

# WINTER 2023

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Sloping Main Reserve extension. Photo by Dan Broun.

**What an impressive field season it has been across the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC), from the ongoing ecological monitoring program and reserve management activities to our conservation programs working with landholders across the state.**

I've been watching on from afar. In our last newsletter I was just about to set off on a three-month sabbatical through South America, exploring and experiencing conservation in different forms across Patagonia and central Chile, supported by the Social Impact Leadership Australia program. I'm now back in the office, and full of thanks for Dr. Cath Dickson, our Conservation Science and Planning Manager, for stepping into the role of Acting CEO over the period and guiding the TLC so well. Read on to learn more about the exciting projects she and the team have undertaken over the past three months. Often when we announce a new reserve project, it's something

we've been quietly working on for a very long time. So it is with the campaign to extend our newest reserve, Sloping Main, the result of more than a year's work behind the scenes. The extension will connect eucalypt forests and woodlands to the extensive coastal wetlands and spectacular coastline. It's one of the highlights of my work with the TLC, having the opportunity to secure vital conservation properties such as this.

The extension will protect a large coastal saltmarsh full of diversity, with a complexity of intricate herb fields and sedgeland supporting an array of migratory and local bird species, not to mention the countless wombats grazing on the fringing grasslands. The place is simply alive wherever you look, night or day. A special thank you to all who have already donated to the campaign and to the Elsie Cameron Foundation for their enduring support in the protection of such important places.

As we always say, protection is just the beginning of the conservation journey. On-ground management is critical to ensuring the long-term conservation of our reserves. There's a perfect example of that, and of the approach we'll apply at Sloping Main, in the article about revegetation at Long Point Reserve. On the east coast, Long Point is our oldest reserve, and over the past three years we've been working with NRM South, Nature Glenelg Trust and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre to restore it and safeguard its future.

In this newsletter, you will hear more about the diverse community of supporters that make the TLC so special, the ever-popular Discovery Day/Weekend, held this year at Five Rivers Reserve, and businesses doing great things in support of TLC.

– **James Hattam**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

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## HIGHLIGHTS



Black swans at Sloping Main Reserve Extension. Photo by Rob Blakers.

**Page 2** A chance to protect a beautiful saltmarsh wetland next to Sloping Main Reserve.



Kids activities at our Discovery Day. Photo by Eddie Safarik.

**Page 4** All the highlights from our Discovery Day trip to Five Rivers Reserve.



Sheep at White Gum Farm. Photo supplied by Another Tomorrow.

**Page 5** From appealing wildlife art to sustainable fashion, meet some businesses supporting the TLC.





# EXTEND SLOPING MAIN RESERVE

Aerial view of Sloping Main Reserve extension. Photo by Rob Blakers.

Guinea flower (*Hibbertia*) at Sloping Main Reserve extension. Photo by Rob Blakers.

**In our Summer newsletter, we were pleased to announce that thanks to so many of our supporters, we had the funds to establish Sloping Main Reserve in a record four months! Protecting Sloping Main Reserve has ensured that threatened vegetation communities on the Tasman Peninsula can be cared for, forever.**

Many Tasman Peninsula locals donated to Sloping Main Reserve. Having the community involved in the project was a real boost for us; one community member – the reserve’s closest neighbour – has even agreed to sell his special block to TLC for protection into the future. This is a magnificent opportunity to extend Sloping Main Reserve to take in a spectacular piece of wetland habitat.

One of the simplest ways we make our reserves more effective and more climate resilient is to make them bigger, allowing species to move from place to place and ensuring that a range of habitats is protected. Expanded, Sloping Main Reserve will be 660 hectares. Together with neighbouring Lime Bay State Reserve and Coal Mines Historic Site, it will be part of 2,220 hectares of contiguous conservation reserve on the Tasman Peninsula.

This extension of our existing reserve is a rare opportunity for the TLC to acquire coastal frontage, especially in an area highly sought after for development. As any of you who have spent time on the peninsula would know, this is a popular place to own a shack! We consider ourselves very lucky to have been the vendor’s chosen buyer. Purchasing this adjoining land has been made

possible thanks to the generosity of the Elsie Cameron Foundation.

Half of this property is a large, nationally vulnerable saltmarsh, known as Burdens Marsh. This saltmarsh has very high conservation values, both because of the vegetation it supports and because it is habitat for many wetland species, including migratory shorebirds, frogs, reptiles and invertebrates.

The marsh’s location also makes it unusually adaptable to climate change impacts.

As Conservation Science and Planning Manager, Dr Cath Dickson, says, ‘Burden’s Marsh provides important breeding and feeding habitats for our waterbirds and waders. It’s a rare example of this nationally vulnerable habitat, tucked away behind the sand dunes where it is safe from storm surges.’

