



Save the Nature of the Kimberley
environs
KIMBERLEY
 INC

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Bulletin No. 44 • December 2007

DIRTY SOCKS AND BROKEN THONGS



Environs Kimberley's highly competitive Dirty Sock Award (DSA) for notable disservice to the environment goes this year to Inpex for its determination to trash at least two pristine islands — the North and South Marets, off the Kimberley Coast — which are significant turtle nesting places, and have many other natural attributes.

The Broken Thong award goes to Main Roads WA for turning so much of the bush into a gravel pit alongside the new tarmac road to One Arm Point.

We also like to hand out a few bouquets, and this year there are two. One goes, unusually, to a politician — none other than our new Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd — for his firm

promise to sign the Kyoto agreement on climate change. Let's hope this portends well for action to stop global warming.

The second bouquet goes to the Broome Shire Council for its recent electronic recycling day, and to the people who made it happen, as well as to the businesses that will be drop-off points for e-waste:

Broome Waste, Best Kimberley Computing and Broome Telecentre.

Season's greetings, everyone, and don't forget to recycle your Christmas cards in those Planet Ark envelopes from the Post Office.



STOP PRESS

Maria Mann (EK), Wayne Bergmann (KLC) and Paul Gamblin (WWF-Australia) celebrate the signing of the Joint Position Statement on Kimberley Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Development, witnessed by Nancy Gibson and Tanvier Fowler (EK Board) and Nita Marshall and Tom Birch (KLC Executive).



Student Environmental Award 2008

Value: \$1200

Purpose:

To encourage Kimberley students to undertake studies with an environmental focus.

Applicants must have been resident in the Kimberley for at least two years; have successfully completed Years 11 & 12 at a Kimberley school; and have applied to undertake an accredited course of study with an environmental focus in 2008.

Applications close:

11th February, 2007

Winner announced:

31st March, 2007

Enquiries: Contact Environs Kimberley for Guidelines and an Application Form.

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



Hello all. I'm back for my third gig as Chair of our wonderful organisation. The AGM in October elected a strong and diverse committee from a very well-attended meeting, with many members answering our call for new blood. Thanks and welcome to all of you.

Thanks and congratulations as well to outgoing chair Jacqui Remond, now mother of Claude and soon to leave Broome, for a while at least. Jacqui made a huge contribution to the Kimberley, not just through EK, and built bridges wherever she went.

We continue to involve ourselves in the debate and discourse over the latest major threat to the integrity of the Kimberley, the potential industrialisation of our coast by the gas industry and possible spin-off projects. The coast, islands and reefs of the Kimberley are a precious asset that Kimberley people need to maintain for their descendants, and for the rest of humanity.

Other challenges include the continued pressure on our ecosystems from fire, weeds, feral animals such as cane toads and now foxes, and human impact via landclearing for broadacre agriculture and uncontrolled 4WD access. Over all of this is the looming threat of global warming. As if wasn't hot enough in the Kimberley in December! Fortunately, local and world opinion is swinging in behind the environment movement, so lets keep moving on, together.

Peter Mitchell

Director's Digressions

It's been an action-packed quarter with plenty of comings and goings.



The AGM saw the departure of many familiar faces from the Board and the recruitment of many new folk, resulting in a good balance between people with fresh new ideas and those with a bit more experience of serving on a committee. I am working with a small team of Board members to establish key directions, develop campaign and project priorities, and prepare funding applications for 2008–2009.

As well as a new Board, we have recruited several new people to part-time staff or consultancy positions. We welcome Christine Elsasser as our new Admin Assistant, Sarah-Jane Laing as Bookkeeper, Fiona Rafferty as Fundraiser and Kirsten Pearce, Seagrass Project Coordinator.

The campaign to oppose the industrialisation of the Kimberley has gained momentum in the past few months, absorbing a good many resources and hours of time. Your Director, together with other EK Board members and representatives, has attended many meetings, both here and in Perth: with other members of the Save the Kimberley Alliance; with Minister for Resources Development, Hon Eric Ripper; with the Northern Development Taskforce; with petroleum companies Woodside, Inpex and Total; with Kimberley Land Council; with funding organisations; with Shire of Broome, and more. We have promoted our position, consisting of four key recommendations, at every opportunity:

1. That an assessment of values (ecological, cultural, social and economic) for the Kimberley–Pilbara coast be conducted without delay, such an assessment to underpin all decisions about the development of an LNG industry in the Kimberley.
2. That the Government and industry proponents commit to a substantial regional benefits package for Kimberley Indigenous people, regardless of the siting of an industrial hub.
3. That, if there is development of the Browse LNG field, the Government requires all processing infrastructure to be located in a single hub.
4. That the Government calls on Inpex to cease operations until a values assessment has been conducted and the Taskforce has made its recommendations.

