

TASMANIAN  
LAND  
CONSERVANCY

# SUMMER 2022

NL 72

*Xerochrysum subundulatum*, Vale of Belvoir Reserve. Photo: Matt Newton.

**Announcing a new reserve is one of the most inspiring and rewarding aspects of our work at the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC). We are delighted to share the news that Sloping Main Reserve is protected, thanks to the commitment and generosity of so many people. We are incredibly grateful for our community of supporters. We also know that the conservation journey is only just beginning, with long-term management – informed by science – critical to the effective and lasting conservation of the rare and threatened species and habitats that characterize Sloping Main Reserve.**

Our summer newsletter is full of great stories from all the different teams who work across the TLC to achieve our

conservation aims. You'll see that this year we are celebrating 10-years of the Midlands Conservation Fund – watch a short film about the MCF at [vimeo.com/tasland/mcf10](https://vimeo.com/tasland/mcf10). This innovative program is a partnership with Bush Heritage Australia, and it brings farmers and conservationists together to look after some of our rarest habitats. We're proud of the lasting results it has already achieved, and the enduring relationships that have been built because of the MCF. A shared value of conserving nature brings all sorts of people together.

As TLC ends its 21st year I am frequently grateful for the phenomenal contribution of so many, all supporting the organisation to be where it is today. Foremost among them is our retiring TLC Board Chair, Jennie Churchill.

Jennie has served on the board for ten years and been chair for three, voluntarily contributing an impressive and eye watering 186 days during her time with us. It has been such a pleasure to work alongside Jennie and I thank her for her guidance, wisdom and steadfast support of me and the whole TLC team.

On behalf of all of us at the TLC we hope you have had a fantastic 2022 and we thank you for all your support and belief in the work that we do to protect nature across Tasmania. Have a happy and safe festive season and we look forward to another exciting year in 2023 – watch this space!

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

## HIGHLIGHTS



Echidna. Photo: Heath Holden.

### Page 2

Ten years of Tasmanian Midlands conservation celebrated in Ross.



Superb fairy wren. Photo: Peter Vaughan.

### Page 4

Summer is time for joeys and chicks across our reserves.

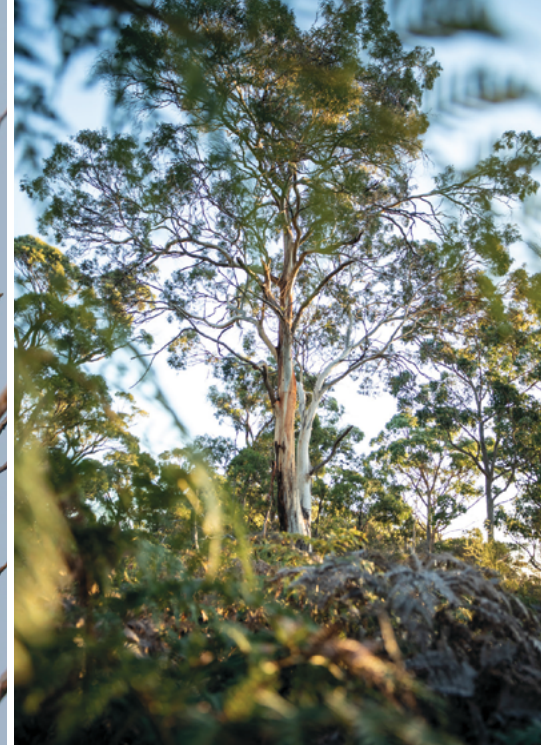


Sloping Main Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik.

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We're delighted to declare our newest reserve at Sloping Main.





# SUPPORTING NATURE

White-fronted chat. Photo: Rob Blakers.

**Purchasing a property for conservation and establishing a reserve is only the start of the TLC conservation journey. Active management makes the long-term difference for habitats and species. To achieve this, we invest significantly in scientific monitoring and land management. Looking after our reserves costs \$64 per hectare: that's a total of \$1,160,000 this year.**

When we establish a reserve, funds are invested in the TLC Foundation to manage it in perpetuity. Thanks to the support of so many, the Foundation now funds 72% of conservation management work across our reserves. But each year while we grow the capital in the Foundation to fund 100% we need to make up the difference, to ensure many of our older reserves can be managed and monitored effectively.

This year the Foundation is paying for an impressive \$934,000 of science and management work, the largest investment in TLC's history. However, we still need to bridge the gap and raise an additional \$226,000 to fund our efforts this financial year.

At the iconic Vale of Belvoir Reserve, we are the custodians of threatened ptunarra brown butterflies, grassland candles and alpine daisies. These species have flourished here thanks to a long and complex history of disturbance by fire and grazing. Keeping the balance right requires intensive monitoring and experimentation – right now, we are seeing a decline in grassland candles that we're desperate to understand and rectify. Additional support from you will help us make sure the Vale's species flourish as the climate dries and fire regimes change.

