



# Our Year - Key Achievements

## Pilbara

### Key facts

- An ESRM plan was completed on Mt Divide and works are underway for improved land management practice.
- **3** pastoral stations (unique farming entities) engaged through Rangeland Property Planning including Landscape Function Analysis.
- Properties participated in the Rangelands Self-Herding trials.
- **15** pastoral stations (unique farming entities) engaged by the Pilbara Mesquite Management Committee (PMMC) for weed management programs.
- WoNS weed control works coordinated across **18** leases, including **12** pastoral stations, **3** mine tenements, **2** reserves and **1** Aboriginal lease.
- **1,957** operator days of weed control with **70,500** ha of land treated by herbicides, including **187** km of riparian systems and **2,500** ha of weed control through mechanical means.
- More than **557,000** mesquite and parkinsonia plants were treated.

### Improving Pastoral Practices

#### Landscape function analysis

Rangelands property plans and landscape function analyses were undertaken for De Grey, Limestone and Yarrie Stations in the De Grey catchment. These whole of property plans include mechanisms for reporting on rangeland condition, implementing rehabilitation works, managing threats, and coordinating landscape and catchment approaches to maintain and improve vegetation cover.

#### Resources/Guides

A Pasture Identification Guide was produced to assist Pilbara Pastoralists to manage their grazing pastures. 'Pasture Identification: A field guide for the Pilbara' was produced as part of the Pilbara Corridors project, and assists in the identification of different types of native pasture species readily grazed by their cattle such as various herbs, grasses and shrubs.

## Pilbara Corridors Project

- **3** ESRM plans completed and one review.
- **6** community participation and engagement events were run with **97** people attending project events for the first time with **36** Indigenous participants at project events.
- **333,8971** hectares were changed to sustainable practices.
- **18** unique farming entities engaged.
- **11** community groups participated.
- A Conservation Action Plan (CAP) process was initiated.

The Pilbara Corridors 'Project' is a landscape-scale project that is coordinated between Rangelands NRM, Greening Australia and the WA Department of Parks and Wildlife to address biodiversity threats on a landscape-scale in the Pilbara.

During 2014-15, the project ran the first part of a series of Conservation Action Plan (CAP) workshops with government agencies, mining industry, pastoralists and community members, to introduce the CAP process, identify key conservation assets and determine conservation goals, strategies, key actions and monitoring in the Pilbara region. CAP is a powerful ten-step tool to guide conservation teams to develop focused strategies and measures of success. When regional priorities have been set, CAP is used to determine the plan of action for these priorities. As actions are taken and outcomes are measured, conservation action plans are revised to incorporate new knowledge. Gaia Resources supported the process in terms of spatial information, using the Rangelands NRM Geographic & Reporting Information Database (GRID), and Pilbara assets and activities mapped in GRID are displayed on a map on the Pilbara Corridors website.

In 2014-15, the Pilbara Corridors Project focused on on-ground activities and sub projects in the 'Fortescue River Corridor' project managed by Rangelands NRM with Australian Government funding.



Fortescue River © T. Belcher

The Pilbara Corridors Project is now also part of Rangelands AusPlots — surveillance surveys run nationally by the Terrestrial Ecological Research Network (TERN) using a standardised methodology of one hectare plots to collect baseline ecological data. The data collected by AusPlots includes site measurements, samples of vegetation and soils, and photo points. Over 400 Ausplots are established throughout the rangelands nationally with a noticeable gap of the Pilbara bioregion. The establishment of sites in the Pilbara is providing a long-term benefit to the region to assist with flora biodiversity management and provide data for use by the broader ecosystem science and management community.

The collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), will enhance nature-based solutions in addressing threats to biodiversity in the Pilbara Bioregion. IUCN is providing consultation on biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services in relation to current projects and the development of sub-projects within the Program.

The Pilbara Corridors Project continues to connect and work with pastoralists, state government departments and ranger groups to manage land, weeds, fire and ferals.



## Preserving biodiversity

### Improving habitats by managing thorny weeds

Improving habitat for the Pilbara populations of the greater bilby and the northern quoll depends on a number of interacting factors including undertaking fire management, maintenance of breeding and foraging habitat diversity, control of introduced predators and weed infestations. Building capacity of Pilbara Aboriginal groups to undertake future weed and fire management activities is also critical to future successes. The Pilbara Mesquite Management Committee (PMMC) has made big waves in the resources sector by helping mining companies become custodians for the land and resources in the region. Starting with a focus on mesquite, PMMC has since broadened to include a range of invasive weed species affecting Pilbara land managers, and now has a membership of 38 representatives from 27 pastoral, mining, government and community organisations. Their funding is competitively gained but healthy, and they are leveraging over \$940,000 per year from our partners to directly control weeds in the Pilbara. Rangelands NRM have been a pivotal supporting organisation over the past seven years and the outstanding relationship and support has allowed the PMMC to make these advancements.

The positive successes of coordinating NRM programs led to the PMMC Project Manager, Linda Anderson, being the recipient of the highly commended Landcare Facilitator/Coordinator Award at the 2014 National Landcare Awards.

## Engaging communities

### Supporting Gumala rangers

Support to the Gumala Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) for the Tom Price Ranger Coordinator has enabled the building of capacity around some initial activities. On ground works have included restoration of a historic water point of traditional significance with targeted weed removal. Some traditional fire management has occurred in partnership with the Department of Parks and Wildlife in Karijini National Park with Certificate I Conservation Land Management training being undertaken. Trainee rangers have been standardising practices in order to pass on knowledge and experience to other members of the ranger team.

### Bringing people together

Ngurrawaana Ranger Coordinator and Tom Price (Gumala Ranger Coordinator) met to discuss Conservation and Land Management (CLM), a meeting that enabled the exchange of ideas and the promotion of good relationships. Additionally, Ngadju members of the Malleefowl and Invasive Weed project met with the Martu ranger team to experience Martu management practices at the Carnarvon Range. The cultural and conservation land management exchange between the groups was very successful, and valuable experience was gained in scats and tracks surveying, cultural burning practices and cultural site management.



DeGrey River ©T. Belcher