The Running Postman

Newsletter of the Private Land Conservation Program

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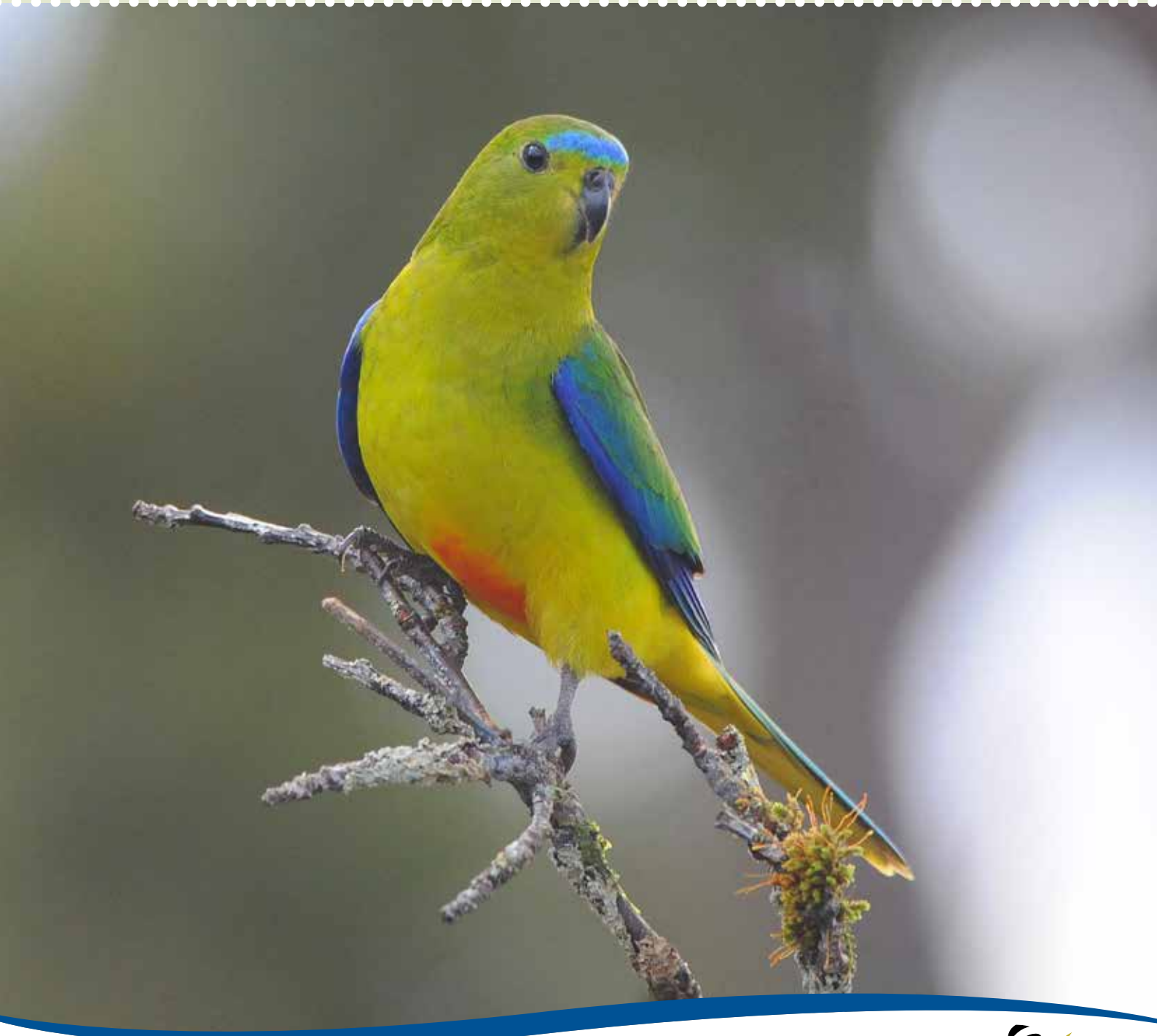
Building partnerships with landowners for the sustainable management and conservation of natural values across the landscape.