On drier ground are several areas of critically endangered black gum forest, and an extensive coastal dune system

that supports healthy threatened white gum coastal forest.

Purchasing the land is just the first step. Managing the land for conservation is a vital part of what we do. We still need \$715,000 to fund monitoring and active conservation management, so we can care for this important addition to Sloping Main Reserve in perpetuity.

The biodiversity of this property is superb. It’s also incredibly beautiful. You can see photos and watch video of the saltmarsh and coastal region, and the many birds who rely on this habitat, at [tasland.org.au/reserves/sloping-main-extension](http://tasland.org.au/reserves/sloping-main-extension)

Thanks to our work with Nature Glenelg Trust at Long Point Reserve (see more on this on page 5), we have explored a host of approaches to ensuring the survival of saltmarsh wetlands in the face of rising sea levels. As at Long Point Reserve, Burdens Marsh’s previous owners have installed infrastructure to alter the marsh, and we are looking forward to developing a plan for how we might intervene to best protect its natural values.

This kind of long-term conservation management, which takes into account historical baselines, human intervention and a climate-changed future, is what we do to make sure habitat is protected in perpetuity. If we are successful in adding this property to Sloping Main Reserve, we will be keeping a close eye on how its plant and animal inhabitants fare, and making sure we have the funding to look after them well into the future.



## GIVE .....

**Help us protect this vital, vulnerable saltmarsh wetland so it can continue to be a sanctuary for birds, reptiles, marsupials and invertebrates.**

**Visit [tasland.org.au/donate](http://tasland.org.au/donate) or call us on 03 6225 1399**





# DISCOVERY DAY

Supporters and staff at Five Rivers Reserve Discovery Day. Photos by Eddie Safarik.

*After ten years running the TLC's events, working with our volunteers and visitors, Phill Laroche is heading off on a new conservation challenge. He'll be missed by many. He shares his thoughts on his last Discovery Day, held in March in the Central Highlands.*

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**There's something extraordinary about conversations held at night, particularly around a crackling fire. This is multiplied when camped at elevation, under a blanketing of stars, huddling together for protection against the sharp chill. I think it's the shared experience of vulnerability. Ancient social survival instincts reanimate, driving us to bond together. There are wild creatures out there. Circumstances such as these can quickly turn strangers into good fellows.**

And so it was at our March Five Rivers Reserve Discovery Day. Camped out at the ruins of Roscarborough Homestead, with only stars, nocturnal sounds and fire-lit faces painted against a black canvas of night to stimulate us, we became fast friends and masterful storytellers shaping shared mythologies.

There truly were wild creatures out there. Eastern quolls are relatively abundant at Five Rivers Reserve, bucking an overall population decline trend in the Central Highlands and Tasmania in general. TLC fauna ecologist Dr Dave Hamilton led campers on forays into the cold night to go spotlighting and set sand traps beyond the reach of the campfire's glow. Dave has been studying Five

Rivers' quolls to discover what is driving overall population decline. Campers slept lightly, excited that tomorrow could bring them close to such a cryptic and charismatic species.

Headlamp beams danced around the predawn campsite as small, eager groups headed out with Dave. The sand traps revealed eastern quolls, wombats and devils. Dave explained that the owners of these prints might have been the micro-chipped quolls that are critical to informing our understanding of population decline.

Campfires and hot brekky rolls greeted the returning campers. Day trippers arrived soon after, growing the group to around one hundred folks.

At 11,000 hectares, Five Rivers Reserve is a vast and varied landscape - impossible to fully experience in one day - so we focused on active science projects and adaptive management efforts.

Attendees bundled off by bus to Top Marsh to see how we have caged critically endangered cider gum saplings to protect them from browsing. Five River's cider gums were hit by wildfires in 2019. TLC conservation ecologist Aimee Bliss explained how the cider gums' special adaptation - sugar-rich sap - defends them from the extreme cold air in their marshlands niche, but also makes them especially attractive to browsing deer and native fauna.

TLC Reserves Officer Grant Houniet asked attendees to grapple with the challenges of managing invasive fallow deer, while University of Tasmania PhD

candidate Tom Guy shared insights into his long-term study on the effects of browsing on highlands native vegetation.

Other groups walked through cabbage gum forests to Bens Marsh, where TLC's Acting CEO Dr Cath Dickson and Australian Mountain Research Facility (AMRF) lead researcher Dr Mark Hovenden shared their knowledge of rich marshland flora. Cath spoke about how the TLC is preparing for a changed climate, mapping climate refugia and researching intervention. Mark explained how AMRF's field research site studies the effects of climate change on subalpine grasslands.

Attendees returned home knowing that as Earth's climate warms, large-scale protected areas like Five Rivers Reserve become increasingly important, enhancing resilience, providing refuge for native fauna and flora, and providing abundant opportunities to observe, learn and hopefully help nature adapt.

