



## Land for Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife Central Australia Newsletter

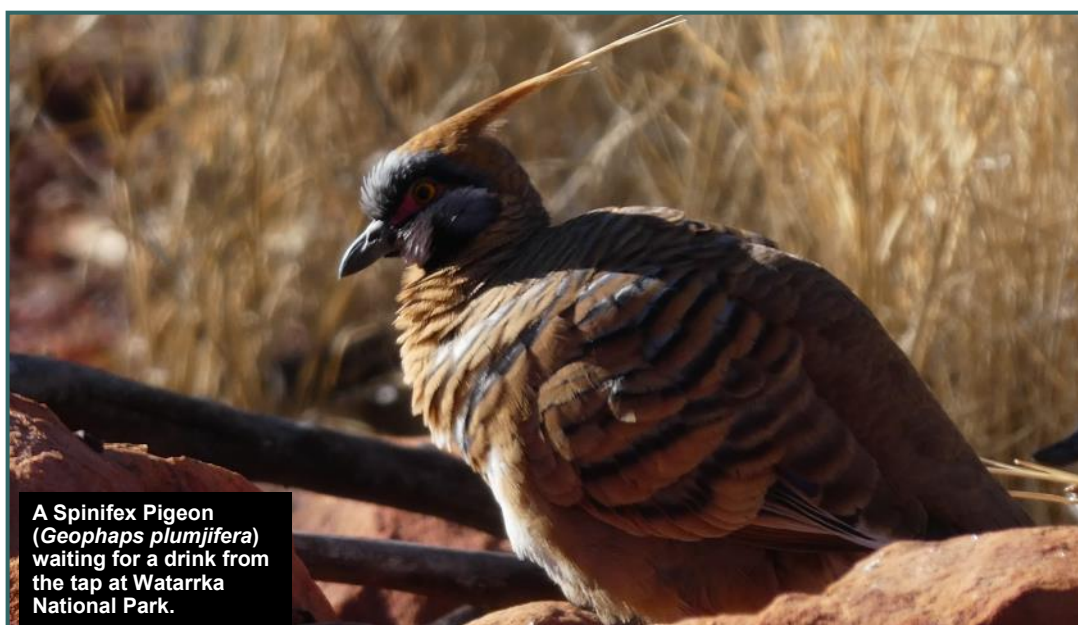
July 2018

### From the Land for Wildlife Coordinator

Well, well, well! Hasn't it been a dry winter so far?! However, with the lack of rain and the drying up of some of the waterholes, the birds are coming to town in search of water. For example, the Mulga Parrots (*Psephotus varius*) have been seen for the first time in a while this month by the Land for Wildlife team, coming in to drink from bird baths around the office.

This week, one of the Land for Wildlife team members also had their first sighting of the Red-backed Kingfisher (*Todiramphus pyrrophygius*) for several months. While this species is resident throughout much of the country year-round, they do seem to leave the region in winter and return to breed when there is rain. Do they know something that we don't regarding the forecast?

As for the Spinifex Pigeon (*Geophaps plumifera*) below, it was seen near the carpark at Watarrka National Park, along with roughly 30 others. They were nowhere to be seen until I refilled my water bottle and some drips hit the ground. All of a sudden, they emerged from the grassy surrounds and took in turns lining up for a drink from the small puddle below the tap. Making runs, in sets of two, from the safety of a rocky outcrop nearby.



A Spinifex Pigeon (*Geophaps plumifera*) waiting for a drink from the tap at Watarrka National Park.

