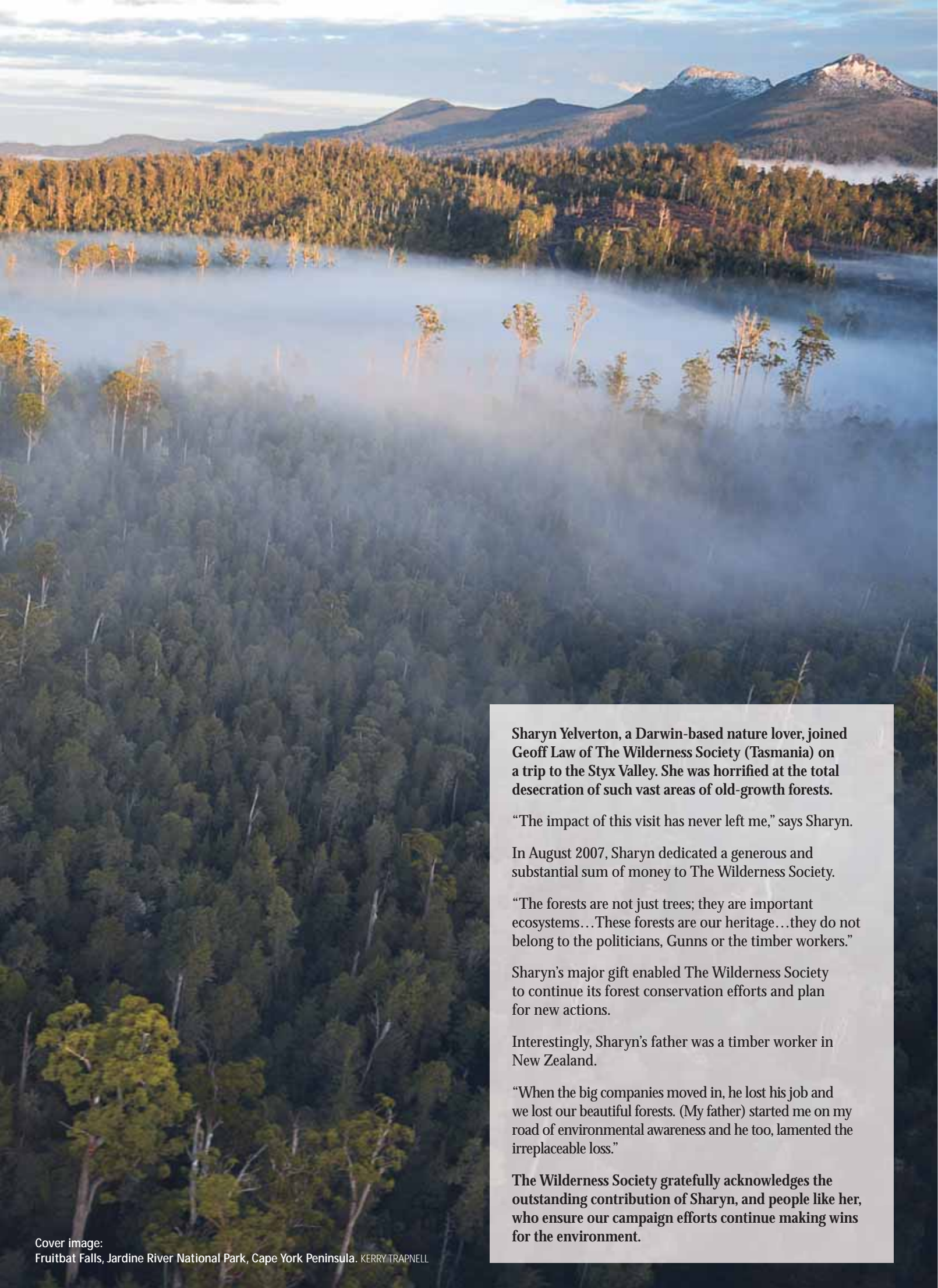


Annual Review

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008



THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY



Cover image:
Fruitbat Falls, Jardine River National Park, Cape York Peninsula. KERRY TRAPNELL

Above: Tall eucalypts in the upper reaches of the Styx Valley, overlooked by snow-capped Mt Mueller. ROB BLAKERS

Sharyn Yelverton, a Darwin-based nature lover, joined Geoff Law of The Wilderness Society (Tasmania) on a trip to the Styx Valley. She was horrified at the total desecration of such vast areas of old-growth forests.

“The impact of this visit has never left me,” says Sharyn.

In August 2007, Sharyn dedicated a generous and substantial sum of money to The Wilderness Society.

“The forests are not just trees; they are important ecosystems... These forests are our heritage... they do not belong to the politicians, Gunns or the timber workers.”

Sharyn’s major gift enabled The Wilderness Society to continue its forest conservation efforts and plan for new actions.

Interestingly, Sharyn’s father was a timber worker in New Zealand.

“When the big companies moved in, he lost his job and we lost our beautiful forests. (My father) started me on my road of environmental awareness and he too, lamented the irreplaceable loss.”

The Wilderness Society gratefully acknowledges the outstanding contribution of Sharyn, and people like her, who ensure our campaign efforts continue making wins for the environment.

Executive Director’s report

The past year has seen change on an enormous scale at national and international levels and The Wilderness Society continues to position itself to shape and respond to these changing conditions.

