

WildernessNews

Winter 2018

Save Ugly.

It's time to support all life.
Warts and all.



[Huge Win: Deforestation crisis
curbed in Queensland](#)

[Meet the Uglies](#)

[Nature Laws That Work:
Our most ambitious project yet](#)

Welcome to the future.

There's never been a more important time for our movement.

The threats to our living world have already begun to impact the lives of everyday people. So we're reaching out to everyone and anyone who's willing to listen with a simple but powerful message:

"It's time to support the life that supports us."

Together, there are 30,000 of us. Many of you have been supporting the Wilderness Society for years, some for decades. We've achieved a lot together — from the forests of Tasmania to the reefs of Ningaloo — spectacular places have been protected and damaging projects have been stopped for good.

Already, thanks to you, we've created real momentum. We drove BP out of the Bight. We stopped a monstrous gas hub at James Price Point. We ushered in the Tasmanian Forests Agreement. And just months ago, we put the brakes on the deforestation crisis in Queensland.

But despite all of our successes, so much is still at stake: our clean air and water, the fertile soils that grow our food, global security, our great cities.

So this year, we've begun our most ambitious project ever. A campaign to replace Australia's toothless environmental rules with a consistent, commonsense plan.

Right now, Australia's environmental laws are broken and it's pushing our iconic species towards extinction. The simplest and fairest solution is a new suite of nationally consistent laws — and an expert independent body with the teeth to enforce them.

In the United States, the Environmental Protection Agency has been using its independent, powerful voice to enforce federal environmental laws since 1970. A snapshot of the EPA's achievements is impressive: eliminating acid rain, establishing emissions standards for vehicles, shutting down dirty factories and power plants, and saving the bald eagle from extinction.

The human benefits are palpable too — a recent study in Southern California found that children's lungs had grown 10 percent bigger and stronger today than they were 20 years ago before pollution cuts were introduced.

How are we going to do this?

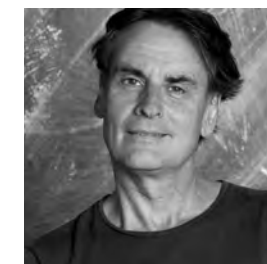
Never underestimate the power of many. The challenges we face are making environmentalists out of all of us. We're broadening our reach with exciting new campaigns like *Save Ugly* (more on page three) to connect with people who may not have otherwise considered supporting the Wilderness Society.

Together, we can secure modern, world-class environmental laws and institutions and make Australia a world leader in climate action. With you by our side, we can turn the state of our environment around.

And the special places we've been campaigning on still need you too. We need you to help drive out the persistent oil companies sniffing around the Bight. We need you to keep the gas giants away from our life-giving water basin in the Pilliga. We need your help in creating lasting protection of our iconic tall forests in Tasmania and Victoria. And we need your help to avert a disaster for the Reef and for the climate by ending the deforestation crisis for good.

Our stunning wild places and enviable climate make Australia a great place to live. And thanks to your ongoing and valued support, you'll help it stay that way for generations to come. We have form, we have the momentum, and we have the people. The future is now.

Support life. Because life supports all of us.



Lyndon Schnieders
National Campaigns
Director

[Click here](#)
to find out how you can help.

