

Malleefowl Matter

Edition 51: November 2010



The newsletter of the
Malleefowl
Preservation
Group Inc.

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Malleefowl Matter

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Malleefowl Believers celebrate book launch



John Davis, founder of the MPG, speaking at the launch of 'Malleefowl Believers: Stories of the Malleefowl and its champions'. Photograph courtesy Alan Thompson

On Saturday 24th July 2010 in Albany, Western Australia, the Malleefowl Preservation Group celebrated a momentous occasion. About 150 people gathered for the official launch of *Malleefowl Believers: Stories of the Malleefowl and its champions*.

Members will know this book was written as a companion to the MPG documentary, 'Gnow or Never'. Having not long started editing the newsletter I went to the launch to meet some of the 'Malleefowl Believers' champions.

When I think back to the launch of *Malleefowl Believers*, two images come to mind, both evoked by speakers whose stories are told in the book.

The first is of a small farmhouse in the 1940's hemmed in by mallee bush so extensive, so dense and so tall that it reduces the amount of light entering the house, and effectively shortens the daylight hours. The driveway is a tunnel through the never-ending thicket and the

bush creatures, including Malleefowl, are constant companions. Kelly O'Neill's description of his childhood home was a revelation for someone like myself, a relative newcomer to the area far more accustomed to seeing small bush remnants scattered between wide-open paddocks.

Alongside this image is one of a fox, caught in a shooter's spotlight, running for its life across a grassy paddock. Ever the consummate predator, it suddenly leaps sideways and snatches a flushed quail

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Book launch cont from page 1... from the air before continuing its dash. John Davis, carpenter, one-time fox shooter and founder of the MPG in 1992, told this story. Though the incident happened more than 20 years ago, John still sounded awed by the audacity and skill of that fox. John and Kelly have been part of the MPG story from its earliest days. As the group consolidated and grew so did its reach until today it has a network of people all over the state and the country. About 250 km north of the hub

of early MPG activity in the Gnowangerup Shire, lives Steven Fry, in the Eastern Wheatbelt town of Narembeen. The land there is extensively cleared, bush remnants are few and far between and salinity is a significant threat. Steven spoke at the launch of a process of ecological triage – where degraded landscapes or species considered too difficult to save were ignored so that scarce Landcare resources could be allocated elsewhere. Lost in the process were the projects that had meaning for the local community – the ‘Little

Champions’ who fenced off patches of bush, created corridors between remnants for Malleefowl and baited for foxes. Despite their best efforts, the odds are stacked against the Malleefowl there. Tup Biggs described an experience that has a much more hopeful outcome for the Malleefowl. At the extreme northern edge of the bird’s range in Western Australia, 400 km north of Kalgoorlie, Tup and Bob Biggs made their home at Yeelirrie Station for 32 years. Throughout that time they watched the country start



Doug Humann, CEO of Bush Heritage Australia, launches Malleefowl Believers.



Tup Biggs speaking about Malleefowl at Yeelirrie Station.



Kelly O'Neill, one of the earliest members of the MPG.



Frank Rijavec, author of Malleefowl Believers.



An expectant crowd...photographed by graphic designer, Alan Thompson, who took all of the launch photos on these pages, and many of the photos in the book.



to recover when the station was destocked of sheep in the mid-1980s. They saw Malleefowl flourish when 1080 fox baiting first began there as a trial in 1978.

The MPG entered the picture at their instigation and group members, George and Joan White, are annual visitors to Yeelirrie monitoring Malleefowl mounds.

About 150 people, including author, Frank Rijavec, graphic designers Alan Thompson and Ken Greenwell, project coordinator, Susanne Dennings, and MPG Chairperson, Alan Dennings, were present to hear these stories along with many other MPG stalwarts.

