



Protecting the Kimberley for 25 years – thanks for your support!

Director, Martin Pritchard

People have actively protected the Kimberley over millennia and maintained a rich landscape with species found nowhere else on earth. We pay tribute to them. Over the past few decades, the local community got together to ensure this magnificent region, particularly the west Kimberley, wasn't turned into an industrial and urban conglomeration like nearly everywhere else in the world. As more destructive developments came, the community pushed back. In 1996, a band of three got together around a kitchen table in Broome to take action to protect the Fitzroy River from dams and cotton farms by supporting traditional owners to defend their Country. Environs Kimberley (EK) was born.



EK Members visit to Dimond Gorge, Mornington 1997



Fitzroy River at Dimond Gorge, about to be protected in a National Park – dams will be banned. Photo: Adam Monk

Protecting the Kimberley for 25 years.



20,000 people march through Fremantle in 2013 calling for the protection of Walmadany (James Price Point). Photo: Adam Monk.

From humble beginnings, EK has evolved into one of the country's premier regional conservation organisations, with over 16,000 supporters and growing. We take the protection of the globally significant environment here extremely seriously. We won't shy away from the biggest multinational corporations, hostile governments and billionaires if their proposals threaten the integrity of the world's most intact tropical savannah and the least spoiled coastline in the world.

Over the past 25 years we have stood strong for Country alongside traditional owner groups, the broader community and other environmental and Aboriginal organisations. We have successfully protected vast areas from industrialisation, letting the world know that the Kimberley is far too valuable to be destroyed for financial gain by people and shareholders who don't live here and won't have to witness the legacy of disappearing species, polluted water and savannah lost forever.



EK Board 2020-21 Back: Rebecca Laird, Isaiah McKenna, Natalie Davey, Alexis Harper Front: Carmel Leahy, Laurel Sutcliffe, Peter Mitchell, Kat Taylor, Craig Phillips (Chair Kate Golson not present). Photo: Damian Kelly

Not only do we defend the Kimberley's vast landscapes, but we also actively support traditional owner groups to live and work on Country. In the last eight months alone we have secured \$1.7 million for traditional owner groups to look after Country, revitalise language, develop sustainable economic opportunities and instigate healing programmes.

We have worked with Aboriginal ranger groups across the Kimberley since 2007. We are privileged to have done so together. By combining Traditional Ecological Knowledge or Aboriginal Science with Western Science, we have dramatically increased the documented knowledge of



Maria Mann (EK's first Coordinator) and Pat Lowe (founding member) enjoying the Wild River Rage 3 in 1998. Organiser Ziggy Miedema in background.

Kimberley ecosystems, plants and animals, and developed management plans to ensure their protection into the future. Our success has come through collaboration and partnerships, and by building networks of knowledge and people not just across the Kimberley but nationally and globally. No one can defend this place alone. We are a small population in a region twice the size of Victoria. Working together is the only way to hold back the forces that would destroy vast areas of the Kimberley, if we let them.

We need to celebrate our successes and build on what we've achieved. The fight is not over, it's just beginning. Here are some of the wins over the past 25 years, gained with the support of our members, donors, the EK Board, dedicated professional staff, partner organisations including Aboriginal rangers and grant providers, and the broader community.

In 1996, plans were set for three dams on the Fitzroy: at Dimond Gorge, the Margaret River Gorge and the Leopold River, to water over 200,000 hectares of genetically modified cotton. Traditional owners were horrified. The community mobilised, joining the small band of plucky volunteers who were EK at the time, to protect the river. Plans to destroy the river and savannah had brewed for more than a century. It took eight years of hard work and campaigning until the three-dam proposal was dropped. In 2005, 'Colin's Canal' came back to haunt the river, but this idea, to take water from the Fitzroy to drought-prone Perth, evaporated almost as quickly as a wet season shower when the Opposition, led by Colin Barnett, lost the election that year.

When exploration for a kaolin mine was proposed on Thangoo pastoral lease, we stood with the pastoralists and traditional owners and objected. The proposal was withdrawn. 2005 was when Woodside and its joint venture partners Shell, BP, BHP and Chevron proposed building a gas refinery at Quondong, 30km north of Broome. The proposal morphed into a 30km² industrial site at James Price Point. When we asked the Premier Colin Barnett, who returned to power in 2008, if downstream industries, such as fertiliser, explosives and gas-to-liquid factories would be associated with the site, his response was that they could be, as long as they were distant from the gas refinery. This fitted in with the 2006 State Government plan to industrialise vast areas of the Kimberley. After years of opposition, most notably from the Broome community, Woodside pulled out in 2013.

In 2015, Rio's Sam Walsh, who had been watching the gas refinery proposal, announced that the company would relinquish its bauxite leases on the Mitchell Plateau, stating, "When we develop a project we want to have community support, we want to have the community licence to operate."



Seed collecting training with Women Rangers and Community members. Photo: Damian Kelly.

Woodside's disastrous foray and the push against it made it clear to everyone that in future companies would need a social licence — community support — to develop large projects in the Kimberley.

In 2010 the Fitzroy River catchment and beyond had tens of thousands of square kilometres of coal-mining tenements laid over it. Aspiring coal miner Rey Resources led the charge to open up the Canning Basin's coal deposits for export, and we determined there was no way that was going to happen. Our objections and detailed submissions to the EPA, as well as traditional owners' objections in the Mining Warden's Court, put paid to this disastrous project, which would have polluted the Fitzroy River in wet season downpours.

When the Kimberley's most popular tourist attraction by air, the Horizontal Falls, was threatened by a copper mine, we mobilised with tourism operators and other groups, leading to the protection of this special place, for now.