**-Phill Laroche**  
Community Engagement Coordinator



## ACT .....

Have you thought about leaving a legacy for nature? Find out more about how you can protect the places you love forever at [tasland.org.au/bequests](https://tasland.org.au/bequests)





# BUSINESSES DOING GOOD

Barega wool stencil. Photo supplied by Another Tomorrow.

**We are proud to partner and work with many businesses and social enterprises that are dedicated to making the world better. There are many ways that businesses can help the TLC protect our wild places for the future.**

Our business supporters come in all shapes and sizes, and each of them supports the TLC in a way that suits their business. Guests at cool Launceston hotel Change Overnight can choose to contribute to one of nine charities, including the TLC. Homeful by Design builds small homes and make a contribution to the TLC to recognise the carbon they expend, while Hobart Airport has joined the Land for Wildlife program.

We have recently welcomed ecological artists, Eggpicnic, and top-flight fashionistas, Another Tomorrow, to the roll call of businesses doing good in support of the TLC.

Eggpicnic specialise in unique and locally made fine art prints and public art. They create characters of beloved fauna that tread a fine line between art and design, and capture the beauty of the natural world with the hope of inspiring others to protect it.

If you need a cool, fun native bird to adorn your wall or your body, visit their website at [eggpicnic.com](http://eggpicnic.com) – 25% of profits on selected artworks are donated to the TLC. See the 'What's On' section for another way you can support us via Eggpicnic right now.

Another Tomorrow, based in New York, is modeling a new future for fashion,

with a circular vision for luxury guided by a value system based on three pillars: human, animal, and environmental welfare. As well as supporting the TLC through establishing a Foundation fund, Another Tomorrow source their ethical wool from White Gum Wool and Barega Merino in Tasmania.

Vanessa Barboni Hallik of Another Tomorrow says, 'We believe in partnering for impact in the communities from which we source. The TLC has remarkable relationships with landowners, and I witnessed first-hand how transformative this is in the Tasmanian Midlands. Giving to the TLC was a clear and meaningful choice. We wanted to make a multi-year commitment to invest in conservation and biodiversity in Tasmania – and creating a fund made our efforts more transformative and accountable.'

To find out more about Another Tomorrow's principles and their beautiful clothes, visit [anothertomorrow.co](http://anothertomorrow.co)

The list of our business supporters has also recently been joined by Sharp Airlines.

In October last year, Land for Wildlife (LFW) Coordinator (South), Phil Wise, travelled to Flinders Island to assess the properties of four new members. He also visited longstanding LFW members to catch up on how their properties were going.

To travel to and from the island we used Sharp Airlines. Following some really positive discussions, Sharp Airlines have come on board to support the

Illustration by Eggpicnic.



TLC to expand our LFW Program on both Flinders and King Islands. We are extremely grateful to this support and look forward to getting back out to both islands when it fits in with all the other exciting work we are doing.

It was a very successful trip, and we are pleased to now be working with Flinders Island resident, Kat Hopkins. Kat is President of the Furneaux Landcare group and she has become a TLC LFW volunteer assessor, conducting property assessments around the island. Phil also dropped off a pool of WildTracker cameras, and Kat will be coordinating their use by LFW members.



## EXPLORE .....

Find out how your business can support the TLC: visit [tasland.org.au/how-to-give-to-the-tlc](http://tasland.org.au/how-to-give-to-the-tlc), or get in touch with Philanthropy and Engagement Manager, Jessie Bodor, at [jbodor@tasland.org.au](mailto:jbodor@tasland.org.au) or 03 6225 1399





# REPLANTING LONG POINT RESERVE

Dan Gfeller, TLC Reserves Officer, at Long Point Reserve. Photo by Eddie Safarik.

Samphire (*Sarcocornia quinqueflora*) at Long Point Reserve. Photo by Eddie Safarik.

**Lovers of wetlands will have been following along for the past three years, as we've worked with Nature Glenelg Trust (NGT) to restore the natural flow of water at Long Point Reserve, on Moulting Lagoon. The whole show wrapped up in May, finishing with a replanting on those restoration works.**

Before we acquired this property for conservation, previous owners had installed drainage infrastructure, including to dry out fields for grazing and for a failed aquaculture project. Long Point Reserve is naturally a saltmarsh wetland, and this drainage had displaced many of the species reliant on regular dampness. Moulting Lagoon is home to molluscs and crustaceans that are an important food source for birds and fish. Saltmarsh and seagrass wetlands regulate the water quality and supply food that native fish and birds need to survive. That includes the bream and flounder that are plentiful on Moulting Lagoon, as well as the estuary's Pacific oyster farms.

