



Caring for the Cape

Tiger Crabs on Kimba Station

by Brendon Ebner (Ebb)

At the start of the dry this year, Cape York NRM and Rodney and Anne Raymond, the property owners of Kimba Station, arranged for James Cook University fish ecologist Ebb, to survey fish and crabs in the local waterways.

The purpose of this first field trip was getting baseline estimates of the aquatic fauna prior to fencing off a reach of the Alice River from being accessible to cattle. A primary focus was on the Tiger crab (*Austrothelphusa tigrina*), which is an endemic species that is currently only known from the western slopes of the Kimba Plateau.

Ann Raymond from Kimba Station said her family had known that Tiger crabs were special, and unique to the region, since her son Shane did some research for a school project.

Ebb is hoping that more properties owners on the Cape and recreational anglers that come across this stunning type of crab, might contact him to help map out the wider distribution of the critter. A photo and a GPS point or a rough location would be a handy start.

Vicki Wundersitz assisted with the surveys and was responsible for counting the number of crab holes in the banks. Vicki and Ebb nick-named these facilities 'hotels', but essentially they resemble a mud-coloured, Swiss-cheese river bank. Of the 15 hotels that were fully inspected, the least holes were 24

and the most was 276, with an average of 121 holes. Six of these motels showed signs of pig damage. Apparently crab truffles are in demand.

The Tiger crab spends about half of its year underground and cuts loose during the wet. The study turned up two types of crab, the common freshwater crab which is typically a plain washed out grey or brown colour, and the unmistakable tiger crab. The Tiger crabs were generally larger than the common freshwater crab, but the latter species was found at a number of small creeks where the Tiger crabs and their hotels were absent.

Small fish were about but not in great numbers at most sites that were surveyed. In some places the rapid drying of the river was leaving small rainbowfish flapping about and short of a future. Presumably the 4WD capability of the crabs ensures a final banquet of stranded fish before the crabs go into hibernation for the dry. A second trip is planned for the end of this upcoming wet season.

For further information or to report a sighting contact: Vicki Wundersitz P: 07 4095 7132

E: vwundersitz@capeyorknrm.com.au

Ebb P: 07 40918805 E: brendan.ebner@csiro

This project is supported by Cape York NRM through funding through Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.



DATE CLAIMER
Cape York NRM Ltd
Annual General Meeting

📅 28 October 2017

📍 Cooktown

Contact 1300 132 262 for more info

Update from the Directors

The 2017 dry season has now fully kicked in across the region, with the topic of fire management growing.

The Nature Conservancy has contributed significantly to our newly formed Fire Project and Coordinator role. Land managers have welcomed discussions around appropriate fire management specific to the native grasses and the terrain of this region, but which also reflect on how ecosystems, waterways and the like can stay healthy through sound management and early burning. The Board has been quite sad to lose one of its key directors, Barry Lyon, to this position. Keeping it local with local knowledge, relationships and expertise, is invaluable to this role. The Board would like to acknowledge and thank The Nature Conservancy for making this possible.

On the topic of fire, a huge thanks to the Balnggarrawarra Gaarraay Traditional Owners who welcomed the 2017 Indigenous Fire Workshop to Melsonby earlier in July. The event was a huge success, with over 100 supporters coming from Cape York and across the country.

This issue talks about various current topics that link with conservation. Conservation goes together with every other industry across the region, and no-one is a better conservationist than a pro-active, responsible land manager. To be able to continue to carry out and implement our projects around healthy soils and waterways, fire management, threatened species, biodiversity and livelihoods, we must thank the Queensland Government and the Australian Government. Without their consistent investment into research, and into addressing challenges on land and in water, our beautiful region would suffer and land managers would be facing even more challenges. With climate change becoming a very real experience, Cape York NRM needs to remain proactive and strong; we need to teach, learn from others, and share knowledge and experiences to help each other succeed on the land.

Check out our range of current and previous projects on the website www.capeyorknrm.com.au or follow our updates on Facebook and Twitter @capeyorknrm.



Emma Jackson
Chairperson
Primary Industries Director

Newsletter contents

What's featuring in this issue

STORY	PAGE
Tiger crabs on Kimba Station	1
Update from the Directors	2
Fire management clusters on Cape York	3
Recycling rubbish and marine debris	4
Saving Balclutha Nature Reserve spring	5
Searching for sawfish in the Gulf	6-7
High priority weeds project	8
South Cape York Catchment project	9
Our Cape York Kids	10
Improving ground cover and resilience on Normanby Station	11
Low Stress Stock Handling workshop at Crocodile Station	12
Around the Cape	13
'Gateway to the Cape' competition	14
RLF state meeting in Cooktown	15
How to use less fertiliser	16
Cape York NRM Director transitions	17
Workshops for the Cape's NRM priorities	18
Do your bit to save endangered sea turtles	19

'One in a thousand' WCTTAA documentary screenings

- Napranum** - Monday 18 Sep 5:30pm
Susie Madua Conference Centre
- Mapoon** - Tuesday 19 Sep 6:00pm
Mapoon Community Centre
- Kowanyama** - Tuesday 26 Sep 5:30pm
Multipurpose Centre
- Pormpuraaw** - Tuesday 10 Oct 10am
Community Hall
- NPARC / Apudthama** - Thursday 12 Oct
Cooktown - Thursday 26 Oct 6.30 pm
PCYC Events Centre
- Cairns** - Wednesday 29 November

Within this newsletter Cape York Natural Resource Management is shortened to Cape York NRM

Fire management clusters on Cape York

by Barry Lyon, Cape York NRM



Hot fires cause severe damage every year on Cape York Photo: Barry Lyon

Fire is undoubtedly one of the most important factors influencing the health of the country, economic viability, and the cultural values of Cape York.

