

TOP NOTES

LAND
FOR
WILDLIFE
VOLUNTARY WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

LAND FOR WILDLIFE TOP END NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2014

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What's in a flower
Clerodendrum floribundum, by
TENPS

Weeping Rosewood and their fungal decline, are there ways to save them? What native alternatives have the same form?

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Jasmine Jan, well known Top End watercolour artist 'Blue faced honey eaters in a Livistona palm'. Inside Jasmine tells of her artist's retreat and love for the native landscape....

From the coordinator



I had a look back over what I wrote for the last Newsletter and there seems to be some recurrent themes. I have been away travelling again! This time only for a couple of weeks but with the chance to visit India. A vibrant country but with numerous environmental issues and a landscape that sees most arable land turned over to food production. With an eye on the plants it was somewhat

ironic for me to be confronted everywhere I went by Neem trees. This species was a feature in the last Newsletter and it seems it will get a bit more attention in future newsletters too.

This newsletter continues with some attention on weeds – this time Tully grass (*Brachiaria humidicola*) as I have also visited many properties that have areas subject to inundation and Tully has seriously invaded in many of these properties. The tough wiry stems are reported as very difficult to slash and small block holders will probably need to resort to other control mechanisms. Hopefully the article will provide some guidance.

Tully is another one of our many deliberate introductions that has escaped well beyond the intended purpose. In fact looking at our most serious weeds it is not hard to come to the conclusion that we have brought most of our weed problems on ourselves. Very few have been through accidental introductions and by far the majority have been deliberately introduced.

Another increasing observation in the rural area is the loss of the introduced ornamental weeping Rosewoods and many members have asked about this problem. We have provided a bit of background to this *Fusarium* infection. Once the fungal infection is on your property there is not a lot you can do. Our recommendation is to replace the lost Rosewoods with some Top End native species that provide similar amenity characteristics. Our resident horticultural expert, Yvette Brady, has provided a list of alternatives. Most of these are available from our nursery at the member plant sale days.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our newest Greening Australia staff member – Emma Lupin. She has been employed initially and primarily on our Howard Sand sheets project. However, I will be handing over some Land for Wildlife tasks to her and you will be hearing a lot more from her in coming months. We will certainly be looking for Land for Wildlife members that have Howard Sandsheet heath on their blocks.

Greg Leach -
Land for Wildlife Coordinator

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Editorial

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Inspiration from the bush-

Stories from Land For Wildlife members



The Artist's Retreat

By Jasmine Jan, Land For Wildlife Member

An obsession with wildlife, a love of the bush and a desire to own a property with a natural water feature was the drive behind searching the weekend newspapers real estate guide for years. Then one day a small ad appears in the classifieds section and reads

“105 acres at Lambells lagoon, bushblock with wet season waterhole. Put your house in the middle and never see the neighbours”.

We got in the 4WD drove out to the place and discovered it literally was just a bushblock with no development on it at all. For me it was like a blank canvas or a fresh clean sheet of watercolour paper just waiting for an artist to create something with it.

This block was a bushland oasis completely surrounded by mango farms and market gardens. We drove the 4WD onto the property following a natural clearing through the bush as there was no driveway or track in. It turns out the natural clearing was a drainage line for the wet season waterhole. We pulled up on the edge of an amazing flooded paperbark billabong that was bristling with white waterlilies and our jaws literally dropped.

It was three years before we started building on the block. It was the best thing we ever did. The block is just

a mecca for wildlife and as a wildlife artist I was soaking up inspiration from every direction. It is not unusual for me to experience a David Attenborough moment whilst working in my studio/gallery which sits on the edge of the Paperbark billabong and acts as a huge bird hide. One highlight was watching a pair of Black-necked Storks teaching their young one how to fish in the shallows of the billabong literally 8 metres away from my studio verandah. Another memorable moment was canoeing in amongst the reeds and waterlilies to discover a pair of Green Pygmy Geese leading their group of 6 ducklings away from me.

It is fascinating to see the changes taking place at this waterhole from the dry season to the build-up and into the wet season. Not a day goes by without me feeling grateful for the amazing lifestyle that we enjoy living on this piece of paradise.

