



DRAFT JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett, MP
Minister for the *Environment, Heritage and the Arts*
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Ms Kat Miller
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WWF-Australia
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THREATENED SPECIES – IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett today joined WWF Threatened Species Network program manager Kat Miller to urge Australians to use National Threatened Species Day, Sunday September 7, to learn more about our threatened species and how they can be protected.

“This year’s theme ‘*Threatened today, extinct tomorrow*’ underlines how important it is to conserve our native birds and animals and their habitat before it’s too late,” Mr Garrett said.

“Introduced species, environmental degradation and habitat destruction through land clearing and development all pose a significant threat to native wildlife. But by working together we can make a difference.”

Mr Garrett said through the Rudd Government’s \$2.25 billion *Caring for our Country* initiative, including \$180 million for the National Reserve System, the Government was investing in biodiversity conservation in partnership with natural resource management groups, landowners and the wider community.

“Decisions like the one earlier this year to ban the Savannah cat from importation also make a real difference to the chances our native birds and animals have for survival, particularly as they are forced to adapt to a changing climate.”

Ms Miller said that without urgent action, Australia was at risk of losing more of the 346 animal and 1249 plant species already listed as threatened under federal environmental legislation.

“Australia has the worst record of mammal extinction in the world. Incredibly, half the mammals that have become extinct globally in the last 200 years have been Australian species. We cannot afford to let more of our unique plants and animals disappear forever,” she said.

Mr Garrett used the day to announce the recipients of this year’s Threatened Species Network Community Grants Program.

“This is the eleventh year the grants program has been run and this year \$500,000 from the Australian Government’s *Caring for Our Country* initiative will go towards 25 projects around Australia,” he said.

“More than 40 nationally threatened plants, animals and ecological communities will benefit from this funding, including the southern bell frog, Carnaby’s black-cockatoo, the bridled nail-tailed wallaby and several Tasmanian orchid species.”

National Threatened Species Day has been held every 7 September since 1996, to commemorate the death of the last Tasmanian tiger in captivity in 1936.

Ms Miller said people could do their bit by joining a conservation or community group and assisting with nature conservation activities such as tree planting and revegetation schemes.

“They can also ensure they keep domestic animals inside at night so they don’t escape and become feral predators,” she said.

There are fact sheets available on eight species and ecological communities chosen for the focus of this year’s National Threatened Species Day. These provide information about how people can get involved. Visit www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened or www.wwf.org.au/tsn

For a full list of this year’s grant recipients and their projects, visit www.wwf.org.au/tsn

All Threatened Species Network Community Grants projects are funded by the Australian Government’s Caring for our Country initiative.

LIST OF GRANT RECIPIENTS FOLLOW

New South Wales/ ACT

Project Title: Drought Refuge for Endangered Southern Bell Frog

Grant: \$45,455

Proponent: Nimming Pollen League

Project Description:

This project will provide a series of waterholes/dams in the Nimmie-Caira section of the Lowbidgee Floodplain to act as a predator free refuge for the southern bell frog during periods of prolonged drought. These waterholes will link with major floodway's. Water is to be pumped rather than gravitated to minimise impact of predator species such as European carp.

Project Title: Surveying and Monitoring Spotted-tailed Quolls in Foxground, NSW

Grant: \$13,472

Proponent: Foxground Landcare Group Inc

Project Description:

The aim of this project is to determine specific habitat requirements of spotted-tailed quolls on freehold land in Foxground. Feral animal control programs will enhance the habitat for quolls and an endangered ecological community. As part of the project we will establish a conservation management agreement, survey/monitor at key sites to determine population size, age, gender and diet, raise community awareness of quolls, their status and key threatening processes, and build community capacity through workshops/field work.

Project Title: Moth counters: standardising Golden Sun Moth monitoring

Grant: \$10,680

Proponent: Friends of Grasslands Inc

Project Description:

Standardised monitoring protocols, for use by community groups and professionals, will be developed for the Golden Sun Moth, an endangered flagship species. After evaluation, the protocols will be applied at 24 sites in the ACT to establish a baseline for monitoring and to underpin sound guidelines for site management.

Project Title: Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS) Restoration Project

Grant: \$11,909

Proponent: North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Project Description:

The re-establishment, from a native plant nursery currently being planned with approval of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, of local plant stock to restore areas from which invasive weed species have been removed or other activities have caused significant disturbance to Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub at North Head. The work will be undertaken in close consultation with all site managers and with the ESBS Recovery Plan.

Project Title: Northern Rivers Sea Turtle Monitoring Project

Grant: \$44,045

Proponent: Australian Seabird Rescue

Project Description:

To get members of the community to participate in a sea turtle monitoring program in the Northern Rivers region. A quarterly survey will be performed to determine current population status of the species, as well as a five month monitoring program of nesting beaches along the coast. This will contribute to management strategies for the species.

