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**Bulletin No. 43 • September 2007**

## MONITORING CRABS

**Cable Beach is one of Australia's most beautiful beaches and a priceless resource to Broome. It has high environmental and cultural values, which ensure it is a focus of tourism and community recreation activities in Broome.**



*The crab monitoring team 2007*

With rising population and tourist numbers there is a concern that off-road vehicles driving on the soft sediment shore may be damaging and devaluing the resource. Vehicle numbers are now having a negative impact on cultural heritage and the environment as well as on public safety and visual amenity.

Crab monitoring research has been undertaken over the past two years to assess the impact of vehicles on Cable Beach. Surveys were carried out at two locations on Cable Beach: at the Resort end and south near Gantheaume point. The surveys cover the numbers and distribution of burrows of the ghost crab

(*Ocypode ceratophthalmus*) and the sand bubbler crab (*Scopimera inflata*).

Each survey was carried out on a receding spring tide to ensure exposure of the maximum area of sand bubbler zone: large numbers of crabs come out to forage on such tides and the crabs have 4-5 hours in which to emerge. The burrows were counted along vertical transects starting from the previous high tide mark and finishing at the low water mark. Each transect included a 20 x 20 quadrat at the beginning to record the ghost crabs, then 20 stations, 1 metre wide x 10 metres long, running vertically down to the shore.



## Admin Assistant

(Part-time)

**Environs Kimberley seeks an experienced, efficient and well-organized person to assist with the running of our busy office.**

The person will provide administrative support to the Director and EK Board. They will process accounts and memberships, coordinate fundraising activities and run community-building events and maintain office systems. An interest in the environment and some knowledge of the Kimberley is a definite advantage. The position is for 20 hours per week, including some after hours work.

**For a job description, duty statement and selection criteria**  
**phone: 08 91921922 or**  
**email the Director at**  
**[envrkimb@broome.wt.com.au](mailto:envrkimb@broome.wt.com.au)**



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There were six transects for the south end of Cable Beach, extending 1.2 km, and ten for the resort end of Cable Beach, extending 4.7km. The south end survey took place on 15th July when low tide was at 3:04 pm. These surveys were conducted by a few volunteers, including EK members Luke Halling, Wendy Trudgeon, Kevin Smith, his sister Julie and her partner Graham, who took part in the crab monitoring last year, and friends Andy Rowe, Kim Morris and Bulan Casley who initially thought we were going down to the beach to catch crabs.

The resort end survey took place on 12th August when low tide was at 2.30pm. We needed a few more volunteers and recruited the seagrass

watchers to help. Bulan Casley and Luke Halling made it down again for the second round of crab counting with workmate Mandie Matheson. Karen and Michelle from the seagrass watchers came along and CALM students Julie, Chris, Kree and Chris McLennan. Everyone did two transects, the first transect starting 500m from the rocks and the last one 4.7km from the rocks.

Both surveys were successful and, apart from my unnecessary 9.4km walk on the morning of the 12th to figure out the GPS, everything ran smoothly. The results from this year's crab monitoring show a higher population of sand bubbler crabs and a decrease in ghost crabs. There were virtually

no sand bubbler crabs recorded for the first 1.5km on the resort end survey. There was a gradual increase in crab burrows the further we got along the beach with the highest recordings at 4.5km. No ghost crabs were recorded at the Resort end and only two at the last three locations at the south end. The highest recordings of sand bubbler crabs at the south end of Cable Beach were at .8km from the access point; numbers declined after that. The crab monitoring research will have to continue to show the impact of cars on Cable Beach

*Peta Harvey*

# Seagrass-Watch training workshop at Roebuck Bay



**The Roebuck Bay Seagrass Monitoring group was delighted to have Len McKenzie from Seagrass-Watch (Qld) visit the Kimberley recently. After spending a couple of days on the Dampier Peninsular with the Bardi Jawi Rangers, Len delivered a training workshop for our volunteers here in Broome.**

We spent Saturday afternoon in the 'classroom', learning about the biology and ecology of seagrass and about Seagrass-Watch as an organisation. The afternoon included some valuable practical sessions learning how to identify different species of seagrass and how to press specimens.