One of the things we do enjoy is showing people our little piece of paradise. It almost seems criminal to not share our amazing place with others who can appreciate and enjoy the joys that a natural bush block can bring.

So this year we are opening our property to visitors as part of the Australian Open Garden program. We will have an exhibition and sale of

artworks featuring the work of 8 artists on display in my studio/gallery. There will be food stalls, plant sales and other small business' displaying their products in the gardens. I have also created a sculpture trail of artworks throughout the landscaped gardens that surround our house and the studio. The Open Garden is called “The Artist's Retreat” opens 10-11th May from 10am-4pm. There is an entry fee charged by the Australian Open Garden scheme which is \$7 and children under 18 are free.

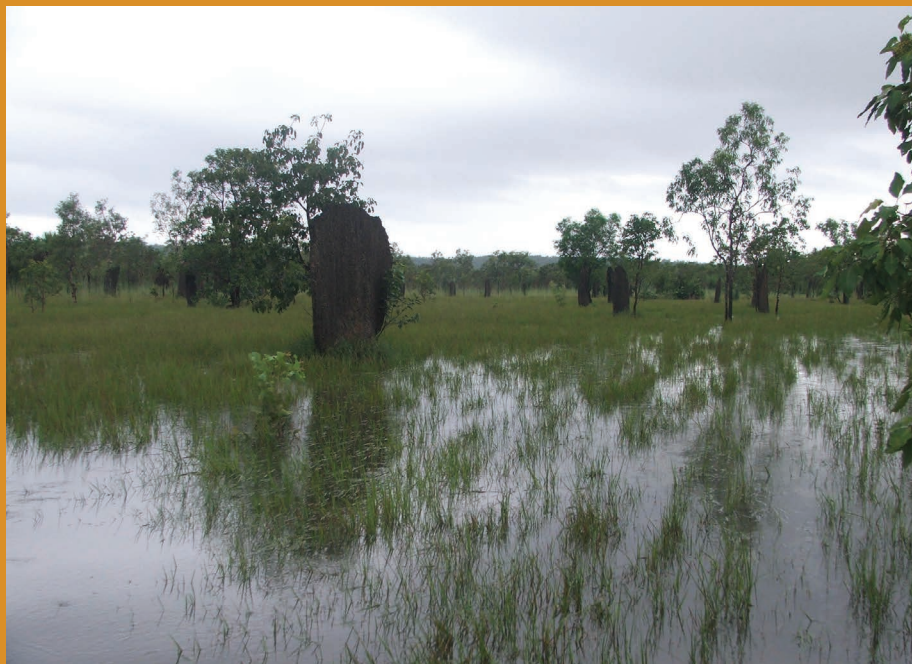
www.jasminejan.com.au

Facebook – Jasmine Jan Studio/ Gallery



Inspiration from the bush-

Stories from Land For Wildlife members



due to the proliferation of African grasses that resulted. At 80 ha, the area is a bit of a handful for one or two people to deal with, especially in the wet season when vehicular access is impossible. At least the incessant search for weeds to destroy forces us to visit even the most difficult parts of the block to access, making us see things we would otherwise miss at times when we might otherwise prefer to be sitting back enjoying the view from the comfort of the house. During the late wet on weekends a lone wandering figure wearing a knapsack spray can come as a bit of a surprise to the bitterns, brolgas and herons who are used to having the place all to themselves during the week.

Land for Wildlife has been a great help for us, especially when we hosted a field day and lots of willing people turned up to plant trees in areas that had been damaged by Gamba grass infestations. Most of the trees have survived and some are now over four metres tall and beginning to provide the canopy we had hoped for. We are blessed to have a number of neighbours and friends who also have Land for Wildlife blocks, who share experiences and knowledge about weed management and the like. Their help and information is invaluable. We have joined with some of them in a Natural Resources Management Conservation Agreement over our blocks.

The local fire brigade and we have managed to keep most of the block free of fire now for seven years. The canopy is recovering, with lots of young trees coming up, and our tree planting efforts have reintroduced some of the missing fire-sensitive species. The birds have done a great job of planting palms and other fruiting trees. If Cyclone Carlos hadn't decimated the finch species we would probably have all the birds back now, too.