As the world continues to grapple with the implications of climate change, The Wilderness Society found itself a lead player on the international stage on the very important role of forests and climate. The release of the Australian National University’s (ANU) *Green Carbon* report, has shown conclusively that Australia’s forests store, on average, three times more carbon than previously estimated – and in some cases up to 10 times more carbon. The Wilderness Society promoted this new knowledge by engaging the community at Forest and Climate forums around Australia, urging forest protection as part of a national climate change strategy. The Final Report of Professor Ross Garnaut’s climate change review, has affirmed this work, stating that Australia’s greenhouse emissions can be reduced significantly if logging of native forests and land clearing are stopped immediately.

The Wilderness Society is now fully engaged in the international negotiations which will determine the way in which forests and their carbon are counted in Australia and globally, from 2012 onwards. The final decision on these accounting rules will profoundly affect the fate of Australia’s tall forests as well as the forests of the Amazon, Indonesia and the Congo.

The election of a new Commonwealth Government swept away a number of national initiatives that posed significant threats to our natural environment. Our anti-nuclear campaign gave voice to the significant community concern about nuclear reprocessing, nuclear power stations and international waste dumps, all of which are no longer being proposed. And plans for converting northern Australia to ‘the food bowl’ of Asia, bringing with it the scourge of major dams, land clearing and salinity risk to the world’s most significant remaining tropical savannah, have been significantly downscaled.

Of course, the consequences of climate change and the many other ongoing threats to our natural habitats make our campaigns on forests and woodlands, Northern Australia, the marine environment and wildlife as important as ever.

The campaign to stop Gunns’ pulp mill, which threatens to destroy significant areas of Tasmania’s native forests and poses a risk to Tasmania’s environmental, economic and social future, has grown in strength. The new state Premier, David Bartlett, has acknowledged community concerns and promised to cut government support for the mill. Gunns has repeatedly failed to meet timelines on the assessment of environmental conditions and has required deadline extensions to provide the necessary information. The proponent’s own bankers, ANZ, refused to fund the project and Gunns has struggled to secure alternative finance for its construction.

The emerging campaign to secure protection for the Great Western Woodlands, the largest temperate woodlands in the world covering 16 million hectares in the southwest of Western Australia, has progressed in leaps and bounds with a significant injection of funds by the Pew Environment Group’s Wild Australia program. This enabled a major community awareness campaign which has seen bipartisan political party support for the first steps towards proper protection and management for this biodiversity hotspot.

Our work campaigning for protection and better management on Cape York has delivered significant achievements this year with the first Cape York Indigenous Protected Area announced by our project partners the Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation on the Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers (197,500 ha) and two Aboriginal owned, co-managed National Parks, being declared at McIlwraith Range (160,000 ha) and Running Creek / Lilyvale (35,500 ha).

The hard work of converting SA’s new *Marine Parks Act* to actual parks began this year. This legislation commits to establishing 19 new marine national parks across the wild and beautiful coastal environments of icons such as the Great Australian Bight, the Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island.

On either side of the Murray River, The Wilderness Society has been actively campaigning to protect the majestic River Red gums that grace this much-troubled Australian waterway. A Victorian assessment is proposing logging and grazing will be significantly reduced and we anticipate news of a number of new protected areas to be announced in late 2008. By contrast, the NSW government is dragging its feet on their part of the red gum forests, but feeling the pressure from our ongoing campaign.

Unfortunately, new threats to nature continue to emerge and nowhere more so this year than in the Kimberley where massive industrialisation driven by oil and gas exploration offshore threatens to change the region forever. The Wilderness Society has established a new campaign for the land and sea, bringing to bear our considerable campaign experience and scientific knowledge from elsewhere in the north of Australia.

In 2008, The Wilderness Society in South Australia fended off a potentially huge mining operation in the internationally significant Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary. And in the Northern Territory, considerable progress has been made to curtail a further deforestation / plantation development on the Tiwi Islands.

The global economic woes are likely to have impacts on all non-government organisations reliant on the commitment of its members and supporters to fund its activities. The Wilderness Society is no exception and we want to thank you so much for your ongoing and incredibly generous contributions to help us in this vital work for nature and wilderness.

Alec Marr

Alec Marr, Executive Director
The Wilderness Society Inc



Alec Marr (left) with Professor Michael Soule, the ‘father of conservation biology’ and co-chair of the WildCountry Science council.
Photo: Andrew Wong

Our vision...WildCountry

In the face of climate change, landscape conservation initiatives that think beyond protecting one place at a time, that focus on maintaining resilience in nature and restoring ecological connections, will be the key to the survival of life on Earth. This is exactly what WildCountry does.

WildCountry's 'big picture' perspective underpins all of The Wilderness Society's work. It is a fundamental understanding of how nature works, based on connections – and how these evolve over time.

The following five steps are how we are putting the WildCountry vision into action across Australia.

1. Developing a continent-wide planning framework underpinned by cutting-edge science and Indigenous ecological knowledge. It's vital we look at the continent as one functioning system and think about the long-term future of the people and wildlife that call it home.
2. Campaigning to protect the last great wild places in Australia from destructive practices – places like the savannahs and rainforests of Cape York, the spectacular

Kimberley and its Humpback nursing grounds offshore, our carbon-rich native forests, and the biodiversity of WA's Great Western Woodlands.

3. Working with partners to restore damaged landscapes and remove destructive activities outside protected areas.
4. Developing 'conservation economies' across Australia. The Wilderness Society is actively encouraging jobs, businesses and industries that are compatible with nature while also providing the social and economic development needed by people.
5. Ensuring community involvement in land and sea protection and management across Australia. WildCountry is a vision for everybody. We've been developing partnerships with Traditional Owners and working with community groups to implement WildCountry on the ground. It's also been encouraging to see governments starting to adopt WildCountry principles in their conservation planning.

The Wilderness Society is a community-based environment organisation. We work to safeguard our sources of clean water and air, to tackle devastating climate change, and to create a safe future for all life on Earth.

