



30 years protecting the Kimberley

A land of raw, cinematic beauty, the Kimberley remains one of the world's last great natural and cultural strongholds. From its healthy, free-flowing rivers to its coastline the region is ranked globally in the top 4% most intact. The Kimberley stands as a testament to what an unindustrialised world looks like.

For generations, Traditional Owners, custodians, and the community have worked tirelessly to protect the Kimberley. We owe them a debt of immense gratitude.

In 1996 concerns were mounting in the Kimberley about a plan for dams on the Martuwarra Fitzroy River and a 600 km canal to irrigate 225,000 hectares of cotton on land south and east of Broome. Concerned residents mobilised and set-up a new organisation. They called it Environs Kimberley (EK).

EK gathered momentum quickly and the campaign to protect the river forged our relationships with Traditional Owners, the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), state and national environmental organisations. EK was invited to join the BandaraIngarri group made up of representatives of Aboriginal language groups from the headwaters of the river to Bidadanga. We also took part in the La Grange Groundwater Consultative meetings with the Karajarri

people, KLC, government and industry. After 8 years and a mountain of work by so many, the cotton proposal was abandoned. We won.

We've come a long way in the Kimberley since '96. Back then there was no Native Title, no ranger groups, no marine parks and no Commonwealth act to protect the environment. Now, thanks to the efforts of Traditional Owners and the KLC, most of the Kimberley is under Native Title and ranger groups are leading the nation in their work protecting country

We've had many wins along the way. Stopping a kaolin mine at Thangoo on the southern part of Roebuck Plains which Yawuru people and the pastoral leaseholders were extremely concerned about. Protecting special places like Reddell beach from a marina. Listing monsoon vine thickets and other ecological communities as 'endangered'. Bush and beach clean-ups. Awareness raising about sustainable living, climate change and nature.

(Continues on page 11).

SEND A SUBMISSION

Protect the Martuwarra Fitzroy River – send a submission to the Cook Government now.



The Martuwarra. Photo: Alex Westover



Report from the Chair

Carmel Leahy

Proactivity

We see what's needed and act with purpose.

George Bernard Shaw once wrote, "The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them." In 1996 people in Broome were alarmed at proposals to dam the Martuwarra Fitzroy River and clear vast swathes of land for industrial-scale cotton production. They decided a group was needed to fight this and started EK.

This proactivity remains one of the core values driving EK's work. Staff and supporters see what's needed and act with purpose. The record-breaking number of appeals to the EPA opposing the Valhalla fracking proposal exemplifies proactivity. Staff spread the word through social media and community networks. They set up systems to facilitate the appeals process. Over eight thousand supporters put in appeals asking the WA Appeals Convenor not to recommend fracking be allowed on the Martuwarra Fitzroy River floodplain.

EK's leadership team has been proactive in recruiting impressively qualified staff to support our growing work needs. The whole EK family can be proud of the calibre of people we have been able to attract to our workforce.

The Board welcomes Michael Bennett. Michael is an environmental lawyer based in Perth. He was the first Principal Solicitor of the Environmental Defenders Office (WA) and has worked since then in environmental law and policy roles in government and academia.

He holds a BA/LLB (UWA), Masters of Environmental Law (ANU) and PhD in Law (UWA). Michael replaces Bethany Moore, who has moved back to Melbourne. We were sad to lose Beth and she left big shoes to fill. Michael's proactive toes are already poking out of those shoes.

The impact that EK achieves protecting the nature of the Kimberley is amplified by the proactive groups that partner with us. As you read through the newsletter, you will appreciate the vital role our partners play in so many of our projects and campaigns.

EK's central value of proactivity extends to the volunteers who step up to support staff. They magnify our ability to reach a wider audience with our campaign messages and to conduct work that preserves important natural habitats and the animals and sea-life in them.

Proactive donors underpin so much of what EK achieves. Our staff ensure the impact of EK's work is clearly documented and available in annual reports, our newsletter and regular updates by email and through social media.

We have kicked off 2026 with the outstanding response to the Valhalla fracking appeals campaign. While the rain pours, rivers flood and weeds grow, each EK team is busy planning its scope of work, to be ready to hit the ground running as Man-gala season draws to a close. Staff are looking carefully at what is needed and will use our resources purposefully to ensure EK's work protects the nature of the Kimberley. Proactive. That's our team.

Staff

Executive Director: Martin Pritchard

Operations Director: Liam Wright

Finance Manager: Christine Elsasser

Administration Officer: Michelle Ashworth, Camille Payet

Kimberley Nature Project:

Phil Docherty, Alex Gibson, Dr Michelle Pyke, Kailee Savoia, Holly Timperley, Kylie Weatherall, Rachel Scott

Sustainable Communities:

Julie Scullion, Tessa Mossop (maternity leave), Mandy Shovellor, Holly Timperley, Kylie Weatherall, Victor Warrell, Jayah Carter

Campaigns: Shaun Clark, Wendy Mitchell, Dan Schulz

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Chairperson: Carmel Leahy

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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.