On Sunday morning we met very early at Town Beach to complete a field monitoring session. Len showed us the monitoring methods in more detail and we learnt how we should be filling in the datasheets to suit the Seagrass-Watch database better. We finished the morning with



some vanilla slices in the park which may have to become standard practice from now on, I think!

Even though the majority of participants had been monitoring in Roebuck Bay for a few months already, we all learnt a lot about seagrass and its role as an indicator of ecological health. But, most importantly, we came away with a great sense of being part of a larger network of seagrass-watchers who are out in their local community, collecting the same information as we are. Our monitoring methods were refined and we now have the skills and confidence to know what to do if we see something out of the ordinary. It is also very reassuring to know that the baseline data we are collecting WILL be useful and CAN influence decision makers.

After the training workshop, Len was able to visit the Port and Demco sites and could confirm that our sites had been well selected and our methods were sound. He pointed out many dugong feeding trails and indicated that the seagrass meadows were looking healthy. So that's great news!

If you are interested in becoming involved with the seagrass monitoring project, please contact Maria Mann at Environs Kimberley.

**We are always looking for more volunteers!**

*Danielle Bain,  
Seagrass Monitoring Project Coordinator*



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# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT *for 2006-2007*

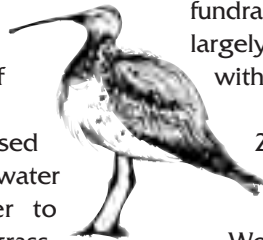
**Our chairperson, Jacqui Remond, has pulled off her biggest coup yet and given birth to a baby boy, Claude. Busy with motherhood, Jacqui has not taken a position on EK's new executive committee. Here is Jacqui's report for the past financial year.**

This year has been extremely positive for Environs Kimberley and it has been a real honour to have been the Chairperson throughout this period.

After celebrating the successes of our first ten years, EK stepped into its second decade with a new theme for 2006/2007: climate change. The committee focussed on seeking financial opportunities for EK and increasing the organisation's capacity to campaign. The results have been outstanding. Financially, and through our campaign portfolio, EK has had many wins.

At the beginning of this financial year the strategic plan was used as a basis for the 2007 annual plan. This provided direction for funding opportunities, and a framework of outcomes and objectives for campaigns. Looking back at the annual plan for this year we can see that across each campaign area achievements have been made by volunteers or by EK staff members.

Campaign work on the Fitzroy River progressed with the employment of Gary Scott, our freshwater campaigner, whose work is taking us closer to gaining long-term protection of the Fitzroy. Seagrass monitoring of Roebuck Bay was commenced by Danielle Bain and her band of volunteers, and will continue throughout 2008. Rachel Tenni worked on Climate Change, and gained the largest grant DEST gave out to run Science Week. I worked on climate change in a voluntary capacity, through the Climate Project, by delivering presentations across the Kimberley. I am pleased to say that two



community members are attending the AI Gore training in Melbourne, so Climate Change Campaigning will continue into 2008. Towards the end of the year we employed Louise Williams as our Community Weed Project Officer. Finally, at the end of the financial year, EK obtained funding from the PEW Foundation to work on the Kimberley Coast Campaign to protect the coast, offshore islands and coral reefs. This is the first time PEW has provided funding to a group in Australia. We hope it will continue.

We have received funds through ACF and the Mullum Trust for the freshwater campaigner position; from Coastwest for the Seagrass monitoring project, DEST for Science Week, NHT for our WEEDS Officer, PEW Foundation for Kimberley Coast campaigning and Lotteries West to employ a fundraiser in the next financial year. These successes are largely due to the efforts of Maria Mann in collaboration with Dave West, an ENGO fundraiser.

Many successful events were held throughout the 2006/2007 financial year, including the Shinju Float 'Save the Whale', the Art Auction, and the Gibb River Road Bike Ride, or Tour de Gibb.