We were born in 1976, and our first major victory was Australia's most famous environmental campaign – saving the Franklin River. Since then, with the support of the community, we've worked to protect millions of hectares of our greatest wild places.

Our WildCountry work includes mobilising the community, driving world-class science, exploring sustainable economic solutions and getting the message through to government and industry.

Southern Australia in focus

There are interesting challenges in implementing the WildCountry vision in Southern Australia. Much of the south has been heavily fragmented by intensive agriculture and land clearing, so the key is protecting what's left and beginning to restore and build connections back into these landscapes. The following are just some highlights of the landscape initiatives taking place across the Southern states.

Great Southern Sanctuary

For several years The Wilderness Society has been campaigning to protect, restore and reconnect native vegetation in the vast Great Southern Sanctuary (GSS) covering western Victoria, south-western New South Wales and eastern South Australia.

The initiative contributes to the Habitat 141 vision, along with the efforts of an alliance of organisations including Greening Australia and Trust for Nature. In the last five years the alliance has grown substantially, with a range of government and non-government organisations coming on board.

The project seeks to protect existing native vegetation, from the Cobboboonee forests in the south, to the red gum forests along the Murray and mallee country to the north of Bordertown, South Australia. Protecting and improving management of ecological processes in the region, including ensuring that more water reaches rivers and achieving better fire management, is a key goal. Over the next year, alliance members will be working with farmers and other



land owners to replant large areas and place conservation covenants on properties to protect existing native vegetation.

Gondwana Link

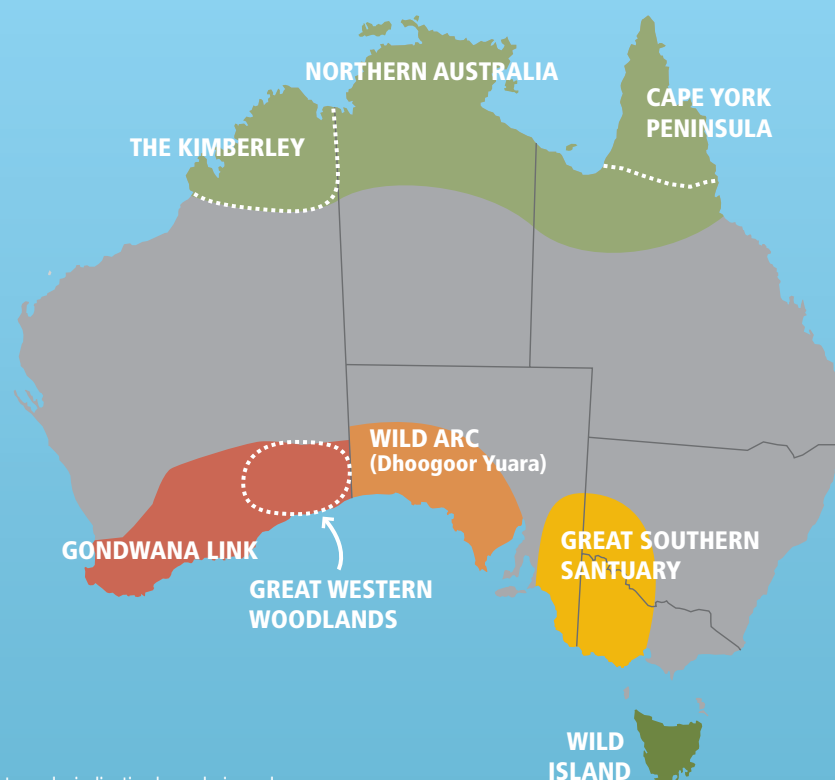
Gondwana Link is a community-driven initiative to rebuild connections into a landscape spanning about 1,000 kilometres from the Karri forests of the south-west tip of WA to the Great Western Woodlands (GWW) on the edge of the Nullarbor.

It is a collaborative project and The Wilderness Society contributes through our strengths in advocacy and science. The Great Western Woodlands have been the main focus of our activity here and will continue to be throughout 2009.

In June 2008, The Wilderness Society released a significant report on this region, *The Extraordinary Nature of the Great Western Woodlands*¹, which highlighted the value of this ecosystem more widely. It was followed up by a community awareness raising campaign which put GWW on the map in the minds of the WA community, resulting in bipartisan support for its protection.

Working in consultation with industry, The Wilderness Society has brokered strong relationships with several mining companies to back the proposal for regional management and establish a trust fund for management of fire and invasive species.

Landscape conservation initiatives incorporating WildCountry Science



Note: Not to scale, indicative boundaries only

The WildCountry Science Council

WildCountry is based on cutting-edge conservation science. In order to develop this science and to inform our work across Australia, The Wilderness Society convenes a Science Council made up of leaders in the field of landscape and marine ecology.

The WildCountry Science Council is charged with developing the principles for justifying and aiding implementation of whole landscape conservation.

The landscape scale initiatives shown on the adjacent map are in addition to our campaigns to protect our wild places all over Australia from destructive practices.



Campaigner profile: Clem Lawrie, Country and Culture Adviser

In South Australia The Wilderness Society is working with senior Mirning Traditional Owner, Clem Lawrie, as Country and Culture Adviser. Clem's work involves progressing the goals of WildARC (Dhoogoor Yuara) – our WildCountry landscape initiative in South Australia – in line with our Cooperation Agreement with the Aboriginal Cultural Development Foundation.

WildArc stretches from the eastern Eyre Peninsula and across the Nullarbor, taking in a marine and terrestrial habitat extending over 200,000km². The Wilderness Society is committed to achieving landscape health and resilience in this outstanding area through advocacy, community engagement and planning large scale restoration at five sites. Clem will be working towards the achievement of a Nullarbor wilderness declaration, with accompanying reform of the *Wilderness Act* that would allow joint management of protected areas to occur between the Government and Traditional Owners.