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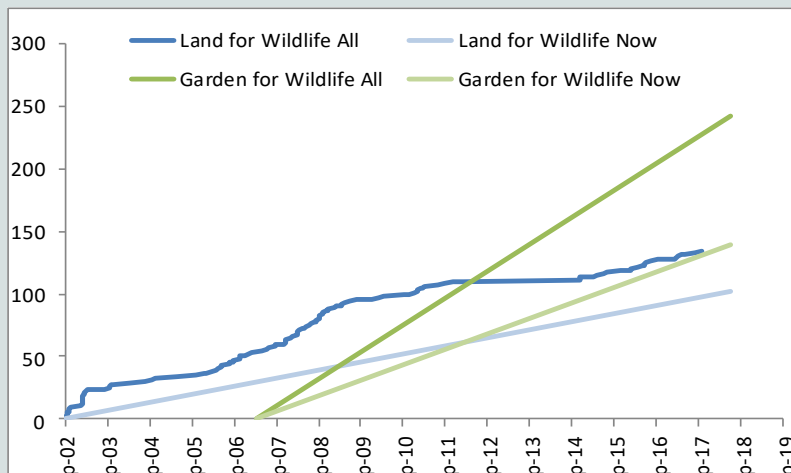
## The Land for Wildlife Program at a Glance

Land for Wildlife Central Australia has just wrapped up yet another fantastic financial year, smashing in a heap of activities to engage with our members and the wider community.

Membership is steadily increasing (see graph), with four new Land for Wildlife members this year and thirteen new Garden for Wildlife members.

We conducted feral animal trapping workshops, EcoFair schools day activities, property planning, bat box making and seed collection workshops, as well as a bird bath biodiversity survey. You also heard the dulcet tones of the Land for Wildlife team on ABC Radio as we spruiked our various activities and at stalls providing information and advice to the masses.

Our biggest project, the NT Register of Significant Trees was the focus of much time and energy and has finally been launched (see over the page). Plus more... we've been busy! Phew—what a year!



The graph shows the increase in Land for Wildlife membership since the beginning of the program in 2002 in dark blue, with the retained members in light blue. Garden for Wildlife membership influx and retained are in dark green and light green, respectively. As is to be expected for a transient town, retaining members can be a challenge!

	Members	Total Area Covered	Smallest Property Size	Largest Property Size
Land for Wildlife	102	33,494.61 Ha	0.15 Ha	10,340.98 Ha
Garden for Wildlife	139	173,572 m <sup>2</sup> 17.36 Ha	36 m <sup>2</sup> 0.0036	33,113 m <sup>2</sup> 3.31 Ha



**FAIRFAX LANDCARE  
COMMUNITY GROUP  
AWARD FINALIST**

**LAND FOR WILDLIFE /  
GARDEN FOR  
WILDLIFE,  
CENTRAL AUSTRALIA**

**Click here  
to vote!**



[www.nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards](http://www.nationallandcareconference.org.au/awards)

Land for Wildlife / Garden for Wildlife Central Australia are up for People's Choice as a Fairfax Landcare Community Group Award Finalist in the National Landcare Awards. **Vote for us!** Note that you don't need to vote in the other categories if you don't wish to, click next through each category until you reach question 10.



Facebook followers have increased from 401 to 519 in the last 12 months, Instagram is up from 74 to 300 and Twitter has increased marginally from 446 to 457. Not following us yet? You should! Head to the links on the final page of the newsletter and follow us to stay up to date.



**Monthly newsletters  
are going  
out to 442  
subscribers**

## Keeping Us In the Loop

Have you moved house or are about to move? Have you changed any of your contact details such as email or phone number? Are you now renting your property or have new residents that would like to know about the program or events?

We would appreciate it if you could get in touch to update us and we can keep you posted with all the comings and goings. It's also a great opportunity to let us know about what is happening on your property!



# NT Register of Significant Trees

## Online Register Launch

The NT Register of Significant Trees has been updated and upgraded to a digital format! Land for Wildlife are proud to announce that the Darwin and Katherine Daly Rivers registers are now live and ready for you to explore.

Take a virtual tour of the register via an interactive Google Map and download PDF fact sheets for trees of interest. Visit the website to find out more!



[WILDLIFE.LOWECOL.COM.AU/PROJECTS/SIGNIFICANT-TREES](http://WILDLIFE.LOWECOL.COM.AU/PROJECTS/SIGNIFICANT-TREES)

*The NT Register of Significant Trees is managed by Land for Wildlife Central Australia, on behalf of the National Trust NT.*

*The register was initiated by the National Trust NT, with input from Greening Australia NT, and coordination by Land for Wildlife Central Australia since 2011.*







**Ankerre Ankerre** is considered the kidneys of Alice Springs (Image: C. Appleby).

## A Snippet From Significant Trees

### » **Ankerre Ankerre**

The Coolabah Swamp, known as *Ankerre Ankerre*, is a site rich in Coolabah (*Eucalyptus microtheca*) and Bastard Coolabah (*E. intertexta*) and is listed on the Central Australian portion of the NT Register of Significant Trees as #13.