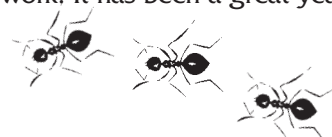
Working relationships have been strengthened with environmental non-government organisations such as Conservation Council of Western Australia, The Australian Conservation Foundation, WWF-Australia, The Wilderness Society and the other groups in the Northern Australia Environment Alliance. We have developed new alliances with organisations such as CHEAK and the Kimberley Marine Tourism Association. EK's profile within the community has been strengthened through events, campaigns and projects such as the Seagrass monitoring of Roebuck Bay, crab monitoring on Cable Beach and climate change presentations.

On a personal level, it has been a fantastic year for me as Chairwoman of EK as I have developed skills in media, campaigning, public speaking, chairing meetings and strategic planning.

My recommendations to the future chairperson of EK, the Board and the organisation include:

1. Developing an annual plan for campaigning and to identify funding opportunities for 2008.
2. Seeking funding for the Director's position beyond March 2008.
3. Developing a strong morale and team approach with the new committee.
4. Working closely with the Director and Staff to maintain staff morale.
5. Obtaining further funding for the Kimberley Coast Campaign.

Thank you to the current Board members for your contributions and support throughout the year. Thank you to the staff and particularly our Director, Maria, for her continued hard work. It has been a great year for EK.



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# Director's Dissertation



**The middle of the year was marked by the opening of the brand new Malcolm Douglas Wildlife Park on the outskirts of Broome. I was accompanied there by ACF's Northern Australia Program Coordinator, Jann Crase, who was in the Kimberley for a series of meetings in Broome and Fitzroy Crossing.**

Our very own Kimberley crocodile hunter turned conservationist, Malcolm Douglas, has been outspoken recently against the establishment of LNG plants along the Kimberley coast and the proposed industrialisation of the region by multinational corporations such as Inpex, Woodside, Shell, BHP-Billiton, ConnocoPhillips, BP and Chevron. Malcolm led the demonstration at the Maret Islands that was organised by local groups Cultural Heritage and Environmental Advocacy for the Kimberley (CHEAK) and Kimberley Marine Tourism Association (KMTA) in June.



The action was prompted by the activities of Japanese company Inpex, which wants to develop a gas processing plant on the Marets. The protest focussed on the drilling rig, which was collecting samples in the coral lagoons that fringe the uninhabited islands. Tourists, tour operators and conservationists took part.

The campaign to save the nature of the Kimberley coast has occupied a good deal of EK's time lately. We have worked with our colleagues at Conservation Council of WA, WWF-Australia, The Wilderness Society, Pew Charitable Trust and CHEAK to lobby for a government-led process to manage the development of Browse LNG, including an assessment of the natural values of the Kimberley coast and an examination of whether the development of an LNG processing plant is appropriate.

This has resulted in the announcement by the state government of the setting up of a Taskforce whose job it is to find a suitable location for an industrial hub somewhere in the North-west to process Browse LNG.

We have also attended meetings with Woodside to discuss their proposed drilling program at Scott Reef – a program that we are opposed to unless it can be managed without any impact on the reef itself – and potential LNG processing sites.

Our campaign skills were enhanced recently when Gary Scott (Freshwater Campaigner) and I attended a weekend

campaign-training workshop in Perth. We are hoping to extend this training to other interested EK members in the new year.

The past few months have seen a number of personnel changes:

- Rachel Tenni has left her position as EK Admin Assistant. Rachel has done a fantastic job for the past couple of years, with organising fundraising events, the weekly market stall and Science Week, as well as with the orderly running of the office. We are looking for someone to take her place — please see advertisement this issue for more information and, if you are interested, contact the office.

- Heather Grace, our bookkeeper of many years, has left Broome for the cooler climes of her home state, Victoria. We thank Heather for her diligence and patience over the years and wish her well. EK's new Bookkeeper is Sarah-Jane Laing and we look forward to working with her.



