

CELEBRATORY BIENNIAL REPORT

July 2025

**From our Chair,
Dr Louise Duxbury...**



The Gondwana Link! This wonderful artwork came from a community arts project commissioned by Basil Schur of Green Skills. Those involved were Lynne and Ken Tinley, Lara Tinley, Elizabeth Po, Andy Pratt and Doyle Sails O'Connor. Funding was provided by Lotterywest & Green Skills.



Gondwana Link tackles the key challenges facing our planet and communities based on what appears to us to be logical and necessary – it's the right thing to do! The key to the Gondwana Link program is the tenacious optimism of scores of community-based groups working at the local scale but set within the bigger picture of what we achieve through large-scale partnerships. These partnerships include landholders, Traditional Custodians, private donors and, increasingly, investment groups. It's wonderful to see the positive changes that are flowing from these collaborative efforts.

For instance, the partnerships with First Nations families and carbon investment companies to set in place arrangements for the eventual hand over of properties to First Nations families is both a personal and Gondwana Link priority – this is the right thing to do for social justice as well as ecological and community resilience.

As to the full scope of our work, it is hugely inspiring to see our one-page **strategic plan** being implemented. There is more going on than ever. Gondwana Link's work spans several scales: we maintain strong links locally and in the larger landscapes across the 1000 km of the Link, and this work has Australia-wide and international significance.

I have been on the Gondwana Link Board for ten years and stepped up to the role of Chair at the beginning of this year. I am following in the large footprints of Virginia Young, who fortunately is remaining on the Board. Sincere thanks to Virginia for her longstanding leadership role in Gondwana Link.

Virginia has been involved in successful environmental campaigns across Australia since the late 1980s. Prior to this she ran the mining section of the Foreign Investment Division in the Federal Treasury and then her own business. She

Louise Duxbury's portrait by Miles Tweedy Photography.
Below, Keith Bradby OAM, CEO, with our strategic plan showcased on a tea towel (that's another story!). Photo: Carol Duncan.



pioneered a continental scale approach to nature conservation in Australia, called 'Wild Country', and played a leading role as the Wilderness Society's National Forest Campaign Co-ordinator in the difficult arena of protecting Australia's native forests. Virginia has been involved in international climate agreements and campaigns since 2007. She continues to be a key influence in international climate debates, growing the knowledge that climate change and ecological decline are parallel crises we must face. It's so helpful to have her perspective on the Board as we grapple with these mighty issues.

Thanks to you all for your support to date and we look forward to your input and support for the next steps! I am available for conversations about how you can help.

Warmest, Louise.

New ventures



Here's most of the team that pulled together the new future for Wilyun Pools Farm (L to R): Keith Bradby (Gondwana Link), Chris Thomas (Wollemi Capital), Graeme Miniter (Wirlomin), Tony Jack (Carbon Neutral), Kim Scott and Olivia Roberts (Wirlomin), and Sylvia Leighton and Peter McKenzie (previous owners). Photo above and Keith's portrait: Nic Duncan.



G'day all, it's time for a long-overdue update from the Gondwana Link program. We've been busy developing approaches that will build more of the Gondwana Link. This work has largely evolved through collaboration with like-minded climate and biodiversity investors, and discussions with First Nations groups and families. The nature of this work (building relationships and negotiating property purchases) meant it had to be done quietly, but it has already led to the purchase of three properties in a key area east of Albany: Wilyun Pools Farm, Sunnyside and at Warriup (more on these later). We are also working on a larger land conservation model that we expect to operate from 2026 onwards.

While this has been happening, a wonderful array of groups, businesses and people have continued their work to strengthen connectivity and ecosystem health across the Link's 1000 km. Some of this work is outlined below, but we know there is so much more underway. We are deeply thankful for all this effort and delighted to be able to help where we can.

Every year, we provide letters of support for groups across the Link who are seeking grant funding for important projects. We see this support as a key mechanism to help achieve on-ground progress through local action. For instance, recently Gondwana Link backed a funding bid by the Walpole-Nornalup National Parks Association for a Red Tingle science project.

Engaging people through the Arts is an ongoing priority for us. Remember 'The Stars Descend' dance performances across the Gondwana Link in 2023? The film of this incredible undertaking has been released under the title *Creative Action for Climate Hope* (see page 11). Another Arts highlight was the March 2025 launches of four new physical Genestreaming Journey Sculptures as part of the Gondwana Link Genestreaming Journey Trail. Our warm thanks to ALL the artists, creatives, local community members and groups, Shires, businesses and sponsors involved.