*Ankerre Ankerre* is a culturally significant place for the Central Arrernte people. The story of this area is that the travelling caterpillars (*Yeperenye*) came to *Ankerre Ankerre* to meet up and had large celebrations with lots of dancing. Today the caterpillars dance frozen in time in the form of the twisted Coolabah.

The area is also a vital water catchment area and has been described by Jodie Clarkson, the coordinator of the *Ankerre Ankerre* Landcare group, as 'the kidneys of Alice Springs', as the swamp filters the water coming off the landscape. Through urban development, altered water flow and the construction of a major road through the site, the area has suffered considerable amounts of degradation. Buffel Grass, Couch Grass and Old Man Saltbush put strain on the swamp. The consistent work from Landcare volunteers over the last 15 years has helped to restore this inland wetland.

View the [NT Register of Significant Trees](#) webpage to learn more about the register. The NT Register of Significant Trees was established by the National Trust NT and Greening Australia and is managed by Land for Wildlife Central Australia.







7-10 Aug & 27-31 Aug 2018

AHCPCM502

## Collect and Classify Plants

(From AHC51116 Diploma of Conservation and Land Management)

The unit will cover;

- The process of collecting, pressing, preserving, mounting and labelling plant specimens.
- Field spotting characteristics for plants in local major plant families.
- Identifying plants using taxonomic keys.
- Field trips and talks with local botanists and plant experts.

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**Dates:** 7-10 Aug & 27-31 Aug 2018

**Time:** 8.30am – 3.30pm

**Venue:** Building 15, CDU Alice Springs Campus, Grevillea Drive, Alice Springs.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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RTO Provider No; 0373





**Left:** Mistletoebird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) perched after having deposited a scat on a dead branch. **Right:** Flat-leaved Mistletoe (*Lysiana spathulata*). **Below:** Mulga Mistletoe (*Amyema murrayi*) fruit ready for the picking.



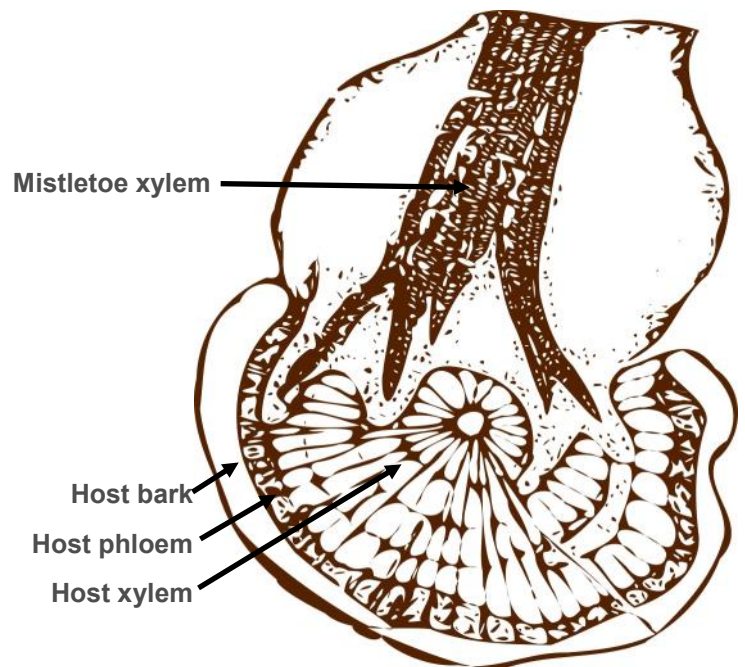
## Mistletoe Seed Dispersal

Ever wondered about how a new Mistletoe plant comes about? As with most other plants, it relies on birds for seed dispersal and the Mistletoebird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) is the key. They are one of the major species that feeds on Mistletoe fruit. Another local species that consumes the fruit is the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*).