Malleefowl Believers was officially launched by Doug Humann, Chief Executive Officer of Bush Heritage Australia. Amongst those to be thanked were The Norman Wettenhall Foundation (Vic) for their initial support of \$10000 and Lotterywest for completion funding. Present at the launch were representatives from the other sponsors Wesfarmers,

BHP Billiton, AngloGold Ashanti Australia and the Great Southern Development Commission, whose generous support over five years ensured the book's production and publication.

Malleefowl Believers, so beautifully written and designed, tells the stories of more than 30 people whose lives have become entwined with the Malleefowl and each other. It describes their triumphs, their trials, their heartaches and their solidarity. It also demonstrates that indeed, from little things big things grow.



Mick Brown and Manda Page.



Steve and Michelle Fry, Narembeen



A spell-bound audience (and a mighty fine photo by Alan).

Eight years of office work for MPG volunteer

Throughout the MPG's almost 20 year history the organisation has relied heavily on volunteers for everything from finding mounds to filing correspondence.

In each edition of the newsletter we will feature a volunteer and in this edition we introduce Glenda Palmer.

Glenda lives in Ongerup, where the MPG office is located, and has been volunteering there since 2002. To begin with her main contribution was helping with the newsletter mail out. Since 2005 she has been doing the office filing, initially assisting the person in charge then becoming that person.

Glenda comes in on an 'as needs' basis. When she knows there is filing to be done she finds someone to assist her. Frequently Margaret Jones, another local, is that person. More than 100 items of correspondence are entered into



Glenda Palmer, right, and fellow volunteer, Margaret Jones, on filing duty at Malleefowl Central. Photograph courtesy Claudine Deering.

the database and filed monthly.

Glenda has been on two Malleefowl surveys in her time with the MPG. Of her decision to volunteer at the MPG office, Glenda says it is a small way in which she can contribute something to the local community.



Malleefowl and Important Bird Areas

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are sites around the world that are recognised as internationally important for bird conservation and known to support key bird species such as Malleefowl. In Australia, the identification and nomination of these sites was completed by a Birds Australia project initially funded by Rio Tinto, with the identification and nomination of sites managed by Birds Australia. The following article was provided by Suzanne Mather and Cheryl Gole from Birds Australia

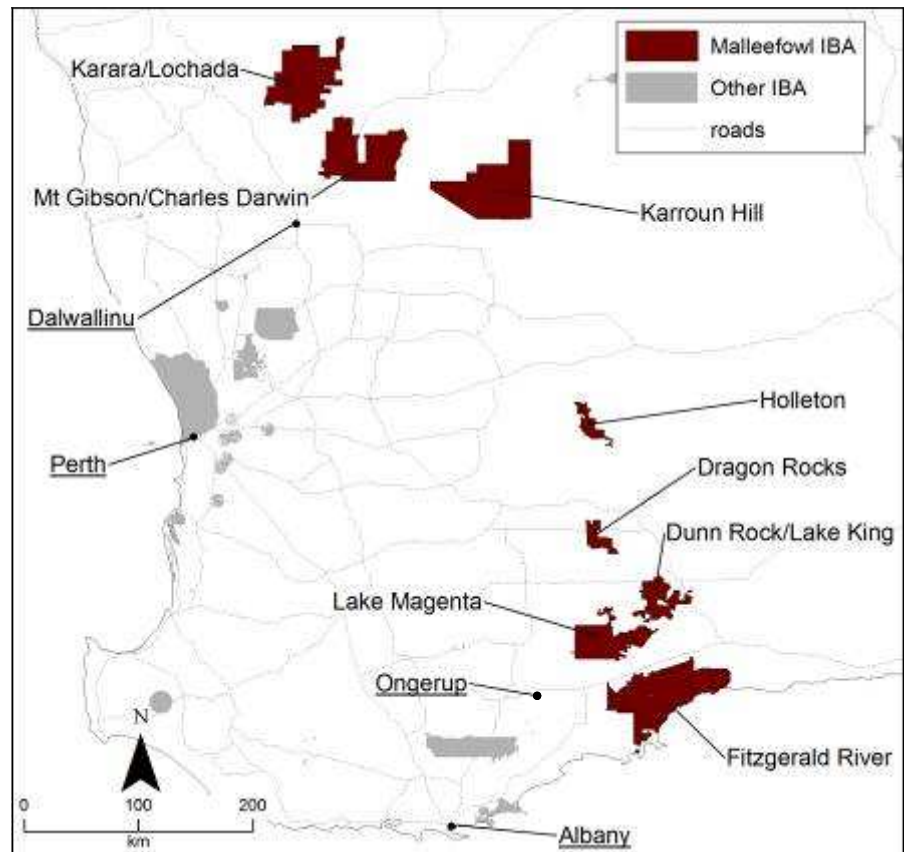
In Australia, 314 IBAs have been designated for 46 threatened species, of which four are designated for Critically Endangered species, 18 for Endangered and 24 for Vulnerable species. Of the 314 IBAs, 21 have been designated for Malleefowl. There are four IBAs for Malleefowl in NSW comprising 1.64 million ha, seven in South Australia (1.3 million ha) and four in Victoria (1,55 million ha). Some of these, for example the Riverland Mallee IBA in NSW and South Australia, cross state boundaries. In WA, eight IBAs, shown in table 1, have been designated for Malleefowl. The total area nationally designated at least in part for Malleefowl is just over 5.83 million hectares. All Australian IBAs meet global criteria developed by Birdlife International. Sites must regularly support threshold numbers of threatened species, support more than 1% of the world's population of a congregatory species, or support significant populations

