

LAND FOR WILDLIFE



News

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Sloping Main. Photo: Andy Townsend

Message from the LFW Coordinator

So far this year the Land for Wildlife and WildTracker Programs have joined forces to host two workshops for our members. These are a great way for members to connect with each other in a region, learn new facts and take away practical knowledge to apply to their own land. It also gives us the chance to meet you and keep you informed about our programs.

In February we went south to the Tinderbox community and learned about nest boxes for forty-spotted pardalotes. This tiny bird is an endangered species that lives on several LFW properties neighbouring the Tasmanian Land Conservancy's Tinderbox Reserve. Dr Sally Bryant gave us a great talk about the ecology of the birds, which helped to explain the importance of getting the box design and placement right. Dr Fernanda Alves from the Difficult Birds Research Group told us about parasitic insects that can affect the breeding success and survival of the birds and talked about her innovative feather dispenser that lets birds deliver insecticide directly to the nests.

Everyone left with a nest box design. Andrew Marshall, who attended the workshop with his two daughters, has since sent us some photos of the nest boxes they had made and installed on their Tinderbox property. We now wait with bated breath to hear that the birds have moved in to breed!

For the second workshop we headed north to Exeter to learn about preserving and enhancing the habitat of the eastern barred bandicoot. Steve Izzard from NRM North's Eastern Barred Bandicoot Project told us about the revegetation and research that is happening to benefit the species. TLC ecologist Helen Morgan discussed the ecology of the species and her work producing bandicoot management plans and Land for Wildlife Assessments.

Afterwards, participants split up to learn about plant identification with TLC Ecologist Anna Povey, or play a wildlife ID game with Glen Bain from TLC's WildTracker program.

These workshops are fun, interactive and a great chance to socialise with like-minded people with cake and cuppa in hand.

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The next workshop is being planned for somewhere in the northwest, and we are hoping to make our central theme the giant freshwater crayfish!

PHIL WISE – LFW COORDINATOR



Eastern barred bandicoot. Photo: Henry Cook



Sloping Main. Photo: Eddie Safarik



Anna Povey at Prosser River Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik

Establishing a reserve on the Tasman Peninsula

As a LFW member, you might not be familiar with some of the other work that the TLC does. Our mission is protecting nature on private land and, as well as working with landholders on their own properties, we also establish private nature reserves that we manage ourselves. Most recently, we protected more than 2,000 hectares of glorious habitat on Tasmania's east coast by setting up Kelvedon Hills Reserve earlier this year. And now we're raising funds to establish a reserve at Sloping Main on the Tasman Peninsula.

This 425 hectare property is almost entirely covered in a rich mosaic of native vegetation, including seven threatened vegetation communities – a diversity of threatened vegetation greater than on any other of the TLC's 25 reserves. This area is also vitally important as a safe haven for mammals. The Tasman Peninsula is home to one of the last remaining populations of Tasmanian devils that is free of devil facial tumour disease and is wonderful habitat for spotted-tailed quolls. Excitingly, there is potential for the property to provide a refuge for one of Tasmania's most cryptic and least understood mammal species – the Tasman Peninsula dusky antechinus, a species that was only described in 2015. Thanks to the diversity of vegetation and the sweeping coastline that borders the property, this is also excellent habitat for avian predators, including white-bellied sea eagles, grey goshawks and wedge-tailed eagles.

This has long been a place where people have loved nature. Land for Wildlife properties are scattered across the Tasman Peninsula – if yours is among them and you'd like us to send you more information about Sloping Main, let us know! You can also find out more and contribute to the campaign at tasland.org.au/reserves/sloping-main

LFW in the north

The LFW team is expanding! As well as Coordinator Phil Wise, we now have a northern Coordinator, Anna Povey. You may have encountered Anna before: she has been working out of the TLC's Launceston office, helping conservation covenant landowners steward their blocks, for the past eight years. Anna is an ecologist with broad, practical experience over 30 years, including growing native plants, controlling weeds and revegetating, flora surveys, a consulting business, environmental education and small mammal research. She tells us that she learns something from every landholder she meets. Anna starts working on LFW in September and you can reach her on apovey@tasland.org.au

Help us spot homes for forty-spots

Forty-spotted pardalotes are small, endangered birds endemic to Tasmania. They only occur in forests where they can find their preferred food tree, white gums (*Eucalyptus viminalis*).

Identifying areas of potential habitat (based on the occurrence of white gums) helps us plan recovery actions. We researchers at the Australian National University have used a statistical tool to predict the distribution of white gums across Tasmania – you can see that map here [whitegum.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/index.html]. An honours student is also carrying out field surveys to ground-truth the model predictions.

Would you like to help us identify areas where white gums might be present? Even if your property falls within one of the categories in the map, but you do not have white gums we still would love to hear from you, because information on absence of white gums is also very important to us. If you want to help us identify potential habitat for forty-spotted pardalotes, please contact me on 0484 326 745 or fernanda.alves@anu.edu.au.

