

Annual Review

Protecting, promoting and restoring
wilderness 2011-12



**THE
WILDERNESS
SOCIETY**

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Cover Image
Chester Gorge, McIlwraith Range, Cape York Peninsula.
Photo | Kerry Trapnell

National Director's report



Lyndon Schneiders
National Director
The Wilderness Society Inc

During 2011-2012 the Wilderness Society created our first ever national campaign plan in order to better focus our collective efforts. Our three priority campaigns are for protecting the Kimberley; ensuring the protection of Cape York's World Heritage values and wild rivers; and defending our magnificent forests in the southeastern region of the country.

During the past financial year our list of achievements included:

- Protecting the Kimberley from destruction by delaying the construction of a gas hub in James Price Point. Woodside Petroleum and its partners Shell, BP, BHP Billiton, Mitsubishi and Mitsui were planning on the project being well under way by now, and thanks to the local community in Broome and the Wilderness Society's support they have not yet secured government approval for the project.

- Promoting Cape York Peninsula as a World Heritage listing nomination, with the best chance of securing this for the region in decades, including \$23 million in Federal funding aimed at protecting the Cape York Peninsula as a future World Heritage area.
- Restoring hope for peace in Tasmania after decades of struggle by engaging in good faith in the Forests Agreement Talks, which is in its final stages of negotiations as we go to press with this Annual Review.

We have also had many other important achievements throughout Australia, as you can read about in these pages. What is outstanding about the past year is that we have been able to make significant progress on seemingly impossible issues: taking on the largest corporations on Earth to stop them from destroying our land, and working in extremely contentious political environments.

Through our belief in the power of people to make change, we are making a difference together.

We are also working very hard on making sure that our experts on Indigenous Conservation and Rights, Science, Climate Change and Conservation Economies help us find solutions for nature that take into account these four areas of focus, which are crucial to our campaigning work.

Thank you so much for your support during the year, and I look forward to the achievements in the year to come.

Convenor's report



James Johnson
Convenor
The Wilderness Society Inc
Committee of Management

The past financial year has clearly been another important 12 months for the Wilderness Society. From our relentless work in the Kimberley to our campaigns for marine sanctuaries, and new threats such as mining in the wilderness areas of the Tarkine and Cape York Peninsula, our work reaches every corner of Australia. We have confronted new challenges while re-energising existing campaigns.

There's a perceptible sense of renewal and belief in what we've achieved for the environment as an organisation in 2011-12. Conversely, we are under no illusions as to what still needs to be done.

Underpinning our campaign work is the prudent financial management that continues in this challenging fundraising environment. We have delivered another budget surplus and continue to build reserves to fortify the organisation's long-term stability.

During the past year the Wilderness Society continued to strengthen its organisational leadership and expertise by recruiting Matt Brennan and Maritza Schafer to join Cath Hoban and Lyndon Schneiders on our four-person senior leadership team dedicated to overseeing the Wilderness Society's key areas of business operations, communications, fundraising and campaigns.

The Wilderness Society continued its reform program to revitalise and renew our operations including initiating a review of our governance arrangements, establishing a Staff Consultative Committee and commencing work on a strategic plan for our mission to protect Australia's wild places. These were accompanied by more obvious improvements for staff, such as the relocation of our Brisbane Street office in Hobart to a far more suitable location right next door to the long-standing Davey Street campaign centre.

It is exciting that this stability, renewed vitality and unified vision have attracted some of the most talented conservation professionals in Australia to join our team over the past 12 months. We welcome them and the contributions they will make to nature conservation.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to both Debbie Dunn of Tasmania and Stephen Lodge of Victoria who retired from the Committee of Management at the 2011 Annual General Meeting. Our gratitude also goes to Stephen Porter and Hilton Sentinella, both of Queensland, who will step down at the 2012 Annual General Meeting. These four remarkable Wilderness Society members were elected to the Committee of Management in June 2010 and worked extraordinarily hard to steer the organisation through a period of unprecedented change. Their efforts have left the Wilderness Society with a renewed sense of energy, direction and professionalism.

