

## Yellow Box Dispatch July 2018

Welcome to the Conservation Council email bulletin for July 2018. It has been a while since our last bulletin so we'll quickly traverse a few topics. We are [recruiting to have more resources for communications](#) and for an [office manager](#) so please feel free to forward items or the whole bulletin to people might be interested.

The Conservation Council is an organisation of member groups and we have an office and some staff (2-3) to share resources, hold meetings and coordinate and collaborate on environmental issues in the ACT and region including our focus areas: **Biodiversity Conservation** – protecting our unique ecological communities and the Bush Capital; **Climate Change** – a regional, national and global challenge; **Planning** – the right things in the right places; **Transport** – connecting people and places; **Waste** – being efficient through closed-loop systems; **Water** – smart use of a scarce resource; **Governance** – for a Smarter, Sustainable Canberra.

Our resources come from various places mostly from volunteers researching, attending, speaking, informing while our funding comes from sources including an ACT Government service agreement (we provide submissions, representation and information on environmental matters); fundraising (e.g. see the [report on the World Environment Day Dinner](#) below); grants and; member group fees. [Donations are important to the Conservation Council](#) and we also have a small group of monthly donors who help us by making our income a little more predictable.

The Conservation Council works on local environment issues and we also work with other local groups or specific issue groups - see the [item on rakali presentations](#) below - and with national groups such as the Places You Love Alliance and ACF to support a [major public rally on threatened species](#) to raise the profile of the need for improved national environment laws at Parliament House 9am 10 September. Please help get the numbers to that event!

As well as [events listed below](#) the Conservation Council also lists our own and other people's events on our [Facebook events page](#).

And we cover other issues through [submissions and input](#) as listed on our website and we raise other issues on our [Bush Capital blog](#).

Regards

*Larry O'Loughlin*

Executive Director, Conservation Council ACT Region

## World Environment Day dinner report

The World Environment Day dinner is our main annual fundraising event through ticket sales, sponsorship, raffles, auctions and donations. It is also a great event for catching up with and meeting people who are also involved or interested in environmental issues.

The 2018 World Environment Day Dinner was successful with high attendance, excellent feedback and good fundraising. The event continues to assist the Conservation Council to raise funds to support the organisation into the future.

Our evaluation survey showed that people like the event, the venue and the length of proceedings. The entree was the favourite course and most people liked the guest speaker Stuart Barry.

Quite a few people appreciated the encouragement of active transport such as bus or cycling to the dinner, and especially that the buses went to town centres other than Civic.

We always review the event and discuss whether we should keep doing it and if so what we should keep and what we should change. The Board has already had a first look and yes, we will do it again in 2019. We would welcome volunteers to assist if you would like to [add your name to the list!](#)

**TOP**

## **Rakali - Australian water rat - help report sightings**

Look out for rakali!

Geoff Williams from Australian Platypus Conservancy will present a series of free public talks about the Australian water-rat/ rakali (*Hydromys chrysogaster*).

A key talk will be at the Slatyer Seminar Room (ANU Robertson Building, no 46) Thursday 2 August, 7pm, hosted by Field Naturalists Association of Canberra and National Parks Association ACT.

WHAT: Free public talk by Geoff Williams on Australian water-rat/ rakali (*Hydromys chrysogaster*)

WHERE: Slatyer Seminar Room (ANU Robertson Building, no 46)