At Egg Islands Reserve, a decade of our intensive weeding has turned a landscape dominated by Spanish heath into one where native species can thrive. But we have so much more to learn about the wildlife that lives here. With predators absent, Egg Islands Reserve could provide lessons about small mammal behaviour that will help us better manage our other reserves, through your support.

Effective conservation management is core to the TLC's efforts to protect nature across our reserves in perpetuity. Protecting critically endangered alpine wildflowers, managing fire, controlling invasive species and maintaining vital infrastructure are all critical to ensure our reserves thrive.



## GIVE .....

**With your help, we can expand our conservation management to better safeguard Tasmania's most special places.**

**The future is in our nature: support us at [tasland.org.au/donate](https://tasland.org.au/donate) or call the TLC office on 03 6225 1399**

Sloping Main Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik.

## SLOPING MAIN IS A RESERVE!

**Sloping Main has been one of our most successful fund-raising campaigns ever. We predicted that it would take a year to get enough donations to protect this magnificent property, but we didn't count on your enthusiasm. It took only four months to raise the \$3.4 million required, a new TLC record!**

We're delighted with the outpouring of support. As TLC CEO James Hattam said, 'We know people want to protect threatened animals like swift parrots and Tasmanian devils. But to see this level of enthusiasm for threatened plants has been, for a botanist like me, a real thrill.'

Many of Sloping Main's neighbours donated to make this reserve possible, and we are particularly grateful to them for wanting nature as a neighbour. This part of the Tasman Peninsula is dense in conservation covenants and Land for Wildlife properties, creating a network of protected corridors.

As with all newer reserves, our fundraising target includes the money we need to monitor and manage the reserve in perpetuity. Invested in the TLC Foundation, it provides income to support research that ensures species survive and thrive. At Sloping Main Reserve, we've already started on some of the most pressing issues, such as pulling up Spanish heath. And as we head into summer, we'll start mapping the reserve's vegetation and installing wildlife cameras.





# WRAPPING UP 2022

Natural Guardians visit to Tinderbox Hills Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik.

**As 2022 draws to a close, it's time to think back on all the things that you have helped us achieve this year. It's been a lot! And without your support, this work we do for nature would not be possible.**

Three new reserves have been added to our estate since last summer's newsletter, meaning 2,900 more hectares of Tasmania is now dedicated to species conservation. Kelvedon Hills Reserve is the second-largest we've ever established: nearly 2,300 hectares, it protects habitat for swift parrots and adds a swathe of important vegetation to the network of conservation areas on the east coast. Eagle Rock Reserve, declared just as 2021 ended, is our first reserve on the west coast. Tucked into the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area it protects unique and under-conserved habitat in a region sorely in need of more protected areas. And see page 2 for news about Sloping Main Reserve.

It's been a great year for events: we've just ticked off our AGM (thank you to everyone who attended) and the end-of-year gathering is right around the corner. In April, supporters of our Bird Conservation Fund joined an online event to hear from last year's bird scholar, Adam Cisterne, about his work on masked owls. We also introduced this year's scholars, Carla Bruinsma and Erin Bok, who are both researching forty-spotted pardalotes at Tinderbox Hills Reserve, contributing to our protection of this iconic bird. And we were party to a lively conversation between James Hattam, Dr Cath Dickson and US-based Freya McDonald, discussing the work of

non-profit Birdability, who increase access to bird watching, and Freya's family's contribution to the protection of Prosser River Reserve (this discussion is available to watch at [vimeo.com/tasland](https://vimeo.com/tasland)).

Among our many reserve visits was our annual Natural Guardians trip, for those who have left a gift to the TLC in their will. We headed to Tinderbox Hills Reserve to see the active management we're doing to conserve forty-spotted pardalotes. The weather was quite a bit wetter than ideal, but the plucky group still managed to learn a lot and have a good day out, fortified by the excellent company.

TLC's reserves officers have been hard at work, with some hectic weather giving them plenty to do fixing roads and fencing (you can read more about that on page 5). Long-term weeding trips with teams of volunteers have shown real results this year, with ragwort and mullein well down at Five Rivers Reserve and fewer than 130 Spanish heath seedlings found on Egg Islands Reserve.

At Long Point Reserve, TLC ecologists continued restoration work with NRM South and Nature Glenelg Trust, restoring the site's hydrology so saltmarsh species can flourish. As part of the same larger NRM South project, funded under the Australian Government's National Landcare Partnership Program, TLC has been controlling gorse across Long Point Reserve and planting local shrubs and trees to replace it. The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre is using TLC's

WildTracker program to monitor how local animals respond to these changes – so far the cameras have taken 10,000 pictures, allowing identification of 11 native animals, including Tasmanian devils, spotted-tailed quolls and even a microbat.

