Even to the trained eye, catching a glimpse of the elusive Lumholtz’s tree-kangaroo can be difficult but it’s a rewarding experience. If you want to increase your chances, visit Tutamonlin (Malanda Falls) where tree-kangaroos are regularly spotted in the rainforest trees. You can even have a cup of coffee while you relax. Lumholtz’s tree-kangaroos live in upland rainforests in the Wet Tropics. Known locally as ‘tree climbers’, their creamy to rusty brown coat provides an effective camouflage.

Even if you don’t see a tree-kangaroo in the wild, there is a wonderful interpretive display in the Malanda Falls Visitor Centre all about tree-kangaroos. It highlights this unique creature’s importance to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

In the surrounding Malanda Falls Conservation Park, you can learn about the Ngadjon-Jii culture and lifestyle from a series of interpretive signs along the Birrar (Red tulip oak) walking track. The Ngadjon-Jii are the Traditional Owners of Tutamonlin (Malanda Falls). Guided walks are available with local Ngadjon elder, Ernie Raymont, or his nephew, Drew Morta. They can teach you about their sacred country and are great at finding local wildlife. You may even see one of these secretive tree climbing creatures.

To volunteer or book guided tours, contact the Malanda Falls Visitor Centre: 07 4096 6957 www.malandafalls.com.

Along the coastal dunes between Cairns and Port Douglas lies the stunning Wangetti Beach, part of Yirrganydji traditional country. Just 45 minutes north of Cairns, this narrow strip of coastline is home to rare vine forest growing on sand dunes – the only protected habitat of this type in the Wet Tropics. These forests contain plant species related to those found in monsoonal rainforests in Cape York, Arnhem Land and the Kimberley. From the foreshore to the mountain peaks to the west, there are at least seven different forest types – significant for such a small area. Drop in and take a look.

The area used to be a camping hotspot - a place to roll out the swag, sit under the stars and explore the coastal dune systems in a 4WD. Being close to Cairns, the constant attention took its toll. The once vegetated dune system had started to become eroded from constant bush-bashing. This endangered rainforest is very susceptible to degradation from fire, weed invasion, camp clearings and vehicle traffic. The beach was being loved to death.

Seeing the need to protect this significant part of the World Heritage Area (their extended backyard), Wangetti locals took up the challenge and have banded together to form the Wangetti Recovery Group. They developed the Wangetti Beach Recovery Plan to help protect this rare habitat. The goal of the Recovery Plan is to reduce impacts and threats.

Today the group continues to revegetate the coastal foreshore. Each year the group runs the ‘Clean-up Australia Day’ campaign and collects discarded rubbish.

Wangetti Recovery Group: www.wangettirecovery.org
To be involved with tree planting activities contact Conservation Volunteers Australia: 4032 0844
www.conservationvolunteers.com.au

George Skeene, Yirrganydji elder, Wangetti Recovery Group member.

As one of the Traditional Owners for the area, George was asked to write the pre-European history of the Wangetti region. The story is now displayed on a sign in the day use area and outlines the importance of Wangetti to Yirrganydji people and the other residents of Wangetti.

In September 2008 George published his autobiography, Two Cultures – Children from the Aboriginal Camps and Reserves in Cairns City. The book talks about his life, straddling two cultures: the Aboriginal Reserves and Camps and the wider community. George remarked that “many people have written about it from the outside looking in but this is written from the inside looking out.” His story is one of survival and adversity – and Wangetti Beach.
Wet Tropics animals

Can you find the Wet Tropics animals amongst the letters below?

Activity 1.
Make a picture of the largest animal and the smallest animal you have seen in the rainforest.

Activity 2.
Why do you like the rainforest? Write down 3 reasons.

Activity 3.
Draw a picture of a spectacled flying fox.

Activity 4.
What would be in a cassowary dropping? Look for one next time you’re walking through the rainforest.

Activity 5. How many rainforest creatures can you find on this page? List them. When you next visit the rainforest see if you can spot them.

Bat
Betting
Cassowary
Chowchilla
Crow
Dingo
Dongo
Dta
Eagle
Echidna
Eel
Egret
Emerald dove
Firefly
Flying fox
Goby
Green ant
Ibis
Kite
Koel
Leech
Mahogany glider
Melomys
Mouth almighty
Owl
Parrot
Pigeon
Possum
Python
Quoll
Rat
Rhinoceros
beetle
Scat
Skink
Snail
Spoonbill
Sunbird
Taipan
Tree frog
Tree kangaroo
Turtle

Quick Quiz.

What does a lemuroid ringtail possum eat?
What colour fur do they have?
Where do they live?
Learn more about the Wet Tropics

**Creatures of the Rainforest**
This creative children’s book explores Djabugay country and contains amazing illustrations. Each is drawn twice, from an Anglo European perspective and an Australian Aboriginal perspective. The book is also written in the traditional Djabugay language and English side by side. By Warren Brim and Anna Eglitis. www.magabala.com

**Glissandra the Glider**
A beautifully illustrated children’s book featuring the adventures of Glissandra, the young mahogany glider, as she learns to fend for herself in the woodlands. This book brings alive the magic of north Queensland forests. It also teaches about this amazing endangered species. By Pam Galeano and Daryl Dickson. www.wildcardart.com.au

**Rainforest Frogs of the Wet Tropics**
A complete guide to all 33 species of frogs found in rainforests of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. It includes an easy-to-use key for identification and detailed information about each type of frog. All species are illustrated with photos. By Dr Conrad Hoskin and Dr Jean-Marc Hero. www.publish.csiro.au

**101 Animals of the Wet Tropics**
A field guide perfect to slip into a pocket on walks, it features information and photos of the mammals, birds, frogs, reptiles, and invertebrates. This guide identifies the wildlife that you are most likely to observe and includes iconic species of the Wet Tropics. By Dr Martin Cohen and Julia Cooper. www.wildtropics.com.au

**Wet Tropics vegetation posters out now**
Learn about different habitats in the Wet Tropics from rainforest to mangroves. If you or your school would like a set of 10 A2 posters to display, contact WTMA.

**Cassowary DVD**
Released by Girringun Aboriginal Corporation and the Wet Tropics Management Authority, this DVD shows the cultural significance of the cassowary to Rainforest Aboriginal people and the need to conserve cassowary habitat. The documentary ‘No Wabu, No Wuju, No Gunduy (No Rainforest, No Food, No Cassowary)’ was produced entirely by Girringun staff and Traditional Owners on their country as part of a training program. Available from WTMA.

**Local wildlife books**