The Kimberley coast had no protection in 2008; now, most of this marine wonderland is in a marine park. We worked hard to make this happen, alongside other groups and in support of traditional owners. The job isn't finished; oil and gas interests, mining and fish farming are still major threats but, in thirteen years, we've come a long way.

Monsoon Vine Thickets (MVTs), remnant rainforest from thousands of years ago, when the north of the continent was covered in this rich ecosystem, are now listed by the Commonwealth as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC). Taking the lead from other Kimberley groups, we undertook the work necessary for listing. It is the only listed TEC in the region and our work with ranger groups continues to ensure MVTs' long-term protection.



EK Staff 2014 – Malcolm Lindsay, Ayesha Moss, Ilse Pickerd, Steve Reynolds, Neil Hamaguchi, Kylie Weatherall, Jason Fowler, Louise Beames (and Zeni), Tessa Mossop, Caitlin Pilkington, Christine Elsasser, Julia Rau and Martin Pritchard. Photo: Damian Kelly.

The Ramsar-listed Roebuck Bay is of critical importance to the people of Broome and surrounds and has been for millennia. Its mudflats are amongst the world's most extensive and packed with invertebrates — food for migratory birds. The Bay is rich in pearlshell for the pearling industry, and a favoured fishing area. To monitor the health of the Bay, we have one of the longest-running citizen science programmes in WA, the Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project, in partnership with traditional owners and the state government. We pushed hard, successfully, to shut down the commercial fishery and develop a marine park in the Bay, and we'll continue to lobby for a sanctuary zone.

Oil and gas companies have been wanting to turn the southern Kimberley into oil and gas fracking fields since 2010. Along with traditional owners and other groups we've kept this polluting industry out. The push is on again, with Texan frackers proposing to frack 20 wells. With your support, we won't let that happen.

After successfully fending off the push for dams on the Fitzroy, we are dismayed to know that the river is once again under threat — from huge pumps, extensive landclearing and all that led to the Murray-Darling disaster. We are working with traditional owners to protect the river once and for all. Make sure you sign the submission to the government on our website.

As long as we have support and funding we will continue to be a watchdog for the region. We'll campaign strongly to protect the Kimberley's precious environment and promote new sustainable industries to strengthen communities and help people to live and work on Country. Here's to the next 25 years!



Louise Beames working with Bardi Jawi Aamba and Oorany rangers to restore Monsoon Vine Thicket 2009



Report From The Chair

Kate Golson

Hello all.

It's early August and, in the Kimberley, we're more than mid-way through the dry season — a time when, in an average year, the size of Broome is said to treble as some 25–30,000 tourists venture here. In 2021, however, as the pandemic and its resultant border closures persist, we've experienced a greater explosion in visitor numbers than ever. We hear reports of more than 70,000 people in the town. No doubt many of these holidaymakers would be spending the winter break, but for COVID-19, in Bali or other parts, but for now, with no community transmission and open travel within WA, they're flocking here on planes and in flashy, gargantuan 4WDs that have eclipsed the usually dominant backpacker vans and the caravans of grey nomads.

It was during all of this that I read with great surprise of the Federal Minister for Environment Sussan Ley's recent politicking trip to Europe (Hungary, France, Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Middle East (Oman) and South Asia (the Maldives). Moved to action by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee's decision to recommend that the Great Barrier Reef be listed as 'in danger' (given three mass coral-bleaching events in five years, and sluggish progress in cutting pollution from farms and properties), the Minister undertook a round of vigorous lobbying for voting countries to reject the recommendation.

Ley appears to have been successful in her mission. A leaked email from Australia's Ambassador to the UN reported: 'Bahrain, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Ethiopia, Hungary, Mali, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, had indicated "they would like to co-author/co-sponsor" an amendment supporting Australia's position. In a document tabled to the committee...those countries, as well as Russia and Spain, are listed as backing Australia' (*The Guardian*, Australian edition, 21 July 2021).

Clearly, despite the COVID crisis and a growing backlog of legislative business, some government business just cannot wait.

On the home front, I have two internal matters to report.

At our last AGM we welcomed five new Board members to EK, significantly more than the average in recent years. The new members make the Board is more culturally diverse than ever before — three are youthful Kimberley Aboriginal people, and four are in their 20s and 30s. This is enormously satisfying after many years of striving for such changes.

Finally, I would like to formally acknowledge the successes of the grant-writers at EK, who continue to secure funds for an array of exciting and groundbreaking new projects, all in collaboration with Kimberley traditional owners.

All the best
Kate

BREAKING NEWS • BREAKING NEWS • BREAKING NEWS

As the EK Newsletter goes to Press, Andrew Forrest has announced that he is pulling his company, Squadron Energy, out of the Kimberley fracking fields. Having recently given the Boyer Lectures, in which he talked feelingly about the reality and threat of climate change, and after attending the 'Celebrate Bandarralngarri' (Fitzroy River) concert at Danggu, Mr Forrest appears to have at last recognised the contradictions between what he says and what his company does — and taken the brave step out. We can only congratulate him for his resolve, which we think is a wise business decision as well.

More next time.

Contact

PO Box 2281 Broome WA 6725
P: 08 9192 1922 web: environskimberley.org.au
email: community@environskimberley.org.au

Staff

Director: Martin Pritchard
Kimberley Nature Project: Louise Beames, Malcolm Lindsay, Ayesha Moss, Kylie Weatherall, Danielle Bain, Hamsini Bijlani, Matthew Macdonald and Victoria de Bruyn
Finance: Christine Elsasser
Communications, Media and Digital Fundraising: Anomie
Community Engagement, Fundraising and Events: Maddie Edwards
Frack Free Coordinator: Shaun Clark
Social Enterprise Development: Liz Jack

Board

Chairperson: Kate Golson
Deputy Chair: Kat Taylor
Secretary: Carmel Leahy
Treasurer: Laurel Sutcliffe
Members: Craig Phillips, Peter Mitchell, Rebecca Laird, Alexis Harper, Monica Edgar, Natalie Davey and Isaiah McKenna

Acknowledgements

Newsletter design: Iannello Design
Original logo: Rose Cox
Artwork: Robyn Wells

Letters To The Editor

Environs Kimberley welcomes letters to the Editor. We accept comment and criticism, and print all letters that are not obscene, offensive or libellous. If you have a bone to pick, pick it with us.

