Officially, it was Volunteer Week from 9 to 15 May. The TLC is still celebrating our volunteers who have folded, planted, weeded, monitored, researched, advised, guided, scored, governed, facilitated, built, drafted, authored and edited alongside us. The ecosystems and landscapes that we protect and manage together are in better shape thanks to your phenomenal effort. Well done!

Volunteering Developments

Would you like to share a great TLC volunteering experience, or advice on how we can improve our volunteer program? You can now submit your volunteer feedback anytime at www.tasland.org.au/volunteering.

Our Volunteer Involvement Policy Statement can now be downloaded as a PDF at www.tasland.org.au/volunteering.

TELLING THE STORY OF OUR SCIENCE

12th - 13th August

The TLC will exhibit at the 2016 National Science Week Festival of Bright Ideas. Last year's festival was a resounding success for the TLC with more than 5000 attendees, which organisers aim to double this year. We plan to launch an innovative online citizen science project in partnership with the ABC. Friday 12 August is Schools Day and Saturday 13 is open to the general public. Come along, be inspired and get involved.

BEQUEST PROGRAM

Bequests are a critical part of the TLC's ongoing operations into the future. Have you already included the TLC in your will? Please let us know. We run a special annual bequest supporter trip to one of our reserves and we want to ensure that you are invited!

Considering leaving a gift to the TLC in your will but would like more information? Please contact Sophie Marshall on 0419 389 390 or smarshall@tasland.org.au.

Morning dew, Five Rivers Reserve. Photo: Arwen Dyer

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