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Thanks for helping us to protect the nature of the Kimberley





Executive Director's Report

Martin Pritchard

Thirty years protecting the Kimberley is an exceptional feat when you consider the challenges – hostile industry, oppositional governments, funding, media disinterest, small population and complex politics.

The Kimberley being over 2,000 kilometres from the centre of power in Perth and a world away from the east coast, makes getting stories out difficult, let alone winning protection for Country. It's clear that it's passionate people, organisations and partnerships who have made this possible.

We have been incredibly fortunate at EK to have such forward-thinking founding members, enthusiastic supporters and members, generous funders and exceptional staff.

Despite the successes and increased awareness of how globally special the Kimberley is, the industrialisation threats keep coming.

The recent global turmoil has been a perfect opportunity for exploitation by oil and gas and mining companies to sell their wares. Woodside says there's need for another 40 years of gas exports amid massive war profits and despite the climate crisis. Mining companies use the recently minted term 'critical minerals', to call for quicker environmental assessments. The number of industrial, damaging proposals in the Kimberley is concerning and challenging.

Fortunately, the number of supporters who want to protect the Kimberley has grown significantly in recent years. The last state election showed us that threats to the Kimberley such as fracking, can shift votes in key electorates, as happened in Fremantle. This is one of the few ways to ensure government and political parties adopt good policies.

The improved integration of our teams in EK allows a more holistic approach to tackling the big challenges to nature here in the Kimberley. It's wonderful to see the Campaigns, Kimberley Nature Project and Sustainable Communities teams working so well together.

When people ask what gives us hope when the poly crisis is so overwhelming? My response is 'the community' and the people who work so hard for the greater good. It is also the younger generation, while they are still getting to grips with a difficult future, surveys are showing a clear and significant shift towards more progressive leanings and care for the environment.

Can change come quickly enough to avert the global climate disaster we're heading towards? The scientists are telling us it can, but we don't have much time left. We will overshoot the Paris agreement 1.5 C threshold, but we can bring it down again if the political will is there.

For the Kimberley, we need to maintain our momentum for protection. Right now, the WA and Commonwealth Governments are on the cusp of major decisions that could protect or damage the Kimberley. The Martuwarra Fitzroy River catchment is in the sights of billionaire agribusiness interests and oil and gas frackers; the Buccaneer Archipelago facing industrial fish farming; the Dunham River, a fluorite mine; the Ord, more cotton; Cambridge Gulf, seabed mining; Scott Reef, drilling for oil and gas; James Price Point heavy mineral sands mining; North Kimberley, bauxite, as well as a proliferation of mining exploration tenements.

We can hold back the tide of destruction but need your support. Together, we can protect the Kimberley, like we've done over the past few decades.



Operations Director's Report

Liam Wright

With the value of proactivity in mind, this has been a defining focus of 2026. Across EK's work, there has been a clear shift towards getting ahead of day-to-day whirlwinds, strengthening the systems, ecosystems and relationships that enable us to better support the region and protect the nature of the Kimberley.

This proactive approach is particularly evident in how we are rethinking project planning. We are introducing new project management systems to help teams act quickly, while maintaining clear visibility over budgets, progress, risks, and opportunities. This is important to ensure we remain both agile and accountable. Early feedback has been positive, and we will continue refining this project.

I'd like to welcome Camille Payet as our full-time Administration Officer. Camille brings such wonderful experience in administration and operations, supporting the office and field teams. She has hit the ground running and is already making a strong contribution. Welcome Camille!

Our Kimberley Nature Projects and Sustainable Communities teams have been particularly busy, with the Wetland Monitoring Toolkit nearing finalisation in partnership with Nyamba Buru Yawuru (NBY), the University of Western Australia, and the National Environmental Science Program. Our Sandy Deserts and Fire Biodiversity partnership with Ngurrarpa, Ngurrara, Karajarri and Nyangumarta, Charles Darwin University, and Lotterywest is also progressing, with workshops coming up soon. Senior Projects Officer Holly is wrapping up the Gooniyandi EHC work, in partnership with the Kimberley Land Council.

We recently held both a risk management workshop with the Board and a team feedback session, which is helping guide our continuous improvement.

We thank the community, supporters, and our generous funders for supporting us, and a great big thank you to the EK team too.

Cane toad control: Why Broome should act now

Derby Landcare Group

Derby has achieved something no other community in Australia has managed: it has brought the cane toad invasion under control. When Nikki Tomsett, Invasive Species Project Officer with Watergum, learned how the Derby Landcare Group had stopped toads from swarming into town, she said she had never heard of any place controlling cane toads as effectively as Derby. The key was simple but powerful—intercept the toads before they reach the town by trapping them at the breeding sites at the base of the peninsula.

Cane toads need shallow, still water to breed. In Derby, these breeding places include open pools, dams, and freshwater wetlands located at the bottom of the peninsula. By placing traps in these areas and removing both adult toads and tadpoles, Derby Landcare Group prevented most of the toads from ever reaching the top of the peninsula where the town sits. This early interception stopped the mass swarms that have overwhelmed so many other northern Australian communities.