WHEN: Thursday 2 August, 7pm

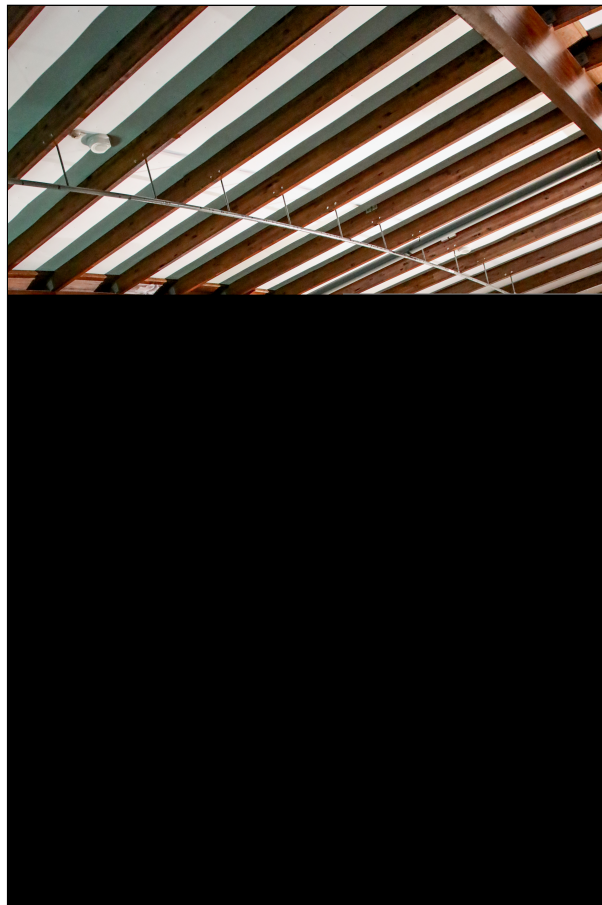
The talk also marks commencement of the Conservancy's survey of the status and distribution of the water-rat in the ACT region over 2018-19 (with support from the Wettenhall Environment Trust).

ACT Parks Manager Brett McNamara will officially launch this important 'citizen science' project.

The platypus is widely recognised as a uniquely Australian animal. By comparison, relatively few people know that the Australian water-rat is a genuine native rodent that was a natural part of our environment long before its pest cousins - the black rat and brown rat - arrived with the early colonists. The water-rat (also known as rakali) is an extremely attractive mammal. Its thick coat of soft fur, dense whiskers, blunt muzzle, partly webbed hind feet, and furry tail, all help create a resemblance to a miniature otter.

Geoff will outline the biology and key conservation requirements of the Australian water-rat. He will also include tips on how to go about spotting this fascinating native mammal in the wild with the aim of encouraging more people to look out for and report sightings of the species.

Members of the community are encouraged to report all reliable sightings of water-rats – both from the past and present. Reporting forms will be available for completion at the talk to record when and where the species was seen (approximate dates can be provided, if necessary).



Details of subsequent sightings over the next year can be reported via the Canberra Nature Map (if accompanied by a photo) or directly to Australian Platypus Conservancy - [platypus.apc@westnet.com.au](mailto:platypus.apc@westnet.com.au) or [www.platypus.asn.au](http://www.platypus.asn.au).

All reports will be entered in the Atlas of Living Australia to help planning of future conservation action by management agencies and environmental groups to help water-rats in the ACT.

Please notify people about this event and also encourage them to report all rakali sightings.

See details of other talks in [events](#) below.

## We're recruiting 1 - Office Manager

The Conservation Council ACT Region is seeking a part-time Office Manager to assist the smooth operation of the office. The Office Manager will assist the Executive Director with member group and donor management and will undertake volunteer management and some secretariat duties. The Office Manager will also undertake bookkeeping tasks including managing the financial system (Xero) and preparation of financial reports.

Apply by 5pm Friday 27 July 2018 to [director@conservationcouncil.org.au](mailto:director@conservationcouncil.org.au) including:

- a résumé outlining relevant work experience and education/training
- an outline of your office management and bookkeeping experience and skills supported by examples
- two referees, including where relevant, your current supervisor

For a full position description and for further information contact Larry O'Loughlin [director@conservationcouncil.org.au](mailto:director@conservationcouncil.org.au) or 02 6229 3202

<https://conservationcouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Bookkeeper-Office-Manager-Position-Statement-July-2018-1-2.pdf>

[TOP](#)

## We're recruiting 2 - Project Officer

The Conservation Council ACT Region is seeking an enthusiastic and motivated person to support our organisation in the key areas of communications and event management. The position may require undertaking or oversight of administrative matters and campaign activities. The position will play a central role in communicating about our activities and co-ordinating and promoting our signature events.

This is a full-time (37.5 hours per week) position until 30 June 2019 (with three month probation) and possibility of extension at a salary of \$58,500.