Victoria

Project Title: The Limestone Blues - Mitchell River Cliffs

Grant: \$10,700

Proponent: East Gippsland Landcare Network

Project Description:

The aim of the project is to remove the current threats to the Limestone Pomederris Shrubland (FFG-listed) remnant and Limestone wattle (FFG and EPBC-listed) by fencing off from cattle grazing and managing the weeds on the site. The site will be placed under a conservation covenant and a management plan for the landholder will be developed. An adjoining section of escarpment will be revegetated from seed and cuttings sourced from the remnant site to preserve the specific ecotype found there.

Project Title: The Black Range Bandicoot Highway

Grant: \$23,318

Proponent: Project Platypus Association Inc

Project Description:

This project aims to revegetate and enhance existing vegetation that will provide habitat for the southern brown bandicoot. A proposed corridor between Black Range and the Grampians National Park has been identified and this project will carry out activities to complete stage one of this proposal.

Project Title: Greta Valley Biolink for Threatened Woodland Birds

Grant: \$27,273

Proponent: Greta Valley Landcare Group

Project Description:

This project aims to protect, enhance and restore habitat that provides for the movement of regent honeyeaters, swift parrots, grey-crowned babbler and other fauna species on the cleared plains of the Greta Valley. This will also help connect habitat restored in the Lurg area with the remnant vegetation on the King River.

Project Title: Protection of Buloke Woodlands on the Longwood Plains

Grant: \$26,704

Proponent: Euroa Environment Group

Project Description:

This project aims to improve the condition of three, high quality patches of Buloke Woodland on the Longwood Plains. It also will highlight the uniqueness of Bulokes to encourage further conservation efforts by local landholders. Additionally, we will trial the effectiveness of fox-proof fencing at increasing breeding success of bush stone curlews.

Project Title: Planting roosting trees for orange-bellied parrots

Grant: \$1,818

Proponent: Port Fairy Golf Club Inc

Project Description:

It is proposed to establish areas of (succession planting) re-vegetation in the western corner of the Port fairy Golf course to provide future roosting sites for the orange-bellied parrot.

Project Title: Ecological Roadside Burning

Grant: \$36,364

Proponent: Country Fire Authority (CFA)

Project Description:

South West Victoria is renowned for its biodiversity importance. Less than 0.15% of the original one million hectares of Western (Basalt) Plains Grasslands are left (DSE). 28% of the remaining grasslands are located on roadsides some being home to endangered fauna. The project seeks to develop interpretative materials to improve understanding of the environmental impacts of roadside management, benefits of burning versus spraying/ploughing and the benefit of native grassland species in fire prevention/mitigation.

Queensland

Project Title: Bridled Nail-tail Wallaby Recovery - Feral Predator Control

Grant: \$22,402

Proponent: Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia -Hunting & Conservation Qld

Project Description:

The project aim is to intensify the control of feral cats on Avocet reserve. Sporting Shooters Association of Australia Hunting and Conservation (SSAA H&C) Qld has been working with Qld Parks and Wildlife (QPW) for four and a half years as part of the QPW Bridled Nail-tail Wallaby Recovery Program. The feral cat trapping project will increase control pressure on the cats, a critical activity for the survival and increase of the wallaby population.

Project Title: Implementation of the National Wallum Frog Recovery Plan

Grant: \$9,545

Proponent: Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee

Project Description:

A major focus of the project will involve extension to key local fauna interest groups, landholders and the community. Distribution data collected from the project and post-project activities will be passed onto the recovery team, researchers and planners to provide a better understanding of population distributions. Surveys and field days will be undertaken in key habitat areas so that locals have opportunities to work with wallum frog experts in this field.

Project Title: Conservation of *Macadamia jansonii* species

Grant: \$12,549

Proponent: Australian Macadamia Society

Project Description:

The overall objective of this project is to protect the last known wild population of *M. jansenii* from decline and extinction and raise awareness of flora conservation issues within the community and establish an ex situ population or gene bank.

Project Title: Giant Barred Frog Habitat Restoration

Grant: \$18,182

Proponent: Wetland Care Australia Pty Ltd

Project Description:

This project aims to undertake bush regeneration/weed control work and survey endangered populations of giant barred frog in a section of the Numinbah Valley. Although no confirmed sightings of Fleay's barred frog have been made at the site, the frog surveys will also include this species. A collaboration between private land holders, Gold Coast City Council, Wetland Care Australia, Qld Frog Society, Griffith University, and Permafrost Pty Ltd will collect and distribute information to key management and community awareness organisations and individual landholders in the region.