Broome, like Derby, is also a peninsula. Derby Landcare Group believes Broome can protect itself in exactly the same way—by preparing now, before the toads arrive. The invasion front is predicted to reach Broome this year. Once cane toads establish themselves, they are extremely difficult to remove. But if Broome identifies its breeding sites early and places traps in front of the peninsula, the town can dramatically reduce the number of toads that make it into residential areas, resorts, and wildlife habitats.

A single female cane toad can lay up to 40,000 eggs at a time. That means the most effective way to control the population is to stop breeding before it starts. If breeding sites are known and traps are ready, the toads can be intercepted. And even if some breeding does occur, tadpoles can still be removed using tadpole traps and pool scoops before they metamorphose into young toads. This is the window where control is easiest and most effective.

Derby Landcare Group has been supported by the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley, Mt Gibson Iron, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), Elders, and the Country Women's Association (CWA). These partners have helped make traps available to the public and provided educational material on Cane toad identification and management. CWA, Elders, and the Shire have also supplied toad disposal points—fridge/freezers where trapped toads can be humanely euthanised. The recommended method, endorsed by DBCA, is to first put the toads to sleep in the fridge before freezing them.

Since Cane toads arrived in 2023, Derby Landcare has trapped and euthanised nearly 3,000 toads and tens of thousands of tadpoles. The informed Derby public has removed similar

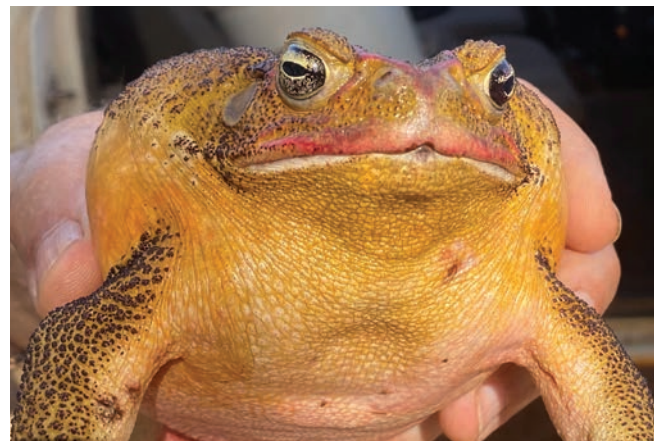
numbers. This combined effort has prevented unpleasant swarms in town and, more importantly, has given vulnerable wildlife time to survive and adapt. In effect, the Derby peninsula has become a refuge. One surprising outcome has been the number of birds that learned to safely eat the thousands of tiny metamorphosed toads emerging from the few pools where breeding did occur.

Broome's many lush, brightly lit resort gardens pose a particular risk. While Cane toads cannot breed in gardens, they can thrive anywhere with moisture. Resort lighting attracts insects, providing an abundant food source. Once toads establish themselves in these gardens, removing them will be extremely difficult. If Broome's resorts join the effort early—by supporting trapping, education, and monitoring—their involvement could generate positive publicity. Swarms of cane toads certainly would not.

Derby Landcare Group urges the Broome community to act now: identify breeding sites, obtain traps, and learn how to use them before the invasion front arrives. Early action is the only proven way to protect Broome's town, tourism assets, and wildlife.



Cane toad tadpoles all gather together as a method of protection, making scooping easy. Derby Landcare Group



Cane toad scooping from water bodies is easy and incredibly effective as early intervention; thousands can be removed in one scoop. Derby Landcare Group



WA EPA recommends fracking – most contested project in state’s history

Shaun Clark

We’ve been fighting fracking in the Kimberley since 2012—and our efforts have already led to the departure of major companies out of the Canning Basin, including Mitsubishi, Alcoa, Origin Energy and Squadron Energy (owned by Andrew Forrest).

However, large parts of the Kimberley remain open to fracking. The three wells drilled and fracked since 2010 have already shown serious issues, including methane leaks, radioactive materials brought to the surface and wastewater dam overflow.

In January, the WA Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) recommended approval for Black Mountain Energy to drill and frack 20 wells in the Martuwarra Fitzroy River catchment.

The project is in the heart of the National Heritage-listed Martuwarra Fitzroy River catchment, one of Australia’s last great free-flowing rivers and a critical habitat for endangered freshwater sawfish. Some wells would be within 2.5 km of Mount Hardman Creek, a key tributary.

Among the many risks are surface and ground water pollution events, aquifer drawdown and the drying of critical water sources and ultimately damage to a globally significant ecosystem.

Comparable projects suggest up to 18,000 tonnes of chemicals could be injected underground into wells passing through vital aquifers.

Despite the Commonwealth’s Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC) raising concerns about limited site-specific data, the EPA recommended approval with conditions rather than requiring stronger independent review and ultimately rejection of the project.

There are also fears this could lead to large-scale industrialisation. Black Mountain has compared the geology of the area to the Piceance Basin in the US, which contains more than 14,000 wells. We do not want the Kimberley to look like Texas gasfields.

Record Appeals – Most Contested Project in WA History

Public opposition has been unprecedented.

