



## Mammal Mail

The Newsletter of the Tree-Kangaroo & Mammal Group

Vol 16 No 2 September 2016

### **What's Going On? Don't Miss These Upcoming Events**

**Join us for a celebration of 20 years of TKMG caring and community action!**

**THUR, OCTOBER 6<sup>TH</sup>: 7 PM** meeting including the presentation of the **William T. Cooper Conservation Award** then the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**. All members of TKMG are encouraged to attend. Please note that only members in good financial standing will be able to vote on the new Committee. Following the AGM, there will be a presentation "A Celebration of Australian Mammals" by reknown photographer, Martin Willis. A light supper will follow and give an opportunity to socialize and reminisce about 20 years of TKMG.

Is your membership up for renewal? Please check (contact either Simon or Ruth) and **RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**. Please remember that TKMG memberships run for the financial year so memberships are due for renewal July 1<sup>st</sup>. Look for a date on your mailing label or email version of the newsletter.

**Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>: Committee meeting, Malanda Hotel 5:30pm**

**Stay tuned for information on the December meeting. It may be on a different date than the usual first Thursday of the month and also may be at a different venue.**

---

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR TKMG MANAGING COMMITTEE**

The TKMG AGM is scheduled for Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 7pm at the Malanda Hotel. All executive positions will be declared vacant and the current executive members, with the exception of the Treasurer, have all agreed to re-nominate. This means that, should you want to nominate someone for a position on the Executive, you need to file a nomination form as nominations for these positions will not be taken from the floor. New perspectives and ideas from members interested in taking a more active role in TKMG are always most welcome. We need someone to nominate to fill the position of Treasurer. You don't have to be an accountant, just be organized, hones and willing to take on the relatively simple responsibility of TKMG bookkeeping. If you would like to participate in the Managing Committee or know a member who is prepared to play a role on the executive, please do not hesitate to nominate them for a position as a member of the Committee or the open executive position of Treasurer. ***If you are nominating someone for the Committee, please make sure that the***

**person is prepared to accept the position.** Nominations of current financial members can be accepted in writing or electronically (email to Secretary) at least 2 weeks prior to the AGM. This means that you will need to nominate **before close of business on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016.** If no written or electronic nominations for Executive positions are received, there will be an open call at the AGM and you can put your hand up at that time to make a nomination.

### PROXY for Voting at TKMG AGM

If you are a current financial member of TKMG and will be unable to attend the AGM, you can use the Proxy form below to assign your vote to another member who will be attending the AGM on 6<sup>th</sup> October. Please cut out and fill in the proxy below and either post or deliver in person to Simon Burchill. You may also email your proxy—please either scan the proxy below or include all the information, nominating the member to whom you are assigning your vote to the Secretary, Simon Burchill at: [sbburchill@gmail.com](mailto:sbburchill@gmail.com)

---

### TKMG AGM Proxy Form 2016

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am a member in good financial standing with the Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group, Inc. (TKMG) and am unable to attend the Annual General Meeting of TKMG to be held on 6 October 2016 at the Malanda Hotel. I hereby give my proxy vote to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed:

Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Delivered by: hand  email  post

---

You can email a copy ( or reasonable approximation) of this Proxy to Secretary, Simon Burchill: [sbburchill@gmail.com](mailto:sbburchill@gmail.com) , nominating someone who will be attending the meeting to vote as your proxy.

---

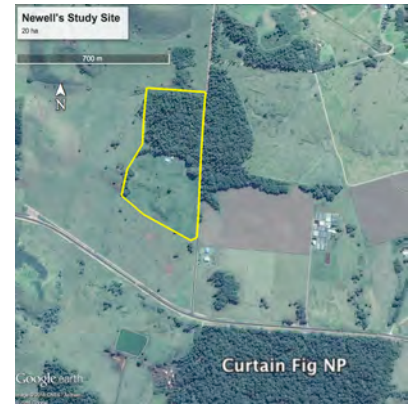
### A Brief History of Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group

*By Dr. John Winter, Beth Stirn and Margit Cianelli*

The impetus to set up Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group was the clearing by a local landholder in September/October 1996, of half of the 20 ha site where Graeme Newell, a researcher at CSIRO, was studying Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo. This galvanized Beth Stirn and Margit Cianelli to set up a group to protect the animal. Beth, a new arrival to the district from the USA had become fascinated with this bear-like animal and struck up a friendship with Margit Cianelli, a long-time resident and wildlife carer. Graeme discovered that there were even more tree-kangaroos living in the patch than he was aware of and also found the tree-kangaroos are very loyal to their patch of turf. All of the animals

stayed on the property in the fallen trees until they were eventually taken by dogs or killed by vehicles. None attempted to move to the near-by Curtain Fig Scrub.