Department of
Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

Tasmanian Government

Manager's **message** – December 2016

What a year! As 2016 comes to an end, it is timely to take a moment to reflect on the amazing events that we have seen in Tasmania recently. Our wilderness areas have been visited by drought, fires and then some of the heaviest rainfall recorded high in our northern flowing catchments.

These amazing natural events remind us of the inscrutable power of our physical environment, and the timelessness of our landscapes. I have visited many properties and reserves affected by the floods, in particular looking at the impacts on natural environments. The universal observation is that notwithstanding the significant impacts on farm businesses and infrastructure, none of this damage is new.

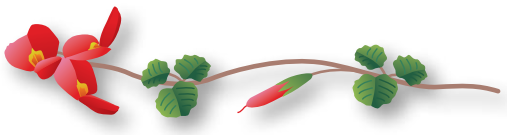
Our floodplains and river systems are dynamic and erosion and deposition are timeless processes. Small fragments of wood we found embedded in the bottom of a floodplain scour have been dated at 2500 years old, this debris may have been deposited on that plain all those years ago in a big flood, or at any time since. But the simple reality that wood and earth has floated down these systems for thousands of years brings perspective to the change we see today. My thoughts are with landholders impacted by the floods and fires of 2016.

For the Private Land Conservation Program in 2016, we continue to add new covenant areas, with close to 100,000 hectares now under perpetual conservation agreements.

This is a significant milestone for the program and demonstrates the amazing contribution that private land managers can make to landscape scale conservation. The act of conserving important places on private land continues to be one of the most fundamentally practical actions that can be taken by individuals to protect biodiversity.

I wish all of the contributors to the protection of nature on private land a warm and happy festive season and a positive, healthy and safe new year.

Peter Voller,
Manager, Natural Values
Conservation Branch



In this **Issue**

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On the cover: Orange-bellied parrot. Photo: Barry Baker. Design and layout: Land Tasmania Design Unit, DPIPWE.



Weeds, herbicides and conservation land

One of the most enjoyable aspects of field days run by Conservation Landholders Tasmania (CLT) is the chance to visit other people's conservation properties. In October Peter Riggall showed a CLT group around his beautiful property, "Dunbarton", near Nabowla. Peter and his wife Lorraine, successfully applied for a conservation covenant under the Private Forest Reserve Program in 2002 to protect 22 hectares of Black Gum (*Eucalyptus ovata*), White Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and Coastal *Eucalyptus amygdalina* forest. As we walked in the shade of his tall trees, we admired the healthy understory of flowering wattles and variety of small, colourful orchids.

But it hasn't always been so idyllic. Peter, with the advice and help of NRM North, has tackled and controlled a major infestation of Darwin's Barberry, *Berberis darwinii*. This popular, evergreen garden plant from South America had escaped from the garden and formed an extensive, thorny thicket more than three meters tall. Through a combination of spraying on elevated country and cutting-and-pasting near the creek, with follow up over many years, *Berberis* has now virtually disappeared from the Dunbarton bush.

Controlling invasive weeds is one of the major concerns of conservation landholders. In the initial survey of conservation landholders in 2011 (that subsequently led to the formation of CLT), weed control was cited as the major management issue by 79% of respondents, well ahead of any other issue.

CLT has now run three field days addressing different aspects of weed control. We are very grateful to our six partners, NRM North, Cradle Coast NRM, NRM South, the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Landcare Tasmania and the Natural and Cultural Heritage Division of DPIPWE for supporting the CLT program of events. During the field day at Nabowla, Sean Guinane, from Integrated Catchment Services, assisted by Mathew Bartlett, instructed CLT landholders on the safe and effective use of herbicides on conservation properties. Sean has worked for 30 years in the environmental services industry implementing erosion control, weed control, planting and direct seeding, both in Tasmania and Victoria. He also owns a 200 ha covenanted conservation property himself.

Many of us would prefer not to use herbicides. We would like to be able to hand weed, or to shade out weeds with a tree canopy or to use established methods of biological control. However, sometimes herbicides are the only cost-effective method, especially for woody weeds that cover extensive areas, such as Gorse or Spanish Heath, or for weeds with rhizomes or tubers, such as Californian Thistles.