@EnviroKimberley
 [environskimberley](https://www.facebook.com/environskimberley)
 @environskimberley

Thanks for helping
us to protect the
Kimberley environment



Will fracking take off in the Kimberley?

Shaun Clark

The McGowan Government has said that the implementation plan on fracking will be finalised by the end of 2021. Companies will be permitted to frack if their applications are approved by the State Government and the EPA.

Black Mountain Oil and Gas subsidiary, Bennett Resources from Texas, referred a 20-well fracking program on Noonkanbah pastoral lease near Fitzroy Crossing to the EPA. Last year, Black Mountain was pushing for a west-east pipeline to get their gas to the east-coast market. The McGowan Government has effectively banned this approach by stopping the export of onshore gas over east and overseas. How long the government will hold out on this is a critical question. Meanwhile, Origin Energy has joined the fray with Buru Energy, and we expect to see similar applications for fracking from them in the near future. They are partnering with Buru Energy drilling a well 70km east of Broome (part of a two-well drilling program) in search of 97 million barrels of conventional oil. Origin is also active in the NT, where they have previously been fracking.

Theia Energy has a tenement to the south-east of Broome and its next step is to drill and frack both a vertical and a horizontal

well. It has a Memorandum of Understanding with a proposed Derby petrochemical/fertilizer plant to use fracked gas. Theia states that it has encountered a 70-metre oil column within the Goldwyer shale, which would require fracking because of the low permeability of the rocks.

A huge number of questions remain around the regulatory system to monitor and control this industry. We have already seen multiple problems with the three fracked wells in the region — one leaking well was not checked by any government department for seven years. There are serious questions around what companies will do with the contaminated wastewater from the fracking process, including radioactive materials.

We are asking the Minister for the Environment, Amber-Jade Sanderson, to direct the EPA to assess the cumulative effects across the Kimberley of the conventional oil industry and not just consider each well-site individually.

Companies with leases in the Kimberley have compared the geological characteristics of formations within the basin to those in other parts of the world. Theia Energy compares the Great Sandy Desert to the Eagle Ford Basin in Texas. There were more than 22,000 oil and gas wells in the Eagle Ford Basin as of January 2020. Can you imagine the Kimberley with so many oil and gas wells?



Seed collection and propagation guide for plants of the Kimberley

Another valuable publication from EK.

Ayesha Moss

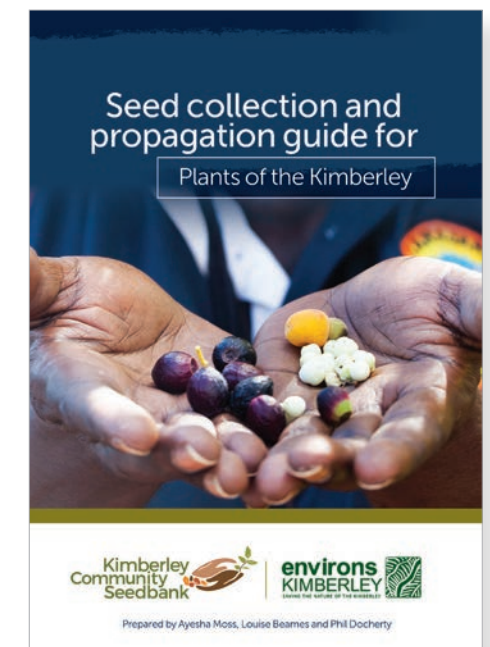
Environs Kimberley is pleased to announce the publication of the 'Seed collection and propagation guide for plants of the Kimberley'.

The guide provides advice and tips for collecting, storing and propagating seed of 41 Kimberley plants. We are excited to share this information to help people restore bushlands, as well as grow local plants for their communities and home gardens.

The guide includes sustainable harvesting guidelines to ensure collectors follow legal and cultural protocols, as well as care for the bush. They are also to help people get the best results possible. These guidelines were developed as part of the 'Enriching Kimberley native food producers and enhancing ecosystems project', funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

The propagation guide was compiled as part of the Kimberley Community Seedbank (KCS) Project, managed by Environs Kimberley and funded through the West Australian Government's State Natural Resource Management Program.

Please contact us if you wish to obtain a copy.
ayesha@environskimberley.org.au



Living Green

– PAINLESSLY

More tips to improve the sustainability of our daily lives without too much effort.

Do you ever ask yourself how you can influence other people, whom you see around you doing all the wrong things, to mend their environmentally unsound ways? I do. I have fantasies about writing to the Prime Minister and finding the perfect form of words that will persuade him to 'pivot' on climate change. And I harbour other grandiose ideas that haven't a hope in Hell of succeeding. I don't even know how to persuade people not to sit in a car for a long time with the engine idling without risking a thump on the nose.

When you are an environmentalist, you read a lot of information about your area of interest. You don't have to seek it — if you use a computer, it comes to you. By some mysterious process governed by algorithms, the Big Brother Brain who distributes on-line content will fill your computer screen with stories, images and YouTube videos about environmental threats and disasters.

