

Effectively developing and managing our natural resources for the benefit of the whole community

Editor; Dick Pasfield
08 9169 2222
olw@nits.net.au
PO Box 1804
Kununurra WA 6743

Ord Land and Water gets its Coordinator

After a lengthy interview process OLW finally got their coordinator on the ground on the 4th February 2002. Both the local community and the Natural Heritage trust have funded the position.

Dick Pasfield, one of the local applicants beat an impressive batch of contenders, based largely on his detailed knowledge of the local issues.

Although Dick comes from an agricultural background and many of the issues OLW will be dealing with are of a farming nature community priorities are high on his agenda. Dick believes that the DoLA decision to deal with the issue of Unallocated Crown land and its management locally needs support and input from the community. He is also keen to bring a workshop to Kununurra that will help in any Shire development of an environmental policy.

In addition to dealing with these local issues, Ord Land and Water will now be able to communicate a lot more effectively with the community.

Ord Land and water AGM

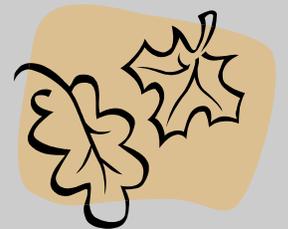
Our second AGM will be held at 5.30 PM on Tuesday 19th March at the Kununurra Tourist Bureau. We will be looking for nominations for up to two new board members. Applications are to be sent to the Chair, at OLW, PO Box 1804, Kununurra, 6743 by 18 March 2002.

This is a good opportunity for those with an interest in what Ord Land and Water to come along and see where we are up to in the implementation of the community plan.

All are Welcome.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Weeds
- SEEKS
- Stage 2
- WWF

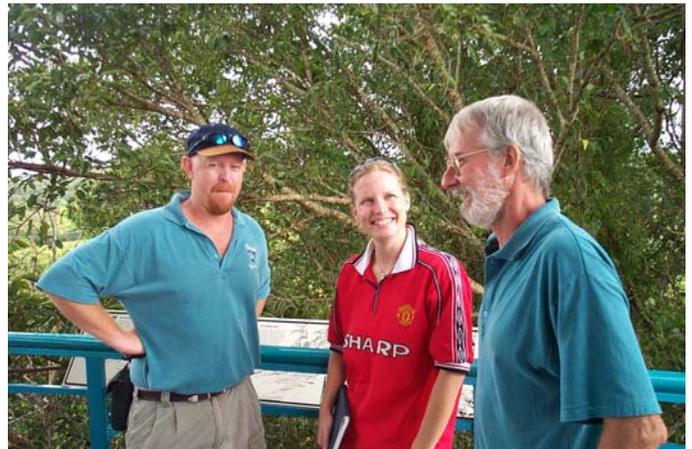


World Wetlands Week 2002

Was held on the 8th and 9th of February with Tarnya Vernes, Scott Goodson Brian Prince and Dick Pasfield of Kununurra attending. The seminar looked at a variety of issues including weed management and aboriginal food harvesting.

The field day included visiting the Adelaide River wetlands and viewing approximately 4,000 hectares of Mimosa that is currently threatening the area.

Ord Land and Water used the trip to establish links with other northern-based environmental groups attending the seminar.



Scott Goodson, Jann Crasse and Tim Willing enjoying the world wetlands conference in Darwin.

Weeds and Seeds

Did you know that there is only one of Australia's top twenty weeds of national significance in [the East Kimberley](#) not being controlled? Salvinia and rubber vine thankfully have been spotted and action taken before they could spread. Only Parkinsonia is out of control. Of course this doesn't mean that the Kimberley is weed free, in fact far from it.

We have a serious weed problem in the Kimberley; it's just that the major contribution to the hit list comes from the more populated areas of Australia.

The local weeds group has put together their own 'top twenty or more' based on criteria such as distribution, impact, economic risk and environmental risk. The area assessed is between the Ord and Diversion dams with the view that it will be expanded to cover a wider area later.

The list is below and may surprise you on its contents, some are growing right in our own backyards!

Weed Priority Score

Weed	Priority score
Salvinia	3+
Bellyache Bush	3
Chinee Apple	3
Wild Mango	2+
Grewia asiatica	2+
Date Palm	2
Andropogon <i>gayanus</i>	2
Noogoora Burr	2
Parkinsonia	2
Merrimia <i>aegyptia</i>	2
African Mahogany	2
Cotton Palm	1+
Mossman River Grass	1+
Neem	1+
Pennisetum <i>pedicellatum</i>	1+
Khaki Weed	1+
Candle Bush	1+
Wild Pawpaw	1+
Para Grass	1+
Vi Vi	1+
Banana	1+
Mintweed	1+
Coral Vine	1+



African Mahogany (above) and Neem (below) are two popular species grown in Kununurra gardens that have proved to be environmental weeds



If you would like more information check out the following web sites:
http://savanna.ntu.edu.au/publications/savanna_links7/exotlist.html
www.weeds.org.au/associations.htm

Local farmer investigated for land clearing

A large local farming enterprise has had their clearing operations on a newly acquired block of land within the ORIA come under official scrutiny. The Department of Agriculture through the office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation is investigating allegations that land clearing took place before any clearance from the department was given.