Sean enabled us to better understand the action of herbicides by explaining how different kinds of herbicides disrupt the living processes of weeds in different ways. He described the various ways that weeds take up herbicides, for instance by absorption through the leaves or uptake through the roots. He took us through the different Mode of Action Groups that can be safely used on conservation properties. We looked together at some herbicide labels, which are legal documents and must be read by each person who plans to use the product. After Sean's presentation we moved outside where Sean and Mathew demonstrated both the protective gear that people need to wear when using herbicides and equipment used in weed control. The equipment ranged from a simple, homemade device made from a cut-out milk container for use in cut-and-paint operations to a motorized spray device mounted on a ute.

John Thompson has written a report of the Nabowla field day, with information about herbicide use. His report, as well as reports of previous field days about weed control, are available on the new CLT website, **www.clt.asn.au**.

Robin Garnett

Photos (L to R): Peter Riggall talks about his covenanted property, 'Dunbarton'. Sean Guinane demonstrating the cut-and-paint method of weed control. NRM North's Invasive Species Coordinator, Greg Stewart, describes methods used to control the woody weed Berberis darwinii. *Photos: Robin Garnett*

How many **species** are there in ***your*** backyard?

Discoveries at the **Extinction Matters BioBlitzes** – marking 80 years since the death of the last known thylacine

Do you know what's living in your backyard or local area? There is probably an incredible number of species - some of which you or perhaps no one else has ever seen. Some of them may be threatened, and what we do in our backyards can make a real difference to their future prospects.

So to mark *Threatened Species Day* this year, BioBlitz events were held in September to look at what was living in two very different backyards in the State – Queen's Domain, Hobart (South) and Bell's Parade, Latrobe (North).

A BioBlitz is a festival of science in nature - a great way to bring scientists, naturalists, schools and the community together to look for and appreciate what we have in our own backyards and local areas. The day's theme, ***'Extinction Matters'***, was used to reflect on and celebrate the significance of every species.

At both sites it was ready steady go at 10 am Friday morning, and the race began to discover and record as many living things as possible over a period of thirty hours - through the night and finishing at 4 pm on Saturday afternoon.

Scientists and naturalists took groups of school children and members of the public on adventures of discovery and learning; every species was identified, recorded in *iNATURALIST**, and its ecological role, life history and odd habits were discussed – this gave each person a sense of pride in what they had discovered, a personal knowledge of what was living in their own backyard and an awareness of its conservation needs. A massive range of living things was found - bats, crayfish, fungi, bugs, insects, aquatic plants and mammals, birds, plants and more.

More than 50 scientists and naturalists were involved, along with hundreds of additional participants. All involved had the opportunity to improve their skills in finding, identifying and recording the plants and animals in their local areas.

The events were run by a partnership between the Bookend Trust, City of Hobart and Latrobe Councils. They brought together scientists and naturalists from the Tasmanian and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Galleries, University of Tasmania, Threatened Plants Tasmania, BirdLife Tasmania, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Parks & Wildlife Service, Inland Fisheries Service, and Forest Practices Authority, along with private consultants and others. Additional support was provided by NRM South, Cradle Coast NRM, Inspiring Australia and the Tasmanian Department of Education. Rotary Club of Latrobe kept participants' energy levels up with food and hot drinks.

Scientists and naturalists included Conservation Landowners Tasmania members, Robin Garnett and Phil Collier, and Sarah Lloyd, who wrote the DPIPWE publication *'Bugs, birds, bettongs & bush'*. Janet Smith and Anna Povey also helped with the event in Latrobe.

As well as generating extensive species lists, the BioBlitzes resulted in a lot of very happy people - feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

To find out more about what was found during the BioBlitzes, and for information on useful, fun ways to apply and further develop biodiversity-spotting skills, you can 'like' the Extinction Matters Facebook page, and explore the two 'Extinction Matters' projects on *iNaturalist*.

Please get in touch if you'd like to help out with future events. A report for each is currently being prepared, and will be hosted on the website **http://extinctionmatters.com.au/**

Janet Smith and Clare Hawkins

* iNaturalist *is a citizen science project and online social network of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists built on the concept of sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe - especially valuable when tracking the conservation status of our less common species. Observations can be added via their website or from a mobile app (**https://www.inaturalist.org**) or added directly to the Tasmanian Natural Values Atlas **https://www.naturalvaluesatlas.tas.gov.au/#HomePage**.*

*Photos (L to R): Looking at water bugs - participants recorded **everything** that could be identified. Photo: Clare Hawkins. The iNaturalist website.*

Citizen science wildlife monitoring

Over 100 private land managers gathered at three meetings across southern Tasmania in the past few months to learn about setting up wildlife monitoring stations, and most carted away cameras and sound recorders to set up on their own property.

