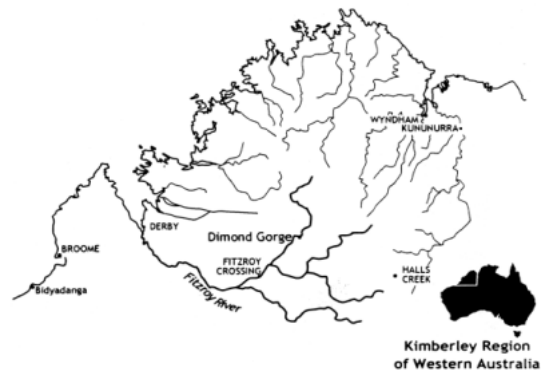




Save the Nature of the Kimberley

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Bulletin No. 48 • December 2008

A SOCK, A THONG AND BUNCHES OF FLOWERS



The end of year would not be complete without EK handing out our annual virtual awards.

The Dirty Sock Award (DSA) for notable disservice to the environment, must go, despite many other deserving entries this year, to our new Premier, Colin Barnett, for his determination to trash the Kimberley as fast as he can, throwing caution to the wind. We can now look forward to industrialisation of our coast, uranium mining and GM crops as a beginning, as well as the fast-tracking of approval processes and the compulsory resumption of Native Title land. Now, that's quite an achievement, gaining the highest score ever. Applause, please.

It is with regret that we give the Broken Thong Award to our Federal Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, and all the Labor premiers, for failing to fight their way out of a plastic bag earlier in the year. And they took a whole day to do it.

It is always harder to find deserving recipients of our first bouquet. However, we throw one at the departing back of our former premier, Alan Carpenter, for his efforts to run a fairer process on which to base decisions about the future of the Kimberley. We at Environs Kimberley appreciate a little caution. All the other bouquets go to our wonderful volunteers, whether they are serving on the committee, monitoring our fellow creatures along the coast or sitting at the market stall. Our staff deserve a room full of bouquets.

And the biggest bouquet of all this year goes to our departing leader, Maria.



STOP PRESS - Kimberley Land Council (KLC) Rejects Woodside Offer

Kimberley Traditional Owners (TOs) have refused a \$500 million offer by petroleum giant Woodside that would have required the carte blanche signing away of cultural heritage rights in return for an LNG development site. The TOs have taken this stand in spite of Premier Colin Barnett's threat of compulsory acquisition hanging over them.

KLC Executive Director Wayne Bergmann said the terms of the proposal were so low that if they accepted it TOs would probably end up making less than if they set aside the same amount of land for eco-tourism opportunities. TOs are understood to support gas development

but only if it offers ongoing economic participation while protecting cultural and environmental heritage.

Environment Groups Support Rejection of Woodside offer:

Environment groups welcomed the announcement that TOs had rejected Woodside's offer.

The groups confirmed their support for TO's rights to informed consent and called for a scientifically based approach to LNG hub site selection, including assessments of sites outside the Kimberley. The decision reflects widespread local community opposition to the industrialization of the Kimberley coast

END OF AN ERA – EK DIRECTOR STEPS DOWN



After more than a decade in various roles, first as Secretary, then Coordinator and finally Director of EK, I have decided to step down.

I have thoroughly enjoyed helping to create this fantastic organisation, and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to hold what is arguably the most

challenging, interesting and rewarding conservation position in the Kimberley.

Throughout my time at EK, I have enjoyed the support, patience and good humour of some of the most wonderfully talented, creative, tenacious and committed people I have ever met, both here and around Australia.

While I brought with me a passion for justice, loads of determination and a sound knowledge and love of the Kimberley, I had a lot to learn about environmental campaigning, all of which I picked up on the job.

Through our collective talents we had some terrific wins, most notably putting a stop to plans that would have seen the Fitzroy River dammed and a massive GM cotton industry established in the west Kimberley.

Of course, leaving the position isn't easy, especially with the Kimberley under such intense pressure from mining and LNG development proposals, and I wish all Kimberley campaigners well in the continued struggle to keep the Kimberley free from industrialisation.

It's great to know that, thanks to our lobbying efforts, the Federal Government is looking favourably at Heritage Listing for a large part of the region.

I don't yet know what I will do next, but I look forward to taking a break and doing some travelling while I decide.

I wish my successor Martin Pritchard all the best.

