

SUMMER 2021

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She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) at Kelvedon Hills extension. Photo: Rob Blakers

As 2021 draws to an end we reflect on another incredibly successful year for the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) across all of our conservation programs. We have been inspired by the generosity of our community of supporters and your interest in protecting Kelvedon Hills. When we embark on a new acquisition campaign, we never quite know what the response will be and what it may lead to. And now we have the opportunity to add an additional thousand hectares to this already impressive potential reserve, allowing us to make an even larger contribution to protecting this important landscape.

One of the fundamental elements of the TLC's successes over the past twenty years has been its people: the supporters from near and far, volunteers, landholders and staff. In this Summer newsletter we share some special stories

from the TLC community: from our Natural Guardians, who are leaving a gift in their will to the TLC, to our staff who contribute their expertise, knowledge, and passion across the organisation. We also recently lost a dear member of the TLC community, Jean Richmond, who sadly passed away in August. She was one of the handful of committed volunteers that started the TLC all those years ago.

A special thank you to all of those that helped us celebrate twenty years of the TLC and launch our latest art and nature collaboration *Breathing space* at Spring Bay Mill in late October. It was such a privilege to be a part of and to see so many people who have contributed to the TLC journey; thank you to everyone who has made the TLC what it is today! It is an extraordinary thing you have all created.

As we head into 2022, we are looking forward to seeing you at a host of TLC events – our Hobart end of year gathering takes place on 9 December, and in January and February we'll be heading up to the Central Highlands once more to remove invasive weeds from Five Rivers and Silver Plains, part of the work of managing these properties' natural values. While these are uncertain times, I also hope that in 2022 we'll once again be able to meet up with our supporters from interstate, particularly those who've been locked down in Victoria and NSW, and share Tasmania's natural wonders with all of you.

Have a happy and safe end to 2021 and we can't wait to celebrate even more exciting conservation successes in 2022.

James Hattam
Chief Executive Officer

HIGHLIGHTS



Kelvedon Hills grasslands. Photo: Eddie Safarik

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Good news on the campaign for Kelvedon Hills!



On the deck at Ike's Hut. Photo: James Hattam

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Natural Guardians at Daisy Dell Reserve.



Dr Rowena Hamer studying eastern quolls. Photo: James Hattam

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Old staff leaving, and lots of new faces around the TLC.



KELVEDON EXTENSION

Kelvedon Hills extension. Photo: Rob Blakers

Thank you so much for your contributions to the protection of Kelvedon Hills – with your commitment to conservation we have now hit our fundraising target and are ready to turn this big, beautiful property into a reserve. It has been a magnificent effort!

And now we have an opportunity to make Kelvedon Hills even bigger. Due to the success of this conservation campaign, we have the chance to purchase and protect the adjoining 996 hectare property, expanding the reserve to a total of 2,300 ha.

With this extension, Kelvedon Hills will become TLC’s second largest reserve after Five Rivers in the Central Highlands. Significantly, the property is bounded by large areas of existing nature reserves including Dry Creek Nature Reserve and Eastern Tiers Conservation Area, providing a huge overall impact and making a lasting contribution to conservation across the landscape.

The property – known locally as Gentle Annie – shares many of Kelvedon’s attributes extending north of the Meredith River. Difficult to access and largely untouched, it is swathed with remarkable vegetation, including three areas of lowland native grassland. There are extensive areas of old-growth blue gums with numerous large hollow-bearing trees in the remote northwest section of the property and in the damp, inaccessible gullies. These gullies are important refuges for the threatened Oyster Bay pine forests.

The property also hosts the rare Tasmanian velvet bush and clubmoss everlasting-bush. The Meredith River winds its way through the forests, lined with diverse riverine environments that provide habitat for threatened aquatic species.

While some of the property was burnt in 2019, the vegetation communities are recovering well and are in good condition, thanks to its inaccessibility. Unusually for this part of the island, it has not been grazed, and the only logging has been small-scale firewood removal. Almost no weeds have found their way into the forest.

We hope to expand the Kelvedon Hills Reserve with the addition of Gentle Annie to make a spectacular parcel of conservation land on the east coast, an area of high development potential. This is a region that will become more and more critical in the survival of nationally endangered species such as the swift parrot and eastern quoll, and the more habitat we can conserve in this landscape, the better we can ensure the future of these species.

