

Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group Inc.

PO Box 1409
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1999/2000

Another successful year for the Group. Our regular monthly meetings at the Malanda pub continue to be well attended and it is always encouraging to see we attract new faces to join us. Thank you to the Malanda pub for providing us with such an excellent venue and to the hotel staff for their help.

Our main focus for the year has been undertaking the tree-kangaroo survey funded by the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). Carol Schmidt and Beth Stirn, our two project officers, ran the survey exquisitely, ensuring that we all contributed to distributing questionnaires, collating the returns and entering the data. They also liaised closely with both the Wet Tropics Management Authority and CSIRO, Atherton who prepared maps and analysed data for us. Carol and Beth finished at the end of July with a flurry of public meetings at Julatten, Kuranda, Ravenshoe and Malanda, all of which were well attended particularly the Malanda one which attracted 90 people. In addition they presented the results to Atherton and Eacham Shire Councils, with Herberton and Mareeba still to come. At these meetings they were able to present an attractively produced report about the survey and its aims of which we can be proud.

The wet sclerophyll component of the project was minor by comparison and remained so. However, we did consolidate the known distribution of the Yellow-bellied Glider in the Moomin and Bally Knob areas with the help of Jaimi Johnson, a student from the School for International Studies (SIT).

Our other NHT funded project on the Spotted-tailed Quoll is also drawing to a close. Scott Burnett was instrumental in preparing a brochure on quolls in the region and how they can be conserved. He has also submitted a draft recovery plan to Environment Australia for assessment.

Our other achievements for the year are several. We:

- Can claim to have influenced the design of the East Evelyn road upgrade over Gentle Annie to make it more tree-kangaroo and cassowary friendly.
- Have participated in the Mabi Forest Working Group by several spotlighting forays into the Nasser's property.
- Had a stall at World Environment Day display at Malanda, visited by 300 school children.
- Have a regular stall at the Yungaburra markets.
- Continue to sell our T-shirts and frig magnets.

- Have negotiated the donation of a tree-kangaroo postcard from Steve Parish through the good will engendered by Timmy.
- Have hosted very successfully a two week visit by volunteers from the San Diego and Rhode Island Zoos to count tree-kangaroo scats in our continuing efforts to find out more about the animals.
- Can claim to have stimulated one of our members, Karen Coombes, to start a PhD on tree-kangaroos on her place.

New grant applications include two from NHT, one to encourage coexistence of tree-kangaroos with a number of different land uses on the Atherton Tablelands, the other to undertake a fauna assessment of the extensive grazing lands of the Georgetown and Crydon districts in conjunction with the Einasleigh Landcare Group. However, with the cut-back to NHT funding we will be lucky to be successful with one, let alone both of these applications.

We have also submitted two applications in the Threatened Species Network program. One in partnership with Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands (TREAT) and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) to establish a treed corridor for wildlife between Pearamon Hill and the North Johnstone River. The other to help with the conservation of the Spotted-tailed Quoll.

If unsuccessful in our grant applications this will give us time to pause and contemplate our future directions and perhaps concentrate on consolidating our community connections.

Finally, I continue to be delighted with the vigor of the group and the way in which a very broad cross section of members participate in all our activities.

Thank you all.

John Winter
7 September 2000