

# Hypsi Forest and Tree Kangaroo Recovery Project

*By Project Coordinator Larry Crook*

**March 2004**

## **Project gets the Green light**

**The Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group received the news that their Hypsi Forest and Tree-kangaroo Recovery project will receive \$30,000 funding under the Federal Natural Heritage Trust Envirofund program.**

Hypsi Forest is a local endangered rain forest type (type 1b) that gets its name from the delightful Musky Rat Kangaroo, otherwise known as "*Hypsiprynodon moschatus*" that makes this forest type its home.

Musky Rat Kangaroos are our smallest and arguably most unusual macropod. They are dark brown in colour and by day can be seen foraging in the litter on the forest floor. Much of their diet consists of forest fruits and seeds which they help to disperse through their feeding and hoarding habits. They nurture their young in a pouch, usually giving birth to twins (but 3 and even 4 young have been recorded).

Tania Simmons, TKMG president, explained the focus of the project. "Like most of our projects we aim to raise community awareness of our wonderful wildlife and promote local activities to protect and build on remaining habitat. We need to realise how important remnant vegetation is, how we need to protect it and build linkages for safe movement of wildlife."

Partners to the project include Eacham Shire Council, Community Revegetation Unit (ESC), Barron River Integrated Catchment Management Association, TREAT and QPWS Centre for Tropical Restoration.

Two properties in the Millaa area, known to be important for Tree-Kangaroos and with remnants of the endangered Hypsi Forest, have been selected.

Each landholder involved with the project will receive a detailed report on the flora and fauna on their property along with a professionally developed property wildlife habitat management plan. Planting of 4500 trees will be strategically located to protect and build onto remnant forest and a field day will be held to promote the project's program of farm habitat management.

Tania invited the community to become involved. "We look forward to lots of community support at our tree planting and field days."

TKMG member Larry Crook and Kylie Freebody have been selected to manage the project. They co-managed last year's project, *Conservation of Remnant Vegetation on Private Property on the Atherton Tablelands – Stage 2*, with Sue Mathams. The Hypsi Project ties in with the Millaa Millaa component of that project, linking Waltham's plantings with those on Waller's and Daley's.

*March 2004*

## **Tree Planting details**

**Brett and Carmen Fry** 8.30 am Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March

700 trees will be planted to complete a tree corridor project linking forest on the Ithaca River to forest on the Johnstone River.

The property is at rural number 472 on Glen Allyn Road, near Malanda. Glen Allyn Road is opposite the Malanda High School and the BP garage on the Malanda-Millaa road.

**Reg and Olive Waltham** 8.30 am Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March

1200 trees will be planted to provide a corridor that will link Waltham's trees with trees on Waller's property.

The property is first on your left on Mullins Road, Millaa Millaa. Mullins Road is just under 4 kms along the Old Palmerston Highway. You turn off at Millaa Millaa opposite the big yellow building.

**Allan and Sharon Waller** 8.30 am Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March

1500 trees will be planted to fill in gaps in regrowth on a creek system on the property.

Waller's property is over the road (Mullins) from Waltham's. Entry to their place is off the Old Palmerston Highway, first turn left after Mullins Rd. Rural number 397

*This tree-kangaroo was photographed in the pine trees on the corner of Mullins Road and the Old Palmerston Highway on the Waller property.*



**John and Dianne Daley** To be advised

3000 trees are destined for this property to build linkages along the North Beatrice River.

