



TASMANIAN
LAND
CONSERVANCY

WINTER 2019

NL 58

Crimson berry (*Leptecophylla juniperina*) at Daisy Dell Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik

As we settle into the winter months, we reflect on the significant achievements of a busy field season for the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC). Our Reserve Management and Science teams have continued to focus on our Five Rivers Reserve in response to last summer's bushfire, with restoration and regeneration works progressing well.

Connecting people to nature is deeply important to the TLC, and our reserve discovery days provide a unique opportunity for this to occur. In April, our Daisy Dell Discovery Day united supporters, local landholders, staff and volunteers for a special day, which highlighted the incredible commitment that

our neighbouring landholders have made to protect the Daisy Dell landscape.

The inaugural TLC Foundation Fund Founders reserve visit was held in May at The Big Punchbowl Reserve, and showcased the TLC's expansion into acoustic monitoring. Sound is a critical element of natural systems, and it is one that the TLC is excited to be exploring in greater detail.

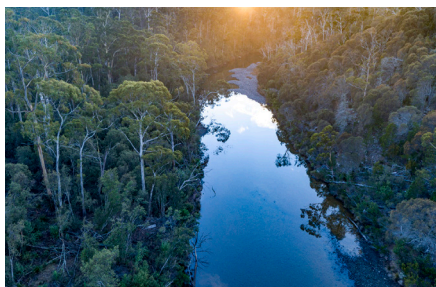
I'm continually inspired by the contributions that so many people make to the TLC's conservation efforts. Our achievements would not be possible without our dedicated volunteers. I couldn't think of a better way to describe our volunteers than by acknowledging

the theme of this year's National Volunteer Week: 'Making a World of Difference'. On behalf of all of us at the TLC, thank you to our volunteers for your valued contributions that are helping Tasmania become a global leader in nature conservation.

Lastly, we are thrilled to be so close to protecting Little Swanport. Each donation is vital for ensuring it is secured as our next reserve, so thank you to everyone who has donated to the campaign so far! Together we can give some of Tasmania's most threatened species the best chance of survival.

James Hattam
Chief Executive Officer

HIGHLIGHTS



Little Swanport River. Photo: Andy Townsend

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Find out how close we are to protecting 150 hectares of important habitat at Little Swanport!



TLC supporters with Daisy Dell Reserve neighbour John Wilson (and Jessie) at the Daisy Dell Discovery Day.

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Read about the latest Discovery Day enjoyed by TLC supporters at Daisy Dell Reserve near Cradle Valley.



New Holland honeyeater (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*). Photo: Peter Vaughan

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Discover how the TLC is embracing the sounds of nature across its reserves through acoustic monitoring.



LITTLE SWANPORT

Little Swanport. Photo: Andy Townsend

When the world’s entire population of critically-endangered swift parrots (*Lathamus discolor*) return to Tasmania in spring, we hope to have secured 150 hectares of core breeding habitat for them at Little Swanport on Tasmania’s east coast.

Loss of habitat threatens this unique species, and we are now in the final stages of ensuring they have another protected place to land, forever. But we need your help to make this a reality.

If established, the Little Swanport Reserve will not only safeguard old-growth blue gum forests that are necessary for the survival of the swift parrot, but will offer an excellent conservation linkage across privately and publicly protected land to the upper reaches of the Little Swanport catchment. In this way, the landscape will become greater than the sum of its parts and provide an even stronger haven for many important species to thrive. With one and a half kilometres of direct frontage to the Little Swanport River, the reserve would also offer a safe place for species to move between aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Like so many areas that are tucked away in Tasmania, the Little Swanport catchment is home to many people who are already contributing to conservation in various ways.

In 2010, a Little Swanport group comprising a number of landholders in the catchment won a National Landcare Award for implementing the Little Swanport Catchment

Management Plan. Their awarded work included fencing riparian land, looking after local habitat, including saltmarsh, and engaging the community in water quality monitoring activities. Tom Teniswood was one of the original contributors to the initiative, more than two decades ago. Tom and his wife Jane are TLC supporters, Land for Wildlife members, and owners of Wingsong – a covenanted property at Little Swanport.

“Over the years, we’ve seen conservation in the catchment gaining more and more momentum, from the early days of land care to now. The patchwork of protected land is gradually linking across the landscape and up the catchment. But it all takes time and commitment,” said Tom.

In February this year Tom and Jane made the remarkable gesture of handing more than half of their land at Little Swanport back to the Aboriginal community.

The contribution that people like Jane and Tom make to the ecological and cultural fabric of Tasmania is profound, and we thank them for their efforts. If the TLC’s campaign to protect land at Little Swanport is successful, we hope to work alongside all our neighbours to achieve the best conservation outcomes possible for this precious landscape.