More than 8,000 appeals were lodged—making this the most contested project in WA history. The previous record was just 727 appeals.

Over 1,000 appeals came from Kimberley residents, alongside thousands more nationally and internationally.

What Happens Next

The final decision rests with Environment Minister Matthew Swinbourn, who will consider the EPA recommendation and appeals report.

Given the scale of concern, the decision will go to Cabinet, with the final call expected from Premier Roger Cook.

The proposal is also undergoing federal assessment, with further public consultation expected in the next couple of months. We will continue pushing for a Kimberley-wide ban on fracking, consistent with the WA Labor Party platform.



Mount Hardman Creek, tributary of the Martuwarra Fitzroy River. Photo: Wendy Mitchell



Protest in Broome after the EPA’s decision. Photo: Damian Kelly



Launching the Backyard Biodiversity Blitz in Broome

Julie Scullion and Tom Callow

What lives in our backyards? From the curious Northern Brushtail Possum navigating suburban trees, to the elusive Greater Bilby moving quietly under cover of darkness, Broome's neighbourhoods are home to more wildlife than many of us realise...

Even the iconic Northern Blue-tongue Skink may be basking just beyond the back fence!

Yet despite living alongside us, much of this biodiversity remains unseen and unrecorded.

To help address this, Environs Kimberley is excited to soon launch a new pilot project: the Backyard Biodiversity Blitz. This citizen science project invites residents, organisations, community groups and local businesses to host a motion-sensor camera in their backyard, on their property, or across spaces they manage. Cameras will be provided, along with simple instructions, and deployed for a three-week monitoring period. Volunteers won't need prior experience - a pre-deployment workshop will cover everything volunteers need to know.

The goal of the project is to better understand how wildlife uses Broome's urban and peri-urban habitats. By collecting data across residential yards, managed greenspaces and natural areas, we can build a clearer picture of where species occur, how they move through our landscapes, and what pressures they may face. Importantly, cameras also capture any other animals that wander past, helping document the broader diversity of birds, mammals and reptiles sharing our neighbourhoods.

Although Broome is known for its rich biodiversity, there is very little regular monitoring in residential areas, and habitat loss, fragmentation and predation by domestic and feral animals continue to place pressure on wildlife. By combining community participation with biodiversity monitoring, the Backyard Biodiversity Blitz helps address the knowledge gaps while encouraging practical conservation action.

In the short term, the project aims to increase awareness and collect valuable wildlife data from rarely surveyed areas. In the long term, it will support better conservation planning and long-term stewardship of Broome's unique fauna. Just as importantly, the Backyard BioBlitz hopes to strengthen community connection to local wildlife and provide opportunities for residents to play a hands-on role in protecting the species on their doorstep.

If you're interested in taking part, keep an eye on our website and social channels or contact citizenscience@environskimberley.org.au.

This project is generously funded by Wettenhall Environment Trust.



Greater Bilby exploring the night, captured on an EK sensor camera.



Project Officer, Tom Callow, during camera deployment trial.



Sensor camera installed and ready to capture wildlife!





Seabed mining in the East Kimberley's Cambridge Gulf

Wendy Mitchell

Cambridge Gulf is a remarkable meeting point for five great rivers that flow out of the vast East Kimberley: the Ord, Forrest, King, Durack and Pentecost rivers. These rivers flow into the Gulf system, delivering nutrients to the dense fringing mangrove systems that are internationally important and listed as a Ramsar wetland. These systems provide extensive habitat for intertidal marine species as well as an abundance of bird life.

Back in December, just as everyone was winding down for Christmas break, the Western Australian Environment Protection Authority (WA EPA) released their recommendation for the first ever seabed mining proposal in the Kimberley. Their report recommended seabed mining could proceed in Cambridge Gulf. The operator, Boskalis, a Dutch-owned dredging company, is proposing to mine the seabed for sand over the next 15 years. This long-term seabed mining proposal is unprecedented in the Kimberley.

Across the border in the Northern Territory (NT), the NT Minister for the Environment has formally declared subsea mining a prohibited activity in coastal and intertidal waters due to the risks it poses to the marine environment and the lack of knowledge about the long-term implications of the practice. Yet here we are with this disappointing recommendation from the WA EPA for a destructive proposal.

Multiple beaches surrounding the proposal area are critically important as nesting areas for flatback turtles, some of the most significant for flatbacks anywhere in Australia.

Cape Dommatt in particular has dense nesting activity, and the inter-nesting area for the flatback turtles lies in the proposed Boskalis seabed mining area. Flatbacks travel through the proposed seabed mining area as they move to and from their nesting grounds.

Boskalis is proposing to dredge 70 million cubic meters of sand over 15 years of seabed mining operations. This equates to around 28,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools worth of sand that would be transported overseas and used in construction projects. The state appeals process is in train and the final decision lies with WA Environment Minister Matthew Swinbourn. We are calling on Minister Swinbourn to reject the project and follow the lead of the Northern Territory by declaring seabed mining a prohibited activity in the Kimberley.