Maria Mann

INTRODUCING MARTIN PRITCHARD, EK'S NEW DIRECTOR

I was born in a rural community in Wales and my first language is Welsh. I have an agricultural and environmental background and have worked in Wales, England and New Zealand. For the past nine years I have lived and worked in Australia.

I have had a lifelong interest in the environment, with a particular interest in ornithology as a youngster. Travelling around Australia in the late 1990s sparked a concern about the environment which became deeper, and the more I investigated, the more I had to do something about it.

Since I arrived in Busselton in 2001, I have been an active member, convenor and staffer of the Busselton-Dunsborough Environment Centre, an environmental NGO, and a board member and staffer of the Geographe Catchment Council, a natural resource management group. My involvement with issues such as mining, threatened species, wetlands, rivers, water quality and forests has given me a good understanding of environmental matters and how community values and voices affect the outcome of proposals that threaten some of our natural and cultural heritage.

I am passionate about our environment, and working to protect it with likeminded people is a significant part of my life. I am looking forward to working for Environs Kimberley with a sense of excitement and some trepidation, given the very large shoes I will need to fill. I am also looking forward to living in Broome and getting to know the people, the place and the incredible landscapes and nature of the Kimberley.

Martin Pritchard

Foolish GM Cotton decision jeopardises future of the Kimberley

EK has publicly condemned the recent decision by the state Government to lift the moratorium on commercial growing of genetically modified (GM) cotton in the Ord. If GM cotton is introduced, the consequences are irreversible - the environment and community health will be placed at risk and the Kimberley will lose its clean, green reputation.

Recently the Conservation Council of Western Australia presented Agriculture Minister Terry Redman with petitions signed by over 27 000 people asking to keep Western Australia GM Free. The Minister told over 1000 people at an anti-GM rally at parliament house that he would listen to the views of the community before making any decision. By taking this decision within only a couple of months of coming to office, the Barnett Government has demonstrated that it is not keen to listen to community concerns.

Cotton is a crop that is extremely intensive in chemical and water use and the experience with GM cotton in other countries

has shown that the use of pesticides is not reduced substantially as claimed. There are numerous pests, including aphids and mirids, as well as fungal diseases that can afflict GM cotton in the Kimberley's challenging tropical environment. The gene that is inserted into the cotton will only control for two pests, the bollworm and budworm.

GM cotton will end up in the food chain and in our food supply. The majority of cottonseed is pressed for oil and is used extensively as an ingredient in margarines and cooking oils. Cotton meal is also fed to cattle.

Minister Redman has said that the exemption from the GM crop moratorium is currently limited to cotton in the Ord. However, an exemption to allow GM canola trials in other parts of WA has also been mooted. EK will continue to oppose those in government and industry who would like to give free rein to cotton and other GM crops.

Gary Scott, Freshwater Campaigner

FAREWELL MARIA

It is hard to believe that Maria Mann, who has stood at the helm of Environs Kimberley for 12 years, is finally leaving us.

Maria was one of the earliest EK members, present at that very first meeting when we didn't know if anyone else would turn up or not. She volunteered to be our Secretary and later took the (unpaid) role of Co-ordinator. Her first jobs were to find us a space to work and to seek some funds to pay our rent and office costs; a desk and chair materialized as if by magic. From then, supported by her committee, which has changed from year to year, Maria has taken the organization through many a battle, many an up and down, to its present dizzy heights, with two well-run offices and four paid members of staff.

Maria has become a well-know figure in the environment movement and in government and industry circles (grown men have wept...), and largely through her own efforts Environs Kimberley has become a respected player in the environmental field. We have much to thank her for, and will remember her enormous contribution with gratitude.

Thank you, Maria, for a job well done. We wish you an even more illustrious future — and look forward to seeing you on our market stall now and again.

EK committee



Fitzroy River Fishway Project

Environs Kimberley recently received funding from Rangelands WA to undertake a scoping study for the construction of a fishway on the Fitzroy River at the Camballin Barrage.

EK is working with the Yiriman Project and local Indigenous rangers to consult with the community about the proposed fishway. We would like to hear your views.

Why are we talking about a fishway for the Fitzroy River?

The Camballin barrage was built in the 1960s for the now defunct Camballin irrigation project. It is located about 150km from the mouth of the Fitzroy River. The barrage facilities were sold to Liveringa Station in 1995 under a WA State Agreement Act. Liveringa still benefits from the barrage for the diversion of water down Snake Creek for irrigated fodder crops.