- Louise Williams is EK's new Weeds Project Officer and we welcome her to the team. She brings with her many years experience of weed management and eradication, project evaluation and public education, and rehabilitation and revegetation with native species – read more about Louise's project elsewhere in this issue and you'll find it's about more than just 'pulling weeds'.
- Danielle Bain, our Seagrass Project Coordinator, is about to retire from the job to have her second baby. We wish Danielle well and look forward to welcoming her yet-to-be-announced replacement.
- Our Chairperson, sometime Kimberley coastal campaigner and former Northern Australia Environment Alliance Coordinator, Jacqui Remond, has also resigned from all her positions — paid and voluntary — to become a full-time mother for a while, before heading east to spend time with family.

More about other comings and goings in our article about the AGM.

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## BIRDING COGITATIONS

**“Think global, act local’ is the mantra of many. So for this issue I will start with news about local birds. Well, they were local to the Broome area and now they are not!**

A Sooty Oystercatcher with an engraved flag C9 was photographed on 1st August 2007 by Emma Carlos at Crocodile Creek, 135km north of Derby. This is a distance of 245km from Roebuck Bay where the bird was banded on 29th Jan 2004. This individual was then seen on the 22nd and 23rd of March 2004 in the Bay but, until the sighting in August, had not been seen since. At least we now know why we are not seeing this individual regularly: this is the longest movement of a member of this species we have had so far during our study.

A Black-winged Stilt, with a yellow flag indicating that it had been banded in North-west Australia, was sighted by Marcus Singor at Lake McLarty, near Pinjarra, south-east of Perth, Western Australia, on 13th August 2007. This is only the second sighting of a Black-winged Stilt with a yellow flag outside North-west Australia.

So, if you are on holidays away from the Broome area, or are a reader in another part of Australia, keep your binoculars handy and your eyes on the lookout and report any sightings of yellow-flagged waders. It is great to receive this type of information from dedicated observers around the country.

Migratory waders have started to return from their breeding grounds in Siberia and northern Asia. The youngsters hatched during the northern summer should be following shortly. Please be mindful that these birds have just flown many thousands of kilometres and arrive tired and hungry. Try not to disturb them at their high tide roosts; avoid walking along the edge of the water if you see flocks of birds, and keep your dogs under control.

Also watch out for Dollar Birds arriving from the northern hemisphere and looking for suitable nesting sites. With all the fires this year there will be a shortage of suitable hollow trees, which are their preferred nesting places.

If you are interested in participating in any research activities associated with migratory waders please contact the Coordinator for North-west Australia, Australasian Wader Studies Group, otherwise known as Chris Hassell, 91928585 or [turnstone@wn.com.au](mailto:turnstone@wn.com.au)

No experience is necessary as training will be provided. A reasonable level of fitness is required. Families welcome.

Happy Birding.

*Liz Rosenberg*

*(Thanks to Adrian Boyle and Chris Hassell for information about bird sightings)*

## ENVIRONS KIMBERLEY BOARD 2007

**More than 40 people crowded into the High Tides Room at the Mangrove Hotel in Broome recently for the EK AGM. It was the best attendance yet, with a good mix of old and new faces.**

Outgoing chairperson Jacqui Remond thanked the organisation for her time with us, showed off her new baby and announced that she would be moving from Broome at the end of the year.

Treasurer Peter Mitchell tabled the audited financial report, commenting that there were challenging times ahead for EK as new sources of funding would soon be required to sustain the Director’s position. Funds would also have to be sought to establish new climate change and Kimberley coastal campaigns, as well as to maintain our freshwater campaign.

Director Maria Mann gave her presentation of the organisation’s highs and lows during the previous 12 months and made it known that she would be resigning her position within the next six to twelve months, ‘to give someone with new ideas and energy a go’.

The new EK Board is:

Chairperson .....	Peter Mitchell
Deputy Chairperson .....	Tanvier Fowler
Treasurer .....	Laurel Sutcliffe
Secretary .....	Nancy Gibson
Committee .....	Andrew Spencer
	Andy Chapman
	Collyn Rivers
	Isolde Scherrer
	Karla McKenzie
	Miranda Dibdin
	Pat Lowe
	Richard Bartlett

Find out more about them in our next issue . . .