Part of a wider push by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC), and in concert with several organisations, the intent is to gather data on wildlife use of the landscape utilising the power of citizen science. As the systems are refined, it is intended that this data will unlock a landscape-scale sense of environmental trends.

These workshops were held on Bruny Island, in the Huon and Derwent Valleys and mark the start of a community-based wildlife monitoring program that TLC is trialling, with the medium term intent to spread the approach across the private land conservation estate of Tasmania.

Using simple but reliable methods and some modern technological gadgetry means that anyone can collect really valuable information about mammals, birds and habitat. It is another example of the power of citizen science - by getting lots of people involved we can start putting together a landscape-scale picture of how our native animals and their habitats are faring in the landscape.

Whilst the key interest is in identifying important areas for native species, the approach can also help to identify hotspots and trends for invasive species like deer, cats and rabbits.

Perhaps the hardest aspect of citizen science is providing the framework into which the data can fit in order to yield reliable and precise results. This stems not only from having the data collected in a disciplined fashion (who says scientists are anal?) but also from the known huge variations that animal populations experience naturally: the so-called boom and bust cycle.

For landholders with properties in any of these regions who are keen to be involved in the wildlife monitoring program, please get in touch with TLC Ecologist, Matt Taylor (**mtaylor@tasland.org.au**).

This project is being delivered in collaboration with Kingborough Council, Bruny Island Environment Network, Bruny Island Community Association, NRM South, Land for Wildlife, and the Derwent Catchment NRM.

Daniel Sprod

Photos (clockwise from left): Motion sensor camera set-up. Photo: Kaylene Allan. Matt Taylor demonstrating how to set up a wildlife monitoring station. Photo: Jim Mulcahy. Eastern quoll. Photo: Nick Mooney.

In full flight: helping to save the **orange-bellied parrot**

In a spectacle of iridescent blue, green and orange, a handful of birds nibble and chatter on a feeding platform at Melaleuca, in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Having just flown over 500 km to reach their breeding grounds, captured in this brief moment of time sit some of the last remaining population known to exist in the wild.

Aptly named the Orange-bellied Parrot (OBP), these magnificent birds are one of Australia's most endangered species.

In an effort to help recover this iconic species, the DPIPWE Orange-bellied Parrot Tasmanian Program (OBPTP) is working closely with the Commonwealth Government, the National OBP Recovery Team, the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service and Wildcare Friends of the OBP volunteers. The OBPTP team oversees the management of the wild OBP population at their breeding grounds at Melaleuca and also cares for a significant captive insurance population, which is managed as part of the national Zoo and Aquarium Association's Australasian Species Management Program for this species.

"With so few OBPs left in the wild, emotions are high with everyone wanting to do what they can for these beautiful birds," says Dr Annika Everaardt, Manager of the OBPTP. "Yet the situation is very complex. With such a small population, any incident such as a severe weather event or a disease outbreak can have devastating consequences."

"Every summer we do what we can to optimise their survival and breeding success at Melaleuca, but these are migratory parrots and they undertake a gruelling journey over a notorious stretch of water, the Bass Strait. Their migration isn't well understood and there is still much for us to learn and investigate in regards to the factors that may be impacting on their survival."

Running a conservation program in the rugged and remote southwest is not without additional challenges. All logistical support must be either flown in or shipped by boat over several days. It is only with the help of an extraordinary team of volunteers who stay at Melaleuca over the summer and provide supplementary bird food, maintain strict hygiene protocols and record the identifying leg bands of OBPs, that the program is able to monitor the population in Tasmania daily throughout the breeding season.

Each September, prior to the return of the birds and commencement of the breeding season, DPIPWE staff climb 15 m tall eucalypts to prepare nest-boxes for the OBPs to breed in, and to install remote cameras to

identify the presence of potential predators and other animals using the nest-boxes. OBPs are known to nest and rear their young in both natural tree hollows and in the artificial nest boxes provided by the OBPTP.

