



rainforest rescue

supporter news *no.17*

inside this issue

Report from the Chair and CEO
14th and 15th Daintree Properties
New Cassowary Conservation Reserve
Daintree Rainforest Nursery
Cyclone Yasi Cassowary Care
Madhima Gulgan
Birdwing Butterfly
Rainforest Research
1st Tassie Property
Saving the Orangutan
Wild Sumatra
Ecuador Purchase
Ride for the Rainforest
Value of Rainforests
Kid's Page

*protecting cassowaries
and their rainforest home*

rainforestrescue.org.au

Photo: Steven Nowakowski



Madeleine Faught, Chair, on the 'Forest Lodge' property in Tasmania

chair report

Your generous support and loyalty have guaranteed that Rainforest Rescue has completed another successful year delivering on its vision to save rainforests and their biodiversity, in Australia and beyond. Our shared achievement highlights the true value we all place on these ancient and remarkable rainforests.

Three wonderful new rainforest properties have now been protected forever – two in tropical Australia and one in Ecuador. We have also contributed to important rainforest conservation initiatives around the world. None of this would have been achievable without your ongoing support.

Our Board has grown this year with the addition of Directors Sue Higginson and Frank Volckmar. Sue is a senior solicitor with the Environmental Defender's Office (northern NSW) and Frank is CEO of an international company based in Sydney (ReadSoft). Sue and Frank bring excellent skills and expertise to the Board and organisation.

It is an exciting time for Rainforest Rescue and we look forward, with your help, to continuing to secure positive outcomes for our planet's precious rainforests. Our warmest thanks to all of you.

Madeleine Faught
Chair, Rainforest Rescue Board of Directors



Kelvin Davies, CEO (right), and Ari Azhari, OIC Forest Restoration Programme Coordinator, at the project site's plant nursery in North Sumatra

ceo report

This year, more than any previous year, I've felt the power of our work. Thanks to you – our wonderful supporters – we've saved some very special places and brought tired landscapes back to life through tree planting and restoration.

The number of properties we've purchased and protected in the Daintree Rainforest has now reached fourteen. In the next twelve months we have plans to save two more of these blocks of rainforest, which otherwise would be developed for housing. I'm feeling a growing sense of the significance of our work to protect this precious and irreplaceable ecosystem.

We are also engaged in the process of purchasing 80 hectares of old-growth, cool-temperate rainforest in Tasmania. The 'Forest Lodge' property was formerly owned by the timber company, Gunns Ltd. Knowing that the ancient Myrtle Beech trees on 'Forest Lodge' will remain pristine forever provides a significant feeling of satisfaction, which I hope you all share.

Another highlight of the past year was revisiting the Gunung Leuser National Park in North Sumatra, Indonesia, where three years ago we began supporting its protection and restoration. Our Indonesian partners, the Orangutan Information Centre (OIC), have now cut down over 50,000 illegally planted oil palms; the rainforest is now regenerating rapidly and further encroachment has ceased in this section of the park.

It is your generosity and belief in our mission to Protect Rainforests Forever that enables us to perform this work. I am deeply grateful for your support. Thank you!

Kelvin Davies
CEO, Rainforest Rescue

daintree buy back and protect forever

Thanks to your fantastic support, our Daintree Buy Back and Protect Forever Project is going from strength to strength. Through this project, we identify high-conservation value properties in the Daintree Rainforest and purchase them, to protect them forever from the threat of development. This ensures habitat preservation for many Daintree Rainforest dependant species.

Cassowary Habitat Saved!

On 3 May 2011, Rainforest Rescue celebrated the purchase of our 14th Daintree property, at Lot 7 Milky Pine Road, in the Daintree Rainforest in Far North Queensland. It is in a strategically important location for Cassowary well-being and we are proud to have further extended critical Cassowary habitat. The southern boundary adjoins the Daintree National Park and is diagonally opposite our 12th property, at Lot 10 Milky Pine Road, which we purchased in May 2010. The property and the surrounding area have been classified as essential habitat for the Endangered Cassowary by the Queensland Government under the Vegetation Management Act of 1999.

Rainforest Rescue volunteers, Allen Sheather and Barbara Maslen, undertook a survey of the property prior to purchase. "I recorded over 100 plant species on Lot 7 Milky Pine Road, including several rare plants, which include *Haplostychanthus* 'Cooper Creek', *Endiandra microneura* (Noah's Walnut), and *Cleistanthus myrianthus*," said Allen. "We also found the fruit of several species known to be Cassowary food growing on the property. I was happy to find a lot of Black Palms growing there, as it is a significant food plant for the Cassowary during the food-scarce wet season."

During the survey, Allen and Barbara also came across three reasonably fresh Cassowary droppings and several older droppings with germinating seeds. Cassowaries play an integral part in the maintenance of a rainforest ecosystem, with their most significant contribution being as a disperser of rainforest fruits. It is estimated that 70 to 100 plant species depend almost entirely on the Cassowary to disperse their seeds, in order for them to grow.

Extending Baralba Corridor

A huge thank you to everyone that has donated towards the purchase of our 15th Daintree property, which is at Lot 83 Rosewood Road, Cow Bay. We are elated to report that we have reached our fundraising target of \$92,000, and will complete the purchase of this stunning rainforest property in January 2012.

Being one of the few remaining private properties in the Cow Bay area that can be developed and built upon, it was essential that we secured this beautiful piece of rainforest for future generations. Human settlement in the Daintree Rainforest brings with it a multitude of threats, which include clearing and fragmentation of the rainforest, introduction of domestic dogs that harass and kill wildlife, increased traffic and road-kills and the introduction of weed species. These pressures all contribute to the degradation of the Daintree's valuable rainforest ecosystems.

Lot 83 Rosewood Road will now be incorporated into our Baralba Corridor Nature Refuge, which was established in 2001 and is made up of our first five protected properties. It forms an important wildlife corridor, which links to the Daintree National Park.

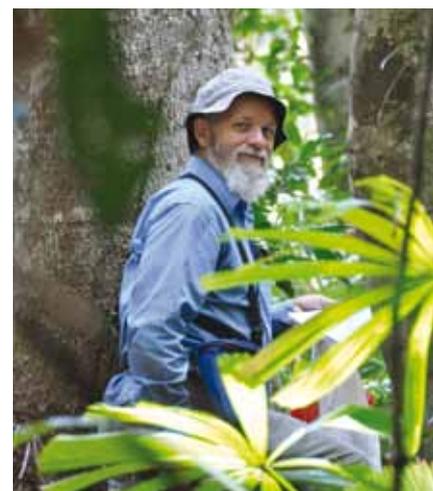
Thank you for your support in assisting Rainforest Rescue to purchase Lot 83 Rosewood Road. Adding a sixth property to this established Nature Refuge has significantly extended the safe habitat for the Cassowaries, as well as other precious animals and plants that live in the Daintree.

