



## Rainforests Should Never Burn

by Dawn Lotty

The Gondwana rainforest in northern NSW has for millenia experienced high rainfall and lush growth while containing ancient and primitive plants and supporting a significant part of Australia's biodiversity, including many unique flora and fauna.

It was the most extensive area of subtropical rainforest in the world but since white settlement it has been logged for the high value timber, cleared for farming or residential development.

Landcare groups have worked hard for many years to support and expand the remaining pockets of this rainforest.

So you can imagine the horror when in spring 2019, after experiencing extremely dry weather, high temperatures and low humidity, strands of ancient Gondwana rainforest, never previously known to burn, succumbed to flames.

Named the 'Mt Nardi fires' they impacted on Terania Creek, Tuntable Creek, Tuntable Falls, Huonbrook, Upper Coopers Creek, Upper Wilsons Creek and surrounds and burnt over 5,500 hectares.

25 species are listed in this area as threatened. They include:

**Birds:** Albert's Lyrebird, Barred Cuckoo Shrike, Bush Hen, Marbled Frogmouth, Masked Owl,

White Eared Monarch, Rufous Scrub Bird, Sooty Owl, Black Bittern, Double Eyed Fig Parrot, Glossy Black Cockatoo, Osprey, White Eared Monarch, Wompoo Fruit Dove, Rose Crowned Fruit Dove, and Rufous Scrub Bird.

**Mammals:** Little Bentwing Bat, Large Eared Pied Bat, Eastern Long Eared Bat, Golden Tipped Bat, Koala, Large Footed Myotis, Red Legged Pademelon and Spotted Tailed Quoll

**Amphibians:** Loveridge's Frog, Pouched Frog

**Reptiles:** Stephen's Banded Snake.

Rainforest4Foundation from Mullumbimby quickly stepped forward to start the replanting and are seeking donations from as little as \$10. For more information [www.rainforest4.org](http://www.rainforest4.org) or contact Kelvin Davies, pictured below, (p) 0437 423 119 or by email: [info@Rainforest4.org](mailto:info@Rainforest4.org)



### Landcare Working Bee

Our team of friendly volunteers work every Saturday morning, weather permitting from 8.30am to 10.30am rotating through the various sites around Bangalow. All welcome.

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# The Importance of Rainforest Riparian Zone Restoration



Jen Ford

Bangalow Land and Rivercare is presenting a workshop, funded by the Environmental Trust. All welcome.

## **Location:**

The veranda, Heritage House Museum & Cafe  
cnr Ashton and Deacon Street  
Bangalow

**Date:** Saturday 28th March 2020.

Time: 10.30am – 1.45pm

Tea/coffee/biscuits will be provided.

**Presenter:** Jen Ford (Ecosure, Brisbane),

The workshop will cover the importance of rainforest riparian zone restoration including:

- \* An overview of how creeks got so degraded;
- \* The importance of providing habitat for wildlife and creek health;
- \* Case Studies (what can be achieved);
- \* Discussion on the importance of best practice regeneration techniques;
- \* Walk and talk around Byron Creek restoration site

## **About the workshop presenter:**

Jen Ford is a highly experienced ecological restoration practitioner who has worked for over 20 years within South East Queensland and northern NSW in a range of positions including as a bush regenerator; a TAFE teacher; a senior officer in local government; and currently in the private sector as Ecosure's Principal Restoration Ecologist.

As a recognised industry leader and passionate advocate, her experience includes successfully applying a range of ecological restoration approaches across a wide range of ecosystem and habitat types; large scale restoration; designing environmental education programs;

developing and presenting information to assist a wide range of stakeholders in implementing better restoration standards and weed control. The follow up to the workshop will be 2 rainforest plantings, these will occur at -

**231 Fowlers lane,**

**Bangalow**

on the following time and dates.

First planting

**9am, Saturday 4 April, 1,200 rainforest trees**

Second planting

**9am, Saturday 25 April, 800 rainforest trees**

**We are looking for volunteers to help plant our 2,000 rainforest trees.**

There is NO weeding,

No digging,

No whipper snipping,

Just planting trees in pre-dug holes and mulching.

If you can spare an hour or so please see above for details.

As a thank you for your time Mullumbimby

Rotary Club will be onsite offering

a Free (meat or veg) Sausage Sizzle!

