

# Our Year - Key Achievements

## Kimberley

### Key facts

- 3 ESRMs were completed.
- 5 events for pastoralists were run.
- **690,000** ha were managed using sustainable land management practices.
- **14** pastoral entities carried out on-ground work. Around 30 participated in workshops.
- 15 ranger groups were engaged in Kimberley projects.
- We actively worked with 25 non-government organisations/community groups.
- Our funding enabled 2 groups (the Kija and Wungurr Rangers) to work together to manage a larger area of 15,200 km<sup>2</sup> through early season mosaic burns.
- Around 1,600ha were managed by Dampier Peninsular ranger groups through Environs Kimberley Monsoon Vine Thicket work.
- Key threatened ecosystems have been protected in the Kimberley through fire management and important habitat has been treated for weeds with areas fenced to remove cattle.
- Properties participated in the Rangelands Self-Herding trials.



Will (Pre Primary) - 'Poddy Calves'

## Improving Pastoral Practices

### Pasture ID workshops

Approximately 50 people attended workshops at Flora Valley Station, Gogo Station and Roebuck Plains Station in the Kimberley to learn more about managing grazing pastures through plant identification. The workshops covered how to identify native pasture species under cattle grazing (herbs, grasses and shrubs); how to take samples and photos for further identification; and the relationship between different soil types and plant species.

### Nutritional EDGE workshops

Rangelands NRM supported the WA Department of Agriculture and Food to run three Nutrition EDGE workshop at Halls Creek, Tom Price and Derby. Pastoralists from 32 pastoral leases attended the workshops to improve their understanding of the nutritional requirements of cattle, estimate the feed value of pasture for animal production, and know what supplements to feed. Producers were provided with valuable tools to optimise the use of pastures, supplements and overall management.

Mitchell (Year 4) - 'Bull'



Installing GPS cattle collars @ K. Andrews



## Cattle responses to Eco Fire

The CaLF project (Cattle, Land and Fire) is using GPS cattle collars to track cattle responses to prescriptive burning programs and inform producers of how their cattle react to fires and how they are using recently burnt areas. Working with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) and CSIRO, this research is part of the AWC's EcoFire program and aims to demonstrate the productive benefits of this fire management regime and to fine-tune the integration of fire and cattle management. The GPS collars have been fitted to lightly managed stock that are held in areas where prescriptive burns are regularly conducted as a method of fire abatement. As the country dries out and the differences between burnt and unburnt country subside, the cattle are mustered and the collars collected to begin analysis of around three-months of data. Regular field monitoring is underway to check the continued functioning of the collars and monitor the regrowth of pasture in burn scars where cattle can and cannot graze.

## Managing Roebuck Plains

Yawuru, Indigenous Land Corporation and the University of WA are working together to manage cultural, environmental and pastoral needs collaboratively on Roebuck Plains Cattle Station. Plans have been developed to guide future management activities and reduce nutrients and other threats to the Bay. Yawuru Country Managers were trained in water monitoring techniques (ground water levels, salinity testing) and a basic understanding of wetland and mangrove communities, and their function has been gained. Capacity in the Yawuru people has been built, enabling them to understand hydrological processes across the catchment, including groundwater systems, vegetation and wetland communities, and culturally significant sites both past and present.

## Establishment of the Kimberley Cattleman's Association

The Kimberley Cattleman's Association (KCA) is an example of a collaborative approach to support land managers to manage their land sustainably and maximise the productivity of WA rangelands. Rangelands NRM supported the appointment of an Executive Officer to the group who works with KCA members to offer knowledge sharing opportunities, including demonstrations and trials of new technologies and innovative practices for improving pasture management and productivity.





Cane toad taste aversion © DPaW

## Preserving biodiversity

Key threatened ecosystems have been protected in the Kimberley through fire management, and important habitat has been treated for weeds with areas fenced to remove cattle. Key knowledge gaps have also been filled through collaborative research. Delivery of all Kimberley programs has been enabled through the engagement and employment of community groups including Indigenous Rangers, which has allowed for increased capacity for these groups to manage country.

### Preserving important habitat

Weed mapping, weed management, fire management and mapping of new Monsoon Vine Thicket (MVT) patches on the Dampier Peninsular were continued by the Bardi Jawi Oorany (women) and Nyul Nyul Rangers, whilst new relationships were developed and MVT management initiated by Yawuru and other Southern Traditional Owners, providing management coverage over the entire MVT network.

Environs Kimberley (EK) also expanded their weed eradication program along key riparian areas of Bunuba Country, within the Fitzroy and Lennard River catchments, to protect and conserve the habitat of the EPBC-listed Purple-crowned Fairy-wren (*Malurus coronatus coronatus*). Work to eradicate a rubbervine infestation along the Adcock River has also assisted the survival of the Purple-crowned Fairy Wren. Six Kimberley Land Council (KLC) Kija Rangers conducted prescribed burning operations with the primary aim of protecting Gouldian Finch (*Erythrura gouldiae*) habitat on Violet Valley and Bow River stations, and Purple-crowned Fairy-wren habitat on Doon Doon station.

### Educating communities about cane toads

The 'Kimberley Cane Toad Clean Up' project has brought together the Department of Parks and Wildlife, researchers from the University of Sydney and ranger groups throughout the Kimberley as well as community group Kimberley Toad Busters (KTB). Scientific field trials are underway and educational resources for the community are being produced. Parks and Wildlife are working closely with University of Sydney students, Prof. Rick Shine and Ranger groups to field trial the application of toad suppression and attractant pheromones to reduce cane toad breeding success and develop some strategies for breeding mitigation on Kimberley Islands. Bunuba Rangers and Parks and Wildlife West Kimberley Nature Conservation team are continuing the work on population structure and ecology of fresh water crocodiles in the Lennard River and identify possible management actions for this species in particular areas including Windjana Gorge.

## Engaging communities

### Roebuck Bay Working Group

The Roebuck Bay Working Group (RBWG) in Broome became incorporated with over 30 members, establishing it as the key stakeholder group for Roebuck Bay and the community. Through monitoring and research, the Group has identified the key issues and brought about significant changes to reduce nutrients draining into Roebuck Bay, a key threat to Ramsar values. Outcomes include changes to drain management and planting native species to strip nutrients.

### Community resources - maintaining a coastal garden

A series of infographics explaining how to build and maintain a coastal garden have been designed to educate the Broome public about reducing nutrients running into Roebuck Bay. The RBWG with help from the Society of Kimberley Indigenous Plants and Animals (SKIPPA) and support from Rangelands NRM, developed a simple Gardening the Roebuck Bay Friendly Way card. The current series features dugongs, seagrass, dolphins and Lyngbya, with the underlying message, to use a coastal gardening approach to reduce Lyngbya blooms and keep near shore waters clean.

