



Mammal Mail

The Newsletter of the Tree-Kangaroo & Mammal Group

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

Thurs, AUG 6th: 5:30pm Committee meeting at the Malanda Hotel; followed at 7:30pm with a presentation by Sigrid Heise-Pavlov giving an update on distribution of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo.

Mon, Aug 31st close of business: Nominations for 2015 TKMG Awards due to Secretary, Simon Burchill.

Thurs, Sept 3rd: 5:30pm Committee meeting at the Malanda Hotel; interested members are welcome to attend.

Thurs, Oct 1st: 5:30pm Committee meeting at the Malanda Hotel; Annual General Meeting 7:00pm including presentation of inaugural TKMG Awards, followed by Tom & Sherri Tischler talking about, "Wildlife in 3 habitats of Ecuador-Cloud Forest, Galapagos and the Amazon."

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 (July 1st-June 30th). Look for a date on your mailing label or email version of the newsletter

VALE BILL COOPER

by Ceinwen Edwards and Margit Cianelli

On 10 May 2015 the world lost an internationally acclaimed artist, a naturalist and conservationist, known for his humanity and generosity.

Bill was a long-standing member of TKMG and donated the drawings we use as our logo and on our t-shirts.

In his honour TKMG is launching the William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals. It will be awarded annually to a person who has made an outstanding contribution to the conservation of tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals. The award will be a work of art commissioned from a local artist.

Our condolences go to Wendy Cooper.

Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group Awards Program

By John Kanowski, TKMG President

Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group announced the launch of an annual awards program on World Environment Day at the Malanda Falls Visitor Centre. The event was covered by the Tablelander Newspaper and local ABC radio. TKMG is calling on its members to nominate worthy recipients of the following awards: The **William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals**; the **TKMG Carers Award** and the **TKMG Research Grant Scheme**. Those nominated do not have to be TKMG members but nominations will only be accepted from current financial members of TKMG. Details of the awards are as follows:

The **William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals** will be awarded to a person who has made an outstanding contribution to the conservation of tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals.

In honour of Bill Cooper, the internationally renowned artist and long-term TKMG member, the award will be a work of art commissioned from a local artist. For the inaugural (2015) award, TKMG will present a unique and stunning work by local indigenous artist Drew Morta, of a tree-kangaroo painted on corrugated iron.

The **TKMG Carers Award** will be presented to a person who has devoted themselves to caring for injured tree-kangaroos and other north Queensland mammals, and to educating the public about the mitigation of threats to our wildlife. The award is a cash prize of \$1500 to help defray the considerable costs associated with rehabilitating sick and injured native wildlife.

The **TKMG Research Grant Scheme** will provide up to \$2500 to students and scientists conducting research on the wildlife of North Queensland.

Nomination—Please use the forms (pages 5 and 6 of this issue of the newsletter) to nominate someone for one or more of the TKMG awards. If you have any questions about the nomination process or the forms, please contact TKMG secretary, Simon Burchill at 0407-091-347 or sbburchill@gmail.com.

Selection

Awards will be decided by vote of the TKMG committee (with consultation from Wendy Cooper for the William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals) at the September meeting. Where there is a potential conflict of interest, committee members will declare the conflict and stand down from that part of the decision-making process. In making a decision about the **TKMG Carers Award** and the **TKMG Research Grant Scheme**, committee members will consider the availability of alternative sources of funding to the nominee/ applicant.

Presentation of awards

The awards will be presented at the TKMG AGM in October.

Review

The scope of the awards will be reviewed annually by the TKMG committee.



photo by David Hudson of Drew Morta's corrugated iron tree-kangaroo

Update on the Conservation Status of Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo

TKMG has made formal submission to the Queensland government in support of revising the status of Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo back to "near threatened" from the listing as of December 2014 as "of least concern". TKMG President, Dr. John Kanowski dealt with a voluminous paperwork and the submission has been made to the relevant authorities. TKMG is guardedly optimistic that the Queensland Government will review the submission and ultimately revise the status assigned to Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo to "Near Threatened".

TKMG Outreach to Malanda State School Year 3 Students

By Amy Shima

Thanks to the efforts of TKMG committee members, Leanne Hales, Margit Cianelli and Ruth Whiston, TKMG was able to help inform year 3 students from Malanda State School about tree-kangaroos and other animals with whom we share the special habitat of the Atherton Tablelands on World Environment Day.