¹ The report was written by The Wilderness Society team together with contributions by members of the WildCountry Science Council. The work was made possible by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant awarded to the Australian National University (ANU), with The Wilderness Society as an industry partner. It can be downloaded at www.wilderness.org.au/gww

Major Gifts

“I support The Wilderness Society because they are a passionate, independent organisation of people who care about the environment. We need active conservation organisations that care about the environment for future generations and preserve whatever wilderness remains. The Wilderness Society represents the true voice of the Australian people.

I particularly loved The Wilderness Society’s practical way of helping to create 100 Aboriginal Ranger positions to help protect and manage Cape York and its wild rivers.

I increased my support due to The Wilderness Society’s professional campaigning on important issues, which includes the protection of pristine wilderness and the recommendations that there are many employment opportunities for sustainable industries such as tourism and fishing. The Wilderness Society extends far and wide, and I will continue to support them.

Being part of the whale research trip was most unforgettable experience. Apart from the absolute enjoyment of viewing the magnificent Humpbacks, I particularly enjoyed talking with likeminded people who wish to protect our precious environment. The experience with these beautiful caring, passionate people was refreshing and inspirational. The coast of the Kimberley is precious and should be given the highest amount of protection that is available.”

– Carolyn Emms, Major Gift Giver and valued supporter.

Alec Marr, Carolyn Emms, Annabelle Sandes, Josh Coates and Phillip Emms, August 2008, Camden Sound area, Kimberley coast, WA. PHOTO: RENAE WILLIAMS



Northern Australia

One of the last great wild places on Earth

Northern Australia stretches from the Kimberley region in Western Australia to Cape York in far north Queensland. With tropical rainforest, wild rivers, wetlands and vast savannahs, Northern Australia is like no other place on Earth.

So far, this region has largely escaped from the agriculture and industrialisation that have decimated the southern parts of Australia – but threats are mounting. Proposals for mining, land clearing, dams and expanded agriculture all have the potential to carve up this stunning landscape. Furthermore, the spread of weeds and feral animals threaten the long-term health of the region.

And of course, climate change will have a dramatic impact. Even a small rise in sea level will cause immense damage to the low lying wetlands of the north, including Kakadu and the immense Gulf country, and the Great Barrier Reef.

The Commonwealth Government’s announcement of a \$180 million land acquisition fund to expand the National Reserve System, with an emphasis on Northern Australia, is welcomed by The Wilderness Society.

In August 2007, The Wilderness Society and partners released *The Nature of Northern Australia* scientific report, which demonstrates that Northern Australia has the largest expanses of intact rivers and catchments on the continent – and contains the largest and healthiest tropical savannah left on the planet. This report has set the scene for the incoming Federal Government to review how we manage Northern Australia into the future.

Cape York

The Wilderness Society has been at the frontline of successful campaigns to protect Cape York for 20 years – and the last year has been no exception. Ultimately, we hope to gain World Heritage status for this spectacular region, and each success we’ve had is a step along the way.

One huge breakthrough was the Queensland government’s declaration of the *Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007*. Formally passed in October 2007, the Act provides a solid foundation to protect the region’s outstanding conservation values, as well as providing a variety of economic benefits to local communities.

Also on Cape York, we are continuing to campaign for the protection of its beautiful wild rivers. The Queensland government is currently in consultation with Indigenous Owners and other interested groups on the future of the Archer, Lockhart, and Stewart Rivers on Cape York.

The Kimberley

The Kimberley in north-west WA is a region of superlative beauty with miles of coastline with red cliffs rising out of clear blue seas as well as savannah landscapes and wetlands. It’s so remote that the Kimberley’s raw beauty has so far escaped the attention of most Australians.

The Kimberley is also a haven for wildlife. It’s one of very few regions in Australia that has retained its complete native fauna species without extinction since European settlement.

Proposals for huge bauxite mines on the Mitchell Plateau, gas extraction and processing plants off the coast, and large-scale agriculture in the Fitzroy Valley have pushed protection of the Kimberley to the top of our agenda during the last

year. It will continue to be a campaign focus in 2009.

The Wilderness Society is developing a vision for the Kimberley that protects the area’s conservation values and provides a strong economic future for Indigenous people and local communities.

Northern Territory

In the Top End, The Wilderness Society is working with Tiwi Traditional Owners to protect the Tiwi Islands from a number of threatening processes – including further destructive forestry proposals. Their isolation means the Tiwi Islands have conservation values of international significance for biodiversity – but already 30,000 hectares have been cleared and replaced with single species plantations for export woodchip.

The Wilderness Society is supporting an incredible group of Traditional Owners who wish to save their lands from Northern Australia’s single biggest land-clearing proposal.

The Northern Territory government has found that if stage two of these proposals to clear tropical rainforest for export woodchip proceeds, approximately 13,300,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions will be released into the atmosphere. Yet the proposal has not yet been ruled out so our campaign continues.





Forests: for our climate, our water and our future

Our natural carbon sinks

Australia's old-growth forests are majestic, abundant, and an important ally in tackling climate change.

New science (*Green Carbon*, Mackey et al. 2008) reveals that Australia's forests are some of the most carbon-rich on Earth – storing on average three times more carbon than previously estimated. In the case of our south-eastern eucalypt forests, they can store up to 10 times more carbon.

Yet our living forests still face the likelihood of being clear-felled, burnt, and turned into millions of tonnes of woodchips every year.

