

End of Financial Year Report and Donation Appeal

Every endangered joey we protect from introduced predators is a step closer to saving the Kangaroo Valley's Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies from what was scientifically labelled as an 'extinction vortex'.

With your assistance the Friends have contributed \$20,000 directly to the broad scale, multi-tenure, integrated predator control program over the last financial year.

The Friends contributed \$10,000 towards introduced predator shooting and humane leg-hold trapping which removed over 75 foxes, 4 wild dogs and 3 feral cats from across 30 priority properties. Our professional contractors have to work hard to find foxes as we have significantly reduced their numbers over 20 years.

\$10,000 from the Friends supplemented the *Save our Species* funds to cover the cost of NPWS and Local Land Services (LLS) servicing 225 permanent 1080 fox/ wild dog bait stations across 18,850ha. The bait stations are concentrated within 5km buffer zones around the three surviving Shoalhaven Rock-wallaby colonies at a rate of 1.1 stations/km². A variety of bait types and techniques are employed.

Public agencies have contributed to the protection of the Kangaroo Valley Rock-wallabies. LLS have assisted in the expansion of fox baiting on private land as well as some school education. Crown Lands fund fox trapping and shooting on their lands, while WaterNSW provided money for fox baiting and weed control on their land near the River colony.

The Friends have helped finance the intensive monitoring of the Kangaroo Valley Rock-wallabies and their predators through a network of IR cameras. Since December 2016 the *Save our Species* program has funded predator monitoring within the colonies using 10 cameras per colony spaced approximately 40m apart throughout a section of each of the 3 colonies. The results to date indicate that the proportion of nights with in-colony fox presence was greatest at the River colony and least at the Creek colony. The proportion of nights with fox presence has decreased each season in the River colony and has been at <10% over the past 6 months. At the Mountain colony the proportion of nights with in-colony fox presence has been ≤5% with the exception of Autumn 2017. At the Creek colony there has only been one instance of a fox caught on camera during all in-colony surveying to date. The proportion of nights with cats and wild dogs has also fluctuated and will continue to be monitored for any trends.

NPWS, the Friends and local landholders are also monitoring 23 cameras strategically deployed around the 3 colonies to identify predators that are in the vicinity and may enter the colonies. These cameras are checked frequently and used to enable a rapid response to any bait-shy predators by the Friends-contracted shooter and trapper. These cameras have revealed a significant amount of wild dog activity and trapping work was increased to address this problem in addition to foxes and feral cats. One trap-evasive brindle male dog with a huge range has been observed accessing each of the three colonies.

The NSW BTRW Recovery Team target is a minimum of 15 Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby adults per colony. It is expected that at this size, a colony will be able to survive occasional predation events resulting in the loss of individuals. The ultimate target is 30 adults per colony which is considered a base-level healthy self-sustaining size. NPWS are monitoring the BTRW on a monthly basis across the 3 Kangaroo Valley colonies using 20 remote cameras. The results over the past 4 financial years have seen a steady increase in the number of BTRW. The River colony is the largest colony with the successful recruitment of 11 breeding-age individuals over the past 4 years, thanks to Brigalow's breeding with Wirra, Flower, Pia, Bangarra and several other females. This colony has reached the minimum target of 15 adults including several new breeding males. We are still determining the sex of 5 subadults and 7 young-at-foot at the River. The mature females have been raising two joeys per year over the last couple of years with about 50% surviving that first year when they are extremely vulnerable to predation.

In the Creek colony there has only been a single breeding event since the death of the aged resident male in late 2014. Nibblers young-at-foot (photos exclusive to adopters) was fathered by a captive-bred male who only persisted in the colony for 3 months post-release and not by the sole male, Tyson, who has persisted in the colony since his release in early 2016. Whilst Tyson appears to be maturing into the breeding male role, a second male would be ideal. Over the next two months we will be able to confirm the presence of pouch young for Pinot, Fiona, Rosie and Jewel.

Since 2015 between three to four captive-bred BTRW have been released into the Creek colony each year but release success has varied significantly. There have been a number of instances of predation of released captive-bred BTRW despite extensive trapping work and a lack of predators showing on the colony's cameras. It appears that we have at least one extremely wary fox accessing the colony, and intermittently killing released BTRW, who has not yet been able to be trapped. Later in 2018 we will be trialing whether the translocation of wild (and potentially more predator-savvy) BTRW would be more successful approach. We are hoping to supplement the Creek colony as well as the single female, Irene, at the Mountain colony.