Scientists have found that the Camballin Barrage on the Fitzroy River is a barrier to fish swimming upstream. *Freshwater Sawfish, Cherabin, Barramundi and Diamond Mullet* — to name a few of the affected species that live in the river — are trapped below the barrage as the river level drops, and being exposed to greater fishing pressure. They are also more likely to be eaten by bull sharks and crocodiles when they become trapped.

What are some of the benefits of a fishway?

- It would allow fish species, including the Freshwater sawfish, a Commonwealth-listed threatened species, to swim upstream for an extra few months of the year. This would allow a greater chance of breeding success.
- It will help to maintain cultural values associated with fish in the river and help maintain fish stocks in waterholes.



Camballin Barrage



Freshwater sawfish. Photo: Dave Morgan, Murdoch Uni

What might a fishway look like?

Fishways are common throughout Australia and have been built on many rivers to help fish get over or around weirs, dams and barrages that block or change the natural flow of the river.

We're not yet sure what the best type of fishway might be for the barrage site. A range of possible fishways will be examined in the scoping study, including *rock ramp*, *vertical slot* and *bypass* fishways.

What will the fishway scoping study involve?

- *Collecting scientific data* e.g. on fish migration patterns and river flow rates.
- *Working out the technical and engineering issues related to the design of the fishway* e.g. location; coping with significant flood events; meeting the needs of the Freshwater Sawfish; sedimentation and erosion; water supply and licensing requirements for Livinga Station.
- *Estimating the financial cost of constructing a fishway and identifying potential funding sources.*
- *Talking about how to best manage a fishway* e.g. protecting cultural values; managing recreational fishing activity and public access.



Example of a vertical slot fishway. Photo: Maunsell



Example of a rock ramp fishway. Photo: Maunsell

What happens next?

- EK and the Yiriman Project will talk with people in local communities about the project in November-December 2008 and March-April 2009. We will visit Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Camballin, Pandanus Park, Jarlmadangah, Looma, Noonkanbah and Koorrabye. A technical consultancy team led by engineering firm Maunsell and including Murdoch University and the Department of Water will make site visits to the barrage during this time.

For further details or to let us know what you think about a fishway please contact:

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Maunsell consultant Greg Kirby and Yiriman Project team visit the barrage.



Gary Scott



Australian Government

This project was funded by Rangelands NRM using Natural Heritage Trust funding. Rangelands NRM regards this project as a strategic investment which will address a key catchment management issue of community concern. Rangelands NRM contracted Environs Kimberley to undertake the project. Funding for the Natural Heritage Trust was made available from the Australian and Western Australian Governments.

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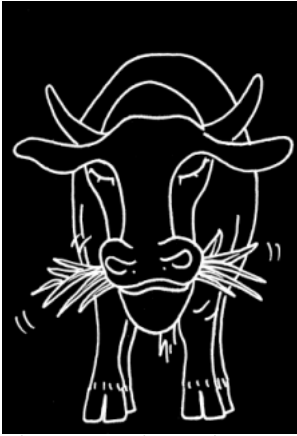
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RUMINATING WITH MAD COW NOAH'S ARK

Who doesn't love the story of Noah's Ark? As I child, I was once given a cardboard cut-out ark, with an assortment of cut-out pairs of cardboard animals. The ark, when assembled with tags in slots, was three-dimensional and I could place some of the animals on the deck. Not all would fit, so the rest had to swim in the imaginary flood the ark sailed on.

In those days, I thought of the animal kingdom as including cats and dogs, farm animals, and the big wild mammals of Africa. My imagination didn't stretch to Aardvarks, Ant-eaters spiny and otherwise, the numerous species of Antelope, down to Zebras and Zebus, let alone all the birds, reptiles and countless invertebrates that Noah would have had to muster from around the world to complete his payload (I don't suppose he had to worry about fish). Not all of them would have fitted into his ark.

In children's books about Noah's Ark, the animals are lined up docilely in pairs, waiting their turn to cross the gangplank, as if they fully understand the import of the coming flood and their sacred duty to carry their genes through the deluge and onto dry land again, ready for some vigorous procreation to pass them on. Presumably the ark carried supernumerary cattle and sheep to feed the many pairs of carnivores on board while it drifted about over the flooded world.