Margit and Beth approached people about the idea of a group and Dr. John Winter, a wildlife ecologist agreed to become the first President. Other early supporters included John Kanowski, Graeme Newell, Leasia Felderhof, John McKenzie, Robyn & Gary Wilson, Tania Simmons, Paul English and many others. Early meetings were



held in homes of members and at the gardens of the Malanda Bottleshop. There was some debate as to the name of the group. This resulted in the rather quirky name, 'Tree Kangaroo **and** Mammal Group' to ensure that the focus was not **just** on tree-kangaroos!

Over the past 20 years, TKMG has been successful in obtaining outside funding for a number of major projects such as:

- 2000-2001 A comprehensive postal survey of tree-kangaroos in north Queensland completed by 2001 – Stage 1 \$1,500 Department of Environment, Stage 2 \$51,038 Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). It resulted in two publications 'Tree-kangaroos on the Atherton Tablelands: Rainforest fragments as wildlife habitat – a managers document' and 'Community Survey of the distribution of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo on the Atherton Tablelands, north-east Queensland. Pacific Conservation 2001'
- 2000 'Protecting Spotted-tailed Quolls' - \$27,700 Threatened Species Network
- 2000 'Anderson Road Landscape Linkage' - tree planting and tree-kangaroo shelter poles-\$18,000 Threatened Species Network.
- 2001-2003 'Conservation of remnant vegetation on private property on the Atherton Tableland' A Case Studies Project –\$42,600 and \$30,000 NHT – included property assessments and a workshop attended by 80 people
- 2004 'Hypsi Forest and Tree-kangaroo Recovery Project' –\$30, 000 NHT - partnership with Eacham Shire, Community Revegetation Unit, Barron River Catchment Management, TREAT, QPWS Centre for Tropical Restoration - included tree planting and a workshop attended by 60 people.
- November 2005 TKMG, in partnership with James Cook University, Rainforest CRC, Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program and FNQ NRM, ran a well attended international conference 'Ecology and Conservation of Tree-kangaroos: Current Issues and Future Directions' at Genazzano Centre.

- 2002-2004 TKMG hosted a \$49,844 NHT study on 'Eucalypt Woodland in Cape York Peninsula as habitat for Arboreal Marsupials: Responses of the Common Brushtail Possum'.

Other activities TKMG has undertaken over the past 20 years include the stall at the Yungaburra markets, a schools program and contributions to the display in the Malanda Information Centre. In July 2012, a workshop on Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo was jointly hosted by TKMG, Terrain, Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) which resulted in the Community Action Plan for Conservation of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo 2014-2019 (CAP).

TKMG continues to work towards achieving the goals outlined in the CAP and to support research to learn more about tree-kangaroos and other mammals. (see article elsewhere in this newsletter) TKMG is currently reviewing progress made on goals identified in the CAP and working to set future directions for the group to best help learn about, manage and protect tree-kangaroos and other mammals of the Wet Tropics.

Most recently the Yellow-bellied Glider project has returned to TKMG, after a 15 year absence during which it was hosted by Tableland National Parks Volunteer and Threatened Species Unit, Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

---

## **Update on the TKMG Community Action Plan (CAP)**

*By Dave Hudson and Amy Shima*

The TKMG Community Action Plan for the Conservation of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo 2014-2019 (CAP) listed 5 goals with potential actions for each goal. The Committee is taking the opportunity of our celebration of 20 years of TKMG working for tree-kangaroos and mammals of the Tablelands and Wet Tropics, to assess what progress has been made towards achieving the goals outlined in the CAP and to identify areas where more work is needed or where the original goals may benefit from modification and reassessment. We welcome input from TKMG members about the CAP goals and the work that has been done towards achieving them. If you have questions about the CAP or are interested in 'championing' one of the goals, please let us know. A copy of the CAP is available on the website and a limited number of 'hard' copies are still available. Please see Simon Burchill if you are interested in obtaining a copy of the CAP.