Frontline support is as important as ever with our Wilderness Defenders and fundraisers continuing to lead the way in member recruitment. They have excelled in their work to grow our movement and increase our efficiency and effectiveness, and were ably supported behind the scenes by our business staff.

The Wilderness Society is taking on some of the biggest conservation challenges facing Australia today. It is our wilderness that gives this country its distinctive character and the work that we do to protect, promote and restore these unique and precious places would not be possible without our members and supporters: thank you.

Campaign achievements 2011-12

Cape York Peninsula

Until now Cape York has mostly been spared the impacts of the rampant mining industry in Australia, but eight new bauxite, sand and coal mines are proposed for the Cape with about a quarter of the region under exploration for further mines.



Over the last year we have engaged in strong and ongoing political, policy, media work and community engagement around promoting the ecological significance of Cape York and the need to ensure the region is properly protected long-term from mining and other destructive development.

Significantly, we saw the biggest single investment in Cape York conservation in over a decade with \$23 million in Federal funding aimed at protecting the Cape York Peninsula as a future World Heritage area. Through our massive physical presence in key electorates of Brisbane, we were able to ensure that the case for a Cape York World Heritage nomination and the protection of the Cape's Wild Rivers were key conservation issues in the lead up to and during the state election.

We successfully objected to the Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke regarding Rio Tinto's planned extension of its South of Embley bauxite mine, highlighting the impacts of increased shipping in the Great Barrier Reef, and we also saw the transfer of the Iron Range National Park into the Indigenous Traditional Ownership of the Kuuku Ya'u peoples.

Forest campaign

An independent verification report commissioned by the Federal and Tasmanian governments confirmed what we have been saying for many years – that the conservation values of native forests in Tasmania are nationally and globally significant. This report will pave the way for proposed reserve areas and potential World Heritage assessment while providing a strong scientific base to build upon for current and future campaigns. After decades of divisive debate, it finally provides the information necessary for signatories to negotiate a lasting resolution.



Above and below left: Central Highlands, Victoria. Photo | Peter Halasz. Bottom right: Walking in the Tarkine. Photo | Shutterstock



This year has also seen welcome progress on the historic Tasmanian forests agreement; bringing us closer than ever before to ending 30 years of conflict between the logging industry, communities, governments and environmental groups.

In Victoria the Ethical Paper campaign continues to do great things with more than 13,500 people and nearly 1,500 businesses supporting the action while pressuring Australian Paper to get out of our native forests. We have formed constructive working relationships with companies such as Officeworks to help educate them on the damaging practices of their suppliers, and a major campaign around Reflex paper has made valuable progress in ending the logging of the native habitat of some of Victoria's most endangered animals.

We have continued to be proactive in supporting strong community-based campaigns all across the country including, in Victoria, local activists who rallied against logging in Toolangi State Forest, home to the Fairy Leadbeater's Possum. We provided assistance wherever possible to these passionate people through legal support, events, peaceful protests, media and other creative avenues.

Kimberley campaign

In the past year we provided significant support in mobilising and growing public opposition to the proposed development of a giant liquid natural gas processing plant at James Price Point; a project that would devastate the natural and cultural significance of the Kimberley region. Together with the local community, we have presented a clear and detailed vision for the Kimberley based on protecting the environment and investing in clean and sustainable industries.



Condemnation of the gas hub has been broad and far-reaching, with many industry analysts — including those from Citi Group, JP Morgan and Macquarie Equities — pointing to the James Price Point proposal as nonviable compared to alternatives. The behaviour of the Western Australian Government has also come under severe scrutiny from the campaign; one notable example of this being the judgment by the Chief Justice of the WA Supreme Court, which found the WA Government acted illegally in attempting to force compulsory acquisition of James Price Point on the native title holders.



Furthermore, the WA Environmental Protection Authority's decision to support the project was publicly ridiculed as four of the five board members had to abstain due to conflicts of interest. We also had more than 240 submissions in response to the EPA decision; three times more than ever before. This groundswell of support for the Kimberley saw 60% of available seats in local government elections in Broome go to Indigenous anti-gas hub candidates and, in a notable victory, the WA Government decided to delay the construction of the \$120 million taxpayer-funded access road to the site.