Through field days and sustainable house open days we hope to make our block an inspiration to others to help look after our Top End wildlife by starting with habitat protection in their own back yards.

That way we can all get to live in our own little national parks.

Living in our own little National Park, By Helen Speirs, Land For Wildlife member

Ever since we were married (in 1971) we had the good fortune to live in national parks. We got used to bringing up our children in the best real estate in Australia. In this regard we were all very spoilt. Then in late 2001 we moved to a unit in Leanyer. Many people are very happy to live in their unit in Leanyer, as there are many good things about living in the suburbs of Darwin, but it was a shock to us, of course. We began looking for a rural block. In 2002 we were very lucky to find a block at Darwin River that we could afford and that had the added advantage of being seasonally soggy, with the river running through it.

The block includes around five different land units, from Eucalyptus dominated low open savannah in the highest portion down through Melaleuca and Grevillea swamps to the gallery forest along the river. There is a grassy swamp with many magnetic termite mounds at the headwaters of a wet season creek that drains into the river. Although it was uncleared, the area had been grazed by buffaloes in the past, and had been frequently burnt. Because of this the block had lost a number of plant species that might be expected in the riverine landscape. Nevertheless, it was virtually weed free, with very small and isolated infestations of exotic plants usually associated with introduced grazing animals.

Even before we commenced fencing we applied for Land for Wildlife status under the very first version of that scheme in the NT. We wanted to establish our intention of managing the block for conservation of wildlife and we hoped the scheme would open the door to a network of like-minded people, and would set an example for some of our neighbours who had large weed infestations or injudiciously cleared areas on their properties.

After a disastrously hot fire burnt practically the whole of our block and

much of the surrounding district in 2006 we found we now had a major weed problem,

That way we can all get to live in our own little national parks.

Inspiration from the bush-

Stories from Land For Wildlife members



My Home

By Chris Binks, New Land For Wildlife member

I purchased 5 acres in Howard Springs approximately 10 years ago. The block was predominately cleared and had maybe a dozen mango trees on it. It was choked with mission grass which aided an intense fire which killed off some of the mangoes and burnt 4/5 of the block and nearly the pre-existing shack.

Through trial and error, speaking with various people and groups, (including the Bushfire Council) I slowly but surely all but eradicated the mission grass as well as *Hyptis* and the odd clump of gamba grass. Spear grass is now the dominate grass species. Concurrently I also stopped getting the block slashed, possibly the vector which introduced the foreign grasses in the first place. Many native trees started appearing on their own accord when the slashing had stopped, they say the Australian Bush has a long memory.

I've planted 60 to 80 native trees and shrubs a year for the last 5 years, as well as a few other non-native trees such as tamarind and mango. I like to plant mainly natives as they are often hardy, water wise and quick growing. I'll generally water the new plants either by hand or by reticulation for a Dry or two but after that you're on your own. Having dug post holes in the Dry I know there is moisture in the soil from about 600mm down, a layer of clay below this aiding the water retention. If they can get

their roots into this they're generally away.

It is not my intention to try and return the block into what it must of looked like prior to being cleared. I do like the *Grevillea pteridifolia* and the Pandanas which appear to dominate the area when the land is allowed to rejuvenate on its own accord, but if I was to remain true to what was originally here that means I couldn't plant Beauty Leaf or Salmon Gums or many other species that I've taken a liking to but aren't endemic to the area. I feel it is easier and more cost effective to protect what natural bush we have left rather than trying to recreate what has gone. Often I feel intact native land is cleared haphazardly, all tied into politics, bureaucracy and kowtowing to big business.

I remember the neighbour, who had been there for 25 years, saying he wished he had planted natives, his house being obscured by towering Poinciana's and African mahoganies. For me the middle road is best, I love many of the native trees but I also don't mind eating a mango straight from the tree in season, the flying foxes don't seem to mind them either.

I am very happy to have become a Land For Wildlife member and have done so to show that I am trying to protect the native bush I have planted and that has regenerated and to access advice on how best to manage the land and meet others that are doing the same.