In spite of only just have returned from visiting her mother in Germany, Margit stepped up to help out and give wonderful presentations about the wildlife of the area and her work caring for them to the students. The Tablelander newspaper reporter wrote up a great article about the event (published in the Tablelander on June 16th). Goal 1 of our 2014 Community Action Plan is to develop an aware and engaged community. Outreach events such as working with the Malanda State School students on World Environment Day are part of the ongoing efforts of TKMG towards achieving this goal.



Photo by Leanne Hales

Update on Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo research

by Roger Martin & Amy Shima

You might see us out on a local roadside or in a field tracking tree-kangaroos. If you're really lucky, you might see a tree-kangaroo who is one of our study subjects—but you'll need a good view with binoculars to spot the tracking collar. We are using both radio-tracking and global positioning satellite (gps) technology to track tree-kangaroos. We're out and about quite frequently in various locations throughout the Atherton Tablelands. If we're on the roadside and it's safe to stop, feel free to "say g'day". The captures (10 so far) have all gone smoothly. We are prepared for the unexpected finding of a sick animal or an injury during capture (something that hasn't ever yet happened during the work Roger did with Bennett's tree-kangaroos or with our work with LTK) with a purpose built enclosure for tree-kangaroos. Combined with Amy's nearly 30 years as a wildlife veterinarian and licensure by QPWS as a tree-kangaroo carer, we're well prepared for just about anything. We'd call on Margit Cianelli or Karen Coombes if we came across any young animals in need of hand-raising.

A big thank-you to our volunteers and to the landowners who have so kindly granted us permission to work on their properties. If you see tree-



Photo by A Shima

kangaroos on your property and would like to help out with this research, please contact us.

Research continues on the road-toll work so you might see Amy and expert volunteer David Gillieson (wearing bright fluoro safety vests) on the roadside recording information about locations where LTK have been killed by vehicles. We've started analysing data from the last several years. I am determined that those animals who have been unfortunate enough to be killed by a car or predator, will be able to help their living relatives by providing us with health status information. So, if you see a dead tree-kangaroo, please ring Amy at 0499-180-961 as soon as possible so we can retrieve the body and add to our knowledge about Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo.

Volunteer Opportunities

Opportunities exist to help TKMG and researchers with various projects. If you are interested in learning what YOU can do to help Tree-kangaroos and other Mammals of the Wet Tropics consider volunteering!

Featured Volunteer Opportunity!

You may remember hearing the "Scat Talks-the use of poo in animal conservation" presentation by PhD student, Avril Underwood (February 2014). Avril is still working on the Tablelands and is looking for volunteers to help her in the field.

Here's the 'hot poo' from Avril on this great opportunity to volunteer:

"I am looking at the distribution, density and genetic structure of populations of arboreal marsupials in different habitat types across the Wet Tropics. My focus animal is Lumholtz's Tree Kangaroo but I am also interested in the ringtail possums. I am using non-invasive sampling methods of faecal pellet (scat) collection and spotlighting to achieve this. DNA from the scats is used to identify individual animals from their genetic 'fingerprint'. This information can tell us how animals are related to each other and how much mixing occurs across different distances and different habitats.

I am looking for volunteers to help with both spotlighting counts at night and scat collection during the day from now until the November. Some of the terrain is quite steep with dense vegetation so volunteers need to be reasonably fit and prepared to get occasionally tangled in Wait-A-While! I will provide transport and food and hopefully animal sightings. I would also welcome anyone with bush camping experience who would like to adventure into the more remote areas across the Wet Tropics where Tree Kangaroos may be lurking!

Whether you want to be a regular volunteer or if you want to give it a go for a day or two, your help would be much appreciated! Please feel free to email me at: avril.underwood@my.jcu.edu.au or call me on [0488972971](tel:0488972971) for further info about volunteering."

On-going volunteer opportunities:

We always welcome members who are willing to spend part of their Yungaburra Market Saturday helping out at the TKMG market stall. Even if you can only stay for a short while, it will help and you'll be doing your part to help TKMG get the message out about tree-kangaroos and other mammals in the Wet Tropics and Atherton Tablelands. For further information, please contact Simon Burchill 0407-091-347 or sbburchill@gmail.com or any of the TKMG Committee members.