Indigenous people have supported biodiversity with knowledge-based fires for thousands of years, but wild fires can be very damaging.

Wild fires mean that ecosystems are injured and may be significantly changed, graziers lose pasture and stock, and erosion and sediment run-off can badly affect even the Great Barrier Reef. People managing their property as part of a fire carbon farming project also suffer significant economic loss.

Recently there has been a resurgence in traditional burning practices on Cape York. This, along with the management of fire savvy graziers, Rangers, and other land managers, has seen big improvements in ecologically sound fire management, typically patchy in nature.

The downside has been the continuation and probable increase in wildfires lit by arsonists. Because of its remoteness and sparse population, Cape York people have a very limited capacity to contain such fires. During a recent wildfire event in southern Queensland, it was telling that, even with 20 fire crews and aircraft attending, the fire still posed huge problems. On many Cape York properties, sometimes just

two or three people and limited equipment are available to deal with inevitably very large fires.

Cape York NRM is supporting improved fire management across the Cape with a range of initiatives. One of these is the development of 'Fire Management Clusters' of neighbouring properties. The approach is that managers from cluster properties would meet and work collaboratively in reviewing fire histories and issues; planning and burning operations; and response to wildfires. Sharing of knowledge, and operating a communications network for wild fire alerts and surveillance for arsonists, are also key roles of the clusters

Funding from the National Landcare Programme, Queensland Regional Natural Resource Management Investment Program, and The Nature Conservancy is enabling this important work.



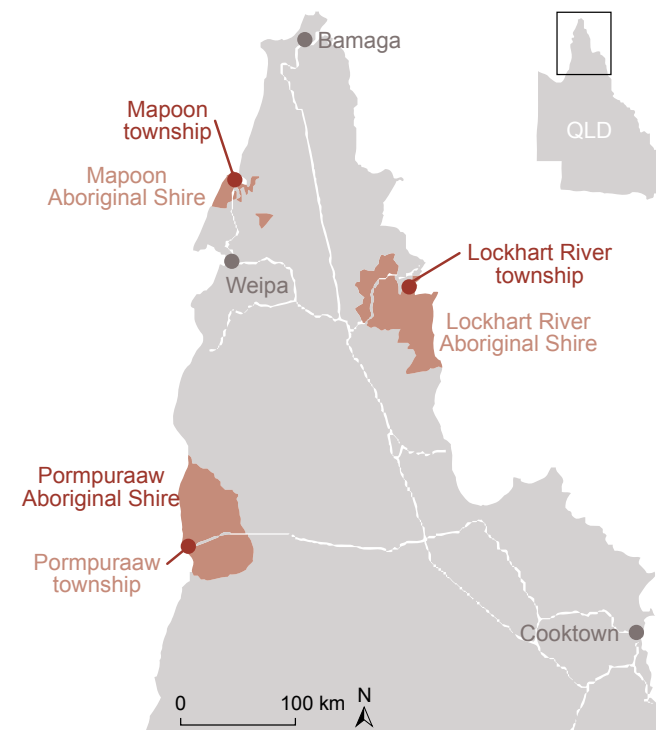
Good patchy burn Photo: Barry Lyon

Recycling rubbish and marine debris on Cape York

by Jane Thomas, Science Communicator, NESP - Northern Australia Environmental Resources Hub



Marine debris littering very remote beaches in the Lockhart River region, Cape York Peninsula
Photo: Heidi Taylor, Tangaroa Blue



Many Cape York Peninsula (CYP) communities are growing in size, receiving increasing numbers of visitors, and dealing with increasing marine debris washing up on their beaches. A Northern Hub project investigated municipal waste and marine debris management issues in three communities.



Best practices implemented in Pormpuraaw include crushing and baling aluminium cans prior to transfer, Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Photo: RAIN Pty Ltd



Lama Lama Junior Rangers and Tangaroa Blue Foundation Marine Debris Clean Up Photo: RAIN Pty Ltd

Project leader Melissa George from the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance affirms the report findings that whilst each community faces unique local challenges, there are shared issues including under-resourced municipal waste management, problems of compliance with regulatory requirements, increasing retail and wholesale packaging and illegal dumping. Lead research group, the Regional Advisory & Innovation Network (RAIN) Pty Ltd reports that there is presently no coordinated recycling industry presence in the CYP region, and only minimal local recycling takes place.

“Our research highlighted areas of best practice and innovation, and found that real opportunities exist for a networked regional recycling effort,” concludes project researcher Ellie Bock from RAIN. “This would reduce local waste, generate new or repurposed resources and create new remote jobs and enterprises, through strategic longer term investments to enhance the capacity of remote community rangers and their partners”.

For more information, see the project wrap-up factsheet, the final report or contact project leader Melissa George at contact@nailsma.org.au

Saving Balclutha Nature Reserve Spring

A culturally significant spring impacted by feral pigs



Freshwater rivers and creeks in northern Australia support incredible biodiversity and cultural values. However, these values are at threat because of land use change, including agricultural development, road construction, mining, grazing, along with water resource development.