We joined forces with Malcolm Douglas and members of CHEAK/Save the Kimberley and the Kimberley Marine Tourism Association to protest against Inpex's work on the Maret Islands. This action attracted a good deal of media publicity.

With what little time your Director has had left over, I have attended the Parks and Protected Areas Forum in Perth; assisted with the Roebuck Bay Working Group's ongoing endeavours to develop a management plan for Roebuck Bay; and provided input into the continuing Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable program of work.

I thank you all—for your continued support of EK and the work we do. It's great to know we're in it together, and in it for the long haul—the planet needs our efforts now, more than ever.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

There are more than 300 EK members – just imagine, if everyone signed up just one more person, we'd have double that number. Please encourage your family and friends to join, or give them a gift membership.

Maria Mann



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THE PROBLEMS WITH ETHANOL

The production of Ethanol speeded acknowledgment that energy problems exist, but producing it from corn means that the need for fuel is competing with the need for food.

The product is made from starch and sugar crops, and the massive diversion of land required is driving up food costs. 'The biofuels boom is causing corn and soybean prices to start moving in tandem with crude oil prices,' warns the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Report (April 2007). '...the world price of food rose by 10% in 2006, driven mainly by surging prices of corn, wheat and soybean'.

Some countries have already reacted. Following growing unrest over escalating prices, Mexico recently controlled the prices of key corn-based products.

Despite this, many countries push for massive increases in ethanol production. In 2005, the US Senate mandated to increase renewable fuel supply from its present 17.5 billion litres to 28.4 billion litres by 2012, and to 138 billion by 2022. How on earth (bad pun intended) this is to be achieved is unclear: US ethanol producers alone are

expected to use half 2008's entire corn crop (estimated at 130 million tonnes).

But not everyone sees this as a problem. The University of California's director of the Renewal and Appropriate Energy Laboratory, Daniel Kammen, says that the US 'is an over-producer of food'.

The push for ethanol is hardly ecologically sound. The (current) PM's Biofuels Taskforce reported in 2005: 'Emissions of CO are reduced [by using 10% ethanol] compared with neat petrol; there is little change in volatile organic compound emissions, and NOx emissions are increased.' Nor is fuel saved: cars running on ethanol use more.

Economically, limited Australian ethanol production makes sense. Australia was a major sugar exporter – at least until prices dropped and farmers accumulated unsold crops. Australia is still a net oil importer. So turning sugar into ethanol is not a bad idea, but using the Fitzroy's water to grow sugar for more ethanol production when we are sitting on seriously big mobs of LPG would be. Nor is water just an issue here. The Stockholm Water Institute says that by 2050 'the amount of additional water needed for biofuel production could equal the amount needed by the agricultural centre to feed the world properly'.

There are pros and cons. Ethanol makes economic sense for Brazil. Its cars now run on it almost exclusively. But it makes less sense ecologically to cut down all its trees to produce more for the USA. It makes no sense at all to do it for political motives, like reducing the need to buy oil from countries currently out of favour.

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Shell Australia has a refreshingly long-term view. In its submission to a recent Victorian parliamentary enquiry, it notes that ethanol from food crops has limited potential: 'their source material . . . can also be used for food crops and so competes for land use'. The company suggests that

converting the cellulose residue of plants 'has the potential to overcome these limitations while delivering much bigger reductions in CO₂', and is working toward doing so.

Collym Rivers

Chasing the chicks in Chukotka

Since 1988 the Russian Academy of Science has run expeditions to the Arctic to conduct bird inventories and monitor threatened species. Paying volunteers join the expedition each year. The 2007 Expedition focussed on the tundra of south Chukotka, between latitudes 62 and 65 degrees North. The team consisted of six Russian scientists and four volunteers, including lucky me.



The adventure began in Anadyr, capital of Chukotka province. The town has a population of 12,000. We camped at a military base across the bay — a Cold War relic that the tundra was rapidly reclaiming. The leaking sewerage system and rubbish heaps provided wonderful habitat for breeding birds. The cold was bearable with four layers under my jacket. Locals gave testimony of global warming: for the last five years snow has come later, fallen less thickly and melted earlier.

A major focus of this year's expedition was the Great Knot, a shorebird commonly found in Roebuck Bay in the non-breeding season. This species is one of many that make long migrations to breeding grounds in the Arctic via the Yellow Sea. Its behaviour in the Arctic is not well known, for instead of breeding on coastal mudflats or marshes, the Great Knot breeds on the tops and upper slopes of hills 300-500 metres above sea level.

An early expedition task was to search for Great Knot nests in the Golden Ridge mountains, about 30kms north-east of Anadyr. In early June snow still covers at least 50% of the tundra; travel is only possible on foot or by 'caterpillar', a vehicle like a tank that can travel over most terrains. The nests are incredibly hard to find. As the photograph shows, the birds' breeding plumage camouflages them wonderfully in the lichen and prostrate shrubs of the alpine vegetation, and they remain motionless on the nest until searchers are within four or five metres of their spot. The only strategy is to walk and walk (and walk). After 8 days we had found only two nests, each with four eggs.