Change the laws... Change the future

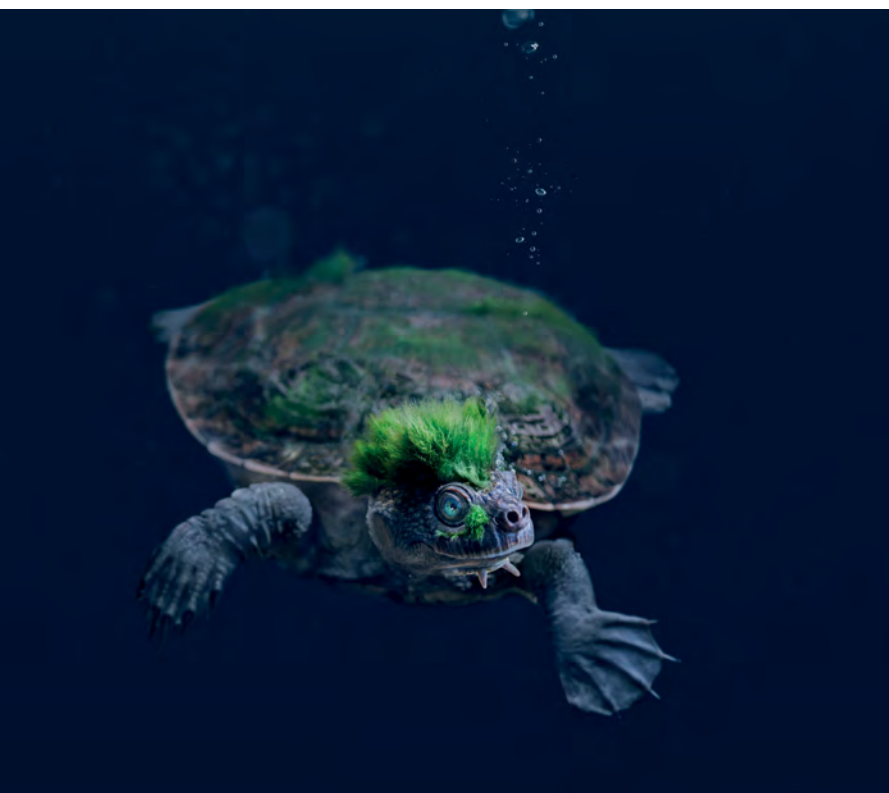
We need your help to push for new laws that will protect our forests and wildlife from destruction.

DONATE NOW

Introducing Save Ugly

We're putting the spotlight on these often unseen and unheralded heroes of nature. You see, without the ugly bits, there'd be no beautiful bits to enjoy. Towering forests are supported in part by the dark, squirmy stuff going on in the soil. Our diverse oceans are kept in check by weird looking sharks. Gondwana rainforests in the Daintree are pollinated by smooch-faced bats. Whale excrement gives tiny plankton the energy they need to fight climate change. Everything is connected.

Meet the Uglies



Mary River Turtle

This bum-breathing turtle once pooped fruit seeds along river banks. How did it wind up on the endangered species list? For decades, the 'Penny Turtle' was caught and sold in pet shops. In 2009, we helped to stop its home from being dammed. Now, it's slowly making a comeback.

Whale Poo

Biodiversity is awash with delightful poo tales, but whales' poo takes the cake. It gives phytoplankton the nourishment they need to suck up carbon (even more than trees do). So every time a whale relieves itself, it's fighting climate change for us.



Ghost Shark

This goofy chimaera goes by many names, including one that alludes to the phallus on its forehead. As a predator, it eliminates sick fish from our oceans, keeping fish stocks healthy. Oh, and it's got a venomous spine. Awesome!

Ghost Bat

If not for its membranous flappy bits, the Ghost Bat might be a national hero. This very vulnerable species hunts rodents, snakes and other creepy-crawlies while pollinating important forest ecosystems. But the caves it calls home are being destroyed by mining explosions.



Adopt an ugly

Make one of these hideous beasts yours today! By adopting an Ugly, you'll help protect the life our lives depend on. You'll also get a magnetic photo and a letter from your creepy critter. Put it on your fridge or bury it deep in a dark closet where no one has to see it.

ugly.wilderness.org.au

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Fixing Australia

Australians love nature — it's part of who we are. But our country has a serious problem: our nature laws are totally stuffed. We now have a once-in-a-generation chance to turn this mess around. Introducing Nature Laws That Work — our most ambitious campaign yet.



The health of our environment affects us all. But our current laws are failing miserably to protect the things that make Australia a great place to live.

Way back in the 1990s, after decades of decimation, Australians decided they had had enough of our native forests being pulped. Faced with so much public opposition, governments tried to find a compromise. This took the form of the Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs).