Improvements to monitoring at the Vale of Belvoir Reserve are giving us a better understanding of the response of threatened grass and sedgelands to management, while targeted monitoring at Tinderbox Hills Reserve is focusing on the forty-spotted pardalote. Our cider gum caging at Five Rivers Reserve, protecting young trees from browsers, has made a real difference to the species' recovery from fire. At Little Swanport Reserve, we continue to monitor the results of our restoration project, investigating the factors that impede and support the recovery of blue gum.

Meanwhile we're making sure Land for Wildlife is reaching all corners of the state, with volunteer assessors popping up in every corner of Tasmania, even Flinders Island, and Anna Povey now working as a LFW Coordinator out of Launceston. It's complemented by WildTracker, which relaunched this year with a super-useable new website at [wildtracker.com.au](https://wildtracker.com.au) and plenty of opportunities to upload your wildlife photos.

And in case you missed it, TLC Hobart/nipaluna has also moved office, leaving its much-loved Taroona home for CBD digs at 186 Macquarie Street.





Sloping Main Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik.

Left to right: Julian von Bibra, James Hattam and Jennie Churchill. Photo: Matt Newton.

**As we head into summer, nature – on our reserves and elsewhere – is getting very active. This is peak field season for TLC scientists who head off to count all kinds of species that are out and about. A particular focus this year will be monitoring all the wonderful flora species at Prosser River Reserve and the grassland paper daisies (*Leucochrysum albicans* ssp *tricolor*) at the Vale of Belvoir Reserve.**

At Silver Plains, we will be checking in on eastern quolls, following up on the two years of research we've done to boost populations in the central highlands. Genetic testing on samples from young quolls is being done now, and we'll be conducting another round of trapping and testing this summer.

It's the best time to trap young quolls because, along with young Tasmanian devils, they're becoming independent and dispersing into their own territory. It's a dangerous time for them, with many juveniles killed on Tasmanian roads. Throughout summer, please drive slowly and keep an eye out so these species can have the best chance at a bright future.

If you have juvenile quolls or devils on your own land, keeping cats and dogs away from them is one of the most important things you can do. Leaving log and rock piles where they can den is helpful, as is keeping your distance from any places you know young animals are growing up. Avoiding rodenticide means you're a lot less likely to inadvertently poison marsupials.

We're also in the middle of breeding time for birds. Many of Tasmania's smaller birds will be fledging their second clutch for the season, including forty-spotted pardalotes. This year we installed nest boxes for them at Tinderbox Hills Reserve, and we're hoping that this summer we will have fledglings enjoying the new accommodation.

To protect young birds, from December to March take care if you're trimming or removing vegetation. If you do accidentally bump into a nest, the mother or nestlings may 'flush' or fly away. If you move away from the nest, they will usually return. If you find a baby bird on the ground and it's in immediate danger from cats, dogs or vehicles, place it in a nearby shrub. The parents will find it and continue to feed it. If there is no danger it's safest to leave it alone, though touching birds does not mean that the mother will abandon them. If you find a little nestling that's so young it has no feathers, or is unable to hop around on its own, then try to place it back in the nest gently.

## ACT .....

**If you'd like to learn more about nature on your property, sign up for Land for Wildlife and WildTracker. Visit [tasland.org.au](http://tasland.org.au) to find out more.**

## BOARD CHANGES

**This year sees the end of TLC Chair Jennie Churchill's tenure after three years in the top position and ten on the board. Julian von Bibra, formerly vice chair, will now take over as chair, while Clare Bower will become vice chair.**

Jennie has led the TLC with outstanding professionalism and dedication to duty. The TLC has gone from strength to strength during her time as chair, increasing the land protected by our activity by more than 32,000 hectares. Jennie has volunteered more than 350 times during her tenure, racking up 1,411 hours (186 days) and counting!

Peter Downie has also come to the end of his tenure, having been a TLC Board member since 2012 and contributing over 250 volunteer hours. Peter has been Chair of the Property Committee and critical in the operation of both the Revolving Fund and the New Leaf Carbon Project.

Our newest board member is Simon Foster. For the past 30 years he has been actively involved in a family farming business at Campbell Town in the Midlands of Tasmania. The business focuses on sustainable merino wool production and the properties managed have significant and diverse areas of high conservation value across 7,800 hectares.





*Themeda triandra*, kangaroo grass. Photo: Andy Townsend.



# RAIN AND RESERVES

Tinderbox Hills Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik.