Ten days later, after a diversion to search for Spoon-billed Sandpiper nests on the coast, two of us returned to the Golden Ridge area. We spent two weeks searching the surrounding hills for Great Knots and their chicks, and found six broods. We did a lot of walking, although the adults helped by making loud alarm calls when we were

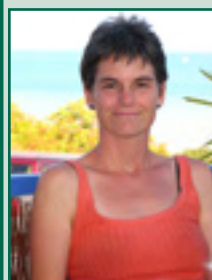
within 100 metres of their chicks. Observations revealed surprises:

- The chicks stood absolutely motionless while a parent continued to give the alarm call — for up to an hour in some instances. This ability, and their camouflaged plumage, made it very difficult for us and aerial predators to spot them.
- The adults and chicks remained on the high plateau tops and slopes until they could fly, not moving to the swampy valleys where we had assumed more food could be found. Apart from spiders and beetles, it was not possible to identify the food the birds ate.
- Breeding densities are very low, approximately 1.75 broods per square kilometre, making it very inefficient for a ground predator to search for breeding birds. We never observed a land predator on the plateau tops, despite the lack of lemmings (their prey of choice) this year.

On June 16th, the day before we left the Golden Ridge area, we spotted the chicks of two broods flying. They flew only 50 metres, but within a few weeks they would be on their way to Australia via staging grounds in China or South Korea. One of those chicks is wearing a pale green flag on its upper right leg that I put on. It would be wonderful if this bird could be sighted in Roebuck Bay, proving conclusively the connection between our world and the very different one of south Chukotka.

Jan Lewis

MEET CHRISTINE...



EK'S NEW ADMIN ASSISTANT

After six years of absence I have arrived back in Broome only recently. Being part of Friends of Gantheaume Point was my first involvement in environmental action. While away, I was active in local Landcare groups, Conservation Volunteers Australia and Greening Australia. My experience of the overdeveloped and very busy East Coast only fuelled my passion to protect places that are still wild and untouched. I am delighted to be back in Broome. When I heard about EK looking for an admin assistant I just had to jump at the opportunity to get involved and be part of a group of people that still cares about the Environment.

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Kimberley Freshwater Campaign Update



Specific policies to protect the natural and cultural values of Australia's unique northern rivers and wetlands were thin on the ground from both major parties during the recently concluded federal election campaign.

The newly elected Rudd Government has certainly committed to a few worthy environmental initiatives, such as a Climate Change Adaptation Plan to help protect iconic areas across Northern Australia from the worst impacts of global warming. Increased funding will also go towards establishing 300 new Indigenous Ranger positions on Indigenous lands, an expanded Indigenous Protected Areas program and enabling greater participation in newly emerging carbon markets. However, the Kimberley itself only featured in the election campaign on one occasion, when the then Shadow Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, committed \$2 million towards the development of a National Cane Toad Plan.

This evident lack of federal concern about the Kimberley environment highlights the fact that the WA Government must be the one to take the lead to ensure the long-term protection of the Fitzroy River. So far it has committed to a Kimberley regional water planning process, which will get under way with a Kimberley Water Forum in Broome in mid-March 2008. Environs Kimberley is a partner in the forum along with the

Kimberley Land Council and key WA government agencies.

The Carpenter Government is also in the process of drafting important new water legislation, which in part needs to be introduced to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth's National Water Initiative. The new legislation will replace the water resource management provisions in outdated acts like the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914.

From a conservation perspective it is important that the new legislation allows the Minister for Water Resources to declare waterways with high conservation and cultural values, such as the Fitzroy River, to be 'significant'. This then ought to require a catchment management regime to be put in place that maintains and enhances these values, with a high level of involvement by the region's Aboriginal people an absolute must. Native title rights to water also need to be adequately recognised and defined in the new legislation so that Aboriginal communities receive equitable outcomes from any future water allocation plans. The Kimberley Water Forum in March will provide a perfect opportunity for government and local stakehold-

ers to debate these crucial and complex issues.

Over the last month I have been covering a lot of ground in the Fitzroy River Catchment talking to many Aboriginal Traditional Owners and other residents to hear their thoughts about the goals of the Kimberley Freshwater Campaign. The great majority of people I have spoken with remain very supportive of the idea that the Fitzroy River needs long-term legal protection from dams, pipelines to Perth and large-scale irrigation schemes. Many thanks also to everyone who has sent back a campaign pamphlet slip. Please keep them coming. I will be sending the first batch to the Premier within the next month.

The coming 12 months is shaping up as the year when the future of the Fitzroy River will be substantially decided. We need to bring as much public pressure to bear on the politicians as we can. The message I've been hearing is still loud and clear – No Dam Way!

