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Newsletter #2 Jan 2021



Welcome!

We've made it to our second newsletter! Not only that, but we're now have a system to send you the latest news more frequently.

As set out below, some steady progress and some big changes made over the last year. We have now entered the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, and we are proud to be an already functioning Australian example of what that can look like on the ground. Through a grant from the Ian Potter Foundation we are now working closely with our main national colleague, Great Eastern Ranges, on a national approach to helping our many colleagues and partners pool their expertise, learn from each other, refine the science and repair more landscapes. As a first step, considerable effort has gone into portraying a number of key stories, with our feature film 'Breathing Life into Boodja' produced, plus 10 short videos in a prominent place at the new WA Museum Boola Bardip, and available on [Vimeo](#). Our website is new and sparkling, and contains much more information.

We're exploring opportunities to support on-ground change in a wider range of areas, through new partnerships. Requests have been made for us to extend our 'honest broker' facilitator role to support regenerative agriculture and landcare programs across the broader wheatbelt, and we hope to be shortly finalising arrangements. That will bring not only fresh opportunities and challenges, but also the extra capacity we need to support work in both the core Gondwana Link areas and further afield.

programs are happening across many areas, there has been an impressive upsurge of discussion and research on how to improve ecological fire management, and the Nowanup and Ngadju programs are not only going well, but have also had a joint gathering. We just don't have room in one newsletter for all the good news.

We remain awed and humbled by the extent of support behind all these achievement, and by the passion, ingenuity and determination of the people we work with.

Keith Bradby and Amanda Keesing, Gondwana Link

Stories and news from across the Link

We start by expressing our respect for Elders past and present in the lands we work on across the Link, and re-affirming our commitment to helping future Elders emerge in a world that shows greater respect for their communities and cultures.

Breathing Life into Boodja



The December 2019 premiere of our film *Breathing Life into Boodja* (48 min) to 550 people at the Albany Entertainment Centre was an exhilarating event and a wonderful way to celebrate and thank the film's contributors and all the other people and groups involved in the Gondwana Link effort.

Breathing Life into Boodja (Boodja means country) is a good-humoured and rousing portrayal of farmers, landcarers, the Noongar community, national and local groups, scientists and environmentalists working together to achieve globally significant change in land management around the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges. A cast of engaging story-tellers gives us all hope and inspiration.

Unfortunately, COVID largely put a halt on our 2020 screenings, but we'll keep you posted about future viewings! Please [contact us](#) if you are interested in screening *Boodja* to your community. And we are working with a film distributor to achieve wider distribution of the film which will be available online in the near future.

Here's some of the wonderful feedback we have received for *Boodja*:

and has such a feel-good positive tone."

" ... just fantastic in so many ways ... Beautifully produced"

"It was wonderful ... it brought tears to my eyes, really!"

"I've watched the film and came away inspired! I've known about Gondwana Link for quite a number of years, but seeing it in motion like this really made the vision resonate that much more powerfully for me."

Gondwana Link produces 10 short films

[WATCH HERE](#)



WA Museum curator Daniel Schoknecht with Gondwana Link's Margaret Robertson and our screen editor Teresa Ashton in the Wild Life Gallery. Photo Keith Bradby.

With the backing of the WA Museum, Gondwana Link has produced:

- A series of eight short films (2 min each) featuring some of work being tackled by people and groups across the Gondwana Link.
- A short (3:12 min) portrayal of the efforts to restore the health of Oyster Harbour, near Albany.
- A gritty film (4:40 min) about the impacts of agricultural land clearing in south-western Australia and the hope that comes from restoring country.

We are honoured and excited that all these films are on display in the new WA Museum Boola Bardip. Our series of eight short films are showcased in a Gondwana Link touchscreen display in the Wild Life Gallery while the other two films are near the large replica of a clearing ball and chain in the museum's Changes Gallery.

A huge thank you to all the films' contributors, the filming, production and editing team, and the WA Museum.

We'd love to hear your comments. Here's some we've had so far:

"I just binged on the entire collection on Gondwana Link Vimeo channel. It was a very fine collection."

"... the Boola Bardip videos have exceeded all the expectations I had for them . . . You have captured both the individual person's story as well as the bigger message they would want to convey."