of species restricted by small ranges. For Malleefowl, a globally threatened species categorised as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List, nominations

were based on sites known or thought to support a minimum of ten mounds. The decision to designate Malleefowl IBAs based on the ten mounds

IBA name	IBA size (hectares)	Other IBA species
Dragon Rocks	32,204	Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo
Dunn Rock & Lake King	75,855	Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo
Fitzgerald River	292,771	Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo, Western Whipbird, Western Bristlebird
Holleton	32,223	
Karara & Lochada	240,441	Western Corella
Karroun Hill	309,678	
Lake Magenta	132,688	Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo, Western Whipbird
Mount Gibson & Charles Darwin	233,501	Western Corella
Total	1,349,361	

Table 1: WA Important Bird Areas (IBAs) designated solely or partly for Malleefowl. Other IBA species include all relevant species that occur in sufficient numbers to trigger IBA nomination. Below: Locations of Malleefowl IBA's in Western Australia. Map courtesy Blair Parsons





Photograph courtesy Jessica van der Waag

criterion followed extensive discussions with the National Malleefowl Recovery Team. In WA, some sites are known to support Malleefowl but have not been designated as IBAs as they were not known to support ten or more active mounds. These sites still have local or regional importance and many have active community support, such as many of the sites surveyed and monitored by the MPG. Further, work in these sites may have a significant role in contributing to research into Malleefowl and their ecology.

IBAs are non-government and non-statutory and are seen as complementary to government-led, legislative approaches to conservation. They provide a focus for conservation and monitoring efforts by the wider community and help communicate the high conservation value of these areas to the land managers responsible for them. Now that sites have been nominated, the task for the IBA project is to record the history and on going frequency of the monitoring effort, to record where the monitoring data is held and to identify who takes responsibility for these tasks. The project does not aim to be a repository for monitoring data but rather to support and encourage the ongoing conservation of habitats for threatened and other IBA species. Conservation action in IBAs and recognition by local communities is critically important for long-term conservation and Birds Australia recognises the national importance of this work through its support of this project.