Using an appealing personal story approach, we continue to generate and publish environmental, landcare and caring for Country stories on our [Heartland Journeys website](#) and in the Southerly Magazine. Recently, we highlighted Ravensthorpe school where the Noongar Languages teacher, Natalie Cordon, is doing exciting work with the students to build their Connection to Country. [Read the story here.](#)

Reaching out to the next generation is a high priority, so we have spent time with groups of Year 12 Geography students. The Gondwana Link program is part of their curriculum and features in WA's Geography textbook for ATAR school students. What a fine place to be!



Year 12 Geography students at Twin Creeks Conservation Reserve with Lucia Quearry from Friends of the Porongurup Range. The reserve is a key part of the Ranges Link, which lies within the broader Gondwana Link. Photo: Keith Bradby.

I'll close by celebrating a fantastic process of reconciliation and cultural restoration many years in the making. For 19 years, Greening Australia and Gondwana Link, along with many, MANY others, have supported the cross-cultural programs at Nowanup, led by Eugene Eades and supported by his brother Aden and sister Eliza. We were thrilled to be part of a formal 'hand-back' ceremony held on Nowanup where Greening Australia transferred legal ownership of the property to Nowanup Noongar Boodja Ltd.

[Read about it here.](#)

Regards,
Keith Bradby OAM - CEO



The signing ceremony for the transfer of Nowanup's ownership from Greening Australia to Nowanup Noongar Boodja, 4 December 2023. The process was finalised in May 2024. Photo: Nic Duncan.

Promoting the benefits of 'HEALTHY COUNTRY - HEALTHY PEOPLE'

We continue to highlight the links between environmental health and human health and have had a number of fruitful discussions with our colleagues in the WA Public Health Alliance on opportunities for a closer collaboration.

Dr James Aronson from the global EcoHealth Network visited Albany early in 2025, with a return visit planned later this year. As a result, we're working with James and other colleagues on an international workshop to be run in the central Gondwana Link area during 2026.

Our State NRM funded EcoHealth project has now concluded. In addition to supporting the schools-based program at Margaret River, we undertook a well-being survey of over 160 landcarers from local groups, and recorded interviews with some of the Noongar families being supported back onto Country and into work with a healing country focus. Roger Erith did a great job pulling together a comprehensive EcoHealth report, which is available on our website:

[gondwanalink.org/
resources](https://gondwanalink.org/resources)

James Aronson with Gondwana Link and Porongurup Friends.
Photo: Lucia Quearry.



Multi-tenure / multi-purpose conservation landscapes



Ravensthorpe bottlebrush
(*Beaufortia orbifolia*)
Photo: Keith Bradby.



Carnaby's cockatoos at Cocanarup.
Photo: Nic Duncan.

An important focus this year, and no doubt for the next few years, is the large area of rich bushland that makes up the 'Ravensthorpe Connection', between Fitzgerald

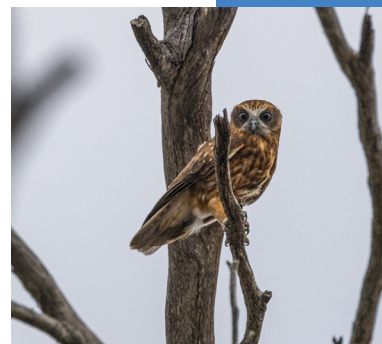
River National Park and the Great Western Woodlands. This area, a hotspot within the larger south-western Australia biodiversity hotspot, is arguably one of the most ecologically important areas in Australia. As well as its intrinsic values, it is also a critical ecological connector.

Since the 1970s, various government reports have recognised the area as worthy of nature reserve or national park status. But it is also a highly mineralised area and in Western Australia that means most of its land tenure remains as Unallocated Crown Land. It lacks conservation management, but local groups like the Cocanarup Conservation Alliance have done outstanding work fighting for some of the most critically important habitats.

There is now strong local interest in working out a better future that delivers good conservation management, reduces conflict and strengthens existing local research efforts, such as Ravensthorpe's outstanding Herbarium. So far, it has catalogued over 1,500 local plant species.

While the future of some of this area is being discussed as part of the South West Native Title Settlement, this seems likely to involve smallish parcels of land in the bigger landscape. We strongly support the return of Traditional Custodians' cultural practices and land management in the area.

We are working with the Ravensthorpe community and others on what a new model of cultural and conservation protection and management might look like, amidst a farming and mining landscape. **Stay tuned!**



Southern boobook.
Photo: Nic Duncan.

United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

Gondwana Link is delighted to be one of the *#founding50* projects for the United Nations Decade of Restoration 2021-2030. We continue to work with a fine array of Australian groups who have formed the Restoration Decade Alliance to promote this UN Decade.