The RFAs were supposed to strike a balance, protecting the most important forests and preserving some for industry. But the forests (and all of us) lost out to the logging industry. Big time.

Fast forward to 2018, not only are native and old-growth forests still wood-chipped, our native species are being pushed to the brink of extinction — like the critically endangered Leadbeater's possum.

And our future is on the line, too. These intact ecosystems support all of the 'ugly' bits of nature that clean our water, build resilient soils, pollinate food crops, and control pests and disease.

This is just one example of a broken system. By every measure, there should be laws to prevent this from happening, but our current nature laws allow it.

A big problem needs a big solution

It's a problem that's hitting us from all angles.

Why can old growth forests still be pulped to make office paper? How is it possible for Queensland to be rivalling Brazil's deforestation front? Why is it okay for oil companies to drill in the Great Australian Bight? When did we make it possible for our precious water tables to be pumped full of toxic waste by gas companies?

Our current system of laws and institutions simply cannot deal with the challenges we face.

We're calling for a commonsense plan to fix our environment, backed by clearer laws and an independent watchdog.

CHANGE THE LAWS

Will you help us make history? Donate now at wilderness.org.au/newlaws

What's gone wrong and how do we fix it?

Unless they're actively enforced, Australia's environmental laws aren't worth the parchment they're written on. Right now, the lines of responsibility between Federal and State are blurred. We have short-term parliaments forever flip-flopping on policy.

Under the current system, even the best of intentions will fall short. In Queensland, for every tree planted under the Federal Government's expensive scheme, five are destroyed by deforestation. Commitments to protect the Great Barrier Reef from coral bleaching still aren't backed by a robust emissions reduction plan. **And in perhaps the most shocking recent example of our broken system — in 2009, the Christmas Island pipistrelle went extinct while officials debated the best way to spend the funding set aside to save it.**

Change the laws. Change the future.

The simplest and fairest solution is a new suite of nationally consistent laws — and an expert independent body with the teeth to enforce them.

This year, a number of key decisions on the environment are being made. The RFAs are up for review and renewal, and the federal election is in the pipeline.

And it's our time to stand up and finish off what started back in the 1990s. It's time to get rid of the RFAs for good in order to protect the best of our natural heritage from more years of destruction.

Let's create a real future for all native critters. The ugly ones like ghost bats and punk turtles, and the not-so-ugly like gliders, koalas and quolls. Let's have cleaner air, more resilient soils, healthy oceans, and a climate we can rely on for generations to come.

Can you help us?

Great things happen when people get together. With supporters like you by our side, we have every chance of making history.

From taking the fight to the boardrooms of companies that profit from nature destruction, to helping us keep up the political pressure at this critical junction. We'll insist on a major overhaul of our failed environmental laws, and your support will give us the strength we need to win.

Change the laws... Change the future

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Campaigns in action

With your help, we're focussing our collective energy in two clear directions: campaigns for climate action and campaigns for conservation. Here's what's been happening on both fronts.

Nature Laws That Work

The campaign for Nature Laws That Work has built Australia's largest environment alliance ever. We've been working with some of Australia's top lawyers to rebuild our laws from the ground up, and things have really taken off in the last six months. We've made the destruction of nature front page news for the first time in a decade, with two mainstream news outlets running multiple feature articles on Australia's deforestation and extinction crises over the last three months. We've taken the fight for change to our national parliament by sending over 18,000 letters to the Federal MPs with the Australian Labor Party including our ask for new nature laws in their draft election platform.



Photo: Ingvar Kenne

Deforestation

In May, we had a breakthrough in our campaign to end deforestation in Queensland. Thanks to your support, new deforestation laws were passed by the state's parliament. These new laws are a big first step, protecting huge swathes of old-growth and high conservation forests from clearing. However, there's still a lot of work ahead of us. If we are ever truly going to get this crisis under control, the industries that are driving the destruction must reform, and loopholes contained in the new laws need to close. We'll continue the fight until the deforestation crisis is over. In other good news, we successfully advocated for a \$500 million Land Restoration Fund to start undoing some of the damage — an exciting outcome for conservation and climate.