It is all too easy to imagine that everyone is receiving the same information, as television viewers once did, but that would be wrong. Just stop for a moment and imagine what members of motor-cycle gangs are seeing on their screens. Not stories about an endangered Hopping Mouse, you can be sure.

Similarly, most of our politicians and big-business people don't read the things we read. Pollies' in-boxes are filled with gumph related to their electorates, to events or developments their party has funded, to forthcoming elections and, if they are Ministers, to their portfolios. Big-business people's in-boxes are filled with information about making money. No one has told them about the endangered Hopping Mouse, which is so far out of their sphere of interest that, if they did hear about it, they would probably find it laughable — far beneath their own elevated concerns.

So this is partly why EK exists. While we make our own strenuous efforts to repair the nature around us, we also strive to let people know about the plight of the Hopping Mouse and its counterparts. We try to help them understand that we are living in an age of extinctions and, in case the reasons for our concern are not obvious to them, why it matters. We want to help them recognise the environmental abuses that led to this unthinkable state of affairs — it would be tedious to list them all here. When you stop to think that we have inflicted most of this destruction on Australia over a mere 220 years, it's terrifying to imagine what we can accomplish over the next 200. Only when people really *get it* will they be prepared to make changes in their own lives — and hold our politicians, who care first and foremost about the next election — to account.

Ruminating with MAD COW



NOSTALGIA

I recently listened to a radio broadcast about nostalgia. Although the presenter tried not to sound judgemental, the subtext was clear: that nostalgia is an indulgence by older people who can't accept the happy present and misguidedly think the past was better. Such people are casting a rosy light on their childhood memories, giving them a glow that wasn't there at the time.

There may be some of that — most of us think that our childhoods were happy. But what if the Nostalgics are right? What if the past really was better than the present? Allow me to list a few objective differences between my childhood years and now.

As you have probably heard before, children were much freer. We walked to school with friends, finding safety in numbers. From the age of seven or eight, armed with parental warnings against talking to strangers, we could go out on our own in daylight hours and play, unsupervised, with children we met in the park. That's no longer legal. At weekends or holidays, we jumped on the milkman's cart and helped him deliver milk to people's doorsteps. No milkman whose milk I delivered turned out to be a paedophile. This will surprise some adults nowadays, when any man who shows a tolerance of children, let alone a liking for them, is suspect. No more riding on milk carts, which have, in any case, gone the way of the horse and buggy.

We played with 'tin' soldiers, made partly of lead. I never heard of anyone swallowing one. We *played* with them — we didn't eat them. Plastic soldiers are crap.

No one had heard of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. It may have existed, rare, unrecognised and unnamed, but there was no epidemic of it, as there is today.

The world was cooler, there were forests, tomatoes had flavour, drinks came in glass bottles that could be returned for cash, to be cleaned and re-used. Phones were answered by human beings.

True, we didn't have these clever electronic devices people are addicted to these days, but instead we had leisure. We had time to sit and read, or think, or watch birds cavorting in the bird-bath. We had time for hobbies. We were not disturbed every few minutes by an insistent 'Ping!' A phone was a luxury item that knew its place; it didn't follow you around and interrupt conversations. We wrote letters to one another. On paper, with pen and ink. Sealed and posted them. Mail was important enough to be delivered fast. Not as fast as NBN, but a damn sight faster than the aptly named Snail Mail.

Africa was teeming with animals. Yes, you could buy knick-knacks made of ivory, but elephants were still plentiful, as were lions, rhinoceroses and giraffes — all endangered now. Australia was teeming with animals too — the Burrowing Bettong, once the commonest mammal, is now extinct on the mainland. Too many other animals have gone or are going the same way. I'm out of space, but I've hardly started.

Book review

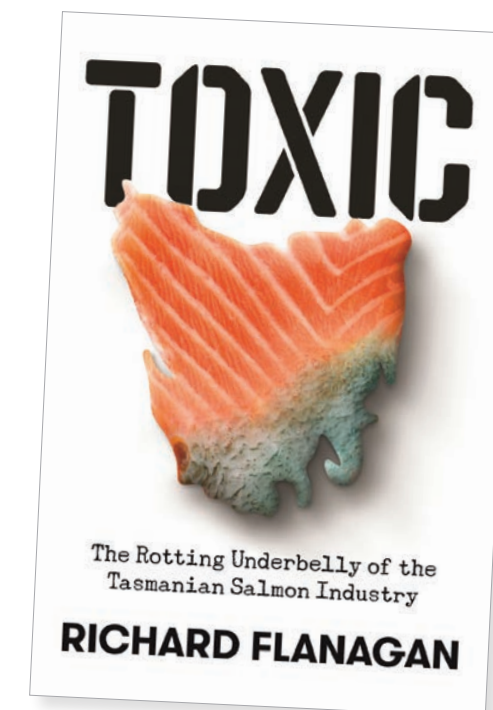


'TOXIC' by Richard Flanagan

This book is a no-holds-barred exposé of the salmon-farming industry in Tasmania

It is written tersely, with barely restrained anger and grief about the environmental and social harm that this overgrown industry has wrought on a large part of a once pristine island. Flanagan has lived to see his paradise, with its clear waters inhabited by myriads of sea life, turned into a polluted cess-pool in which nothing thrives. Even the salmon fail to thrive. These are Atlantic salmon, fish that, by nature, swim from Scotland to Canada, and then back again to spawn and die. In these foreign Tasmanian waters, they are caged in tiers and fed minced battery-hens. They are sick — their flesh is grey and has to be dyed pink, to look like healthy Atlantic salmon. Their faeces and food waste coat the sea floor. Locals complain about the incessant noise from the salmon farms and the resulting environmental destruction they have witnessed — to no avail.