Changing Seasons- An indigenous insight

Seasons changing, by Emma Lupin

Living or working out in the native bush, we have the wonderful privilege that we can feel the seasons changing. Not only can we tell by the temperature and the humidity but indicators in the landscape show us that change is coming. This time of year, after a plentiful wet season that has brought abundant life to this vast and incredible landscape, it seems that the skies may be drying and the temperature cooling slightly, as the sun moves away from us and over the equator to the north. Many people believe that dragonflies are an indicator of the dry season coming, but many other of our native plants and animals give us further signs. What is it you notice on your block or when out bush that the seasons are changing towards the dry season?

Often, as just indicated, our seasons are simplified in northern Australia as the wet, the dry and the build-up, but it is of course more complex than this, which is recognised in the languages of traditional owners. Each language group in Northern Australia has its own words and way of dividing the times of year. Gulumoerrgin (Larrakia) language is the language group of the traditional owners past and present for Darwin, Cox Peninsula and Gunn Point regions. It consists of two main harbours, the Darwin Harbour and Bynoe Harbour. Gulumoerrgin country is well watered. It receives approximately 1700mm of rainfall annually. Both the land Gwoyalwa and sea Gunumitjandawa provide important resources. The seasons are broken into seven main seasons: Balnba (rainy season); Dalay (monsoon season); Mayilema (speargrass, Magpie Goose egg and knock 'em down season); Damibila (Barramundi and bush fruit time); Dinidjaggama (heavy dew time); Gurrulwa (big wind time), and Dalirrgang (build-up).

At the moment the season, in Gulumoerrgin language, is "Mayilema" - Speargrass, goose egg and knock 'em down season. Mayilema is the word for speargrass and signifies the start of the goose egg (Biyinba) collection on the flood plains. As the speargrass heads turn brown, the eggs hatch, marking the end of the season and knock 'em down storms, knock the spear grass down, indicating the end of the wet season. Dragonflies (Birrdibirripba) appear and the native cherry is fruiting. The red dye plant (*Haemodorum coccineum*) is fruiting and is used to dye Pandanus (Biyarmarra) and Sand palm

(Gwillirrimba) to make string bags and mats. The Barramundi (Damibila) move downstream from the flood plains to the sea. The Kakadu plum (*Terminalia ferdinandia*) is fruiting in abundance in our woodland landscapes and is one of the highest sources of natural vitamin C and great in smoothies and to eat off the tree.

Along the road ways bronze-golden spear grass lines the road, slowly drying out and getting knocked down. Another plant that flowers just as the knock em down rains come is *Acacia alleniana*, adding a bright yellow weeping flush to the landscape. So many flowers are out, on the sand plains and river margins, putting their energies into reproduction before the dry comes. It really is a wonderful time to look at flora in the landscape.

Some of this information is taken, with permission, from a wonderful calendar compiled in partnership with Larrakia people, Lorraine Williams, Judith Williams, Maureen Ogden, Keith Risk and Anne Risk and organisations CSIRO and TRACK. It can be downloaded from CSIRO at and there is an interactive version too. <http://www.larrakia.csiro.au/#/calendar/dalay>



Land For Wildlife past events

Atlas Moth Day review

Last month, Michael Braby coordinated a public forum for the Atlas Moth Recovery Network, which was held in Darwin 22-23 Feb. 2014. The Atlas Moth is currently listed as a threatened species (Vulnerable) under the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, and its Regulations section 43 (3) the moth is categorised as Protected Wildlife. The goals of the forum were to provide up-to-date information on the conservation of the Atlas Moth, plans to restore its habitat and reintroduce the species back into Darwin (where it is believed to be locally extinct), and formally establish the Network. Several events were held during the forum, including a series of seminars held at the Museum Theatre at Bullocky Point, tours of three restoration sites in Darwin at Casuarina Coastal Reserve, Ludmilla Creek and East Point Reserve, and a field trip to Dundee Beach that was held in conjunction with the Top End Native Plant Society to learn about the breeding habitat and larval food plants of the moth.