A Mistletoebird will eat the fruit when it is ripe but the seed passes through undigested and coated in a thick sticky coating. When the seed passes, the coating sticks to the downy feathers around the bird's cloaca, in turn irritating it enough that it seeks out a branch on which to wipe it off.

Once the seed has been wiped onto a live branch, it can begin to germinate. When a Mistletoe seed germinates, it taps a root into the branch of the host tree, producing a knot known as a haustorium. The haustorium provides an anchor point for the Mistletoe, and also taps into the nutrient (phloem) and water (xylem) channels of the host plant. Unlike regular plants that close their stomata (pores for gas exchange) at night time to prevent evaporative water loss during periods of photosynthetic inactivity, Mistletoes keep their leaf stomata open at night as well, which sets up a passive moisture gradient between Mistletoe and host. This in turn allows the Mistletoe to steal water and nutrients from the host, leading to the phrase hemiparasitic.

The Mistletoe then grows, establishes itself, flowers and sets fruit – the cycle continues! To read more about Mistletoe and identify some species in the local area, check out our [Mistletoe fact sheet](#).



**Diagram of Mistletoe haustorium (adapted from UNBiology).**



## Social Media Recap

Land for Wildlife Central Australia are active on social media, posting interesting wildlife photos and facts on Instagram and Facebook. In case you missed it, we're here to update you on some of the most popular posts!

We celebrated NAIDOC week this month so and to highlight the connection between wildlife and our country's Indigenous land owners, I shared one of my favourite images.

The photo was taken a few years ago when I was a ranger at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and had the excellent opportunity to learn about some of the local wildlife, country and culture from Anangu. I was privileged to be able to go digging for Maku (Witchetty Grubs) and ate them both raw and cooked.

It was an excellent experience and I was thankful that I had the opportunity to learn about from incredibly knowledgeable people that live in the heart of our country.



## Land for Wildlife Presentation to the Australian Plants Society Inc. Alice Springs: "A Journey Through the Undergrowth of South America"

The Land for Wildlife team will be presenting some floral and fungal highlights from their travels through South America recently to the Australian Plants Society Inc. Alice Springs at their monthly meeting. Come along and see some of the strange but wonderful plants from the Andes, Patagonia, Brasil, Peru and the Galapagos Islands.

**Where: Olive Pink Botanic Garden Visitor Centre**

**When: Wednesday, 1st August 2018 at 7:30 PM**



# ARID LANDS OUTBACK TREK

- > Visit Central Australia > Challenge yourself on a 5-day trek
- > Help protect and preserve Australia's outback
- > Raise funds for ALEC to support vital programs

Join ALEC for the Arid Lands Outback Trek and help raise vital funds to protect and preserve Australia's outback. You will witness the work of ALEC first hand, learn more about desert living and support vital campaigns to ban fracking, strong climate policies and support communities to take action.

## THE DIFFERENCE YOU'LL MAKE

Desert Australia depends on clean groundwater, clean air and strong communities.

Unfortunately, 85% of Australia's Northern Territory is under application for exploration for petroleum and gas. More than half of the Territory is at risk of fracking.


Mining and fracking threaten to industrialise our wild landscapes, contaminate precious groundwater supplies and contribute to climate change. Furthermore, invasive weeds and feral animals threaten our unique biodiversity, and unbeknownst to many, climate change brings many challenges to life in remote communities.

With vast landscapes and small populations, the Territory needs strong voices to protect our arid heartland. Every kilometre you cover in this life changing challenge will enable the Arid Lands Environment Centre to continue their fight to ban fracking, protect country and support desert communities to prepare for climate change.


By taking part in this incredible adventure, you will be helping us to continue our fight against dirty and dangerous developments, and help communities living in desert Australia adapt to climate change.