If you haven't already, send a message to the WA Environment Minister, Matthew Swinbourn, calling on him to reject the project.



SCAN FOR
INFO

SIGN THE PETITION



Lyne River, Cambridge Gulf in the East Kimberley.

Save the date - EK Art Auction



For 23 years the annual Art Auction has been Environs Kimberley's premier fundraising event and a highlight of Broome's social calendar.

This year's Auction will again be both live and online, to ensure everyone can take part.

- **Online Art Auction:**
Wednesday 22 July to Sunday 2 August.
- **Live Art Auction:**
Saturday 25 July 2026

If you are interested in submitting an artwork for the Auction, please email artauction@environskimberley.org.au or find an application form on our website. Artwork submissions close 25 June 2026.



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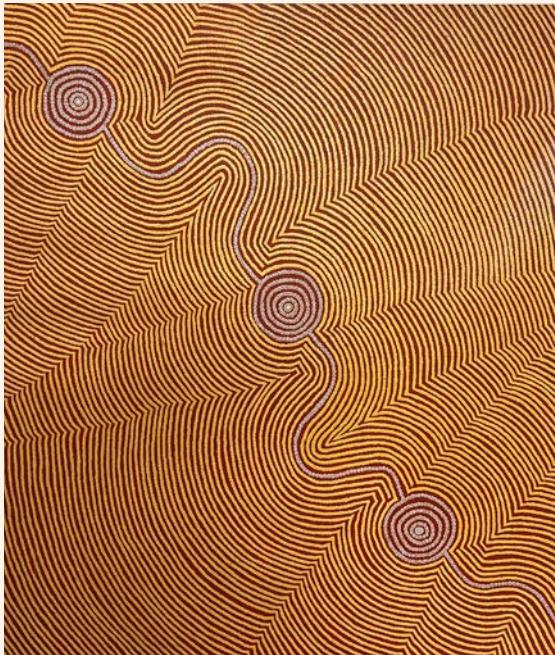
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EK Art Raffle

We are delighted to announce our annual art raffle featuring this mesmerising piece called "Bibarr" (106 x 110cm, acrylic on canvas) by the exceptional artist Robert Nanala Tjapaltjarri.

Born in 1959, Robert, his mother, father and brothers are well established artists painting for Walayirti Arts Centre in Wirrimanu (Balgo). Robert resides in Wirrimanu with his family, and visits Bidyadanga and Broome during the wet season.



Robert's paintings represent his connection with Country, including creation stories, kangaroo dreaming and mapping of the desert. With his original connection and knowledge of Country and his lived experience, Robert and his paintings are a very special part of Australia's history.

When Robert is not painting with his family, he works to assist his people as an interpreter. He speaks 7 different First Nation languages and English.

The painting's exhibition label tells the story of the painting in Robert's words: "This is in the Great Sandy Desert, WA. This is my grandfather's and grandmother's homeland where dreamtime stories can be told to us present now, then into the future for kids to hold and be told repeatedly. This is the stompen ground for people getting together in the certain time of the year repeatedly. Is place call Bibbarr with the 3 rock holes. In the grey is the dry river bed. Yellow is the spinifex in between the sand dunes."

Raffle Details

There are 350 tickets at \$30 each. The artwork is valued at \$3,200. The winner will be drawn on 25 July 2026 and results published on that date on our website.

You can purchase your ticket through the QR code here. Every ticket purchased supports our work protecting the Kimberley region and directly benefits the artist



Permit No: LS224584626 Draw Date: 25 July 2026. Organisation: Environs Kimberley Incorporated.

A percentage of proceeds of this lottery will be paid to Galabid Pty Ltd as a professional fundraiser. For any enquiries contact Environs Kimberley on 91921922.

PEPPER IT UP



Trish Pepper

In daily life, I try to minimize my footprint and have certain rules about caring for the environment. I recycle, upcycle and do my utmost to lessen the impact of my life on my surroundings. But is it enough? How do I influence others, or is it even worth trying?

Over the fence I chat with my neighbour about what to put in the yellow topped bin, but he continues to dump plastic bottles full of engine oil, old batteries and broken furniture.

Where I rinse my milk containers and flatten tissue boxes, carefully removing the plastic bits, he ties up a plastic bag with his offering each fortnight, and into the recycling bin it goes.

Several years ago, being inspired by Craig Reucassel on ABC's War on Waste, I gathered as many people as I could from the streets around me to see if we could somehow better manage our waste.

We decided to put into practice a few initiatives. Kids collected clean jars for re-use, food scraps were given to local chickens, egg cartons were gathered for school projects, old wheelie bins were decorated and converted into compost stations and pre-loved books were placed on the shelves of our street library. The side benefit was that we became friends and felt we were helping our community.

But, of course, in time people moved on and after a while our program fell by the wayside. Now I reckon it's time to crank up our neighbourhood group again. It's time to expand our sphere of influence. But how? One must come up with something that needs changing or improving.