To apply please send 2 page (maximum) Expression of Interest PLUS current résumé to [director@conservationcouncil.org.au](mailto:director@conservationcouncil.org.au)

For further information about this position please contact Larry O'Loughlin at [director@conservationcouncil.org.au](mailto:director@conservationcouncil.org.au) or 02 6229 3202

Closing date 5pm Friday 27 July 2018

<https://conservationcouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Position-Statement-Project-Officer-Communications-Events-July-2018.pdf>

[https://nrmjobs.com.au/jobs/2018/20001197/Project\\_Officer\\_Communications\\_and\\_Events?state=ACT&category=&search=&page=](https://nrmjobs.com.au/jobs/2018/20001197/Project_Officer_Communications_and_Events?state=ACT&category=&search=&page=)

[TOP](#)

## What's wrong with Land Development Agency rural purchases?

The Conservation Council's Biodiversity Working Group meeting held 25 July discussed, among other things, the conservation status of Central Molonglo land. This land has been subject of an [ACT Auditor-General report](#) and has been of concern to the Biodiversity Working Group and Conservation Council for some time now. We were asking questions of the Land Development Agency before they were restructured and we continue to ask to be involved in discussions about how the natural values of the area are to be protected.

It is useful to remember that Central Molonglo was regarded as so important for environmental reasons in early planning that the area was never to be developed as urban area. As the Auditor-General's report notes: "In August 2008 the Government accepted the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment on the Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 281, that 'Central Molonglo be removed in perpetuity from being considered as a future urban area' noting in its response that 'This recommendation is supported. The ACT Government will remove Central Molonglo from being considered as a future urban area'." (p57)

The chair of that 2008 Standing Committee was backbencher Mick Gentleman MLA now Minister for Planning and Environment. The Minister for Planning in 2008 was Andrew Barr MLA.

However, since 2008 "In former Land Development Agency Board reports and a Ministerial Brief, information about the area of Central Molonglo removed in perpetuity from being considered a future urban area was inaccurately presented. The Board reports and Ministerial Brief referred to as a '20-year moratorium' rather than being '... in perpetuity from being considered as a future urban area'. This presented potential risks to the transparency of information for decision-makers. 3.153"

The Conservation Council is preparing further action to protect the environmental values of the bush capital in these areas and to keep raising the issues of how environmental outcomes need to be considered as part of good governance.

**TOP**

## Threatened Species Day event - Parliament House 9am 10 September

Australia is facing a national extinction crisis and our environment laws are broken.

Australia has already lost more mammals than any other nation. Our national environment laws don't protect the habitat our wildlife need to survive and they don't stop extinction.

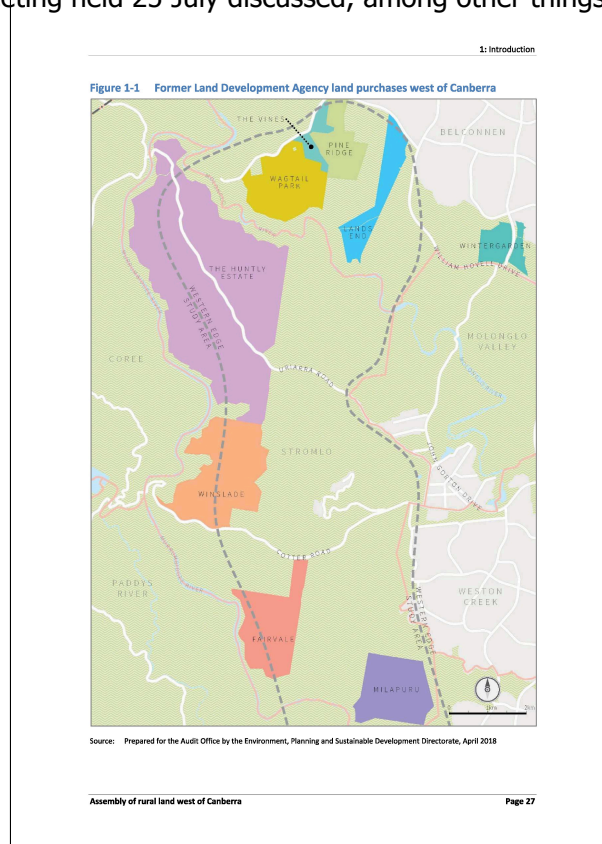
It doesn't have to be this way

With stronger laws to protect species and their habitat and more resources to invest in their recovery, we can bring our threatened species back from the brink.