The Tasmanian Government is in thrall to the salmon farmers, willing to change laws rather than enforce them when the industry ignores them. A bitter lesson about what can happen when government and industry are in one another's pockets. Recommended reading, with a warning: it is likely to put you off Tasmanian salmon for good.



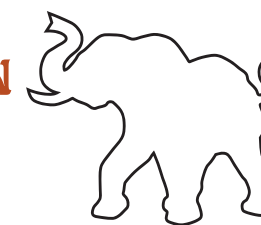
TROPPO SOUND

- Musical Instruments
- PA & Lighting Systems
- Mobile Stage
- Recording Studio

MICK CONNOLLY

Shed: 29 Hunter St. Ph: (08) 9192 2394 Fax (08) 9193 5690
Shop: 19 Frederick St (old min-golf building) Ph / Fax: (08) 9192 6222
Mobile: 0418 938 724 Email: troppo@comswest.net.au
PO Box 185, Broome Western Australia 6725

BROOME CONVENTION CENTRE CHINATOWN



12 Frederick Street, Broome • Phone: 9192 6222
Mob: 0418 938 724 • Email: broomeconvention@bigpond.com

Now on the BBC and ABC 'Stargazing Live' program with Professor Brian Cox.

GREG QUICKE'S ASTRO TOURS
delivering intensely practical astronomy to humanity since 1995

Greg's new book!

'Broome's Astronomy Experience' or 'Quickies Cosmic Tuneup'
is a 2 hour educational and entertaining mind bender using big telescopes, lasers and fun under some of the best stargazing skies on the planet.

From April to October when the skies are clear!

Bookings essential!
Check the online schedule and book at

www.astrotours.net
greg@astrotours.net
0417 949 958

Greg Quicke's Astro Tours astrotoursbroome
 @GregQuicke #spaceandalf



Natural wonders of Roebuck Bay now on iNaturalist

Elsa Fuentes-Hare

The mudflats of Roebuck Bay are a haven for seagrass meadows and the species that live in them. Though seagrass monitoring is not a new activity in the bay, the Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project (CMP) has now established an iNaturalist page.

The CMP brings volunteers together at low tide for dawn and afternoon surveys of the species present on the mudflats of Nagulagun Buru, Yawuru sea country. Regular monitoring, which has been occurring since 2006, is crucial in assessing the health of the nurseries and habitats provided by the seagrass meadows, and in detecting any changes in their condition. Monitoring of this kind is being carried out on a global scale through Seagrass-Watch, an international effort to monitor, conserve and raise awareness about the health of seagrass habitats. The Broome surveys were conducted in Roebuck Bay at Town Beach (RO1), Demco (RO2), Port Slipway (RO3) and at Black Ledge (RO4 — these codes can be found on the seagrass watch map online). The mudflats here have an unparalleled benthic species richness, and are Ramsar-listed as a wetland of international significance. Seagrass meadows are crucial on many scales: globally as carbon sinks, locally for ngangarr (dugong). In order to maximize the impact of the surveying done in Roebuck Bay, the species that were photographed are being uploaded to iNaturalist, a citizen science network where members of the public can share species observations and classify them.

The new Broome CMP iNaturalist page features 20 species identified from the February surveys, with numbers expected to grow after the recent July surveys. From brittle worms to brittle stars, to sea anemones and sea squirts, the observations stretch across the animal kingdom. Many of these creatures are very small, and demand a careful and patient eye; the dedicated observer is rewarded with the strangeness of the animal world, and if you are chasing gold, you may even be rewarded with a sand dollar! Public citizen science efforts like iNaturalist help add depth to the knowledge about Roebuck Bay, though it is fair to say we are barely scratching the surface. If this has sparked your interest, please check out the iNaturalist site, or even consider uploading your own observations. The next surveys will take place from the 5th to the 8th of November.



This project receives funding support from the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, Kimberley Ports Authority, Rangelands NRM WA through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, and Roebuck Bay working group through the West Australian Government's State Natural Resource Management Program. Project partners include: Nyamba Buru Yawuru, Seagrass Watch, and Parks and Wildlife.

iNaturalistAU



Bristle Worm



Brittle Star



Sea Anemone



Sea Squirt



Sand Dollar



Kimberley Weeds Network's online success

Danielle Bain

Weeds are one of the major threats to the nature of the Kimberley. Lots of people are working towards managing Kimberley weeds better, but there are many challenges. The difference between organisations in approaches to weed management can be stark, depending on funding and politics. We recognised at the 2015 Weeds Forum that it is important to get together to discuss Kimberley weeds, which can be forgotten by centralised decisions-makers. We need to work together to share knowledge if we want to have Kimberley weeds recognised as the major threats that they are.

Over the past year, we have been working hard to establish the Kimberley Weeds Network. The original aim was to get together for a weeds forum in May 2021, but this was cancelled because of uncertainty around the dreaded Covid; however, thanks to the wonders of technology, we were able to continue talking weeds online. We quickly discovered the advantages of this and forged ahead with regular online mini-forums.

These online forums became a chance to connect researchers, weed officers and managers, rangers and interested weedos across the Kimberley and beyond, allowing them to share information, and giving them the opportunity to collaborate without having to be in the same room. We were able to meet more often and we didn't spend time and money travelling to a central location. Of course, nothing beats a face-to-face meeting, but we have realized the benefits of using online tools and we will certainly use them more in the future.

More successes for the Kimberley Weeds Network include the weeding days in Broome in May/June 2021. Kylie Weatherall put on a spread for the volunteers, who came out in droves for the community 'weed warrior' day at Minyirr Park. The hard-working volleys removed 200m of vines that were smothering our endangered Monsoon Vine Thickets.