The Alliance is a great forum for sharing information and jointly encouraging all the various efforts underway in Australia. However, despite representations to the Federal Government, Australia remains one of the countries that has yet to recognise or provide tangible support for this UN Decade formally. Nevertheless, some great work is happening in Australia **that we can all be proud of.**



Australian restoration organisations supporting the
United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
2021 - 2030

Supporting major efforts in joint ecological & cultural renewal

Along with the Nowanup families, some other First Nations groups have recently been supported into land custodianship and property ownership in the last few years.

In 2022, Tony Jack at Carbon Neutral asked for some advice on how to increase the benefits from their carbon program. This was someone we trusted, through a relationship going back a few decades. We introduced Tony to our colleagues at Esperance Tjaltjraak Native Title Aboriginal Corporation. As a result, Tjaltjraak, working with Carbon Neutral and other associates, were able to secure the 4,000 hectare Kardutjaanup property adjoining the Great Western Woodlands, west of the town of Salmon Gums. It's just wonderful to be out there and see the young Ranger Team revegetating this massive area of marginal farmland and know that the work and the financial proceeds will deliver social, cultural, ecological and financial benefit. Here's one [news story](#) on their land program.

Tjaltjraak has since secured other key properties, including one in the Ravensthorpe Connection area, and established an ambitious 'Cultural Corridor' program across the Esperance sandplain to rejuvenate the old storylines and improve the health of downstream systems. It's a very impressive program that is steadily expanding. During our last visit over there we met new investors, and scientists from NASA and Cambridge.

We have worked with Carbon Neutral to secure three important properties east of Albany, in that mega-diverse area between Waychinicup and the Pallinup River. Investment arrangements enabled the purchase of the 1550 ha Sunnyside property near Cape Riche, which has 750 ha of very significant bushland. A formal land-use agreement for the property has been signed with the Yaramouup Aboriginal Corporation.

In September 2024, agreements were signed and a celebration took place on the award-winning landcare property Wilyun Pools Farm, in the Mettler area, to recognise the role of the Wirlomin Noongar Language and Stories group in gaining the custodianship and eventual ownership of this 1190 ha property:

[learn more.](#)

On both Sunnyside and Wilyun Pools Farm, members of the Noongar families involved are now employed in the initial management and revegetation programs, with planning underway for ongoing social enterprises. On the Sunnyside property, we have worked through Carbon Neutral and with the Yaramouup Aboriginal Corporation and contractors to start removing the invasive weed Sydney Golden Wattle. Over \$120,000 has been spent so far, but this is really just a start. On the Wilyun Pools property, the Wirlomin are also looking to secure funding to focus on this weed, as well as eradicating some small populations of Melbourne Ti-Tree.

In May this year, the 520 ha property at Warriup was also secured, and we are now discussing management and long-term ownership with an Albany-based Noongar organisation.

All these properties protect, buffer and connect ecologically valuable areas, provide significant social and cultural benefits, and were made possible by investment in genuine carbon sequestration – they are what we call 'carbon enabled'. To achieve these outcomes, we have been flexible in our approach. The planting mix includes biodiverse plantings and Sydney blue gums for sawlogs. We have learned how much the nationally threatened malleefowl love nesting in the existing Tasmanian blue gum areas! These properties have been big efforts for Gondwana Link and others, but any one of them would have been **worth a year's work**.

Over Easter this year, four generations of the Gray family gathered at Sunnyside to share meals, stories and their collective strategic vision for the property. There was discussion around what they want to do on Sunnyside now they have custodianship of this beautiful Country. Photo: Ryn Pettersen.



Securing & restoring other strategically-placed properties

Fitz-Stirling:

It's wonderful to see affiliated groups continue to secure key properties in parts of the Gondwana Link, including Bush Heritage's 2024 purchase of Dodgey Downs (762 ha). This property further consolidates their network of reserves in the Fitz-Stirling section of the Link. Nearby, on Bush Heritage's 1067 ha Ediegarrup Reserve, major planting is well underway through Greening Australia, Nowanup Rangers and Ngoolark Rangers (420 ha by the end of this planting season). The Nowanup Rangers collected much of the seed.

Great Western Woodlands:

Gondwana Link is working on an ambitious program to blend restoration plantings on agricultural land in ways that strengthen both habitat availability for wildlife and existing farming efforts. Stage 1 is scheduled to cover many thousands of hectares and reconnect a number of existing habitat areas back to the Great Western Woodlands. We hope to have more news about this in the next few months.

North Perillup:

We assisted Perth Airport with plans for their purchase of a 447 ha 'offset' property in the North Perillup area, with the aim of bolstering the Forest to Stirlings Link. Earlier this year, Green Skills' Basil Schur and other local experts - Steve and Geraldine Janicke and Melissa Howe - met with Perth Airport environmental staff to share information, including lessons learned from restoration plantings on Green Skills' nearby Tootanellup property (49.5 ha). The Perth Airport property contains 295 ha of cleared land and 152 ha of jarrah/marri forest and Melaleuca wetland areas.