Regional campaigns

Tarkine

The Tarkine campaign has continued to grow as the threats to the area rise, and we are proud to be involved in the type of community engagement that underpins the start of a strong movement. The past year has seen significant organised opposition to dozens of proposed mines that, if built, would devastate the ecology of a wilderness area recognised as globally significant.

A solid response to an online appeal resulted in more than 3000 people voicing their concerns to the Environment Minister, Tony Burke, and more than 5000 writing directly to Venture Minerals. Even though the conversation has been polarising at times, the Tarkine is now living in the consciousness of all stakeholders.

We have also had a presence at the Venture Minerals AGM in Perth, where we were privy to the news that the company's share price had not yet reached the level required in order for capital raising to commence. We are confident that the company has not yet been able to quell investors' fears regarding the huge risks involved with these proposed mines, and we will continue to take action to protect this vulnerable region.

Great Western Woodlands

The Great Western Woodlands is the largest intact temperate woodland left on Earth, with a remarkable richness and diversity of native plant species. Because of its size and relative health, GWW has the potential to provide a safe refuge for many species of wildlife that have disappeared or are in decline in other more fragmented parts of Australia.

Our work has been against the threats that arise from a lack of adequate recognition, protection and conservation management of the woodlands by successive governments. Over the past year we have worked with an alliance of groups to expose the impacts of proposed 500km-long barrier fence in southern GWW, which will now be subject to State and Federal environmental impact assessment.

We also lobbied against proposed mineral exploration in the Helena Aurora Range and laid the groundwork for a big campaign to prevent the mining of this beautiful range. We have also continued our work with the Goldfields Land and Sea Council to apply Indigenous cultural knowledge, particularly in relation to fire, this area.

Simpson Desert

The Simpson Desert is one of the largest areas of high quality wilderness left in Australia. It is already under pressure from pest plants and animals, and the impacts associated with a large and increasing number of tourists. More significantly, it is facing renewed interest from various mining and petroleum companies that have expressed interest in drilling in an attempt to mine coal or extract oil.

Our work over the past year has been towards the declaration of a Wilderness Protection Area in the Simpson. This would provide the highest level of legislative protection available and specifically excludes mining. To this end, we have been involved in advanced negotiations with the SA Government regarding boundaries for this area, and we began work on a broad public relations campaign to bring the beauty and significance of this region into the public consciousness.

Pilliga

The Pilliga Forest is the largest and most intact temperate eucalypt woodland in eastern Australia. It provides vital water recharge for the Great Artesian Basin, as well as being highly significant for both Indigenous and European cultural heritage. A massive coal seam gas project run by Santos threatens to industrialise this iconic biodiversity hotspot; this will involve the destruction of endangered ecological communities and threatened species habitat.

Significantly, after a year-long campaign of protests, actions and awareness raising that exposed the damage caused by coal seam gas in the Pilliga, Santos withdrew its planning application for 550 coal seam gas production wells in the Pilliga Forest, and announced that they will instead conduct further exploration until 2015.

As well as putting significant pressure on the Coalition to protect New South Wales' most valuable bushland, we have worked to build the profile of the Pilliga Forest and the important role it plays for sustaining wildlife in north-west NSW.

Marine

For a nation surrounded by oceans dotted with pristine ecosystems, we've been proud to oversee real progress in our marine campaign over the past financial year.

Most notably, the Federal Government announced plans for the world's largest network of marine reserves after a concerted effort by the Wilderness Society and other environmental groups to gather more than 400,000 submissions from around the nation and the world. Under the proposal, around 2.3 million square kilometres of our oceans will be protected in reserves that prohibit the most damaging forms of fishing and industrial activity like bottom-trawling – the clear-felling of the sea.

In Western Australia, Ngari Capes Marine Park was announced after a decade in the pipeline, and the first coastal Kimberley marine park was created in Camden Sound. An overall increase of sanctuary zones in WA from 13% to 20% was achieved as a result of public pressure, including the protection of the largest inshore reef in Australia, Montgomery Reef.