Cassowaries are often seen around our Baralba Corridor Nature Refuge. If you would like to visit, directions can be found on our Self-Drive Tour on our website, at www.rainforestrescue.org.au/ourprojects/daintree-self-drive-tour.html

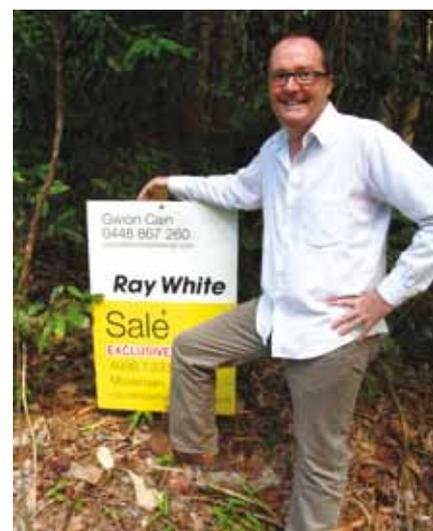


Photo: Liz Gallie

It has been estimated that as few as 1,000 wild Cassowaries remain in Australia



Daintree resident and Rainforest Rescue volunteer, Allen Sheather, undertakes a survey of Lot 7 Milky Pine Road



Kelvin Davies, CEO, at Lot 83 Rosewood Road. There are approximately 180 properties that still remain at risk within the Daintree Lowland Rainforest

Thank you to everyone who has helped us to save the Daintree Rainforest in the past 12 months. We would particularly like to acknowledge the very significant contribution of the Roden family from Sydney.



our new cassowary conservation reserve

Rainforest Rescue has purchased its largest property in the Daintree Rainforest to date. Sitting at the base of the prominent and spectacular Thornton's Peak, Lot 46 Cape Tribulation Road comprises 27.66 hectares in one of the most important ecological positions in the Daintree.

The property is of critical importance, in terms of habitat and connectivity, for the endangered Cassowary and other species. Surveys of the surrounding rainforest area have recorded the presence of 14 Rare, three Endangered and two Vulnerable species. The property

The Cassowary Conservation Reserve sits at the base of the spectacular Thornton's Peak in the Daintree Rainforest

includes an Endangered Regional Ecosystem and protects two important creeks that are part of the catchment area for Coopers Creek, which is one of the larger Daintree lowland creeks. It also has some remnant forest with ecological transitions from rainforest to swamp forest.

As a result of a long history of abuse, from a combination of clearing, grazing and oil palm cultivation, there is a gap in the rainforest of 17.89 hectares, representing almost two-thirds of the property.

We are now planting trees to restore the rainforest across the entire property. Since its purchase on 30 August 2010, we have already planted 1.1 hectares. Trees for revegetation are being grown in Rainforest Rescue's Daintree Plant Nursery, which you can read about on the next page. Rainforest Rescue has named this property the Cassowary Conservation Reserve to recognise the existence of essential habitat for the endangered Cassowary. Cassowary food trees are of course a focus for plantings on this property, but we ensure they are not planted too close to the road.

We are working with one of our sponsors, Converga, to develop a carbon sequestration partnership for the site. A report prepared for Rainforest Rescue concluded that "Lot 46 Cape Tribulation Road provides a significant opportunity for the establishment of a carbon sequestration (forest sink) project. The high rainfall and rainforest species provide an excellent rate of sequestration."



A young Cassowary makes a surprise visit to a recent community tree planting event at the property

The value of the Daintree Rainforest in both evolutionary and ecological terms is now well known. The critical role the Cassowary plays in the dispersal of rainforest seeds makes it an integral part of the function of the rainforest. The Daintree Rainforest has an ancient connection to the earliest Gondwanan rainforest. The plant lineages that make up the rainforest have survived major climatic changes over millions of years. During that time the rainforest contracted to the wettest places and then re-expanded in response to improving conditions. One of the most important 'wet places' was the Daintree coastal lowlands at the base of the large peaks.

The Cassowary Conservation Reserve sits in just such an area and is critically important for the future of the rainforest. Your support in helping us to achieve our mission of saving rainforests and their biodiversity forever will ensure that the rainforest and the Cassowary will continue to interact and thrive into the future.

daintree rainforest plant nursery

Over the past 12 months, our Daintree Rainforest Plant Nursery has continued to flourish. A team of dedicated volunteers meet regularly to propagate seedlings and maintain the care of the young trees. These passionate volunteers have, so far, raised over 8,000 plants, and assisted planting most of these for our Daintree Plant a Rainforest Project.

Edie Beitzel, our Nursery Coordinator, says, "Helping to restore the Daintree Rainforest is an experience myself and the volunteers find immensely satisfying, having been part of the trees' growth from seed. The seed is hand-collected from the Daintree Lowland Rainforest, between the Daintree River and Cape Tribulation, and the trees are being replanted in this area. Our nursery also provides plants to landowners and local businesses that undertake their own revegetation projects, many of whom also provide us with seed stock."

The rainforest nursery is located in the Daintree National Park. Volunteers meet every Wednesday afternoon from 12 to 4pm.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, visiting the nursery or accessing trees for revegetation projects, please see Edie on Wednesday afternoon at Lot 98 Cape Tribulation Road, Diwan (RP1781), or email nursery@rainforestrescue.org.au

With this invaluable volunteer assistance, and the savings gained by being able to propagate rainforest trees in our own nursery, Rainforest Rescue has been able to further revegetate degraded properties in the Daintree at a much reduced cost.

We would like to thank Tree Friends and the George Lewin Foundation for supporting the nursery over the past year.



Fletcher Beitzel enjoys volunteering at our Daintree Rainforest Plant Nursery during his school holidays

cassowary visits planting

We are excited to report that Rainforest Rescue has, since 2007, planted a total of 26,308 trees in the Daintree Rainforest. These trees are rapidly filling the gaps in the rainforest and providing essential habitat for animals such as the Endangered Cassowary. In fact, during a recent community tree planting event at our Cassowary Conservation Reserve, a juvenile

Cassowary emerged from the bush and wandered among the volunteers, delighting everyone with its presence. It was as if the Cassowary was showing its approval, and checking out which trees would, in future, feed it and its family! A total of 2,916 trees have already been planted on the property by our dedicated nursery staff, volunteers from the local community and staff members from one of our sponsors, Convergga, since its purchase 10 months ago. See page 4 for details of the Cassowary Conservation Reserve.



*Andrew Reading from Convergga planting *Idiospermum australiense* at the Cassowary Conservation Reserve*



Convergga has been a generous supporter of Rainforest Rescue since 2008 through sponsoring tree planting in the Daintree. Thank you!

cyclone yasi and cassowary recovery



Kelvin Davies, CEO (second from right) with volunteers preparing fruit to feed the Cassowaries

Unfortunately, ten Cassowaries have been killed since the cyclone.