"Each year prior to the breeding season, we clean the nest-boxes and provide new nesting material for the OBPs to incubate their eggs," explains DPIPWE Wildlife Biologist, Dr Shannon Troy. "We re-climb all the trees in January and February in order to band and sample the juvenile OBPs. This data is fundamental to the conservation program as it allows us to monitor the population over time and evaluate our management actions."

Notwithstanding these challenges, there are currently around 300 OBPs held in captive breeding facilities around Australia (although the number fluctuates throughout the year with births, deaths and release events). Established in Hobart in 1984, the captive breeding program provides birds for release to supplement the wild population and an insurance population if extinction occurs in the wild.

"In recent years, the program has been undertaking releases to increase OBP breeding opportunities in the wild with promising results – the majority of captive-bred birds from these releases have survived the translocation and remained in the area over the summer, and some have even successfully undertaken the return migration," says Troy.

"Given that past releases of captive-bred birds have been unsuccessful in areas where there have been no wild birds present, this is a critical recovery action whilst there is still a wild OBP population at Melaleuca."

A strong captive insurance population (including strategic releases of captive birds into the wild), together with a productive breeding season, will provide the species with the best possible chance of survival in the wild in the short-term. Meanwhile, the species' many supporters in Tasmania and on the mainland continue to do what they can to assist with the long-term persistence and recovery of the OBP in the wild. We are working together in an effort to ensure this remarkable species continues to be a part of the Australian landscape.

Sophia Callander,
DPIPWE Orange-bellied Parrot Tasmanian Program

Take these rare birds under your wing and support the OBP conservation efforts by making a donation to the WILDCARE Save the Orange-bellied Parrot Fund ***http://wildcaretas.org.au/donations/obpfund/***

To find out more information about the OBP visit www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/obp or find us on Facebook: ***http://www.facebook.com/TasmanianOrangebelliedParrot***

Photos (L to R): The rare and beautiful Orange-bellied parrot. Photo: DPIPWE. Orange-bellied parrots checking out DPIPWE remote camera monitoring equipment on the feed table at Melaleuca. Photo: DPIPWE. Climbing high: DPIPWE staff preparing artificial nest-boxes. Photo: DPIPWE. The spectacular iridescent colours of the Orange-bellied parrot. Photo: Col Rowe.

Nature Conservation Plan Reviews

This year the Private Land Conservation Program (PLCP) has embarked on a process to review the Nature Conservation Plans for all of the conservation covenants that have been due over the past five years. Just about all Conservation Covenants have one of these plans, variously called a Nature Conservation Plan, if the covenant was registered through the Protected Areas on Private Land Program (PAPL) or an Operations Plan, if the covenant was registered through the Private Forest Reserve Program (PFRP).

These plans are important documents that not only provide landowners with information about the natural values that occur on their properties and how to best manage them, but also provide authorisations for certain activities that are permissible under the covenant only with written approval from the Minister.

These plans will generally be reviewed routinely every five to ten years, and this review provides an opportunity for both the landowners and the PLCP to revisit the conditions by which the reserves should be managed and decide if those stated within the plan are still the most appropriate for conserving the natural values of those properties.

If you are the owner of a conservation covenant, it is most likely that someone from the monitoring and stewardship team of the PLCP will have either contacted you recently or will do so in the near future, formally notifying you that a review is being undertaken. When this happens, even if the conditions of your plan are still right for you, it may be worth having a chat with the monitoring and stewardship team anyway to discuss your reserve more generally. It may be that you have an issue with your reserve such as a particular weed, or a concern around fire management, that we can provide advice on, or it may be that you have gained particular insights into managing your patch that the team could learn from and pass on to other landowners.

Of course for some landowners, this review will provide the opportunity to change the conditions of your plan to allow for a new management regime, although depending on the proposed changes, in some circumstances they may be made through a one off authorisation. For example a landowner may wish to upgrade a track for fire management purposes that was not in the Operation Plan. A discussion with the monitoring and stewardship team and potentially a site visit to ensure that potential impacts will be limited, should allow you to do what's necessary to manage your properties the way you need to whilst also satisfying the conditions of your covenant.

