

ISSUE 51

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# JABIRU

Newsletter of the Wildlife Conservancy of Tropical Queensland

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## President

Dr Annabelle Olsson

## Board Members

Trevor Adil

Cathy Bishop

Terry Carmichael

Phil Druery

Dr Merrilee Frankish

Tim Nevard

## Wetlands to re-open in April!



As the Wet Season draws to an end, Marg Atkinson and her team at the Wetlands are getting ready to open the Reserve and Jabiru Safari Lodge in April.

If you want to check up on access to the Reserve in early April, which is weather dependent, we suggest you give the Visitor Centre a call on 4093 2514.

## Founder of ICF to Visit Wetlands

This year the Mareeba Wetlands will be taking part in Crane Week, a week long celebration of cranes on the Tablelands. Crane Week 2014 will take place 29<sup>th</sup> September to 5<sup>th</sup> October.

For keen photographers, keep an eye out for details of the annual photography competition, with categories for bird photography, and a special category for photographs of cranes.



George Archibald, renowned conservationist and founder of the International Crane Foundation will be staying at the Wetlands during Crane Week, and activities will include a special field trip at the Wetlands with George. Members will of course be given first opportunity to book a spot for this special event.



Award winning photograph Crane Week 2013  
"Dancing Cranes" by Alison Faigniez



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## Wetlands Wildlife

We recently played host to Stanley Tang and his team from JCU. Stanley is doing a PhD on Black-throated Finches, and is especially interested in the genetic differences between different populations and races. He and his team spent a couple of weeks at the Reserve mist-netting Black-throated and other finches and small passerines, and taking

genetic samples for later analysis. Stanley has marked all the birds with individual colour leg bands, and is keen that any visitors to the Reserve report sightings. These will need to record the time of day, date, location, and number of birds. This will help him build up a picture of how Black-throated Finches and associated species use the Reserve.

Black-throated Finches are another of the Reserve's specialties and both black and white rumped races have been seen on the Reserve in the past. On this occasion Stanley only sighted and banded black rumped birds.

Stanley's email address is:

[stanley.tang@csiro.au](mailto:stanley.tang@csiro.au)



*Two Black-throated Finches mist-netted by Stanley Tang*

## Gouldian Finch Update

The Gouldian Finch aviary at the Wetlands is once again alive with breeding finches. Last year, following a series of snake attacks, numbers of finches fell to dangerously low levels after a couple of

poor breeding seasons. We have been able to augment numbers in our Visitor Centre aviary from our purpose built off-site aviary where breeding has been very successful over the last couple of years.

A release is planned for later this year. We will let you know, so that you may be able to see some of the birds as we release them into the Reserve for the first time in several years.



### **Did you know? – Brush-tailed Phascogale**

Did you know that the Brush-tailed Phascogale is one of the special mammals at the Mareeba Wetlands? Like Tropical Quolls, another Reserve specialty, it is a marsupial carnivore. It's nocturnal and rarely seen and avoids spotlight beams by going behind a branch – so really difficult to spot. It spirals upwards, jumps and clings underneath branches; running downwards headfirst; probing for lizards, insects and other invertebrates under bark and rotting wood, tearing it off with its teeth. Mating occurs from mid-May to early June, and all the males die soon afterwards, leaving the females to live for another three years! An especially distinguishing feature of the Brush-tailed Phascogale is its bottlebrush tail.



**Dates:****April:**

- Wetlands re-opens

**May:**

- Sunday 11th Mother's Day Tea at the Wetlands

## Members' News

Membership for 2014 is now due!

All memberships fall due on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and you can really help us by renewing your membership promptly.

We are encouraging families to enjoy the Reserve, by reducing the cost of membership to just \$5 per adult, and

\$10 per family (2 adults, 2 children under 15).

This year we are also introducing the option of paying your membership for three years, thus reducing the amount of paperwork and administration for our volunteers, and our members!

Member benefits

include free entry to the Reserve and walks, 10% discount on tours, activities and shop purchases. You will also receive an invite to special member events.

Members are also entitled to vote at the AGM and to nominate for a position on the Board.

## Tea with Mother!

Two of our directors, Merrilee Frankish and Cathy Bishop are organising our first event of 2014. This is 'Tea with Mother', to be held on Mothers' Day, of course! Details will be posted on the Mareeba Wetlands website [www.mareebawetlands.org](http://www.mareebawetlands.org) and invitations will be sent out in April. This is a free event and will include afternoon tea at Clancy's Lagoon Visitor Centre, with live music, boat tours and champagne for mum! Later in the year, we have other events in the pipeline, including a special occasion with George Archibald to celebrate the magical world of cranes, as well as a musical soiree.

## Time to Renew Your Membership

### Payment Options:

1. Complete the attached membership form and post with payment (credit card details or cheque) to the Wildlife Conservancy of Tropical Queensland, PO Box 809, Ravenshoe, QLD 4888
2. Email completed form with card payment details to [info@wildlifequeensland.com.au](mailto:info@wildlifequeensland.com.au)
3. Pay by direct debit into the WCTQ bank account (details on form) quoting your full name
4. Visit the Mareeba Wetlands and pay at the Visitor Centre

**Your membership supports our conservation work and helps us to keep the Mareeba Wetlands open and the Conservancy thriving.**

# Thank you for your support!