GIVE
Thanks to the generosity of the Elsie Cameron Foundation, we need raise only \$300,000 to secure this extension to Kelvedon Hills. If you would like to contribute, visit tasland.org.au/donate-now or call the office on 03 6225 1399

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ALCA SUMMIT

Those of us who work in conservation know that often our heads are down, focusing on our own conservation projects or on a particular patch of land we’re working to protect. It can be all-consuming! Thankfully, every now and then we get a chance to step back and see the bigger picture. The Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA) Summit, held on 20 & 21 October, invited delegates to lift their gaze.

With Covid quashing a planned face-to-face ALCA Conference, ALCA deftly converted the meet-up to an online summit.

The summit brought together conservation experts from across Australia and beyond. They gathered online to share their ideas and reflections on global conservation policy, biodiversity and the role of private land conservation in protecting species.

There are so many big issues to consider in this space, where global warming and the extinction crisis make it hard for local conservation efforts to keep up. Climate and bushfire were considered, and opportunities to buoy conservation efforts were explored, including conservation finance and market-based mechanisms.

The TLC supported over 40 people to join the summit, offering complimentary registrations to landholders with conservation covenants, Land for Wildlife members, Landcare Tasmania members, TLC staff and board.

The 2022 ALCA Conference will be held in Sydney 8–10 March.



NATURAL GUARDIANS TRIP

Natural Guardians at Daisy Dell Reserve. Photo: James Hattam

On 9 October, TLC's Daisy Dell Reserve hosted our 2021 Natural Guardians reserve visit. Natural Guardians are those supporters who have made the profound commitment to leave TLC a gift in their will, and every year staff from the TLC invite this group to visit one of our reserves.

A stone's throw from Tasmania's iconic Cradle Valley and the TLC's Vale of Belvoir Reserve, Daisy Dell Reserve is a hidden glade filled with rich floristic diversity and unique Tasmanian wildlife. In early October, around 50 of us made the trip on a weekend that promised plenty of wild weather.

We arrived to a surprisingly sunny day and were greeted by a couple of remarkable wedge-tailed eagles – their timing was so superb that it was suggested that perhaps we had just released them from the car boot!

Our hosts for the day were Peter Sims and John Wilson – Natural Guardians, reserve neighbours, long-time supporters, legendary conservationists and the driving force behind the protection of Daisy Dell – and their dog Jessie, with many on the trip listing John's delicious scones on arrival as a highlight.

The rain began to fall as we separated into two groups and set out on hikes, one group heading to the waterfall and the other to the duck pond. The duck pond is on Gary Clark's adjoining property (to be bequeathed to the TLC) and is a unique perched subalpine wetland often with resident ducks and wombats feeding on the marsupial lawn, fringing the wetland.

Ducks and eagles weren't the only bird sightings – one supporter was thrilled to see their first-ever pink robin (*Petroica rodinogaster*) during our walk.

By lunchtime the weather had seriously set in, though we were denied the forecast snow. The heavy rain made it all the more pleasurable to snuggle around the fire at Ike's Hut, eating hot soup and listening to Peter's many stories of the reserve's history, wildlife and its journey to protection.

Natural Guardians are such a diverse bunch. This year we were joined by supporters who had been on every single Natural Guardians trip, as well as some who were travelling with us for the first time ever. People came from all over the state (we are so hoping that next year interstate Natural Guardians will be able to join us again), and there were owners of Revolving Fund properties, artists, scientists, assorted friends and family, and Guardians young and old.

Thank you to John and Peter and Jessie for hosting us, and to everybody who has made a commitment to protect nature in perpetuity in this special way.

ACT
Find out more about becoming a Natural Guardian and joining us on our annual reserve visits at tasland.org.au/ bequests

Orchids at Jean's memorial service. Photo: Matthew Newton

VALE JEAN RICHMOND

Recently we sadly lost a great treasure with the passing of Jean Richmond. Jean died unexpectedly but peacefully, at home in her armchair with her beloved dog Buddy beside her.

Jean was one of the 'handful of volunteers' that started our organisation. Jean joined after hearing about the newly formed group at a fundraising stall at Salamanca Market, where TLC founders were raising funds for the purchase of Long Point on Tasmania's east coast. Jean joined the small team the following Tuesday (29 July 2003), volunteering at the TLC's Salamanca office.

Years later as the TLC grew to become one of Tasmania's largest private landholders, Jean became a staff member in the Fundraising Team, retiring at the age of 80 in late 2016. Jean had previously had careers at CSIRO and UTAS before joining the TLC.

Jean lived a phenomenal life and was an extraordinary woman: courageous, resilient and determined. Born in 1937, Jean migrated to Hobart in 1974. Jean was kind, generous and fun loving, a deeply caring and devoted mother, grandmother and great-grandmother and loving and loyal sister, auntie and friend.