In South Australia, the State Government finally honoured its 2006 election commitment and declared the Nuyts Archipelago and Investigator Group of Islands Wilderness Protection areas. And in the Northern Territory, the State Government has announced a three-year moratorium on damaging seabed mining.

Murray-Darling Basin

Without the pressure we applied on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA), it is unlikely that the progress made on increasing river flows in the last year would ever have eventuated. Thanks to our major lobbying efforts, the MDBA was forced to remodel its flow projections to align with the most recent scientific studies carried out on the basin. Irrigation lobby groups attempted to force the plan down but our persistent campaigning thwarted their actions.

As a result, proposed flow figures are steadily increasing. This is a promising sign for the future health of the river system and all wildlife that relies on it. There is still much work to be done however and we will not rest until the future of the Murray-Darling Basin can be guaranteed.

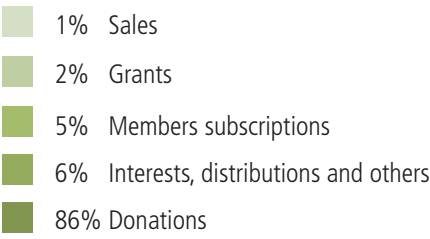
Financial statements for the Wilderness Society Inc

Statement of Comprehensive Income			
For the year ended 30 June 2012			
INCOME	2012	2011	
Income from fundraising, donations, bequests and grants	13,197,418	12,386,883	
Investment and other non-operating income	583,112	324,877	
TOTAL INCOME	13,780,530	12,711,760	
LESS: EXPENSES			
ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS AND PROGRAMS			
– National	1,304,606	1,328,269	
– NSW	858,110	881,301	
– VIC	570,815	546,651	
– TAS	444,235	478,243	
– SA	453,282	480,690	
– WA	599,392	627,088	
– QLD	699,445	651,538	
– NT	37,960	36,978	
– Wild Country programs	233,596	237,737	
– Community awareness events	445,565	–	
– Membership and supporter engagement	833,398	627,197	
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS AND PROGRAMS	6,480,404	5,895,692	
Fundraising expenses: recruitment of new members and supporters	2,643,808	2,098,100	
Fundraising expenses: staff, appeals and other costs	2,156,595	2,318,235	
Governance, finance and operations	1,765,765	1,854,777	
Interest on Forever Wild Trust loan	51,610	–	
Donation to Forever Wild Trust	607,312	49,584	
TOTAL EXPENSES	13,705,494	12,216,388	
NET SURPLUS	75,036	495,372	
Other comprehensive income	–	–	
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	75,036	495,372	

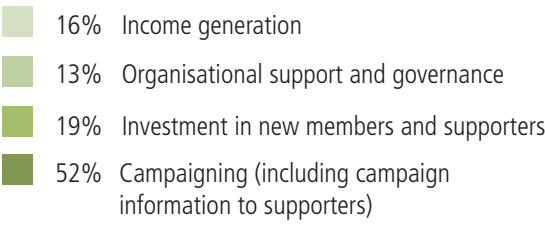
Statement of Financial Position			
For the year ended 30 June 2012			
ASSETS	2012	2011	
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	1,630,504	1,236,711	
Trade and other receivables	484,844	1,044,979	
Inventories	50,202	60,436	
Other assets	245,048	357,283	
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	2,410,598	2,699,409	
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Investments	545,340	545,340	
Property, plant and equipment	469,494	420,920	
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	1,014,834	966,260	
TOTAL ASSETS	3,425,432	3,665,669	
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	1,211,261	1,291,582	
Borrowings	211,836	242,507	
Other liabilities	133,757	472,339	
Short-term provisions	448,355	222,475	
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,005,209	2,228,903	
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	350,000	350,000	
Borrowings	167,364	327,590	
Long-term provisions	120,493	51,846	
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	637,857	729,436	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,643,066	2,958,339	
NET ASSETS	782,366	707,330	
EQUITY			
Accumulated surpluses	782,366	707,330	
TOTAL EQUITY	782,366	707,330	