The Kimberley Freshwater Campaign is supported by the Australian Conservation Foundation



SKIPS — Society for Kimberley Indigenous Plants

Christmas greetings from SKIPS. As a group we've had an extremely active six months and it's great to see the interest shown in Kimberley indigenous plants.

August saw an intrepid group of about 25 set off from the Vine Thicket and walk in through the back of the dunes towards Minyirr Park Base Camp. Many of the plants were in flower or fruiting and the walk was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Those pushing prams and carrying children reported that they slept very soundly that night. The walk was a little longer than I had imagined. Another more recent walk took in the old CALM arboretum and a very beautiful garden on Robinson St. Hope to have a self-guided garden walk trail out to you soon.

A recent highlight was a highly informative and enthusiastic presentation on fire and its effect on germination of native species, by Dr Kingsley Dixon, Director of Kings Park and Botanic Gardens. He visited one of our propagation evenings and we were able to pick his brain on all manner of plant and propagation trivia. He is one of Australia's foremost plant experts, and we were most fortunate to have access to his limitless knowledge. We have made an extremely valuable contact for our group. Thanks, Tim.

As the weather has warmed up we have been busily propagating at the TAFE nursery (thank you, Kim and the horticultural staff). After a few false starts we are beginning to have good success, and if you would like to have some of

these plants, why not come down and get involved.

SKIPS is currently working with Louise Williams and the Shire in the hope of being able to produce a leaflet that will assist local gardeners in plant selection for a waterwise garden. We'll keep you posted on this one.

If you would like to be part of our group, please phone with your details or tune in to our friendly local ABC radio station for details of upcoming events.

Contact Phil Docherty on 91937331 or philip.docherty@det.wa.edu.au

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RUMINATING with Mad Cow

NURDLE SOUP, ANYONE?

You've heard of the Stone Age, the Iron Age and the Bronze Age — all with the ring of nobility about them, even if they didn't happen in the way they are imagined in Eurocentric text books. In Australia, there are

still people around who remember using stone tools. Working with tools of wood and stone was labour-intensive but, since people didn't waste energy on unnecessary tasks, they didn't feel burdened by the exercise of their muscles and brains making useful things and getting food. On the contrary, it kept them fit, dextrous and strong. Furthermore, their lives had little long-term effect on their environment; their ecological footprint, as today's parlance has it, was not much bigger than their foot.

Today, we rarely use stone for anything but making roads, decorating gardens or marking graves. We still use wood — far too much of it — but the material we use the most, for which future generations, if we are lucky enough to have any, will remember us, is plastic. Plastic enters all our lives by every crevice. Our houses are full of it, and it would be tedious to try to list all the things that are made of it. Think of cameras, computers, printers, television sets and radios, telephones, washing machines and air conditioners, storage boxes, packing crates and office furniture. Then think of plastic furniture, car interiors, plastic bags, belts and shoes, kitchen and bathroom equipment and containers galore. And then think of packaging: a whole book could be written about the way plastic is used to package things that don't need packaging, in bottles, bags, wrap... See

what I mean: tedious.

Unlike useful objects made of stone, iron and bronze, those made of plastic, especially electronic ones, don't last long. Yet the material they are made from does. It accumulates in rubbish dumps and landfill all over the world. Plastic bags cast into the sea suffocate dolphins and are eaten by turtles. They, and a mountain of other plastic waste that finds its way into the sea, including miles and miles of ghost nets, drift around the oceans of the world for years, creating mayhem, until they meet in the Pacific Ocean at a place where currents converge. Here they swirl about in a plastic soup twice the size of Texas, gradually breaking down into smaller and smaller components. The smaller components, which have a nasty affinity for toxic chemicals and are known as 'nurdles', are ingested by birds and other marine life. Toxic nurdles are now in the food web and entering the digestive tracts of the so-called higher animals, including us.

Meanwhile, Pacific islands are drowning, not only under the rising tide, but also in their own plastic waste, which they don't have room to store and no one will take away.

Such is the legacy of over-consumption and the culture of disposability. Environmentalists have been warning about it, as they have about global warming, for years, but there is little comfort in again being right. In WA the state government wants to make plastics recycling mandatory and plastic bottles returnable. Industry, predictably, is resisting. Can we afford any longer to entrust our sick planet to the Market Gods?



QUEENSLAND LEGISLATION OVERRULES XSTRATA WIN

The Queensland Parliament has rushed through special legislation overriding the decision in Queensland Conservation Council Inc v Xstrata Coal Queensland Pty Ltd & Ors [2007] QCA 338, permitting Xstrata's expansion of a mine 130km west of Mackay to proceed without conditions regulating greenhouse gas emissions.

Earlier in 2007 the Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) argued before the Land & Resources Tribunal that Xstrata's application to expand its mining lease should not be approved without conditions requiring Xstrata to offset the greenhouse gas emissions produced. President Koppenol ultimately found in favour of Xstrata, recommending the application be approved without the conditions sought. QCC was held to have failed to demonstrate that Xstrata's operations would have any significant impact on global warming (Re Xstrata Coal Queensland Pty Ltd & Ors [2007] QLRT 33).