In June 2025 at Ediegarrup Reserve, researchers from Curtin University, in collaboration with Bush Heritage, Greening Australia, Gondwana Link, Nowanup and Wilga Farming Australia, successfully conducted their first field trial to understand whether a standard air seeder could be used for biodiverse native seed mixes when seeds are pelleted to the size of commonly used agricultural species such as canola. Following this year's trial, the team hopes to refine the process further to increase its application across the south-west by farmers and restoration practitioners alike. Photo: Arielle Fontaine. Thanks to Oscar Jones for this content.

Achieving quality restoration

An initial 15-page **Quality Restoration Guidebook** has been produced by Gondwana Link. Comments on the Guidebook are welcome - please send to info@gondwanalink.org.

In conjunction with the WA Landcare Network, we hosted a Quality Restoration workshop and field day in 2024 for a range of groups, contractors, scientists and individuals.

Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) recently brought together restoration ecologists and scientists from BHA, Greening Australia, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), Gondwana Link and the University of WA to assess restoration quality across a number of restoration plantings in the Fitz-Stirling section of the Link.

In September last year, we joined with the WA Landcare Network and the Revegetation Industry Association of WA to hold a Perth workshop focused on how to strengthen the native seed industry and **avoid bottlenecks that endanger the future industry expansion we need.**



Quality restoration field trippers enjoy a magnificent bushfoods morning tea at Twin Creeks Conservation Reserve while Judy MacKinnon, Chairperson of the Friends of the Porongurup Range, speaks about the Friends' work. Photo: Keith Bradby.



Gondwana Link board member Sylvia Leighton and UWA PhD candidate Aidan Mitchell in the Fitz-Stirling section of Gondwana Link. Aidan undertook 290 soil tests in the land restoration areas looking at soil nutrient levels along with soil compaction. Comparative testing was also done in bushland reference sites and nearby long-term agricultural paddocks. Photo: Aidan Mitchell.

Scientific endeavours

We are impressed by the increasing number of scientists conducting work across the Link, and we're very pleased it is providing so many research opportunities. There are now over 120 papers in the scientific literature directly connected to the program, with more on the way.

The range of restoration plantings in the Fitz-Stirling section of the Link, some of which date back 22 years, are now supporting four important studies. PhD students Aiden Mitchell from UWA and Oscar Jones from Curtin are exploring how restoration techniques and results vary, while Murdoch University's Elina Rittelmann-Woods is using her PhD studies to explore the relationship between plant diversity and soil carbon storage in restoration areas. In the same section of the Link, DBCA's Harry Moore and colleague JP Emery are looking at the climate resilience of vertebrate communities across a number of Fitz-Stirling properties, with a particular focus on the genetic connectivity of reptiles.

Sharing the stories

We have published our 34th story as part of our Heartland Journeys series in the Southerly Magazine. These stories are also uploaded to Gondwana Link's Heartland Journey's website. You can find them [here](#).

The Southerly Magazine is largely distributed in the Great Southern and south coast areas through cafes, visitor centres, motels, caravan parks, newsagents, roadhouses, shopping centres, IGA stores and more, and is also available online. The magazine is high quality and free and has a strong following.

We receive pleasing feedback and the effort to prepare each story is warranted by the wide audience. The stories are helpful and in demand in a myriad of ways. They are co-ordinated by Gondwana Link's Margaret Robertson, who is also the primary editor.

Gondwana Link pays tribute to Stephen Mattingley, our wonderful friend, 'grammar guru', donor and so much more, who provided outstanding help with so many of the stories. At the end of June, Stephen passed away suddenly. **He is deeply missed.**

This work follows on from earlier major studies such as the 'Functional Bird Group' survey and analysis undertaken by Dr Nic Dunlop and the Conservation Council of WA Citizen Science program. Another research project addressed 'Is Restoration Working?'. This had a genetics focus and was undertaken from 2016 to 2019 by researchers from UWA, Kings Park and DBCA (and the answer was indeed 'yes').

It has been a relief that these and other research efforts validate our much earlier decision to adopt a 'Build it and they will come' approach: run with the existing science to get good work happening; expect further refinement through research attracted by the Gondwana Link program; **and provide support where needed.**



In 2015, quenda (southern brown bandicoot), were re-introduced, via a fenced wildlife sanctuary, to the Balijup property in the Forest to Stirlings section of the Gondwana Link.