I want to rid our verges of the dreaded weed (and nasty prickly) known as Caltrops. It has a charming yellow flower which bees love, but is a curse for cyclists and bare-footed kids. And it is widespread in our town. It is easy to pull out as it has a central tap root with a low spreading form. Gardening gloves are a must, secateurs are needed to cut stems into pieces, and a trailer to remove the debris. Black plastic bags are a great idea, to hasten the rotting process and kill any seed.

This is a great starting point for anyone wanting to contribute something positive. Create an event, provide an incentive, such as food, drinks or music so it is loads of fun, and make it happen.

Who wants to pull a few weeds with me?

Welcome to new staff

Camille Payet

Camille brings more than 15 years experience in administration and operations, with strong organisational skills, attention to detail and a collaborative approach. She has worked in hospitality, tourism and small business environments, supporting teams through effective communication, systems management and process improvement. Originally from Reunion Island, Camille is fluent in both French and English. She holds a Certificate IV in Environmental Science (Management and Sustainability) and a Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing. The environment is the reason she chose to make Australia her home. She is thrilled to be working in the environmental field. Camille is also a volunteer Ambulance Officer as she values contributing positively to her community.



Rachel Scott

Rachel is a fauna ecologist and conservation scientist who is enthusiastic about amplifying Traditional Ecological Knowledge and working with communities to advocate for the protection of wildlife and Country. Rachel believes that for conservation to be successful and sustainable, collaboration with local communities is vital. Before joining EK, Rachel worked as a fauna ecologist in Queensland and New South Wales. She has contributed to bear and elephant rehabilitation programmes, as well as anti-poaching community outreach in Cambodia and Thailand. Rachel loves citizen science, and when not at work she is either involved with environmental projects or spending time with her dog, Marli.



Dan Schulz

Dan is a researcher, visual artist, filmmaker and journalist with a doctorate in water justice in the Murray-Darling Basin from the Australian National University, Crawford School of Public Policy.

Their work in water justice began after mass fish kills saw over one million fish die in the Murray-Darling. Since then, they have been an advocate within academic and policy spaces for the ecological restoration of the Baaka-Darling River, First Nations water sovereignty and water governance reforms.

Combining academic expertise, deep listening to community experience and multimedia storytelling, Dan's frontline work highlights the consequences of environmental mismanagement and strives to understand and advocate for social movements responding to ecological crises.

To the Kimberley, they bring valuable experience from the most abused river system in Australia, where over-extraction of water, land clearing, invasive species and repeated policy and governance failures produced one of Australia's greatest environmental tragedies.



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30 years protecting the Kimberley (continued from cover)

For over five years we worked in the Great Sandy Desert with ranger groups and researchers surveying, monitoring and managing species and habitats. Place-based, traditional ecological knowledge was key to our success. From the desert, through freshwater country to the saltwater our partnership programmes continue. It has been a privilege to work with ranger groups on managing weeds, fire, feral animals, documenting traditional knowledge and surveying country.

The 'Appropriate Economies Roundtable' held at Fitzroy Crossing in 2005 with the KLC and Australian Conservation Foundation was a statement on how locals wanted to see development being done in a sustainable way with the free, prior and informed consent of Traditional Owners. Recently, our work on wattle seed connects traditional ecological knowledge and native food systems to real economic pathways. Collectors harvest, roast, grind and package wattle seed. A sustainable opportunity to live and earn on Country.

The mid-2000s saw a dramatic play by the oil and gas industry supported by the state and federal governments of the day to set up an oil and gas processing province on the Kimberley coast for Browse basin gas. Fortunately, the community realised the enormous damage this would bring. An epic 8-year campaign was mounted until Woodside and its joint venture partners pulled out.

Our team continued to grow. Together with Traditional Owners we were successful in stopping a coal mine on the Martuwarra Fitzroy River and a copper mine at Horizontal Falls. Working alongside Traditional Owner groups, more than 70% of the Kimberley coast has been designated as marine parks and 19 million hectares has been national heritage listed. We've held back fracking and conventional onshore gas for 14 years and continue to defend Scott Reef from Woodside. Protecting the Martuwarra from billionaires has been a major achievement.



Kayaking trip down the Martuwarra reaches Dimond Gorge in 2006



Two of EK's founding members Finn Pedersen and Pat Lowe at EK's 20th birthday party

We have run volunteer led, citizen science projects like the long-standing Seagrass Monitoring Program and more recently a backyard biodiversity survey. Community members are engaged, building skills and connection to nature and its future. One monitoring event can attract up to 90 participants.

Over the past three decades EK has confronted a huge array of threats to the Kimberley and been proactive in caring for country. None of this would have been successful without partnerships and alliances with Traditional Owners, custodians, the community, conservation and environment organisations, volunteers, members, philanthropists and grant makers. We thank you all and look forward to continuing our work to protect the Kimberley.



EK staff at James Price Point April 2026



EK 'Dam busters' team – Broome Dragon Boat race 2005



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

All about snakes

Pat Lowe

Are you afraid of snakes? It may surprise you to know that snakes are afraid of you — and with much greater reason. While up to 3,000 people are bitten by snakes each year in Australia, only one or two of them die from a snakebite. In contrast, thousands of snakes are killed by human beings over the same period, many of them harmless pythons. Despite the widespread fear of snakes, we seldom see one — they keep well out of our way. If you do encounter a snake, there is nothing to fear unless you have trodden on it, cornered or otherwise frightened it, in which case it is likely to retaliate.