About 120 people attended the forum of which 90-100 attended the talks. Dr Don Sands from Brisbane opened the forum by delivering a key note address on the History and development of the Richmond Birdwing Conservation Network. This excellent talk was then followed by a series of presentations by Michael Braby (conservation status of Atlas Moth), Geoff Martin (biology and captive breeding of Atlas Moth), David van den Hoek (habitat suitability of Atlas Moth at East Point), Louise Finch (Connecting Corridors of Green Project: Revegetation of Atlas Moth habitat in Darwin by Conservation Volunteers), Greg Leach (Land for Wildlife programme by Greening Australia), and Helen Haritos, Chris Capper and Deb Hall (habitat restoration at East Point Reserve, Ludmilla Creek and Casuarina Coastal Reserve). More than 70 people have now joined the Network and the first meeting by the steering committee will be held next month.

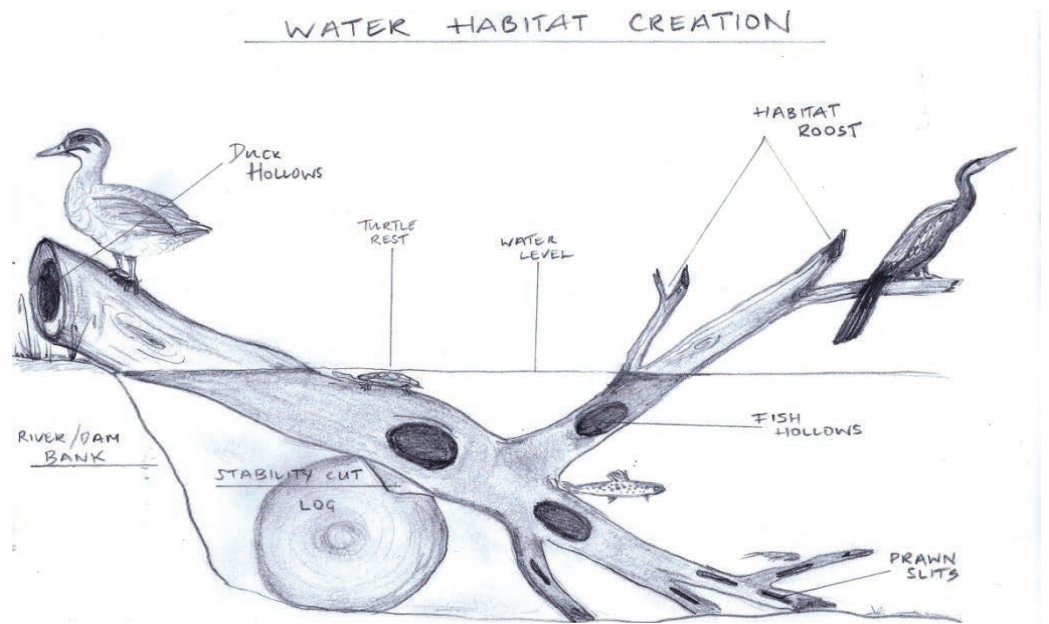
If you are interested please contact Michael Braby-michael.braby@nt.gov.au

Land For Wildlife June event

Trees for Habitat

Land for Wildlife is offering a wonderful work shop about using trees for habitat with arboriculturalist Phil Kenyon, who teaches at CDU.

The Arboricultural Industry has gradually become aware of the importance of habitat trees as part of an active ecosystem. The creation of habitat hollows in dead, dying or living trees is developing rapidly within the Industry. This information is aimed at providing awareness of the potential of creating habitat in trees whilst maintaining the trees basic integrity. Tree hollows are of great importance as they are used as nesting sites, shelters and safe refuges. Hollows can present as a small crack or split to very a large cavity in the tree.



Reptiles also use cracks and holes in logs to hide in and when cutting trees, you can purposefully increase their habitat with cutting techniques.

AQUATIC HABITAT: historically logs and snags have played an important role in the ecology of freshwater systems. It can take possibly up to 400+ years for hollows to be naturally created in submerged logs. Aquatic habitat may be created in logs and trees in rivers and wetlands both above water and below water.

The Workshop is on
Saturday 14th June from 9 am- 12.30pm
at 'Dutchie's Lagoon' on Gail's 57 hectare block (Howard Springs)
and will look at an arbor technique that promotes habitat for wildlife.

A brunch will be provided, please RSVP to info@nt.greeningaustralia.org.au, so we can know numbers and send you directions.