The introduction of feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) in northern Australia has also caused broad-scale negative impacts on coastal wetlands, namely water quality, and biological communities. The challenge for land managers faced with protecting wetland ecosystems from feral pigs is access to data and information to assist and support on-ground restoration investment.

During a field survey in late November 2016, scientists from TropWATER visited a spring on the Balclutha Nature Reserve, with Land and Sea Rangers from Wunthulpu Aboriginal Land Trust (WALT), and staff from Cape York NRM. The spring holds important value to the WALT community, but has been damaged by feral pigs and cattle.

The visit was part of a project to conduct a preliminary survey of the aquatic fauna and water quality in the spring, and to collect baseline data for comparison once feral pig abatement works (fencing the spring and wetland area) are complete. In addition, this survey provided the opportunity to start building capacity with the Ayapathu Rangers, and to broker knowledge around wetland conservation and management.

Lead Scientist, Dr Nathan Waltham of TropWATER (James Cook University) recently completed a survey of the ecology in the spring.

“We completed a survey of the fish occupying the spring and were surprised by the number of fish, crustaceans and frog species living in the spring. However, the spring is suffering from feral pig damage, with water quality very poor” Dr Waltham



said.

Secretary of the Wunthulpu Aboriginal Land Trust, Mr Billy Pratt, has been delighted with the outcomes of the project so far. Mr Pratt said that the work follows an earlier project in 2000.

“There are many things to still do, but completing the survey of the spring was an important first step in restoring country” Mr Pratt said. “We hope to begin installing feral pig fencing this year during the dry season. The fencing will stop pigs and cattle from compacting the spring and reducing the flow of water to the fish and crustaceans that live in the spring”.

Cape York NRM’s Project Contracts Officer, Ms Vicki Wundersitz said that Cape York NRM was excited to continue working with WALT.

“This project will provide important information for the region and for other projects planned for Cape York” Ms Wundersitz said.

For more information about this project, contact Ms Vicki Wundersitz 07 4095 7132, or Dr Nathan Waltham 07 4781 4191 nathan.waltham@jcu.edu.au

This project is supported by Cape York NRM through the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme. Photos supplied



Searching for sawfish in the Gulf of Carpentaria

by Barbara Wueringer, PhD Photos supplied

In late 2015, Sharks And Rays Australia commenced a research project on the distribution and abundances of sawfish in Far North Queensland, the Cape York region and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Sawfish were once common in coastal tropical and subtropical waters around the world, but now they are considered the most endangered family of all sharks and rays globally.

All five species of sawfish are listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, three as Critically Endangered and two as Endangered, indicating that sawfish are at a high risk of extinction in the wild. Under these listings, sawfish are protected internationally to the same level as African elephants, and the trade with sawfish saws is as forbidden as the trade with ivory.

The freshwater sawfish (*Pristis pristis*), which is also often called the largetooth sawfish, was recently listed as one of the 100 most endangered species on the planet by the IUCN.



Dr Barbara Wueringer assists in safely securing a juvenile freshwater sawfish, to be measured and have DNA samples taken. The sawfish is then tagged and released.

The best-documented decline of sawfish is the local extinction of freshwater sawfish in the waters of Lake Nicaragua in Central America. There, a commercial fishery targeting sawfish took an estimated 60,000 to 100,000 animals in five years during the 1970s. During a scientific survey in 1992 not a single animal was caught, and in 2006 Nicaragua banned fishing for sawfish in its waters, but this move was likely decades too late.

The last assessment of the abundance

and distribution patterns of sawfishes in the Gulf of Carpentaria, done by DPI's Stirling Peverell, ended in 2008. Towards the end of this study, sawfish received protection both under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act and also in Queensland waters.

Scientists and managers are not clear if the protections are working, nor if sawfish are still present in sustainable numbers in the region. Because of this, Sharks And Rays Australia (SARA) has commenced its assessment in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The Director and principal scientist of SARA, Dr Barbara Wueringer, places a high importance on working with local stakeholders including Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger groups. At this stage, SARA is in contact with four Indigenous Ranger groups along the Gulf coastline, who are helping with logistics and have received the first training on how to conduct sampling studies for sawfish.

However, the project is not possible without the help of the general public. SARA is asking people



Dr Wueringer explains SARA's research and methods to Gangalidda-Garawa Rangers of the Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. A sawfish forms part of the Rangers' logo, indicating the traditional importance of these animals in the region.

to submit information of previous sawfish captures, to better understand the distributions of the different species. Information on both tagged and untagged animals can be submitted via www.cytags.com or by calling 1800 CYTAGS (1800 298 247). Photos of sawfish are particularly welcome.

So far, SARA has received reports and video footage of live sawfish that had survived an amputation of their saw. The saw is used for feeding and enables the sawfish to sense the electric fields of its prey,



A juvenile bull shark has been tagged and is ready to be released in the Wenlock River. From Left to right: Kristie Lawrence (SARA volunteer) is holding the shark, supported by Dr Ross Dwyer (UQ), while Dr Wueringer (SARA) is driving the vessel.

allowing it to hunt in the dark and in murky waters. A saw-less sawfish will not be able to feed itself properly. Only one sawfish amputee had ever been captured by scientists and tracked for three months in Western Australia. The animal showed unusual behaviours and disappeared after three months, which likely means that it slowly starved to death.