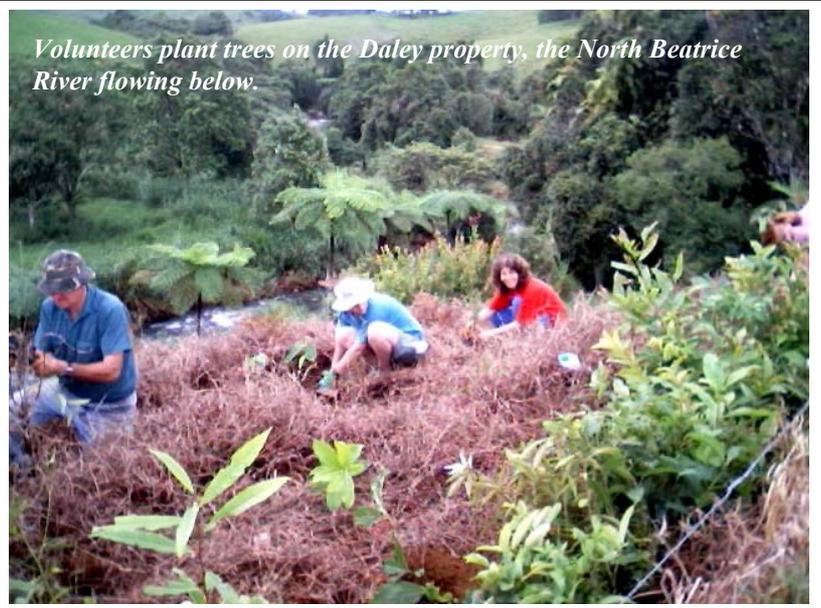
June 2004

# 7000 trees planted

7000 trees were planted this year by TKMG members, the landholders and volunteers (many from TREAT (Trees for the Atherton Tablelands)). 700 trees were planted on Bret and Carmen Fry's beef property near Malanda and 1300 on Reg and Olive Waltham's beef/farmstay property near Millaa Millaa as a finishing touch to last year's *Conservation of Remnant Vegetation on Private Property on the Atherton Tablelands Project*. The remainder were planted on two properties and a Reserve just south of Millaa Millaa. 1750 were planted on Alan and Sharon Waller's beef property, 1900 on John and Dianne Daley's dairy property and 1350 at Pat Daley Park as part of the current *Hypsi Forest and Tree Kangaroo Recovery Project*. The Park is a *Reserve for Environmental Purposes* administered by the Eacham Shire Council.

The work was made easier by the tremendous contributions made by the landholders. They prepared the sites for planting, sometimes involving heavy machinery to clear lantana or elephant and hammil grasses, and then erecting exclusion fencing. John and Brad Daley also cleared, levelled and fenced the Pat Daley Park site. Special thanks go to Mark and Angela McCaffrey, and Reg and Olive Waltham, who not only turned up to the plantings but also provided valuable assistance in the preparatory work such as digging and fertilising the holes and distributing the trees throughout the sites in readiness for planting.

The Park and Daley plantings are along the banks of the North Beatrice River and Fry's on the bank of the North Johnstone



Volunteers plant trees on the Daley property, the North Beatrice River flowing below.

River. These plantings linked advanced regrowth to large rainforest Type 1b (Hypsi Forest) remnants.

The Waltham planting completed links from their property to the Waller property. The Waller planting filled in gaping holes in a regrowth area.

The Millaa plantings have strengthened rainforest corridors along the North Beatrice River from the Type 1b remnant in Pat Daley Park, down river through the Daley property and then overland through the adjoining Waltham property and across the road to the Waller property. From there it is a short journey west to a large Type 5a remnant. Tree kangaroos are prevalent all through this area. The linking of the remnants and advanced regrowth patches provides safer passage for TKs and other animals as well as extending their habitat area and food source.

Other valuable assistance was provided by Peter Dellow and the team from the QPWS Centre for Tropical Restoration (CTR), and Bronwyn Robertson and the crew from the Eacham Shire Council's Community Revegetation Unit (CRU). Trees were supplied by CRU, CTR/TREAT and Alan Tunley's nursery in Ball Road, Malanda.

The sites are all maintained by CRU for the crucial first year and then by the landholder.

The project is funded by the Australian Government via Envirofund.  
For the few that are not aware, TREAT meet every Friday morning at the QPWS

CTR nursery, McLeish Rd, Lake Eacham to do nursery work such as seed cleaning, weeding and potting. Anytime from 7am to midday, and beyond if you wish. It is an enjoyable morning including a morning tea and a 'show and tell' session on what is flowering, fruiting or flitting about the place at the moment.

*July 2004*

## ***Big Day Out at the Falls***

**An estimated 60 people attended the *Hypsi Forest Field and Information Day* held on 17<sup>th</sup> July at Malanda Falls.**

Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group Project coordinator Larry Crook claimed the day as a great success. "We had an overwhelming response from people wishing to know more about the Hypsi rainforest that is characteristic of the south-east Atherton Tablelands. It is an endangered ecosystem which means there is less than 10% remaining today."

"This forest type has been named after the smallest kangaroo in the world, the Musky-rat Kangaroo, or *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*, which lives mainly in this forest type. It is TKMG's intention to combine with other like-minded community groups to lodge an application to have this ecosystem listed at federal government level", Larry said. "This will increase the likelihood of attracting federal funding to establish a recovery plan for the ecosystem and further funding to carry out more revegetation work".