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# RUMINATING with Mad Cow

## In foreign parts

**Mad Cow recently ventured into new pastures, but soon came udder-swaying back, alarmed at what she had seen but with much to think about.**

In London I sought out a man who has been camping in Parliament Square, on the grassed area in front of the Houses of Parliament, since 2nd June, 2001: more than six years. Initially campaigning against economic sanctions and the US/UK bombing of Iraq (which was going on long before war was declared), as events unfolded he honed in on the 'war on terror'. Brian Haw's long protest has outlived media interest except on the occasions when the police have pulled down his display, arrested him or moved him on. Such interventions have served rather than thwarted Mr Haw's purposes, and he has attracted some noteworthy supporters, including a number of parliamentarians and civil libertarians. In May 2006 the police conducted a middle-of-the night raid, confiscating most of Mr Haw's anti-war display and reducing its extent to three metres. So very British.

This raid too led to greater rather than less exposure for Brian Haw: I had earlier wandered into the Tate Britain and found, in pride of place at the top of the first flight of stairs, an installation consisting of a replica of Haw's confiscated display, with hand-written posters and photos of injured and dead Iraqi children: it stood there without obvious attribution or explanatory label, and I took it to be a protest in its own right, impressed, if a little surprised, that such an august institution as the Tate should allow its premises to

become an anti-war protest site. Only after I had visited Mr Haw did I learn about the display's origins, and the name of its creator, Mark Wallinger.

On the afternoon of the day of my visit, Brian Haw's encampment was again taken down by the police. He was not arrested, but others with him were. These may have included the Australian woman (not Mad Cow) who had been using Mr Haw's megaphone to abuse and insult politicians as well as the police across the road who, let it be acknowledged, behaved with good humour and restraint (possibly because they knew they would be able to get their own back later).

It is easy to dismiss the Brian Haws of our world as mad, anarchists, unemployed with nothing better to do. But Brian Haw has had a respectable missionary career, travelling to Cambodia and other places far from the pavement where he now lives. And a six year, day and night, summer and winter vigil shows a commitment deserving of respect. So much so that Brian Haw has been nominated for Channel 4's 2007 'Most Inspiring Political Figure' award, along with Tony Blair and the Archbishop of York, inter alia. I know where my vote would go.

So what does Brian Haw's protest have to do with Environs Kimberley? Nothing, perhaps. But I wouldn't mind having him as an EK volunteer.



## LYNGBYA FORUM

**Lyngbya is a naturally occurring saltwater cyanobacterium — not strictly a blue-green alga (plural algae) although, when it occurs in dense clusters, it looks and behaves like one.**

EK and others became interested in Lyngbya following an abnormally dense bloom of a weedy-looking, free-floating organism along the coast on the eastern side of town, including Town Beach, in October, 2005. Thick fronds of it lay stinking on the beaches and hanging in the mangroves. Samples were sent

away for identification, and they turned out to be Lyngbya. A smaller bloom occurred in 2006.

Lyngbya can be toxic, causing severe discomfort to the skin if touched. Dense blooms of it can smother sea grass, the main food of dugong, also eaten by turtles.

As a result of all the interest generated by the weedy bloom, a one-day Lyngbya Forum was held in the Department of Environment and Conservation conference room (formerly the snake house) in Broome in late August. Maria and Pat attended for EK.

Traditional Owner Neil McKenzie

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introduced us to country in the morning, and talked to us later about Rubibi, or Roebuck Bay, and the changes he has noticed since he was a boy. He described the decline or disappearance of crabs, cockles and other shellfish that used to abound, even on Cable Beach.

Scientists from Down South, including Bob Prince, Petra Ringeltaube and Tony Chiffings, gave us background and scientific information during the first part of the morning.

No one knows quite what caused Lyngbya to produce these abnormal blooms around Broome, and speakers held different views. All agreed that the blooms were stimulated by high levels of nutrients flowing into the Bay, but some held that these came via the wet season runoff from gardens, verges and

roads, which is channelled by kerbing along roadways and into the sea at outflow points along the beach. Others blamed leakage or overflow from the sewage ponds, located as they are so close to the coast. Further research must be done to answer this question.