Project Title: Regent Honeyeater re-establishment on Myall Creek, Queensland

Grant: \$8,582

Proponent: Friends of Myall Creek

Project Description:

This project will re-establish key habitat for the endangered regent honeyeater along Myall Creek, Queensland. Numerous community groups will participate in the planting 600 'key' tree species in Dalby. The project will be underpinned by a site specific management plan incorporating awareness raising as well as long term monitoring and maintenance.

South Australia

Project Title: Reviving Neat wattle habitat on the Brinkley Plains

Grant: \$17,310

Proponent: Nature Conservation Society of South Australia

Project Description:

Stock-proof fencing is proposed to protect 25 ha of critical habitat for the neat wattle (nationally listed as vulnerable), three state rare indigenous plants, and a declining birds species over a network of grazed mallee remnants on private land at Brinkley, 80 kms southeast of Adelaide in the SA Murray Darling Basin.

Project Title: Determining Southern Bent-wing Bat habitat requirements

Grant: \$14,745

Proponent: Friends of Parks Inc- Friends of Naracoorte Caves

Project Description:

This project seeks to gain an understanding of the foraging grounds and dispersal of the southern bent-wing bat from its two maternity sites using radio tracking techniques and genetic analysis. This information is critical for

effective habitat conservation and the techniques could be translated to other bat species.

Western Australia

Project Title: Community protection and enhancement of Carnaby's Black Cockatoo habitat, Tambellup

Grant: \$20,504

Proponent: Birds Australia

Project Description: Protection and enhancement of remaining Carnaby's black-cockatoo nesting sites is critical to the species' survival. This will be achieved by revegetation at selected sites with local provenance food species, fencing off remnant vegetation; allowing natural regeneration where possible. Capacity building will be accomplished through community involvement in revegetation and monitoring of breeding sites.

Project Title: Conservation of a purple-crowned fairy wrens in the Kimberley

Grant: \$19,318

Proponent: Australian Wildlife Conservancy

Project Description:

This project is to inform the conservation management of EPBC listed purple-crowned fairy wrens in northwest Australia, by gathering information on the species' distribution, habitat preferences, and vulnerability to local extinction and then using this to prioritise areas for remedial management and/or protection. This information will be shared with participating landowners.

Project Title: Martu Multi-Species Surveys in the Western Desert

Grant: \$39,964

Proponent: Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation (Jamukurnu-Yapalikunu) (WDLAC)

Project Description:

The project will incorporate targeted monitoring and threat abatement works for black-flanked rock wallaby, as well as multi-species track-based surveys and patch burning at a number of locations. It will increase habitat availability and suitability of a number of threatened species by applying both traditional and scientific methods. It builds on previous survey work on the greater bilby undertaken by Martu people in conjunction with the TSN, WA Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and the Rangelands NRM Coordinating Group (RNRMC). The project will provide an important opportunity for Martu to engage with NRM stakeholders as part of the process to develop a land management unit to deliver long-term environmental benefits for threatened species in the Western Desert region.

Tasmania

Project Title: Threatened Orchid Conservation in Tasmania

Grant: \$13,427

Proponent: Wildcare Conservation Plant Action Group

Project Description:

Tasmania has 32 EPBC listed orchids, making threatened orchid conservation a high priority for the state. This project will contribute to threatened orchid conservation both by implementing effective on-ground recovery actions, and by providing training in orchid conservation and management to the wider community.

Project Title: Controlling Gambusia to reduce impacts on threatened frogs

Grant: \$32,272

Proponent: Tamar NRM

Project Description:

A gambusia (*Gambusia holbrooki* - mosquito fish) eradication/control/trapping and community education program will minimise gambusia impacts on green and gold frogs and the chances of further spread of gambusia. The program will build upon awareness created in several previous programs and utilise traps developed in a current gambusia project, which concluded July 2008.

Project Title: Orange-bellied Parrot Coastal Habitat Restoration Project

Grant: \$9,645

Proponent: The Understory Network

Project Description:

The orange-bellied parrot (OBP) and Tasmanian devil recovery programs include captive management. The provision of plants for food (OBP only) and shelter improves the health of individuals and encourages natural behaviours. This project will supply native plants and, in the case of the OBP, undertake a coastal habitat restoration project.

Northern Territory

Project Title: Slater's Skink survey at Loves Creek

Grant: \$15,000

Proponent: Central Land Council

Project Description:

The project aims to determine the size and extent of Slater's Skink (*Egernia slateri*) populations on Loves Creek a pastoral lease property, to set up a monitoring program, and to assess threats such as buffel grass. Three surveys will focus on defining the recently identified population, and searching for additional populations, respectively.