Statement of Changes in Equity			
For the year ended 30 June 2012			
2012	Accumulated Surpluses	Total	
Balance at 1 July 2011	707,330	707,330	
Total comprehensive income	75,036	75,036	
Balance at 30 June 2012	782,366	782,366	
2011	Accumulated Surpluses	Total	
Balance at 1 July 2010	211,958	211,958	
Total comprehensive income	495,372	495,372	
Balance at 30 June 2011	707,330	707,330	

Where our money comes from



Where our money goes



Treasurer's report



Donald Hellyer
Treasurer
The Wilderness Society Inc
Committee of Management

In 2012 the Committee of Management directed its efforts into looking at increasing efficiency in how we raise and spend funds. We remind ourselves that every donation dollar is valuable, and provided to us by ordinary people wanting to make an extraordinary difference to protect Australia's wild places.

The Wilderness Society, like many environmental charities, is operating in an

increasingly competitive space, and our many generous supporters are experiencing their own financial uncertainty. We are fortunate to retain such wonderful people who support the work of the Wilderness Society and who recognise the importance of our purpose.

Financial Results

Operating result for the financial year 2012 was a surplus of \$75,036 (2011 \$495,372). Reserves increased to \$782,366 (2011 \$707,330).

Income from memberships, fundraising, donations, bequests and grants was \$13,197,418 (2011 \$12,386,883) with the increase over the previous year primarily due to bequests and a very successful WildEndurance event managed by the Wilderness Society, Sydney. The generous supporters who made gifts in their wills to the Wilderness Society ensured that \$607,312 (2011 \$49,584) could be directed to the Forever Wild Trust. The Forever Wild Trust provides long-term support for both the organisation and our WildCountry program, protecting, promoting and reconnecting core wilderness areas across Australia.

We spent \$6,480,404 (2011 \$5,895,692) on our wilderness campaigns and programs with an extensive regional presence concentrating on

our major campaigns in the Kimberley and James Price Point in WA, the Tasmanian Forest Agreement, engagement in the Murray-Darling Basin in NSW, SA and Victoria our Ethical Paper Campaign in Victoria, Wild Rivers and Cape York in Queensland, the National Marine Reserves and protecting the Pilliga Forest in NSW.

Costs to recruit new members and supporters were \$2,643,808 (2011 \$2,098,100) largely due to the rebuilding of capacity. We are planning on this investment to return its costs over the next three to five years.

Continuing To Improve Our Financial Health

Since July 2010 the organisation has continued to rebuild reserves. Our strategy of strong financial planning, coupled with ongoing monitoring and review of our operations, will provide a basis to continue to strengthen the Wilderness Society's financial position over the coming years. We continue to explore practical ways to increase current reserves to provide flexibility to improve processes and protect against unforeseen expenditures.

Thank you - by standing up for wilderness together we've achieved so much

The support and loyalty of our members and donors is critical to the success of the Wilderness Society. Meeting our campaign targets would not be possible without the enormous contribution you make. Concerned citizens provide us with political, practical, moral and financial support; membership subscriptions, appeal donations and online fundraising accounts for 91% of the Wilderness Society's income. The remaining 9% is raised through merchandise sales and grants from foundations and trusts.

At the Wilderness Society we are committed to fighting for nature – for its own sake and as a human right. Nature is vital for human survival; a healthy environment is a basic necessity. The destruction of our environment in favour of industrialisation cannot be justified by the need for commercial growth. Rather, choosing the economy over the environment guarantees neither will survive. Our food, water and shelter are dependent on natural resources, which can only be

degraded once before they're gone forever. As Australians, we have both the privilege of living in this unique and beautiful land and a responsibility to protect it.

Our members and donors are themselves campaigners who advocate for conservation. Without your support, none of the achievements of the past year would have been possible, and the future of our environment would be left in the hands of those who only see it for short-term financial gain.

Thank you

Bequests, grants and gifts in memory

Forever Wild Bequest Program

The Wilderness Society would like to acknowledge the generosity of the following people from whom we received a Bequest or Gift in Memory in 2011–2012. We offer their family and friends our deepest sympathy and we will continue to honour their passion for protecting Australia's wild places.