2015 TKMG AWARDS Nomination Form.

(CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED)

Please return nominations to:

TKMG Awards, TKMG, PO Box 1409, Atherton, QLD 4883

Your name: _____ TKMG member: Yes / No

1. William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals

Purpose: to publicly recognise the work of a person (or group) who has made an outstanding contribution to the conservation of tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals.

Award: a relevant work of art, commissioned from a (local) artist. Presented at AGM.

Nomination:

Who have you nominated? _____

Describe their contribution to the conservation of tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals:

2. TKMG Carers Award

Purpose: to support the work of a carer who devotes their time and resources to caring for injured tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals, and educating the public on threats to our wildlife.

Award: one or more grants to the total value of \$1500. Presented at AGM.

Nomination:

Who have you nominated? _____

Describe this person's contribution to the care of injured tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals:

How has this carer helped educate the public on threats to our wildlife?

TKMG Research Grant Scheme

Purpose: to support the conduct of research relevant to the conservation of tree-kangaroos or other north Queensland mammals.

Award: one or more grants to the total value of \$2500. Presented at AGM.

Nomination (note: researchers/ students may nominate themselves):

Name of researcher/ student _____

What are the objectives of the research project?

Briefly describe the methodology of the research project:

How will the research help the conservation of tree-kangaroos and other north Queensland mammals?

Will the research meets one or more objectives of the *Community Action Plan for Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo* (LTK CAP)?

If so, which objectives?

What funding is being sought? \$_____

What will the funding be used for?

What alternative sources of funding are available to this project?

Reporting: Note that grant recipients will need to provide TKMG committee with a brief report on expenditure against the grant at the end of the financial year (i.e. if grants awarded October, recipients to report by August following year).

Save the Date! October 1st is the TKMG Annual General Meeting

Thursday, October 1st will be the Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group annual general meeting. In addition to the usual reports and election of committee members, this year will be special in that the inaugural Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group awards recipients will be announced. Local artist, Drew Morta, got special permission from TKMG life member, Ernie Raymont, to be able to paint Uncle Ernie's the 'mupi'. This work of art will be presented to the recipient of the inaugural, William T. Cooper Award for Conservation of North Queensland Mammals.

The presentation after the AGM, "Wildlife in 3 habitats of Ecuador-Cloud Forest, Galapagos and the Amazon" is not to be missed. Tom and Sherri Tischler are not your average couple showing photos from their holiday trip. Sherri spent her career working as a zoo veterinarian in the US, NZ and Australia. Tom is an internationally known sculptor, exhibit designer and all around Renaissance Man. Their photos and tales of a recent trip to the Galapagos, the Cloud Forest of Ecuador and the Amazon promises to be informative and entertaining.

Membership Renewal: Please check either the email containing this newsletter or the address sticker on your paper copy of the newsletter for the date your membership is due for renewal. Please keep in mind the membership in TKMG runs with the financial year so renewals were due 30th June 2015. This year, we hope you'll consider getting more involved with TKMG by joining the Committee, volunteering to help researchers or participating in other projects that TKMG is getting involved with to get the message out about what you can do to help raise awareness and increase our understanding about tree-kangaroos and other mammals of the Wet Tropics.

New Look Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Website Coming Soon!

In order to take advantage of the latest technology and get our message out to the maximum number of people, TKMG has embarked on a major website renovation. Working with local web designer, James Leech, the new TKMG website will enable us to take advantage of various platforms such as smart phones and tablets (in addition to 'normal' computers). The project is still in early stages of development and we are working to make sure the site is 'user-friendly'. We are looking forward to the launch of the new site and will keep you informed as to progress on it. The TKMG website address will remain the same:

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

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Please Post to:



Tree-kangaroo and Mammal Group, Inc.
PO Box 1409
Atherton, QLD 4883

Email: info@tree-kangaroo.net

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

President: John Kanowski 0408-365-609

Vice-President: Amy Shima 0499-180-961

Secretary: Simon Burchill 0407-091-347 sbburchill@gmail.com

Treasurer: Ruth Whiston 07-4096-6372

Newsletter editor: Amy Shima 0499-180-961 tkmgnewsletter@gmail.com

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