If you would like to join the conversation and learn more about the Kimberley Weeds Network, have access to our recordings of the mini-forum presentations, be able to download the weeds newsletters and find out more about our weeding days, go to www.environskimberley.org.au/kimberley_weeds_network

Thanks to Western Australian Government's State Natural Resource Management Program and The Australian Government's National Landcare Program for funding this important work. We look forward to talking with our partners online about weeds in the Kimberley and making the most of this opportunity to collaborate and improve our regional voice.

Kimberley Weeds
NETWORK



Volunteers who removed invasive vines that threaten Monsoon Vine Thicket in Minyirr Park. Photo: Anomie



Kimberley Calling – A Frack Free Kimberley concert

Shaun Clark

When the McGowan Government lifted the moratorium on fracking in 2018, it designated the Kimberley as one of the two areas where fracking would be permitted into the future. Whilst fracking was banned in the Perth, Peel and South West regions, many Traditional Owners felt it was inequitable that their homelands were left open for this destructive industry. A large group of Mangala Traditional Owners decided to make a stand against this decision, which leaves their country at threat. They came to EK and Lock the Gate with the idea of holding a festival.



Nuria Jadai, Mangala/Martu calling for a Frack Free Kimberley, Mama Kin and Martin Pritchard, Director, Environs Kimberley, Photo: Damian Kelly

Over many meetings with Mangala Traditional Owners, decisions were made to host a concert at Cable Beach and invite local and other supportive musicians to celebrate what a wonderful place the Kimberley is, with the largest, almost intact tropical savannah left on the planet — no place for large-scale industrialisation.

Kimberley Calling – A Frack Free Kimberley concert was born. Musicians and speakers were invited, organisation began between groups of volunteers, applications were sought from authorities. At 5pm on the 17th July, all parts of the careful design came together beautifully. As the crowd arrived the atmosphere grew, the wonderful music bellowed across the amphitheatre and the kids played like there was no tomorrow. Between the sets, powerful speeches set the tone, raising awareness against the fracking industry getting a foothold in the Kimberley and potentially destroying an amazing, biodiverse landscape and custodians' homelands for tens of thousands of years, as well as ruining the future for the development of sustainable industries.

An exceptional feeling of solidarity carried across the entire evening, with a powerful finish by John Butler, who had been personally invited by the Mangala people. A huge thank-you to all the musicians: Albert and Woody Gray, Mama Kin, Wil Thomas, Tania Ransom, Olive Knight, Clifton Gargiba, Sarah Mortimer, the Mexicans, John Butler and Stephen Pigram, who joined us at the end.

A massive thank-you to Bart Pigram for his charismatic role as the M.C. Marjardee for her welcome to country, Martin Pritchard, Micklo Corpus and most powerfully Nuria Jadai for their stirring speeches, and other Mangala family members who were on the big screen. To the PAKAM network for their newly acquired stage and the team; Troppo Sound, event organisers and production management, with a special mention of Andrew Chambers for his efficiency; the Shire of Broome, which was wonderfully accommodating, and the food vendors — a huge thanks. Finally, a heartfelt thank-you to all the volunteers with their devotion to supporting events that help raise awareness of threats to the amazing and unique Kimberley region; the roles you play are invaluable in making such wonderful celebrations a success. Frack Free Kimberley!



The Mexicans Photo: Damian Kelly



John Butler Photo: Damian Kelly



Yawuru Traditional Owner and protector of Country Micklo Corpus. Photo: Damian Kelly



Huge community support for a Frack Free Kimberley. Photo: Damian Kelly



Detecting species through eDNA

Matt Macdonald

The Bunuba community has stressed the importance of the Garuwa (freshwater) places on their country, the springs, waterholes and rivers. People visit Garuwa places for camping and milhabininyi (hunting and fishing); some of these sites hold immense cultural and spiritual significance, being the resting places of creator beings, and are interconnected through junba (songlines) as outlined in Jalangurru Muwayi: Bunuba Healthy Country Plan 2018. The Bunuba community wants to develop a monitoring program for Garuwa places, incorporating the best of cultural and scientific approaches.

Environmental DNA (eDNA), is an emerging technique for biodiversity surveys. As animals swim in or drink from water they leave behind DNA in the form of skin, feathers and other tissue. The method involves collecting water samples, then analyzing them to see what DNA is in the water. This DNA is then compared to sequences from previously studied species. Sampling eDNA offers the possibility of rapidly detecting many species simultaneously, which can be much easier and quicker than other methods (e.g. fishing or netting) and has the advantage of potentially detecting animals otherwise difficult to find.

Twelve Garuwa places were sampled in the late dry season 2020 by Bunuba Rangers and EK staff, to trial the use of eDNA in the Kimberley: six sites in October before the onset of wet season rains, and six in December after Fitzroy Crossing had recorded between 80 and 150 mm rainfall.

DNA from 36 types of vertebrate animal was detected across the twelve sites, including 17 types of fish, four frogs, eight birds and four mammals, as well as freshwater crocodile and two types of freshwater turtle. Two fish: Bunda (spangled perch) and Walmarri (rainbowfish) were detected at all twelve sites.

Twenty-seven types of animal were detected across the six samples taken prior to the onset of the wet season (sampled October 2020), while 20 types were detected from the six samples taken after the rains had started (sampled December 2020). The sample with the greatest number of animal types detected was from the Brooking Gorge site, just below the confluence of Brooking Creek and Homestead Creek, with 16 animal types recorded from this site alone.

More types of aquatic animal (i.e. fish, crocodile and turtle) were detected in the October sampling than the December sampling, indicating that such species may be harder to detect after heavy rain. In contrast, all frog detections were from samples taken after rainfall, presumably a result of increased activity of these species (particularly spawning) in response. No clear patterns in the detectability of bird and terrestrial mammals were obvious with the current sample size.