The nomination of IBAs can be seen as public recognition of their importance in Malleefowl conservation, irrespective of site ownership. They have been identified through close collaboration with local experts and interest groups. If you are interested in contributing to Malleefowl conservation in WA's Malleefowl IBAs, please contact Suzanne Mather, Birds Australia IBA co-ordinator for Western Australia. Email: suzannemather@bigpond.com

MPG news briefs

Gnow or Never is back

If you've missed earlier screenings of the MPG's documentary 'Gnow or Never' you can see it on ABC1 TV at 6 pm on Friday 3rd December 2010 (check program details closer to the screening date). This will be the fourth time the documentary has been aired in WA and the third time nationally. DVD copies can also be purchased from the MPG office

MPG's new committee members

At the July AGM Don Smith was elected to the position of vice chairperson. Justin Jonson, Rodger Hall, Peter Speldewinde and John Spiers are all new appointees to the committee. Jessica van der Waag, who stepped down from her role as vice-chair retains a place on the committee, as do Yann Toussaint, and Len van der Waag as chair person of the Community Conservation Trust Fund.

Natasha Moore and Blair Parsons (science) remain in advisory roles to the group. Congratulations and welcome to all new committee members and thanks to the outgoing committee members who've contributed so much. Outcomes from the AGM and chairman's report are included as an insert in this edition.

A friendly reminder:

Membership fees are now due!

Due to the uncertain future of MPG, membership renewals were postponed in July this year, however we are now confident of new opportunities and encourage you to renew your membership. For those receiving Malleefowl Matter electronically, you will have received your reminder with the Chairman's report. Those members receiving this hard copy, your renewal form is enclosed.

Newsletter chalks up milestone

The July 2010 edition of Malleefowl Matter was the 50th edition of the newsletter. Edition One was a single A4 page edited by Susanne Dennings in 1993. Susanne would go on to edit the newsletter for nine years and then do more editorial stints in later years. Other editors have included Alan Dennings, Terry Keirans, Janet Traylen, John Pridham and myself (Leonie McMahon).



Back to nature for lab-based scientist

Katrin Dulitz, a 24 year old scientist from Brandenburg, Germany, joined MPG volunteers on the annual Mount Jackson survey in May this year. For the first time in seven years of surveying there, heavy rain played havoc with the schedule and access to the site was delayed. Katrin provided the following account of her experience.

I am a scientist. Hence, my main objective is to explain phenomena in our natural environment. If not dealing with a computer simulation, I usually conduct measurements with high-tech instruments inside an air-conditioned laboratory with artificial light.

Like most researchers, I spend an awful lot of time on the internet to stay in tune with the latest scientific results. There, I also came across the application form for the Malleefowl survey at Mt Jackson.

Two months later this survey was to become a vital part of my vacation in the land 'Down Under'. I expected a group of die-hard ecologists so intent on their mission to save our planet that they would accept the simplest of living conditions amidst the scorching heat of the Australian bush.

Instead, I found myself sharing a comfortable 4WD van with Dee, a girl my age working for a mining company in Kalgoorlie. I was introduced to more remarkable townfolk and local farmers at the meeting point in Bullfinch. Dee and I were among those sleeping in tents, whereas half of our convoy to the prepared camp

site consisted of fully equipped caravans. Due to heavy rainfall the day before, we were not allowed to take the mine road leading to our base camp. Instead, we pitched our tents at a site nearby. Nobody complained about all the lost hours guarding the campfire or looking for spiders, animal tracks... or gold that we were unable to find. Eventually, in the late afternoon, we were permitted access to the mine road allowing for a delayed start to the campaign. The rudimentary campground turned out to be a state-of-the-art site with generators, water-closets and pump-driven showers. The survey induction was given via laptop and beamer under a sky full of stars.

Over the next four days, I felt like a police(wo)man in search of a corpse: keeping in a horizontal line, yelling and repeating orders, following all commands (except for wearing a baseball cap). In the event that a suspicious Malleefowl mound was discovered, everybody was told to hold the line while a few of us mapped the nest using GPS techniques. Lunch breaks were usually used to find trapdoor spiders

instead of having a proper meal. The afternoons got longer and longer, mainly because gloves proved poor substitutes for fly flaps. However, a hard day's work was rewarded with a barbeque and exciting conversations at the campfire accompanied by some "bloody" good home-grown music from Ross. I was much impressed by the commitment I experienced at the Malleefowl survey. I want to thank everyone involved in the realization of this great week.