In the early hours of 3 February 2011, Cyclone Yasi crossed the Far North Queensland coast at Mission Beach. The area impacted by the cyclone extended from Townsville in the south to the Daintree Rainforest in the north. Thousands of people were evacuated during the massive storm; houses were destroyed and many people were left homeless.

For the Cassowaries of Mission Beach, the situation was also dire. The Category Five cyclone had stripped their essential rainforest habitat bare and their food supply had almost entirely disappeared. Rainforest Rescue was quick to respond to this disaster. We sent out an urgent appeal for

donations to help save the Cassowaries. The wonderful response from our supporters enabled us to take immediate direct action.

Our first priority was to provide funds to purchase fruit to help feed the Cassowaries. This helped to supplement the fruit supply when donated fruit from supermarkets was unavailable. Remote feeding stations were established by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in the area impacted by the cyclone (from the Cardwell Range north to Flying Fish Point) in an effort to ensure Cassowaries remained in the rainforest rather than venturing into town in search of food.

The fruit was prepared by volunteers from the community and was only given every three days to encourage the Cassowaries to continue to search for remaining native fruit. At the time of going to press, there were a total of 103 active feeding stations, 60,600 kilograms of fruit had been distributed and an incredible 2,100 hours of volunteer time had been given.

In addition, we are contributing funds towards the CSIRO-led DNA-based assessment of the feeding program. Input data, including footage from camera traps set up at the feeding stations and Cassowary scat samples, are being analysed and recorded. This assists in identifying individuals and recording any loss of individual birds.

For medium to long term care for the Cassowary, we have partnered with Terrain NRM (the Catchment Management Authority for the Mission Beach area) to plant trees and create Cassowary Corridors, which will expand essential Cassowary habitat in strategic locations in Mission Beach. Planning is underway and tree planting will commence in February 2012.

Cassowaries are iconic birds, and are listed as Endangered in Queensland and Vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. It is estimated that as few as 1,000 remain in the wild. They play

a vital role in the upkeep of biodiversity in the rainforests of Far North Queensland. Rainforest Rescue is committed to the long-term survival of the Cassowary throughout its range, from Townsville north to Cape York Peninsula.



'Jooov', a six year old Cassowary male, struggles to find food after Cyclone Yasi stripped the rainforest bare. Cyclone Yasi impacted 100,000 hectares of rainforest, which is 10% of the remaining prime Cassowary habitat. This photo was taken in Bingil Bay by Liz Gallie shortly after the cyclone

It is important for people not to hand-feed Cassowaries, to take care on the road and for residents to control dogs. To report a sick, injured or orphaned bird, call the Department of Environment and Resource Management on 1300 130 372.

madhima gulgan

Rainforest Rescue has been engaging the services of an indigenous, professional bush regeneration team, from the Madhima Gulgan Community Association, since October 2008. They undertake important restoration work within the subtropical rainforest of northern NSW. Krista Bernard talks with Team Leader, Trevor Jenkins.

1. Tell us about the Madhima Gulgan Community Association.

We were originally a part of a Community Development and Employment Program (CDEP), which was set up for Aboriginal people. From there, we set up the Madhima Gulgan Community Association and elected to do bush regeneration work as we thought that there was a future in it. We started off working with National Parks as volunteers. Now we are in our third year doing contract work.

2. Who started the community association, and for what purpose?

Athol Compton ran the CDEP and then he helped set up Madhima Gulgan Community Association. We are creating good outcomes for our local community by seeking education and employment opportunities. Six of us are now qualified bush regenerators and two members will complete Certificate IV in Conservation and Land Management this year.

3. What work have you undertaken for Rainforest Rescue?



We've been involved in a lot of projects. The biggest one so far is the planting along riparian areas on Saltwater Creek in Mullumbimby. Rainforest Rescue also funded our organic bush regeneration work at the Mullumbimby Community Garden. We've also done a lot of work in the Big Scrub rainforest remnants at Nashua, Hayters Hill and Eureka – mainly removing weeds to allow the rainforest to return. We're also working at Juggler's Foot Organic Farm in Goonengerry and have planted 900 trees so far. Our last job there was to get rid of the weed, Madeira Vine, which once established is extremely persistent and hard to eradicate.

4. What is your vision for the future?

Because our work is good for the environment, I can see a lot more of the natural habitat coming back and animals returning. As for the team, no-one is earning a basic wage yet, so I'd like to see us all be able to do that soon. It's been great to have Rainforest Rescue's work and we look forward to more work with them in the future.

5. Do you have a favourite project, or project site?

Our first big job was at Valances Road in Mullumbimby. The 30 acre site was dominated by camphor laurel, which we slowly cleared out. I liked it because we were there for 18 months, and over that long period of time we could see the big difference we were making. Once the camphor laurel was gone, the rainforest started growing back by itself.

6. What is the best thing about your partnership with Rainforest Rescue?

I hadn't realised how involved the organisation was until we started working together. Kelvin, the CEO, told me about what Rainforest Rescue does in Australia and overseas. It's great to be associated with an organisation that does so much good work.

"We enjoy the plantings and highly recommend Madhima Gulgan for their work and their camaraderie."

Bob and Liz Gray, owners of Juggler's Foot Organic Farm, Goonengerry, NSW



Team members from Madhima Gulgan removing the persistent Madeira Vine from a local organic farm

Below: Liz Gray admires the planting undertaken by Madhima Gulgan





Photo: Ray Seddon

bringing back the birdwing butterfly

The Richmond Birdwing Butterfly (*Ornithoptera richmondia*) is one of the largest and most beautiful native butterflies in Australia. The female has an impressive wingspan of up to 15 centimetres, the male has brilliant green and black wings and a bright red splash on its thorax. They live in subtropical rainforest where their larval host-plants grow. But this rainforest habitat has been extensively cleared, with less than one percent remaining. As a result, the butterfly is struggling to survive.

In the early 1900's, this butterfly was found in great numbers from the Mary River Heads in Queensland to the Clarence River in New South Wales. To the west, it reached the Great Dividing Range. Today, the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly is classified as Endangered in Queensland, and exists only in small numbers in two small areas – from Caboolture to Kin Kin in the north, and Nerang to Wardell in the south.

The Richmond Birdwing Butterfly is threatened by climate change, loss of habitat and a rogue vine that poisons the larvae. In addition, its larval host-plant, the Birdwing Vine (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*), has become extinct from two-thirds of its original range, threatening the butterfly further.