The reproductive biology of freshwater sawfish is similar to that of sea turtles in some ways: sawfish return to the river that they were born in to give birth to their young. The pups then swim upstream and hide from predators in shallow waters. This also means that if all sawfish from one river are fished, then this river is lost to sawfish. They are very unlikely to move into a new river.

SARA's research methods are specific by the size of animals caught, but all species of sharks and rays (which together form the group of elasmobranchs) are tagged and released. The distribution data of other species may lead to other future projects.

To find out more about SARA's work, and how to identify sawfish, go to: <http://www.sharksandraysaustralia.com/>

The project is currently funded by the Save Our Seas Foundation (Switzerland) and the fieldwork is made possible by the hard work and financial contributions of SARA volunteers.

Reducing the Economic and Environmental Impacts of High Priority Weeds in the Cape York Region

by Lyndal Scobell and Vicki Wundersitz

Cape York NRM's project under the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative Program has commenced.

Reducing the Economic and Environmental Impacts of High Priority Weeds in the Cape York Region, funded through the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative, will address priority weed management in areas where weeds are having significant economic and/or environmental impact.

The project will roll out across the south-east of Cape York in Hope Vale, Wujal Wujal and Cook local government regions.

It delivers priority feral pest and weed management activities as detailed in the (DRAFT) Cape York Peninsula Regional Biosecurity Strategy 2016-2021, and will be guided by a project steering committee.

Cape York NRM's Chairperson and Primary Industries Sector Director, Emma Jackson, said that the project provides some fantastic opportunities for land managers, and will achieve some key outcomes for controlling problem weeds.

"The coordination of on-ground works, weed control planning and training will be through community organisations including Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Inc. and on-ground components will be delivered through working together with Jabalbina Yalanji Rangers, grazing and horticultural land managers, Landcare and other community organisations.

The project will draw on expert knowledge from the Northern Australia Quarantine Services, and the Tropical Weeds Research Centre to integrate best management practice into the project.

Techniques are selective and will target specific weeds, and biodegradable chemicals - no residual chemicals are used.

"The project provides opportunities to build skills in weed control, plus increase landholder knowledge when property planning for pests and weeds management" Emma said.

Eric Dick will look after the project for Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Inc.

"This project provides some practical contributions for a coordinated approach to biosecurity management on Cape York" Eric said.

"Landholders are constantly doing more with less - the goodwill to control weeds is there, but they frequently don't have the



Pond apple in south-east Cape York
Photo: Trevor Meldrum

resources to do the work - and this project will help to change that.

"A key outcome for landholders is they can stop emerging weeds in their tracks, before the weeds become established in the region" he said.

The project runs over two years, and will wind up in May 2019.

For more information, contact Cape York NRM on 1300 132 262.

The Queensland Feral Pest Initiative has received funding through the Queensland Government's Rural Assistance Package.

Project Deliverables

Property Weed Management

Working with landholders to map declared and other invasive weed species, and develop a property management plan and implement best practice processes.

Accredited Training

Agricultural Chemical Distribution Control (ACDC) training to certificate level for landholders and land managers, and provide them with ongoing on-ground technical support and mentoring.

Pond Apple Control

Resourcing will extend the surveying, removal and impact reduction of Pond Apple from swampy areas and wetlands in priority locations between Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale (south eastern coastal areas of Cape York). Delivery with CYWAFI and Jabalbina Rangers. Builds on work since 1993 in Cooktown foreshore.

Rangers working with high school students to fence out pigs

by South Cape York Catchments Photos supplied



Wild horses and feral pigs have damaged lagoons on Normanby Station

South Cape York Catchments and the Balnggarrawarra Rangers have teamed up with Cooktown Holy Spirit College students to build pig exclusion fences around Curly and Lily Lagoons on Normanby Station.

Every Wednesday the students visit Balnggarrawarra Country and work with the Rangers. First they set up wildlife cameras to learn which animals were using the lagoons. They found that a number of wild horses were regularly bathing in the lagoons and eating the wetland plants, and then as the water level dropped the pigs moved in and dug up the edges. The students were excited to find a number of wetland birds visiting the lagoon as well.



Balnggarrawarra Ranger demonstrating fencing techniques to students

Prior to fencing, the Rangers measured the health of the lagoons using the Cape York Wetland Assessment methodology. The results showed the lagoons were in poor health, with damage to the banks and low water quality being the main contributors. The team decided that fencing out the pigs and horses was the best solution to conserve



Wetland birds frequent Curly Lagoon

the lagoons and help bring them back to a healthy condition.

The students have been working hard every week with the Rangers and have completed fencing Curly Lagoon. Recently the team were lucky enough to get help from Cairns Holy Spirit College students - with over 30 people on board, Lily Lagoon was fenced in no time.

The Rangers and students are excited to see what the results of their hard work will be, with some predictions being: the resident Brolgas will nest, the water will stay clear all year round, and perhaps, even a turtle for lunch! We shall see after the next wet.



Balnggarrawarra Ranger and student fencing

Thanks for making the project possible: This project is supported by Cape York NRM with funding from Queensland NRM / National Landcare Program, Indigenous Land and Sea Program - Balnggarrawarra Rangers, and Holy Spirit College - teachers and students.

Our Cape Kids

Fun with words this issue for our Cape York Kids.

How can we help save threatened species?