Top: Katrin Dulitz on arrival for the Mount Jackson survey. Above: At the camp site (Katrin is seated, third from the right). Photographs courtesy Susanne Dennings.



Mt Jackson survey statistics

2010 survey

- 18 MGP volunteers participated (17 walkers)
- A total of 575 ha were searched using the human chain method
- 493 km were walked (total individual contributions)
- 74 mounds were located, of which eight showed signs of recent activity
- No Malleefowl tracks were seen

Since surveying started in 2004

- An area of 2966 ha has been searched
- 3243 km have been walked
- 299 mounds have been found

The 2010 survey site supports the highest Malleefowl mound density since commencement of surveying in 2004.

In contrast to previous surveys, many of the mounds were located high up on hill slopes or on several occasions, at the top of hills.

Malleefowl feathers were collected and sent to Taneal Cope, Dept. of Zoology, University of Melbourne for her DNA research project (reported in the July 2010 edition of Malleefowl Matter)

The Mt Jackson tenements are leased by Cliffs Asia Pacific Iron Ore. The MPG thanks Cliffs for its financial contribution towards associated costs, volunteer fuel, BBQ meals and staff support throughout the survey.

Trainees learn ropes at Windarling with MPG



The survey group (left to right): Mates trainees, Peter Lavern and Trevor Sambo, Tafe student, Liana Annison, DEC Assistant Operations Officer Louise O'Reilly, and Mates trainees, Victor Smith and Timothy Champion.

In late June this year MPG project coordinator, Susanne Dennings, and MPG volunteer, Roger Hall, lead a survey for five young trainees in Western Australia's Eastern Goldfields. The survey was carried out in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and Cliffs Asia Pacific Iron Ore. DEC Project Officer Stefanie McBurney provided the following story.

DEC Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES) trainees recently undertook their first Malleefowl survey, discovering 37 historical sites and three active mounds, one of which was happily stumbled across after the official survey was finished.

The trainees, who are funded by Cliffs Asia Pacific Iron Ore, surveyed a mining tenement in the Windarling area in the Goldfields region, over three and a half days in late June. The project provided the

opportunity for MATES/Cliffs trainees, Victor Smith, Peter Lavern, Trevor Sambo and Timothy Champion, and TAFE Albany student, Liana Annison, to develop fauna surveying skills training through the MPG. DEC Assistant Operations Officer Louise O'Reilly, who supervised the students in the field, said the group surveyed an area of 945 square kilometres, walking a combined total of 168 kilometres—21 kilometres each—scouring the ground in impressive time. "This was my first fauna survey too—it was a big learning curve for all of us," Louise said. MPG project coordinator Susanne Dennings reported that the trainees worked well and were keen to learn GPS technology. During the initial MPG training session the importance of clear communication, good team work and record-keeping were explained in detail. The group successfully put this into practice while following GPS navigations through thick vegetation, over

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Hope for the Maleo at last

Indonesia's endangered Maleo belongs to the same family as the Malleefowl - family megapodiidae. In March this year, the MPG's Susanne Dennings gave a presentation on community initiatives for Malleefowl conservation in Western Australia at a conference held to discuss conservation measures for the Maleo. The following article was written by Dr Philip McGowan and Natalie Clark, representing the World Pheasant Association, and Marc Argeloo.



A pair of Maleo, endangered megapodes endemic to Indonesia. Photograph courtesy Chi-en Lee.

It is more than 30 years since conservation attention first fell on the endangered Maleo *Macrocephalon Maleo*, a majestic megapode endemic to Sulawesi in Indonesia. In 1978 Professor John Mackinnon, a specialist on Asian birds, reported in the third *Journal of the World Pheasant Association* on two WWF projects that he was managing at the time and which were concerned with conservation management and research.