Noah's Ark is often used as an analogy for a zoo, especially when a few specimens of an endangered species are placed in a zoo 'collection'. Holding endangered animals in captivity is justified on a number of grounds. The animals are there, we are told, so that people have an opportunity to see rare creatures; so that scientists can learn more about them and through so doing perhaps better protect the

remaining wild populations; to enable the species to multiply through captive breeding programmes, for possible reintroduction to the wild later on.

This last argument, which gives rise to the Ark analogy, would be the most persuasive if only it were more firmly founded. The usual reason that animals are endangered (and anyone who follows the news even casually can hardly escape a growing sense of alarm, if not terror, at the sheer numbers of species under threat) is that their habitat has been spoiled, either through direct destruction or pollution, or through the presence in it of introduced predator or competitor species. Whatever conditions brought the species to its knees almost always persist or get worse, so that any released populations will only go the same way as their progenitors. Only in those rare cases where territory has been especially set aside, prepared and protected, as in the case of islands cleared of feral animals, does an endangered population stand a fighting chance.

If a zoo is an Ark, it is an Ark with no landing place. It is destined to float along aimlessly with its pathetic cargo of doomed animals until the last one perishes. Since there will be zoos, we must ensure they are good ones that do all they can to diminish the pains and tedium of captivity. But let us not delude ourselves that zoos alone can do anything significant to preserve the declining species whose remnants they exhibit. For that, we need three things: habitat, habitat, habitat.



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Meet FIONA BISHOP

Our new Seagrass Monitoring Coordinator

A devotee of Roebuck Bay, I have often wandered out on the mud flats, fascinated by the living world revealed beneath my feet, including the seagrass — the ‘rainforest of the ocean’. Bringing skills from a

background in cultural heritage and natural resource management, I feel privileged at this opportunity to work with the community to protect our seagrass resources through the Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project. By joining the project as a volunteer, you can help to identify trends in local seagrass ecology and changes in the health of our coastal environments. And, as my young niece commented this morning, ‘You’ll make sure the dugongs and turtles have dinner to eat.’

Volunteers are needed for monitoring on the 15th, 16th and 17th of December – call 0422 244 145 or email seagrassmonitoring@gmail.com to register as a volunteer. I look forward to meeting you!

Fiona

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EK Market Stall

Another year for the EK Market stall is winding down. We close at Christmas and will start again at Easter 2009.

What a year it has been! The challenges for EK to Save the Nature of the Kimberley have been numerous, as you know.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all our dedicated volunteers, who have tirelessly worked for EK, driving the trailer to and from the markets as well as manning the stall week in, week out. There's lots to do on any one morning: answering questions, collecting signatures, doing some serious fundraising through selling merchandise and asking for donations, promoting our events and, most importantly, providing us here at the office with feedback from the community!

We have recently brainstormed and will have the stall looking fresh and ready for the next season. We will be looking for dedicated volunteers again to help keep the stall going next year. All suggestions and ideas will be most welcome. Two hours a month is all it takes, so be part of a team that works to SAVE THE KIMBERLEY!

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

P.S. Can't think what to give for Christmas? Check out our market stall! Great gifts available there!

Christine Elsasser



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Student Award Progress Report

It has been an exciting two years studying at Edith Cowan University in Joondalup. The first year was very interesting and I really enjoyed it. I studied units such as Environmental Management, Australia's Physical Landscapes, Ecology and Understanding Pollution. This year I decided to Major in Environmental Chemistry which had me doing units like Soil and Land Processes, Introduction to Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry, Biological and Chemical Hazards and Cellular and Molecular Biology, which I loved. There were a few dramas along the way. My Genetics teacher became seriously ill during the course and we were unable to finish the unit, and some units, such as Biological and Chemical Hazards, were 3rd year subjects, which I found challenging but rewarding when I finally completed the unit. Going to uni and living in the student accommodation allowed me to make many friends and I would defiantly recommend it for anyone going to uni. It is also highly likely that you will end up moving out with friends you lived with during your first year. Living away from home was very expensive and confusing for the first year or so, and I constantly found myself confronted with unfamiliar issues, such as people who could quite easily leave their dirty dishes on the sink for two weeks! Luckily at the student village we had cleaners come in once a week, and our unit wasn't that bad, but I did hear some horrors stories. I took my Dad's advice to heart: "If the food starts walking out of the fridge – let it go". The scholarship from Environs Kimberley was very much appreciated!