One of the ways to help threatened plants and animals survive is to protect their habitats permanently in national parks, nature reserves and wilderness areas. There they can live without too much interference from humans. It is also important to conserve habitats outside reserves such as on farms and along roadsides.

How many things can you think of that you can do at your place to protect native animals?

Send us a short story about your ideas of how to look after wildlife. If you like, we will put your stories on our website. Do you have photos of wildlife around your home? We'd love to see them too!

You can email your stories and photos to us at: capekids@capeyorknrm.com.au

Wildlife Word Search

I	E	L	I	D	O	C	O	R	C	M	W	K	U	P	CASSOWARY	MAMMALS
U	P	Y	S	L	A	M	M	A	M	B	I	L	B	Y	WALLABY	DINGO
K	O	Y	S	E	K	A	N	S	E	L	T	R	U	T	BANDICOOT	LIZARD
X	O	E	B	R	E	C	A	S	S	O	W	A	R	Y	BETTONG	CROCODILE
J	R	L	O	A	O	G	L	B	N	U	M	B	A	T	BILBY	SNAKES
P	A	P	K	N	L	S	E	L	I	T	P	E	R	O	POSSUM	SPIDERS
A	G	O	D	B	I	L	B	E	T	T	O	N	G	C	NUMBAT	KANGAROO
R	N	S	I	A	Z	E	A	G	L	E	Q	I	N	M	CURLEW	ECHIDNA
R	A	S	N	N	A	Y	G	W	O	S	T	B	F	F	PARROT	FROGMOUTH
O	K	U	G	D	R	F	R	O	G	M	O	U	T	H	TURTLE	
T	I	M	O	I	D	S	R	E	D	I	P	S	N	A	SHARK	
M	X	N	W	C	R	C	D	Q	W	E	L	R	U	C	FROG	
P	R	B	Y	O	S	G	A	N	D	I	H	C	E	V	COCKATOO	
Z	O	D	C	O	C	K	A	T	O	O	G	O	R	F	EAGLE	
C	Z	D	Q	D	C	D	A	K	R	A	H	S	N	K	REPTILES	

Improving ground cover and resilience on Normanby Station

by Andrew Hartwig, Cape York Regional Landcare Facilitator



Cliff Harrigan carrying out a traditional burn at Normanby Station Photo: Andrew Hartwig

The Normanby Aboriginal Corporation, in partnership with the Regional Landcare Facilitator Andrew Hartwig, was successful with funding from the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Grants Program for their project 'Improving ground cover and resilience on Normanby Station'.

Normanby is a 31,400 ha grazing lease in southern Cape York that had limited infrastructure for cattle management; and faces threats from late season wildfires, weed incursion and uncontrolled visitor access resulting in a loss of biodiversity, ground cover and soil erosion. The station is isolated from Cooktown during most of the wet season when the Normanby River rises.

The Regional Landcare Facilitator was approached by Normanby Traditional Owner, Vince Harrigan, who was keen to get back out, have a go, and try and make a living off the property. It took time to gain mutual respect and a feel for the country and time for the Harrigan's story to emerge; this was their application and project for them to own. They already had a strong governance structure, but preferred South Cape York Catchments to host the project and handle the finances and administration. Their father was the biggest influence and inspiration for the Harrigan brothers, and he was able to read the signed funding deed shortly before he passed away. The brothers all stepped up to contribute to the project, which is what their father would have wanted.

Valuable and lasting networks and partnerships were established. The brothers worked and liaised

with neighbouring cattle stations for cooperative fire and cattle management, Queensland Parks and Wildlife on joint aerial burning operations, South Cape York Catchments and Balnggarawarra (Melsonby) Rangers, and the Landcare Facilitator with fire plans, permits, and a five-year Property Pest Management Plan. The Landcare Facilitator also hosted a soil conservation / erosion control workshop on Normanby and assisted with an AgForce Grazing Best Management Practice program.

The project has increased the capacity of the Normanby Aboriginal Corporation to manage their land. Early burns helped to congregate cleanskin cattle on green pick that were then mustered, and the construction of some internal fences and access to water means they now have cattle behind wire that have dropped their first calf. Ongoing employment opportunities through South Cape York Catchments, funded by the Qld Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program, will assist them with land management. This support will reduce the impacts from late season wild fires, and with a reduction of invasive weeds, feral animals, soil erosion and sediment run-off, will lead to increased perennial ground cover and grazing production.

The Regional Landcare Facilitator Program is supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. Cape York's Regional Landcare Facilitator is hosted by Cape York NRM.

Low Stress Stock Handling workshop - Crocodile



Participants putting their new skills into practice as the herd is calmly directed to the gate Photos: Robyn May



Twelve participants from Lilyvale, Crocodile, Violetvale, Olivevale and Bonny Glen attended the workshop



The group watching Chooky demonstrate his skills



Glen Shephard trialing new stock handling methods
Photo: Lyndal Scobell

On 6-7 September Roy and Karlene Shephard of Crocodile Station hosted a two-day Low Stress Stock Handling course with trainer Chook Kealey.

The twelve participants learnt methods to keep cattle calm during mustering, in the yards and for loading on trucks, which then keeps weight on the cattle for market. Participants were amazed at the immediate response of the cattle by using these methods in just two days.

The workshop was funded by Reef Trust 3, through the Reef Alliance. The Reef Alliance Program is a partnership between agricultural industry, regional NRM bodies, and facilitated by the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF), with a common goal of securing the future health of the Great Barrier Reef.