Deforestation (land clearing) and forest degradation (which includes logging) together comprise one of the world's leading sources of carbon emissions. One of the quickest and cheapest ways to achieve deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions is to protect the Earth's natural forests.

Protecting forests from land clearing and logging must be part of Australia's and the world's response to climate change, along with strong action on reducing emissions from other sectors such as electricity generation, transport and agriculture.

Promoting the role of forests internationally

As well as keeping up the pressure on the Federal and State governments to protect Australia's forests as carbon sinks, The Wilderness Society has greatly strengthened its engagement with the UN climate processes during 2007 and 2008. Thanks to support from our members, lead campaigners were able to attend the UN Climate Conference in Bali (December 2007) and key international climate meetings throughout 2008, which will culminate in a renewed climate treaty (protocol) in Copenhagen in December 2009.



Approximately 15,000 hectares of native forest are clear-felled and burnt in Tasmania each year. On average, 90 per cent of wood removed from Tasmania's public native forests ends up as woodchips for paper production.

The Wilderness Society is campaigning for the valleys of the Styx, Upper Florentine, Middle Huon, Weld and Upper Derwent, which have been identified by experts as World Heritage value, to be granted the protection they deserve.

At these international forums, we have been telling the story of Green Carbon and lobbying for practical policies and approaches to protecting and restoring the carbon stored in the world's forests. If we are successful, there will be new rules and incentives that prioritise and fund the protection of forests globally.

Standing up to Gunns' proposed pulp mill

Since Gunns first announced its plans build a pulp mill in Tasmania's Tamar Valley, The Wilderness Society has led a national campaign to protect Tasmania's environment and community from this carbon-polluting pulp mill. The campaign has seen The Wilderness Society in courtrooms, holding rallies, and spending countless hours informing politicians, bankers, corporate stakeholders, and the public about the devastation that this mill will cause if it goes ahead: the pulp mill would consume up to 4.5 million tonnes of wood from native forests and plantations annually for the next 30 years.

In May 2008, the ANZ bank elected not to fund the mill – thanks largely to the actions of The Wilderness Society and our supporters. Gunns has struggled to find funding ever since, and now it is looking unlikely that the mill will go ahead.

Protecting Victoria's water catchments

Five of Melbourne's catchments, supplying over half the city's water, are still available for logging. At the time of writing, the two most intact and pristine catchments, Armstrong and Cement Creeks near Warburton, were earmarked for logging from 1 December 2008. Logging in water catchments reduces the water flows as well as the quality of water. We will continue to keep up the pressure on the Victorian Government in 2009 to protect Victoria's forests for our water, climate and our future.

River Red gums help keep the Murray River healthy

The Wilderness Society has been actively involved in protecting the River Red gums along the Murray River. At the time of writing, we are anticipating a Victorian government announcement on the protection of more than 100,000 hectares of red gum wetlands along the Murray and its tributaries. The announcement should reduce logging of red gum forests by 70%, phase out cattle grazing and pave the way for Aboriginal joint management of the new reserves. We are actively campaigning for a similar outcome for NSW red gums in 2009.



National Indigenous Conservation Program

Australia's unique natural environment and its Indigenous cultural values go hand in hand. The extraordinary wildlife and iconic landscapes of Australia have been managed for millennia by Indigenous Traditional Owners.

Today, contemporary conservation principles together with Indigenous ecological knowledge and expertise are bringing new hope to addressing the cluster of environmental issues facing our continent. This field of conservation is full of challenges – but it gives us the opportunity to provide enormous gains for society, for the economy and for our precious environment.

Building on two decades of progress in this area, The Wilderness Society's National Indigenous Conservation Program addresses practical issues associated with protecting the environment and meeting the needs of the community. The program seeks investment in opportunities to achieve lasting environmental protection and economic inclusion, especially for those, predominantly Indigenous, people living in the remote and largely intact landscapes of the country.

Already, we are seeing results across the continent.

The Wilderness Society is building on relationships with Traditional Owners from the last three decades of environmental advocacy and is well positioned to be a major contributor to the field of Indigenous conservation in years to come.



During 2009, our work with Traditional Owners in Northern Australia and Southern Australia will continue.

In New South Wales and Victoria our work with the Traditional Owners of the Murray and Lower Darling Indigenous Nations to protect the Murray River Red gum forests and wetlands will continue, whilst building support for joint management of national parks, and cultural heritage and biodiversity protection.

In Tasmania, we are initiating relationships so we can move forward on Indigenous conservation strategies as part of the Wild Island landscape initiative. And throughout Western Australia, our work for land justice and conservation is building momentum, particularly in the Great Western Woodlands and the Kimberley.

In focus: Cape York

There has been incredible progress on Cape York Peninsula in the past year. Two decades of effort and dialogue have culminated in a package of environmental protection and sustainable development outcomes from the Queensland Government. This includes the passage of the *Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007* as well as Indigenous economic and employment initiatives that support ranger programs, the arts, and cultural and tourism enterprises.

One of the many positive outcomes of this legislation is a new form of National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land, or CYPAL). These parks are Aboriginal-owned and jointly managed

between the Traditional Owners and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. This is the first time joint management has been provided for in Queensland and it's a huge step forward for the local conservation agenda. Two magnificent new National Parks (CYPAL) were declared in the second half of 2008 with the agreement of the Traditional Owners, one of which is the Kulla National Park covering Australia's largest tropical rainforest wilderness.

In June 2008 we saw the creation of Cape York Peninsula's first Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) – the Kaanju Ngaachi (Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers) IPA. This covers 197,500 hectares of savannah, rainforest, wetland and sand ridge country in central Cape York and is a shining example of Indigenous conservation that brings environmental, economic and social returns to the community.