Just last year, Jean was made an Honorary Life Member of the TLC for her extraordinary contribution over 17 years. Jean was a gentle soul, caring and considerate. With her passion for science, Jean loved the TLC, and the TLC loved her.



TLC PEOPLE

Staff and supporters at Prosser River Reserve. Photo: Eddie Safarik

After having a lovely time on long-service leave earlier this year, TLC Senior Conservation Scientist Matt Taylor decided it was time to try his hand at something different. Matt had been with the TLC for 13 years. His friendly face, sense of humour and gift for scientific interpretation made a huge impression on many of our supporters during Discovery Days and other events. Children, in particular, enjoyed Matt’s exciting insights into Tasmania’s flora and fauna, and around half of the state’s kids have been photographed with Matt in one bush location or another. We know Matt will flourish in all his many, varied endeavours.

While she hasn’t exactly left the TLC, Conservation Scientist Rowena Hamer is now working from home – in Patagonia. A thrilling new job for her partner means Row has moved to Chile and will be working on discrete projects for the TLC while she’s there. We miss her huge brain and kind, patient manner and hope to welcome her back eventually.

We have been joined by two new wildlife ecologists to fill Matt and Row’s well-worn boots. Glen Bain joined the TLC after a stint as a lab manager and health and safety guy at the UTAS, where he also completed his PhD on woodland birds of the Tasmanian Midlands in 2019.

Glen is interested in birds (of course), restoration ecology and citizen science and will be further developing the WildTracker platform.

David Hamilton grew up in the Tasmania of the northern hemisphere (Scotland), but moved here in 2014 to start a PhD on Tasmanian devils and their transmissible cancer. After this experience morphed him into an accidental quoll scientist, he fell in love with Tasmania’s landscapes and wildlife. Twitter users know him for his brilliant quoll songs and devil videos.

Emma McPhee is back from maternity leave – hooray! After a stint pre-leave as Land for Wildlife Coordinator, Emma has now become our Engagement Systems Coordinator, making sure we are effectively connecting supporters to our work. Meanwhile, Shaun Thurstans – who filled in as LFW Coordinator during Emma’s leave – has moved on to coordinating the TLC’s data systems, helping out with mapping, IT and all the other things that keep the organisation technologically ticking over.

With both Emma and Shaun in new positions, we needed a new LFW Coordinator. Enter: Phil Wise! Phil comes to the TLC from the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program and has previously been a park ranger in the NT, working with traditional owners. Phil is really looking forward to meeting all the enthusiastic land holders who want to join the program to benefit the wildlife and habitats that surround their home. He has been a member of the program himself for over 10 years and displays his green sign with pride!

With all our new reserves, the TLC’s Reserves Team was finding itself

stretched very thin. Thankfully, Daniel Gfeller has arrived in the nick of time, working with Belle Monk to keep our southern reserves in shape. Daniel has been working in environmental restoration for seven years throughout urban and remote bushland reserves in Tasmania and New South Wales, and before coming to the TLC, he worked at a nursery propagating and growing Tasmanian native plants. Those of you who’ve been on weeding trips in recent years may have already met Daniel.

That left just one spot to fill. With the sad loss of Andrew Cameron, Eleanor Hetharia has now stepped formally into the role of Midlands Conservation Fund Coordinator. Eleanor was previously Operations Manager at NRM North and has a strong background in environmental and NRM project delivery, policy, planning and regulatory roles at the regional, state and federal levels. Eleanor has experience in delivering on-ground projects and programs including biodiversity/threatened species, fire management and environmental restoration projects, and she’s spent much of this year consolidating the MCF and planning its future development.

EXPLORE

Read about a year in the life of the Tasmanian Land Conservancy in our 2020/21 Annual Report, at tasland.org.au/about-us/annual-reports



20 YEARS OF THE TLC

Inhale. Exhale. Tribute to the Tasmanian Land Conservancy. (detail) Artist: Richard Wastell

What a night! During a storm of epic proportions, TLC supporters, former and current staff and board members past and present gathered in a giant tin shed at Spring Bay Mill to celebrate the TLC's 20th birthday. Howling gales and pouring rain couldn't spoil the party as we came together to reminisce about the past and look forward to the future.

Nala Mansell welcomed the group to country with a challenging and engaging speech. Then James took the stage to summarise the TLC's journey – from \$50 in the bank and a handful of volunteers to 90,000 ha protected for conservation and 26 staff. Over the past 20 years, the organisation has raised \$44 million in donations and spent \$32 million in the Tasmanian economy, \$20 million of that on land.