An investigator recently visited Kununurra to take statements from the Lerch's and other witnesses. Any land owner or occupier who intends to clear more than one hectare of native vegetation must notify the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation at least 90 days prior to the proposed commencement of clearing.

WWF new position for Kununurra

World Wildlife Fund Australia recently appointed Tanya Vernes to the newly created position of Wetlands Project Officer, based in Kununurra. The position is due to start full time in early April 2002 initially for 12 months and concentrates on wetland conservation and management in the Kimberley Region, WA and Top End, NT.

WWF has created this position to help achieve its vision for conserving biodiversity and ecological processes through the joint work of local communities, government and businesses. The position covers a large area geographically but focuses on two main areas to further the wetland conservation in northern Australia:

1. Promote and facilitate more effective wetland conservation through the establishment of voluntary management agreements for significant wetlands on a range of land tenures;
2. Explore sustainable options for future water resource management of the Ord River within a community driven process. Tanya is currently employed with the Department of Conservation & Land Management in Kununurra and manages the Tropical Forestry Research Project. She has been actively involved in a number of community organisations over the past few years including Steering Committee member of Ord Land & Water and Chair of the Ord Land & Water Conservation Action Group.

Forum

Are you keen to air your views on any of the environmental issues that concern you? If you can keep it short and to the point send them in and we will look at publishing them in a reader's forum in the future.

Stage 2 on the ropes?

With Wesfarmers exit stage 2 seems to have been permanently derailed, or has it? The state Government is still looking for that elusive proponent to fill Wesfarmers shoes and what form stage 2 may take based on land availability. But what is happening on the local front? Several groups including the Shire, Kimberley Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Kimberley Land Council and the Kimberley Primary Industries association are looking at how the local community can best feed into the process.

At least one thing is for certain and that is Ord Stage 1 may finally get a break from the proliferation of misinformation being spread. Reporting (such as from 'The Weekend Australian') has done this area a lot of damage with misreporting of facts and overlooking the progress made by locals on environmental issues.

At least we will be left in peace to get on with our business. Who knows maybe one day one of these 'fly in fly out' expert reporters from the south may actually have something nice to say about us! I'm not holding my breath though, good news never sells newspapers.

How about that word sustainability?

In 1987 the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development defined 'sustainable development' as-

Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

SEEKS SPEAK

SEEKS (Save Endangered East Kimberley Species) is a volunteer group promoting community involvement in the conservation of the native plants and animals of the East Kimberley. The group formed in 1999 in response to the plight of the endangered Gouldian Finch but has since taken on a wide range of projects and issues.

Members have been involved in Birds Australia surveys, monitoring Salvinia at Lily Creek Lagoon, radio-tracking pythons and Noogoora Burr weed control on Lake Kununurra. Current projects include flora surveys in Mirima National Park and Point Spring rainforest rescue. Recently the group was successful in obtaining a Lotteries Commission grant for population studies of the estuarine crocodile in the East Kimberley.

Meetings are held monthly providing updates on projects, information about native plants and animals and discussion about local conservation issues. Guest speakers are invited to share their knowledge and expertise. Topics have been wide ranging such as fire, weeds, mistletoes, fossils, bats and crocodiles. Anyone is welcome to attend at 7pm on the third Wednesday of the month at the Kimberley Development Commission conference room.

For more information about SEEKS or current projects contact president Trish Purchase on 9168 1782 or secretary Jenny Wilksch on 9168 2276.

Triple bottom line, what is it?

It's one of the latest catch phrases in 'new-speak'. What it means is that environment and community values join economic values as a three-pronged approach to development. Now the things that a community views as important, including the landscape need to be considered prior to commencement of work. Its up to the community to ensure that the relevant people know what is important and needs protecting rather than the dollar having the only say.



Interesting view of the Dunham road (sorry river) recently

WA Government's sustainability principles

This is what our current Government has committed itself to-

- Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity (as the basis on which life depends).
- The precautionary principal (lack of scientific certainty should not delay measures to prevent environmental degradation and other damage).
- Inter and intra-generational equality (our decisions today should not compromise the choices of those generations still to come and should provide equity within generations).
- Improved resource valuation (pricing and incentive mechanisms to protect and repair the environment).

Lets see how successful it and Government agencies are at standing by these principals.

Articles Please!

If you have something to say or an article of interest please send them into me at the OLW office or e-mail me on olw@nits.net.au.