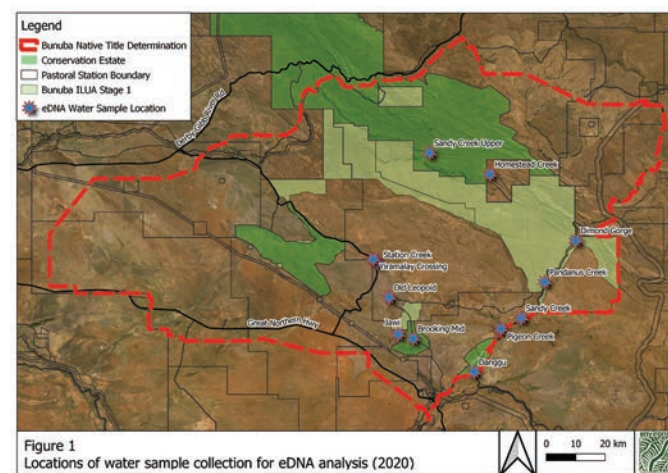
Many Kimberley species remain understudied, which means that a large number of DNA sequences could only be matched at Genus or Family level, limiting the interpretation of our results.

It is also evident that we missed many well-known species from the Garuwa sites, the most obvious being Gayi (freshwater crocodile), which wasn't detected from Danggu, a place known for its large resident population.

We feel that a dedicated research project should be established to investigate the reliability of the DNA methods in the Kimberley. If we can be sure it is reliable, then we feel that eDNA sampling will become a very powerful tool, quick, cheap and effective, for sampling biodiversity in the Kimberley, allowing ranger teams like Bunuba to efficiently assess the health of their Garuwa places.



Monique Middleton filtering water sample (Yiramalay Crossing).
Photo: Matt Macdonald



We are working with Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuba rangers through the EK Kimberley Wetlands Project, funded through Lotterywest, and the Jalangurru Muwayi Healthy Country Plan Project, funded through the Western Australian Government's State Natural Resource Management Program. Bush Heritage is providing support through their 'Right-way Winthali Project, funded by the Australian Government.

New Staff Members



Anomie, Communications, Media and Digital Fundraising

Anomie grew up on Whadjuk Nyoongar Boodja (Perth and surrounds), where she completed an arts degree, majoring in Anthropology at the University of Western Australia (UWA), and a Graduate Diploma of Arts (Media Studies) at Edith Cowan University. She is an award-winning writer and published researcher, having worked in film and television education, production, and events, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equity. Her methods and ideas have been presented at international conferences across a range of fields. With extensive experience in communications and publicity, Anomie joined Environs Kimberley in 2021 to promote our work. She was attracted to the Communications, Media and Digital Fundraising role because it continues her commitment to social and environmental justice through care of Country.



Maddie Edwards, Community Engagement, Fundraising and Events

Maddie is a Jaru woman who grew up on Miriuxwung Gajerrong country (Kununurra). She attended Presbyterian Ladies College and UWA in Boorloo (Perth), graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in Marketing. Maddie then was employed in Marketing and Community Engagement roles in Boorloo, but missed the Kimberley and moved back to take up a position at Environs Kimberley. Having grown up in the Kimberley, Maddie cares very deeply about the land and is excited to join an organisation committed to the protection of the region.

Current Interns



Elsa Fuentes-Hare

Elsa is studying marine science at UWA in Boorloo (Perth) under a Fogarty scholarship, and is co-founder of UWA Students for Environmental Action. While growing up in Berlin, Germany, Elsa developed a strong passion for marine conservation, climate activism and writing. During her time at Environs Kimberley, Elsa updated the Broome Conservation Monitoring Project iNaturalist page with species observations from the February seagrass surveys in Roebuck Bay, mapped endangered vine thicket habitats, and compiled Bardi Jawi marine species names for an informational resource.



Amos Smith

CareerTrackers Indigenous Intern

Amos is a Balanggarra man, who grew up on Minang country (Albany), spending much of his early childhood on Wongatha country in Kalgoorlie. He attended Guildford Grammar on a Madalah scholarship, graduating in 2019. He is now studying Conservation Biology at UWA in Boorloo (Perth). Amos is concerned about the impacts of mining and human activity on the earth's biodiversity. He wants to help keep the environment intact for future generations. Amos is interning with Environs Kimberley during University breaks to gain experience.

On his recent stint with EK, Amos planned and carried out a valuable project on arboreal mammals in the Monsoon Vine Thickets.

Damian Kelly Photography
Broome Western Australia
f i
0459 233 780
www.damiankellyphotography.com.au email dkphoto@tpg.com.au

Hidden Valley
BROOME
* Soaps * Skin Care * Essential oils * Candles
Great gift ideas all hand made with love here in Broome
Customers are welcome to our workshop showroom
2 Harriet Rd, Blue Haze M-F 9-4, Sat 9-12
T 08 91937036 www.hiddenvalleybroome.com.au
Proud to be associated with Environs Kimberley

Kimberley Cottages
18 Windjana Rd. Derby WA
Windjana Wellness & Sustainability Services
phone 0891911114 kimberleycot@gmail.com
Permaculture Design Bokashi Composting
Natural Farming Fresh Produce & Food plants

Free Computer Service
for Pensioners and Unemployed
1st Tuesday of the month
ECLIPSE
COMPUTERS
20 Hunter St. Broome 9192 2832
sales@eclipsecomputers.com.au



Celebrating the River at Danggu

Anomie

Environs Kimberley has been working with Bunuba people for 25 years to protect the Fitzroy

River and keep it free-flowing. On Saturday 10 July, as the Danggu (Geikie Gorge) rock-face turned gold with the setting sun, we celebrated the river with the Bunuba people.