It should be kept in mind that any proposed changes to your plans, such as changing the firewood allocation, grazing regime or any other conditions, should not impact negatively on the natural values for which your reserve was established. The monitoring and stewardship team are here to help you find solutions to any management issues you have and to support you in undertaking the management actions in your plans.

From our work to date, thankfully, the majority of plans are fine in their current state, but if you feel that you need to change your plan, either when contacted for a routine review or at any time, please get in contact with the monitoring and stewardship team, whose details are on the back page. You may also not have a copy of your plan at hand, in which case get in touch and a copy can be sent out, as it is definitely worth checking in with the plan from time to time.

Oliver Strutt, Conservation Programs Officer

Photos (L to R): Undertaking monitoring of the condition of a covenant. Covenanted bush in good condition. Photos: DPIPWE.

Big bully in the garden - **Yellow wattlebird**

A rather large noisy boisterous bird found only in Tasmania and on the islands of King, Three Hummock and Hunter is Australia's largest honeyeater, the yellow wattlebird (*Anthochaera paradoxa*). They actually get their name from the fleshy long pendulous skin that dangles from their cheeks known as wattles. With the yellow wattlebird the wattles are yellow-orange in colour and do give the bird and interesting look!

There are four species of wattlebirds in Australia. Along with the yellow wattlebird there are the little, red and western wattlebirds. However, the little and western wattlebirds lack wattles!

The yellow wattlebird is a large bird measuring from 40 – 50 cm and weighing around 180 – 200 grams. Adult male and female birds are similar in appearance with grey-brown plumage with white streaks. Around the face is white and in adult birds the belly is bright yellow. However, the male is larger than the female. The plumage of young birds is similar but paler, the belly is browner in colour and the wattles are shorter.

The yellow wattlebird is found in a variety of habitats from dry and wet forests, coastal heaths and urban gardens. During the colder months from late autumn, wattle birds may move down from the mountaintops to lower areas to feed. Their main diet is nectar where they probe flowers with their long brush-tipped tongue which soaks up the liquid nectar. They also eat insects, spiders, grubs, berries and ripe fruit.

They are quite fast and agile fliers as they skilfully weave their way through trees, shrubs and other objects within their flight path. They will often give chase to other yellow wattlebirds or other birds who they see as competitors for their nectar sources. They frequently call either to let other birds know they are around or to each other. They occur in pairs or small flocks.

They have a very characteristic, audible and amazing call to hear, some describe it as being quite harsh and grating. In fact it has been likened to the sound of someone vomiting!! They put a lot of effort into making themselves heard, throwing their head back and then jerking it forward as they vocalise their call. These can be quite varied, I have even heard a yellow wattlebird that sounds as though it is imitating a Scottish person screeching 'och aye'.

They were actually considered a good flavoured game bird and were subjected to a limited hunting season from the early days of settlement in Tasmania – they must have tasted quite sweet from their nectar diet! This caused numbers to decline dramatically. Fortunately this practice was stopped in the early 1970s and numbers have recovered well. It is now listed as a protected species.

Yellow wattlebirds have a close association and dependency on older native forest where there is greater abundance and richer source of nectar producing trees and plants, particularly eucalypts. Loss of this habitat due to clearing or frequent fires can threaten the continued survival of this species in some areas. For example on King Island, yellow wattlebird numbers have greatly diminished due to loss of habitat and if this continues there is the very real risk they may well be lost from the island.

Iona Mitchell

Photo: Yellow wattlebird. Photo: Eric Woehler.

Giving **Swift parrots** a helping hand

'Swift' is an apt name for the swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) given they fly swiftly at speed in direct flight paths. They can readily be identified in flight not only by their swift speed but by the shape and green colour of their body and noticeable red colouration under their wings. They also have a distinct call when in flight and are extremely noisy feeders, particularly if there is a small flock of birds foraging on the same tree, chattering away to each other as they feed.

The swift parrot is now listed as a nationally critically endangered species and is under a very real threat of extinction – grim news for this beautiful bird species which is the only member of its genus worldwide. Recent estimates are that there are only around 1000 breeding pairs left in the wild.

