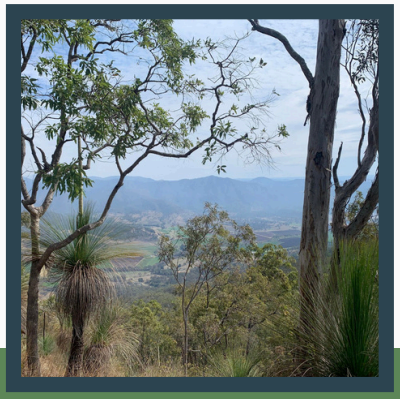
2024

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

Throughout Autumn, we were busy planning for our workshop on 'Innovative Approaches to Koala Conservation'. This event shaped up to be a fantastic day investigating different technologies and concepts being used to learn more about koalas and controlling weeds that are inhibiting koala movement across the landscape. Thank you to everyone who was able to come along, we hope you enjoyed the day.

Our next major event will be the LLRI Bioblitz in conjunction with the Great Southern Bioblitz in September. You might ask why we keep changing the month it is run each year? The coordinators of the Great Southern bioblitz have chosen to run these events alternating between the Spring months. Changing months for the bioblitz, allows data to be captured and compared between months. So keep an eye out for our upcoming dates.

Follow our socials at:
@littleliverpoolrange or find us at: llri.com.au



NEWS & FEATURES

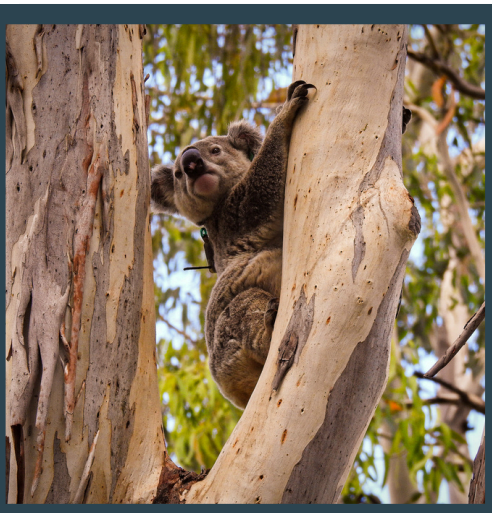
LLR Native Species Profile

Common name:
Blue gum or Forest Red Gum

Scientific name:
Eucalyptus tereticornis

This well-known species hosts a range of ecosystem services and value to the surrounding environment. Blue gums are well known for their large hollows which can host many hollow-dependent animals like gliders, possums and birds. They are also one of the preferred food tree species of our local koala populations.

Blue gums can grow to a massive 50m high. The species Eucalyptus tereticornis has been split into 4 sub species, of which 2 exist in the LLR: E. tereticornic subsp. tereticornis & E. tereticornis subsp. basaltica.



Koala in the LLR sitting in a Blue gum

Photo credit: Martin Bennett

An interesting E. tereticornis tereticornis in the low lying areas of the LLR

Pest Features

Common name: Cane Toads

Scientific Name: Rhinella marina

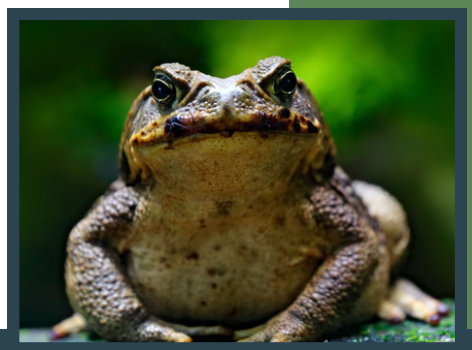


Photo Credit: WWF

After their introduction to Australia in 1935, this species has become widespread and has had major impacts on our native species. The presence of a large poisonous gland (Parotoid) has caused the decline of many natives. If ingested, this poison impacts the consumers heart and central nervous system. However, a number of native species have now learnt to consume the cane toad by avoiding the poisonous glands.

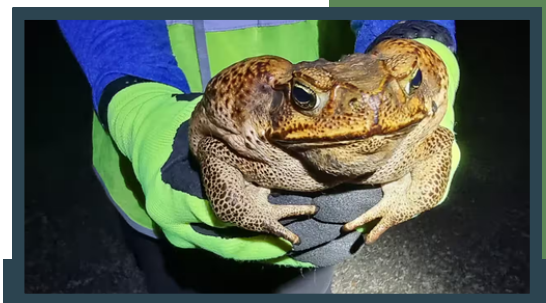


Photo Credit: SBS

Additionally, cane toads compete with our native wildlife for important habitat. An example of this was seen during a scientific study where cane toads intruded on one-third of rainbow bee-eater nests, eating their eggs and young.

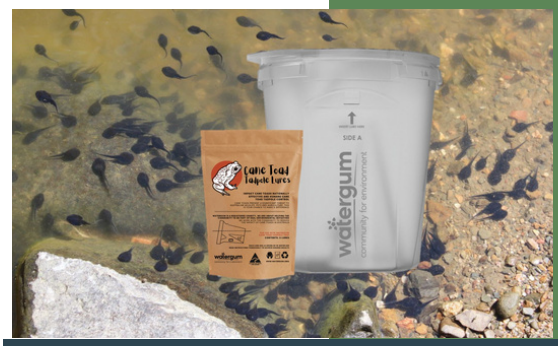


Photo Credit: Water gum

Innovative approaches being used to control cane toads:

- Training wildlife to avoide cane toads
- Use of TOADINATORS

What can you do to help control them?

