



Often, the language used by those who help manage our environment can be confusing, full of technical, scientific and 'in' terms. So, here is a list of environmental 'buzz words', or phrases. Each newsletter will contain a few of these words, often relevant to the featured articles.

**Indicator Species:** Species of flora or fauna that can only be found when the condition of an ecosystem reaches a certain level, thus providing a good signal of the condition of an ecosystem. Most indicator species are fish and invertebrates.

**Anthropogenic:** Effects or processes that are derived from human activities, as opposed to effects or processes that occur in the natural environment without human influences.

**Urbanisation:** An increase in the population of people in urban localities (cities or towns) or the increase of this proportion over time.

**Habitat fragmentation:** The process whereby, or the extent to which, the geographic range of a species is broken up into smaller patches.

**Connectivity:** Connectivity refers to connections of vegetation across the landscape.

If you have any words you would like to know the meaning of, please contact us!

Source: Wikipedia 2006, www.wikipedia.org

**Did this newsletter reach you at your new address?**

If you have changed your postal address, phone number or email address, please contact the Landcare Discovery Centre to tell us your new details. Phone (07) 4637 6201.

Land for Wildlife website: via Queensland Murray Darling Committee Website: [www.qmdc.org.au](http://www.qmdc.org.au) (follow link under *vegetation*)

If you would like to arrange a Land for Wildlife assessment on your property, please contact the Land for Wildlife representative nearest to you.

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Compiled by the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee Inc, with the assistance of the Land for Wildlife representatives.

Land for Wildlife in the Queensland Murray Darling Basin is coordinated by the Queensland Murray Darling Committee (QMDC) on behalf of South West Natural Resource Management Group (SWNRM) and Condamine Alliance.



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**Connectivity, indicators and property planning—managing biodiversity for the future**

Hello Land for Wildlifers and welcome to another edition of the Land for Wildlife newsletter across the Queensland Murray Darling Basin. This edition showcases a few new sections including 'Indicator Species Who Am I?' and 'Environmental Buzzwords'.

Our feature article centres around fragmentation and the importance of vegetation corridors across the landscape. It includes a section on things you can do on your property to maintain these important landscape linkages.

There have been quite a few staff movements of late, with the recent resignation of our Regional Vegetation and Biodiversity Coordinator, Lyn Pullen. Lyn has been of great value to QMDC and the Land for Wildlife program and we are all sad to see her go. Her position has been replaced by Greg Ford, our former regional ecologist, and her role as Regional Land for Wildlife Coordinator has been taken over by Alison Goodland, our Grassy Ecosystems Project Officer. Alison is looking forward to becoming more involved in the program.



Lyn Pullen

There has also been some changes with technical staff around the region. Some words from Kate Steel:

"I have really enjoyed being part of the LFW program in the Border Rivers, with the opportunity to register many new properties over the past few years. It has been great to meet conservation-minded people who have been involved in the program for some time and I have been privileged to visit some of the most beautiful and cared for places around. I am confident the network of LFW will only get stronger as more people get involved. I will be continuing my role with QMDC in Roma. I shall miss the cool mountains of Stanthorpe; however, Holly Hanlon will take over my position in the Border Rivers, and you will hopefully meet her at a Springtime Wildflower Walk, or other LFW activities in the future. Thank you."

**WHO AM I? - Indicator Species**

Can you identify this native 'indicator' species?

Clues:

- I am a small species of bird
- My lady friend is grey-brown, fading to almost white on the lower belly, with dark grey and wings and a dark tail
- I have a black head, neck, upper chest and back above a white under-belly, and white and black wings
- I prefer drier woodland (e.g.: eucalypt, cypress pine, mulga) with fallen logs, stumps and ground litter (see photo)
- I perch on logs and stumps to watch for prey, which I capture by ground-pouncing, or hawking, after flying insects

What's an indicator species? See page 4!



My habitat

Answer on page 3

Newsletter for the Queensland Murray Darling Basin



**LFW Survey**

Recently, a student from the University of Queensland, Gatton campus, has come on board with us for her practical semester.

Emily Rogers is studying a Bachelor of Environmental Management, specialising in natural systems and wildlife. She will be working with us on the Land for Wildlife program.

One of her tasks is to conduct a telephone survey with the aim of updating our Land for Wildlife database. This is to ensure all our information is current.

So, if you haven't already received a phone call, be expecting one!



Emily Rogers

**Upcoming Events**

**Farm Forestry field days - "Management & Selling Timber from Freehold Native Forests"**

- 12 October, Injune
- 2 November, Inglewood
- There will be two additional field days in early 2007 (locations yet to be decided)

Contact Rohan Allan of AgForests, Queensland, on 0408 769 918 for more information.