 10 – 15 June 2019

 Moderately challenging


Registration fee: \$770  
(non-refundable)

 Fundraising target: \$3,500

Travel quote:  
No Alice Springs accommodation \$2,100\*

Pre & post accommodation in Alice Springs \$2,350\*

 Comfortable camping

 [www.inspiredadventures.com.au/events/ALEC-outback-trek-2019](http://www.inspiredadventures.com.au/events/ALEC-outback-trek-2019)

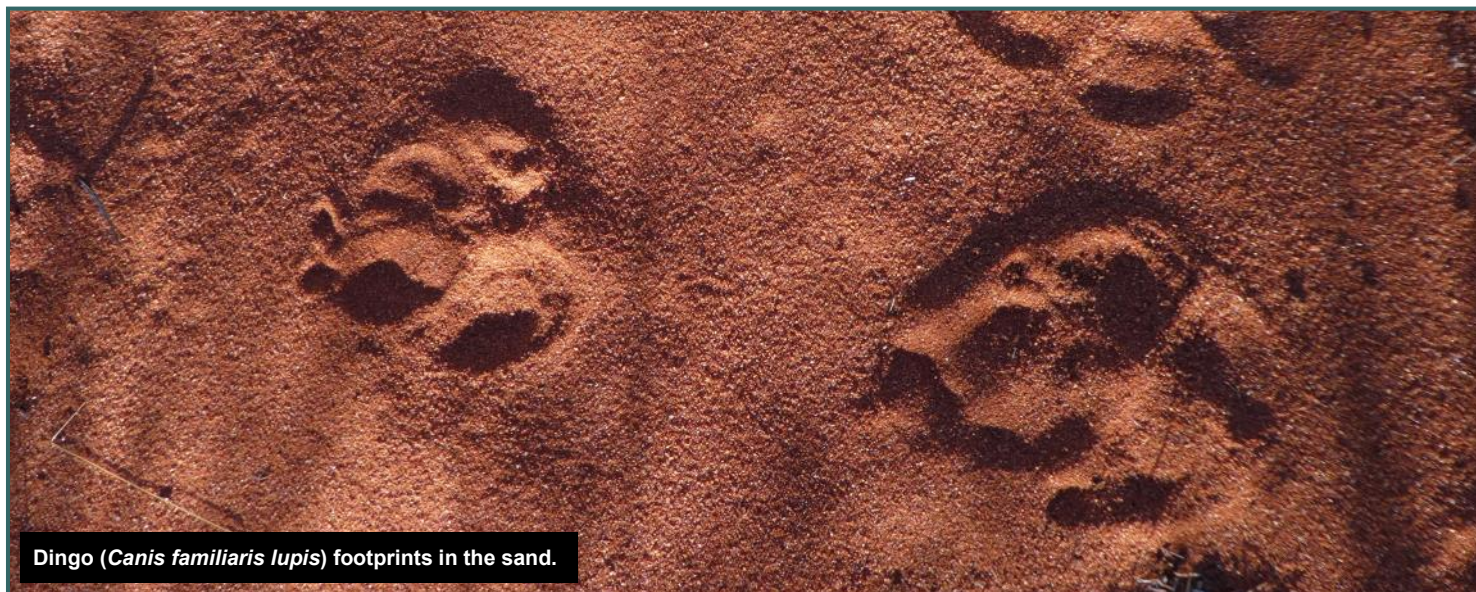
*\*Subject to change*

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**Arid Lands Outback Trek 2019** Information Pack

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## Further Reading

Click the link symbol to be redirected to the article



Article • Fear of humans is making animals around the world go nocturnal



Article • Study: Students infected with 'cat parasite' more likely to major in business



Article • From worms to whales, the wildlife that worries airports



Article • Wildlife winners and losers in Britain's summer heatwave



Video • How trees secretly talk to each other

Cheers,

*Caragh, Candice and Bill*

Do you have any stories or images to share? Get in touch! We are always looking for members to share their experiences via our social media and newsletter. Email us with your suggestions of articles or topics that you wish to hear more about.

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Follow us on social media and tag us in your wildlife posts!



Visit our website to read the blogs, access newsletters or print fact sheets



Follow Land for Wildlife on Facebook



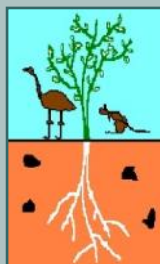
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