



20th CASSOWARY Awards

Wet Tropics Management Authority

6 SEPTEMBER 2024

Program

The Wet Tropics Management Authority's Cassowary Awards are the only awards in Australia to recognise community contributions to World Heritage management.



**PROTECT
BEAUTIFUL
QUEENSLAND**



**WET TROPICS
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**





PROTECT BEAUTIFUL QUEENSLAND



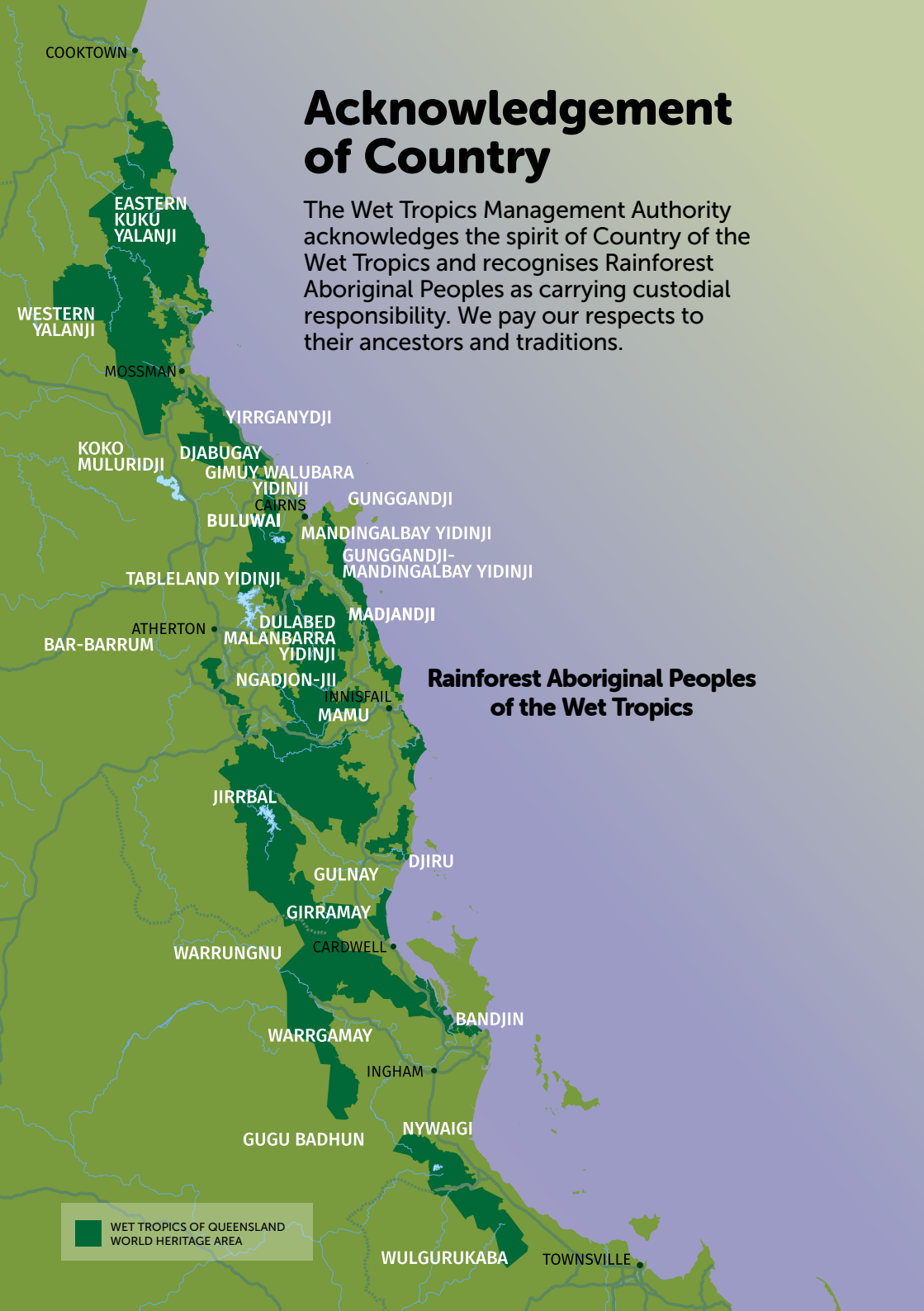
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Acknowledgement of Country

The Wet Tropics Management Authority acknowledges the spirit of Country of the Wet Tropics and recognises Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples as carrying custodial responsibility. We pay our respects to their ancestors and traditions.



Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples of the Wet Tropics

WET TROPICS OF QUEENSLAND WORLD HERITAGE AREA

Program of events

Tjapukai NOW! [4 Skyrail Drive, Smithfield](#)

- 4pm** Welcome function
Canapes and refreshments
Didgeridoo performance
- 5.40pm** Calling to Country
Tjapukai dance performance
- 6.20pm** Seating for awards ceremony
- 6.30pm** Cassowary Awards presentation
- 8pm** Close



WARNING

Recent crocodile sightings
Be crocwise

**Towards
2050**



We're shaping a growth
strategy to make Cairns
the best it can be in 2050





Chair's welcome

On behalf of the Board of the [Wet Tropics Management Authority](#), I am excited to welcome you to the 20th Cassowary Awards, again being celebrated on Djabugay Country.

This 20th awards ceremony is a remarkable milestone, and testament to the community's ongoing desire to recognise their Wet Tropics champions—a desire that is not waning, if the 45 nominations made this year are any indication!

The Cassowary Awards are only made possible by the community—the amazing individuals and groups who are nominated, as well as those inspired to nominate them in recognition of their work.

And this year's nominees are certainly inspiring, with outstanding individuals, organisations and groups (including Traditional Custodians, scholars, advocates, innovators, volunteers and collaborators) across eight award categories. Every single nominee deserves to be recognised for their commitment, passion

and tenacity. Some have built a legacy through decades of work while others are just starting their journey, showing that the future is in safe hands.

I would also like to recognise the commitment of those who, through their generous sponsorship, have enabled us to celebrate and acknowledge these Wet Tropics champions over the years. Much like the Wet Tropics itself, the Cassowary Awards would not have endured without continuing support and dedication of the community.

This year we proudly announce a new gold sponsor: [Protect Beautiful Queensland](#), an organisation with a vision to double Queensland's protected areas by 2030 in well-managed parks, private protected areas and Indigenous protected areas with inclusive, collaborative and well-funded management arrangements.

[Cairns Regional Council](#), a longtime supporter of the Cassowary Awards, has returned as our silver sponsor. They have previously received a Chair's Award in recognition of their leadership in nature stewardship and climate change action, and their project [Towards 2050: Shaping Cairns](#) is looking at how the region can accommodate both growth and sustainability.

For our award category sponsors we enjoy continued support from [CleanCo Queensland](#), [Daintree Discovery Centre](#), [Powerlink](#)

[Queensland, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships—Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, Queensland Water and Land Carers, Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, and Terrain NRM](#). We also welcome back our Young Cassowary Award sponsor, [YETI \(Youth Empowered Towards Independence\)](#). From the nominees and their nominators to our sponsors and other important guests, the Cassowary Awards truly represents a diverse cross section of the Wet Tropics community.

The Authority is proud to facilitate the Cassowary Awards, which celebrate not only the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, but also the Wet Tropics community. It was community that led to the Wet Tropics' World Heritage listing, and it is community that continues to work tirelessly to ensure its Outstanding Universal Value is maintained for future generations.

Tonight, we celebrate the entire Wet Tropics community that makes the Cassowary Awards an enduring success and give sincere thanks to nominators, nominees and sponsors.

Welcome to your awards night—we hope you have a wonderful evening.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine T. Grant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped flourish at the end of the name.

Ms Chrissy Grant
Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority Board

Award categories

Climate Change Leadership Award



Sponsored by Daintree Discovery Centre

Education Research Innovation Award



Sponsored by Powerlink Queensland

Industry Excellence Award



Sponsored by CleanCo Queensland

People Country Culture Award



Sponsored by Terrain NRM

Peter Hitchcock Community Champion Award



Sponsored by Queensland Water and Land Carers

Thorsborne Award for Conservation and Rehabilitation



Queensland Government

Sponsored by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships—Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

World Heritage Presentation Award



Sponsored by Skyrail Rainforest Cableway

Young Cassowary Award



Sponsored by YETI

Climate Change Leadership Award

Recognising exceptional leadership in climate change response. This category honours those who lead research, advocate for action, develop mitigation strategies, educate and inform the community, and broker local solutions to help climate-proof the Wet Tropics.

————— Sponsored by Daintree Discovery Centre —————

The [Daintree Discovery Centre](#) is an award-winning ecotourism attraction in the heart of the Daintree that provides unrivalled views of the unique beauty of the Daintree's ancient flora and fauna, from the rainforest floor up into the soaring heights of the treetops. Walk the 11-metre high aerial walkway and climb to the top of the 23-metre high Canopy Tower. Descend to the rainforest floor and take in the Jurassic Forest, Bush Tucker Trail, Cassowary Circuit and more. Enjoy interactive displays, live jungle bugs, and a rainforest aquarium. Experience the all-new Stage Hologram, "Walkabout with Juan," which brings the Daintree rainforest to life like never before.