Photo: Hugh Brown

Great Australian Bight

Statoil may have just changed its name to Equinor, but the Norwegian oil company is seeing that our campaign to protect the Great Australian Bight will only continue to grow. We've taken the fight right to Equinor's company headquarters in Norway, with the Wilderness Society and the Mayor of Kangaroo Island raising our concerns directly at the company's May AGM. At the same time, we have been briefing Equinor shareholders on their company's risky plans for the Bight. Community opposition to Equinor's drilling plans is growing rapidly too, and 10 local councils across coastal South Australia have now passed formal resolutions opposing oil drilling. With Onkaparinga, Alexandrina, City of Port Adelaide Enfield and City of Marion councils passing motions in the last two months alone, it is becoming increasingly clear that no oil company has a social licence to drill in this marine wilderness.



Photo: Sarah Rees

Pilliga

At 38 times the size of the City of Sydney, the Narrabri Gas Project is the largest proposal by land area in the history of NSW — it's also the most controversial. Last year the project sparked a record-breaking 23,000 official submissions, with 98% opposed. Recently, we've been working with local communities, with scientists and other experts to analyse Santos' response to submissions and highlight its flaws. Over coming months, we'll continue to engage deeply in the assessment process, striving to force the greatest rigour possible.



Victoria's Forests

Dodgy logging deals — known as Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) — were signed twenty years ago. In Victoria, they have allowed decades of destruction in threatened species habitat, old-growth forests, and the water catchments that provide Melbourne with clean, safe drinking water. We've lobbied hard for these deals to be abandoned, and the Victorian government agreed that the RFAs are out-of-date and has committed to a thorough review of them. Watch this space — your views about how our precious native forests should be managed will be critical throughout the review period to ensure we don't get another round of decades-long dodgy logging deals.

Kimberley

With your support, we're working towards a vision for the Kimberley based on a conservation economy which supports life, respects Traditional Custodians ancient culture and allows their local communities to thrive. We're campaigning hard to keep the world's largest untapped shale gas reserves underground. These reserves, found in the Kimberley's Canning Basin, could blow Australia's entire carbon budget four times over if fracked. Although there's a temporary ban on gas fracking in Western Australia until 2020, it's advancing as one of the greatest threats to the region.



Tasmania's Forests

The campaign to properly protect Tasmania's forests and the special values they hold continues. In March, Tasmania went through a state election that saw the Wilderness Society campaigning for forests strongly, with public meetings, TV advertising and door-knocking. The positive campaign to formally protect iconic forests like the Douglas-Apsley, Bruny island, Wielangta and takayna/Tarkine will continue. Meanwhile, logging in the habitat of species like the swift parrot needs serious reform. Logging in state-owned forests still doesn't meet the global standards set by the Forestry Stewardship Council certification scheme.

Read more at wilderness.org.au/work

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MOVEMENT FOR LIFE

A little over a year ago, we began a targeted community organising strategy centred around curbing Queensland's deforestation crisis. We're off to a great start, but there's more to be done. Here's how we did it.

One conversation at a time, our goal was to make deforestation an election issue, and that's exactly what happened.

We set about building a small army of supporters who were connected by shared values. We ended up with teams of persuasive, highly-trained environmental leaders, with the social networks, skills, tools and energy to hustle for change.

Empowered with their newfound skills, these crack community organisers hit the streets to connect with Queenslanders around the deforestation crisis. More than 250 committed Movement For Life supporters went door-to-door in targeted electorates to shape the broader conversation around deforestation.

People were incredibly receptive to the issue, and generally shocked that it was happening in their own backyard on such a globally significant scale. There's no doubt that this on-ground activity

was a turning point in the deforestation debate in Queensland. Politicians heard the chorus of constituents concerned about the issue loud and clear and an election promise was made to stop the crisis.

Today, Queensland has made an important first step in reigning in its excessive deforestation and land clearing with much-needed new state laws. However, there's still a hard slog ahead of us if we're truly going to curb this crisis. We need to continue to advocate for much stronger federal laws and meaningful industry reform, or we'll find ourselves in the same position in a few years time.

