



Mammal Mail

The Newsletter of the Tree-Kangaroo & Mammal Group

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SPECIAL DECEMBER MEETING!!!

Instead of our regular first Thursday meeting, TKMG is sponsoring a special showing of “This Changes Everything” –a film about the impact of climate change on our world. **Sunday 13 December 2015 3:30 pm at the Majestic Theatre in Malanda.** Tickets available online at <https://www.tugg.com/events/77068>

No meeting in January 2016

TKMG Management Committee meeting, Thurs Feb 4th 5:30pm at the Malanda Hotel. All members welcome to attend.

Coming sometime in January...the “new look” TKMG website!

2015 Annual General Meeting of the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group (TKMG)

President’s Report

By Dr. John Kanowski

It is my pleasure to present the President’s report for TKMG for 2015.

TKMG was started in 1997 by a group of people concerned about the clearing of habitat for Lumholtz’s Tree-kangaroo. The group included scientists, wildlife carers and concerned local people – the diversity of membership has always been one of TKMG’s strengths.

Since inception, TKMG has worked to raise awareness of tree-kangaroos and the other unique mammals of north Queensland, and sponsored research, conservation and restoration projects.

This work has continued in 2015, as follows:

TKMG initiated its annual conservation awards. These awards are aimed at addressing some key actions listed in TKMG’s *Community Action Plan for the Conservation of Lumholtz’s tree-kangaroo and its habitat*. The awards include:

- the *William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals* – to recognise a person who has helped protect the native mammals of our region. Local indigenous artist Drew Morta designed the artwork for this years award - a unique and stunning painting of a tree-kangaroo on corrugated iron (pictured below). Thanks to Wendy Cooper for her support of this initiative.
- The *TKMG Carers Award* - presented to a person who has devoted themselves to caring for injured tree-kangaroos and other north Queensland mammals, and raise awareness of their plight. The award

is a cash prize of \$1500 to help defray the costs associated with rehabilitating sick and injured native wildlife.

- The *TKMG Research Grant* which provides up to \$2500 to students and scientists conducting research on the wildlife of North Queensland.

The awards are funded from TKMG's cash reserves, the result of years of volunteer fundraising and memberships.

TKMG hosted public talks at the Malanda Hotel every second month. I would like to thank the people who gave these presentations:

- Tim Hughes (Kimberley to Cape Initiative)
- Mason Campbell (Response of Lianas to rainforest fragmentation)
- Dr John Grant (Community conservation in Bali – reintroduction of Bali Myna)
- Mia Dehre (Response of dung beetles to rainforest restoration)
- Dr Sigrid Heise-Pavlov (Distribution of Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo)

TKMG published its quarterly newsletter, *Mammal Mail*. Thanks very much to Amy Shima for editing the newsletter, amongst her PhD commitments.

TKMG held a stall at the monthly Yungaburra Markets. Thanks to Simon Burchill and Ceinwen Edwards for staffing the stall.

TKMG commissioned an update to its website (www.tree-kangaroo.net). I thank the TKMG subcommittee that drew up a brief for the project, selected a web designer – James Leech -- and liaised with James to develop the content and style of the revised website. Thanks also to Pesavento Web Development and Marketing for their management of TKMG's current website for the past years. The "new look" website should be up and running early next year.

TKMG published a revised 'food plant list' to provide information to the public and nurseries on native plants used by Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo for food. Thanks to Leanne Hales for managing this project, Britta for the beautiful artwork and Margit Cianelli, Kylie Freebody and other TKMG members for input to the content.

TKMG helped fund the development of 'Kimberley, the 3D virtual Tree-kangaroo'. This project is being developed to the proof-of-concept stage with James Cook University. Kimberley the 3D virtual Tree-kangaroo is an education tool which will allow people to have an 'up close and personal' interaction with a tree-roo in virtual reality. This project has been the brainchild of David Hudson. The project has also attracted funding from Terrain NRM.

TKMG submitted a nomination to the Qld Government to reverse an earlier decision to downgrade Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo from 'near threatened' to 'least concern'. TKMG understands that our nomination has been accepted but the change has not yet been enacted in regulation. John Kanowski put together the TKMG nomination.

TKMG lobbied Tablelands Regional Council to adopt Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo as its official faunal emblem.

TKMG contributed to World Environment Day with outreach to Malanda State School Year 3 Students. Thanks to Leanne Hales, Margit Cianelli and Ruth Whiston for organising and conducting this event.

TKMG submitted an application to establish a tax deductible fund.