The Reef Alliance Program is funded by the Australian Government and delivered through the Reef Trust.

Around the Cape

Jabalbina Fire Posters



Cape York NRM worked with Jabalbina's Ayton Ranger Base and Shiptons Flat Ranger Base over the past year to develop posters for their fire plans.

The Fire Planning Annual Calendar (example above) will be available for any Cape York groups who would like a copy. A communications toolbox for fire planning, which includes templates for a poster, letter, media release, notice and calling card, was also produced for Jabalbina, and is available to other groups.

Contact Cape York NRM on 1300 132 262 or media@capeyorknrm.com.au for more information.

This project is supported by the Queensland Government Department of Natural Resources and Mines through the Queensland Regional Natural Resource Management Investment Program.

NRM annual general meetings

It seems September is AGM time across the Cape.

Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals, South Cape York Catchments and Wenlock Catchment Management Group all held AGMs during the month. South Cape York Catchments and Cape York Weeds and Ferals both said good-bye to retiring long-term chairperson, and NRM advocate, John Giese; while Wenlock Catchment Management Group gratefully received a \$1000 donation from SCYC to boost their newly-opened bank balance.

Cape York NRM will hold its AGM on Saturday 28 October at Hillcrest Guest House in Cooktown.



Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Inc. AGM

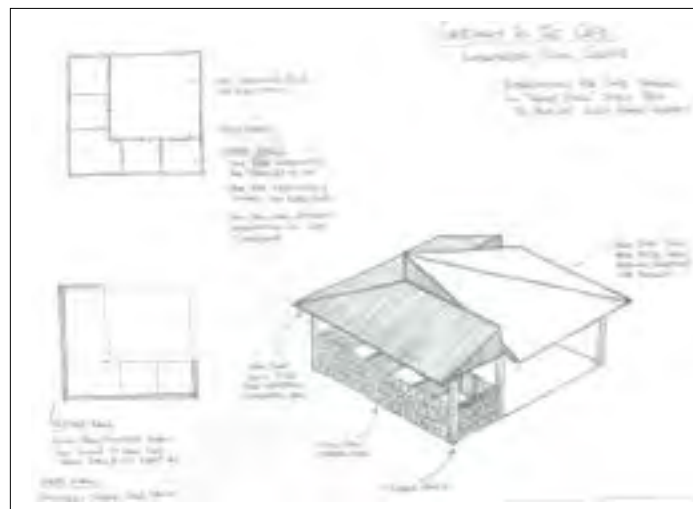
World Cassowary Day 2017



Vicki at the Cape York NRM stall in Cairns on World Cassowary Day on 24 September

‘Gateway to the Cape’ design winners announced

by Robyn May and Waratah Nicholls



Garry O'Kane's winning building design concept



Ori Albert-Mitchell's winning sculpture design concept



Waratah Nicholls and Garry O'Kane

Entrants, organisers and voters gathered at the Lakeland Coffee House on Tuesday 19 September for the final vote and announcement of the results of the ‘Gateway to the Cape’ design concept competition.

Funding from the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has enabled the first step towards a ‘Gateway to the Cape’ traveller’s information and rest stop.

This new facility is intended to offer travellers a place to have a break, take photographs and view the educational interactive displays, taking time to understand a little more about the beauty and specialness of Cape York Peninsula.

The winner for the building design concept is Garry O'Kane from Lakeland, and the winner for the public art sculpture design award is Ori Albert-Mitchell, from Bloomfield.

Project Manager Waratah Nicholls said there had been a good response from the Lakeland community.

“I am really happy that one of the residents has won this fantastic prize and the honour of his design being built in their community” Waratah said.

The competition ensured that everyone in Lakeland had the opportunity to put their ideas forward and have their say as part of the process, the final selection was put to the vote by the people.

Garry’s design based on a horse stable, reflecting Lakeland’s light horse history, will now be developed into structural plans and submitted to Council for approval.

Ori’s design of a staged scene, encompassing many characters of Cape York will also be developed and then installed on the site, it will certainly attract travellers to stop and enjoy the ‘Gateway to the Cape’.

“I encourage everyone to visit the Lakeland Coffee House to have a look at all the entries on display, and to vote for the ‘People’s Choice’ award. Voting closes on 16 October” Waratah said.

This project is an initiative of the Combating Litter & Illegal Dumping Creatively on Cape York Project supported by the Queensland Government's Litter and Illegal Dumping Community and Industry Partnerships Program and Cape York NRM.

RLF state meeting in Cooktown

by Andrew Hartwig - Regional Landcare Facilitator, Cape York Peninsula



Regional Landcare Facilitators met in Cooktown in September Photo: Melanie Fenton, Cape York News

Cape York recently hosted the State Regional Landcare Facilitators workshop. The workshop was attended by RLF's from throughout Queensland and the Northern Territory, and a Federal Department of Agriculture and Fisheries representative.

A range of local guest speakers highlighted the challenges of sustainable agriculture and the importance of Landcare partnerships on Cape York. The workshop was held at Natures Powerhouse followed by a field day including Normanby and Fairview Stations, Spring Creek and the Lakeland horticultural area.

The network would like to thank Cape York Natural Resource Management and the National Landcare Programme for hosting the workshop which allowed for valuable knowledge exchange, and an appreciation of those helping to manage our unique and beautiful landscape.