In this great photo by Angus Dempster, a quenda, which has been assessed during a 2025 Balijup citizen science survey, is released. We acknowledge the Hordacre family and Green Skills for their ongoing leadership of conservation efforts on Balijup. See Basil Schur's full Facebook post [here](#)

Catch up on our latest stories ...

Prue Anderson, businesswoman and ecologist
"My home is close to the Frankland River and throughout my life I've spent many wonderful hours rock-hopping and swimming, paddling up and down, exploring and learning about the biodiversity along it and the creatures that live in it."

Monty House, farmer and landcarer
"Living next to the Stirlings has given me the clarity of vision to see what this place could have been like. I'm keen to build some of that back over time – get some bush areas regrowing in patches where agriculture just doesn't work."

Graeme Miniter, Chairperson, Wirloomin Noongar Language and Stories Inc.
"We've gradually got to this point now where we've been able to take on the custodianship of the land with the aim of looking after it, planting back native bush and implementing the Carbon Neutral program. This gives us a great opportunity to get our people back on Country."

HEARTLAND Journeys

An online guide to the places, people and natural wonders of the Great Southern
HEARTLAND JOURNEYS will enrich your experience of the Great Southern's extraordinary natural values, cultural history and world-class eco-restoration efforts.
heartlandjourneys.com.au/stories

Gondwana Link
connecting people, connecting places
gondwanalink.org



Creating a holistic plan to bring to the fore Noongar aspirations and knowledge of how to revive the ecology and re-awaken the songline of the Pallinup-Marra River. Boxwood Hill meeting, April 2025. Photo: Jim Underwood.

PALLINUP RIVER CATCHMENT: We were thrilled to secure a grant from State NRM to develop an Elder led Healthy Country Plan for the lower Pallinup area. Under the Elders' guidance, including their wisdom that rivers need to be cared for in their entirety, this project has now expanded to cover the entire Pallinup River catchment (from roughly west of Gnowangerup to Beaufort Inlet). It covers much of the Link's Fitz-Stirling area.

Here's an inspiring June 2025 report from the planners:

"On another beautiful Pournier day, Menang and Goreng families gathered at Boxwood Hill near Marra Bilya to continue their work on developing Marra Bilya Moort - Wangee Boodja (Marra River Family - Talking Country). This project, funded by the State Natural Resource Management Office through a grant to Gondwana Link, has brought together Menang, Goreng and Wirlomin Noongar families with close connections to the Marra (Pallinup) River to *"listen to the river to hear what it needs"*.

Led by Elders from at least 7 families, yarning circles have been free-flowing and wide ranging about how to reawaken the river and how it all connects - flows, families, stories, Boodja and caring for Country.

There have been five large gatherings so far, mostly on the Boxwood Hill property of Alison, Rob, Lisa and PJ (thanks again for your generosity!), with one meeting at Gnowangerup. In parallel with these large gatherings, conversations with individual family Elders are taking place with Shandell Cummings as part of Elder led cultural mapping to inform some of the actions needed now and into the future.

The conversations we have had so far are now being assembled as a draft plan (called Marra Bilya Moort - Wangee Boodja). Once the Elders who make up the Marra Steering Group are happy that this reflects the wishes and aspirations of all the participants, we will head to the next step: inviting potential supporters and collaborators to join the process and turn their aspirations into solid actions that can be delivered over the next decade and more, building on landcare work that's already underway.

While the plan is the "deliverable outcome" from this project, people have expressed their pleasure at the process itself. Some memorable quotes include:

"The old people are looking down on us and putting their hands together on the progress we have made so far".

TASSIE HAYWARD

"Ever since this group has come together, I have seen the River starting to come alive again. The ancestors will be proud".

ROBBIE MINITER

"No-one can override the power of Boodja, putting us back together. It's so great to see this unity in the community again. It's like the old days with it all on the table like it should be."

EUGENE EADES

"This is an amazing group representing a long link to the river. So far (those links) have been respected and not argued against."

LYNETTE KNAPP

NOWANUP: Working with the consultancy firm Archae-aus, we also supported Nowanup Noongar Boodja's successful funding application to State NRM to develop a Healthy Country Plan for the Nowanup section of the Pallinup catchment. This is providing a wonderful opportunity to consolidate all the ideas and programs that have been developed at Nowanup and also demonstrate the planning power when Elders come together in the old ways of decision making.

Presentations and media



Belinda Swift of Yaramoup Aboriginal Corporation and Gondwana Link's Jim Underwood co-presented at the Conservation Council of WA conference (2024) to tell the story of including Noongar ecological knowledge in the design of restoration at Sunnyside. Photo: #MilesTweediePhotography.