Trying to find a sensible balance between Uni and a social life was also different – and for the first half of the year I'm afraid you all know which side won out... but as uni became

more involved, I settled down and concentrated on getting an education. With the support of Environs Kimberley and my parents, I have been able to really enjoy my studies (for the most part – there's always something about school we don't like, mine is lab reports!). I am leaving for England for study abroad in December, which will be interesting!

When I finish my degree, I hope to work up in the Kimberley for a time before I continue my education in the field of Soil Microbiology. My end goal (which I hope to achieve before I'm 70!) is to provide training and education for farmers on organic farming – with scientific sense. The reason that many farmers are unwilling to become organic is the lack of scientific understanding behind it, many believe it is only the chemical companies which deal with actual science. Hopefully I will be able to deliver that information without making the farmers spend 3 years at University!

I'm a Kununurra girl. Always have been, always will be even if I were to move to the other side of the world. The Kimberley means everything to me and I congratulate Environs Kimberley on their effort in protecting our beautiful home.

Sarah Waser, Student Award Winner 2007



Turtle hatchlings are a bit like Energizer Bunnies. Once their switch gets flipped 'on' they've got about three or four days before they run out of steam. Imagine being at the bottom of a two-foot-deep, 25-centimetre-wide column of wriggling, writhing baby turtles. The wriggling loosens the sand in the nest and slowly the hatchlings make their way towards the surface. The harder they work the more energy they use and the quicker their egg yolk 'battery' becomes depleted. Once that 'on' switch gets flipped, there's no going back — it's all pure instinct. What flips the switch? Heat? Time? No one really knows because the Flatback Turtle is the least-studied of all marine turtle species.

We do know that Flatbacks are our Native Australian Turtle in that they only nest on the remote northern beaches of Australia. But don't think that means they hang out here the rest of the time. The turtles that come to Cable Beach from October to January are on a mission, driven by instinct to travel hundreds of kilometres back to the same beach where they hatched, 35 – 60 years ago.

The Flatback Turtles start arriving in late October and, over the next few months, nest several times at two-week intervals, dragging their 100-kilogram weight up the beach and back each time. Get the tide right and it's not such a long journey to the base of the dunes, but for those turtles that miss the high tide, Cable Beach must seem like a marathon track.

If a turtle can't find a spot she likes, or is interrupted, then she will return to the ocean and try again the next night. But when she's got to go, she's got to go, so if a turtle is unsuccessful at nesting several nights in a row, she'll drop her eggs at sea, where they simply join the food chain. If all goes well and she makes it to the bottom of the dunes undisturbed then she'll often dig in a few different spots before settling on the one she likes, leaving a trail of disturbed sand in her wake. You can always tell when she's managed to nest successfully because there's no more mucking around; she's out of there, straight back to the ocean.

Last wet season over 40 people joined Conservation Volunteers Australia to monitor and record 55 nests in a six-kilometre stretch of sand along Cable Beach, right where people put their towels & poke their brollies into the sand and walk the dog and put in their surf skis, not to mention drive their cars. That's potentially 2750 wriggling, moving little Energizer Bunnies. It's a sobering thought then that, at best, only three might survive long enough to make the journey back here in 35 years' time to lay their own eggs. Even more sobering is to imagine what might await them when they emerge from the water onto this world-famous beach.

Nancy Gibson

Community WEED Update

Weed Education and Eradication Delivery Project

From the West and North Coasts, to Kununurra and Fitzroy – this quarter, the Community WEED project has been spreading the word on weeds, and hopefully contracting the area affected by them!

Earlier this quarter the CWEED and Kimberley TAFE were invited to Sunday Island by the Bardi Jawi Rangers to investigate weeds at the old mission site and at a freshwater spring called Goorngangoon, which means “Running Water”. The rangers had identified that the weeds were choking the spring. Three days effort saw a stagnant pool returned to a running stream and everyone was quite pleased. There will still be some weeds to clean up next time but a great start has been made. We were also lucky enough to see a humpback whale and calf frolicking off the coast and that, combined with good storytelling under the stars was enough to make my week!



The transformation of Goorngangoon, where weeds are being removed. Nathan Sampi from the Bardi Jawi Rangers shows how the water is starting to flow.