In a concerted effort to bring back the Birdwing Butterfly, the Richmond Birdwing Conservation Network (RBCN) and concerned gardeners have been planting the vine in Queensland. To support the return of the butterfly and vine to the Northern Rivers region of NSW, Rainforest Rescue partnered with the RBCN. In March this year, we put on a community workshop, during which butterfly experts Dr Don Sands, Hugh Krenske, Greg Siepen, Phil Moran, Andrew Wilson, Rosie Booth and Kathy Vail taught participants about the beautiful Birdwing Butterfly and its vine and discussed current projects to bring the butterfly back to its northern range, which included details of how to record and map butterfly habitats and sightings. The group were also introduced to the Birdwing Vine and rogue look-alike plants. In the afternoon, they participated in a planting of 30 vines at the Mullumbimby Community Garden. We are happy to announce that there have subsequently been sightings of the Birdwing Butterfly at the garden.

A big thank you to the RBCN, the Mullumbimby Community Garden, local butterfly expert Kathy Vail and everyone who attended the workshop. It was a great day!

To record locations of wild and planted Birdwing Vines and sightings of all life-cycle forms of the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly, go to the RBCN's database at www.richmondbirdwing.org.au



Photo: Ray Seddon

"We are keen gardeners and planted two Birdwing Vines five years ago and are yet to see a Birdwing Butterfly. We went to the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly workshop to find out how long before we can expect to see Birdwing Butterflies flying around the place. On returning home we had a close inspection of the vines and found six larva happily munching away and three old pupa cases under the leaves. We've missed the butterflies but it just goes to show that conservation works. We are planting another six vines along our creek to make it even easier for the butterfly to find us."

Bob and Judy Howard, Newrybar, NSW



research to the rescue 2011

Rainforest Rescue is acutely aware of the importance of 'getting things right' in all of our conservation projects, so we make a concerted effort to inform these projects through a foundation of solid scientific input.

With the aid of a few supporters who specified that they wanted their donations to go towards scientific research, Rainforest Rescue has been providing a level of funding to noted rainforest ecologist, Dr Robert Kooyman, in support of his scientific research. Outcomes from this are in the form of numerous research papers published in prestigious international journals. This international exposure contributes to a broader knowledge of Australian rainforests and provides Rainforest Rescue with a link to the latest in scientific research.

The funding supports collaborations between scientists from around the globe and subsequently provides Rainforest Rescue access to 'cutting edge' research. Included in this research are themes as diverse as:

- Measuring the ecological strategy of species (why plants occur where they do and how they 'make a living');
- Measuring how species co-exist and how rainforests have maintained high diversity through time;
- Providing insights into what happens when rainforests are disturbed or cleared or impacted by climatic variation;
- Examining what happens when things change across long and short timescales;
- How to manage and repair systems after disturbance, clearing or in the context of projected climate change; and
- How to measure carbon budgets and the amount of carbon accumulated and stored through time.

Robert has a busy year ahead as he has been asked to present his work at several conferences, such as the XVIII International Botanical Congress in Melbourne. He has numerous research field trips planned, including to the Daintree Rainforest to look at plant growth and light responses, and one to remote areas of Papua New Guinea in collaboration with a paleo-botanist from Pennsylvania State University. The latter research focuses on comparing plant fossil records with living vegetation as a means of ascertaining the effects of climatic variation through time.

The Research to the Rescue funding is all about contributing to this local, regional and global scientific initiative to improve our understanding of how rainforests work and how that understanding can improve our management and our capacity to protect and repair what remains.



Living Agathis trees



*Dr Robert Kooyman in the field with a *Gymnostoma australianum*. It is the only living representative in Australia whose fossil records date back to the Gondwanan period*

Below: Agathis fossil



Photos: Peter Wilf



protecting tasmania's ancient rainforest

By Madeleine Faught

Because of your generous support, we have secured Rainforest Rescue's first ever Tasmanian property. The purchase paperwork is in process and the 80 stunning hectares of 'Forest Lodge' will soon be protected in perpetuity.

Venturing into these cool temperate rainforests is a new direction for Rainforest Rescue, and an important and exciting one. All the more so as 'Forest Lodge' was previously owned by Gunns Ltd. and had been earmarked for logging. The company has subsequently ceased the practice of logging and converting native rainforests into monoculture Eucalyptus plantations. In early 2010, Gunns put 'Forest Lodge' and other rainforest properties on the market.

Recent negotiations between forest industry representatives and conservation groups resulted in an agreement to protect native forests, but only those forests that are owned by the government. This means any privately owned rainforests could potentially still be under threat of logging and development. 'Forest Lodge' was one such property.

Many of our supporters have expressed an interest in supporting the buy back of rainforest in Tasmania. This was backed up by a generous commitment from a major donor, Tara Hunt from The Hunt Foundation, to match raised funds to purchase this pristine property. Rainforest Rescue took up this fantastic opportunity and funds were raised in just six weeks! Situated on the Rattler Range in north-east Tasmania, 'Forest Lodge' is surrounded on three sides by the conservation zone of Mount Victoria Forest Reserve. The drive to the property passes through clear-felled land and plantation logging operations, which dominate much of that landscape, highlighting the need to preserve as much of the rainforest as possible.

This truly beautiful rainforest immediately entices you to walk among its ancient Myrtle Beech and Sassafras trees, whose canopies tower far above, imparting a quiet sense of being in one of nature's cathedrals. Interspersed between the tall trees are giant tree ferns and a wonderful diversity of fungi and mosses. The air is soft with moisture. Occasionally there will be a rustling in the undergrowth and your thoughts run to the possibility of sighting a Tasmanian Devil, or a Spotted-tail Quoll. If you are fortunate you will catch sight of one of these Endangered or Rare species.

Including Tasmania in Rainforest Rescue's conservation efforts has extended our influence from the 'top end' of the Australian continent to the bottom. This is something we believe is overdue, and is a recognition that critically important rainforest habitats exist from the tropics through to the subtropics to the temperate regions in Australia, and elsewhere around the globe. Securing these rainforests is our mission and supports our vision of protecting rainforests and their biodiversity forever.

A big thank you to Tara Hunt and The Hunt Foundation for matching donations for the purchase of 'Forest Lodge' and the hundreds of people who donated. Thanks also to Goodman Conveyancing for providing pro-bono conveyancing services.



Photos: Rob Blakers



Once the oil palms have been cleared, it is encouraging to see how quickly the newly-planted rainforest trees grow and how the canopy is reforming.



Pictured left to right is Ari Azhari, the OIC's Forest Restoration Programme Coordinator, and Panut Hadisiswoyo, Founding Director of the OIC



orangutan habitat for survival project

Orangutans are only found on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra, where their survival is threatened by logging and the encroachment of oil palm plantations. Rainforest Rescue has been working with our project partner, the Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS), and implementation partner, the Orangutan Information Centre (OIC), since 2008, to restore 500 hectares of critical Orangutan habitat in the Gunung Leuser National Park in North Sumatra, which is one of the last remaining strongholds for the surviving Sumatran Orangutans (*Pongo abelii*).

