

Centenary and District Environment
 Action Incorporated
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CDEA Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 10am on Saturday, 29th October, 2022, followed by a Public Presentation by Dr Sean FitzGibbon, a Wildlife Researcher in the Koala Ecology Group at The University of Queensland.

The venue for the AGM and presentation will be the Pooh Corner Environment Centre, 100 Wolston Road, Wacol. The proposed topic is "Challenges to Koala Conservation in Urban Landscapes in South-East Queensland". Join others for a bush walk at 8.30am.



WHAT IS A TREE HUGGER?

(Vaughan Kippers, Editor)

If you Google this term, you can read a large amount of interesting information, including the history of "tree huggers". When applied to people, it is sometimes an informal, derogatory term used to describe "an environmental campaigner (used in reference to the practice of embracing a tree in an attempt to prevent it from being felled)." This is a practice first recorded in 1730 in India.

➤ [Nick Kilvert](#) (ABC Science Aug 2022) 'Tree hugger' might not be the insult you think it is — the term has deep historical roots. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2022-08-07/tree-hugger-bishnoi-chipko-defiance-deep-historical-roots/101247020>

More accurate, respectable and admirable synonyms for "tree hugger" include ecologist, conservationist and environmentalist.

Locally, some people use the term, incorrectly, to refer to the knitted woollen tree protectors that you can see along Wilsons Walkway and on some of the street trees in Tekapo Street, Westlake. What are they protecting? They are protecting tree trunks from the feral deer that inhabit parts of the Centenary suburbs.



Knitted woollen tree protectors on trunks of street trees at Westlake Drive end of Tekapo Street (Photo © Vaughan Kippers, 14:34, 26th September, 2022)

This issue will address two related issues:

- 1) The importance of saving trees, and
- 2) The problems caused by feral deer

THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES AND THEIR PRESERVATION

(Vaughan Kippers, Editor)

Human Health

Being connected to nature has a number of positive health outcomes, and having regular access to green space is one factor that improves sleep time.

- [Shelby Gull Laird](#) (Mar 2014) Hug a tree – the evidence shows it really will make you feel better. <https://theconversation.com/hug-a-tree-the-evidence-shows-it-really-will-make-you-feel-better-21924>
- [Thomas Astell-Burt](#) & [Xiaoqi Feng](#) (Mar 2020) More green, more ‘zzzzz’? Trees may help us sleep. https://theconversation.com/more-green-more-zzzzz-trees-may-help-us-sleep-132354?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2016%202020%20-%201563514952&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20Mar

Urban Tree Canopy

In Issues 51 & 53 (February & May 2022) we discussed the importance of the tree canopy and “urban forest islands” in our local environment, particularly in reducing maximum temperatures during summer.

- [Thami Croeser](#), [Camilo Ordóñez](#) & [Rodney van der Ree](#) (Feb 2020) Thousands of city trees have been lost to development, when we need them more than ever. https://theconversation.com/thousands-of-city-trees-have-been-lost-to-development-when-we-need-them-more-than-ever-132356?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20February%2027%202020%20-%201545914764&utm_content=La
- [Mridula Amin](#) (ABC Nov 2019) These two Western Sydney streets are completely different temperatures — here's why. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-21/western-sydney-heatwave-alleviated-by-tree-cover/11721698>
- [Prianka Srinivasan](#) and [Hellen Souisa](#) (ABC Nov 2021) As backyards get smaller and trees are removed, urban heat islands could be making suburbs hotter. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-11-11/townhouses-development-heat-island-effect-australian-suburbs/100588334>
- [Gregory Moore](#) (Mar 2022) Roadside trees stitch the ecosystems of our nation together. Here's why they're in danger. https://theconversation.com/roadside-trees-stitch-the-ecosystems-of-our-nation-together-heres-why-theyre-in-danger-175337?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2029%202022%20-%202247922323&utm_content=Lates

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Homes for Native Fauna

The **Queensland Conservation Council** has had an Art Competition for the last two years, with the theme of “**Saving Wild Homes**”. Everybody recognises that trees, particularly mature trees with hollows, act as homes for many species of mammals, birds and insects. The competition for homes becomes fierce when their natural habitat is destroyed. Urban forests must be preserved to save the trees and their inhabitants.