A bloom is not the immediate result of a nutrient dump. Nutrients mingle with the sediment and only when the sediments heat up during the warmer months are they released into the water, to be fed on by Lyngbya.

We didn't spend the whole day talking about a blue-green bacterium, fascinating though the subject was. Related topics included the hydrology and hydrogeology of Broome and Roebuck Bay; RAMSAR listing, National Heritage and Marine Reserve status for

the Bay. Vic Justice told us about the responsibilities of the Port Authority, of which he is CEO. These include preparing for emergencies such as an oil spill, and environmental management of the foreshore, the intertidal zone, the sea and seabed.

There is a natural opposition between Lyngbya and Seagrass, as Len McKenzie of SeagrassWatch pointed out in his presentation, and our keen team of Seagrass Watchers will be poised to notice and report the development of any future Lyngbya blooms.

Our old friend of mudflat fame, Grant Pearson, told us about opportunities for funding necessary research. The day ended with a workshop and discussion of future strategies.



## ENVIRONS KIMBERLEY'S 'RISING TIDE PROJECT'

**For National Science Week,  
Environs Kimberley coordinated  
events in Broome and across the  
Kimberley.**



Under the banner of 'The Rising Tide — Climate Change in the Kimberley', EK organized activities, lectures and tours to make people aware of the science of climate change.

'Science by the Beach' was a success thanks to University of Queensland's Dr. Catherine Lovelock and Dr. John Pandolfi, as well as Broome's own Dr. Conrad Macrokanis. Three sessions were held at Broome Surf Life Saving Club covering the impacts of climate change on mangroves, coral reefs and irukanji jellyfish.

Dr. Cath Lovelock also led a tour of the mangroves. Her knowledge of and enthusiasm for her subject was infectious and we learnt much about our own Roebuck Bay mangroves.

Another highlight of Science Week was 'Climate Change — An Indigenous Perspective', presented by Dr. Donna Green from the University of New South Wales with Yawuru traditional owners Cissy Djargween and Micklo Corpus,



held at Minyirr Park for students from Broome Senior High School and St Mary's College as well as the general public. The presentation was filmed by Goolarri Media and will form part of an education pack available to all 25 Kimberley Schools.

The 'Rising Tide Sustainable Solutions' tour was hosted by Sue Thomas from PM+D Architects, showing examples of sustainable housing around Broome and the possibilities for energy-wise design. Big thanks to Melissa from Town Bus Service, Broome, for supplying the service, and capable bus driver Robyn.

'20/20 Vision — A Kimberley Hypothetical' was hosted by the ABC's Ben Collins at Notre Dame University. The night brought together an eclectic group of Broome's

leaders in business, science and the environment to discuss the future of the mythical Pearl Town in the year 2020. The research and material developed and presented by Ben made for an entertaining and informative night.

Local businesses and government departments, including the Bureau of Meteorology, Department of Environment and Conservation, Australian Quarantine Inspection Service and Manbana Aquaculture centre, held open days during this week.

Displays were sent throughout the Kimberley: to Halls Creek, Kununurra, Wyndham, and Derby shire offices and libraries. Included in the display were maps designed by Nat Raisbeck-Brown showing fire frequency and intensity across the Kimberley. The displays highlighted the ecological damage caused by such fires. Other displays showed the predicted effects of climate change on the Kimberley and explained what residents can do to reduce the expected impacts.

The program organised by Fusion Herbs was again outstanding and very popular. It included 'The Big Organic Day Out' led by composting expert Tim Marshall and tropical gardener Leonie Norrington. This was followed by an organic feast complemented by organic wine and beer from the south-west. The efforts of volunteers ensured a very successful night. Special thanks to Tanvier, Jason, Indi and Jazz, the musicians Tania Ransom, Joe Fox, Claire Moodie, Belinda Skinner, Carol-Anne Olivero, Cat Edmonds, Peter Harper, Dave and Craig Phillips, the cooks, the helpers, Maureen Spencer for the candles and Ushan Boyd the DJ. If you missed out, put it on your calendar for next year. This is truly a unique Broome experience.