Approximately 20,000 hectares in the Langkat Region was illegally cleared by both local people and plantation companies who have converted the rainforest to oil palm plantations. Clearing the rainforest results in loss of habitat and food supply for the wild Orangutans and they are forced to leave the rainforest to raid crops in villages. This causes human-animal conflict, which can result in Orangutans being shot or captured and sold for the illegal pet trade.

Since 1990, the number of Sumatran Orangutans in the wild is thought to have fallen by as much as 91%. The current total population estimate, as of 2008, is 6,624, and numbers are continuing to fall every year.

In the face of these oppressive environmental pressures, the members of the OIC are achieving notable conservation successes. Through the funding that Rainforest Rescue has provided in the past year, the dedicated team have planted 38,015 native seedlings on 15 hectares of degraded land. Seedlings were cultivated with the help of local people in a tree nursery established within the national park replanting site. Site preparation includes the removal of the destructive oil palms and, so far, they have removed an impressive 400 hectares of the oil palms.

Also in the past year, maintenance on 20 hectares of previously planted land was conducted. Additionally, monitoring for tree growth progress and the presence of wildlife on the restoration site (through transects and the use of camera traps) took place. Sumatran Elephants (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*), Barking Deer (*Mutiacus munjact*), Pig-tailed Macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*), Porcupines (*Hystrix brachyuran*) and the Leopard Cat (*Felis bengalensis*), are some of the species that have been photographed within the restoration site. There have also been sightings of Orangutan nests in the area.

This important project is providing a sustainable livelihood for the people living in the communities surrounding the critical Orangutan habitat by providing employment opportunities. Activities for people living around the project site are being conducted to raise awareness of the threats facing wild Orangutan populations and to engage more people in Gunung Leuser National Park conservation efforts.

In the coming year, Rainforest Rescue will fund the production of 60,000 seedlings in the OIC's plant nursery, the restoration of a further 40 hectares of degraded land within the national park, maintenance of 20 hectares of land replanted with rainforest trees, and the removal of 5,460 oil palms.

We are looking forward to a continued partnership with SOS and OIC into the future, to protect the endangered Sumatran Orangutan and its rainforest home.

You can visit this project in Sumatra and help to save the Orangutans! See page 15 for details.

orangutan adventure trek 2011

by Melina Georgousakis

Being a scientist by profession, I am a very systematic person by nature. I never do anything without a lot of planning and rarely do things on impulse. However, the day I saw the advert for Rainforest Rescue's Orangutan Adventure Trek, that all went out of the window. After 24 hours of 'should I?, shouldn't I?', I was on the phone and had signed up before I could change my mind. I am so glad I did.

There are so many reasons why the 12 days I spent in Sumatra, Indonesia, were among the most amazing days of my life: the challenge of the trek, the unreal food, my fellow trekkers, seeing the Orangutans. But there are two things in particular that have stayed with me since I have been home. The first, which was reminded to me during our trek through the Gunung Leuser National Park and when watching the Orangutans that inhabit it, is just how beautiful our world is and how lucky we are to be able to enjoy it. We need to treasure it. The second was the kindness and generosity of people. Being a charity challenge, the aim was for trekkers to raise funds for Rainforest Rescue's Orangutan Habitat for Survival Project in Sumatra (see page 12). I received support from family, friends, work colleagues, local businesses, community organisations and people I didn't even know.

This generosity was also apparent to me once we arrived at the project site in Sumatra. Meeting Rainforest Rescue's project partners, the team at the Orangutan Information Centre, who against all odds – financial, bureaucratic and environmental – are dedicating their lives to replacing illegally planted oil palms with native rainforest, was nothing short of inspiring. The work they are doing deserves so much recognition and now, with support from Rainforest Rescue, their work will hopefully be just that little bit easier and they will be able to achieve that little bit more. Knowing that I have contributed to just a small part of the difference they are making, made my foray with impulse one of the best decisions of my life.

Would you like to go on an adventure to protect the rainforests and help save the Orangutans? Our 2012 Orangutan Adventure Trek will be held on 12–22 April. To book, phone 1300 763 611 or email info@rainforestrescue.org.au

A big thank you to this year's Orangutan Adventure Trekkers: Therese Buhler, Melina Georgousakis, Sarah Highley, Paul Norman, Dave Rawlins and Rick Shepherd. They raised a fabulous \$30,000 for our Orangutan Habitat for Survival Project in North Sumatra.



Orangutans have always been close to Melina's heart. Here she is (pictured left) with fellow trekker Sarah Highley, having a close-up encounter with the Orangutans at Bukit Lawang



Photo: Carolyn Barry



Dave Rawlins at the rainforest plant nursery at the project site in North Sumatra

site visit

by Dave Rawlins

Dave Rawlins is an ecologist, a professional bush regenerator, a long-term supporter of Rainforest Rescue and a fantastic community fundraiser.

After an amazing experience on the Orangutan Adventure Trek (see page 13), I farewelled my companions, excited about my next adventure. I was going to see first-hand how the money we'd raised was helping restore an area of the Gunung Leuser National Park. As my work in Australia involves restoring degraded land, I was particularly interested in volunteering at the project site, where the Orangutan Information Centre (OIC) is restoring 500 hectares of former rainforest that has been illegally cleared and planted with oil palms (see page 12).

The first thing that became apparent was the resilience of the rainforest returning to the site. As there is so much primary rainforest adjoining the project area, there was a large amount of natural regeneration. This scrubby re-growth vegetation, which will eventually become rainforest again, was great to walk through as it is home to many different birds,

including Bulbils, Woodpeckers and even Hornbills. Already the former palm oil plantation had the feeling that life was returning and nature was regaining control. The frogs were deafening at night and there were signs of animals everywhere. I helped out installing camera traps, which survey animals by taking photos triggered by motion sensors. That evening, Darjo, the OIC's Ecologist, showed me the pictures of animals that the camera traps had captured previously.

I was inspired to see how dedicated Ari, the Forest Restoration Programme Coordinator, is and what has been achieved. He stays at the project site for weeks at a time and nurtures the trees he has planted. The on-site nursery produces thousands of trees under his care. Ari's knowledge of ecological restoration was impressive and it was inspiring to hear how they had the support of the villagers to implement the project. His two off-siders, Kemek and Aye, helped undertake the planting and weed control, as well as making sure we ate well! I shared their bamboo hut for a week while helping to plant trees and control oil palms and other environmental weeds.

I really appreciate the work that is being achieved by the Indonesian team in restoring their rainforests and protecting the animals that live there. Rainforest Rescue and I are now looking to raise funds to sponsor Ari and Darjo to visit Australia to further their training and to recognise the OIC's fantastic achievements.