Presentations have been made at forums, conferences, festivals and on webinars. Hosts included the Cocanarup Conservation Alliance (Ravensthorpe), Conservation Council of WA, Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand, Fitzy Futures (Ravensthorpe), Geography Teachers Association, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Lotterywest, Lower Blackwood Landcare, Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Transition Margaret River, U3A Bunbury, WA Landcare Network and the Wildflower Society of WA (Albany). CEO Keith Bradby has recently given a plenary speech at the Global Sandy Soils Conference in Perth.

Another highlight was the October 2024 screening of the ABC Back Roads documentary, which we helped to initiate, featuring the Ongerup community and a short segment about Nowanup. In addition, our much-loved film Breathing Life into Boodja was screened on SBS and SBS On Demand in May this year.

Further national coverage was provided by Australian Geographic's March-April 2025 edition, which carried a bumper feature story by Victoria Laurie about Bush Heritage's restoration and reconnection work in the Fitz-Stirling section of the Gondwana Link.

We look forward to being part of the World Environment Education Conference in Perth during September 2026. It was an honour to be invited onto the organising committee, and even more so to have the conference theme set as '**Gondwana - reconnecting resilient cultures**'.

Supporting responsible fire management

For the remaining habitat areas across the Link, ecologically damaging fire regimes are clearly one of the most significant ecological stresses. We are working on deepening and broadening the community's knowledge of planned and unplanned fire wherever and however we can.

In 2024, building on earlier cultural burning successes at Nowanup, we worked with Elders and various organisations to bring small scale, low-intensity cultural fire into nearby areas.

We kickstarted this by addressing Elder wishes to prepare a culturally appropriate fire management plan for the large, intact Peniup reserve between the Fitzgerald and Stirling Range national parks. With funding support from the Koorabup Trust, Gondwana Link's Dr Jim Underwood has been a key part of this activity, which involves Elders from all the families connected to that Country, the Nowanup and Gnowangerup Rangers, local volunteer brigades, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), Department of Fire and Emergency Services, University of WA's Walking Together project and Wagyl Kaip Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation.



In May 2024, Goreng and Menang Elders put a cultural burn into Nowanup for the third year running. The Elders were supported by the Nowanup and Gnowangerup Rangers, along with a collaboration of people from the University of WA, Gondwana Link, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, DBCA, and Bush Heritage Australia. Photo: Rob Eades.

Gondwana Link is also supporting comprehensive ecological research that examines the impact of the state government's prescribed fire program in the wetter western sections of the Link around Walpole.

The Potter Foundation has largely funded a collaborative research effort focused on protecting peatland ecosystems and addressing threats in southwestern Australia: **the PEAT Project**. Aboriginal Elders, universities, scientists, DBCA, WA Museum, other government bodies, and local groups and communities are involved, and Gondwana Link now sits on the PEAT Stakeholder Reference Group. For several years we have also participated in the annual Walpole Wilderness Bioblitz, which includes a peatland focus.

Peatlands are featured in two of our Heartland Journeys stories:

Professor Pierre Horwitz writes about freshwater wetlands and sunset frogs, which are peatland dwellers: [read here](#).

Walpole artist and scientist Dr Elizabeth Edmonds presents a rich story that includes peat paints! [read here](#).

In January this year, we endorsed the Rally for the Tingles in Nornalup, with its focus on the state government's prescribed burning program. Our Heartland Journeys story by Dr Joanna Young, a long-standing Walpole resident and member of the Leeuwin Group, addresses this issue too: [read here](#).



Jason Fowler of the WA Forest Alliance speaks at the Rally for the Tingles. Photo: Keith Bradby.

A recently released Nowanup video captures what's happening with cultural burning and is **[available here](#)**.

We have published two cultural burning stories on our Heartland Journeys website and in the Southerly Magazine:

Yarning about fire
Giving fire back to Goreng Country

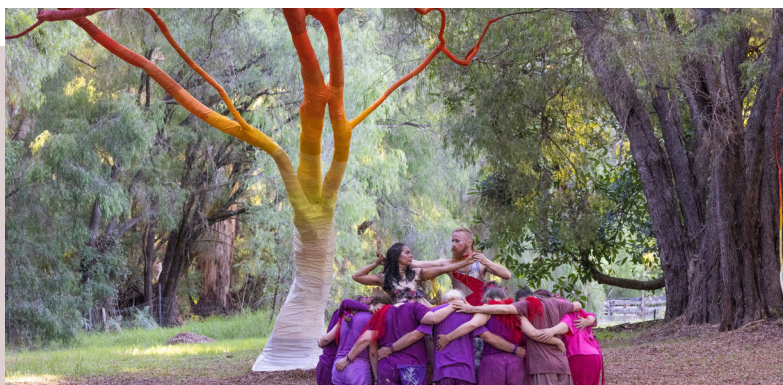
OUR CREATIVE HEART

dance | film | sculpture

THE STARS DESCEND: We're not often asked to "explain Gondwana Link through performative dance" but in 2023 we were part of The Stars Descend, featuring five community-based dance performances across the Link (Wooditjup Margaret River, Northcliffe, Borongur/Porongurup, Fitzgerald Biosphere/Ravensthorpe, and Garlgula/Karlkurla/Kalgoorlie). It was fantastic!