In October the CWEED project worked with Balangarra Traditional Owners as part of the Saltwater Country Project coordinated by the Kimberley Land Council. The group was constructing an informative walk-trail along the historic path of the SS Koolama survivors, who were walked from their bombed ship at Koolama Bay to safety by Balangarra people from the Kalumburu mission. Environs Kimberley’s main role was to support the team to collect weed and ant samples for AQIS and conduct initial weed works on *Calotropis procera* (Rubber Bush) invading the beaches near Bertram Cove. The *Calotropis* infestation was identified from previous Balangarra sea trips and then confirmed by AQIS as the eastern-most front of the invasion, with a separate infestation occurring at the Berkeley River mouth. The air-filled seed pods are likely to be spread by floating along the currents and landing on these beach fronts. The feathery seeds are also readily dispersed by water and wind. With many hands on deck, two beaches were cleared of this weed by cutting and painting. It was hot yet rewarding work and I think we will be all up for the challenge of following up this work next year and expanding the control to other sites along the coast.

Also in October DEC, Minyirr Park and EK pooled resources to attend the WA State Environment awards in Perth with rangers from Minyirr Park, Bardi Jawi and Karajarri, joining EK chairman Peter Mitchell, EK CWEED project officer Louise Williams and Alison McGilvray (DEC). The EK Community WEED

project had been short-listed as a finalist in the Community Achievement Category, recognising the role of the project in protecting biodiversity by increasing public awareness and developing the capacity of Kimberley people to identify and respond to the threat of weeds. The application recognised the key partnerships that have been developed with Department of Environment and Conservation, Kimberley TAFE, KLC and Indigenous ranger groups including Bardi Jawi, Minyirr Park, Karajarri and Walmajarri. There was strong representation from Kimberley environmental projects and congratulations go to the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley who won the Local Government Leading by Example Award, and Australian Wildlife Conservancy Eco Fire Project which won the Community Achievement Category, and also went on to win the main award!



Lorraine Alberts and Rachel Edwards remove Calotropis at Bertram Cove



Louise Williams and Rachel Edwards record locality details at Bertram Cove

And in brief.....

- A visit to Gogo Station and an impassioned plea from station managers for weed work to be initiated on the Fitzroy has seen CWEED develop a brief for the Fitzroy River Catchment Action Management Project that outlines the way forward for running a successful Fitzroy weed program.
- CWEED also recently spent some time in Kununurra meeting the new weeds and waterways ranger at Miriuwung Gajerong Cooperation and lending a hand with mapping and identification. Where possible I will be assisting them to deliver their weed program next year.

- The EK team made the trek out to the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Festival and 30th Anniversary Celebrations of the Kimberley Land Council held at Mount Barnett. We arrived on the final day of the celebration and were able to catch up with many of our working partners and witness some fantastic dancing on the final evening. It was exciting to hear that the weed work with EK featured in a number of the ranger presentations and I look forward to continuing these strong working relationships in 2009.



NIDICOLOUS* NOTIONS



I can't help but respond to Mad Cow's Ruminations in the September Newsletter. Birds and cows have had a long symbiotic relationship so I hope she is not offended!

Seasons come and go, the tide comes in and out, the sun appears to rise and set, yet all is not as we first perceive. The sun is always there, while our world is moving. There is a cycle of birth and life and death. Change is inevitable. We can welcome it, influence it, promote it or grumble about it or do all four!

Yes, we should do all we can to prevent loss of habitats and extinction of species, but if we look at Geological History we can see that species have been arising and dying out for millions of years. It is our narrow perception of life that sees change as something evil and to be prevented. Mad Cow is quite correct: things have changed and in many cases not for the better. As I write this, Corporate and Individual Greed seems to have created an 'Economic Meltdown', but even these have occurred before, as with the South Sea Bubble in the early 18 Century. Greedy people have been ripping off the gullible as long as humans have been around.

Back to the wonders of birds and migration and those who study these phenomena.

We are about to undertake a project 'bigger than Ben Hur'! With funding from MYSMA (Monitoring Yellow Sea Migrants Australia) and Shorebirds 2020, a team of Australian and international ornithologists will count shorebird populations along the coastline from Cape Keraudren to Point Coulomb.

The whole 220-kilometre stretch of 80 Mile Beach has been counted twice before. Regular counts have been conducted along the most densely populated stretch south of Anna Plains Station for the last 10 years. Counts take place in June or July, in the middle of the Northern Winter, and twice in the lead-up to the Wet, usually late October/Early November and early December. The winter count focuses on juveniles and non-breeding adults who over-winter in Australia, while the breeding adults are in the northern hemisphere. The pre-wet season counts occur when bird numbers reach their maximum. With the onset of wet season conditions many migratory shorebirds move to inland wetlands.