Darjo and Aye installing camera traps



Camera trap photos show Elephants returning to the restoration site



One of the now many curious wild Pig-tailed Macaques getting acquainted with one of the camera traps placed in the field



A Barking Deer photographed by a camera trap in the restoration site

Camera trap photos: SOS/OIC

bringing knowledge together

In August 2010, Rainforest Rescue sponsored two members of the Sumatran-based Orangutan Information Centre (OIC), Founding Director, Panut Hadisiswoyo and Forest Restoration Programme Coordinator, Ari Azhari, to visit Australia. Their aim was to learn, first-hand, from the experience and knowledge that has been gathered over many years of restoring the Big Scrub and Daintree Rainforests and transfer this to Indonesia and their important project to restore the habitat of the endangered Sumatran Orangutan (see page 12).

The secrets of successfully restoring rainforests in Australia have been revealed to rainforest regenerators and scientists by their careful observations over many years. Vital functions, such as when trees set seed and the role of birds and bats in their disbursement, provide important learning about the natural ecology of the rainforests and the processes by which rainforests can restore themselves with our assistance.

A highlight for Panut and Ari was the visit to Rocky Creek Dam, inland from Byron Bay in northern NSW, where they spent time with rainforest regenerators Ralph Woodford and Dave Rawlins. They were particularly impressed by the natural revegetation techniques employed by Ralph and the success achieved over more than 20 years. Panut and Ari also met with forest ecologist Dr Robert Kooyman and biologist Tim Low and visited a number of tree planting and rainforest restoration sites in Northern NSW and in the Daintree Rainforest in Far North Queensland.

Now back in Sumatra, Panut and Ari are utilising the knowledge gained from their Big Scrub and Daintree site visits to form a number of rainforest restoration trials, which are improving their work to restore the essential Orangutan habitat in the Gunung Leuser National Park. This includes undertaking a detailed analysis of the project site through a scientific flora and fauna study. They are also improving the way seedlings are propagated in their rainforest plant nursery. Importantly, the team now know that they are not so isolated in their work to protect and restore rainforests. There are many others who have been engaged in this work for many years who are delighted to assist by offering training, experience and advice.

We are sponsoring Ari to come back to Australia again this year. He will be accompanied by Darjo, the OIC's Ecologist, and they will arrive in mid-September. We are very much looking forward to their visit.

You can read about Dave Rawlins visit to the OIC project site on page 14.



Kelvin showing Panut how, through natural regeneration methods and techniques, pioneer trees have sprung up by themselves amongst the Rainforest Rescue plantings in northern NSW



Panut and Ari at the project site in North Sumatra



Conservation leader, Dicky Tri Sutanto

wild sumatra news

Through our Wild Sumatra Project, Rainforest Rescue is working in partnership with the Save Indonesian Endangered Species Fund (SIES), to protect and restore the Way Kambas National Park. Situated within the biodiverse region of South Sumatra, this area is home to species such as the Endangered Sumatran Elephant and the critically Endangered Sumatran Tiger and Rhinoceros.

In the Bungur section, making up one-third of the national park, reforestation is underway. This area has long suffered from man-made fires, encroachment, hunting, deforestation and land degradation. Once rich in rainforest and wildlife, this area has now been reduced mostly to Imperata grasslands. Work commenced with construction of a water tank, nursery and a timber guard post for workers to stay in. Firebreaks in the grass have been cut by hand and fire-resistant, fast-growing pioneer tree species have been planted. The team are aiming to propagate and plant 40,000 trees a year.

Having community involvement in the project has inspired locals to stop their annual burning of Bungur, meaning that pioneer tree species can now grow and spread. Enrichment planting of slow-growing rainforest tree species will soon take place, expanding the riparian strips of remnant rainforest.

In addition, Rainforest Rescue is providing funds for local people to patrol the national park, to protect species such as the rare and endemic White-winged Duck and Hornbill. A rare plants arboretum has been set up at the gates of the national park. Conservation Leader, Dicky Tri Sutanto, said, "I felt anxious about the potential loss or extinction of plant species. We have built this arboretum to propagate and protect them." Rainforest Rescue is supporting education and research programs to further engage the community in restoring and protecting this vitally important ecosystem.



Photo: Way Kambas National Park

People wishing to visit Way Kambas National Park and the Wild Sumatra Project are warmly welcome. The local community is proud to show their work and their park to visitors.

Please contact us for more information.



The rainforests of Sri Lanka contain dense pockets of endemic plant and wildlife species

sri lanka update

The rainforests of Sri Lanka are one of the most threatened ecosystems on the planet. Only a few thousand hectares, 140 remnant forest patches, remain, which are located in the south-west of the island. The largest of these forest patches are the World Heritage-listed Sinharaja Reserve, the Kanneliya Forest and the Nakiyadeniya Complex.

This year, through our Sri Lanka Plant a Rainforest Project, which is in partnership with Rainforest Rescue International based in Galle, Sri Lanka, many thousands of trees will be planted in the buffer zone around Sinharaja Reserve and Kanneliya Forest. The project aims to directly empower the communities living alongside the rainforest to be an integral part of its rehabilitation, ensuring that any further deforestation is avoided and helping to create a sustainable livelihood for local residents.



ride for the rainforest 2011

by **Obi McDonald-Saint**

Sri Lanka is a wondrous place filled with a rich tapestry of tastes, smells and vivid imagery to tantalise your senses. Tea, curry, spices, warm friendly people, exotic birds and animals; everything a group of cyclists needs for an adventure of a life time. There were nine cyclists in total, from all walks of life, all united in one cause: the rainforests of Sri Lanka. We were to ride 300 kilometres from the middle of Sri Lanka to the south-west corner to raise funds for Rainforest Rescue's Plant a Rainforest Project in Sri Lanka.



The community lands adjacent to Kanneliya Forest

Our first day of cycling took us to Nuwara Eliya, home to Ceylon's fine high-grown tea. Then on to Horton's Plains National Park, where we met our first endemic species: a Sri Lankan Deer called a Sambar and a Jungle Fowl, the supposed ancestors of all Chickens. Satan's Steps followed – a rocky path that wound steeply down a precipitous mountainside. We rode down, ricocheting off rocks, jarring our wrists, elbows and knees.

Thank you to the Ride for the Rainforest team: Krista Bernard, Daniel Coward, Ebony Lowe, Clint and Negin Maddock, Obi McDonald-Saint, Colin and Leree Roden, and Angela Standley. They raised an impressive \$20,000, for our Sri Lanka Plant a Rainforest Project.

Upon reaching the Sinharaja Reserve, we took a rest from our bikes and trekked through the amazing World Heritage-listed rainforest. We were surrounded by staggering biodiversity and even spotted the elusive Blue Magpie. Our journey soon took us to the Amphibian Research Centre where we spotted many frogs, lizards and birds.

