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JABIRU

Newsletter of the Wildlife Conservancy of Tropical Queensland

Inside:

- Northern Quolls and Gouldian Finches.
- Did you know.... Gulf Saratoga
- Members' Benefits
- Membership renewal

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Wetlands re-opens in April



After a pretty damp squib of a 2014/15 wet season, Marg Atkinson and her team at the Wetlands re-opened the Reserve and Jabiru Safari Lodge in April.

As always, we advise that you check up on access and give the Visitor Centre a call on 4093 2514.

Dances with Cranes

We welcomed the founder of the International Crane Foundation Dr George Archibald during September last year, when he hosted an evening at the Visitor Centre as part of the Atherton Tablelands' Crane Week. This year the Conservancy will again be taking part in Crane Week (www.craneweek.org), which will take place from September the 21st to 27th 2015.



Cranes are one of the Conservancy's specialties and it is actively involved in research in partnership with Charles Darwin University, University of Greifswald, CSIRO, the North Queensland Wildlife Trust, BirdLife Australia and the Norman Wettenhall Foundation. The research is designed to throw light on the genetics, population dynamics, ecology and foraging movements of Brolgas and Sarus cranes in Far North Queensland and has been underway since July 2013.



Top Quollity

In May 2015 we welcomed Dr Ben Phillips and Ella Kelly, researchers from Melbourne University, who are catching up to 24 Northern Quolls *Dasyurus hallucatus* at the Reserve, because of their behavioral and/or genetic adaptations to cane toads; established over 50 years of contact. The Mareeba quolls will form part of a programme based at the

Territory Wildlife Park to test whether their apparent cane toad adaptations can be passed-on to quolls in the NT and WA; which are currently being decimated as cane toads continue their inexorable westward march. It's early days but despite a lower than expected trapping-rate, (even when using Ben's *stinkiest quoll bait*) Ben and Ella have already

sent five quolls to the NT and we all have our fingers crossed that they'll catch enough animals to form a viable colony at the Territory Wildlife Park and help defeat the cane toad! If our quolls breed in captivity in the NT, we hope to bring some of their progeny back to repopulate one or more area in FNQ that quolls formerly inhabited.



Northern Quoll, live-trapped using Ben Phillips' patent recipe 'stinkiest' bait!

Gouldian Finch Update

In September last year, Warren Entsch MP, a long-term supporter of the Gouldian Finches at the Wetlands presided over a soft release of 75 birds from the aviaries at the visitor centre; where Paul Killip, a

volunteer from England, watched-over the birds during their first few weeks in the wild. This resulted in significantly less early predation than experienced in the past and a much higher post-release survival rate.



Did you know? – Gulf Saratoga

Did you know that the Gulf Saratoga *Scleropages jardinii* is the commonest large fish at the Mareeba Wetlands – with specimens up to 95cm in length? It belongs to the Osteoglossid family of fish with 'bony' tongues and has a fossil record dating back 38-55 million years. It is characterized by thick bony scales, pink spots, a pair of barbels on the lower jaw, a large oblique mouth for surface feeding and single dorsal and anal fins placed well back on their bodies. There are seven living Osteoglossid species, with two found in Australia and others in South America, Africa, Southeast Asia and New Guinea.





Memberships due for 2015!

Membership Benefits

Memberships for 2015 are now due!

All memberships fall due on 1st April 2015 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 retaining the popular option of paying your membership for three years, reducing the amounts of paperwork and administration!

Members are entitled to

free entry to the Reserve and walks, 10% discount on tours, activities and shop purchases.

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

Tea with Mother!

Our annual Mothers' Day 'Tea with Mother' event on May 10th was a great success. Many thanks to Gwyneth Nevard, Merrilee Frankish, Cathy Bishop, Marion Adil and Clare Adil for organising and helping-out and, as always, to Marg Atkinson and her team for getting the Visitor Centre ready...and last but not least to Greg Jenkins for his wonderful boat tours! This is a free event that we first ran in 2014 and includes afternoon tea at Clancy's Lagoon Visitor Centre, with live music, boat tours and champagne for mum! We have other events in the pipeline for later in 2015, including 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
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!