Bequests:

- Frank Rigby
- David Macdouall
- Harry Bugden
- Laurie Abell
- Joan Calvert
- Noelene Smolenski
- Patricia Hailstone
- Grace Fraser
- Moya Crane
- Keith R Ross

Gifts received in memory of:

- David Buckner
- Hazel Power
- Justin Walker

Grants

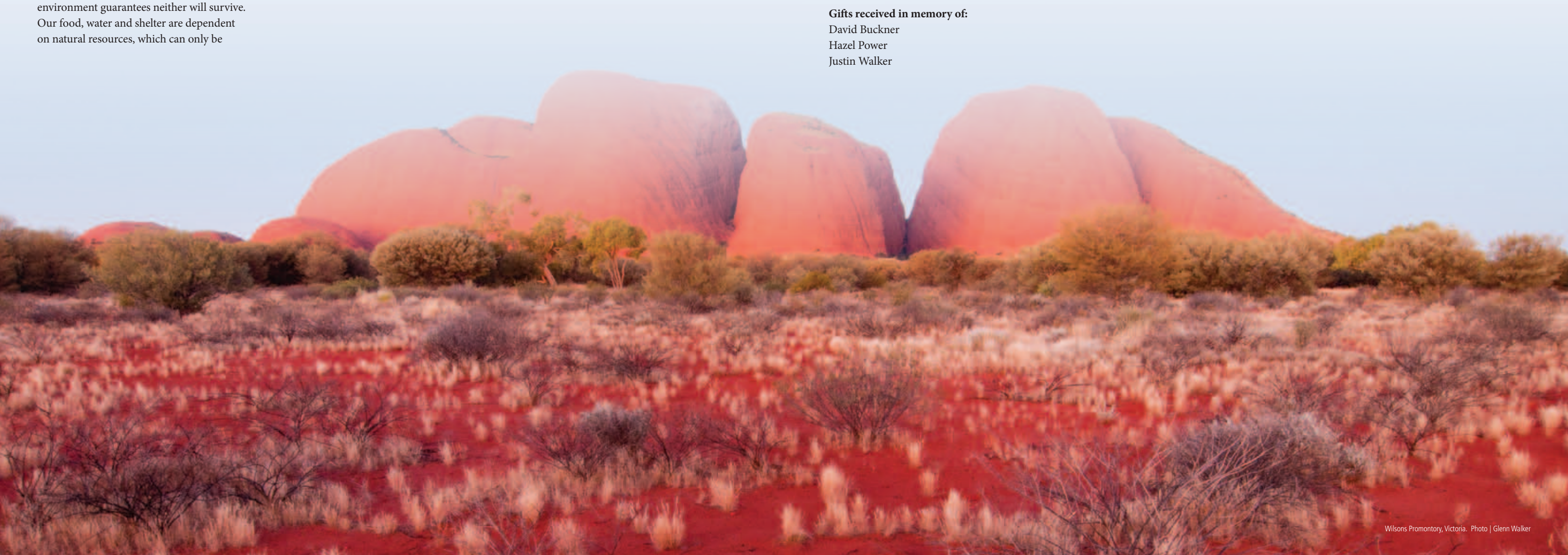
We would also like to extend our thanks to the following Trusts and Foundations who supported our work in 2011-2012:

The William Angliss Fund

The Albert George and Nancy Caroline Youngman Trust as administered by Equity Trustees

The Curlew Fund — a sub fund of Australian Communities Foundation

The Loftus-Hill Trust as administered by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation



Our values | Passion for purpose,
the power of people to make change,
organisational independence and integrity,
compassion, and a commitment to
success in protecting the environment.

Protecting, promoting and restoring wilderness
and natural processes across Australia for the
survival and ongoing evolution of life on Earth.

The Wilderness Society Australia
For membership, donations and bequests
call 1800 030 641
info@wilderness.org.au
GPO Box 716
Hobart TAS 7001
ABN 21 147 806 133

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