## TEN YEARS OF MIDLANDS CONSERVATION

**The Tasmanian Midlands is one of Australia's most important biodiversity hotspots. It's an area rich in species found nowhere else, but it's also an ecosystem under threat. Less than 5% of the original native grasslands remains, which is why the TLC and Bush Heritage Australia have been working with farmers in the midlands through a partnership called the Midlands Conservation Fund (MCF), to protect this hotspot before it's gone.**

In early November we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the MCF with farm visits and festivities in Ross. We also welcomed a new MCF Coordinator, Pierre Defourny, who has many years' experience working in Europe across trade, climate and sustainability and who recently completed a climate project for the TLC. We are thrilled to have him working on conservation in the midlands.

The program benefits ecosystems, but also benefits farmers, particularly those who want to sell to markets concerned with environmental credentials. Through the MCF, partner organisations have already helped landholders protect and manage 2,500 hectares of critically endangered lowland native grasslands and woodlands.

**October was astonishingly wet, with rainfall records broken across the country. Tasmania was not exempt, with significant flooding across the north in the second half of the month. Gray, on the north-east coast, had 543mm of rain during October, more than 100mm more than its previous October record.**

The weather has been so wet thanks to a La Niña and a negative Indian Ocean Dipole pumping moisture into the atmosphere around northern Australia. As weather systems move over the continent, they pick up this moisture and drop it over south-eastern and eastern Australia. And in October, much of this moisture landed on TLC reserves.

Heavy rainfall can be incredibly destructive, particularly when it falls over a short timeframe. Across our estate, we've seen roads significantly damaged, culverts destroyed and bridges washed away. From Eagle Rock Reserve on the west coast to Little Swanport on the east, nine TLC reserves have been seriously affected by fearsome weather.

The main result of the damage is that access to these reserves is either restricted or completely off the cards. Our reserves are actively managed – our scientists visit them to monitor the status of threatened species, and we implement measures, such as weeding and caging, to protect those species. We partner with other scientific organisation such as the University of Tasmania, whose researchers conduct long-

term studies on our land. While access infrastructure is being repaired, many of those activities will have to be delayed. Some will be pushed back weeks or months but others, that rely on the seasonal activity of species, will be delayed for a year.

The good news is that some of the damage will repair itself as the weather dries. But in other places it will take four to six weeks of intensive repair to restore access. Our reserves managers estimate this will cost around \$100,000.

The management work we do on our reserves is informed by future projections of more intense rainfall events. We are already working to mitigate the effect of these events, increasing the capacity of our culverts and building our roads and tracks to be more weather-proof. While we have some catching up to do, we know that a changing climate and more destructive weather have to be part of our plans, and those plans will be included in all our future fundraising efforts for new reserves. Until then, let's keep our fingers crossed for a few months of drier weather across northern Tasmania.

## EXPLORE .....

**Read the 2021-22 Annual Report to find out more about what your support enables us to do for nature**  
[tasland.org.au/about-the-tlc/annual-reports](https://tasland.org.au/about-the-tlc/annual-reports)





# WHAT'S ON

*Dianella tasmanica*, Rubicon Sanctuary. Photo: Andy Townsend.

## ANNUAL REPORT

### Available now

The TLC 2021/22 Annual Report is completed and available online at [tasland.org.au/about-the-tlc/annual-reports](https://tasland.org.au/about-the-tlc/annual-reports). If you would like us to post you a copy, please call the office or email [info@tasland.org.au](mailto:info@tasland.org.au)

## TLC END OF YEAR GATHERING

### Thursday 8 December 2022

This year we'll be gathering again at Hobart's Legacy Park for woodfired pizza and drinks to thank supporters and celebrate all we've done together in 2022. See more details and register at [events.humanitix.com/2022\\_celebration](https://events.humanitix.com/2022_celebration)

## OFFICE CLOSURE

### 23 December 2022 to 3 January 2023

Our Hobart and Launceston offices will both be closed from 23 December to 3 January, and with low staff numbers over the first couple of weeks of January, it's probably best to call before dropping in.

## SAVE THE DATE: FIVE RIVERS RESERVE AND CENTRAL HIGHLANDS VOLUNTEER WEEDING

### January and February 2023

The grand hunt for weeds continues across our Central Highlands properties from 31 January to 20 February. Watch your inbox for an invitation to register!

## GIVING LAND BACK

We at the TLC are proud to support the new initiative, Giving Land Back. Launched in July, this initiative from the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT) is raising money from the public to buy culturally significant private land. The public is now also able to gift or bequeath land titles to ALCT. Visit [givinglandback.org](https://givinglandback.org) if you would like to learn more.



*Banksia marginata*, Sloping Main Reserve. Photo: Andy Townsend.

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## BOARD MEMBERS

Mr Julian von Bibra (Chair)  
Ms Clare Bower (Vice Chair)  
Dr Vanessa Adams  
Mr Stephen Atkinson  
Dr Ian Cresswell  
Mr Simon Foster  
Ms Erika Korosi  
Prof Ted Lefroy  
Prof Greg Lehmann  
Prof Jan McDonald  
Mr Mark Temple-Smith

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