The Tribunal's decision was overturned by the Full Court of the Supreme Court of Appeal Queensland on October 12th. The Court found QCC had been

denied natural justice by the Tribunal, as it was refused leave to amend the amount of offsets sought to be imposed, and not given opportunity to respond to an article doubting the science of climate change — 'The Stern Review: A Dual Critique' — considered by the Tribunal. The matter was remitted to the Land Court for rehearing.

The Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007 (No. 46 of 2007), passed by the Queensland Parliament just days later, effectively nullified this ruling,

permitting Xstrata's expansion to proceed without conditions before the matter could be reheard. The Queensland Government claimed the legislation was necessary to save jobs.

DAMIAN KELLY PHOTOGRAPHY

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In a Media Release from 17th October Anita O'Hart of the Environmental Defender's Office Queensland stated: 'It is misleading for the government to say that their special legislation is to save jobs.' The laws relating to the assessment and approval of coal mines have been in existence for some time and already require a detailed assessment of both the environmental impacts and

economic benefits of proposed mines in Queensland.

'It is hard to envisage a project or development that does not involve jobs. Will they all be excused from proper assessment and legal process?'

'The government argues for a consistent approach to assessing coal mines, but at the same time it specifically excludes one individual mine from

an assessment according to the law. This is a dangerous precedent and a blow to the sensible consideration of greenhouse gas emissions as part of the assessment process,' Ms O'Hart added.

*By Cameron Powrie,
Principal Solicitor,
Environmental Defender's Office
and Lisa Burton,
EDO volunteer*

NOTPA

The Department of Agriculture and Food's New Opportunities for Tropical and Pastoral Agriculture (NOTPA) program is investigating and developing new scenarios for sustainable agriculture.

The NOTPA program has been running since June 2005, focussing on the sustainable development of the pastoral, agricultural, and horticultural enterprises in the West Kimberley and Pilbara regions.

It services a wide client base and works in close consultation with stakeholders, including Aboriginal entrepreneurs and family groups, pastoralists, horticulturalists, agri-business, non-Government organisations and other State Government departments.

NOTPA's services range from assistance with developing diversification applications, guidance on how to apply for research funding, advice on a wide range of agricultural and horticultural issues, and assistance on how to monitor sustainable productivity and performance.

Recently, NOTPA completed a benchmarking study of the region to gain a better understanding of important issues associated with agriculture from our stakeholders' perspective.

One of the outcomes was a request for information on organic farming practices and making compost.

Subsequently, the Department of Agriculture and Food sponsored Tim Marshall, a recognised specialist in organic farming practices, to speak at an Open Day.



Farm walk at Fusion Herbs Open Day delivered by Leonie Norrington.

Tim is highly regarded as an organic farming writer and trainer and has a vast knowledge of composting, having authored the book, 'Recycle Your Garden'. Tim's talk and the Farm Tour that followed were held at Fusion Herbs, Broome, in August.

Tim commented on the achievements of local Organic industries to date, and encouraged local producers to continue their good work.

Leonie Norrington from the ABC's Gardening Australia programme also attended the Open day, sharing her



Jason Fowler of Fusion Herbs inspects his compost with organic farming and composting specialist, Tim Marshall.

knowledge as a third generation tropical gardener. Leonie has also written a book, titled "Tropical Food Gardens".

The NOTPA team, in their role as facilitators for sustainable agriculture in the region, were pleased with the high level of interest shown in the day.

NOTPA team would like to thank Tanvier and Jason Fowler for providing such an inspiring venue and hosting the day.

NOTPA can be contacted for advice or information on the numbers below:

Staff member	Key role	Contact details
Chris Ham	Project Manager	91 94 1424
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Broome		kmay@agric.wa.gov.au
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Leonie Wilson	Development Officer	91 94 1400
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Update

Roebuck Bay Seagrass Monitoring Project



Change appears to be the order of the day in the Broome Seagrass Project. Not only has the previous project coordinator, Danielle Bain, had her new baby and a new coordinator been handed the reins, most excitingly, the Bay has been transformed into a stunning carpet of 'seagrass' green.

As the new coordinator for the project, I say hello to all and thank you to everyone who helped to make the handover such a pleasure. Briefly about myself: I have been living in Kimberley, (with the occasional detour), over the past seven years and I have filled my time variously, from the inevitable customer service roles to completing Lands Parks and Wildlife certificates at the Broome TAFE, working on fungi in Manjimup, land snails in Kununurra and weeds and feral animals in Broome. I am also somewhere between the start and end of a Masters in Tropical Environmental Management and a fairly recent entrant into the ranks of motherhood. Seagrass presents a new challenge, which I am already thoroughly enjoying.