TKMG has managed several grants:

- **Rainforest revegetation, Rock Road:** with South Endeavour Trust, TREAT, TRC Revegetation Unit and Conservation Volunteers Australia. This project is re-establishing habitat and links between remnant rainforests on fertile soils in the cloudy wet highlands of the southern Atherton Tablelands. This project attracted \$100k funding from the Queensland Government's Everyone's Environment grants program
- **Pasture Conversion Trials:** Carla Catterall (Griffith University) is the main investigator, in collaboration with TREAT, TRCCRU, SFS and landholders. This project is investigating the effectiveness (cost and outcomes) of enhanced natural regeneration as a reforestation method.
- **Demographics, abundance and health of the Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo population on the Atherton Tablelands:** Amy Shima and Roger Martin are the investigators. Funds have been used to purchase

GPS/ radio tracking collars, remote cameras and safety gear. The study aims to capture, examine and take biological samples from a large sample of tree-kangaroos from across the Tablelands. The purpose of this is to provide data on age, reproductive status and health of the females in the population which, together with existing data on mortality rates (mainly from road and dog kills), will be used to inform a Population Viability Analysis model of the Atherton Tablelands population.

- **Survey of the distribution of Bennett's Tree-kangaroo:** Roger Martin is the investigator. Over the past 3 years, Roger has been conducting a community survey, collecting records of sightings. Over the next few years the survey will focus on the south-western distribution of the species in the remote Upper Daintree, using camera traps.

TKMG ran monthly meetings at the Malanda Hotel. I thank the TKMG committee for contributing their time and energy to the group.

Finally, thanks very much to TKMG committee and membership for your support over the past two years when I have served as president of TKMG. I am stepping down from the role this year due to increased work commitments, which involve a lot of travel and have meant I have had to miss a number of recent TKMG meetings. I look forward to continued involvement with the group, which plays a valuable role in raising awareness and contributing to the conservation of the wildlife of north Queensland.

FROM THE (new) PRESIDENT

by Peter Valentine, 10th November, 2015.

First let me thank the membership of the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group for electing me as your new President at the annual general meeting in October. I am very much looking forward to becoming better aware of the key conservation issues and to assisting with any activities that may be appropriate. TKMG has had a wonderful President in John Kanowski and of course he will very likely be keeping a close eye on our program of activities, but he is to be congratulated on some excellent work while he was President. Earlier this year John made a submission to the Queensland DEHP concerning their shifting Lumholtz Tree Kangaroo from the "near-threatened" category to the "least concern" category. John drew attention to the evidence that suggested this shift should not have happened. We are now awaiting a positive response to John's submission.

I want to particularly thank Dave Hudson who gave me an excellent overview of the many projects underway by TKMG. I was very impressed at the achievements of what is a fairly small organisation. Dave took me out to the Rock Road project and I recall seeing part of that several years ago when I was Chair of the Wet Tropics Management Authority and we had a field trip to inspect the revegetation project. The difference today is amazing and it is excellent to see what community groups have achieved. These projects rely on partnerships and mutual support and while the population in the tablelands is relatively small, there are many talented people who contribute to community based conservation groups.

My first formal meeting as President was the November Committee meeting and it was such a pleasure to meet the very active and talented committee members. It is no wonder TKMG is going well when it has such hard-working committee members. However there is scope for more contributions and it would be healthy for the group to foster more volunteers, especially younger members.

One of the projects currently being undertaken is the "virtual" tree kangaroo and I look forward to learning more about how the James Cook University computer experts are progressing. It is interesting to me to see the variety of work being done in support of our very special mammals. TKMG seems to cross a wide range of fields from the important science about the individual species to significant ecological restoration in support of conservation and to projects that engage with the community and try to raise awareness amongst the community about our wildlife. The essential work of caring for damaged individuals, often the result of our human activities, links to several aims. The carers have a special role in both helping individual animals and in trying to get a more aware and supportive community and set of governments.

I met the Threatened Species Commissioner recently and it is clear he had been provided with excellent material by TKMG members. He seems genuinely interested and we might hope he can be persuasive with the

Government who appointed him. He at the least has a sense of fun with wildlife and he spent over an hour dressed as a Cassowary at the recent event in Mission Beach!

Another very interesting development that members may be pleased to learn about is a program to re-start a natural history journal in northern Queensland. Many members will recall the North Queensland Naturalist, a long-running publication sponsored by the then North Queensland Naturalist Society. The journal was published for 60 years, between 1933 and 1993. It provided many advances in knowledge about our wildlife over that period. With the support of the Northern Gulf NRM body, a small team has been established to start publishing a journal again - using the same title, North Queensland Naturalist. The launch is next month and there will be a call for papers in January. The journal will be of a high academic standard (refereed papers only) and will be published on-line and will be free. It is hoped that there will be a good supply of suitable articles covering our amazing northern Queensland wildlife. It is planned to include plants, vertebrates and invertebrates in the focus and the environments will include terrestrial, coastal and aquatic. There are three handling editors ready for the launch, Don Franklin (who is also the receiving editor), Steve Murphy and myself. I look forward to seeing papers from our members and from students working on projects of relevance to TKMG in the first edition.