The first 20 of up to 100 Wild River Ranger positions have been established in Cape York and the Gulf of Carpentaria and work has started on the ground helping to protect Australia's magnificent living rivers.

In 2007, The Wilderness Society based a field worker in Cape York Peninsula to work with Traditional Owners. There, he undertook important wildlife surveys on Angkum homelands, and assisted with conservation planning and developmental work with Traditional Owners interested in establishing IPAs.

Left: Quinkin rock art, Cape York Peninsula. PHOTO: GLENN WALKER

David Claudie, Kaanju Traditional Owner, with The Wilderness Society's Lyndon Schneiders. PHOTO: THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY COLLECTION

Lotus Lilies, Blue Lagoon, Lakefield National Park, Cape York Peninsula. PHOTO: KERRY TRAPNELL

Boys fishing, Elin Beach, Hopevale, Cape York Peninsula. PHOTO: KERRY TRAPNELL

This page: The Wilderness Society and the Aboriginal Cultural Development Foundation work together on the WildArc (Dhoogoor Yuara) landscape initiative in Southern Australia. PHOTO: BILL DOYLE

Western Australia has 40% of the country's coastline but only 2.4% of the state's marine waters are fully protected.

Marine & Coastal: Australia's Largest Wilderness

Australia's marine waters cover double the area of our land. The nation's coastline extends nearly 20,000 kilometres and 90% of Australians live within 120 kilometres of the coast¹. But few people have the opportunity to witness the ecological wonders below the ocean vista, and the threats that could compromise its extraordinary marine life.

Australians love the beach and marine lifestyle, yet overfishing, oil and gas drilling, mining and pollution continue to damage ocean habitats and marine wildlife. Many well-known marine species including whales, sharks and turtles are under serious threat. Climate change will turn seawater warmer and more acidic and change ocean currents, threatening global wonders like the Great Barrier Reef.

Campaigning for the deep blue's unseen wonders

Thanks to our supporters The Wilderness Society has established marine campaigns on the north, south, east and west coasts.

Scientists recommend the establishment of fully protected areas to ensure marine ecosystems and species survive and flourish. The Wilderness Society is calling on state and federal governments to make good on international scientific targets of 20-30% protection for each marine habitat type to give marine life – including plants and animals – their best chance of surviving.

The Wilderness Society's WildCountry vision extends to the sea and we have been working with WildCountry Science Council members such as Professor Helene Marsh, Dr Regina Souter and Dr Trevor Ward, who are documenting new thinking on marine ecological processes and their role in conservation planning.

Our great western coast

The largest state in Australia, Western Australia also has the most wild country, including 40% of the country's coastline. Yet currently only 2.4% of WA's marine waters are fully protected. The remaining 97.6% which extend from the tropical waters of the Kimberley to the southern ocean off Albury and Esperance are open to potential exploitation by overfishing and industrialisation.

Each year, an estimated 20,000 Humpback whales migrate from Antarctic waters along the West Australian coast to shelter in Camden Sound on the Kimberley Coast. Scientists say this is the most crucial Humpback whale habitat in the world. Yet fossil fuel giants such as Shell, Woodside and Japanese-based Inpex have major plans to develop the Browse Basin gas field in Kimberley waters where there are no fully protected marine national parks at all.

The Wilderness Society in Western Australia has been campaigning for a system of science-based, fully protected Marine National Parks to help strengthen all of Western Australia's unique marine ecosystems. In late 2008 and into 2009, this work will be bolstered by a national campaign to secure protection for the marvellous seascape and whales of the Kimberley coast.

Northern Australia

In the Top End of Australia, The Wilderness Society is working closely with the Australian Marine Conservation Society and the Environment Centre of NT to establish fully protected marine parks across northern waters. Early intervention stopped a highly polluting sea cage aquaculture development from being established in the Tiwi Islands.

Southern Waters

The WildArc WildCountry initiative, which covers the land and sea environments from the Eyre Peninsula to the South Australia / Western Australia border, has continued to gather momentum in 2008.

The *Marine Parks Act* was passed by the South Australian Parliament in 2007 and commits to establish 19 Marine Protected Areas by 2010. The Wilderness Society played a pivotal role in securing bipartisan support for the legislation and has been appointed to the Marine Parks Council, the statutory body set up under the Act to advise the Minister on implementation. Areas of high conservation value are currently being considered for park status and The Wilderness Society will continue to pressure the government to deliver throughout 2009.

In The Wilderness Society's Newcastle Campaign Centre, the aim is to promote the importance of the marine environment to the community and, in turn, raise awareness about the need for more Marine Parks in New South Wales' waters like those around Solitary Islands, Byron and Jervis Bay Marine Parks.

The Wilderness Society's marine campaigns in New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia aim to secure important areas in fully protected zones which will protect the habitat of the Weedy Seadragon (below) and other precious marine life. PHOTO: JOHN LEWIS/AUSCAPE



¹ Australian Coastal Guard



National Management Committee Report

The Wilderness Society Inc

The Wilderness Society Inc has had a year of campaign success and important conservation outcomes.

Our efforts have resulted in significant increases in protected areas, especially in Queensland and Victoria, growing community support against the Gunns' pulp mill in Tasmania, and the establishment of emerging new campaigns as in the Kimberley wilderness. Proposed massive expansion of the nuclear industry and plans to turn northern Australia into a sweeping agricultural zone are no longer government priorities.

The Wilderness Society has also taken on an increasing international role in the development of the post-Kyoto global climate framework, educating governments and NGOs about groundbreaking research on the significance of Australia and the world's forests as carbon banks.