We planted trees on the community lands adjacent to Kanneliya Forest. We ate food made from the rainforest including jaggery, a sweet hard toffee made from the sap of the Fishtail palm, and drunk toddy, a fermented drink made from the same tree. Finally, our adventure concluded at Galle, where, with great sadness, we relinquished our trusty steeds; the bicycles we had befriended that had served us so well. The ride was over, but for me, the journey to save the rainforests had just begun...

the value of rainforests

by Sally Barrett

Putting a value on rainforests, and the effect they have on our environment, is a controversial topic. The government's carbon tax is provoking questions about climate change and the validity of available research. However, there is one area of research that is not in question, nor will it ever be. It has been proven, time and again, that the world's rainforests have a resounding effect on the quality of our earth's environment. Rainforests absorb huge quantities of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, storing it as carbon. Additionally, by recycling water vapour, rainforests have an effect on cloud formation, therefore playing a hand in rainfall totals. Without rainforests, we would be living in an altogether drier and more toxic world.

This is why Rainforest Rescue's work is so important; understanding the science and the importance of rainforests has led their efforts in reforestation and education. Approximately 20% of climate change has been attributed to deforestation, which is why the process of reforestation and protection is vital. Buying back areas of native rainforest and replanting indigenous flora is a step towards preservation.

Possibly the most important element of Rainforest Rescue's work to save and regrow rainforests is education. Giving people the opportunity to learn about native land areas and get involved in their repopulation provides a sense of why their protection is so important. Many people who are arguing about the carbon tax have not had the opportunity to learn about the giant impact humans have on our planet. The government needs to spend more time educating the country on how carbon plays a part in our environment, and how such industries as mining and resource exploration affect the long-term health of the natural world. With more education, there may be more tolerance of a tax focused on protecting our natural assets.

Spreading the word about Rainforest Rescue and its rainforest restoration and protection projects is the first step in educating people about the value of rainforests. Ultimately, our actions can have a devastating effect. You only need to look at how the face of the earth has changed in the last 500 years to see that humans are the main instigator in climate change. In its broadest connotation, our climate has changed through progress. We grow as a species, we develop land and we learn how to utilise the space we have been given, but we pay little to no attention to what long-term effects this has.

Over 30 million years ago, Australia was almost completely covered in rainforest. We no longer have such a balance in our climate; we are an altogether drier and less fertile land. Only now are we stopping to think about the effect we have had, and will continue to have, on our climate; only now are we starting to put a value on the rainforests that have kept our climate balanced for so long. Rainforest Rescue continues to communicate the value of our rainforests, but it relies on people like you to help spread the word. If we continue to educate, we may just put a hold on change; transforming the adage that change is a good thing – when it's informed.



Sally Barrett Editing and Writing Service donates part of its fees to Rainforest Rescue. Thank you!



Photo: Steve Nowakowski

Rainforests

Tropical rainforest features

1. Tall trees form a dense canopy and create a shady, cool and moist climate for the plants and animals below.

2. Rainforests have many forms of plant life such as palms, vines, ferns, mosses, fungi and epiphytes (plants which grow on other plants but don't harm them).

3. Other obvious features to look for are large buttressed trunks, drip tips to funnel water off leaves, and flowers and fruit growing from trunks.

What does tropical rainforest need to exist?

1. Energy: Tropical rainforests are found between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn where the sun strikes the ground from almost directly overhead, providing constant energy and warmth throughout the year. **2. Water:** Tropical rainforests need plenty of rain throughout the year.

Activity 1. Use a scrapbook to create your own Tropical Nature Diary. Each Monday write down something you saw or heard over the weekend. It could be a caterpillar in the garden or a media report about a cyclone. Use the school library or the internet to find out more...

Activity 2. Mount Bellenden Ker (1555m above sea level) receives Australia's highest average annual rainfall of 8312 mm. Nearby Babinda receives about half that amount. Create a graph of Babinda's average monthly rainfall (in mm) from January to December: 676, 752, 766, 531, 387, 185, 121, 109, 109, 121, 217, 370. Use the internet (www.bom.gov.au) to compare it to another town.

Activity 3. Many Rainforest Aboriginal people believe that trees, rivers, rocks and other natural features are the spirits of people. Create a story to explain the human origin of a rainforest feature.





Are all rainforests the same?

Combinations of soil, wind, rain, temperature and altitude create different types of rainforest. Scientists have classified north Queensland's rainforests into many different types. Tropical rainforest in coastal areas is often the richest because it's warm and wet all year.

Activity 5. Which two items does the tropical rainforest need to exist?

- a. fertile soil
- b. solar energy all year round
- c. lots of regular rain
- d. cloudy weather
- e. high mountains

Activity 6. Name some of the major features of tropical rainforests. (Hint: The answers are on this page).

1. C _ N _ _ _ 2. V _ _ _ 3. F _ _ _

4. _ _ L M 5. _ _ T T _ S S _ _ T _ N K

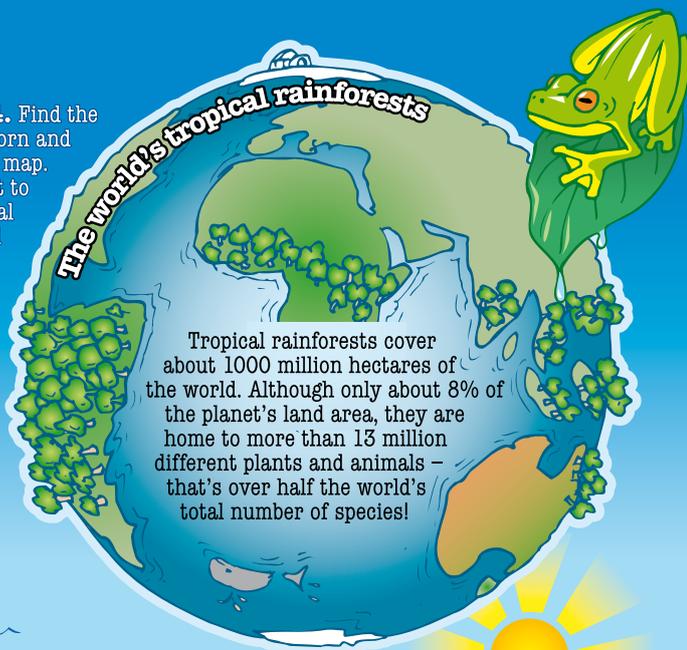
6. _ P _ P _ Y _ _ 7. F _ N G _ _ 8. D R _ _ T _ _

Activity 7. Why is the rainforest important to you? Write down three reasons.

Activity 8. Are you important to the rainforest? What are three things you can do to help protect the rainforest?

Activity 9. How many rainforest creatures and features can you find on this page? List them. When you next visit the rainforest see if you can spot them. What noises did you hear? What colours did you see? Report back to the class.

