

Project Background

Success during the early stages of the Corridors of Green Consortium Project in the Mary River catchment, inspired Barung to apply for additional funding through the Threatened Species Network Program to extend our activities to the Stanley River catchment.

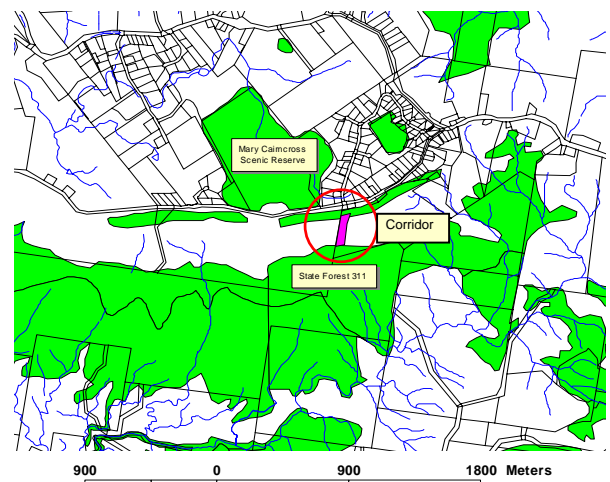
The project was carried out over 12 months with a Project Officer for one day per week and a small budget for on-ground work.

Rehabilitation work was undertaken on about 20 properties with varying levels of success, mostly depending on the level of landholder involvement. While many threatened species in the project area would potentially benefit from the work, much of the focus was on improving habitat for endangered stream frogs in the Peachester area.

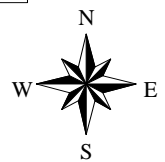
The site chosen for this case study is situated between State Forest 311 and Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve. A vegetation corridor was established to create a link between the two reserves, both of which contain good quality remnant rainforest.

The map on the right shows the isolation of Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve in relation to surrounding vegetation, and the location of the corridor

Mary Cairncross Corridor



 Drainage.shp
 Revegetation.shp
 Dcdb_arcs.shp
 Natural vegetationOlveg2001.shp



Source CCC & Marc Russell

Project Objectives

To:

- ◆ identify high priority vegetation links to reduce genetic isolation of rainforest within council reserves
- ◆ protect and extend riparian corridors through enhanced landholder awareness, planting, fencing and implementing management and conservation agreements
- ◆ ground-truth existing GIS vegetation data to identify the presence of additional threatened species.

Project methods

- ◆ Priority sites were identified and flora and fauna surveys were carried out or sourced.
- ◆ Work was undertaken to protect, enhance and create corridors between private land, council reserves and State Forest. 9 660 trees were planted and 1.7 km of fencing erected to protect, enhance, extend or link important ecosystems.
- ◆ Public awareness and involvement increased through workshops, field trips, public tree plants, presentations, articles and school educational activities. Much of the education and on-ground work focussed on local endangered frogs found within the project sites.
- ◆ On the spot verbal and written advice was given to landholders involved in the project regarding weed control, revegetation / regeneration and habitat protection and enhancement.
- ◆ Ground-truthing of vegetation discovered many inaccuracies in council GIS data. Recommendations were made to ensure greater accuracy in future.
- ◆ On-site meetings were held with Caloundra City Council staff on several sites to discuss ongoing management of council reserves and surrounding private land.
- ◆ Ongoing monitoring was carried out on the corridor (mostly of bird species) to determine any changes during the establishment of the site.
- ◆ Labour forces included: private landholders; Green Corps; Green Reserves; Work for the Dole; Men of the Trees; Community Service; Caloundra City Council Officers; Queensland Wildlife Preservation Society; school students; and other community volunteers.

Project Partnerships

Involvement by a variety of stakeholders was essential to the success of the project. Funding was provided by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature through the Threatened Species Network Program, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and Maleny Community Credit Union.

In-kind support came from Caloundra City Council, QPWS, Queensland Frog Society, Land For Wildlife, Men of the Trees, Wildlife Preservation Society, Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve volunteers, Peachester State Primary School, Brisbane Valley Kilcoy Landcare and individual community members. Landholder contributions exceeded all other financial and in-kind support combined.

What did we learn?

- ◆ Landholder involvement and commitment is essential at every stage of the project.
- ◆ Projects must run for longer than 12 months to enable continuing support mechanisms for landholders.
- ◆ At least one case study must be planned from the beginning for each project undertaken, and this cost needs to be written into funding application budgets.
- ◆ It is much easier to establish revegetation in a frost free zone than on a frosty creek bank.
- ◆ Dense plantings and the use of predominantly fast growing local species provided habitat for several species of small birds after only six months. Bird species diversity continues to increase as the site becomes more established.

Doing it differently next time

- ◆ Morning Glory is very persistent! With longer project time, initial control measures would be extended and more thorough before beginning planting.

Beyond the project

- ◆ Caloundra City Council (CCC) provided funds for ongoing revegetation / regeneration work on several reserves. Several field officers and contractors are now employed to manage hinterland reserves.
- ◆ Our data collection and distribution for the upper Stanley River played a large role in CCC securing funding to purchase an important 36 hectare property.
- ◆ Most of the 70 workers at the community tree plant day pictured were Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve volunteers. Carrying out positive ecological work to help the reserve, and enjoying it immensely, led to the formation of the Mary Cairncross Bushcare Group.
- ◆ While some properties did not achieve the anticipated level of success, others far exceeded the project aims. Landholders often build on small successes to achieve the best long-term results. Assistance offered by the project helps get them started and pointed in the right direction.



Above from top: the prepared paddock, the community in action, 6 months growth (many trees exceeded 2m) and achieving early canopy phase after about 3 1/2 years.