But the early signs are positive — our movement has barely stopped to catch its breath — it only continues to grow in strength.

Now, we're using this momentum to usher in a new era for environmental protection in Australia. Just like we changed the landscape in Queensland, we'll scale up our ambition to demand nature laws that work for the entire country.

We cannot meet our purpose and win our campaigns without more and more Australians joining us. Our values say we are committed to the power of people to make change. This is what Movement For Life is all about.

Great conversations change minds. Movement For Life gives you the building blocks to spread your values and create change in your community. Together, we'll put the political power back in the hands of people who care.

Join the movement at
movement.wilderness.org.au

Wear your heart on your sleeve.

You don't have to look ugly to Save Ugly. We're celebrating the not-so-cute critters that support life on earth — and you can too. Designed by local and international artists, these tees are rearing their ugly heads for a limited time only, so don't miss out. Ew!

Printed on quality AS
Colour Mali tees

100% cotton

Ethically produced

Limited edition



Ugly giant isopod

Giant isopods are an example of deep-sea gigantism — they are far larger than their shallow-water relatives. Living proof that big is not always beautiful. But without them, who would decompose waste on the ocean floor?

Artist: Tin&Ed



Ugly gecko

Smooth knob-tailed geckos can self-amputate their head-shaped tails as a defense mechanism. Gross, but cool. Plus, they keep creepy-crawly populations under control.

Artist: Ellen Porteus



Ugly handfish

Why swim when you can walk? The red handfish, aka 'warty angler', was the first Australian marine animal to be listed as critically endangered. Fifty million years ago, they were abundant — but now they only wander the waters south-east of Australia, mainly around Tassie.

Artist: Rudi De Wet



Ugly fly

Far from a common bugbear, the humble fly is an important pollinator, making them of considerable value to humans and ecosystems. So you might want to reconsider reaching for that swatter next time...

Artist: Reg Mombassa



Ghost shark

Ghost sharks are living fossils that have stayed virtually unchanged for more than 400 million years. The males are total d*ckheads, sporting retractable penises on their foreheads.

Artist: Stefan Marx



Save the whale poo

Whales excrete plumes of liquid feces which provides important nutrients to CO₂-sucking phytoplankton. Eat sh*t, ocean-dwellers.

Artist: Steph Hughes

shop.wilderness.org.au

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Life Supporters



**Janet Dimelow Life
Supporter**

I can't say exactly when my love for nature began. I remember riding a horse through a forest and thinking that it was as beautiful as a film set. It struck me I had it around the wrong way. A film set can only be magnificent enough to mimic nature; to successfully capture nature in all its beauty.

I remember the Wilderness Society starting in Tasmania when people from around Australia got together with the Federal Government to save the Franklin. When I saw Tasmania I was moved by its beauty. I felt its vulnerability. This has had a big influence on me. I joined the Wilderness Society because of Dr Bob Brown and his towering integrity.

The Wilderness Society is an evolving organisation. My hope for the environmental group comes from the belief that a significant number of people care and the groups will lead the charge into reduced carbon emissions; reduce human waste, make space for a wilderness, and respect for our native flora and fauna.

People who are thinking about supporting the Wilderness Society might think of the adage: The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good people do nothing.

When future generations look back at our time they will see in the global community a breathtaking denial of the damage done; hopefully they will see the Wilderness Society was one of the strands of change that reached out to wake us all up!



**Gemma Plesman
Campaigner**

As the Wilderness Society's Queensland Campaign Manager for the past two years, **Gemma Plesman** is on a mission to end deforestation, and protect the Reef, our forests and wildlife. Needless to say, she's off to a great start.

How did you get into this field of work?

When I was younger, my home in Northern NSW became threatened by coal seam gas. My friends and I decided to make superhero costumes to raise the alarm. We called ourselves Girls Against Gas and we helped to mobilise hundreds of people to take action in their own way. A powerful community movement was formed and together stopped the extraction of gas on our doorstep.