GIVE.....

Please join us to protect Little Swanport by making a donation via tasland.org.au



Tasmanian Eastern Bettong (*Bettongia gaimardi*) Photo: Joe Shemesh

WORKING WITH LANDHOLDERS

Landholders will receive support to conserve their properties in a groundbreaking partnership between the Kingborough Council and the TLC.

The exciting partnership will help landholders conserve their properties through facilitated conservation covenant agreements.

The partnership is the first of its kind in Tasmania and demonstrates how local governments can recognise the significance private landholders make in protecting landscapes with high ecological value. The partnership is backed through the Kingborough Environmental Fund, which has been receiving financial offsets for the removal of vegetation since 2004. The partnership’s aim is to balance the loss of biodiversity from development and includes protecting habitat for the swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*), forty-spotted pardalote (*Pardalotus quadragintus*), and a range of other important species.

TLC CEO, James Hattam, said that landholders establishing a private reserve on their property make the ultimate contribution to protecting Tasmania’s unique biodiversity.

“Providing landholders with the opportunity to protect nature on their own land is one of the most powerful ways we can give our threatened species the greatest chance of survival.” he said.

To apply for a conservation covenant, or for more information, visit kingborough.tas.gov.au/environmental-fund.



ACOUSTIC MONITORING

The Big Puchbowl Reserve. Photo: Andy Townsend

A celebration of sound has been emerging at the TLC, with the TLC Foundation playing a key function in expanding our ecological monitoring program to collect acoustic data.

Sound is a powerful indicator of environmental condition and an effective tool to identify species – both present and absent. We can often hear changes in the environment, such as in bird calls, before we see them.

The TLC Foundation – through the Bird Conservation Fund – has secured the resources to expand into acoustic monitoring. The ambient sounds of The Big Punchbowl Reserve were heard first hand at the inaugural Foundation Fund Founders event in May.

The event was attended by internationally acclaimed composer and sound designer, Dr Douglas Quin, who explained how sound informs our understanding of nature. For the past 30 years, Dr Quin has travelled widely to document natural soundscapes – from Antarctic ice to Arctic tundra and from African savannah to Amazon rainforest. His recordings of endangered and disappearing habitats represent one of the most unique and extensive collections compiled. The TLC’s Conservation Ecologist, Rowena Hamer, also attended, and introduced the acoustic technologies being used across our reserves to monitor ecological change.

While sound is inextricably linked to our everyday experiences of the world, environmental conservation often emphasises what can be seen. In Tasmania we need only consider

how a single photograph by Peter Dombrovskis mobilised an entire generation to stand up for the Franklin River. Or how iconic images from Olegas Truchanas helped raise the public awareness of Tasmania’s south-west wilderness areas. Images can deeply connect us to a place, while also stirring feelings of intrigue, hope and action. However, showcasing soundscapes to engage people in nature can also achieve this, and this strengthens the TLC’s conservation work. This was highlighted in March, when the University of Tasmania hosted Dr Quin to hold a workshop at the TLC’s Daisy Dell and Vale of Belvoir reserves.

The workshop – attended by TLC scientists, artists, teachers, and musicians – explored how sound informs both ecological understanding and creativity. For the TLC’s Head of Science, Dr Sally Bryant, the significance of capturing soundscapes is critical to form a complete picture for our ecological monitoring programs.

“How we thought we could understand nature and not include the component of listening is like thinking we could study people and not include language,” she said.

Dr Quin, who has created the sound design for the Academy Award-nominated film, *Encounters at the End of the World*, and worked variously on *Jurassic Park III* and *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, as well as television and radio documentaries – gave context to how we respond to sound with our entire bodies.

“Sound, hearing and active listening animate all our senses and help to inform a visceral and holistic connection to the world around us. This animation of the senses is key not only to a perceptual reckoning but to developing empathy and intellectual curiosity,” he explained.

Dr Quin also highlighted the inextricable nature of science and the arts.

“The arts and sciences represent different yet complementary modalities of knowing; processes, practices and avenues of inquiry that reveal as much about our own condition as that which we endeavor to understand as ‘nature’. After all, nature is not an abstract other; it is us.”

The TLC’s science team will continue to deploy song meters to collect acoustic information from across our reserves.

“It’s an exciting time with new technologies making it possible to capture the sounds of nature like never before.” Dr Bryant said.

Embracing the multi-faceted nature of sound is a powerful tool that will be used by the TLC to track change over time on our reserves, and to help inform management priorities.

EXPLORE.....