I hope to meet more members in due course and I plan to assist our program of work as best I am able. It is a pleasure to be living on the tablelands and to be part of the wet tropics community. Please feel free to contact me at any time ... you can find my email address in this newsletter.

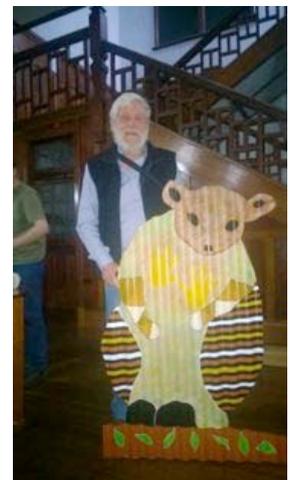
TKMG First Annual Conservation Awards

By Dr. John Kanowski

At our recent AGM, TKMG celebrated the first of our annual conservation awards. Details of the awards are in the 2015 President's report. **Winners of the awards** are as follows:

1. The **William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals** – Dr John Winter. John is the 'eminence grise' of mammalogy in north Queensland. In the 1970s, John was appointed to a wildlife ecologist role with the newly minted Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. In the last four decades, John has helped map the distribution of north Qld mammals, explained patterns of distribution in relation to biogeographical, ecological and historical processes, and done much to help protect the native mammals of our region by raising their profile amongst scientists and the wider community. John was the founding president of TKMG and continues to work in the field of wildlife conservation.

Photo by J. Kanowski



2. The **TKMG Carers Award** was awarded to Margit Cianelli. With a background in animal husbandry, Margit has devoted herself to caring for injured tree-kangaroos and other north Queensland wildlife. She is passionate about the welfare of native animals and has tirelessly and fearlessly worked to raise awareness of their conservation in the community. Margit was one of the driving forces behind the establishment of TKMG and continues to support the group through her work on the committee.

3. The **TKMG Research Grant** was awarded to two projects.

First, to the **Tablelands National Parks Volunteers** for a project investigating habitat use by the Yellow-bellied Glider on the Herberton Range. The project will rely on volunteers to re-map the use of feed trees relied on by the glider, following up work done by CSIRO in the 1990s. TKMG has a long-standing interest in the conservation of the Yellow-bellied Glider.

Second, to **Amy Shima and Roger Martin** in support of their study on population and health of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo. Roger and Amy are both well known active participants in TKMG, Amy currently serving as Vice-President and newsletter editor. Roger has long-standing research projects on the ecology and conservation of Bennett's tree-kangaroo and is enjoying learning more about Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo. Amy is a wildlife veterinarian and current PhD student with the One Health Research Group at James Cook University.

Progress Report on “Kimberley” Tree-kangaroo

By Margit Cianelli

Kimberley has now been in the forest for well over a year. And what an adventure it has been! When she initially went out I was so nervous, and very glad the School of Field Studies worked with her and filmed her climbing efforts all day long. Kimberley was such a little dare devil and often when I inquired how she was going the students would say: “ We will have to sedate you before we show you the footage.”

At one time she got herself into a situation where she just could not find a way to get back down. The students realized what an instant wreck I turned into, so they sat up all night, taking turns to watch her and called me at 2am when Kimberley figured out a downward passage.

She has come a long way since then! She has always been confident, over confident really. It was me who worried so much. But as the weeks and months passed I could see her wonderful improvements and now I don't ever get worried watching her. It is amazing how able she is, she seems to know exactly all ways to get out of even the tallest, most challenging trees. I have seen her spread out her body as to increase her surface area and get herself from the very outer twigs into another tree. How she knows what twigs will still carry her weight I just don't know. She seems to balance on matchsticks at times. Other times she just catapults her body from one tree trunk to another, well over a meter away.

I am not the only one impressed by her efforts. I had 5 film crews stay in the last 2 months alone. Two Australian, an American, a German crew and the BBC. They were all in awe what this girl can do, and also by the way she still enjoys the best of both worlds, and by the trust she has in me.

Kimberley wears a radio collar (I have the legal paperwork for this) while she is in the forest. She stays out all day now, I find her at about 4.30 pm and she immediately comes down from the tree she happens to be in and climbs on my shoulder. She is so ready to come in, I never have to hang on to her and she clings to my back. I take her in the house and remove the collar whilst she is enjoying some nuts and maybe some wombok or kale.