Activity 4. Find the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer on a world map. Use the internet to identify tropical rainforests and colour them green. Colour the deserts yellow. Which colour dominates?



Tropical rainforests cover about 1000 million hectares of the world. Although only about 8% of the planet's land area, they are home to more than 13 million different plants and animals – that's over half the world's total number of species!

Five reasons why tropical rainforest is important:

1. The equator's belt of tropical rainforest is the earth's heart and lungs and drive global weather patterns.
2. It is an ancient survivor, giving us a glimpse of our planet's evolution.
3. It contains over half the world's known plant and animal species.
4. It is a rich source of natural chemicals and medicine.
5. It is mysterious, beautiful and the last wild frontier in our modern world. It may be our last chance to show that we can live with nature.

Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

Cape York Peninsula

Cooktown

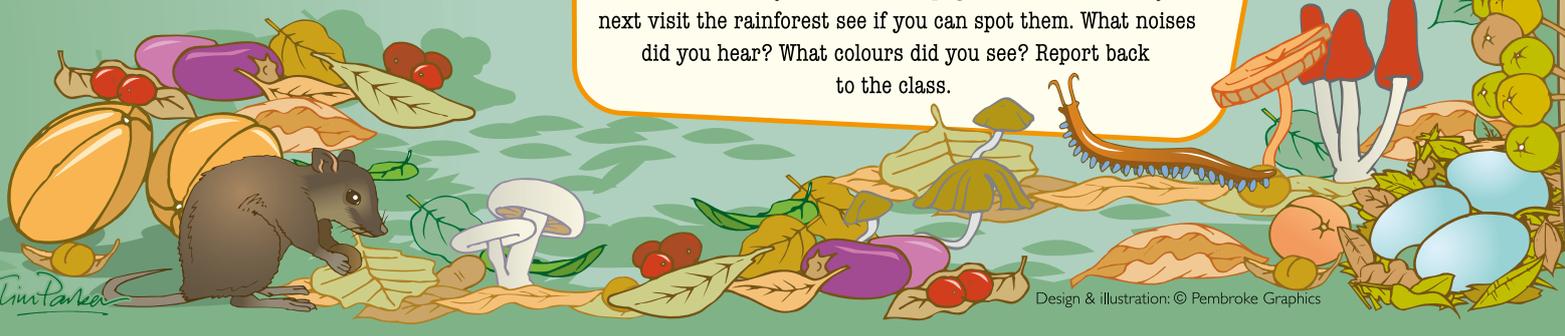
Port Douglas

Cairns

Innisfail

Ingham

Townsville



how can i support the work of rainforest rescue?

How will my donation benefit Rainforest Rescue?

Your donation helps us to purchase and protect high-conservation value rainforest; re-establish rainforests through planting, maintenance and restorations programs; and educate future generations on the importance of rainforests and their biodiversity.

Can I indicate a preference for where I want my donation to go?

Yes. If you wish, you can nominate the project of your choice.

Can I make a donation as a gift to friends or family?

Yes. You can do this by purchasing a Rainforest Gift online or over the phone. To acknowledge your support, we will send a special Rainforest Rescue Gift Card to your recipient of choice, anywhere in the world, with your own personalised message. Each card will contribute directly to achieving specific conservation outcomes for your project of choice.



Can I donate in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special occasion?

Yes. You may prefer to do this instead of giving or receiving flowers and gifts. If required, we can send you donation forms and envelopes, and information on our projects, to distribute to your guests.

What is a Rainforest Rescuer and why are they so important to Rainforest Rescue?

Rainforest Rescuers support our work by donating on a monthly basis. In spreading the cost of their donation over the year they can make affordable monthly contributions that suit their individual circumstances. Rainforest Rescuers provide us with continuity on our conservation commitments, enabling us to effectively plan for the future.

How would leaving a bequest in my will benefit Rainforest Rescue?

Your generosity and foresight in leaving a bequest will not only assist us to confidently continue our work well into the future, it will also have a lasting impact on future generations who will benefit from your legacy in conserving our precious rainforests.

How can my business become involved in protecting rainforests forever?

Our Business Partnership Program is an excellent way for you to get involved and support a range of rainforest conservation initiatives. Partnering with us will help your business by boosting staff morale, demonstrating to customers the values of your business and creating good will in your community.

Can I fundraise on behalf of Rainforest Rescue?

Yes. You can set up a fundraising page on www.everydayhero.com.au and your contacts can make donations online (they will receive an automatic tax-deductible receipt). You can also join our special fundraising Rainforest Treks. See page 13 for details.

Are there any volunteer opportunities available with Rainforest Rescue?

You can volunteer at tree planting days held in the Daintree and northern NSW. These are advertised on our website and in the local media. You can also volunteer at our plant nursery in the Daintree. By signing up to our email newsletter we can keep you informed as to when volunteer opportunities arise.

How can I stay informed about the work of Rainforest Rescue?

You can sign-up to our online newsletter and blog by visiting our website. By supplying us with your postal address we can also send you our annual supporter newsletter, which details our conservation achievements. You can also join us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter.

You can also support the work of Rainforest Rescue by telling a friend about our projects.

For further information on how you can support the work of Rainforest Rescue please visit our website at www.rainforestrescue.org.au/howtohelp or call us on 1300 763 611.

thank you

Thanks to your generous support, we can continue to protect rainforests and their biodiversity forever.

Thank you to all our supporters including: our Rainforest Rescuers – your ongoing monthly donations provide us with continuity on our conservation commitments; those who have left a bequest to Rainforest Rescue in your Will – you have created a lasting legacy for future generations; those who have made gifts – we appreciate your generosity and support for our conservation projects.

We would also like to thank the supporters listed below. You have helped us achieve some fantastic outcomes for conservation:

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The Albert George and Nancy Caroline Youngman Trust, as administered by Equity Trustees; Bird Observation & Conservation Australia; Canon Australia; Commonwealth Bank; the George Lewin Foundation; Hunter Hall International Ltd; James N. Kirby Foundation; North Queensland Wildlife Trust; The Westpac Group; Tree Friends.

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We would like to thank the following schools for helping to bring about awareness of the importance of our rainforests:

Bellevue Hill Public School, Australia; Campbells Bay School, New Zealand; Caulfield Junior College, Australia; Eco-Charter School, United States; James Cook University, Australia; Nutfield Church Primary School, United Kingdom; Peters Elementary School, United States; Pimpana State School, Australia; St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Australia.

A big thank you to our Board of Directors for volunteering your services over the past year:

Kathryn Biggs; Kelvin Davies; Madeleine Faught; Tony Gilding; Sue Higginson; Frank Volckmar.

Yes! I want to save our priceless rainforests by making a donation.

All contributions are tax deductible.

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For Terms and Conditions visit www.rainforestrescue.org.au/terms.html

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