The Regional Landcare Facilitator Programme is supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. Cape York's Regional Landcare Facilitator is hosted by Cape York NRM.



Queensland Regional Landcare Facilitations visit to Cape York Photo: Darren Jennings, Regional Landcare Facilitator South West Natural Resource Management

How to use less fertilisers and still grow heaps

by Dr. Wendy Seabrook, Learning from Nature, Cooktown



Earthworm Photo: Wendy Seabrook

Wouldn't it be great not to need fertilisers?

The money and time we'd save! We're told it's the best way to be productive. That we need fertilisers to replace the nutrients removed with the harvest.

How is it then that some farmers are getting higher nutrients levels in their soils without using fertilisers?

It's not hokey pokey! There are broad acre croppers, like Gabe Brown (www.learningfromnature.com.au/fertilizers/), getting soil tests showing nutrient levels higher than their neighbours, and that nutrient levels are increasing. Contrary to what we would expect.

Unfortunately though, there is no quick fix. Just doing away with fertilisers isn't the trick.

Soil organisms are the magic ingredient. Soil scientists are now saying that our soils are not generally lacking in nutrients, just the soil biology to make them available.

So the trick is bringing diverse and healthy populations of organisms back into our soils again. Half measures don't work as well. We need to create functioning soil food webs by giving our soil organisms a comfortable place to live and sufficient nutritious food to eat. It's how these innovative farmers are growing without fertilisers.

This is challenging. If we could easily and affordably do this using current organic techniques, wouldn't everybody be doing it already? In reality, most of us struggle just meeting the costs of 'sustaining'

the status quo, making small improvements when we can.

So what's the solution?

Designing our production systems to grow a varied diet of organic material and root exudates for our team of soil builders and nutrient recyclers, as well as saleable products.

Are you interested in exploring ways to trial this ecological approach on your property?

Come to a one day workshop at Hill Top Farm, near Cooktown, facilitated by Dr. Wendy Seabrook.

You'll understand the soil science behind this approach, look at how other growers are benefitting, and develop ways to grow feedstuff for soil organisms in your production systems – orchards, pastures, market and home gardens.

Workshop: How to use less fertilisers and still grow heaps! 28 October 2017 at Hill Top Farm, Endeavour Valley Road, Cooktown.

For more information and to register – email info@learningfromnature.com.au. Can't make the workshop? Check out Learning from Nature's videos and other resources.

This workshop is supported by Learning from Nature and Cape York NRM through funding from Cook Shire Council's Economic Development Programme.



Dr. Wendy Seabrook chatting to Gabe Brown from North Dakota. One of the innovative growers using this ecological approach – photo provided



DATE CLAIMER
Cape York NRM Ltd
Annual General Meeting
28 October 2017
Cooktown
Contact 1300 132 262 for more info

Change of guard for Cape York NRM Directors



Director Gibson and Director Emma Jackson

As the 2016-2017 Annual General Meeting approaches for Cape York NRM, the board have said goodbye to two long serving Directors.

After almost three years as Indigenous Zone Four Director, Shane Gibson stood down at the recent Cape York NRM meeting in Weipa. Shane has relocated to Alice Springs for work and family, and will be sorely missed by the Cape York NRM Board of Directors.

Shane has been a strong voice for Indigenous Zone Four as well as for Cape York in general. He has been a key influence in the strengthening of governance of Cape York NRM in recent years.



Director Sandra Woosup

Sandra Woosup, a Cape York NRM Zone One Director is also standing down after almost four years on the Cape York NRM Board of Directors.

During her time with Cape York NRM, Sandra has been an advocate for the protection of, and respect for, cultural knowledge in NRM. Sandra will continue her work in the NPA with the Apudthama Land Trust.

The Board of Directors and staff at Cape York NRM extend their heartfelt thanks to Shane and Sandra for their service to natural resource management on Cape York.

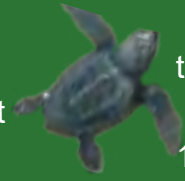
Recruitment for the vacant positions is underway, with new directors to be announced at the Annual General Meeting on 28 October in Cooktown.

Cape York Calendar

Events significant to your life on Cape York

SEPTEMBER

- 4-10 National Threatened Species Week
- 5-6 Low Stress Stock Handling school at Crocodile Station
- 16-2 Queensland school holidays
- 18 'One in a Thousand' screening at Naprunum
- 19 'One in a Thousand' screening at Mapoon
- 24 World Cassowary Day
- 26 'One in a Thousand' screening at Kowanyama
- 25-28 19th Biennial Conference of the Australian Rangeland Society



OCTOBER

- 2 Queen's Birthday public holiday
- 10 'One in a Thousand' screening at Pormpuraaw
- tba 'One in a Thousand' screening at Punsand Bay
- 13 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
- 24 NRM priorities workshop - PCYC Cooktown
- 28 Cape York NRM Annual General Meeting - Hillcrest Guest House Cooktown

NOVEMBER

- 29 'One in a Thousand' documentary screening, in Cairns

Have your say on Cape York's natural resource management priorities

Cape York NRM is seeking input from Cape York's land and sea managers to align the region's current natural resource management targets in Cape York's natural resource management plan.

A series of workshops will be held across Cape York in the next six to eight weeks, commencing in Cooktown on Thursday 26 October at the PCYC between 9am - 4pm.

