

# Breathing Life into Boodja

Social and ecological restoration in an ancient land



I've seen the film, now  
what are MY NEXT STEPS?



**Gondwana Link**  
connecting people...connecting nature

[www.gondwanalink.org](http://www.gondwanalink.org)

# We can all care for Boodja and make a difference

*"We need to breathe life back into the nostrils of mother Boodja to make sure that her heart is pumping again and that blood is running through her veins."*

**Ezzard Flowers, Noongar Wirloomen Elder**



As a Noongar man, Ezzard comes from one of the world's oldest continuous cultures – people who have thrived on this continent since time immemorial. There is so much to learn from Noongar culture about how to be part of Boodja – country. For Gondwana Link, showing respect for and supporting the aspirations and needs of Noongar and other First Nations' people is as integral to our work as protecting, restoring and reconnecting nature.

We all have opportunities to breathe life back into Boodja. As Eddy Wajon says in the film, *"You can do something, but you have to want to do it. And it isn't difficult, I mean we're just ordinary people."*

He is modest – there's nothing ordinary about Eddy and his wife Donna or the many other wonderful people we see in the film. They are living and working with their eyes wide open. They see the beauty and wonder of the world, they see the damage it is carrying, and they are working to make a positive difference. They are the exceptional people the world needs right now.



## Be exceptional and join them

Wherever you are, whoever you are, you can be exceptional too. If you wish to help inspire, mobilise and support more good work across the Gondwana Link, we encourage you to consider these options:

- Join and support some of the many groups working across the Link. You can see some of these groups at [www.gondwanalink.org/aboutus](http://www.gondwanalink.org/aboutus). If you live in the Link, get involved with your local conservation or landcare organisation – all sorts of skills and help will be appreciated.
- If you already own land, think about the inspiring farm stories Sylvia Leighton, Alan Hordacre and Peter Luscombe have shown us and consider your own options. Both Gondwana Link and your local group have skills in matchmaking – bringing landholders together with those who can help them. The Green Skills partnership with the Hordacre family at Balijup, for example, has been so very rewarding. And each year, groups involved in building the Link are using local planting teams to replant hundreds of hectares on other people's land across the Link.
- Consider investing in a conservation property along the Link, either individually or with a group of friends. It has been a great honour to help Bill and Jane Thompson, Eddy and Donna Wajon and others find their dream properties, and then connect them with people who can help them to restore, manage and enjoy those properties. We follow the land market closely and have some experience in purchase negotiations. Get in touch with us for a discreet discussion.





- Join with other community members in the scientific surveys that are deepening our understanding of these ecologically important landscapes and the restoration work that is needed. The Balijup, Chingarrup and Twin Creeks properties have fantastic survey programs, as do groups like Bush Heritage. And there's the annual Walpole Wilderness Bioblitz, organised by the Walpole-Nornalup National Parks Association. Link in directly or ask us for details.
- Don't be a quiet Australian. Make sure your local councillors and MPs know of the support we all need to continue and expand this environmental protection and restoration work. Write letters, chew ears, recruit your friends and neighbours, make your voice heard. Good government policy is integral to expanding our current program. We can do much more with much more.
- Give Local. We still find it awkward to ask, but the reality is that we need ongoing donations to maintain and grow the current work. You could give to a group working along the Gondwana Link pathway, or you could donate directly to Gondwana Link Ltd to support the whole program. At the core of Gondwana Link Ltd is a tiny team operating over a vast area on very low overheads – so every dollar gets used well. To donate see [www.gondwanalink.org/donate](http://www.gondwanalink.org/donate).
- Consider a bequest in your will, or better still a living bequest so you can see the good work your support enables.
- Buy a Gondwana Link T-shirt – you'll be a well-dressed, walking billboard! Go to 'SHOP' on our website.
- Above all, be proud of what is being achieved in our part of the world.

Our Gondwana Link program began in 2002. We've grown a lot since then, with many great people and groups joining in the effort. We're also an integral part of a national and global network. In 2021, Gondwana Link was selected as a #Founding50 program of the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. With many governments around the world embracing multi-million-hectare restoration commitments, we're working with groups in Australia's Restoration Decade Alliance to get Australia up to that level.

**We look forward to being part of this mighty effort with you.**

**[www.gondwanalink.org](http://www.gondwanalink.org)**

# Voices from 'Breathing Life into Boodja'



"We had this fantastic biodiversity in the south-west of WA and in the last 40 years I have just seen it disappearing right under my eyes from a variety of things [...] and so this is an attempt from us to hold the bulwark at least at our property and to set an example for other people that, in fact, it can be done. You can do something but you have to want to do it."

**Eddy Wajon, conservation landholder, Chingarrup Sanctuary**

"This particular day, it was a hard day ... I went for a drive and this rakali [native water rat] ran across the road in front of me. I'd never seen one before and I thought, well that's it, that makes it all worth it. I can deal with all that other stuff because I know he's here and that's probably because of all the work that we've done — he's got an environment here that's good enough for him to live in."

**Heather Adams, farmer and Oyster Harbour Catchment Group**



"What brings joy to me in particular is when I see a difference in someone's life once they've come out here [to Nowanup] and had time out, and had an experience of a lifetime — families come out to do seed collecting and then the planting... and watching these people grow in cultural knowledge—Noongars call it mabarn. It's a power, it's an energy that was used to make unwell people well again, and seeing the people that come here, whether they're non-Aboriginal or Aboriginal, always go away feeling a lot better."

**Associate Professor Eugene Eades, Nowanup**

"When the decision came about five years ago to return to this farm with my partner Peter it was very much like it was the right thing to do. ... We have this amazing opportunity to redesign the farm and think about what we're going to do with it and how we're going to do it. We made the decision that the remaining native vegetation is the most precious thing in this landscape and it's the core of the farm and everything we do away from it is to ensure that we don't cause any more damage to this bushland."

**Sylvia Leighton, Wilyun Pools Farm**



"Conservation is a human endeavour... The only thing that can hold it together is the connections between people, the social networks. The science isn't going to hold it together by itself, the funding isn't going to hold it together, it's only the social networks that have that capacity to say, well, we're connected to each other and this is what we do."

**Nic Dunlop, conservation scientist, Conservation Council of WA**

**For rich stories by the film's 'cast' and other landcarers, First Nations' Elders and scientists, visit our Heartland Journeys website: [heartlandjourneys.com.au/stories](https://heartlandjourneys.com.au/stories)**

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UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON  
**ECOSYSTEM  
RESTORATION**  
2021-2030

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