If you missed the dance performances, or just want to relive the joy, you can watch The Stars Descend film *Creative Actions for Climate Hope* online [here](#).

Congratulations and many thanks to **Annette Carmichael Projects**, Josephine Jay of **Gneiss Design** and all the participants and team members.



The Stars Descend by Annette Carmichael Projects: Chapter 2, Northcliffe.
Photo: Nic Duncan.



The Stars Descend by Annette Carmichael Projects: Chapter 3, Borongur Porongurup.
Photo: Nic Duncan.

It has been great to see a strong public response as Basil Schur, a wonderful ambassador for Gondwana Link and a key Arts supporter, tours Green Skills' 'In the Footsteps of Bella Kelly' exhibition. There have been eight main events involving gallery exhibitions preceded by painting days on Country.

To strengthen public celebration of the ecological pathway that is the Gondwana Link, in March this year we were part of launching the Gondwana Link Genestreaming Sculpture Trail. The sculptures highlight both the deep-time evolutionary processes behind today's species, and the cultural continuity of the Noongar world. Beautiful physical sculptures are now installed at five places along the Link:



Ravensthorpe's Genestreaming Journey Sculpture on launch day, March 2025, featuring many of the contributors and the stunning sculpture. Photo: courtesy of Natalie Cordon

- Northcliffe's Information and Visitor Centre (and Understory Art & Nature Trail)
- Denmark's Kwoorabup Community Park, next to the Denmark Health Service
- Twin Creeks Conservation Reserve, north of the Porongurup Range, along Knight Road (established 2022)
- Bremer Bay's Skate Park and Civic Square on Seadragon Avenue
- Ravensthorpe's cultural precinct, at the top of the main street.

Please visit artist Ben Beeton's sciart.com.au website to see the names of all those who contributed and to learn about each sculpture.



Northcliffe's Genestreaming Journey Sculpture with some of the magnificent art by scientific illustrators Mali Moir and Ben Beeton of the Art of Nature School. Photo: Margaret Robertson.

A massive amount of work has been contributed by a great number of people and we **THANK YOU ALL**.

We particularly wish to acknowledge and thank the project co-founders, artist Ben Beeton and Menang Elder Aunty Carol Pettersen. Also vital to bringing it all together were Mali Moir of the Art of Nature School, Gary Muir of WOW Wilderness Eco Projects, Mark Hewson of Torbay Glass, Glenn Hoskins of Roll Form WA and Lightning Rock. Many Noongar artists supplied the exterior artworks, with students at Dalyellup and Ravensthorpe schools also contributing. Sincere thanks to the local artists and creatives, teachers, and community members and groups who contributed so generously.

We are very grateful to major supporter Lotterywest, and the Shires of Capel, Denmark, Jerramungup, Kellerberrin, Kondinin, Manjimup and Ravensthorpe, along with Blue Scope Steel, Hartway Galvanizers, Roll Form WA, Signarama and Vulcan. **Warm thanks to Gondwana Link's Roger Erith who provided essential coordination and to Carol Duncan and Melinda Brown.**



Celebrating the launch of Kwoorabup / Denmark's Genestreaming Journey Sculpture. Photo: Michelle Stanley.

Sports fans!

Hey sports fans, we're delighted to announce that part of the Gondwana Link has just won Gold!

Under the sponsorship banner of "Legacy Leaves – Commonwealth Games Australia Alumni Recognition Program" (a tree for every athlete since 1930), Commonwealth Games Australia is contributing to the biodiverse planting underway on Wilyun Pools Farm, near Wellstead, in the Gondwana Link.

To kick start the program, diver Sam Fricker and gymnast Emily Whitehead (pictured) visited Wilyun Pools recently, along with Carbon Neutral staff, the Wirlomin tree planting team and Gondwana Link.

Enjoy this short video, which includes a great clip of our Jim Underwood and footage of Wilyun Pools Farm.

And here's the media release.



Photo: Commonwealth Games Australia.



'Bright Spots' in Landscape-scale Restoration: Insights for Governance & Innovation

We were excited to be invited by CSIRO's Valuing Sustainability Future Science Platform to partner with them in what they have called the 'Bright Spots' program. This is a 15-month social science study focused on experiences across the Gondwana Link.