The building of The Wilderness Society's organisational capacity to achieve its purpose of protecting, promoting and restoring Australia's WildCountry has progressed well.

Our People

The Wilderness Society remains effective because of the commitment and passion of its members, supporters, staff and volunteers.

The National Management Committee saw the resignation of the Treasurer Gary Dorahy and Secretary, Nick Galloway during the year.

The Committee would like to express their thanks and appreciation for their contribution to the governance and management of The Wilderness Society Inc.

People who joined The Wilderness Society during the year included:

- **Chief Operating Officer** – Marian Schoen
- **Executive Manager – Finance and Administration** – Jes Singh
- **Executive Manager, Human Resources** – Debbie Dunn

- **Executive Manager, Information Services** – Graham Richmond, who replaced Christo Norman.

NMC would like to thank Michael Connors for his work as Acting Chief Operating Officer.

Organisational Development

Activities undertaken to enhance organisational capability and sustainability included:

- development of a comprehensive human resources framework
- strategic and operational planning framework
- financial and performance reporting
- functional review and restructure of Communications
- review and restructure of the National Campaign team
- implementation of strategic thinking training.

Legal Matters

This year saw the conclusion of The Wilderness Society's Federal Court challenge to Commonwealth assessment process for Gunns' environmentally damaging pulp mill. Our appeal against Justice Marshall's previous unfavourable ruling was rejected by the Appeal Court, although the decision was not unanimous. Financial considerations prevented the matter being appealed in the High Court, but the case highlighted major flaws in Federal environment legislation which it is hoped can be remedied through upcoming reviews.

Gunns' long running suit against The Wilderness Society and originally 19 others is now in its fourth year. This year saw the settlement of some claims and the exit of more defendants from the case. The Wilderness Society is now in a stronger position with a much more manageable case. Much of the year was taken up with time-consuming processes around disclosure of documents, and at the time of writing, Gunns' was appealing against the court's decision not to grant them access to a range of our documents.

Financial Performance

Financial position of The Wilderness Society Inc is: a deficit for the year of

\$1,350,208, which was \$299,426 above budget. Legal fees were some \$327,000 more than budgeted, due to our decision to appeal the original Federal Court's decision in regards to the Gunns' pulp mill challenge and also additional Gunns 20 costs. This deficit also includes a \$319,580 donation to the Forever Wild Trust. Net assets are \$2,064,158 at 30 June 2008.

The decision to operate a deficit funded from reserves was taken to consolidate organisational internal structures and to enable the organisation to build capacity for the future.

The Wilderness Society Inc continued to provide project funding for all its WildCountry campaigns and programs.

The investment of bequest donations in the *Forever Wild* Trust to ensure ongoing funding for our WildCountry vision for future generations has seen steady growth.

The Wilderness Society Inc was the recipient of a considerable grant from the Pew Environment Group for its work to protect the Great Western Woodlands in Western Australia.

Protecting, promoting and restoring wilderness – and our climate

The Committee remains very optimistic and excited about the future of The Wilderness Society, as a hugely successful and effective national environmental organisation. The Campaign team is outstanding and The Wilderness Society continues to engage with the best conservation science in the country. The Wilderness Society staff, volunteers and supporters have also been instrumental in forwarding this work on the ground. The highly successful fundraising by the Membership and Fundraising team has enabled The Wilderness Society Inc to fund its conservation education and advocacy work. The Communications and Administration teams are excellent, and are committed to strengthening systems and processes and building capacity for the future well-being of the organisation. The continued dedication, commitment and passion for purpose of The Wilderness Society staff, volunteers, members and supporters are gratefully acknowledged.



Financial Statement – The Wilderness Society Inc

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2008

ASSETS		
Current assets	2008 (\$)	2007 (\$)
Cash and cash equivalents	3,582,493	4,800,663
Trade and other receivables	390,447	193,145
Other current assets	78,885	218,220
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	4,051,825	5,212,028

Non current assets		2007 (\$)
Property, plant and equipment	499,957	491,426
Other non current assets	427,507	422,267
Total non current assets	927,464	913,693
TOTAL ASSETS	4,979,289	6,125,721

LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities	2008 (\$)	2007 (\$)
Trade and other payables	2,034,503	1,922,965
Short term borrowings	30,848	16,860
Short term provisions	365,056	259,160
Total current liabilities	2,430,407	2,198,985

Non current liabilities	2008 (\$)	2007 (\$)
Trade and other payables	350,000	390,458
Other long term provisions	134,724	121,911
Total non current liabilities	484,724	512,369
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,915,131	2,711,354
NET ASSETS	2,064,158	3,414,367

Statement of changes in equity

2008	Retained Earnings (\$)	Total (\$)
Balance at 1 July 2007	3,414,367	3,414,367
Profit attributable to member	(1,350,209)	(1,350,209)
Transfers to and from reserves	–	–
SUBTOTAL	(1,350,209)	(1,350,209)
BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2007	2,064,158	2,064,158

2007	Retained Earnings (\$)	Total (\$)
Balance at 1 July 2006	4,155,599	4,155,599
Profit attributable to member	(741,264)	(741,264)
Transfers to and from reserves	–	–
SUBTOTAL	(741,264)	(741,264)
BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2007	3,414,367	3,414,367

Detailed statement of financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2008

REVENUE	2008 (\$)	2007 (\$)
Sales	178,370	151,641
Fees	–	6,816
Interest income	273,038	281,830
Dividend income	10,762	11,989
Member subscriptions	977,182	882,748
Grants	254,041	7,816
Fundraising	12,556,120	10,373,587
Expense Reimbursements	272,906	178,193
Other income	11,178	258,240
TOTAL REVENUE	14,533,597	12,152,860