She then just chills, hops about the living room or actually walks around, she loves walking! (tree roos are the only macropod able to do this) She either rests on the couch or on the floor, and sometimes she comes and climbs up my leg just to sit on my shoulder for a few minutes as if to reassure.

Tree kangaroos actually are with their mums for about 3 years, about 10 months in the pouch and 2 full seasons on foot or hanging about in their mother's territory. This is the longest time spent with mum for any macropod. I assume the reason is that there is just so much to learn when you venture in the third dimension and eat a highly toxic diet... As Kimberley is about 2 years and 9 months old, it is totally natural that she still wants to come into the house and be around me. Not to mention that she knows that she is onto a good thing.

She will soon be sexually mature and consequently she might not want to come 'home' much anymore.

Last night as she was resting by the window in my room, a tree kangaroo jumped on my roof. I was quite worried as the house is one level on one side but 2 storey the other. Sure enough this animal moved to the high side but must have left the dangerous roof via a fig tree.

After I fitted Kimberley with her collar this morning and let her go up her usual spot near the fig tree, she immediately jumped on that very branch that reaches the roof and sniffed it for about 5 minutes. I was worried she might end up on the roof! Anyway, she turned back and climbed around in the fig tree and disappeared out of sight like every morning. About 30 minutes later I spotted a tree kangaroo and knew immediately it must be the one from last night. He went up a tree, obviously where Kimberley was. I then witnessed about two hours of two nervous or excited tree roos chasing each other and vice versa. As I did not want to get too close and scare the stranger off I can only be sure in one case that Kimberley was the one doing the 'chasing'. Most time was spent on the ground, but there was also some climbing and jumping off trees. When Kimberley eventually showed up close to the house she was panting heavily, she chose a shady spot in some vines and is currently having a good rest. It will be interesting getting her in tonight.

Kimberley is a very able young tree kangaroo. She is headstrong and determined, and physically a picture of an animal, beautifully muscled. She could not look better if she had grown up with her own mum.

Whilst Kimberley might not come in any more once she rears young ones, I very much hope that I still get to see her occasionally in the forest. I feel very humbled by watching Kimberley turn into an adult tree kangaroo.

Tree-kangaroo Mortality Study

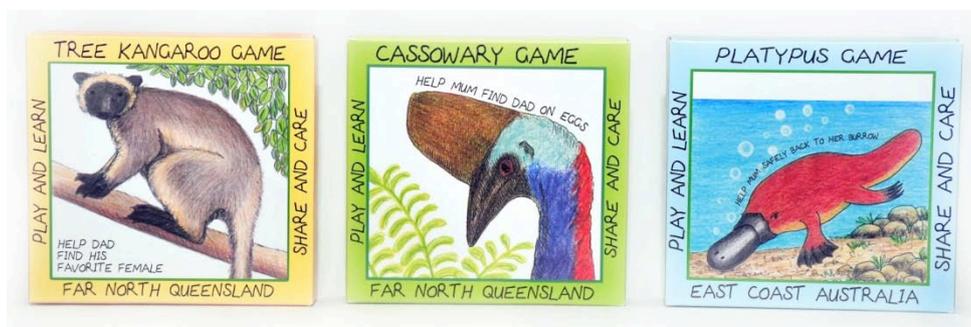
by Amy Shima

The study to document, perform post-mortem examination and gather information from tree-kangaroos who are killed on the roads is ongoing. I am starting in on the analyzing data collected over the past 3 years, but am still interested in documenting tree-kangaroos killed on the roads. If you see a dead tree-kangaroo, please contact me **as soon as possible** on **0499-180-961** or 07-4095-1347. We go out to record location information and collect the body for post-mortem examination. This information will be used to help us learn more about tree-kangaroos and the dangers posed to them by human activity.

Have you seen our new Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo Food Plant List? TKMG is keen to make sure that members and the general public have easy access to a list of plant species known to be preferred food plants for Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo so that people may consider these for planting on their properties. To get this information out in an attractive and easy-to-use format, we enlisted the help of talented local artist, Britta Jackie, who shares our passion for the environment, especially the unique creatures that live here in Far North Queensland. Britta provided the exquisite drawings that transformed our humble species list to a work of art which is now available at local nurseries and plant stalls at the local markets.

The plant list will also be available to download from our new website which is due to be launched early next year. In the meantime, if you haven't got a copy and would like one, please contact Leanne Hales on 4096-5510 or email: halesfnq@gmail.com. Or print out a copy from the next page of the newsletter.