### **Community Awareness and Engagement = Goal 1: An aware and engaged community**

- TKMG has submitted a proposal to TRC to have Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo adopted as the TRC faunal emblem. The Malanda Chamber of Commerce and Tropical Tablelands Tourism support TKMG in this effort. We hope that there will be some action on adopting LTK as the faunal emblem for the region.
- TKMG, with the gracious support of Wendy Cooper, initiated the William T. Cooper

Conservation Award for North Queensland Mammals. The inaugural (2015) recipient of this honour was Dr. John Winter.

- TKMG is working with James Cook University on 'Project Kimberley' to create the worlds' first 3D, virtual reality wildlife experience featuring Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo. The virtual reality experience of interacting with 'Kimberley' the virtual Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo will, when completed, be installed at the Malanda Falls Visitor Centre.
- TKMG successfully petitioned the Queensland government to reclassify Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo from 'of least concern' to 'near threatened' status. While TKMG was notified in December 2014 that the petition was successful, the change has yet to be ratified in legislation.
- The Community Action Plan for Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo has been linked to the new Terrain Regional Natural Resources Management (NRM) Plan. In addition, Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) as well as the Federal Threatened Species Commission and State and Federal Environment Ministers were all presented with a copy of the TKMG CAP.
- TKMG market stall is a regular presence at the monthly Yungaburra Markets which provides an opportunity to engage with both locals and visitors to the region.
- TKMG continues to host public presentations every other month (even numbered months) on topics related to wildlife and conservation issues.
- TKMG has revamped its website [www.tree-kangaroo.net](http://www.tree-kangaroo.net) to make it more accessible and compatible with smart phone and tablet technology. The 'new look' website is being launched in October 2016.

**Habitat = Goal 2: Adequate Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo habitat in sound condition, protected and well connected**

- TKMG secured \$100,000 funding through the Queensland Government Everyone's Environment Grant scheme for revegetation of the Rock Road corridor. This corridor is a significant wildlife corridor linking the Hypipamee Outlier rainforest remnant to the Wet Tropics World Heritage area. The South Endeavour Trust has taken a leading role in this project with significant investment in the purchase of property (Dirrans' End) and restoring land in priority habitat corridor areas.
- TKMG continues to partner with TREAT on a number of revegetation projects on the Tablelands including the Peterson Creek wildlife corridor.

**Threats from humans and their activities = Goal 3: Direct human-related threats are mitigated**

- A study on road and predator mortality has been ongoing since 2014. As part of a James Cook University PhD project, this study is establishing a mortality database, analysing mortalities due to vehicles and predators and establishing protocols for post-mortem examination and evaluation of tree-kangaroos injured or killed by vehicles or predators. TKMG has been supportive of this work.
- Work on suitability of wildlife road-deterrents (e.g. reflectors, roo-shoes, audible strips and other technologies) has yet to be done.

**Captive Care & Rehabilitation = Goal 4. Protocols based on sound knowledge and experience are applied in LTK husbandry, rehabilitation and release.**

There are only three wildlife carers licensed to rescue, rehabilitate and care for Lumholtz's tree-kangaroos. All are experienced, capable and care about sick, injured and orphaned tree-kangaroos.

Tree-Roo Rescue and Conservation Centre Ltd. (TRRCC) was established in 2012 by Dr. Karen Coombes with the specific goal of providing a dedicated rescue and rehabilitation facility. TRRCC is also involved with a captive breeding program for Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo in collaboration with Dreamworld and Wildlife Habitat. TRRCC has been working on developing its own protocols for the husbandry, rehabilitation and release of tree-kangaroos.

**Research = Goal 5. Knowledge of the species is adequate to guide conservation actions.**

- TKMG is involved in ongoing collection of tree-kangaroo sightings via the market stall, website and other contacts.
- TKMG has been supportive of research projects on tree-kangaroos. A research grant program is being initiated to provide limited funding to aid in projects studying tree-kangaroos and other mammals.
- TKMG has recently applied for deductible gift recipient status. If successful, TKMG will be able to receive tax-deductible donations from individuals interested in supporting research and projects on tree-kangaroos and other mammals.
- Research projects on tree-kangaroos have been conducted by students at the School for Field Studies.
- There is a population and health status study of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo going since 2014. The population study involves collaboration with researchers from James Cook University and University of Melbourne. The health study is a PhD project at James Cook University. Another James Cook University PhD project involving tree-kangaroos is looking at novel means of identifying tree-kangaroos through DNA harvested from faecal material. TKMG has been supportive of these projects.