The weeding life is incredibly busy, yet rewarding – if you are thinking of starting some weed activity and are looking for some advice or support, please give me a call at 91921922 or drop me a line: ekweeds@envirokimberley.org.au



The Community WEED Project is funded by Rangelands NRM. The Dampier Peninsula Vine Thicket Project is contracted by Rangelands NRM and managed by EnviroNS Kimberley in collaboration with DEC Pilbara Region

Right now, the 28th Annual Australasian Wader and Tern Expedition is taking place. An eclectic international gathering of retirees, semi-retirees, researchers and professionals in Veterinary Science and Ecology met at Broome Bird Observatory from November 8th to begin three weeks of field work. Objectives are to obtain samples of shorebird populations to estimate the percentage of juveniles and thereby the breeding success or failure of various species. From recaptures of previously-banded birds, calculations are made of survival rates and longevity of species. Most shorebirds are longer-lived than passerines. The local team has the record for recapture of the oldest known Bar-Tailed Godwit (27½ years old). The bird was successfully released. Other objectives are to attempt capture of rarely-caught species to study migratory pathways and stopover sites. AQIS (Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service) vets will take cloacal and blood samples to monitor bird-borne diseases.

As the human grey nomads leave, the avian 'grey wader' migrants arrive. Large numbers can be seen in Roebuck Bay, smaller numbers on Cable Beach and at Coconut Wells. Broome has been host to Little Curlews, seen around local playing fields. They will disperse to inland wetlands after significant rains. Yellow Wagtails have appeared on the oval next to the Boulevard Shopping Centre. The wetland created at the corner of Gubinge Road and Old Broome Road has become an interesting shore- and waterbird habitat. A Little Ringed Plover, rarely seen here, has been resident for three weeks as I write. The birds ignore the noisy machinery but are disturbed by people. I have been doing lazy birdwatching by driving the car into the area just off Old Broome Road, leaving the air conditioner running (OOH-AAH, I forgot about carbon emissions), and getting good views through binoculars.

Dollarbirds, always welcome returnees, are being their usual noisy selves.

If you are interested in taking part in activities in the Broome Region please contact Chris Hassell at turnstone@wn.com.au. Volunteers are always welcome and training is given.

**Nidicolous denotes birds which are helpless when hatched and remain in the nest for some time.*

Liz Rosenberg peaceroaseau@yahoo.com.au

Meet the new Board



PHIL DOCHERTY
CHAIRPERSON

I've had an interest in the environment since I was a small boy wandering around the bush, adding to my bird egg collection. I don't collect eggs any more but I spend as much time out bush as I can.

I'm hoping to contribute to EK by making it more appealing to our membership. I'd like us to engage in more community-based activities such as revegetation projects and camping trips to support environmental studies.

I'm active in the community group SKIPS (Society for Kimberley Indigenous Plants), which promotes the use of native plants in gardens. I'm also keen to get my children involved; if they can become interested in the environment and have fun at the same time, they'll learn to appreciate it more. Conservation can be a bit dour and grim, so if you have any great ideas as to where we can help make a difference, feel free to contact us so that we can present them to our committee.



TANVIER FOWLER
VICE-CHAIRPERSON

I'm pleased to have been re-elected as Vice-chairperson. I recently heard an interesting conversation on Radio National about optimism being a learned trait. I hope to take on a teaching role, with EK, by continuing to highlight local sustainable enterprise and provide opportunities for everyone to gain knowledge about why and how to achieve an environmentally sustainable future. We can make a difference! Whilst conserving the last wild places is essential, individuals choosing to consider nature in daily decision-making and spending are just as important. Imagine the future you want, reject what you don't believe in and stay positive!



MIRA HOLZMANN
SECRETARY

Born and raised in Germany, I came to Broome eight years ago to breed and bring up my three children in a healthy environment.

After long years in hospitality and tourism, working and travelling the world, I started studying homeopathy and other alternative healing modalities. I have completed qualifications in Business Management and Community Services.

Being involved with EK for two years as a volunteer for various events, I am honoured to have been elected as secretary now, and hope to contribute a little more of my knowledge and skills towards the protection of this beautiful place.



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, Pampirla. 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.



PAT LOWE

I am of World War II vintage, and have witnessed great destruction of Nature. In 1979 I discovered Broome and the Kimberley, where I settled in the hope of this part of the world remaining a backwater. Alas, my hope was misplaced. A dozen years ago, in order to prevent the damming of the Fitzroy River to grow GM

cotton through wide tracts of the west of the region, two friends and I founded Environs Kimberley, which was then run entirely by volunteers. I have been on the committee ever since, and it is probably time I was pensioned off.