Since then the Maleo has remained a conservation icon even though opportunities to carry out research and promote action have fluctuated. Now, however, their fortunes seem to be on the rise again and a very well attended and productive conference was held in late March in Manado, north Sulawesi.

The total population of the Maleo is believed to be between 8,000 – 14,000 and declining rapidly (in places, by up to 90% since 1950). It is one of the most charismatic of birds. Its large eggs have long been sought as a source of food and increasingly as a

delicacy, it is considered to be a must-see bird for birdwatchers visiting the region, and it has exerted a strong pull over a succession of conservationists who have struggled to create conditions that would give us confidence in its long-term survival. One of its most dedicated advocates, Marc Argeloo,

“The total population of the Maleo is believed to be between 8,000 and 14,000 and declining Rapidly”

organised the conference after discovering in late 2008 that there were several Maleo conservation projects run by Indonesians underway now and that a conference could be the perfect way to capitalise on the new wave of interest and publicise the species' conservation needs.

It was a very powerful mix of people present. More than 70 individuals attended and, with only a handful from outside Indonesia, these people and organizations represented a genuine grass roots concern for the species.

There was a sense of concern that the Maleo had continued to decline. Although it is the nesting behaviour of the Maleo that has attracted much attention, (it nests communally at coastal breeding sites, typically sandy beaches, lakeshores and river banks) the nearby lowland and hill rainforests are vital for these birds for virtually all other needs. Many of these forests have disappeared or are disappearing. However, some hope is offered by the National Species Conservation Strategy (adopted by the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry) and the Maleo has been given the highest priority for attention. There is a great diversity of activities underway at present, ranging from site-management of hatcheries, approaches to corridor and land protection,



On Malleefowl and farmers...



Above: John and Marilyn Dunne. Insert: Marilyn's personalised numberplate. Photographs courtesy Susanne Dennings.

Marilyn and John Dunne are landholders in Beacon, in the far north eastern wheatbelt of Western Australia. Here, in her own words, is Marilyn's reason for choosing the Malleefowl as her emblem.

Apart from five years as a young lady living and working in Perth, I have spent my whole life in the bush.

I am a bush woman and proud of it so when I purchased my Hilux in the year 2000 I wanted to identify it as belonging to someone who lives and loves their life out in the real bush. In thinking over appropriate and meaningful words I could use on the number plate I realized the word MALLEE-HEN would be very suitable as I see our lives as farmers very similar to that of a Malleefowl. By that I mean we seem to be an endangered species: fewer and fewer of us on the ground, working our backsides off year after year to scratch up an existence, and depending very heavily on the weather as to how successful the breeding - or in our case the crop - turns out!

When one of my friends saw a Malleefowl sign that had been knocked over on the side of the road there was only one place she could think to put it. Mother's day last year we were out enjoying a picnic and arrived home to discover the mystery sign very nicely erected at the grid. It was several months before I could uncover the identity of the secret donor.

and land purchase. Workshop discussions were lively, reflecting the concern and interest of all participants. Follow up action has been agreed and will include production of a grassroots handbook

about the Malleefowl and what can be done to conserve it, greater co-ordination of existing activities, and a strategy for future needs that will be used as a framework for promoting action over the next few years.

This meeting was a wonderful example of the power of such gatherings and in years to come we may look back and reflect that it marked a turning point for the future of one of our most charismatic of birds.



How are Australia's threatened birds doing?

Judit Szabo is based in Darwin and is doing her doctorate on the efficiency and effectiveness of threatened bird conservation. As part of Judit's research the MPG was asked to provide figures relating to investment in Malleefowl conservation – in terms of volunteer contributions as well as finances. Judit provided the following article about her research.

Australia, not unlike other parts of the world, is experiencing a huge human-induced extinction crisis. Since European occupation 16 mammal species became extinct in the country. Birds have been doing better – on the mainland we have only lost one full species, the Paradise Parrot.

However, on islands birds have fared worse. Among others, gone forever are the Tasman Starling, Lord Howe Gerygone and the Long-tailed Triller. However now there is a danger that birds on the mainland will catch up to their unfortunate island counterparts, as threatening processes such as habitat loss and introduced plants and animals have been pushing them towards extinction.