Thanks to all who made The Rising Tide Project a great success.



*Dr Donna Green discusses climate change with students at Minyirr Park*



*Science by the Beach with Dr Catherine Lovelock*



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## *EnviroNS Kimberley launches the Community Weed Education and Eradication Delivery (WEED) Project*

**G'day EK members and supporters, I am the EK Community WEED Project Officer.**



*Louise Williams: EK's new Community WEED Project Officer*

On what was supposed to be a whirlwind trip of Central and Northwest Australia, I found my blood

reaching boiling point as each anticipated destination was smothered in a blanket of environmental weeds. And, I would find, I am not the only one who is incensed by the spread of weeds at the expense of our natural ecosystems. EnviroNS Kimberley has been working for some time to launch Community WEED. The project is funded by Natural Heritage Trust and will be implemented by EK in the Kimberley and the Northern Rangelands NRM Coordinating Group in the Pilbara.

Though the prospect of 'weeding the Kimberley' appears daunting, I am up for the challenge. I have spent the last five years working for a small Melbourne company, developing, training and managing environmental teams undertaking a variety of works including: weed and pest animal control, fire management, seed collection,

species reintroduction and translocation of endangered species. Additionally, I managed the ecological consultancy compiling practical environmental management plans, flora and fauna surveys and species monitoring systems.

The Community WEED project will work with 'weed active' people and organizations and assist them to deliver projects and strategies to reduce new and emerging weed problems and control established weeds. Many people recognise that weeds are a major threat to biodiversity and in the face of impending climate change this is forecast to escalate. Invasive weeds are expected to become more competitive and move beyond restricted climate zones, creating more frequent and hotter fires and competing against many vulnerable plant communities. Now is the time for the community to take control and save the things they love about the Kimberley: its plants, its animals and the lifestyle.

We cannot, whatever the budget, remove every single exotic plant from the Kimberley, so, as well as running ground projects, I will focus on creating greater weed awareness to foster responsible approaches to the way we

garden, camp, farm, mine and build roads. These include hygiene practices, sustainable gardening, long-term weed management programs, and connecting weed managers to share knowledge and drive success. I will also campaign for responsible restoration programs to be implemented by government agencies and industry groups that clear vegetation and contribute to the spread of weeds.

One of the first major projects to be started this September is assisting KLC's Bardi Jawi rangers and Minyirr Park rangers in establishing weed control sites on the Dampier Peninsula. The pilot project is in response to the study by Sally Black et al (in press), which investigated priority Vine Thicket patches and identified weeds and fire as major threats. Vine Thickets are a Threatened Ecological Community and local weed control efforts will go a long way to securing their future.

I look forward to meeting the many EK supporters over the course of the project. If you are concerned about the threat of weeds and wish to discuss any ideas or plans of attack, please contact me by phone on 91929122 or email at [ekweeds@enviroNSkimberley.org.au](mailto:ekweeds@enviroNSkimberley.org.au)



# STANDING UP for the BURRUP

Members and friends of Environs Kimberley answered a call from the Friends of Australian Rock Art (FARA) recently when they gathered at Gantheaume Point for a photo shoot aimed at raising awareness of the threats to the Burrup Peninsula rock art from the petroleum industry.

Fifteen people donned over-sized t-shirts, which spelled out the slogan 'Stand Up for the Burrup', and lined up on the rocky headland. Thanks to photographer Damian Kelly for helping out. Celebratory drinks and nibbles were enjoyed by all as the sun went down.

Western Australia's Burrup Peninsula

is the world's largest outdoor rock engraving site, containing rock art of world importance, possibly dating back 30,000 years, including what may be the first ever representation of the human face. Woodside Petroleum and the Western Australian Government are planning to turn part of this site

into a natural gas production facility, against the wishes of some of the site's Aboriginal custodians and the scientific community.