To watch a short film about how sound informs our scientific and artistic understanding, visit tasland.org.au/blog/8080



DAISY DELL DISCOVERY DAY

TLC CEO James Hattam and Daisy Dell Reserve neighbours Gary Clark, John Wilson (and Jessie), and Peter Sims. Photo: Eddie Safarik

The power of people working together for nature conservation was highlighted at the TLC’s Daisy Dell Reserve Discovery Day in April.

When the TLC set their sights on purchasing and protecting 105 hectares of land at Daisy Dell in 2016, a groundswell of support was received. Numerous factors contributed to the campaign’s appeal. Located a stone’s throw from Tasmania’s iconic Cradle Valley, Daisy Dell links the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area with the forests of the northern tiers, forming an important conservation corridor. As a result, the hidden glade is filled with rich floristic diversity and unique Tasmanian wildlife. Yet it was the profound human connection to the Daisy Dell landscape that ultimately ensured its protection as a TLC reserve and that motivated vital donations and personal commitments from various neighbouring landowners.

This included the bequest of a 217-hectare property, bordering the land earmarked by the TLC, from landowner Gary Clark. It also inspired Peter Sims and John Wilson to bequest their 287-hectare neighbouring property – Iris Farm Nature Reserve (IFNR) – to the TLC, following the success of the Daisy Dell Reserve fundraising campaign. Together, this cluster of private properties enhances the security of many iconic species and exemplifies how a small group of conservationists can leave a big impact upon the natural and cultural landscape of Tasmania. It was this spirit that was celebrated at the Discovery Day, when an overnight storm did little to deter 85 supporters from huddling on the

marsupial lawns in front of Ike’s Hut (a traditional King Billy pine shingle dwelling built at IFNR by John and Peter), ready to set out for a day of carefully crafted adventure.

John, accompanied by his beloved elderly chihuahua Jessie, took supporters on a gentle jaunt around IFNR. John and Peter are living legends of Tasmania’s conservation movement, and their love and perseverance for restoring nature has culminated in them sharing their humble forest home so it may inspire others.

“Over the years, we have met many talented and inspirational people, and learned much about the country, including its association with Aboriginal people. We therefore desired to share this with other like-minded folk who care for the environment, its history and need for protection,” they said.

Supporters also meandered through the Daisy Dell landscape to reach story-stops, alongside TLC and guest experts, including entomologist Dr Peter McQuillan, TLC carnivorous marsupial expert Rowena Hamer, Tasmanian wildlife photographer Heath Holden, and TLC ecologist Matt Taylor. Peter Sims and bryologist Dr Patrick Dalton also led groups into the rainforest, all the way to the majestic Water Race Falls.

The TLC thanks all our supporters and committed volunteers for helping create such a special day. We also thank our neighbours – John, Peter and Gary – without them none of this would be possible.

KING ISLAND

Exposed to the elements, King Island is raw, wild, ancient and biologically unique.

The TLC’s King Island Revolving Fund properties for sale (which are covenanted and collectively titled Sea Elephant) provide important habitat for wildlife and boast spectacular coastal scenery.

Located a 30-minute drive from world-renowned surf breaks, the King Island Cheese Factory and the King Island Airport, the properties are some of the Island’s last remaining wild areas – a key feature for a place that has faced 75 percent habitat loss and pushed critically endangered species such as the King Island scrubtit and brown thornbill to near extinction.

Today, the King Island scrubtit and brown thornbill are persevering in fragmented pockets of habitat and have the support of scientists, government agencies, and local experts, who will be planning a recovery program for the species in June. The TLC’s Head of Science, Dr Sally Bryant, will attend the event, and is pleased to help turn efforts to protect habitat on King Island.

ACT

Buy your own conservation property through the Revolving Fund at tasland.org.au/properties-for-sale



ON THE RESERVES

TLC Conservation Ecologist, Rowena Hamer, leads volunteers at the Vale of Belvoir Reserve. Photo: Phill Roach

The life of a zoologist (that's someone who studies animals, not someone who studies zoos!) isn't all selfies with cute and fluffy critters.

Picking zoology as your career typically means signing up for antisocial working hours and being bitten, stung, scratched, peed on (or worse, much, much worse) and parasitised by all sorts of creepy crawlies as you try to find your animal of interest. In fact, this can often develop into a competition – trading war stories with other zoologists to establish who has had the most horrific or disgusting fieldwork conditions.