Swift parrots (fondly known as 'swifties'), have a close association with blue gums (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and black gums (*E ovata*), their primary and preferred food source during the breeding season. They forage for the copious nectar in the blue gum's especially large, cup-like flowers with their specially modified tongue which has a brush-like tip for gathering nectar.

Swift parrots fly to Tasmania from the mainland for their summer breeding season which usually starts around the end of August. They tend mostly to favour the eastern coastal region where their favoured habitat of blue gum forest occurs, though much of this has been cleared for coastal development, forestry or agriculture. The loss of old trees greatly reduces the amount of food available in two ways. Firstly, breeding swift parrots can only access food which is within comfortable flying distance of the nest holding their chicks - a hollow which is typically only found in a tree at least 100 years old. Secondly, older trees produce more flowers and hence greater nectar supply for the birds to feed on. This is particularly important during their breeding season when they need all the food and energy reserves they can find. The shorter the distance between substantially flowering blue or black gums and nesting habitat, the less effort they have to expend searching for food.

While swift parrots nest in hollows, they are unlikely to use the same nest in successive years. This is largely due to the spatial variation in flowering of blue gums or black gums - any one tree may not flower substantially for several years. This year in Tasmania, many mature blue gums are flowering prolifically on Bruny Island, around Hobart, down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and the southern forests. By contrast in 2014, only a few blue and black gums flowered across Tasmania - around Rheban and Ida Bay - severely limiting the parrots' capacity to breed that year. Since they only live for a few years, seasons such as 2014 can compromise the species' prospects severely.

One of the greatest threats to swifties is the loss of not only mature blue or black gum habitat but also trees with hollows in the areas that they are breeding in. It can take up to 100 to 200 years or more for hollows to form large enough for swifties to use as successful nest sites, so large old trees, dead or alive, are invaluable - not only to swifties but other hollow-dependent species, such as owls, forty-spotted pardalotes, possums, rosella species and bats.

This year on Bruny Island, swift parrot researcher Dr Dejan Stojanovic from the Australian National University (ANU) is leading an experiment to trial the use of nest boxes to make up for the shortfall of suitable and available natural tree hollows for swift parrots to nest in. Around 200 nest boxes have been placed in trees in prime foraging areas for swifties. These nest boxes have proven



to be a great success with swift parrots using a number of them for nesting. There have been reports of one box containing five eggs and another six which is great news and testament that the swifties approve the man-made accommodation.

Another clever form of artificial tree hollow providing additional nesting sites is being created by carving hollows into trees. A group of arborists from Victoria trained in carving tree hollows came to Tasmania to volunteer their time and skills to make hollows to help the breeding success of swifties. The creation of man-made hollows is an extremely skilled task requiring not only tree climbing ability but skills in the use of a chainsaw at height. A face plate is cut to the depth of the nesting hollow which is around 40 to 50 cm depth and a hollow created using the chainsaw and chisel to remove the core wood. A small entrance hole is made, usually about 5 cm in diameter. The face plate is placed back and secured and effectively covers the carved out hollow. Dr Stojanovic reported that within a few days swifties were observed using many of these artificial hollows which is wonderful news.

One benefit of this method is that younger trees can be used to carve hollows into them. This is particularly valuable in areas where natural hollows suitable for swifties are lacking. To compensate for the hollowed out section of a branch or trunk, the end of the branch or trunk beyond the hollow is cut to reduce the weight and risk of splitting at the site of the hollow.

Bruny Island was selected for the trialling of the artificial hollows and nest boxes largely because there was a greater chance of breeding success and survival. In many places on mainland Tasmania favoured by swifties for breeding, there has been predation by sugar gliders leading to mortality of young swifties and even adult birds in the nest.

Research continues into the issue of sugar glider predation, assessing means to reduce the mortality rates, which sadly can be quite high.

There are no sugar gliders on Bruny Island and so it is a very safe place for swifties. It was also assessed earlier in the year that this year was going to be a good year for blue gum flowering on the island – and it has been.

What can we do to help? In Tasmania, the main thing is to maintain and protect as much old blue gum and black gum forests and trees as possible, and old trees of any species with hollows (dead or alive) in prime foraging habitat. A blue or black gum typically doesn't produce substantial flower for 40 years, and hollows tend only to form in trees aged at least 100 years old. While planting additional trees is a great investment for the future, the birds need all the habitat they can get right now - including the many conservation covenants and Land for Wildlife properties protecting this habitat. Also important is the protection of their habitat on the mainland in Victoria and NSW in the areas where swifties spend their winter.