The speakers included Wet Tropics botanist Kylie Freebody who explained the terminology, floristics, structure and distribution of Hypsi forest.

Dr Andrew Dennis, a zoologist from CSIRO, spoke of the importance of fauna in the forest,

focussing on seed dispersal and the Musky-rat kangaroo.

Ngadjon representative Ernie Raymont spoke on the cultural and historical significance to the Ngadjon people of Hypsi forest.

TKMG representative Sue Mathams explained the importance of getting Hypsi forest registered under the federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

Eacham Shire Mayor Ray Byrnes was the final speaker and expressed his gratitude to groups such as TKMG and TREAT and volunteers for their conservation work. He spoke of the Shire's new motto, 'Developing naturally', and the importance of nature tourism.

Ray then launched the TKMG Hypsi T-shirt and then fielded questions on many related topics including dogs and cats and rate rebates.

An estimated 35 people then attended the Field section of the Day at Reg and Olive Waltham's property, *The Maples*, near Millaa Millaa. People travelled on a mini-bus donated for the day by the Mareeba Environment College.

“Here people were treated to a fine afternoon tea before walking down to a TKMG tree planting site to discuss the revegetation project and its significance to the larger picture in the surrounding landscape”, said Mr Crook. “The planting is part of a network of wildlife corridors and remnant habitat linkages that are being built on three

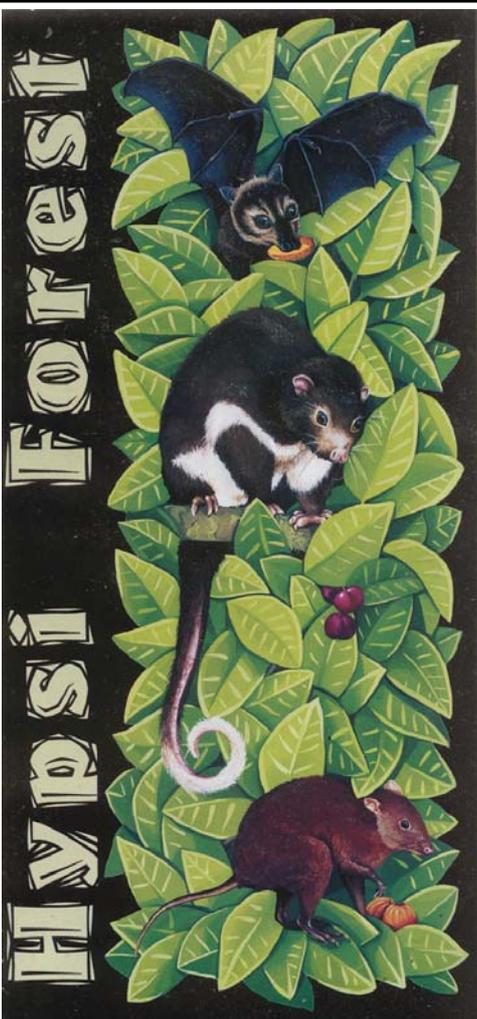
adjoining properties and an environmental reserve in the district”, he added.

TKMG and volunteers have planted almost 9000 trees on the project since 2003. “These represent 3 hectares of forest planted”, said Mr Crook. The project is funded by the Natural Heritage Trust Envirofund.



Botanist Kylie Freebody describes Hypsi forest at the Field Day.

*Photo by Sue Mathams*



*Jane Jehne*

## Hypsi Forest Field & Information Day

The Tree Kangaroo & Mammal Group will host a Field and Information Day as part of the *Hypsi Forest & Tree Kangaroo Recovery Project*. *Hypsi Forest* is the name given to the endangered Type 1b rainforest which is the vegetation type characteristic of the south-east Atherton Tablelands.

Speakers include:

- Andrew Dennis – Fauna
- Ernie Raymont – Cultural significance
- Kylie Freebody – Flora
- Tania Simmons – Status of Hypsi Forest
- Ray Byrnes – Mayor. Eacham Shire Council perspective & launch of TKMG *Hypsi* T-Shirt

Interested persons will then travel by bus to Reg & Olive Waltham’s property, Mullins Rd, Millaa Millaa to view and discuss the tree plantings there. Afternoon tea will be served afterwards.

**Saturday July 17<sup>th</sup> 1pm  
Malanda Falls**