- [Brendan Wintle](#) (Dec 2018) The small patch of bush over your back fence might be key to a species' survival. https://theconversation.com/the-small-patch-of-bush-over-your-back-fence-might-be-key-to-a-species-survival-108672?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20December%2013%202018%20-%201184110771&utm_content=Latest%20
- [Gregory Moore](#) (Aug 2021) Cockatoos and rainbow lorikeets battle for nest space as the best old trees disappear. https://theconversation.com/cockatoos-and-rainbow-lorikeets-battle-for-nest-space-as-the-best-old-trees-disappear-165973?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20August%2024%202021%20-%202039820069&utm_content=Lates
- [Philip Gibbons](#) (Jul 2018) Smart city planning can preserve old trees and the wildlife that needs them. https://theconversation.com/smart-city-planning-can-preserve-old-trees-and-the-wildlife-that-needs-them-98632?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%202%202018%20-%20105419327&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20

Australian Native Trees

All 10 finalists in the ABC's public vote were iconic, but the River red gum was the winner. The local Moreton Bay fig was fifth.

- [Jessica Riga](#), [Kylie Andrews](#) & [Jonathan Webb](#) (ABC Aug 2022) River red gum wins Australia's favourite native tree countdown, Moreton Bay fig fans and boab boosters left gutted. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-08-26/australias-favourite-native-tree-winner-count-down-live-updates/101372644>
- [Andrew Thornhill](#) (Apr 2019) A detailed eucalypt family tree helps us see how they came to dominate Australia. https://theconversation.com/a-detailed-eucalypt-family-tree-helps-us-see-how-they-came-to-dominate-australia-113371?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20April%209%202019%20-%201280211884&utm_content=Latest%20fro

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Economic Benefits

“Money might not grow on trees, but it'll probably buy you a place with more of them.” Cheaper outer suburbs often have lower house prices, but there are other costs, such as more air conditioning and longer commute distances and times. Vendors may profit but buyers may balk at paying extra for a green environment; in Canberra the government thinks it will be worth it!

- [Nick Wiggins](#) & [Erica Vowles](#) (ABC RN Mar 2020) Tree loss is making for sweaty suburbs, and the households that can least afford it are feeling the heat. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-02/tree-loss-increasing-heat-in-suburbs-as-thermal-inequity-hits/11984338>
- [Sara Wilkinson](#), [Agnieszka Zalejska-Jonsson](#) & [Sumita Ghosh](#) (Sep 2019) Trees can add \$50,000 value to a Sydney house, so you might want to put down that chainsaw. https://theconversation.com/trees-can-add-50-000-value-to-a-sydney-house-so-you-might-want-to-put-down-that-chainsaw-122710?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2011%202019%20-%201406513253&utm_content
- [Antoinette Radford](#) & [Elizabeth Byrne](#) (ABC Oct 2021) Concern proposed planning law change to increase number of trees in Canberra could drive up house prices. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-10-30/proposed-tree-canopy-law-changes-draw-mixed-reactions/100580834>

A recent University of Queensland study compared three Brisbane suburbs, including Riverhills, and found that the poorest suburb had the least tree cover.

- UQ News (Sep 2022) Tree study shows low-income Brisbane suburbs need more shade. https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2022/09/tree-study-shows-low-income-brisbane-suburbs-need-more-shade?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=Nov2013&utm_campaign=Newsletter
- Qld PS News (Sep 2022) Suburbs found to need more trees. <https://psnews.com.au/2022/09/27/suburbs-found-to-need-more-trees/?state=qld>

Tree Planting

Thomas Crowther is a young British ecologist who argues that the best solution to global warming is to plant one trillion trees. I wish I could believe it is that simple. Certainly it is one of many methods that have been proposed and Brisbane had its own Two Million Trees Project from 2008 to 2012, which cost \$14 million

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(<https://www.waterandcarbon.com.au/media/bhvmgcjx/wcg-case-study-2-million-trees.pdf>). I wonder how many trees were cut down by developers during the same period?