It asks the question:

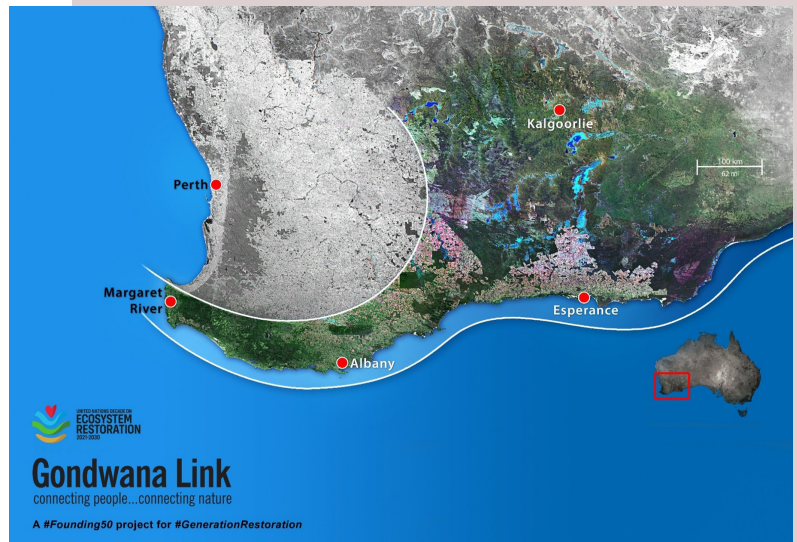
"What forms of governance principles, measures or processes are valuable or required for landscape scale collaborative restoration programs in order to ensure 'good' or 'just' practices are embedded?"

Work so far has included a review of our history and key steps, plus ongoing interviews with a range of colleagues. We are humbled by the people and organisations who are contributing their time. Sharing insights and stories has not only been informative, but also great therapy!

More therapy was available to us in early 2025, when we also worked with the international landscape restoration group Commonland to delve into the essentials of Gondwana Link's growth as part of an intended state-wide program to support and accelerate **transformative improvements to landscape and community health.**



Austroboletus occidentalis, The Knoll at Walpole.
Photo: Margaret Robertson.



For readers who are new to the Gondwana Link, this is our 'swoosh map' showing the 1000 km we work across, from Margaret River to the Great Western Woodlands around Kalgoorlie.

Governance, structure, sustainability & succession

Our Board expanded in 2024 with the exciting addition of Sylvia Leighton and Pierre Horwitz. Louise Duxbury (Chair), Virginia Young and John Holley are long-standing board members. We warmly thank Peter Luscombe for his steadfastness as a Board member, and hope he is getting more relaxation time now.

Our one-page **Long-term Strategic Plan** has been revised, and some impressive new opportunities have opened to expand the on-ground work.

Even though we have been sticking to our operating maxim of building the Gondwana Link by supporting the wonderful range of groups, individuals and businesses working on the ground to achieve parts of the Link, we do admit to the small, core team having been stretched, even more than usual, over the past few years.

We need to keep up with all that's happening and be better placed to run with the opportunities in front of us. Plus, after 23 years of effort we are quite certain a 'refresh' would be good. We are now working with a group of colleague organisations on how we can become a more sustainable and even more inclusive organisation, and we're getting some useful guidance from the CSIRO analysis mentioned earlier. **We look forward to talking with you all about this in the near future.**

THANK YOU!

The essence of the Gondwana Link program is that many, many people, community groups, businesses, First Nations groups and families, Ranger teams, conservation landholders, artists and creatives, researchers, scientists, conservationists and funders make up this gigantic effort.



Wear your t-shirt and start a conversation

Available at www.gondwanalink.org

Available sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL.

PURCHASE HERE

We are DEEPLY THANKFUL for your support and efforts. We WARMLY ACKNOWLEDGE Business Events Australia, Commonland, Lotterywest, Koorabup Trust, State NRM and an anonymous benefactor for their ongoing funding support. We also SINCERELY THANK our donors and a bequestor.

HUGE THANKS to Carol Duncan for her invaluable help with this biennial report and to the contributors and photographers. Thank you to Josephine Jay at Gneiss Design for layout design.

Our Chair, Louise Duxbury, is happy for you to contact her about how you can help: chair@gondwanalink.org



The Koorabup Denmark Genestreaming sculpture launch, March 2025: artist Jenny Wilson (top) and Rhian Thomas and the Femmonics Choir. Photos: Basil Schur and Margaret Robertson.

Genestreaming sculpture at the Twin Creeks Conservation Reserve, Porongurup. Photo: Basil Schur.



Menang Elder & co-founder of the project, Aunty Carol Pettersen, speaks at the launch of Northcliffe's Genestreaming Journey Sculpture. Photo: Josephine Jay of Gneiss Design.