With the capable assistance of local volunteers, Karen and Miranda, the October monitoring session was very successful. Karen and Miranda enjoyed seeing the drastic increase in seagrass cover and viewed numerous dugong-feeding trails. In November, new volunteer, Ali, ventured onto the mud with

me to assist with recording the inshore edge of the bed. Thankfully, she had a great sense of humour, as she had the pleasure of meeting the mud bottom first and on several occasions had to retrieve her shoes from the ever-recalcitrant mud. The contribution afforded by volunteers to this project is essential and sincerely appreciated.

To help volunteers apply common names to fauna more consistently, a basic identification booklet will soon be available in the field. A walk on the mudflats reveals a myriad of stunning life forms: flatworms, snails, sea slugs, starfish, feather and brittle stars, sea urchins, anemones and so much more. It is easy to appreciate why this location is so worthy of our attention.

The seagrass beds from Broome Port to Dampier Creek are quite a spectacle, and no less so from the air. A recent flight gave us the opportunity to record each of our monitoring sites, and almost the entire seagrass bed, aerially. Over subsequent seasons we hope to repeat this process and, as well as col-

lecting monitoring data, assess the extent of variation in the size and density of the beds.

There are also plans soon to implement seed monitoring at each of our monitoring locations. We will be applying tried and tested Seagrass-Watch techniques to record the size of mud-based seed reserves of seagrass species, *Halodule uninervis*. This will help us to determine the capacity of the local seagrass beds to re-establish themselves, following significant impacts such as those wrought by cyclonic events.

As Envirofund has recently confirmed a new round of funding, this worthwhile project now has a future until at least June 2009. New volunteers are always welcome; it's as little as a couple of hours every two months. Please call Kirsten Pearce with any enquiries on (08) 9192 6362.

*Kirsten Pearce
Seagrass Monitoring Project Coordinator*



Update



Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Help the Environment
An Australian Environmental Organisation

Community WEED—Weed Education and Eradication Delivery (WEED) Project

The Community WEED has been keeping up a hectic pace over the last few months, raising the profile of weeds and assisting groups with training to identify local weeds and implement control.

There are some fantastic groups of people in the Kimberley, for many of whom the mere mention of weeds ignites a passion. Weeds can have a devastating effect on the places we value, yet often it is not until we look a little more closely at the 'bush' that we realise how insidious they really are. It has been great talking to people about weeds, empowering them with knowledge and listening to their experiences. Discussion creates awareness which, in turn, changes attitudes and motivates action. I look forward to a lot more of it following the wet!

One of the on-ground projects I have taken part in is assisting Alison McGilvary (NRM Karratha) to coordinate weed activities along the Dampier Peninsula's Monsoonal Vine Thickets. The Bardi Jawi rangers have sunk their teeth into the first of three demonstration and training sites. This area in Lombadina has no fewer than eight weed challenges: Coffee Bush, Neem, Siratro, Merremia, Passion Vine, Snake Weed, Bellyache Bush & Buffel Grass – perfect for establishing good weed identification and control techniques. We have worked twice in the last few months and the rangers will use their new skills to establish other sites at One Arm Point and Djarindjin, as well as to map satellite infestations in other vine thickets. The work undertaken has been incorporated into TAFE assessments, so it has been not only great fun, but a good opportunity for the rangers to be accredited. The community WEED will continue to be there to assist the rangers undertake works into 2008.

The first week of November saw the Community WEED tour Bidyadanga's amazing Gubinge enterprise and we also had the opportunity to talk to the horticulture group and some of the new Karajarri Rangers about weeds. A guided tour of the area around the community was part of a great two-way learning day, as we looked at bush food plants and some of the weedy areas. We gave these groups information about

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weeds and showed examples of the damage they can cause, so that both groups will be able to keep a watchful eye for weedy plants. Hopefully, we can work towards creating a poster or other material specific to the area to raise awareness in the broader community about the impacts of weeds, and perhaps initiate a weed project in 2008.

A trip to the East Kimberley was also very productive, when the Community WEED met up with important weed contacts at DAF, DEC, SWEK, SEEKS & LCDC. Preliminary plans were put in place for the CWEED to work with SWEK

to update the East Kimberley Most Wanted weed poster. Additionally, CWEED will assist Miriuwung Gajerrong's Weeds and Waterways Ranger to develop material specific to communities.

There is rarely a slow day on the weed front, but if you have concerns about weeds or are interested in undertaking a weed project, give me a call at Ph: 91921922 or drop me a line to ekweeds@envirokimberley.org.au

Cheers,

Louise

Roebuck Bay Working Group wins WA Coastal Award for 'Outstanding Community Group Effort'.

Professor David Wood presents Kandy Curran and Neil McKenzie from the Roebuck Bay Working Group with the 2007 State Coastal Award for 'Outstanding Group Effort'.