James reminded us that without our community of supporters none of this would be possible. From those in the room – including some of the very first funders of the organisation, its earliest volunteers, and those who bought the first Revolving Fund properties – to those watching along on the live stream and the supporters and staff who have passed away during those 20 years, everyone has made a contribution to purchasing and protecting so much of what we love about Tasmania.

The party also saw the first screening of a short film made by Matthew Newton of Rummin Productions, 'You can't ask that!'. Current and former CEOs and staff were put on the spot with some curly questions about the TLC's operations – 'do you feel like a scab asking for money?'; 'do you feel guilty

about everyone you've locked out of the land?'; 'should we return these properties to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people?'. The answers were honest, insightful and occasionally hilarious. If you'd like to see the film, along with the others presented on the night, visit vimeo.com/tasland (the films are called 'You can't ask that', 'Inhale. Exhale' about the art of Richard Wastell, and '20 years of the TLC'). You can also watch a recording of the live stream [here](#).

The night also featured the launch of the TLC's new book, *Breathing space*. We looked back on the TLC's previous arts and nature projects, *The Skullbone Experiment* and *Poets and Painters at The Big Punchbowl*, and reflected on the TLC's commitment to using the arts as an avenue to understand nature and to connect to new audiences and express the value of conservation.

Breathing space was launched by noted Tasmanian poet and essayist, Pete Hay, who spoke of his long connection with the TLC through his son Tom's bequest and the founding of the Tom Hay Reserve. Attendees were able to enjoy Richard Wastell's original painting *Inhale. Exhale. Tribute to the Tasmanian Land Conservancy*, which was hung at Spring Bay Mill and reproduced in *Breathing space*.

The evening was closed with the announcement of the extension to Kelvedon Hills, which you can read more about elsewhere in this newsletter, and we were serenaded back out into the now-much-calmer night by the sweet sounds of musicians Teresa Dixon and Hannah Morell, and a toast to the next 20 years.

BREATHING SPACE

The TLC's latest arts and nature project, *Breathing space*, was released into the wild at our 20th birthday celebration on 29 October and can now be found in bookshops around the country.

Throughout 2020, we at the TLC asked ourselves, 'what are we for' and 'how can we best achieve our aims'? *Breathing space* is part of our efforts to find diverse ways for people, including writers, readers and thinkers, to contribute to nature conservation.

We are in a time of increasing social and environmental change where the old solutions often don't work. To find new solutions we need to be involved in all kinds of conversations that might be difficult or disturbing, and to recognise there are many ways to love the land.

Some of those conversations are taking place in *Breathing space*, with essays, stories and poems from writers such as Danielle Wood, James Boyce, Robbie Arnott, Erin Hortle and Adrienne Eberhard, as well as new and exciting voices. Beautifully designed and featuring gorgeous photography as well as artwork from Richard Wastell, *Breathing space* would make a wonderful Christmas gift.

ACT

Get a copy of *Breathing space* from your local bookshop – find stockists at tasland.org.au/breathing-space



WHAT'S ON

She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) and running postman (*Kennedia prostrata*) at Kelvedon Hills extension. Photo: Rob Blakers

TLC END OF YEAR GATHERING 2021

Thursday 9 December

This year we'll be gathering again at Hobart's Legacy Park for woodfired pizza and drinks to thank supporters and celebrate 2021. Covid restrictions are still in place so numbers will be somewhat limited and we'll require you to register if you want to come along. See more details at <https://events.humanitix.com/eoy2021>

FIVE RIVERS RESERVE AND CENTRAL HIGHLANDS VOLUNTEER WEEDING

January and February 2022

The grand hunt for weeds continues across our Central Highlands properties in the early months of 2022. To find out more and register your interest in attending, visit events.humanitix.com/tlcfiveriversweeding2022. Be quick: these trips fill up very fast!

ANNUAL REPORT

The TLC 2020/21 Annual Report is completed and available online at 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

ALCA CONFERENCE

March 2022

The Australian Land Conservation Alliance's sixth annual conference – PLC2022: Recover, Restore, Redouble - will be hosted by the Biodiversity Conservation Trust NSW in Sydney on 8-10 March 2022. For more information, visit alca.org.au/alca_event/plc2022

OFFICE CLOSURE

Our Hobart and Launceston offices will both be closed from 24 December to 4 January, and with low staff numbers over the first couple of weeks of January, it's probably best to call before dropping in.

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