Since then, more ambitious targets have been proposed in New Zealand and China, as two international examples. “Planet Ark's National Tree Day started in 1996 and has grown into Australia's largest community tree planting and nature care event.”

(<https://treeday.planetark.org>)

- [Lucy Munro](#) (Jun 2019) A Trillion Trees Can Save the World. <https://wonderground.press/botanica/trillion-trees-can-save-world/>
- [David Hall](#) (Jul 2018) Coldplay conundrum: how to reduce the risk of failure for environmental projects. https://theconversation.com/coldplay-conundrum-how-to-reduce-the-risk-of-failure-for-environmental-projects-99449?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%2011%202018%20-%20106099399&utm_content=Latest%20from%252
- ABC (Aug 2021) China announces tree planting pledge to increase forests and bring down carbon emissions. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-08-20/china-announces-mass-tree-planting-to-increase-its-forests/100395780>

Local Example

Many readers may have seen the announcement that there has been a **postponement of the Centenary Bridge Development**, which allows time for local environmentalists to argue for preservation of the roadside forest island featured in Issue 53 (May 2022, p 4).

In the February floods, the bridge over Jindalee Creek was damaged and it has been proposed that it be replaced. If the new pedestrian/cycle bridge is located further downstream, the proposed cycle path associated with the new Centenary Bridge should be redesigned in an effort to preserve the roadside urban forest for the local residents, walkers and cyclists. It must be recognised that there is a cost in destroying a forest regardless of its size. Every mature tree has a value, which is quite substantial. The cost of destroying the forest with machines is also high, and then there is the added cost of replanting the area with trees that will reach maturity is about 100 years.

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Can we afford to lose one of our local forests? “The benefits from trees increase as they grow older, so the sooner we get started planting more street trees across these at-risk suburbs, the better.”

- Qld PS News (Sep 2022) Suburbs found to need more trees. <https://psnews.com.au/2022/09/27/suburbs-found-to-need-more-trees/?state=qld>
- [Peter Burnett & Michael Vardon](#) (Jul 2021) ‘Environmental accounting’ could revolutionise nature conservation, but Australia has squandered its potential. https://theconversation.com/environmental-accounting-could-revolutionise-nature-conservation-but-australia-has-squandered-its-potential-163661?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20July%2013%2021%20-%2020004196
- [Farz Edraki](#) (ABC RN Dec 2018) Trees are worth billions to Australia's economy — but how we value them is changing. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-18/the-changing-economy-of-trees/10602186>

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF FERAL DEER

(*Vaughan Kippers, Editor*)

In Australia, the Invasive Species Council advocates for proper control of feral deer.

- Invasive Species Council (2021) Feral deer. <https://invasives.org.au/our-work/feral-animals/feral-deer/>
- Invasive Species Council (May 2021) Taking a national approach to managing Australia's growing feral deer problem. [Feral Herald](#). <https://invasives.org.au/blog/taking-a-national-approach-to-managing-australias-growing-feral-deer-problem/>
- Invasive Species Council (2022) Feral deer in Tasmania. <https://invasives.org.au/our-work/feral-animals/feral-deer/feral-deer-in-tasmania/>
- Invasive Species Council (2022) Feral deer in Victoria. <https://invasives.org.au/our-work/feral-animals/feral-deer/feral-deer-in-victoria/>

During the last two years the ABC has published a series of articles informing the public about the negative effects of feral deer and the strategies being discussed for their control.

Deer are correctly described as “feral” in Australia because they were introduced from overseas (Europe and Asia) for farming and hunting. Even before a recommendation by the Western Australian Acclimatisation Council in 1898, that deer be introduced, ecologists had warned that their presence in Australia would not be a good idea.