FERNANDA ALVES



Forty-spotted pardalote. Photo: Chris Tzaros





Wombat. Photo: Matt Palmer

LFW People: Robert Jordan

There are many reasons that people join LFW. Some do it to become part of the greater conservation community, some join to learn how to best manage the land that surrounds their home for the benefit of wildlife, and some do it to make a statement of intent about how much preserving wildlife and habitats mean to them. Many people join for all of those reasons!

In recent times the LFW team had the deep pleasure of working with Robert Jordan, and his sister and brother-in-law, Sue and Paul DalSasso, to register a property in north west Tasmania for very personal reasons. Sue explains...

My brother Rob passed away from an aggressive cancer on 9 July 2022 aged 57.

He had always been passionate about the environment and had for a number of years wanted to buy a property on which he could protect and conserve the bush and wildlife.

With his health deteriorating, this became a priority. My husband Paul had alerts out on any potential properties with conservation value and we finally found the perfect place.

The property is a 12-acre bush block with some cleared land running alongside the Mersey River at Liena. As a bonus it has a shingled cabin, off the grid! It is located in a farming valley but surrounded by national parks and forest reserves, with the Mersey River Forest Reserve bordering a couple of our boundaries.

Despite Rob being unwell when he first saw the property, he soon realised it was the place he'd been looking for: hearing the gentle flow of the river, the abundance of birdlife and evidence of various wildlife. It had everything – the bush with some amazing trees, gullies with ferns, cleared areas which could be planted up, and the land could be improved by removing non-endemic plants, all of which would aid in more wildlife.

Rob was determined to sign up with LFW, having been involved with this organisation previously as an assistant volunteer. The vendors, Michael and Julie, were extremely



Robert Jordan and Ali Dugand

generous and understanding in allowing us time at the property before settlement. We met Ali, a volunteer assessor for LFW, who gave us some useful advice and gave Rob the LFW sign – a very proud moment.

Phil Wise organised a night camera for Rob to capture some of the wildlife in the area and we were able to view pademelons, brush tailed possums, wombats, native rats, a feral cat (a future project) and possibly an eastern quoll.

The times we spent there with Rob gave him a renewed lease on life and deep satisfaction in owning and conserving into perpetuity the property of his dreams. The family are now considering whether a conservation covenant might be possible to further ensure that Rob's dream becomes reality.

We thank the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, including LFW, for their amazing organisation and all the support they gave in helping Rob attain satisfaction and contentment at the end of his life.

This property is his lasting legacy.

SUE DALSSASSO

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The new and improved WildTracker will be relaunched in August!

WildTracker relaunch

We are excited to announce that Land for Wildlife and the TLC's citizen science program, WildTracker, will be teaming up this year, providing stewardship, conservation tools and advice to members.

What is WildTracker?

WildTracker is a citizen science program designed for private landholders to upload, tag and share images of wildlife that are collected using motion-sensor camera traps. The observation data collected by citizen scientists helps ecologists at the TLC monitor wildlife trends and make more informed conservation decisions.

You may have heard the name WildTracker before, or perhaps you have even participated in previous iterations of the program, but over the last year we have been redeveloping the online platform to make it more user-friendly, bug-free and focused on the landholder experience. The new and improved WildTracker will be relaunched in August.

How does it work?

When WildTracker relaunches, we'll be looking for new participants: why not get involved! If you're already on the waiting list, we haven't forgotten you; otherwise, we'll be taking expressions of interest via the WildTracker website. You'll get your own User Dashboard and Property Page that only you can access. You might like to invite family, friends or neighbours to see all the juicy data that you collect.

You'll be able to create new survey sites, upload images from camera trap surveys and tag the animals you see in your images using our updated 'Fauna Classifier'. Don't worry if you are not confident in identifying your local species, we just want you to give it a try. And every wombat that you tag is one less for us!

WildTracker includes resources to help you along the way, like how to tell a potoroo apart from a bettong, where and how to set up a camera trap effectively, and everything that is special about the critters you record.

Sounds good, but I don't have a camera-trap

We will be setting up hubs in key locations across Tasmania so WildTrackers can borrow a camera-trap from the TLC. Otherwise, if you're in the market to buy a new wildlife camera, have a look at outdoorcameras.com.au. Give them a call, mention **WildTracker** and the discount code **BANDISNOOT** (yes, snoot), to receive \$40 off the Swift Enduro model. All we ask is that you share your photos with us on WildTracker when your new toy arrives.

Keep an eye on your emails and the next newsletter for updates on WildTracker and how you can be a part of the program. Thanks to the Ian Potter Foundation for making this work possible.

DR GLEN BAIN - WILDTRACKER COORDINATOR

WHAT'S ON

Watch your inbox for more information and links to reserve your spot at the following events:

> SATURDAY 27 AUGUST

We will be holding a workshop in the north-west (location to be confirmed) with a focus on giant freshwater crayfish and other wildlife that lives in their habitat – see page one for more information.

> FIRST WEEKEND OF DECEMBER

Come along to a birding field visit weekend in partnership with Inala Nature Tours on south Bruny Island.