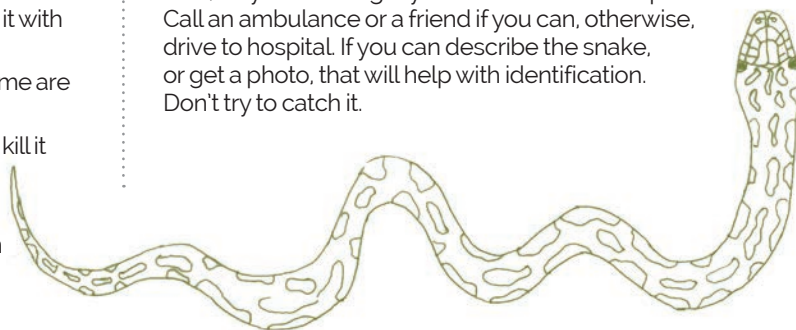
THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT SNAKES

- Snakes are frightened of you. They are not aggressive; they are defensive
- A snake's first impulse on meeting a human being is to hide
- If you meet a snake, step back calmly; avoid alarming it with sudden movements
- Snakes are not poisonous — they are edible — but some are venomous
- Most people who get bitten by a snake were trying to kill it
- Never try to kill a snake; give it space and allow it to hide
- If you do get bitten by a snake, seek medical attention
- Most snakes you encounter are likely to be harmless pythons

- Pythons are not venomous and rarely bite, but a python bite may become infected
- Python bites leave rows of toothmarks; venomous snakes leave two fang marks
- Some bites are 'dry bites', when a venomous snake strikes but does not inject venom
- In Australia, nearly everyone who gets bitten by a snake lives to tell the tale
- There is no need to fear snakes; just respect them and admire their sinuous beauty

FIRST AID

A bite is almost always on a limb. Keep the limb still and compress with bandages, starting from well above the bite, and allow someone to take you to hospital. If you are on your own, stay calm and get yourself to medical help. Call an ambulance or a friend if you can, otherwise, drive to hospital. If you can describe the snake, or get a photo, that will help with identification. Don't try to catch it.



Volunteer Spotlight

Dianne Bennett

EK's Volunteer Spotlight shows off our wonderful volunteers and what inspires them to continue to protect our environment. Without their endless and enduring support, our work could not be possible. Last week, we had a cuppa with Dianne Bennett, who has supported EK in many aspects of our work. From planting natives with SKIPA, to manning our market stalls, to collecting wattle seed and participating in ecological surveys. For our seagrass monitoring project, Dianne never fails to show up at crack of dawn, to monitor and protect our seagrass meadows of Roebuck Bay, sharing her knowledge and passion with every new volunteer who joins.

Hi Dianne, can you tell us how you got involved with the Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project?

Hello Alex. The first thing I did with EK was seagrass monitoring, which would have been when I moved here 14 years ago and I was looking around for things to do. I looked at the flyer and thought "hmm that doesn't look like much fun." But then I met someone who had done it and they told me to join. When I did, it turned out to be very engaging!

Yes it is more fun than you think! I know it isn't always easy waking up at 4am to participate in the surveys, but can you tell us what motivates you to explore the mudflats on those early mornings?

The chance to learn about a whole system I didn't know existed before. Also to participate in a program helping to check the health of Roebuck Bay alongside other motivated people. And to watch the sun rise out in the mud is very special.



What is the biggest thing you have learned from volunteering with the seagrass project?

How there is a huge number of creatures that live above, below and in the seagrass and mud. There is still a lot I don't know, but I know much more now!

I agree it is incredible how much life we have in the seagrass! When you aren't volunteering with seagrass project, what do you love to do?

I volunteer on the EK market stall and with SKIPA. I spend time on suitable tides checking out the intertidal life. While walking the dogs on Broome's beaches, I have been lucky enough to discover dinosaur tracks, so now I record the tracks of Broome.

What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about joining the Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project?

Just come along and have a go! It is a lot of fun and you get to do lots of interesting things that you would never think of trying before... like getting up at 4am.

If you had to describe seagrass in three words, what would they be?

Educational, inspirational and muddy.

Would you like to get involved? Whether you are a local or someone visiting, we have plenty of opportunities for you to join in. Get in touch via our website www.environskimberley.org.au/volunteer or email us direct at community@environskimberley.org.au



EK staff and our Board recently got together in Broome. The Board had a day of risk management planning, while staff workshopped results of a team survey. We're looking forward to working together to protect the nature of the Kimberley.

Thanks and Farewell Sam, Michelle and Danielle



Sam Younis

Sam started out researching how fire regimes were shaping the savannahs and woodlands of the Dampier Peninsula. As KNP Program Coordinator, he's been involved in so much of what we do, supporting the Dampier Peninsula Fire Working Groups, the Gooniyandi rangers, the Kimberley Wetlands Project and so much more. Congratulations Sam on your new role as Land and Sea Unit Manager with Karajarri. We look forward to continuing to work with you in this capacity.