Roebuck Bay Working Group members were thrilled to win the 2007 WA Coastal Award for 'Outstanding Community Group Effort'. The award recognizes the outstanding efforts of the Roebuck Bay Working Group (RBWG) in building local capacity to care for Roebuck Bay, Broome. The group is a collaboration of environment groups, Traditional Owners, Government agencies, industry groups, community organisations, local government and volunteers, with the Secretariat position hosted by the Kimberley Land Council. The RBWG is working to achieve sustainable management of Roebuck Bay, a tropical marine embayment highly valued for its cultural and natural heritage.

Yawuru Traditional Owner Neil McKenzie and RBWG Secretary Kandy Curran accepted the award on behalf of the RBWG at the WA State Coastal Awards in Denmark on November 1st 2007.

'The award is a fantastic endorsement for the RBWG, who have been involved in a collaborative management planning process to restore and maintain Roebuck Bay since 2004,' Ms Curran said. 'Roebuck Bay Working Group's success is based on a commitment to community, Traditional Owner involvement and ownership, and dedication to building local capacity to care for the natural and cultural heritage of Roebuck Bay.'

It is hoped that the award will raise the profile of Roebuck Bay and help attract much needed funding to achieve the



RBWG's aims for 2008: to develop a values-based management plan for Roebuck Bay that is strongly supported by the Broome community.

The management planning work recognised in the State Coastal Award includes a *Values Mapping* process for Roebuck Bay undertaken in 2004 and the development of an *Issues Paper* and *Interim Management Guidelines*, finalized in 2007. These processes identified Crab Creek as a priority planning area and in 2008 a values-based management plan will be developed for the Crab Creek area of Roebuck Bay.

Enviro Kimberley is a founding member of the Roebuck Bay Working Group

WALK AGAINST WARMING 2007

The annual nationwide Walk Against Warming, Australia's largest community day of action on climate change, was held this year on 11th November.

WAW provides an opportunity for Australians to voice their concerns about climate change and urge the government to take their calls for greater action on climate change seriously.

The Broome event was held at Cable Beach, beginning with an address by event organisers, Jacqui Remond and Karla McKenzie, as well as local young traditional owner, Erica Spry. The message was about how our combined efforts to reduce unnecessary energy consumption can contribute to the total reduction of dangerous carbon emissions, as well as why it is so important

for us to join together to put pressure on the government to set serious targets to reduce carbon emissions for Australia.

Cable Beach provided a beautiful backdrop for the event, and after the address the group took a walk along the beach, proudly displaying the banner, 'Climate Action Now', designed and painted by a dedicated group of students from Broome Primary School. With this unique and pristine view we were reminded of just how important it is for all of us to unite and take action against climate change before it is too late.

The Walk was a huge success and a real community event, with a diverse range of community members turning out and braving the harsh Broome heat so early on a Sunday morning. The event was well supported by the community: the 85 people joining the walk in Broome contributed to a 115,000-strong voice Australia-wide. A huge congratulations to all of those who took part. With such a loud voice there is no doubt that Australia's united calls for action will be heard.

Karla McKenzie

Meet the new Board ...



PETER MITCHELL PRESIDENT

I am a long-term Kimberley resident and have been active in community and environmental matters for most of my time here. I believe in diversity and in the Kimberley that includes the integrity of our ecosystems, our landscapes and our cultures and communities.

The threatened damming of the Fitzroy River in 1996 galvanised me and many other Kimberley folk into action. Since then EK and our friends and partners in the indigenous and wider communities have worked to preserve the special nature of the Kimberley, in the hope that our descendants can continue to enjoy the beauty that we all celebrate and enjoy.



TANVIER FOWLER VICE PRESIDENT

I first blew through Broome in 1995, came back in 1997 and moved here for good in 2000. Along the way I've studied Botany, Zoology, Marine Biology (BSc), Aquaculture (Cert) and Tourism (Cert). Since settling at Twelve-Mile I've worked with my husband Jason to set up a Certified

Organic Farm, had twins, talked on ABC Kimberley Radio, held fundraisers for EK, researched Biodynamics and am now attempting to finish a Permaculture Design Certificate. I'm often asked how I do it; well, I'm driven by a passion to conserve nature. I believe in leading by example and taking a proactive stance on finding ways for people not only to co-exist, but to prosper, together with nature.



NANCY GIBSON SECRETARY

I arrived in Broome on a fishing boat in the middle of a stinking hot February, 14 years ago. As I climbed onto the jetty the heavens opened up and released the hugest raindrops I'd ever seen. The smell, the colours, the heat, the dry land ... it's been love ever since.

I'm currently a recovering café owner who's vowed never to make Raspberry & White Chocolate muffins again. I feel embarrassed about how little I know of this beautiful country and am totally in awe of everyone whose heart and soul are in helping to protect it.