- Collect eggs from ponds manually
- Collect tadpoles using cane toad tadpole trap
- Collect and humanely kill individual toads

Landholder Highlight: Liam & Kate

When did you join LFW and LLRI?
Before We purchased our property on the range in early 2022, we'd seen the LFW signs around the place but had never really known what they were about.

While researching the area we came across the LLRI website and signed up for the email list and Shania suggested we could join LFW as well.

Within a couple of weeks of contacting LFW, Martin was out at our block (on a very hot summer Saturday!) for a look around and helped us identify a few dozen plant species that we knew nothing about, we signed up for LFW immediately!

Why did you join the LLRI and LFW?
As well as having a bush getaway (home among the gum trees etc. etc.), a big part of our motivation in buying our block was to learn more about the area and get to know the flora and fauna. As we progressed, we started to understand just how much of the vegetation we were seeing was introduced and after putting up a wildlife camera over our dam, how many feral animals we had on the property. On the plus side, we also see lots of native animals around.

What restoration work have you completed since joining LFW and the LLRI?
We have a focus on trying to get rid of lantana, it feels like an endless job! we're also taking down unnecessary barbed wire fences to allow wildlife to move around easier. Following on from one of the LLRI seminars, we also invested in trapping equipment, aiming to catch the feral dogs that roam the area- no luck yet but we'll keep trying!

What have you found most rewarding from restoring your property?
Exploring our patch of bush, getting to know more about the species present and the different microclimates and most of all knowing that we're helping to create an environment that is wildlife friendly.

The seminars run by LLRI, LFW and other conservation groups in our area have been consistently great and have introduced us to a lot of important land management concepts and techniques including controlled and cultural burning, feral animal management and identifying animals remains and scats. These groups have also supported us with equipment to help attract wildlife back including nestboxes, wildlife cameras and now a Tree Troff!
Using iNaturalist has also been really valuable in getting accurate IDs - we had no idea there were so many different frogs in the area until We signed up!

Landholder Highlight

Do you have a favourite animal you see around your property and why?
There are different things at different times of the year which is cool, the yabbies are delicious, the bandicoots and joeys are cute, pale headed rosellas are very pretty.

We also love whoever has the little whiskery nose that pops up on our camera sometimes- we've never been able to see enough to confirm a species, but maybe some kind of glider.

What are you aiming to achieve on your property?
We're aiming to reduce weeds and feral animals while increasing native plants throughout the property and hopefully attract more wildlife, especially koalas back to the property.

But also, it's a place for us to relax and unwind.

What has been your biggest challenge to date?
Lantana! Early on in our journey we attended a weed control workshop, which included a backpack sprayer which was very useful, but we found spraying did a lot of damage to surrounding plants and was only about 50% effective, with a lot of regrowth the following summer. We since moved to using the cut stump method with a different herbicide, but it is more laborious. We have since invested in a new toy – a saw blade for our brushcutter which is speeding up progress and is dangerously fun!

Photo credit:
Liam & Kate

CELEBRATING LAND MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS AT AROONA

Written by: The Queensland Trust for Nature

QTFN have entered into a long-term partnership with Ecosure and Fireland to help integrate our weed and fire land management methods on Aroona Station. Ecosure's expertise in restoration planning and delivering on-ground works, and Fireland's expertise in ecological fire will help us approach restoration efforts strategically across the property.

Aroona is at the top of the catchment, and we take responsibility for reducing our impact downstream. Seeds can disperse through wind, water, or birds, so we have to consider our landscape closely. Managing weeds across a rugged landscape isn't an easy job, and with the wet seasons we've had over the past couple of years there's plenty of work to be done. The key weed species we're aiming to target in our management is lantana, broad-leaved pepper tree, Chinese elm, and cat's claw creeper.

Weeds can be barriers to our native wildlife's movement, particularly the koala, and outcompete the recruitment of our native flora. Dense woody weed cover can also negatively affect the availability of grazing pasture, with thickets outcompeting grasses, and reduce the feed on offer. Managing the cover of woody weeds is beneficial for both conservation and productive outcomes on Aroona Station.

This three-year agreement will enable us to find the right approaches for the diverse landscape and ensure works are maintained long-term. From the upland eucalypt woodlands to the shaded gullies and riparian systems, the approach to reducing our weed cover and improving vegetation condition will vary. Finding the right approach will be important in ensuring an impact is made effectively and efficiently, and that the forests will be on their way to becoming a self-sustaining ecosystem.

To celebrate this long-term partnership, the team gathered onsite at Aroona last month. We are excited to have boots on the ground and continue this great work. In a few short months, we are starting to see the impact already.

Photo credit: Tiffany Barnes / Ecosure

iNaturalist Statistics

13145
Observations

2410
Species identified

298
Observers

Upcoming events

September 2024 - LLRI Great Southern Bioblitz