Michelle Ashworth

Behind every smoothly run organisation is someone who keeps it all together, and at EK that person has been Michelle. As our Administration Officer, Michelle has been the reliable, warm presence at the heart of the office. She is the person who helped our staff and the public feel welcome and supported. Michelle returns home to her family in Canberra.



Danielle Bain

Danielle was the main driver behind EK's long running Seagrass project in the mid-2000s. When she returned to the KNP team, she quickly made her mark as a standout Project Officer. Over many years she coordinated the Kimberley Weeds Network, leading volunteer training and running workshops with local community members. More recently her focus shifted to supporting mapping work in the Great Sandy Desert, adding yet another layer to an already impressive body of knowledge. She continues working in natural resource management and supporting important work over in the East.

Protecting Country - Celebrating Peter Robertson OAM



WA environmentalist Peter Robertson has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to conservation and the environment.

Peter demonstrated his commitment early on when he cycled from Perth to the Franklin River where he was involved in the successful campaign to stop the dam. Other notable campaigns he played a key role include protecting WA Old Growth Forests and the Helena Aurora Range.

His involvement in protecting the Kimberley goes back more than 40 years and he's played a key role in stopping the industrialisation of the region. As the State Director of the Wilderness Society WA, we worked very closely with him and his team on the successful campaign to protect Walmadany / James Price Point.

His no-nonsense approach and will to win protection for Country as well as his strategic nous and tactical thinking make Peter one of the most formidable campaigners in Western Australia.

After receiving the award Peter said, "The most rewarding thing is being part of a large movement of people working towards a common goal which is the protection of a particularly important or beautiful or special or unique environment".

We have been very fortunate to have Peter consulting to EK for several years now and we congratulate him on a well-deserved award. Thanks for all you've done Peter.



Peter being interviewed at the 2013 Concert for the Kimberley in Fremantle
Photo: Adam Monk

Reflections of the NIGHT PARROT



SKIES FULL OF DRAGONS

They fill the skies of our town, appearing suddenly and en masse. They weave through the streets and zigzag coastal dunes. They have names like the wandering glider, and the Kimberley emperor. They are dragonflies.

We have a dozen species around Broome and when they appear, people rejoice. They know what it means. It means more than a beautiful spectacle in the sky, airborne jewels, glinting rubies and emeralds with wings. It means more than a sign cooler weather is near. More important, more exciting than all of that, at least in my household, the appearance of the dragonflies means: less mosquitos.

Mosquitos, you see, are dragonfly food. Dragonflies use their enormous eyes for a 360-degree view to spot floating mozzie meals. When they see a mosquito in flight, they calculate where it will be in a couple of seconds, dart to intercept it, and gobble it up mid-air. Munch! Delicious. They can eat hundreds a day, filtering them from the air.

What few realise is that many commercial mosquito repellents kill dragonflies too. Chemicals in some personal repellents, backyard mozzie bombs and large-scale mosquito fogging programs devastate dragonfly populations; the very populations that would naturally reduce mosquitos.

With mozzie populations recovering faster than dragonfly populations, it creates a recurring dependency; without dragonflies to naturally control mosquitos long-term, people become reliant on repeated chemical treatments – a cycle that never ends.

Fortunately, there are sensible alternatives. A friend told me of a device that mimics the sound of dragonfly wingbeats, and it projects it to cover 30 square metres. There is promising early research into dragonfly-scent based repellents too. Mozzie larvae in water detect dragonfly chemical signals and change their behaviour in response, so it has potential.

Dragonfly repellent pins are a bit of fun. You attach them to your shirt or hat, and on a bouncy bit of wire, a fake dragonfly 'scarecrow' bobs, warning mosquitos to stay away. There's not yet solid data on the effectiveness of these, but they're a conversation starter.

Meanwhile, there are personal repellents that do not contain harsh chemicals. Some natural ones have essential oils. They smell quite nice.

So put the mozzie bomb down. Step away from the deet. We can manage mozzies without the collateral wing damage. We have a hovering, darting, natural solution; we just need to open our eyes to the iridescent small joys – the dragons in the sky.



CALLING ALL ARTISTS

ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN FOR ENVIRONS KIMBERLEY'S ANNUAL ART AUCTION 2026!



Proceeds from works sold go to you — the artists and art centres — and support our conservation work.

Deadline for submissions: Wednesday 25 June 2026, with the live auction to take place the following month.

Please share with other artists you think might like to be involved.

If you would like to submit art, you can find more info and the submission form on the events page of our website



Pictured are examples of stunning art from last year's auction — thank you to our valued artist community!

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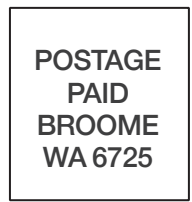
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The EK gift fund is a public fund and is listed in the register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1.1 subsection 30-35 (1) of the income Tax Assessment Act 1997.



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