To find out more visit <http://www.standupfortheburrup.com/>



## Kimberley Freshwater Campaign

Over the past few months Environs Kimberley (EK) has continued to campaign for the long-term legal protection of the Fitzroy River. Dams, pipelines, large-scale native vegetation clearing and excessive water extraction for irrigation must be ruled out once and for all.

A campaign brochure has been produced to this end and is enclosed with this newsletter. The brochure outlines EK's vision for the protection and management of the Fitzroy and other Kimberley rivers. It includes a section that I would strongly encourage EK members and supporters to detach and send to the Premier of WA, Alan Carpenter.

EK is asking the Premier to commit the WA Government to the following three actions:

1. *Establish a consultative process to investigate options for cross-cultural legal protection of the Fitzroy River.* EK would like to see this process begin in the next six months.
2. *Ensure that land tenure and native title issues in the Fitzroy River catchment are resolved.* This will not be easy, but the recent settlement of the Noonkanbah native title claim and the Miriuwung-Gajerrong agreement in the East Kimberley demonstrate what is possible when all parties work together.
3. *By 2010, introduce legal measures to protect the Fitzroy River in the long term.* This allows for a realistic 2-3 year timeframe for extensive community consultation to be undertaken, as well as commitments to be made and acted upon pre- and post- the next state election (due in February 2009).

Already there is some initial movement along this path. The Department of Water will undertake a Kimberley regional water planning process over the next few years. EK will be working to ensure that the vital ecological and cultural importance of the region's river, wetland and groundwater systems are duly recognised and that these systems are given a high level of protection throughout the Kimberley. We are members of a Steering Group for a proposed Kimberley Water Forum, which will set the scene for the water planning process. The Forum is likely to be

held in February or March 2008 – more information about this event will be included in the next EK newsletter.

EK has also been busy campaigning to keep GM cotton out of the Kimberley. In August, Agriculture Minister Kim Chance released a discussion paper that was highly slanted in favour of allowing GM cotton to be grown commercially in the Ord River Irrigation Area. EK's submission recommended that the current state-wide moratorium on GM crops be extended for a further 10 years at least. A decision whether or not to allow GM cotton in the Ord is likely in coming months as the WA Government seeks to clear the way for Ord Stage 2 to proceed.

The Prime Minister's Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce visited Broome and Kununurra in August, and EK made a presentation highlighting the ecological importance of the Fitzroy River. Taskforce Chairperson, Senator Bill Heffernan, continues to argue the case for maintaining Australia's 'food sovereignty' in the context of dwindling water supplies in southern parts of the nation. Northern Australia would become the new national food bowl and possibly a major exporter of food to many Asian countries. Yet this vision of a new agricultural frontier across the north, one full of GM crops, expanded irrigation areas and fragmented landscapes, is not one shared by environmental groups. It would place the nature of the Kimberley at grave risk.

The Kimberley Freshwater Campaign is supported by the Australian Conservation Foundation

*Dr Gary Scott,  
Freshwater Campaigner*





Save the Nature of the Kimberley  
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 INC

**We meet on the last Wednesday of every month  
 at 5pm, Lotteries House, Cable Beach Road.**

**New members/visitors are very welcome.**

**Ring Maria on 9192 1922 for place and time  
 of our next meeting so that you can help to  
 SAVE THE NATURE OF THE KIMBERLEY**

**BOOKS**

- Life Along Land's Edge by Rogers, Piersma, Lavaley, Pearson and de Goeij \$40 plus postage & handling.
- The Boab Tree by Pat Lowe \$25.00 plus postage and handling.

**T-SHIRTS**

- Hemp T-shirts & singlets, *Keep your cotton pickin' hands off the Kimberley, Save Riddell Beach, Fitzroy River, let it flow and Environs Kimberley Save the Nature of the Kimberley* Available in various sizes & colours.



All prices inclusive of GST



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Thank you for helping us to protect the  
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The gift fund is a public fund and is listed on the register of Environmental Organisations under item 8.1.1 of subsection 30-35 (1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.