The 'Celebrating Bandarlŋgarri' concert (Bandarlŋgarri is the Bunuba name for the Fitzroy River) was part of the inaugural Yajilarra Festival, which means 'let us dream' in Bunuba. We were honoured to be asked to organise and run the celebratory concert. Local and international acts, including Olive Knight, No Strangers, Men's Shed, Patrick Davies, Mama Kin, Fitzroy Express and John Butler, sang to the river in front of a captivated crowd.

The two-day festival sought to engage Bunuba youth in the ancestral knowledge and ceremony of Bunuba elders, by bringing Bunuba cultural stories to life, in language, on stage, on Country. Yajilarra aimed to build cultural identity, strength and connectedness, and then share an authentic Aboriginal cultural experience with visitors; a test of the capacity to produce an annual event.



Men's Shed Photo: Damian Kelly

Bunuba Traditional Owner, Mary Aiken, summed up the sentiment of all in attendance in her Welcome to Country address. She underlined the need to protect Bandarlŋgarri into the future, "The Fitzroy River here is ours, you and me, the kids to enjoy and see. It's a living water, a living reef... and we do not want this water taken out of it and to become the Murray-Darling."

The event was streamed live through PAKAM and included speeches by elders June Oscar, Mary Aiken, Olive Knight and Joe Ross.

We thank the Bunuba people, Bunuba Culture and Conservation Institute and Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions for holding the event. Thank you to all the musicians who played on the night and the production team, our wonderful Board members and volunteers who helped make the event such a success.

If you haven't already, please go to our website and tell the Western Australian Government not to take water from the Fitzroy River: www.environskimberley.org.au/water_paper



John Butler Photo: Damian Kelly

EK Art Auction: Live and Online in 2021

This year's Live Art Auction, held on the evening of Saturday 7 August, was our 18th auction. Over 300 art lovers and supporters of Environs Kimberley attended the gala event. We had remote bidding via Zoom, as trialled successfully last year, and it was gratifying to see one Zoom attendee secure a piece.



Each piece tells a story and there is much to discuss. Photo: Don Bacon

Simultaneously, EK hosted an Online Art Auction with additional stunning pieces from Aboriginal artists representing remote Kimberley Country, all included on the professional auction platform.

Money raised from this signature annual event goes towards research to prepare submissions on fracking proposals, raising awareness and supporting the community to hold the government to account on all matters of preservation and protection of this significant region. By participating in the auction, EK's supporters join us as we go up against companies that have tens of millions of dollars in the bank.



Tension builds as bidding begins. Photo: Don Bacon



Warm crowd at this year's Live Art Auction. Photo: Don Bacon

EK sends a giant thank-you to all the artists, collectors and art centres who contributed works; Mick and all the staff at Troppo and the Broome Convention Centre; our wonderful Board members and volunteers who hung artwork and worked the cake stall; Matt's Authentic Filipino Cuisine and DNM Paella Catering for the scrumptious food; Alessandro De Ponti, the DJ on the night; Don Bacon for event photos and all those generous friends of the Kimberley who participated by bidding and buying art. We hope you enjoy your pieces!

EK Fundraising Concert with Kim Churchill

On Friday 21 May, Kim Churchill, Ben Catley, For Sure and Chloe Schofield took to the stage in support of EK and the Kimberley. The sold-out event was a huge success, attended by a young crowd, many of whom had enthusiastic discussions about EK's work.

Kim shared travel stories and songs in his only performance in Broome, and Ben had the community dancing to his uplifting, big-energy sounds. Local musicians, For Sure, brought the spirit of the Kimberley to the stage and newcomer, Chloe, was warmly welcomed.

EK sends a heartfelt thank-you to all the musicians who played on the night: Kim Churchill, Ben Catley, For Sure and Chloe Schofield; Mick and all the staff at Troppo and the Broome Convention Centre; our wonderful Board members and volunteers; Little Waroeng for the delicious food; Damian Kelly for event photos and the image gift for Kim Churchill and all those who attended and made this a superb night.



Kim Churchill Photo: Damian Kelly



Chloe Schofield Photo: Damian Kelly



For Sure - Michael Pigram, Adele Oliver and Bart Pigram Photo: Damian Kelly

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

- ☐ 1 year for \$30.00/ Concession \$20.00 (Inc of GST)
☐ 3 years for \$80.00/ Concession \$50.00 (Inc of GST)
☐ Lifetime membership for \$500 (Inc of GST)

I would also like to make a donation of: \$ _____

(Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible)

Name _____

Postal Address _____

Suburb _____

Postcode _____

Phone () _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

- ☐ I would like to receive my quarterly EK Newsletter and other correspondence by email

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS

Credit card payment - please debit my ☐  ☐ 

CVV Code No:

Card No:

Cardholder's Name _____

Signature _____ Expiry Date /

CHEQUE PAYMENTS

ENVIRONS KIMBERLEY

PO Box 2281, Broome WA 6725

Phone: 08 9192 1922

Email: finance@environskimberley.org.au

Subscription is also available online at:

www.environskimberley.org.au



The EK gift fund is a public fund and is listed in the register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1.1 subsection 30-35 (1) of the income Tax Assessment Act 1997.



environs
KIMBERLEY
SAVING THE NATURE OF THE KIMBERLEY



POSTAGE
PAID
BROOME
WA 6725

PO Box 2281,
Broome WA 6725



SUPPORTING US HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER

More members and friends are choosing to give an automatic monthly donation to EK. This means you don't have to think about it and we have the security of knowing how much you want to give us through the year.

You can provide a monthly donation through our website.
Please ring Christine if you have any queries on (08) 9192 1922.