Feature Native plant species

Clerodendrum floribundum

by Peter Ebstworth, Land for WildLife and Top End Native Plant Society member

This wonderful plant is a native shrub that can be relied on to provide a spectacular display late in the Top End wet season. Growing to between 2 and 5 meters high, it has large green leaves that set off masses of white, sweetly scented tubular flowers. These may develop throughout the year although we usually see them in numbers at Darwin River in March or April. Clusters of globular red fruit (~15 mm diameter) set in red star-shaped bases develop after flowering. This suggests one of the plants common names, "Lolly Bush". The fruit create a display of their own as they turn from red to black while ripening.

This species occurs over a large range across northern Australia, south into the Centre and down the east coast of Queensland into northern New South Wales. This may help explain its adaptability and ability to grow in a wide range of soil types. Although well-drained sites are recommended, we have *C. floribundum* growing naturally at Darwin River on sites ranging from both poorly drained heavy clays and well drained sands beside a billabong, to poor lateritic gravels with underlying clay and coffee rock in woodland. Propagation, cultivation and other notes for this species are available in Greening Australia's very useful book "Native Plants for Top End Gardens" by Nicholas Smith. We have good success potting seedlings that pop up in

inconvenient spots (e.g. under fruit trees) once they are around 100-150 mm high. Otherwise very fresh seed is needed, along with protection from rats and other seed predators! The plants respond well to light pruning to shape them in garden situations.

We have been Land for Wildlife members for 10 years, managing our land for conservation by slowly reducing weeds and restoring large areas that were degraded by decades of too frequent fires, cattle and buffalo grazing. We place particular value on *C. floribundum* as this beautiful species not only attracts and provides food for native butterflies, birds, and mammals, it appears to be a ready colonizer when patches are opened up as weeds such as Calopo and African Grasses are removed, particularly along seasonal streams and near permanent water.



Feature Weed plant species

Urochloa humidicola (Tully grass)

by Pete Mcfadden

Another introduced pasture plant gone feral is the introduced species *Humidicola*. Present on many road verges in the rural areas it forms a dense stoloniferous mat and as an environmental weed can invade undisturbed bush land. Favouring wet areas it has even been considered as a “choking plant” to control *Mimosa pigra*.

Humidicola stays green most of the year and when it burns it produces very dense smoke that reduces visibility to almost zero. *Humidicola* has a thick root mass to feed underground fires that can burn for days until they break through the surface, producing new runaway wildfires. The ground can become so hot that it sterilises the soil, destroying other plants and seeds (NT Bushfire Volunteers)

The main mode of distribution is by root stolon growth and the plant steadily creeps along. Seed production is reportedly limited at lower latitudes and the vegetative reproduction is the main mode of propagation /spread.

Control with Glyphosate is effective but does require good coverage of all leaf areas and may require a follow up application. Recent experience at McMinns Lagoon Reserve confirms that control can be achieved in one season and no regrowth has been recorded from soil seed-banks or reshooting. As *Humidicola* prefers wet and inundative areas control is best achieved early in the wet season when access is easier.

When using any herbicide please read the label and use any appropriate personal protective equipment required.



"PLant me instead"

NT Native Trees recommended to replace the Weeping Rosewood.

Replacing the infected Weeping Rosewood,
by Yvette Brady, Greening Australia



The commonly grown weeping form of The Indian Rosewood, *Pterocarpus indicus* has fallen prey to the serious *Fusarium oxysporum* fungus for which there is currently no treatment. It appears, that the disease does not affect other trees in the Fabaceae family. Work is being done on developing a resistant rootstock so the species can be grafted, but this is unlikely to be available for some time. This partially deciduous tree has a lovely spreading habit especially if pruned now and then to make the most of its natural arching branches. The small, yellow pea shaped flowers cover the entire tree from October - December and make it an attractive addition to any tropical garden. It was a very hardy tree well adapted to dry conditions and notoriously easy to propagate with the ability to develop roots on quite large pieces (up to 2m) and as it is also very fast growing and has a form which allowed the branches to sweep the ground, it had become a major screening tree for the rural area. Under good conditions the Rosewood are able to reach heights of between 30-40m, although the tree needs at least 20+ years to gain this height.