ISOLDE SCHERRER

This is my second year on the EK committee and it's good to be back.

I've lived in the Kimberley for five years and worked in roles within the education field. I know I live in one of the best parts of the world: the Wild Rivers, Monsoonal Wets, Bird Haven, Wildflower-rich, Clean Air, Endless Rangelands, Stunning Colours country. Unfortunately, there is

a movement that sees it as the Gas Hub (sorry, precinct), Food Bowl, Uranium Mine, GM Field, Gold Mine and Water Well of this resource-hungry world. That's why I've joined the smarter movement! Bring on a Heritage-listed, healthy, sustainable Kimberley future! I look forward to engaging in many lively debates, tough decision-making and fun (definitely!) to bring this about.



PETER MITCHELL

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.



JOHN BUCKNALL

Pilbara-based visitors back in the 70's, my wife Gwen and I became permanent Broome residents in 1983. This was much the same time as Lord McAlpine 'fell in love with the sleepy little town by the bay' and Highway One was bitumenised to the west and the east. As a consequence we have observed, with growing concern, the impact that these and other events have had on the physical and social environment of the Kimberley. As a long-time member of the ACF — a membership that stretches back to the days of the Franklin Blockade — and more recently of Environs Kimberley, I am particularly interested in the further development of effective collaborative relationships between these organisations and Indigenous Australians in order to *Save the Nature of the Kimberley*.



CARMEL LEAHY

I grew up on a property in Central Western NSW and I've spent most of my working life in remote schools in the Kimberley. I've studied Applied Linguistics as well as Education. I moved to Broome about five years ago. I love quality shed time and have made most of the furniture in my hovel. It's all pretty dodgy and, well, it's not pretty at all. From personal experience I have learnt that kayaks and crocodiles do not mix. Being a bush sort of person I value our environment. I'd like to see those who call the Kimberley home prosper in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way.



MARIANNE VANDALE

My name is Marianne, but otherwise I'm known as Mazz. I have been living in Broome for 12 years and work as a community-based mental health professional. I am a lover of all things oceanic, bushwalking and playing music. I felt this year would be a good opportunity for me to join the committee, to increase my awareness and just be more involved generally. I am interested in marine issues.



MIRANDA DIBDIN

I am originally from the UK. I moved to Australia five years ago and have lived both in the country and in cities and now love living in Broome. I have been here for two and a half years, and enjoy the lifestyle. Broome and the Kimberley offer all the creature comforts of a city, but without the long commutes to work or play. I like being part of a real community and, like me, many people who live here appreciate the clean air, clear waters and stunning scenery. That's the main reason that I have been on the EK committee for the last 12 months, trying to do my bit to keep the Kimberley just that way.



KATE GOLSON

I was born in Canberra and grew up between there, PNG and England. I majored in political science and social anthropology at Sydney University. I arrived in the Kimberley in 1992 to visit a friend in Fitzroy Crossing and ended up working for six years with the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), living mainly in Halls Creek and Derby. For the past four years I have been living in Broome and working mainly with NGOs in the conservation and Natural Resource Management fields, managing projects such as Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable for EK, KLC and ACF. I am currently employed by a Northern Australian tropical rivers research program.



JASON FOWLER

I grew up fishing, surfing and scuba-diving along the WA coast, from Ningaloo to the Kimberley, and have always been absolutely fascinated with the marine environment. After five years of study I completed a Science degree in Marine Biology and Aquaculture in Townsville. Since then I've been organic farming at 12 Mile and have just finished our new organic cafe. From my spell in Queensland, the connection between coastal land use and the health of the nearby marine ecosystems became very clear to me. I joined the EK committee to bring some marine science to the table.



JAN LEWIS

I've joined the EK committee because I love the blue sky, huge spaces and relative emptiness of the Kimberley and I want to try to ensure these continue. I've lived up here for 15 of the 25 years I've been in Australia, mainly in Broome but also three years in Kununurra in the early 80s and three in Wyndham in the 90s. For the past ten years I've had a job that covered the region. I'm a keen bird researcher, and volunteer on any project that I can. I will do more of this as I am now semi-retired. I'm also a member of Roebuck Bay Working Group and past committee member of the Broome Bird Observatory.



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