## **What you need to bring and wear:**

Trowels, drinking water, sunscreen. Wear long sleeves, gloves, fully enclosed footwear and a hat.

**RSVP** [zan.hammerton@zoho.com](mailto:zan.hammerton@zoho.com)





# Scientists Warn Forest Industry Plan Could Increase Fire Risk

Scientists warn a timber industry proposal to allow some logging in national parks and on other public land to reduce bushfire risk is an "incredibly misleading" idea that could actually make forests more flammable.

The Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) and the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) have said the forestry industry should be used, along with more hazard reduction burning, in a new approach to bushfire prevention.

AFPA chief executive Ross Hampton proposed new initiatives to make forests "more fire resilient" could include selective logging to protect homes, water catchments and key infrastructure, and mechanical reduction of undergrowth to reduce the fuel load in forests.

But Australian National University landscape ecology expert Professor David Lindenmayer said "multiple academic and forest industry studies showed forest thinning in Australia makes forests more fire prone. It [thinning and mechanical fuel reduction] is a misleading argument that is simply wrong, it might sound like a simple way to reduce fuel loads and with it fire risk but it would actually make the forest more flammable".

Forest and fire expert Professor Philip Zylstra from Curtin University said "thinning and fuel reduction wouldn't be feasible across broad areas but could be used close to homes, although cleared zones would be more effective. You couldn't do that on a landscape scale. It would have to be focused on asset protection zones where you can get vehicles in to fight fires".

Professor Lindenmayer also said doing mechanical fuel reduction on a scale required to be effective would be too expensive and damage the environment. "You would need a huge road network to cart the wood-chipped undergrowth and we know roads are one of the major ignition sources for bushfires, and building that many roads would cost a fortune. More intervention in forests will also have a big negative impact on biodiversity. I know why the industry is talking about this, they have run out of timber ... this is crass opportunism to take advantage of a catastrophe."

The photo below shows the amount of fuel left on the ground after the forestry industries logging near Eden NSW prior to the bushfires.

*Source: The Conversation*







## Echidnas in the Garden

By Dawn Lotty

Echidnas are not soft and cuddly and they would not win a beauty contest but my neighbours and I could not be happier as we share one or more Echidna that visit our native gardens.

At first we could not work out what was making such a mess of the mulch. We have always had Bandicoots but this was digging on a much grander scale. Then at dusk one evening a neighbour saw a small animal slowly meandering across the road and went to investigate. It was an Echidna.

From that day, nearly two years ago, we have all become very protective of our little visitor, monitoring its movements, concerned about its lack of road safety awareness and finding out about its habits and diet.

Just like the other egg-laying mammal, the Platypus, Echidnas are even more interesting than they appear.

The four different Echidna species have spines, a long, narrow snout, and black or brown colored 'hair'. The tips of their snouts, which are frequently referred to as a "beak," is very sensitive. They have short legs and long claws used for digging. Echidnas lack teeth, instead using a long sticky tongue to slurp up insects.

Echidnas feed primarily on earthworms, ants, and termites. They use their keen sense of smell to locate food, and their sharp claws to dig, to tear open termite mounds, and to rip apart tree bark and rotting logs.

Once their prey is accessible, they use their long, sticky tongues to retrieve it. Because they have no teeth, these animals use pads on the tongues and roofs of their mouths to smash the food into an easy to swallow paste.

For the most part, Echidnas are not extensively threatened by human activities in Australia. Land clearing and habitat loss cause localized extinctions, but echidnas are common throughout Australia despite this.

Breeding season runs from July through August. Female Echidnas normally lay a single egg, and this egg is incubated in the mother's pouch for ten days, after which the egg hatches inside the pouch.

The baby Echidna, called a "puggle," remains in its mother's pouch for 53 days. At that time, it begins to grow spines, and mom (not surprisingly) will place it in an underground tunnel. She will feed her puggle every 5-10 days, until it is about 7 months old and ready to survive on its own. It is believed they are territorial

### *Village Eco News*

Our aim is to inform, interest, amuse and educate our readers on all things environmental. We welcome you to submit your contributions or to subscribe to this free Newsletter send your name and email address to:

[bangalowlandcare@gmail.com](mailto:bangalowlandcare@gmail.com)

Please pass this publication on to your family and friends. Receiving our Newsletter online will help to save the environment we work to preserve.

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