

LAND FOR WILDLIFE NEWS



Newsletter of the Land for Wildlife Program in Alice Springs Municipality, NT

Vol.1 No.1 February 2003

Land for Wildlife Update

Seven months into this pilot *Land for Wildlife* program and the response from the people of Alice Springs is very encouraging. To date there have been 26 applicants with sixteen Landholders receiving Full Registration, one has been assessed as Working Towards Full Registration and the remaining nine applicants have yet to be assessed. So if you have yet to make an appointment for assessment please contact the new *Land for Wildlife* Coordinators Audrey Hill, Bill Low or Marc Cassanet at W.A.Low Ecological Services on 8955 5222.

The new coordinators took over from Deborah Metters when personal commitments took her to Armidale, NSW. We thank Deb for the great organisational job she did in getting the program up and running in such a short time. After a short pause, the program is back on the fast track so another round of devolved grant applications can be called for very shortly.

On behalf of the Coordinators and the Advisory Committee, we would like to thank Kaye Kessing and Sue Richter for the time and thought that both ladies contributed to the Advisory Committee and assisting with the creation of material for the program. Both Sue and Kaye continue to support *Land for Wildlife* and each are Landholders of properties with Full Registration. It is unfortunate for the Advisory Committee to lose the contribution of these individuals due to other commitments. Special thanks goes to Kaye for allowing the Launch of *Land for Wildlife* in the Alice Springs Municipality to take place on the property and Sue for her role and input to the Devolved Grants Program.

There are now two vacancies, for Landholders, on the Advisory Committee. These voluntary positions were created so the Coordinators to receive input and feedback from relevant sources in relation to aspects of the *Land for Wildlife* program such as: Workshops, forms, folder contents and Devolved Grants.

Currently the Advisory Committee consists of: Dr Lynn Day, Bushcare Coordinator; Andy Vinter, Greening Australia; Dave Albrecht, Landholder (and Snr Botanist of the Southern Bioregion); Basil Zadow, Landholder and the *Land for Wildlife* Coordinators. If you are a Landholder and interested in making a deeper contribution to the *Land for Wildlife* program, please contact one of the Coordinators on ph:8955 5222.

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Watch out for:

Kapok Bush, *Aerva javanica*

This attractive, introduced species was sold in nurseries for landscaping gardens over the last 10 or more years. It has previously been employed in land rehabilitation programs but is now classed as weed. During the dry years it was not a serious problem, but with all the extra rain it has spread beyond domestic gardens.

In the back sleeve of your *Land for Wildlife* Folder there is a photograph of the Kapok Bush in the "Garden Thug" pamphlet though most of the residents of Lillecrapp Road are very familiar with the species.

In the warmer months, following rains is when germination is likely to occur. As with many unwanted introduced species Kapok Bush establishes readily in areas of disturbed soils, such as road verges.

Kapok Bush can live for several years and its light seeds are easily distributed by wind. The control method recommended is to firstly dead head (remove and bag flower heads), collect as much seed from around the base as is possible and then pull it up, roots and all!

Another weed!!!

Anyone seen a Buffel Grass plant lately? Everyone knows this plant and in the next Newsletter we'll provide more info on various control techniques that are being employed in the Alice area. It doesn't have to be back breaking, but it does have to be continuous.



This newsletter has been produced with the assistance of the Alice Springs Town Council and the Commonwealth Government's Natural Heritage Trust.

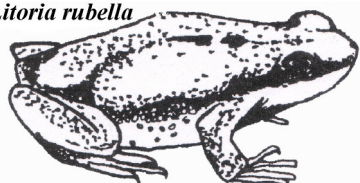


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Spotlight on: Tree Frogs of the Alice Region

The **Desert Tree Frog** *Litoria rubella* is reddish-brown, 28-43 mm, with a dark stripe

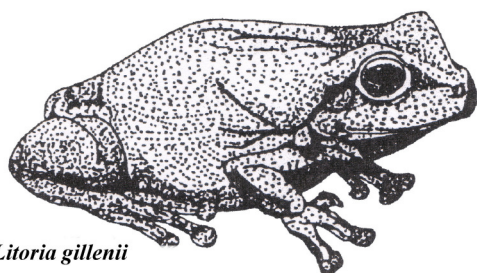
Litoria rubella



along both sides of its head and body. It's found near waterholes dotted along the

creekbeds of inland Australia. You're likely to spot it clinging to reeds, logs and rocks, or in nearby grass. Despite what the name implies, it spends most of its time on the ground and only climbs trees occasionally. Disc-shaped pads on the tips of its fingers and toes enable it to cling to vertical surfaces (like the insides of toilet bowls.) It's a very rapid breeder and the tadpoles may leave the water before metamorphosis is complete. So you may see small froglets, still with tails, hopping around. Desert Tree Frogs can survive after the waterholes dry up, in small pockets of moisture covered by leaf litter at the base of Red Gums.

The Centralian form of the **Green Tree Frog** *Litoria gillenii* is restricted to rocky gorges in the MacDonnell Ranges where there is permanent water. Colouring varies from olive to brilliant green with small creamy-white spots. It has a broad body, which is 66 - 110 mm from head to bum. Its broad fingers have large discs and the toes are extensively webbed.



Litoria gillenii

Compiled by Stuart Traynor from notes.
Pictures supplied by Parks & Wildlife Commission NT.

Books worth a look ...

Plants

"Wildflowers and plants of inland Australia", is a glovebox size paperback that is into a second print run. Anne Urban's keen interest in botany and photography have been combined to produce this informative book.

Animals

Recently launched, "A guide to rare & threatened animals in Central Australia", was published by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in Sydney, 2002. Rachel Paltridge and Steve McAlpin have authored a fine guide that describes over 20 rare or threatened species of Central Australia.

The thoughtful layout of this book together with its clear photographs makes it a useful reference. What make it an outstanding reference is the inclusion of chapters covering management options, useful contacts and references, as well as getting wildlife conservation projects funded.

Available through ALEC (Arid Lands Environment Centre). The Garden Café and Giftshop in the Olive Pink Botanic Garden and Big Kangaroo Books are a couple of other shops worth exploring for both books.



Workshops and Events

Saturday, 22nd of February. Greening Australia Local Native **Plant Sale**, 9am – 12pm. Bushcare Nursery, Centralian College, Grevillea Drive, Sadadeen.

Friday, 28th of February. Georgia Miller, Hons. Student, CSIRO, Alice Springs, will present a **seminar** on: *Ecological impacts of Buffel Grass invasion & altered fire regimes on central Australian woodland overstorey – preliminary findings.*

Saturday, 1st of March. Olive Pink Botanic Garden Growers Group **Plant Sale**, 10am – 12pm, in the Botanic Garden on Tuncks Road.

Wednesday, 5th of March. Australian Plant Society, **Workshop: Propagation by Cuttings**, following the AGM at 7:30pm. Members receive benefits such as borrowing from a very comprehensive Library.

Friday, 7th of March. Applications due from Schools and non-profit community groups for support from Greening Australia for small scale revegetation projects for Arbor Week 2003. Contact Greening Australia Office Ph:8953 2882.

Saturday, 15th of March. Greening Australia Local Native **Plant Sale**, 9am – 12pm. Bushcare Nursery, Centralian College, Grevillea Drive, Sadadeen.

31st of March to the 6th of April
Arbor Week 2003