After 3 intensive years of community education funded by the Environment Trust grant, the small Friends committee took a break from hosting large engagement events this year. We did run activities with 300 children and supported KV Schools *Wakakiri* Rock-wallaby performance. Friends volunteers signed up new members and raised funds from merchandise sales and symbolic adoptions at Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre, two Wollongong Makers Markets, the Kangaroo Valley and Moss Vale Show and Huskisson World Environment Day Fair. Friends volunteers launched a new website, honed our strategic and business plans and are applying for grants to fund two exciting new community education products.

When the Friends, NPWS and the Kangaroo Valley community set out 23 years ago to rescue the local Rock-wallaby from the edge of extinction the notion of success would have seemed a lifetime away.

Despite the enormous challenges presented by such diminished Rock-wallaby numbers, the inherent complications of employing fox control techniques within a built-up rural community and the vast number of properties needing to be involved around the colonies, the Kangaroo Valley Rock-wallabies are fairing as well as several other NSW *Save our Species* sites situated within large conservation reserves.

Slowly but surely we are shaping a secure future for the iconic Kangaroo Valley Rock-wallabies. But the Friends must continue funding the predator shooting and trapping.

WE ARE SEEKING TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS TO COVER THESE VITAL COSTS FOR ANOTHER YEAR. CAN YOU HELP?

[To Donate Now - Please Click Here](#)

Can you Sell some Raffle Tickets?

Derek Lucas has donated a beautiful handmade timber chess set. The Friends are Raffleing this unique prize at \$5 per ticket or 3 tickets for \$10. The winner will be drawn on Threatened Species Day - Sept 7. For ticket booklets and sales please phone Belinda on 0466 065 768 or email friends@rockwallaby.org.au

[Forward this Newsletter to a Friend](#)

Waterfall Springs Sanctuary

Over the last few years many volunteers grabbed at the opportunity to participate in working bees at Waterfall Springs Sanctuary - the breeding facility for our gorgeous Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies.

The volunteers who arrived on Friday evening had the opportunity to assist with trapping the Rock-wallabies who needed a health check (weight, condition of fur, pouch young and whether microchipped). This was carried out under the guidance of Celia and John, two very passionate and dedicated Waterfall Springs 'fixtures'. This gave the volunteers a rare opportunity to have very close contact with a beautiful threatened species.

The volunteers were up early on Saturday morning to assist with processing of any Rock-wallabies trapped overnight. Then the rest of the day was spent on jobs such as fencing, painting, weeding, spraying, collecting timber etc - anything to help keep the Rock-wallabies safe and happy.

Thank you Waterfall Springs for opening your Sanctuary to working bees and enabling Friends members to get up close with our elusive 'rock stars'.

Thank you to Celia and John who regaled us with stories about the habits and personalities of some of the residents. One has even starred with David Attenborough!

The privilege of being given access to allow insight into the intricate lives, personalities and ethical constraints on all our cherished Rock-wallabies has been valuable in understanding the Sanctuary's role in helping maintain the delicate balance for the colonies to survive in the wild.

There will be no further working bees at Waterfall Springs until further notice.

Meet NPWS Technical Officer Christy Derwent

How long have you been involved in the BTRW project?

I have just gone past my one year mark of having the pleasure of working and helping the beautiful Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies in Kangaroo Valley

What did you do you prior to working for NPWS?

Prior to NPWS I lived in Oberon, near Jenolan Caves where I was a full time stay-at-home Mum with my three young children. Along with this fulfilling and demanding role I also managed my parents sheep and eucalyptus plantation property, which involved many duties including 1080 baiting of foxes each lambing season.

What interests you about this project?

Having studied a Bachelor of Environmental Biology and worked at Billabong Sanctuary in Townsville, it is great to be in a position that is making a difference on the ground. To be able to have a positive impact on a population of endangered Rock-wallabies is very satisfying.

In Search Of The Short-eared Rock-wallaby

By Jann Mattick

A highlight in a recent adventure to the Kimberley region WA was spotting the Short-eared Rock-wallaby in two locations. A friendly NP Ranger advised us where to look early morning and late evening. Even though they were quite close, it was still very difficult to take a full length photo. In total we saw five rock-wallabies during our stay, including a female with two joeys (one looked liked it was just out of the pouch).