THE WORLD'S OLDEST RAINFOREST STARTS HERE



23-Metre High Canopy Tower | Aerial Walkway | Interpretive Centre
Boardwalks | Animatronic Dinosaurs | Bush Tucker Trail | 3D Stage Hologram | Jungle Bugs
Native Fish Aquarium | Self-Guided Audio Tours in 8 Languages | 68-Page Guide Book | 7-Day Return Pass



10km North of The Daintree River Ferry • OPEN 7 DAYS 9am - 5pm • PH: (07) 4098 9171 • www.discoverthedaintree.com



Branden Barber Rainforest Rescue

Branden has led Rainforest Rescue since 2018, working towards conserving and restoring unprotected, high-biodiversity areas of the Wet Tropics. Branden has driven the organisation to new highs—in 2023 they raised almost \$2 million in funds for projects, secured protection of another 25.6 hectares of lowland rainforest, oversaw 50,000 trees planted in wildlife corridors and grew the global community involved in these actions to over 750,000.

Branden believes “rainforest action is climate action.”



Cairns and Far North Environment Centre

Cairns and Far North Environment Centre (CAFNEC) have been advocating for the protection of nature in far north Queensland since 1981. CAFNEC has led, collaborated and supported scores of campaigns, coordinating action on important environment issues and becoming a leading voice in climate change action. As well as holding politicians and corporations to account, CAFNEC strives to enhance the capacity of the local community to act for conservation.



Christine Jorgensen
Wildlife Science

Christine is passionate about the environment and uses social media to demonstrate ways to make a positive difference in day-to-day life, including recycling, cutting down on electronic use and picking up rubbish in public areas. For the last seven years Christine has worked as a wildlife educator at the Cairns Aquarium.



Sarah Sims
Cairns Conservation Services

Sarah Sims has been involved in conservation, citizen science, education and sustainability projects and events in the Cairns region since 2020. Her passion for restoration-driven carbon capture has led to the planting of thousands of trees. Through roles at Cairns Regional Council, Treeforce and Holloways Beach Coast Care, Sarah has project-managed landscape restoration around the region and delivered various sustainability and educational activities.

Education Research Innovation Award

Recognising inventive projects and educational activities that improve understanding and management of the Wet Tropics and its World Heritage values. This category celebrates innovative research and technological applications, as well as educators who inspire and impart an appreciation of the World Heritage Area.

Sponsored by Powerlink Queensland

[Powerlink Queensland](#) is a government-owned corporation that owns, develops, operates and maintains the state's electricity transmission network. We connect Queenslanders to a world-class energy future, providing electricity to five million Queenslanders and 238,000 businesses via the state's distribution networks. We are also responsible for connecting large-scale renewable energy developments, including wind and solar, and providing electricity to large industrial customers in the rail, mining and LNG sectors. Through our unique central position in the power system, we are helping to drive our state's new energy future.





Alexander Cheesman
James Cook University

Dr Alex Cheesman, Senior Research Fellow at James Cook University and the University of Exeter in the UK, is a plant eco-physiologist and soil scientist. Collaborating with other researchers, Alex examined how best practices can be integrated with restoration work to ensure resilience to climate change.

Alex's project utilising light detection and ranging technology tracks how rainforest plantings grow and develop, aiming to improve the monitoring of restoration in tropical forests.



Annette Ryan
Whitfield State School

Annette is a teacher-librarian and gifted education program coordinator at Whitfield State School. She has co-founded and coordinated innovative education initiatives across far north Queensland for the last 21 years, including the Gifted Global Green program. She developed and ran a STEM program for high-performing First Nations students and has conducted the Philosophy Café Academy at Whitfield State School for the last five years, where students discuss environmental ethics.



Bailey Stevenson Precious Plastic FNQ

Bailey leads Precious Plastic FNQ, which aims to actively keep plastic waste out of landfill and the environment by repurposing through innovative recycling efforts. This local, small-scale company transforms plastic bottle caps into useful products such as hair combs and plant pots. Bailey works closely with the disability community of Cairns to offer meaningful employment opportunities.



BirdLife Northern Queensland

Through the collaborative Birds with Altitude citizen science project, BirdLife Northern Queensland has built on the mounting evidence that Wet Tropics rainforest-dependent bird populations are declining in the upland areas because of climate change.

The project—designed to harness the skills and interests of birdwatchers and other citizen scientists—began in 2022 and has grown to include five key Wet Tropics biodiversity areas with monitoring sites including some accessed by wheelchair-traversable paths, allowing participation by a diverse range of volunteers.