Please [contact us](#) if you would like to access a high resolution copy of any of these films for screening.

Swimming for Gondwana Link



Nicole Hodgson swims 14 km along the Frankland River during one of her practice sessions.

Nicole Hodgson gets star rating at Gondwana Link. She has been a highly regarded volunteer of ours for a number of years and is now an invaluable part of major project work. Nic brings a range of terrific skills to our table, particularly research, writing, storytelling, graphic and website design, and arts and event coordination. Her latest and very much appreciated contribution is her solo swim to Rottneest (Wadjemup) in February. Nic has chosen Gondwana Link as the recipient of her fundraising. Please support Nic's fundraising aspirations for Gondwana Link [HERE](#).

New website for Gondwana Link



We were grateful to receive funds from The Ian Potter Foundation that enabled us to

Western Woodlands, so we encourage you to send us your stories and information by emailing amanda@gondwanalink.org. The website was developed with guidance from Tandi Spencer-Smith, the communications consultant we now share with the Great Eastern Ranges program based in NSW. [VIEW WEBSITE](#)

Support for a national approach to connectivity conservation



Gondwana Link's Amanda Keesing and Great Eastern Ranges Gary Howling enjoy a well earned drink after Melbourne planning sessions for the Potter funded program. Photo Keith Bradby.

In late 2019 Gondwana Link and our main Australian colleague organisation, the Great Eastern Ranges, were fortunate to receive a significant three year funding grant from The Ian Potter Foundation. The grant, combined with other funding and programs, will help us consolidate our current efforts, strengthen our collective science base and reach out to emerging connectivity conservation programs across Australia. [READ MORE](#)

Restore South-Western Australia?



It's been a delight to work closer together with Di Haggerty, seen here with husband Ian and a film crew from WA Museum Boola Bardip. Di is Chair of the RegenWA Steering Committee, and with Ian runs Prospect Pastoral Company, successful regenerative farmers on the eastern edge of the WA wheatbelt. Having native grasses and wildflowers come up through their paddocks is one of the bonuses of the regenerative approach.

In 2002 we kick started Gondwana Link, on the basis that private funding could provide the leadership and the catalytic actions for transformative change. Well it's now 2021, and not only are we still going and growing, but so is the private conservation sector. Our view that south-western Australia is a globally significant opportunity to achieve transformative change over large landscapes is shared by a number of significant local, national and international organisations, private funders and impact investors.

[Restore Australia](#) program, proved to be a wonderful opportunity to take a broader look at how we can work better and more ambitiously with the farming community, and assist in their efforts to also achieve change at scale. During 2020 we broadened our network and developed a cohesive program covering both the core Gondwana Link area and the broader wheatbelt regions, with regenerative agriculture a key part of the repertoire. [READ MORE](#)

Acronym of the Month - MYGOD!



Gimlet after rain. Photo Amanda Keesing.

CEO Keith Bradby recently underwent some training in measuring and evaluating social benefit – as did his colleague Andrea Salmond from Katanning Landcare. Naturally enough some of the conversation turned to how to keep locally driven programs funded and operating, so they can access the many project opportunities and meet strategic needs (note we draw an important distinction between ongoing programs and the projects they run).

Andrea calls the critical need MYGOD. That puzzled us for a bit too, until she explained it stood for Multi Year General Operating Dollars.

Thank you to all those who have supported projects across Gondwana Link this year, and a special thank you to those who have helped with our need for MYGOD support.

Please donate :)

EcoHealth - linking human and environmental health



Stillness and quiet while watching a Great Western Woodlands sunset. Photo Amanda Keesing.

mature salmon gum woodland. It lies at the heart of a wider area of largely-untouched bushland stretching south to the Fitzgerald River National Park and east to the Ravensthorpe Range.

This broad landscape forms a critical link between the reserves of the south coast and the Great Western Woodlands, as shown in the image below. Further, it is known to have significant natural and cultural heritage values, some of which are clearly of national importance.

In 2019, when it became obvious that mineral exploration threatened the integrity of important Carnaby's black-cockatoo breeding habitat in Cocanarup itself, a group of concerned locals formed the Cocanarup Conservation Alliance Inc (CCA) which is dedicated to the full protection of the wider Cocanarup – Kundip area.