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Deer in Perth Zoo, 1929. A parcel of deer, gifted by the royal family, were also released in WA. (Supplied: State Library of Western Australia)

- [Gianfranco Di Giovanni & Emma Wynne](#) ([ABC Radio Perth](#) Jul 2021) No laughing matter: the bizarre colonial project to make WA more European. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-03/colonists-disastrous-use-of-animals-for-acclimatisation/100254906>

In South Australia, fallow deer are increasing the fire hazard in the Adelaide Hills by “cultivating” olive trees, which “strangle” many of the native plant species. “Escaped fallow deer in the Mount Lofty Ranges, increasingly spotted by bushwalkers, are a particular problem.”

- [ABC Radio Adelaide](#). (July 2020) Feral deer 'cultivating' olive trees in Adelaide Hills as the pest plant strangles native vegetation. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-29/feral-deer-cultivating-olive-trees-in-adelaide-hills/12500738>



Fallow deer in South Australia destroy a malleefowl nest. (Supplied: Lee Williams)

In Tasmania, fallow deer are competing for food with domesticated animals on farms, causing large financial losses.

- [Luke Bowden](#) (ABC Tasmania Mar 2021) Tasmania's wild deer population is on the rise — with many calling for better population control. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-07/calls-to-control-tasmanias-growing-wild-deer-population/13223230>
- [Ellen Coulter](#) (ABC [7.30](#) Sep 2021) In Tasmania, deer aren't classified as pests. That's causing problems for farmers like Julian. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-21/tasmania-feral-deer-impact-on-farmers-populations-spreading/100467680>

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Readers may be familiar with the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape, in Victoria, which features an elaborate series of stone-lined channels and pools set up by the Gunditjmarra people to harvest eels. This Aboriginal site [was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List](#) in 2019. In 2021, the ABC reported that 1,100 feral animals, mainly deer and pigs, were killed during an aerial shooting operation.

- [Daniel Miles \(ABC South West Vic May 2021\)](#) Feral pigs and deer killed in aerial cull to protect Budj Bim Cultural Landscape. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-14/aerial-shoot-kills-feral-pigs-and-deer-in-world-heritage-site-100136532>

A report prepared by Frontier Economics for the Invasive Species Council estimates that the cost of not controlling feral deer in Victoria could be as high as \$2.2 billion over the next 30 years.

- Invasive Species Council (Jun 2022) Counting the doe; feral deer could cost Victoria over \$2 billion. <https://invasives.org.au/media-releases/feral-deer-could-cost-victoria-over-2-billion/>

In Victoria, deer are ringbarking rainforest canopy trees by “rubbing their antlers on the trunks”, as can be seen along Wilsons Walkway and Tekapo Street, Westlake.

- [Anne Simmons \(ABC Gippsland Dec 2021\)](#) Sambar deer are destroying rainforest canopy trees in fire-affected regions. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-12-27/sambar-deer-damage-rainforests-in-fire-ravaged-areas/100660722>



Tom Crook shows where deer rub antlers on a rainforest tree. (ABC Gippsland: Anne Simmons)

Deer are also a growing problem in the mid-north coast and northern New South Wales.

- [Keely Johnson \(ABC Rural Aug 2021\)](#) Deer control underway on NSW Mid North coast, carcasses used as feed for local zoo. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2021-08-10/deer-control-on-the-rise-carcasses-used-as-feed-for-local-zoo/100360738>

- 5 ➤ [Madeleine Cross \(ABC Mid North Coast Aug 2022\)](#) Growing concerns about spread of feral deer across northern New South Wales. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-08-10/concern-about-feral-deer-spread-through-northern-nsw/101309744>

As in many parts of Australia, including the local Centenary suburbs, deer have escaped from commercial deer farms or been deliberately released.

It was reported last year, that a male rusa deer, our local species from Indonesia, ran across the Bruce Highway in Rockhampton and entered a Bunnings store where it “terrorised” the shoppers.