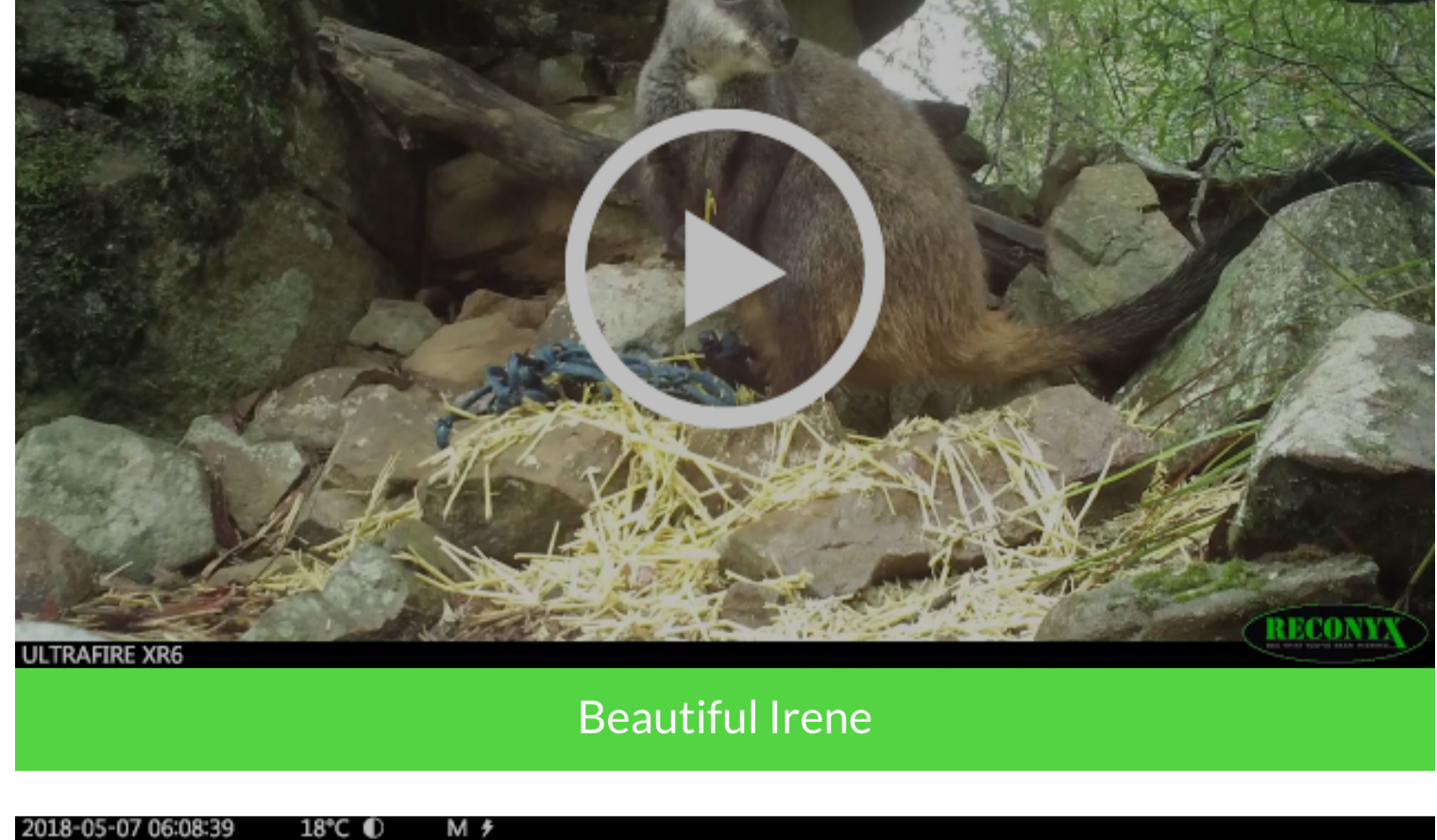
The Grotto near Wyndham - a female with pouch joey



Windjana Gorge

The Short-eared Rock-wallaby are lighter in colour than our Brush-tailed rock-wallaby although similar in size. They are located in the Kimberley region of WA in areas where appropriate caves and rock crevices form protective habitat.

Their threatened status is 'least concerned' although they are still very shy and as secretive as ever!



[f](#) [@](#) [v](#) [p](#) [e](#)

Copyright © 2017 Friends of the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby Incorporated. All rights reserved.
YOU RECEIVED THIS EMAIL BECAUSE YOU ARE A CURRENT MEMBER OR ROCK-WALLABY ADOPTER.
YOU WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE OUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER UNLESS YOU UNSUBSCRIBE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

Our mailing address is:
PO Box 6182, Kangaroo Valley 2577

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

This email was sent to <Email Address>
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)
Friends of the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby - PO Box 6182 - Kangaroo Valley, NSW 2577 - Australia