Industry Excellence Award

Recognising outstanding performance from industry across the Wet Tropics. This category shines a light on exceptional efforts to go above and beyond to protect and present the World Heritage Area by sectors including tourism, agriculture, construction, local government, telecommunication, transportation and utilities.

Sponsored by CleanCo Queensland

At [CleanCo](#) we are delivering clean energy solutions to help Queensland businesses and communities thrive in a net zero future.

CleanCo is the custodian of 1100MW of flexible, low and no-emissions energy generators, including the Barron Gorge and Kareeya hydro power stations in far north Queensland. These valuable assets provide the foundation on which we are building our portfolio of renewable energy generation and storage facilities to meet the growing energy needs of our current and future customers.

CleanCo: A clean energy future crafted in Queensland.



Delivering clean energy solutions to help our customers thrive in a net zero future.

cleanCO
queensland

cleancoqueensland.com.au



Cassowary Conservation Management Plan

Department of Transport and Main Roads

The Cassowary Conservation Management Plan—developed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads in 2020—aims to improve cassowary conservation through a consolidated and consistent approach.

As well as public awareness campaigns and best-practice road design and maintenance, it supports the development of new technology to enhance safety and reduce vehicle-animal collisions. This included a trial of a large animal activated roadside monitoring and alert system on the Kennedy Highway near Kuranda, to provide real-time hazard detection.



Deanna Holder, Nicole Nash and Daryn Storch

Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, and Department of Resources

Working together, Deanna (Department of Resources), Nicole and Daryn (Department of Environment, Science and Innovation) have secured permanent protection of ecologically important areas of the Wet Tropics under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. They are progressing the transfer of high-value unallocated state land to national park and so far have successfully transferred 16 land parcels that linked 3 separate national parks.



Mamu Tropical Skywalk

Mamu Tropical Skywalk in Wooroonooran National Park—named for the Mamu people, Traditional Custodians of the area—provides visitors with an opportunity to experience biodiversity up close while minimising environmental impacts. The elevated walkways and viewing platforms are carefully integrated into the forest, ensuring that the natural habitat remains largely undisturbed.



Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation

Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation (MYAC) has delivered a wide range of engaging opportunities for its people including a successful tourism venture (Mandingalbay Authentic Indigenous Tours) and a ranger training program.

MYAC has also developed a land management program, utilising traditional knowledge to restore Country through collaboration with natural resource management partners.



RoadTek (Department of Transport and Main Roads) and Douglas Shire Council

In the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Jasper and the subsequent extreme rainfall event, RoadTek were engaged by Douglas Shire Council to repair the Cape Tribulation–Bloomfield Road, where numerous landslips caused severe damage and closures.

The commitment, engagement and collaborative approach ensured protection of cultural and World Heritage values and saw the road safely reopened for locals and visitors despite challenges posed by the terrain and ongoing rain.



Ryan Zihrul Cairns Regional Council

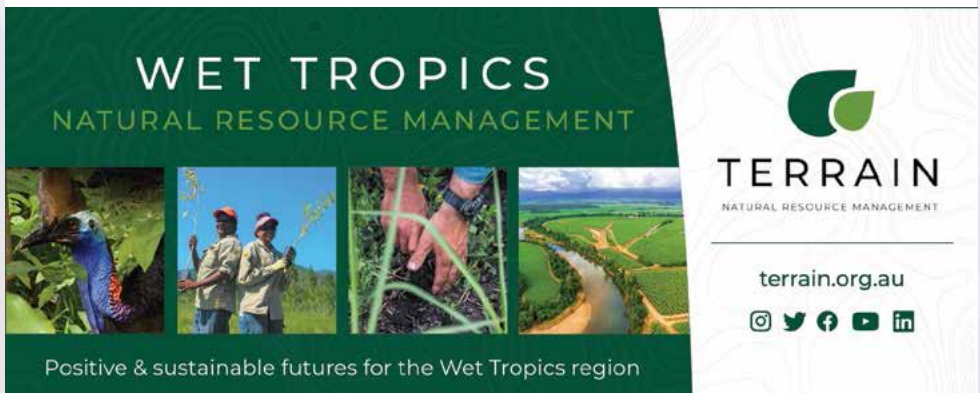
When Ryan first joined the Cairns Regional Council native plant nursery, it was depleted of stock and lacking staff. Through his capability, passion and commitment it has become a vital supplier for community revegetation projects throughout Cairns. Ryan also finds time to assist site preparation teams and attend volunteer tree planting activities.