What motivates you?

Queensland is truly amazing – there are species of plants and animals that are found nowhere else in the world. Sadly, it's also a state that clears more bushland than the rest of Australia combined. Throw climate change into the mix too, and it's clear that we need to take swift action to protect every precious patch of refugia left.

How did it feel to get the recent campaign win in Qld?

Standing shoulder to shoulder with Wilderness Society members and supporters as we blew the lid off Queensland's hidden deforestation crisis was both humbling and energising. The real heroes are the selfless wildlife carers on the front line and the hundreds of volunteers who had thousands of conversations with other Queenslanders. There's still plenty of work to do. We have secured stronger laws, but there are still big loopholes in the legislation to close.

Honorary Life Membership Nominations

Following the closing of the nominating period for 2017 Honorary Life Membership nominations, the two nominations received were presented for consideration and decision by the Board, as follows:

Karuna Knights, nominated by the Wilderness Society Tasmania

John Bailey, nominated by the Wilderness Society WA

Proposal: That the Wilderness Society Ltd Board agree that Karuna Knights be granted Honorary Life Membership of the Wilderness Society Ltd.

Proposed: Stuart Baird, Seconded: Coral Robinson.

Proposal agreed by consensus

Proposal: That the the Wilderness Society Ltd Board agree that John Bailey be granted Honorary Life Membership of the Wilderness Society Ltd.

Proposed: Stuart Baird, Seconded: Melissa McQuillan

Proposal agreed by consensus

Notification of awarded Honorary Life Memberships will be sent to the Wilderness Society Member Groups in September, with awards announced at the Wilderness Society Annual General Meetings in October-November.

It's AGM time

The Wilderness Society Ltd Notice of 2018 Election of Directors and Annual General Meeting

The Wilderness Society's achievements over its 42 year history are something all Members can take pride in. As a Member, you are a vital part of our success story.

Each year Members participate in the election of our Board of Directors. The nomination and election process is designed to promote broad geographic representation and elected Directors must come from at least four of the following six regions: Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales; Queensland; Northern Territory and South Australia; Tasmania; Victoria; and Western Australia.

Due to the requirements of the transition clause in the Constitution, elected Directors who will be retiring, and who are able to renominate, at the 2018 Annual General Meeting are Linda Selvey from

Queensland, Coral Robinson and Leanne Craze from New South Wales, Craig Zanker from Victoria and Stuart Baird from Tasmania, opening five (5) Director positions for election. Our continuing elected Directors are Larissa Zimmerman and Sam Rando.

Directors may be elected from regions in which there are vacancies, these regions are Queensland; Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales; Northern Territory and South Australia; Tasmania; Victoria; and Western Australia.

The Wilderness Society Ltd operates nationally with Campaigning, Organising, Communications, Membership, Fundraising and Business Operations arms that work across several offices alongside separately incorporated Campaign Centre Members. The Board maintain oversight of all these activities and at this election the organisation is looking for particular skills or experience in the governance of non-government organisations; financial and risk management; environmental advocacy and social change; and legal expertise.

The Wilderness Society is calling for nominations from Members for the position of Director. If as a Member you are interested in nominating, please contact executive.officer@wilderness.org.au or call 1800 030 641 for further details and nomination form.

Nominations will close at 5pm AEDT on Thursday, 11 October 2018. Election voting opens on Thursday, 25 October 2018 when candidate information and voting material will be made available on www.wilderness.org.au/AGM

Voting will close at 5pm AEDT on Thursday, 15 November 2018.

The results of the election will be notified to Members at the Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 22 November 2018 at 6:30pm AEDT. Details of the various locations where you can attend the meeting will be available on www.wilderness.org.au/AGM from 25 October 2018.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support as a Member, and to encourage you to participate as a candidate as well as in our 2018 election process.

For nature,

**Leanne Craze and
Stuart Baird**

Co-Convenors

The Wilderness Society

Matt Brennan

Secretary

The Wilderness Society

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