Some of you may already know Britta's work from her beautiful range of hand-drawn children's games which are sold at local venues, including the TKMG market stall at Yungaburra. Britta describes her games as "a great way to learn about our precious environment and what small or large steps can be taken to protect it." You can read more about Britta's games and what inspires her at her website: www.gamesconnect.com.au



On-going call for volunteers!

Get involved with TKMG by volunteering your time to help out at our market stall at the Yungaburra Markets. Contact Simon Burchill 0407-091-347 for further details. It's a fun way to spend an hour or so at the markets and a great way to help TKMG.

Lumholtz Tree Kangaroo Food Plant List



Species	Common Name
<i>Alphitonia petriei</i>	Sarsaparilla, Pink Ash, Red Ash
<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Milky Pine, Milkwood, White Cheesewood
<i>Argyrodendron peralatum</i>	Tulip Oak, Red Crowsfoot, Red Crowsfoot Elm
<i>Beilschmiedia tooram</i>	Tooram walnut, Coach Walnut, Brown Walnut
<i>Cardwellia sublimis</i>	Bull Oak, Northern Silky Oak
<i>Castanospermum australe</i>	Black Bean, Moreton Bay Chestnut
<i>Castanopora alphanthii</i>	Brown Tamarind
<i>Cerbera inflata</i>	Cassowary plum, Grey Milkwood
<i>Chionanthus ramiflora</i>	Northern Olive, Native Olive
<i>Cryptocarya corrugata</i>	Corduroy Laurel, Oak Walnut, Acidwood
<i>Cryptocarya hypospodia</i>	Northern Laurel, White Walnut, Rib-fruited Pepperberry
<i>Cryptocarya mackinnoniana</i>	Rusty Laurel, MacKinnon's Walnut
<i>Cryptocarya melanocarpa</i>	Laurel
<i>Cryptocarya triplinervis</i>	Brown Laurel
<i>Cupaniopsis flagelliformis ssp. flagelliformis</i>	Brown Tuckeroo
<i>Diploglottis diphylostegia</i>	Northern Tamarind
<i>Elaeocarpus grandis</i>	Blue Quandong, Silver Quandong, Blueberry Ash
<i>Endiandra insignis</i>	Hairy Walnut, Rusty Walnut
<i>Endiandra sankeyana</i>	Sankey's Walnut
<i>Euroschinus falcata</i>	Pink Poplar, Ribbonwood
<i>Ficus obliqua</i>	Small-leaved Fig
<i>Ficus superba var. henneana</i>	Superb Fig, Sand Fig, Deciduous Fig, Cedar Fig
<i>Flindersia bourjotiana</i>	Queensland Silver Ash, Silver Ash, White Ash
<i>Flindersia pimenteliana</i>	Maple Silkwood, Rose Silkwood, Mountain Silkwood
<i>Franciscodendron laurifolium</i>	Cabbage Crowsfoot
<i>Glochidion hylandii</i>	Hylland's buttonwood, Pin Flower Tree
<i>Guioa lasioneura</i>	Silky Tamarind, Woolly-nerved Guioa
<i>Helicia nortoniana</i>	Norton's Oak,
<i>Litsea leefeana</i>	Bollywood, Bollygum, Bolly Beech
<i>Melicope elleryana</i>	Evodia, Pink Euodia, Butterfly Tree
<i>Mischocarpus lachnocarpus</i>	Woolly Pear Tamarind
<i>Neisosperma poweri</i>	Milkbush, Red boat tree
<i>Neolitsea dealbata</i>	Grey Bollywood, Velvet-leaf Bollywood
<i>Polyscias australiana</i>	Ivory Basswood
<i>Polyscias elegans</i>	Celerywood, Silver Basswood, Black Pencil Cedar
<i>Pouteria myrsinodendron</i>	Yellow Boxwood, Black Ash, Yellow Teak
<i>Sarcopteryx martyana</i>	-
<i>Schefflera actinophylla</i>	Umbrella Tree
<i>Sloanea australis ssp. parviflora</i>	Blush Alder, Maiden's blush, Blush Carabeen
<i>Sloanea langii</i>	White Carabeen
<i>Xanthostemon whitei</i>	Red Penda, Atherton Penda
Vines	
<i>Elaeagnus triflora</i>	Millaa Millaa vine
<i>Faradaya splendida</i>	Potato vine

Beautifully drawn by Britta Jackle
gamesconnect.com.au

An initiative of the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group, FNQ. For more information visit – <http://www.tree-kangaroo.net>

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Newsletter of the Tree Kangaroo & Mammal Group, Inc.

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