LAUREL SUTCLIFFE TREASURER

I came to the Kimberley in 1986 in search of adventure. After three years as Aboriginal Independent Schools' administrator in Fitzroy Crossing, I moved out to the sandhills abutting the St George Ranges with my husband, Pampila. With his extended family, we established Yakanarra

Community on Cherrabun Station. After 17 fun-filled years there, we moved to Broome in February 2006, so that our two almost-teenagers could be immersed in English and have access to a wider range of 'Life Be In It' pursuits.

As the world population continues to explode it becomes increasingly imperative for us like-minded 'little' people to band together and work hard to protect the natural environment of the Kimberley from the ravages of a resource-hungry world and short-sighted thrill/money seekers.



RICHARD BARTLETT

I am currently the primary carer for my two sons. I have worked in Kimberley communities on organic food production, community greening and bush regeneration projects. I am passionate about native landscaping, domestic food production, running my vehicle on vegetable oil and protecting the nature of the

Kimberley. I am enthusiastic about contributing to EK and representing its membership.



ANDY CHAPMAN

I have been involved with EK since 1998, including two years as Chairperson. I feel strongly about protecting the magnificent natural values of the region and continuing to promote these as our greatest asset. Issues I am particularly interested in at the moment are the proposed Browse Basin developments and the ongoing protection of The

Fitzroy River. I believe we should strive to get increased legislative protection for parts of the Kimberley, to preserve these areas for future generations. I would love to see EK become a larger group with more paid staff to take on the increasing workload and develop more proactive projects like the Appropriate Economies Roundtable.



MIRANDA DIBDIN

A farmer's daughter brought up in rural Wales, I have a respect & love for the environment. I chose nursing as my career and found shiftwork all consuming. I have since tried rebalancing my life and have chosen a job that still uses my nursing skills but is much less stressful, which leaves me with energy to do other things that I enjoy.

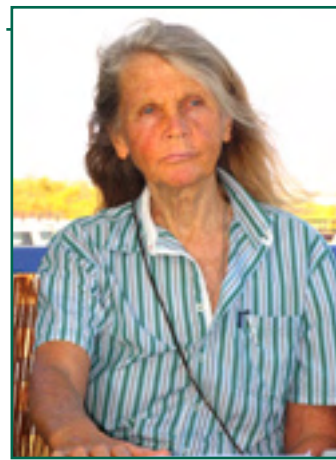
I now have more time & energy to be able to get closer to the land and sea whilst doing something useful, such as being a volunteer for Broome Sea Rescue, Turtle Monitoring, and Seagrass Research. I have recently joined EK.



COLLYN RIVERS

Collyn is our senior member and a man of many parts: former research engineer, international electronics and technical publisher, technical editor of The Bulletin and now a self-publisher of books on an array of matters including solar power and caravanning. Every so often he produces another rabbit from his many career hats; this year's rabbit was just what we needed: a bicycle

mechanic. Collyn is also a yogi who spends much time on his head. He and his wife Maarit, having built their all-solar property at Coconut Well, travel to exotic places on mysterious missions.



PAT LOWE

Pat Lowe has been around for donkeys' years and was one of the founding members of Environs Kimberley, an achievement of which she is inordinately proud, even though the organization would never have got to first base without the practical thinking and dogged work of numerous other donkeys. In past incarnations Pat has been

a professional dish-washer (in the days when dishes were washed by hand), postwoman, teacher and psychologist. She has written several books, articles and pamphlets and edited many more.



ISOLDE SCHERRER

At heart I'm a radical greenie but, tempered by my mind, I've become an EK committee member. I arrived in Broome four years ago on what was intended to be a quick stop before launching myself overseas. Obviously, I never launched myself and the main reason is — I got distracted. Distracted by the colours, the beauty and the people of the Kimberley. Recently

there has been another, not so pleasant distraction – the increasing pressure to industrialize and civilize this amazing part of the earth. I look forward to being a part of the EK committee and taking a more proactive role in saving the nature of the Kimberley



KARLA MCKENZIE

I moved to Broome with my family over a year ago and immediately fell in love with the unique lifestyle the town has to offer, as well as the magical, untouched environment of the Kimberley. Moving to Broome highlighted the need for us to become more involved in the protection of areas like this from over-development and the continued

exhaustion of natural resources. I became a volunteer for EK mid-way through 2007 and then joined the committee for the 2007/2008 year. I have also had the great pleasure of being part of AI Gore and the Australian Conservation Foundation's 'Climate Project Australia'. I am looking forward to being active with EK over the coming year.



ANDREA SPENCER

Andrea Spencer is an independent consultant by profession, with over 25 years experience in human resource management. She is also a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Andrea migrated to Australia from the UK in 2000 and has lived in Broome with her partner, Chris Hassell, for over five years. Andrea has joined the EK Committee with the

aim of making a practical contribution to conserving the Kimberley's native fauna and habitats, and raising awareness of its diverse natural heritage. Andrea is also a member of the Broome Bird Observatory Committee.



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