LESS: EXPENSES	2008 (\$)	2007 (\$)
Accounting fees	34,200	30,492
Advertising	23,083	26,129
Bad debts	(5,000)	5,000
Bank charges	183,223	243,212
Campaign Centre Subsidy	3,539,157	2,716,711
Campaigning Costs	1,003,945	290,589
Conference/Seminar costs	82,357	99,301
Computer expenses	99,898	134,140
Legal & Consultants' Fees	928,456	726,405
Depreciation	104,873	89,228
Donations	319,580	1,154,964
Grants	–	43,500
Insurance	105,253	120,268
Lease rentals on operating lease	212,506	134,865
Market research	4,773	15,426
Other Occupancy Costs	131,504	12,735
Other employee costs	525,262	395,104
Licences & Registrations	61,242	32,552
Postage & Packaging	741,198	537,358
Printing & Stationary	411,740	409,874
Recruitment	217,141	221,661
Repairs and maintenance	2,754	3,085
Research and development costs	15,000	42,500
Resource Library	5,405	–
Salaries	5,289,485	3,791,587
Subcontracting costs	11,006	-
Sundry expenses	122,507	65,428
Superannuation contributions	547,334	607,892
Telephone and fax	286,470	191,452
Training	125,737	124,104
Travel & Accommodation	627,483	502,371
Travel & Accommodation – Overseas	126,608	46,860
Telemarketing	(375)	79,331
TOTAL EXPENSES	(15,883,805)	(12,895,623)
PROFIT ATTRIBUTABLE TO MEMBERS	(1,350,208)	(741,264)

A colourful Lorikeet in the bush. PHOTO: RICHARD GREEN

Curvaceous Buttressed Fig trees, Chester Creek Gallery Forest, Silver Plains, Cape York Peninsula. PHOTO: KERRY TRAPNELL

Lichen detail. South Coast trail, Tasmania. PHOTO: GLENN WALKER

Endangered Loggerhead turtles live mostly in warm shallow seas and estuaries. They mate and nest in tropical and subtropical areas including those in WA. PHOTO: PETER & MARGY NICHOLAS/ LOCHMAN TRANSPARENCIES



Forever Wild

Planning a healthy future for our planet for generations to come

To all our fantastic supporters who have chosen to include wilderness in their Will or who are considering doing so, a huge thank you for caring for the future of Australia’s wild places. As our precious planet faces more environmental challenges than ever before, it is vital that we plan for the future now.

During 2008, our *Forever Wild* bequest program has grown with the generous support from our benefactors. We have had the pleasure of meeting many supporters at bequest events held throughout the country and are continuously thrilled by the amount of passion for conservation these supporters show. Our supporters, members and volunteers truly are the backbone of The Wilderness Society, so thank you for your support no matter how small or large.

The *Forever Wild* Trust is set up to provide long term, ongoing financial support for campaigns across the country, both now and beyond our lifetimes. By leaving a bequest, you are ensuring The Wilderness Society will continue to speak for environmental protection on your behalf for years to come. This way you are helping provide a healthier environment for your children, grandchildren and future generations.



Pretty Face wallabies. PHOTO: GEOFF SPANNER

We are proud to announce that the *Forever Wild* program won the Fundraising Institute of Australia’s (FIA) National Award’s of Excellence in bequest fundraising for 2008. The FIA is the body which governs standards of ethics, accountability and transparency amongst charities.

Benefactor Profile: Christina Kennedy



Christina at a favourite wilderness camping spot near the Grampians, Victoria.

Christina became actively involved with The Wilderness Society over a year ago, after she became interested in making a bequest towards the protection of Australia’s environment. Christina loves spending time in nature and is a keen bushwalker and camper. She also makes an effort to change her everyday life by finding ways to tread more softly on the planet.

“As a child growing up in a seaside suburb of Victoria with the sea at one end of a very long street and country at the other, I never realised how fortunate I was. Many years later whilst camping at Wilson Promontory I was suddenly struck with many happy memories of my childhood. I stood stock-still, stunned, when I realised it was that beautiful, warm, honey smell which is indicative of so much of our coastal vegetation which had initiated this very emotive response.

The experience also reminded me of sitting on Bonbeach on Port Phillip Bay as a child watching the dolphins at play far out in the water. This was around 1956 and I just took it for granted.

Over the years bushwalking has taken me to many different Australian landscapes, from coastal areas, to the hills, mountains, deserts and rainforests, all so different, all so beautiful and unique – each one a protective, healthy environment for the nature that it nurtures. There is such completeness about an untouched wilderness: everything is balanced.

I feel it is so very important to maintain this balance, this tranquillity in such an often chaotic world that I have made a bequest to The Wilderness Society to enable those with the same love, admiration and passion for our beautiful country to carry on this valuable work long after I am no longer able to do so.”

The Wilderness Society is privileged to have Christina’s unconditional support, and the staff members who have met her find her to be a truly inspirational woman. A sincere thank you to Christina for her faith in The Wilderness Society and her foresight for the health of our planet.

Have you left a gift to The Wilderness Society in your Will and haven’t yet let us know?
Would you like to share your story of what led you to remember wilderness in your Will?
We’d love to hear from you. Please contact National Bequest Manager, Gaye French, on 1800 030 641 or (03) 6270 1778 (direct line) if you would like more information on leaving a gift in your Will towards The Wilderness Society.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,
committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead*

Thank you



www.wilderness.org.au

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

Printed on 100% recycled post-consumer waste paper.

The Wilderness Society Australia
For membership, donations and
other inquiries: 1800 030 641
57E Brisbane St. Hobart, Tas, 7000
Email: info@wilderness.org.au