Although CCA began their campaign focused on conservation of the natural and cultural values of this area through the establishment of a Class A reserve, the game changed in early 2020 when the Wagyl Kaip Working Group identified the area as a priority for inclusion in the Noongar Land Estate under the South West Native Title Settlement (SWNTS). The SWNTS was finalised in November 2020, clearing the way for the government to negotiate the details of the future tenure of the extended Cocanarup – Kundip area. Just how these negotiations will proceed is unclear, but this is obviously a critical process for an area that forms a major natural corridor between the coast and the inland and which, in its own right, contains very significant conservation values.

To learn about the area and to support CCA in their efforts to protect this important landscape visit their [website](#).

"Given what we've found this year, Cocanarup is quite likely the single most important entirely natural nesting site for Carnaby's anywhere in the state" Vicki Stokes, Birdlife Australia, WA Project Manager, October 2019.

Nowanup update



Curtin University students in one of the recently constructed mia mias at Nowanup.

What's happening at Nowanup? The answer is LOTS. Noongar family healing camps; new walktrails and mia mias built; Noongar Elders across the region provided with roo and salmon while they stayed safely at home during COVID; cultural exchange camps for Curtin University students, schools, youths at risk and yorga (women's) and to top it all off, a music festival to celebrate getting through 2020. [READ MORE](#).

cultural exchange program with planning, research and funding applications. The Friends also bring their skills, friendship and advice to Nowanup. Nowanup is enriched by their generosity and good will. [Here](#) is a lovely story by Rod Safstrom who initiated the Friends group.

Tootanellup – an opportunity to help



Green Skills have purchased a 50ha Tootanellup property near Rocky Gully which sits in an important part of the Gondwana Link. The property provides an important opportunity to connect two key existing habitat areas and develop a base for community education programs that support eco-restoration. We encourage you to help support this important work which contributes to the Gondwana Link vision. [READ MORE.](#)

'Adopt a Spot' on the Margaret River foreshores



One of Margaret Rivers 'Adopt a Spot' locations at Ellen Place was planted with 2,000 seedlings in 2018.

The beautiful Margaret River region sits at the western end of Gondwana Link. Nature Conservation Margaret River Region has an 'Adopt a Spot' program which is restoring the landscape and forging long term community relationships built on stewardship of the land. Adopt a Spot is now in its fourth year and continues to connect students from a number of schools with landowners and community groups to care for foreshore, bushland and coastal reserves. [READ MORE](#)



'Floppy top' being added to the fence to aid exclusion of feral animals from the Nullaki Peninsula near Denmark.

The Wilson Inlet Catchment Council is working with the Nullaki Peninsular landholders near Denmark, WA, to establish an ongoing fauna monitoring program to gauge the effectiveness of their feral predator control efforts. The project involves The Moorditj Noongar and Yorgas — Albany Aboriginal Rangers in setting up camera traps and analysing the data, as well as Nullaki landholders and other community volunteers.

[READ MORE](#)

Our Ngadju Journey

By Rodney Safstrom



During the journey. Photo Elizabeth Pedler

For many years, Eugene Eades and Friends of Nowanup members Basil Schur, David Dyke and myself, have dreamed of having a visit to Ngadju country in the Great Western Woodlands. Last November this dream became a reality with 41 Noongar and Wadjella men and women participating in a three day trip in November 2020 to Ngadju country hosted by Les, Wendy, Jocelyn and James Schultz and the Ngadju Rangers.

Having Uncle Noel Nannup, Uncle Eugene Eades and our Noongar and Ngadju friends come together was a moving experience. It was a very special reconnecting of the Noongar and Ngadju cultures – deep in ways beyond our Western understanding. Our theme was 'Listening for Connecting'. As Basil Schur put it "*Paying respect to Elders, tuning into country, and yarning. A convergence of two sciences, an affirmation of the culture of our First Nations and a focus on environmental custodianship*".

One of the outcomes is to form the Friends of Ngadju Conservation so that we can keep on supporting Ngadju cultural and conservation work on country.



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