Unfortunately the *Fusarium* has now become entrenched in the Darwin and rural region and there are now many large dead trees and screening rows with quite unsightly gaps formed. If your Rosewood is showing symptoms of *Fusarium*, it displays die back from the top down and will have dark streaks in the timber under the bark, it will die either from the fungus itself or from attack by other pests and disease which take full advantage of its weakened condition. It is much easier to remove the tree while still partially alive. When totally dead the timber becomes very brittle and quite large branches may fall causing injury or damage

to structures, people or plants beneath. As the fungal disease persists in the soil, you cannot plant another Rosewood. Therefore a different tree should be planted in its place. Unfortunately the possible replacement trees do not display quite the same habit and if the main reason for growing this tree was screening then a layered approach with rows of trees of differing heights will need to be emplaced.

Possible replacements include the very fast growing *Albizia lebbek* (Indian Siris), *Sesbania formosa* and *Peltophrum pterocarpum* (Yellow Flame Tree). These are all leguminous trees from the same family as the Rosewood and are also dry season deciduous or partially so. Other possibilities which are evergreen include *Ganophyllum falcatum*, which actually looks quite similar but does not have the same weeping habit and only gets to between 15-20m. *Allosyncarpia ternata* is another very graceful looking tree and may reach heights of 30m if the soil is deep enough. Other evergreen trees, which can get to that height, are drought hardy and moderately fast growing include *Calophyllum inophyllum* (Beauty Leaf) and *Maranthes corymbosa*. Other potential replacements, which are evergreen but perhaps not quite as tall and will need a little extra water during their establishment phase, or the first 2 years, include *Carallia brachiata* (Freshwater Mangrove, Currant Tree), *Cupaniopsis anacardioides* (Tuckeroo), *Mimusops elengi*, *Myristica insipida* (Native Nutmeg) each growing to about 15m.

These can be grown right next to an affected tree and allowed to get a little bit of height before taking out the Rosewood although better results are achieved if the affected tree is totally removed, the soil rested for a season or two and then built up with organic matter before replanting. As with most trees and shrubs, supplementary fertilising is very beneficial with the best results gained from applying an all purpose N(10) P(9) K(8) fertiliser with trace elements at planting and thereafter at 4 monthly intervals until tree is about 5 years old. Rates are 100g per year age or 1m of height. whichever is greater... Eg; 3 year old tree that is 5m tall should have 500g of ferterliser. The only exceptions are trees and shrubs of the Proteaceae family which really dislike Phosphorous and require a specialist ferterliser low in that element.

A Bush Poet's story

Waldo the Bush Poet., by Emma Lupin

On the theme of inspiration from the bush, the famous bush local, 'Waldo the bush poet' has provided us with a poem about some native wild life- The Fruit Bat. Waldo and Sue moved to Humpty Doo (and that rhymes too), in 1980 and bought a 5 acre block, which was just a hay field. For some years they hosted tours with barbeques of buffalo and Barra. Sue says 'Back then it was a small community, everyone knew each other, there were no schools out here, a lot has changed since then, but we still



love it and now have great grand kids.' 'When we were first here we just wanted plants and colour and started planting whatever we could get hold of., 'Back then native plants weren't sold in nurseries, in fact the main plants available were palms, so that's what we planted.' 'We pulled out a lot of gamba grass- by hand, it was hard work, but we had a dream.' The block is now full of tall trees, orchids and bush 'ornaments' There are some trees, which Sue calls 'Bird Shit trees' which are mainly native and have come by happy chance and grow along with everything else. 'We are pretty fed up of the palms now, you just spend all your time picking up palm fronds.' 'We would like to plant more natives and find out more about which ones are suited; this block is staying in the family, our daughter is buried on it and our other daughter is coming to live at the back, so it may be a time for a new direction.' Waldo says he loved watching the native animals come in from the surrounding bush and wrote poems about them.

Waldo and Sue still warmly host visitors at their bush shop, 'The Barra Shack' where poems and Sue's hand-made Barra purses can be bought and many a yarn and a poetry recital can be given out freely. You are welcome to call in at 41 Acacia Road, Humpty Doo.