Iona Mitchell

Find out more about the species, how to recognise them and how to design and maintain your house and property to be swift-parrot-friendly, on the Threatened Species Link profile page: ***http://www.threatenedspecieslink.tas.gov.au/Pages/Swift-Parrot.aspx***

Photos (L to R): Swift parrot feeding on blue gum flowers. Photo: Keith Martin-Smith. Swift parrot hollow in a Eucalyptus pulchella tree. Photo: Matthew Webb. Swift parrots using a nest box on Bruny Island. Photo: Lachlan Story. Blue gum flowers and gum nuts. Photo: DPIPWE. Swift parrot. Photo: Chris Tzaros.

Conservation Landholders Tasmania: next event

Conservation landholders are welcome to participate in the following events:

Friday 10 February (6pm) –Sunday 12 February (11.30am) 2017: Field weekend on *The management of dry sclerophyll forest* at Cambridge

Fred and Mercedes Duncan are hosting a CLT weekend associated with their conservation property and other dry sclerophyll forests near Cambridge. Fred is an experienced Tasmanian botanist and a wonderful educator.

Thursday 11 May 2017 (9.30am – 4pm): Conservation forum on *Climate change and conservation properties* at Campbell Town

CLT is organising a conservation forum on Climate change and conservation properties for conservation landholders and staff from partner organisations. This topic has been requested by many landholders. The day will include expert presentations, small group discussions and Q and A sessions.

To join the CLT email contact list, email Robin Garnett **robin@rubicon.org.au** or John Thompson **thompsonjohng@gmail.com**. Invitations are sent out to those on the list a month before each event.

Tasmanian landholders' conservation values study:

Professor Mai Yasue from Canada is conducting research at UTas on the motivations, values and experiences of landholders participating in conservation or stewardship programs. Landholders who have been involved with programs such as Land for Wildlife, Gardens for Wildlife, Landcare, Bush Heritage, Midlandscapes, Greening Australia or conservation covenants on their property and, do **not*** live in the Derwent/Huon Valleys and Bruny Island, are invited to participate in this research. This research aims to help design programs that are more effective and meaningful for landholders. All responses will be kept confidential and will not identify individuals. The survey is available online **https://interceptum.com/s/en/LandholderConservation**. For people willing to participate in a phone or in-person interview, contact Mai Yasue at **maiyasue@gmail.com** or **(03) 6226 2462**. As a token of her appreciation, participants can enter a raffle to win a $100 donation to their favourite charity, local school or sporting club.

**Landholders in the Derwent/Huon Valleys and Bruny Island have already been approached for a similar research study.*

Private Land Conservation Program participants as at December 2016

Number of covenants	819	99,321 hectares
Land for Wildlife members	935	57,465 hectares
Gardens for Wildlife members	570	2,818 hectares

Please note that some landowners are registered with more than one program and there is some overlap in the figures presented.

Selling property?

If you have a conservation covenant over your property and are thinking of selling, you should keep in mind that anyone involved in the sale process (e.g. agents, lawyers) need to be informed of the covenant and its implications.

Prospective buyers and new owners must also be informed of the covenant on the property title so that they can factor this into their decisions.

A covenant may appeal to particular purchasers and should be promoted as a valuable aspect of the property. Stewardship Officers are happy to talk to prospective buyers regarding the natural values and how to manage them in accordance with your agreement.

We often find that buyers of Land for Wildlife (LFW) properties are keen to enter the program so that they can get involved in more active conservation management.

We therefore also ask LFW owners who are selling to notify us so that we can make contact with the new owners and see if they would like to keep the property in the program.

Contacts

Stewardship
Anna Povey (North) **0498 800 611**
Andrew Cameron (North) **0417 361 998**
Oliver Strutt (South) **0407 352 479**

Land For Wildlife
Iona Mitchell **6165 4409**

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Natural and Cultural Heritage
Private Land Conservation Program
134 Macquarie Street Hobart
GPO Box 44 Hobart TAS 7001
www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/plcp

Tasmanian Government