**Wildflower Walks in the Stanthorpe Shire**

With one wildflower walk already undertaken, this spring will see another two wildflower walks in the Stanthorpe Granite Belt area:

- 15 October, Girraween Environmental Lodge
  - 12 November, Girraween National Park
- Meet for each walk at 9:30am, ending about 1pm. Any enquiries, phone Liz Bourne on 07 4683 6374.

**Grassland Earless Dragon Field days [see brochure]**

A series of field surveys and information mornings will be held over a weekend in October:

- Clifton 9:30-11:30am Friday 13 October
- Bowenville 9:30-11:30am Saturday 14 October
- Macalister 9:30-11:30am Sunday 15 October

Come along and learn everything about these little critters from farmers who have them on their properties. RSVP to Alison Goodland by 11 October 2006.

**'Lushfarms' Property Planning**

On 25 August, QMDC held its annual Property Planning field day where senior agricultural students had the chance to visit a property and learn about various aspects of soil, water and vegetation management.

Hosting the event on their Tara property, 'Lushfarms', Daryl and Val Lush place a lot of importance on managing their property by balancing conservation with production.

The day was supported by Landcare with a variety of sessions run for the students, from water and soil testing, to pasture management, to the production and environmental benefits of native vegetation.



Toowoomba Grammar Students: enthusiastic about vegetation management

The 60 or so students from Warwick, Toowoomba and St George will now use the information they learnt on the day to develop property management plans for the Lush's property. The plans will be assessed by a judging panel and a winner announced at the Discovery Landcare Conference in Toowoomba, mid-October.

The day was a huge success with the students learning about the challenges of running a farm and protecting valuable environmental assets at the same time.

Organiser of the event, Pam Fisher, said "such events are really important for the education of our future land managers, and the for future of our natural resources."



**A fragmented world – Part 1**

By Emily Rogers

Fragmentation is caused by natural and anthropogenic (human-related) causes. Natural reasons for fragmentation of vegetation include fire, geological processes and biological processes between species such as competition. However, the natural process of fragmentation is being sped up by a fast growing human population, where more and more areas of vegetation are being cleared for agriculture, industry and urban developments.

Fragmentation not only reduces the amount of vegetation but reduces connectivity of vegetation across the landscape. That is, the distances between patches of vegetation become too great to allow for the movement of fauna, thus disconnecting, or fragmenting, the landscape. In such fragmented landscapes, species populations become isolated, and many native Australian species of flora and fauna are now becoming threatened or endangered from habitat fragmentation.

Thus, the creation, or re-creation, of 'corridors' throughout the landscape is vital to help protect these species. When talking of 'corridors', we refer to continuous strips or clumps of vegetation. These are most commonly seen along watercourses, fence-lines and roads, and can be created by linking up smaller patches of vegetation within the landscape by planting trees and shrubs.

Corridors of vegetation are of particular importance for fauna relying on larger spaces to search for food, nesting sites and mates, such as macropods and large species of birds. They are also needed for dispersal when populations expand and become too large to exist in smaller areas. Seasonal movements, particularly of birds, also requires connectivity across the landscape. Finally, connectivity in landscapes can act as an escape route for species after major disturbances such as fire, cyclones and drought.

**What is being done?**

On a regional level, many groups across Queensland devote themselves to establishing working corridors for wildlife movement across the landscape. Trees for the Atherton and Everton Tablelands (TREAT), Landcare, Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) and Greenfleet are just a few of the organisations currently battling the issue of fragmentation across the state through research and on-ground activities, assessing areas and planting more trees.

Programs like Land for Wildlife are also increasing across the country, helping and encouraging like minded private land managers to locate the missing pieces and reconnect the landscape.

**What can you do?**

- Leave strips/clumps of regrowth between larger remnants
- View aerial maps of your property and adjacent land to discover corridors and areas where it may be possible to 'bridge the gap' between areas of vegetation
- plant clumps of trees and native shrubs in open areas between remnants as 'stepping stones'

**I'm a Hooded Robin!**

This indicator bird species gets its name from the male, whose entire head and neck is black - giving it a hooded appearance.

Being an *indicator* species, the Hooded Robin is very sensitive to habitat alteration and usually requires large, intact areas of good woodland for survival.

This species is one of many bird species to watch for if you wish to monitor the effects of your farm management practices on bird diversity.



The male Hooded Robin

- Enlarge small remnants
- Learn about individual flora species and where they flourish best e.g. are they edge species?
- Protect riparian vegetation by fencing
- Widen roadside corridors within your boundary

Look out for [Part 2](#) of this article, with more information on 'edge effects' and the importance of *shape* and *size* when creating corridors of vegetation and looking after your remnant patches.

**Sources:**

McIntyre, S 2003, 'The landscape game: a learning tool demonstrating landscape design principles', *Ecol.Mgt.Rest.*, vol. 4(2), pp.103-109.  
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