Freda the Fruit Bat

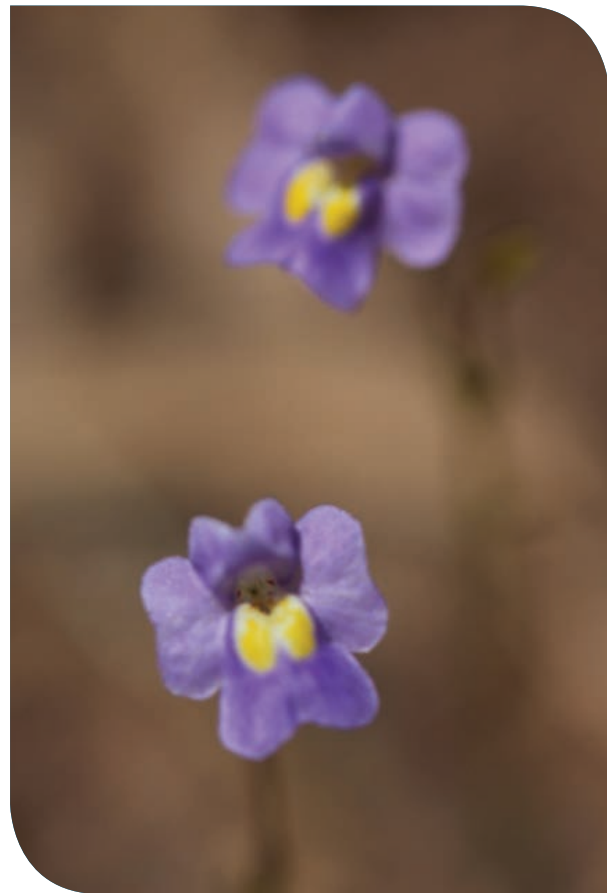
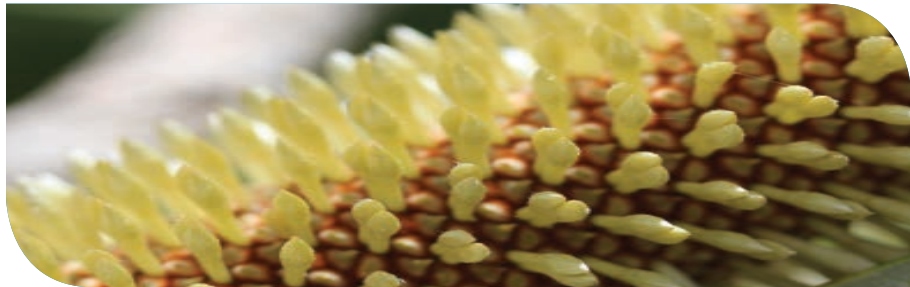
Freda is a Fruitbat, she lives out in the scrub, with lots of birds and lizards, and some pretty coloured grubs. When mango season comes around, bat colonies just swell, and if you walk up through the trees, there's an awful stinky smell!

At night time they go out to eat, they often fly together, by then the wet season's arrived, they'll fly in any weather. And if you have some mango trees, they'll flop down on a branch, that's when the poor old Mango just hasn't got a chance. They scratch the skin, and eat the fruit, they really make a mess! then fly off with those great big wings, which looks just like a dress.

Freda and her friends fly back to the colony again, hang upside down, then go to sleep; they look just like a chain. Sometimes a bat will fly away, then hang upon the wire, and if it touches both of them, it may just catch on fire!

The mango season's finished, now there's nothing left to eat, the colony will fly away, and other friends they'll meet. Now Freda and her thousand friends will mate out in the scrub, so next year when you see them, there'll be lots of little bubs. I suppose it's part of nature's way, of culling some fruit crops but when they get into our trees, they don't know when to stop!

Next time you see a fruitbat, hanging on a limb, just yell out "hi there Freda" but it could be Joe or Jim!! To all you little fruitbats, your mothers and your dads, we really like you very much, that means you're not so bad!



Dates for Your Diary

Saturday June 14th 9-12.30 am -

LFW Trees for Habitat Workshop...

Saturday 24th May -

Howard Sand Sheets with Top End Native Plants

Society, near Girraween Road

Saturday and Sunday 10th and 11th May-

'The Artist's Retreat' Open Garden

First Friday of every Month-

LFW and members plant sale at Greening Australia

Nursery



Northern
Territory
Government

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info@nt.greeningaustralia.org.au



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