As part of the project "Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of Australian threatened bird conservation" we are currently reviewing the status and trends of all subspecies of Australian birds for the first time since 2000. In the last couple of months we conducted a series of work-

shops around the country to bring together all the information on recent trends in population size and distribution. We also obtained estimates for the amount invested in the conservation of each taxon – in volunteer time as well as money – and the actions that have been suggested and undertaken to each taxon in the last 20 years. In this project we aim to analyse up to 20 years of research and management of Australia's threatened birds, drawing out the biological, social, economic and institutional correlates of success. The creation of links between such a broad suite of variables and threatened species recovery has never been attempted.

We will also develop an approach that can help policy makers and managers choose the bird conservation interventions that are most likely to be successful. During this process we determine the cost of

interventions and strategies for optimal investment and provide guidance to conservation managers on how to allocate resources among threatened species.

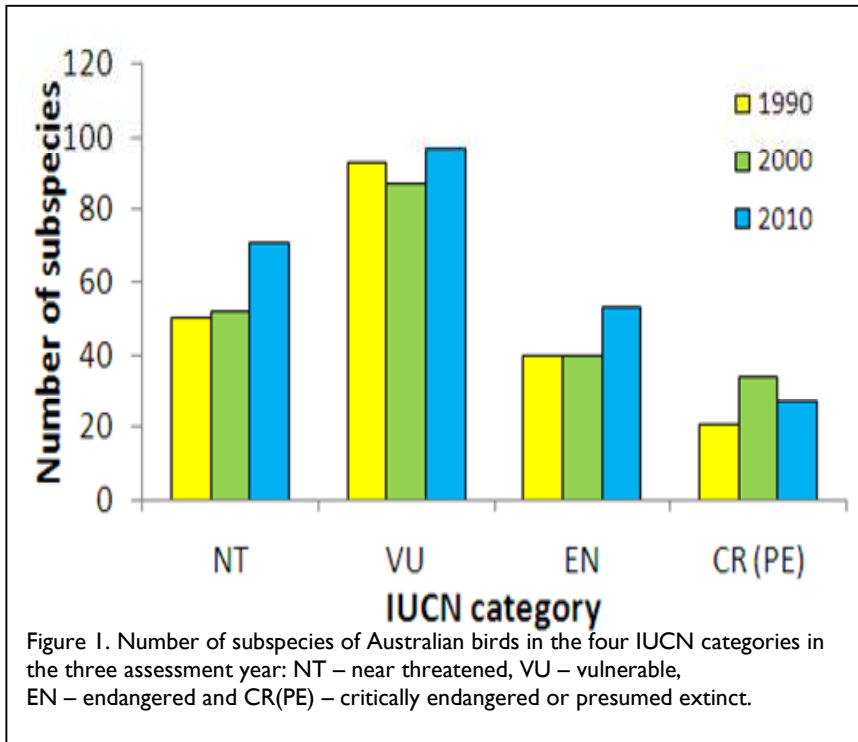
The three-year project is funded by Birds Australia and the Australian Research Council with generous support from Biosis Research, BirdLife International and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

The Malleefowl is an endemic species with a wide distribution. Sadly its status has been vulnerable since at least 1990 because there has been a decline over 30% in its population in the last three generations. There is plenty of evidence that Malleefowl populations have been declining continuously since 1960 (which is three generations as Malleefowl adults can be very long-lived), and are projected to fall by a further 30–50% by 2060 based on counts of active mounds, habitat availability and rates of fox predation.