NGT has been removing drains in a careful and evidence-based manner so that natural water flow is restored across the property. This is good news for saltmarsh communities: climate change projections for sea-level rise and increased storm surges mean this vegetation is going to need a clear path to migrate upslope as the water gets higher.

During March over ten days, multiple excavators removed levees and drains, some built by convicts in the early 1880s, others as late as the 1990s.

We're already seeing samphire, a salt-tolerant succulent, regenerating in the places where drain removal was completed last year. Now our job is to give these plants and others a helping hand across the reserve.

In early May, Reserves Officers Dan Gfeller and Iden Reidy got on the shovels and planned out where the revegetation would happen. After studying the landscape to see what plants were regrowing where, and reviewing forecasts for where the water would flow, the team imagined a future envelope of great growing potential and got to work.

With a team of local volunteers, they planted 1,200 plants in one day. It wasn't a nice day – cold weather and plenty of sticky mud – but everyone was enthusiastic and put in an amazing effort. When you consider the species they planted were samphire (*Sarcocornia quinqueflora*), grasses (*Austrostipa stipoides*) and sedges (*Gahnia filum*) – all very close to the ground, with a lot of repetitive, back-breaking bending – we're even more grateful to volunteers Jennie and Rob Churchill, Mark Lawrence and Stuart Dudgeon. We're all looking forward to seeing these plants flourishing in their restored surroundings.

This work is part of a project supported by NRM South through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

## WHY DO SALT MARSHES MATTER?

**Half of Tasmania's saltmarsh wetlands have been lost or degraded, mostly due to land-use changes. Weeds are a major risk to saltmarsh vegetation, while climate change and sea-level rise bring more threats.**

Coastal saltmarsh wetlands are unique habitats, generally tidal and inundated regularly or occasionally. Salt-tolerant plants such as succulents, herbs, grasses and low shrubs grow, providing habitat for crabs, snails, insects, spiders and fish. Saltmarshes connect land and sea, filter run-off water and sequester atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Remaining coastal saltmarsh wetlands are found in a narrow margin around Tasmania in shallow, sheltered intertidal zones. Dr Eric Woehler notes that 'pressures on Tasmania's saltmarshes have seen much of this habitat lost, and rising sea levels may exacerbate those pressures. Those kept intact will have the greatest resilience, maintaining their critical ecosystem roles well into the future.'

The TLC protects one of the largest and most intact saltmarsh areas in Tasmania, at Long Point Reserve. We also work with the Cradle Coast Authority to protect threatened coastal saltmarsh on private properties, including some Land for Wildlife properties.

Saltmarshes are a vital part of Tasmania's habitat protection jigsaw. That's why it's so important for us to protect a prime example of this increasingly vulnerable habitat at Sloping Main Reserve.





# WHAT'S ON

Landscape at Sloping Main Reserve extension. Photo by Dan Broun.



White-fronted chat at Sloping Main. Photo by Rob Blakers.

## A NEW EYE ON NATURE – PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

**Tuesday 4 – Tuesday 25 July, Wild Island Hobart**

This year, three emerging nature photographers had the rare opportunity to spend a week on a TLC reserve, casting a fresh eye on the complex and stunning nature we protect. Thanks to this residency, Kelly Slater, Nick Green and Karen Keefe have produced photos that will spark a conversation about what nature is, what it is becoming, and how conservation organisations such as the TLC might respond.

## NATURAL GUARDIANS AT THE HADLEY'S ART PRIZE

**Friday 4 August**

We'll be celebrating the support of everyone who is leaving a gift to the TLC in their will at this special event. This exclusive evening at the Hadley's Art Prize will include a tour with curator Amy Jackett.

If you've left a gift in your will but haven't yet let us know, contact Annabelle, Planned Giving Coordinator, at [asweetman@tasland.org.au](mailto:asweetman@tasland.org.au)

## WINTER WARMERS

**All Winter**

You don't have to be an outdoor type to support the TLC. If your ideal winter is getting into your comfiest clothes or just staying warm, we can help.

Canberra artists, Eggpicnic, have just released an extra special TLC jumper featuring a wedge-tailed eagle and forty spotted pardalote in flight. Ethically sourced, limited-edition jumpers, with 25% of proceeds going to the TLC: it doesn't get much better. Visit [eggpicnic.com/product/tasland-jumper](http://eggpicnic.com/product/tasland-jumper) to get yourself or a friend into one.

Need a book to read while you're rugged up in your new jumper? We have just released a beautiful new paperback edition of *Breathing space*, the TLC-commissioned anthology of poems, stories and essays about Tasmanians' relationship with nature.

Pop into your local Tassie bookshop or order a copy online from Fullers Bookshop at [shop.fullersbookshop.com.au](http://shop.fullersbookshop.com.au)





We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

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