However, one sneaky group of zoologists has figured out how to rise above all of this. I am referring to the lepidopterists (or butterfly-ologists, for those of us who don't speak Latin!), who have cleverly specialised in a group of animals which are notoriously selective about the conditions in which they show themselves. I recently discovered how much I've been missing out on when I had the opportunity to monitor the threatened ptunarra brown butterfly (*Oreixenica ptunarra*) at the TLC's Vale of Belvoir Reserve with one of our veteran volunteers, Alison Dugand. The ptunarra brown butterfly is the Goldilocks of the animal world – flying for just three weeks in mid-March, and only in temperatures of 18°C or above, with no rain, wind or too much cloud cover, between the hours of around 10am and 4pm. They obligingly fly up from the grasslands to be counted as you walk past, but quickly return to what they were doing almost as soon as you've passed by. All this adds up to some very civilised

fieldwork, conducted at a gentle stroll!

This delicately beautiful species is under threat because it is dependent on our native Poa grasslands, which are one of the most endangered vegetation types in the state. The Vale of Belvoir, just a stone's throw from Cradle Mountain, supports some of the best condition native grassland in Tasmania, complete with a resident population of ptunarra brown butterflies. The TLC's Denna Kingdom established a monitoring program for the butterflies in 2010 with guidance from Phil Bell, Tassie's resident expert. Denna has been surveying the site every year since, with help from volunteers.

One of our main motivations is to make sure that the TLC's management is suitable for the persistence of this species. Grassland ecosystems often require frequent, low-level disturbance (such as fire or grazing) to maintain species diversity and prevent encroachment by other vegetation types. Prior to the TLC's purchase of the Vale ten years ago, the site was managed as a summer grazing property for over 100 years, with regular burns to generate green pick for grazing cattle. Since acquiring the property, the TLC has instituted a program of ecological burning, and is phasing out cattle grazing, particularly to reduce impacts on the freshwater habitats. Monitoring ptunarra brown butterflies is part of a larger ecological monitoring program aimed at making sure that these changes do not impact on the unique natural values of the Vale of Belvoir Reserve.

Denna has handed over the mantle this year, while she brings the TLC's newest family member into the world. Now that I've had the chance to spend a calm, sunny day counting gently fluttering butterflies in the beautiful highland grasslands, I suspect Denna may have some problems reclaiming her favourite survey program once she's back from maternity leave!

Rowena Hamer
Conservation Ecologist

BUSHFIRE UPDATE

In between working at Silver Plains, and Daisy Dell Reserve, the Reserve Management Team has spent a lot of time at Five Rivers Reserve over the last few months. Last summer, bushfires saw large areas of this reserve impacted either lightly, moderately, or severely by fire.

The Science Team has collected new data sets from 45 motion sensor cameras and five song meters while 100 fixed vegetation plots in burnt and unburnt areas have been re-surveyed.

The TLC's Head of Science, Dr Sally Bryant, reports that while some areas will benefit from light fire, an active wedge-tailed eagle nest and significant stands of cider gum were destroyed. The impact of fallow deer on fire-affected areas is also being monitored:

"We are working closely with University of Tasmania research students to investigate the impact of fallow deer at key locations, and we have developed an emergency plan to erect a number of weldmesh enclosures to protect emergent cider gum seedlings from browsing," said Dr Bryant.



WHAT'S ON

Egg Islands Reserve. Photo: Rob Blakers

SAVE THE DATES: EGG ISLANDS RESERVE WEEDING

Friday 2 & Saturday 3 August
Sunday 25 & Monday 26 August

Be part of our volunteer team as we undertake our tenth year of controlling Spanish heath on beautiful Egg Islands Reserve, in the Huon Valley. Invasive weeds don't belong in this important natural area - we need your help to eradicate them for good.

For more information and to register, visit:
<https://volunteereggislands2019.eventbrite.com.au>

DARK MOFO & THE TLC

Thursday, 6 June 2019 - Sunday, 23 June 2019

If you're buying tickets online to any Dark Mofo event, keep an eye out at the ticket check-out for the opportunity to make a \$5 'offering' to the critically endangered swift parrot. Your donation will go directly towards the TLC's Little Swanport conservation campaign!

This initiative invites ticket buyers to contribute to conservation in light of the environmental impact of the festival. The profile of the swift parrot will also be raised, with a free event at Hobart's waterfront on Sunday 23 June from 5-6pm, which will honour the critically endangered species with the ceremonial burning of a swift parrot-shaped ogoh-ogoh.

SAVE THE DATE: NATIONAL PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION CONFERENCE 2019

Tuesday, 8 October - Thursday, 10 October 2019

Join us for the Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA) Private Land Conservation Conference! The conference will unite conservation professionals, scientists, land managers, indigenous organisations, academics and many others who are helping to grow Australia's private protected areas. Find out more and subscribe to updates at alca.org.au



Blue Tier Reserve. Photo: Andy Townsend

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