Fortunately all is not lost for the Malleefowl. Western Australia in particular has a healthy population in the woodlands east of the wheatbelt and the



Judit Szabo, pictured with a pair of crested tern chicks. Her research covers all threatened Australian birds including the Malleefowl. Photograph courtesy Judit Szabo.



work of volunteers over many years has helped retain them in many places further west from which they would probably have been lost otherwise. Despite its threatened status there is every chance that the action by volunteers and, because of the public interest, of governments will mean we

do keep Malleefowl forever. And, encouragingly, while the number of threatened species has gone up, we know of no species or subspecies that has gone extinct since Australians really became concerned about the dangers of extinctions in the early 1990s. Let's hope we can keep it that way.

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 rocky hills and across break-aways.
 Trainee Trevor Sambo discovered the third active mound on the way back to the car. "We had just decided to call it a day when I spotted something in the thick bush, 30 to 40 metres away," he said.
 "I wasn't sure at first so I went and had a look. I was really excited when I got close enough to see that it was a very large Malleefowl mound and even happier when it was confirmed to be active."
 "I really enjoyed the project and would like to take part in further Malleefowl surveys," Trevor said.
 The results showed Malleefowl populations are doing well in the area. The project linked to the extensive surveys and monitoring of Malleefowl in the region that began with the MPG in 2004. Susanne said the MPG looks forward to including MATES trainees with their survey team in May, 2011.

Coming Events			
Date	Activity	Where	Contact
24th November 2011	MPG Committee meeting	Yongergnow Malleefowl Centre Ongerup	Claudine Deering Ph: 98282007 malleefowl.wa@wn.com.au
3rd December 2010	'Gnow or Never' documentary on ABC1 at 6 pm	Screening nationally	Check program details closer to date
26th January 2011	MPG Committee meeting	Yongergnow Malleefowl Centre Ongerup	Claudine Deering Ph: 98282007 malleefowl.wa@wn.com.au
23rd February 2011	MPG Committee meeting	Yongergnow Malleefowl Centre Ongerup	Claudine Deering Ph: 98282007 malleefowl.wa@wn.com.au
May/June 2011 (dates to be confirmed)	Mount Jackson Malleefowl survey	Mount Jackson, north of Bullfinch, Yilgarn Shire	Susanne Dennings Ph: 98282083 sdennings@bigpond.com



Chick Chat

Beacon Primary School student, Sophie Cashmore, won an award earlier this year for a story she wrote about the plight of the Malleefowl – in Italian. Sophie’s Italian teacher, Lynne Rockliff, explains about the program and Sophie’s award.

Every year the Italo-Australian Welfare and Cultural Centre (IAWCC) runs a competition for primary school students as part of the Italian Festival Week Celebrations in Western Australia.

This year the theme was the International Year of Biodiversity. The Year Six task was to write an informative report about an endangered species and present it as a book suit-

able for young readers. Sophie chose Malleefowl because some live on her family’s farm [some pages from Sophie’s project are shown right]. She was up against students learning Italian from all over the state and from all school systems (state, catholic, private, ethnic, home schooling). There are hundreds of entries in the competition so Sophie did very well to win the Year Six State Award. She won a trophy and a cheque for \$25, which were presented along with a certificate, by the Italian Consul for WA, Dr Giorgio Taborri and the President of the IAWCC, Mr Enzo Sirna, on 29th May this year at the ‘Italian Day at the Races’ at Belmont Race Course in Perth.



Poor Malleefowl is crying. Along comes a young girl. "Why are you crying?" "Because I don't have any place to live."



Can I help you? Tell me a bit about yourself."



So, how many of you are there?" "Not many! There are less than 2000 in all of Australia."

Photo. From left to right: Giorgio Taborri, Italian Consul for WA; Gabriella Pasqualao Luciano, 2009 Miss Italy in the World (Miss Italia Nel Mondo) Australia; Sophie; Sarah Hughan, Miss Oceania 2009 and Enzo Sirna, IAWCC president. Photograph courtesy Lynne Rockliff.



The Malleefowl Preservation Group thanks Cliffs Asia Pacific Iron Ore for their support.

Cliffs was a recipient of a Certificate of Merit at the 2010 Golden Gecko Awards for their management of Malleefowl at Mount Jackson