The workshops will also provide feedback on the achievements of the Cape York NRM Regional Investment strategy 2013-2018 that was developed in collaboration with Cape York land and sea managers. These workshops will help inform the 2018-2022 investment for the region's NRM plan.

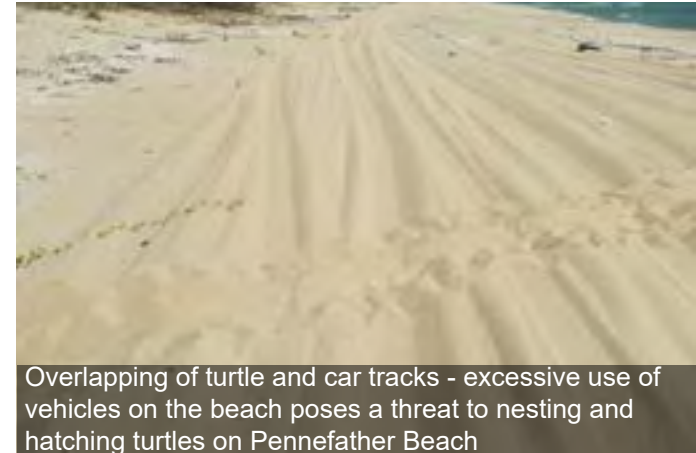
The workshops will cover: reviewing Cape York's current NRM plan, achievements to date, the new national Landcare program and state natural resource management priorities, and your regional natural resource management priorities.

Western Cape Turtle Threat Abatement Alliance's documentary - *One in a Thousand* will be screened in the evening, following the workshop.

For more information, and to RSVP for the Cooktown event (by Thursday 19 October) contact Vicki Wundersitz at Cape York NRM vwundersitz@capeyorknrm.com.au

Do your bit to save endangered sea turtles

by Kerri Woodcock and Lyndal Scobell



Overlapping of turtle and car tracks - excessive use of vehicles on the beach poses a threat to nesting and hatching turtles on Pennefather Beach



Sea turtle safely returning to the ocean after nesting
Photo: Kerry Trapnell

Western Cape York turtle nesting season is underway again. Turtles nest all year round on Cape York, but peak nesting time on the western Cape is from July to October each year.

This corresponds with the time of the year that the beaches are most accessible, and visitation to these remote beaches continues to increase.

All species of sea turtles nesting on the western Cape have experienced severe decline in numbers over the past few decades and are now listed as threatened species. This means that these turtles could disappear from the oceans forever without a change in human behaviour.

Turtles face many natural threats throughout their lifetime, but it is the impacts of human activities that now threatens their survival. Coastal development, marine debris, boat strikes, fishing practices and climate change are all threats to sea turtle survival.

Nanum Wunghthim Ranger Coordinator Phillip Mango said that during the nesting and hatching season, turtles on western Cape beaches are easily disturbed by light, noise and movement of people and vehicles.

"Lights from night time driving or campfires can disorient emerging hatchlings, and vehicles can crush them as they attempt to reach the ocean" Phillip said.

Driving at any time can compact sand above nests.

"Even if eggs withstand the crush, hatchlings may be buried alive, unable to dig their way to the surface because of the compacted sand.

"Tyre ruts left by vehicles can confuse hatchlings so that it takes them longer to get to the water and increase their chance of being eaten by a predator" Phillip said.

Many of the major turtle rookeries in Queensland are within land that is owned or controlled by Indigenous

communities. Indigenous rangers on the western Cape are involved in a range of activities to monitor and protect turtles nesting on beaches on the western Cape.

However, Rangers rely on the support of the entire community to assist them in their efforts to protect these species.

What you can do

Everyone has a role to play in helping to ensure that sea turtles do not disappear from the western Cape York beaches.

- If you have a vehicle on the beach, drive slowly on the beach at low tide and stick to the wet sand below the high tide mark whenever possible.
- At night, do not have excessive lights on the beach as this can confuse nesting turtles and their hatchlings – this includes campfires.
- If you see a nesting turtle on the beach at night, use minimal torch light and avoid sudden movements which may scare the turtle.
- Do not allow your dogs to disturb nesting turtles or their eggs.

WCTTAA is supported by Cape York NRM and is funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments' Nest to Ocean Turtle Protection Program.



Cape York Natural Resource Management Ltd

Board of Directors



Emma Jackson
Chairperson
Primary Industries Sector



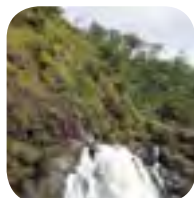
Sally Gray
Conservation Sector



Pauline Smith
Vice Chairperson
Indigenous Sector, Zone 2



Mikayla Down
Indigenous Sector, Zone 3



Currently vacant
Indigenous Sector, Zone 4



Currently vacant
Indigenous Sector, Zone 1



John Charlton
Tourism, Small Business,
Mining and Other Industry
Sector



Trevor Meldrum
Community Sector



Joseph Elu
Indigenous Sector, Zone 1



Desmond Tayley
Local Government Sector

CONTACT US:

Cape York Natural Resource Management
47-49 Maunds Road | PO Box 907
Atherton QLD 4883
1300 132 262

To contribute or subscribe:
media@capeyorknrm.com.au
0488 656 690



www.capeyorknrm.com.au



Australian Government

**National
Landcare
Programme**