We need to send a powerful message

If thousands of Australians take a stand against extinction and demand strong #naturelaws, our politicians will be forced to act.

Environment groups across Australia are working together to build an event in Canberra on 10 September and take a stand against extinction.





We need your help to turn out 2000 people on Parliament lawns to represent Australia's 2000 threatened species. Will you join us?

### How to get involved

- Sign up to show up via [Facebook](#) or [Eventbrite](#)
- Part of a group, organisation, union or workplace? Get your members to turn out
- **Invite your friends! If you can't invite them face to face, send them a link to the [Facebook](#) or [Eventbrite](#) pages**
- **Questions, support requests and creative ideas welcome: talk to [info@placesyoulove.org](mailto:info@placesyoulove.org)**

[Click here to find out more about what's planned](#)

The Conservation Council is helping to create a massive event in Canberra for Threatened Species Day this September. If thousands of Australians descend on Parliament House to make a visible stand against extinction and demand strong #naturelaws, the public will take notice and our politicians will be forced to act.

## Events

[Also see events listed on or Facebook site](#)

## Rakali - Australian water-rat - presentations 29 July-3 August

### Look out for rakali!

Geoff Williams from Australian Platypus Conservancy will present free public talks about the Australian water-rat/ rakali (*Hydromys chrysogaster*)

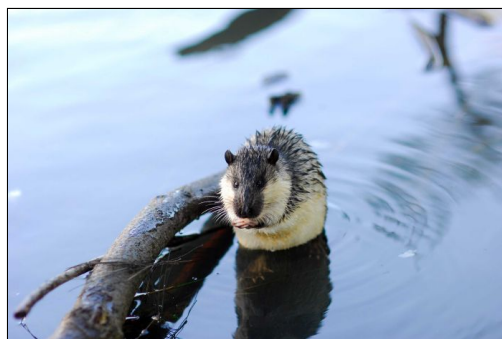
Members of the community are encouraged to report all reliable sightings of water-rats – both from the past and present. Reporting forms will be available for completion at the talk to record when and where the species was seen (approximate dates can be provided, if necessary).

Details of subsequent sightings over the next year can be reported via the Canberra Nature Map (if accompanied by a photo) or directly to Australian Platypus Conservancy - [platypus.apc@westnet.com.au](mailto:platypus.apc@westnet.com.au) or [www.platypus.asn.au](http://www.platypus.asn.au).

All reports will be entered in the Atlas of Living Australia to help planning of future conservation action by management agencies and environmental groups to help water-rats in the ACT.

Please notify people about these events and also encourage them to report all rakali sightings.

- Sunday 29 July Namadji NP Visitor Centre 10.30am
- Tuesday 31 July Southern ACT Catchment Group offices, Wanniasa 7pm
- Wednesday 1 August BCS Training Room (Old Kippax Health Centre), Kippax Place, Holt 7pm
- Thursday 2 August Jerrabomberra Wetlands 11am
- Friday 3 August Cooma Ex-Services Club 6pm



**TOP**

## Rally to Stop Adani - 4 August

**What:** Public rally to Stop Adani

**When:** Saturday 4 August at 12:00–13:00

**Where:** Garema Place

**Who:** Hosted by [Stop Adani](#) and 7 others

**Interested?**



## Why Tibet matters - 8 August

Hear from a young inspiring Tibetan environmentalist on why Tibet matters to the world.

Tibet is a land of immense environmental importance. Climate change and China's destructive policies are bringing dramatic changes to Tibet, with profound consequences both for Tibetans and the millions of people who depend on the water that originates from the Roof of the World.

If we are concerned about climate change, inequality, water security, we need to pay closer attention to Tibet. Equally importantly, we need to understand that the solution lies in giving power back to the Tibetans, the traditional stewards of the land.

Tsechu Dolma is a 25-year-old environmentalist. Born to Tibetan refugee parents in Nepal, Tsechu Dolma moved to the US as a young girl. On her first trip back to Nepal as a teenager, she saw the effects of climate change in the mountainous region of Mustang, bordering Tibet. She has since founded the Mountain Resiliency Project, a social enterprise building climate change resilient communities through women's empowerment in sustainable agro-business.