- [Frazer Pearce \(ABC Capricornia Jul 2021\)](#) When nature and suburbia collide, this buck stops at Bunnings. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-07/bunnings-shoppers-face-off-with-wild-deer-rockhampton/100270536>

A major concern in Queensland is that the deer will continue to migrate north, occupying larger areas, as they have done in other states.

In summary, deer impact Australian communities in the following ways:

Environmental; ecosystems are being transformed by deer as well as competing with native animals, degrading waterways and spreading weeds. Serious damage is being caused to very sensitive ecosystems such as alpine bogs, rainforest and coastal areas.

Social; in outer urban areas, such as the Centenary suburbs, fences and gardens may be destroyed, and deer are becoming a serious traffic hazard. Further out, such as in the Brisbane Valley, irresponsible hunters may cause distress to members of the public.

Cultural; Aboriginal cultural sites may be eroded, and therefore degraded, by soil compaction and damage to native plant species.

Economic; various agricultural and forestry industries have been affected by deer grazing and browsing in paddocks, and this is likely to increase in the future. Of greater concern, is their potential to transfer diseases such as foot and mouth disease.

What are the plans for controlling the numbers of feral deer in Australia and to reduce their negative effects?

Farmers in Tasmania have been doing the same as we have done in the Mount Ommaney Bushland Reserve; “caging eucalyptus saplings to protect them”.

- [Alexandra Humphries](#) (ABC Tasmania May 2021) Diazepam, nets considered in fight against feral deer, with Tasmanian wilderness areas under threat. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-21/diazepam-suggested-for-fallow-deer-pest-control/100154674>

Strategic Plans have been released for comment by Government Departments, such as in Queensland, which has a Draft Feral Deer Management Strategy 2022-2027.

- Invasive Species Council (Jul 2022) Draft Feral Deer Management Strategy 2022-2027. Queensland. Submission. <https://invasives.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Draft-Feral-Deer-Management-Plan-QLD-submission-from-the-Invasive-Species-Council-July-2022.pdf>

Different deer management objectives have been identified:

“**Preventing** deer establishing in areas they don’t currently occupy (highest priority);

Eradicating small and isolated populations and those that impact most on values;

Containing feral deer to identified areas while resources are limited, and;

Protecting assets within those containment areas to protect high value assets be they environmental or economic.”

In Queensland, this program will be supervised by the Biosecurity section of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Modern technology, involving drones and artificial intelligence, has been used to monitor numbers and distribution of a range of animals, including feral deer.

- National Parks Association of Queensland (Feb 2022) Using Technology to Support Conservation Outcomes. <https://npaq.org.au/using-technology-to-support-conservation-outcomes/>

Shooting by authorised shooters has been used and is considered one of the best methods, but so far, this has only stopped the increase in numbers, rather than reducing them. “Hunting alone won’t control numbers”.

- Invasive Species Council (Jul 2022) Draft Queensland feral deer strategy. <https://invasives.org.au/publications/draft-queensland-feral-deer-strategy/>

6 “*Planning at property, local government and regional levels is the first step in implementation*”. But who will be responsible for eradicating deer from private property in Pinjarra Hills where there once was a commercial deer farm?

A trapping program in northern NSW has only been successful in keeping numbers static. Fencing is a temporary solution that inhibits migration. “It’s a complex land management problem and it’s going to require a complex solution.”



Annelise Wiebkin is developing a national plan for controlling deer. (Supplied)

Dr Annelise Wiebkin is Australia’s first “National Deer Management Coordinator, who will support community-led deer control in all states and territories across Australia” (Invasive Species Council February 2021 Update)

The National Deer Management Coordinator, Dr Annelise Wiebkin, from the South Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regions, leads a Project Team consisting of eight representatives from government departments in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland.

- Invasive Species Solutions (Feb 2021) National Deer Management Coordinator. <https://invasives.com.au/research/national-deer-management-coordinator/>

The **Invasive Species Solutions Trust** is a charity dedicated to continued research, development and engagement that tackles the ongoing threat from invasive vertebrate pests and weeds in Australia. You may like to **make a donation here:** <https://invasives.com.au>