---

### **Update on Yellow-bellied Glider Project**

*By Dr. John Winter & Dave Hudson*

The TKMG management committee and Yellow-bellied glider sub-committee have been very busy over the last few months sorting out arrangements for the yellow-bellied glider (YBG) monitoring project and for a pilot feral cat trapping program proposed for Tumoulin Forest.

For those not familiar with the project, its full title is "Community involvement in the management of the vulnerable yellow-bellied glider in a modified habitat between Atherton and Ravenshoe". The area was chosen because there were a number of isolated populations of YBG on the doorsteps of Atherton, Herberton and Ravenshoe. The project relies heavily on volunteers, previously with

Tablelands National Parks volunteers (TNPV) and now with TKMG, liaising closely with owners/managers of the gliders' habitat – Traditional Owners, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and private landholders. Activities associated with this project include mapping essential habitat trees, monitoring glider activity and mitigating known threats. This includes protecting potential and known den trees at risk from fire.. The ultimate aim is to secure the YBG habitat in perpetuity.

The existing project activities will continue to run under the auspices of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) until TKMG is approved as a 'Scientific User' by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Becoming a 'Scientific User' allows TKMG to apply for ethics approval through the DEHP 'Community Access Animal Ethics Committee'. Once TKMG has become a 'scientific user' and gained animal ethics approval for the proposed work, TKMG can then apply to the DEHP for a 'Scientific research and educational purposes permit'. Holding this permit will allow TKMG to conduct monitoring activities on state managed land (eg. Tumoulin and Mt Baldy Forest Reserves) which are managed by the QPWS (which is no longer part of DEHP but under the Department of National Parks, Sport and Recreation) as well as on private land.

The proposed feral cat trapping project will require its own permit but in the interim we have:

- Identified a standard operating procedure which must be followed, i.e. CAT002: Trapping of feral cats using cage traps" produced by the Invasive Animals CRC
- Secured \$5000 funding from the Norman Wettenhall Foundation to purchase traps, cameras, etc.
- Been offered pro-bono support from two local, licensed veterinarians to humanely euthanize feral cats after they have been trapped. Cats will be checked for microchips so that domestic pet cats (provided their owners have complied with regulations and the cats have been microchipped) will not be euthanized if trapped.
- Entered into discussions with DEHP about commencing this activity under the existing auspicing arrangements. If this is not possible, then the trapping will be put on hold until TKMG obtains the requisite permits and permissions.

If you have questions or concerns about TKMG being involved in the YBG project or about the project itself, please let Simon Burchill, Secretary, know or contact any of the Committee members.

---

On this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the formation of Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group, Inc. the Committee would like to take the opportunity to thank our members for their support and to encourage people to keep in mind that this is a Community Organization so, step up and be an **active** member of our community. Volunteer to help us spread the word about the fascinating environment and amazing animals who inhabit it. Contact any of the Committee members for information about how you can help TKMG encourage appreciation and protection of the amazing native mammals of our area. Get involved---you won't regret it.

## Mammal Mail

Newsletter of the Tree Kangaroo & Mammal Group, Inc.



Please Post to:

Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group, Inc. (TKMG)

PO Box 1409, Atherton ,QLD 4883

e-mail: [info@tree-kangaroo.net](mailto:info@tree-kangaroo.net)

Website: <http://www.tree-kangaroo.net>

President: Peter Valentine [peter.valentine@jcu.edu.au](mailto:peter.valentine@jcu.edu.au)

Vice-President: Amy Shima 0499-180-961

Treasurer: Ruth Whiston 07-4096-6372

Secretary: Simon Burchill 0407-091-347 [sbburchill@gmail.com](mailto:sbburchill@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Amy Shima 0499-180-961 [tkmgnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:tkmgnewsletter@gmail.com)

*The opinions expressed in Mammal Mail are not necessarily those of the Tree Kangaroo & Mammal Group, Inc.*



TKMG thanks Sustainable Solutions Global, Inc. for their generous sponsorship of the newsletter and website.