A graduate from Columbia University, Tsechu was recognised as one of Forbes 30 under 30 in Social Entrepreneurship, Fulbright-Clinton Fellow, Echoing Green Fellow and Brower Youth Award winner.

This is a great chance to meet a young Tibetan environmentalist, learn more about Tibet and connect with ATC supporters and environmental activists in Canberra.

**When:** 6pm, Wednesday 8 August

**Where:** Conservation Council office, 14/26 Barry Drive, Canberra

**Bookings:** [Eventbrite](#)

[TOP](#)

## ACT Biosecurity Act - 10 August

Have your say by 10 August on what the new Biosecurity Act should look like and help protect the ACT from pests and diseases that threaten the environment and agriculture <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/act-biosecurity-act>

[TOP](#)

## Moving climates - 17 August

A cross-disciplinary artistic response to the inner world of climate scientists: creative development performances and Q & A.

How does it feel to spend your working life dealing with the data of disaster? How does it change you? And how do others perceive you?

A performance in development in which an actor, a dancer, a digital artist and a composer explore these questions, responding to interviews with climate scientists.

This creative development is a chance to see a work in progress, give feedback to the artists on how the work might develop, and discuss the issues it raises.

Show length approximately half an hour, with twenty minutes Q and A.

Supported by the ACT Government, and Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres.

**Where:** Ralph Wilson Theatre, Gorman Arts Centre, 55 Ainslie Ave Braddon

**When: 17 August**

**Cost: \$10**

## Restorative talks with Friends of Grasslands - 18 August

**What:** Friends of Grasslands (FOG) Networking and two great talks

**When:** Saturday 18 August 1.30 – 4.30 pm

**Where:** Mugga Mugga Environmental Education Centre, 129 Narrabundah Lane, Symonston (opposite Therapeutic Goods Administration)

Our two speakers are **Dr Darren Le Roux** and **Dr Brett Howland**, both of whom work with ACT Parks & Conservation Service, and both of whom are restoring grassland areas around ACT – in very different ways.

Fire has been largely excluded from Canberra Grassland ecosystems over last 50 years, but it may have the potential to help restore our threatened grasslands. Over the past 3 years the ACT Parks and Conservation Service has implemented 22 ecological burns, in both spring and autumn, covering over 200 ha across seven grassland reserves. Their aim is to help understand the role fire may hold in restoration. Brett Howland will be speaking about the early results of this trial, focusing on changes in species composition, vegetation structure, and kangaroo grazing pressure following burns.

He says: 'I will speak about the Barrer Hill Box Gum Grassy Woodland restoration project in the Molonglo River Reserve. This work has involved bottom-up recreation of woodland habitat for wildlife, including experimentation with unique artificial vertical habitat structures designed to mimic some of the functions of mature trees. I will present the findings from my Honours student's research project investigating bird responses following installation of these vertical structures and discuss the implications of this work for woodland restoration more broadly.'

FOG provides a delicious afternoon tea for this annual gathering, so be sure to register with [ann.milligan@fog.org.au](mailto:ann.milligan@fog.org.au) so we can provide for everyone properly.

## Black Mountain Symposium 2018 - 24 and 25 August

**What:** 24 August is [Themed talks at CSIRO Discovery Centre](#) Followed by wine and cheese 25 August is [Themed walks in Black Mountain Nature Reserve](#)

**Where:** CSIRO Discovery Centre (24 August)

**When:** **24 August** 9:00 for 9:30 am to 4:30 pm **25 August** 9:30am to 12 noon

**Who:** Friends of Black Mountain

**Cost:** Symposium talks \$55 (fully catered); Wine and cheese option \$10; Guided walk \$5

**Information and registration:** <https://www.friendsofblackmountain.org.au/Symposium>

**TOP**



GPO Box 544 CANBERRA ACT 2601 | 14/26 Barry Drive CANBERRA ACT | T: 02 6229 3200

[info@conservationcouncil.org.au](mailto:info@conservationcouncil.org.au) [www.conservationcouncil.org.au](http://www.conservationcouncil.org.au)