People Country Culture Award

Recognising Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples of the Wet Tropics. This category showcases the dedication of individuals and groups who care for Country, promote the culture and livelihoods of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, and actively participate in management of the World Heritage Area.

Sponsored by Terrain NRM

For over 20 years, [Terrain NRM](#) has been driving environmental stewardship across the Wet Tropics to ensure our region is thriving and sustainable into the future. We are an independent not-for-profit community-based organisation. We think innovatively and act collaboratively, combining science, technical expertise, local and traditional ecological knowledge to solve our most pressing environmental challenges. Collaboration is one of our core values, enabling us to extend the reach and long-term impact of our programs. We have formed alliances and partnerships with hundreds of partners and thousands of landholders to improve the health of our waterways, soils and landscapes and protect threatened species.



The banner features a dark green header with the text "WET TROPICS" in large white letters and "NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT" in smaller green letters below it. Below the header is a row of four images: a blue bird, two people in a field, hands holding a plant, and a river landscape. To the right of the banner is the Terrain NRM logo, which consists of a stylized green leaf icon above the word "TERRAIN" in large black letters and "NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT" in smaller black letters below it. Below the logo is the website "terrain.org.au" and a row of social media icons for Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

WET TROPICS
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

TERRAIN
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

terrain.org.au

Instagram Twitter Facebook YouTube LinkedIn

Positive & sustainable futures for the Wet Tropics region



Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples Prescribed Body Corporate Aboriginal Corporation

The Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples Prescribed Body Corporate Aboriginal Corporation strives to improve social and emotional wellbeing for Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples through positive employment and training outcomes, delivered in community on Country.

Employment and training are a core focus of the corporation's Indigenous ranger program, which increases Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' contribution to the protection, cultural understanding, and management of the World Heritage Area.



Kunghi On-Country Youth Camps, Gunggandji Aboriginal Corporation

Gunggandji Aboriginal Corporation's Kunghi On-Country Youth Camps—in partnership with Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council and Club Fight Back—offer Rainforest Aboriginal youth an immersive experience where they can engage with their ancestral land and heritage in meaningful ways. The program stands out for its holistic approach, combining traditional cultural teachings, conservation education, and physical activities to foster a deep connection with the land and its stewardship.



Madjaybana Rangers

Since their program was established in 2020, Madjaybana Rangers have mapped cultural sites, documented story lines and language names, plotted ancestral walking trails, repaired degraded riverine land, collected litter polluting waterways, and monitored mangroves forests and the water quality of culturally important banas (creeks).

Madjandji Elders have shared cultural, historical and traditional ecological knowledge of the minya (fauna) and mayi (flora) with the rangers, enabling the use of cultural knowledge to manage the land.



Peter Green

Department of Environment,
Science and Innovation

Peter, a proud Djiru man from Mission Beach, is a senior program officer with the Queensland Government's Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program where he has been facilitating training for ranger groups in the Wet Tropics and around the state.

Peter has a long history working to improve the Wet Tropics, including previously working with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' weeds programs and with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships.



Sonya Takau

A Jirrbal Rainforest Aboriginal woman and leader, Sonya's dedication to Indigenous advocacy inspires those around her. For over 9 years, Sonya owned and operated Ingan Tours, working with her father Dr Ernie Grant to promote the cultural and environmental values of the area.

She has been instrumental in bringing together Rainforest tribes from the southern end of the Wet Tropics to participate in the Wet Tropics Management Authority's Bama Country and Culture project.



Peter Hitchcock Community Champion Award

Recognising individuals who inspire others through their commitment to and advocacy for the Wet Tropics. This category highlights those who raise the profile of issues affecting the wellbeing of the World Heritage Area and champion solutions.

Peter Hitchcock was the inaugural executive director of the Wet Tropics Management Authority and a conservation leader. Peter set the foundations for the Authority at a time when World Heritage listing of the Wet Tropics remained a controversial issue. He worked tirelessly to involve the community in the Authority's work, ensuring the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area was appreciated by all.

————— Sponsored by Queensland Water and Land Carers —————

[Queensland Water and Land Carers](#) (QWaLC) is the peak body for natural resource management volunteers. QWaLC's roles include representation, advocacy, promotion, networking and insurance administration. QWaLC's board includes representatives from each of Queensland's regions. Our membership consists of almost 500 groups who have around 62,000 individual members.



Naturally Together

qwalc.org.au





Chelsea Scanlan
Fotra Group Consulting

Chelsea advocates for the Wet Tropics environment through her work. She is passionate about sustainability, chemical-free weed management, and looking after our waterways and campaigns for change through social media and educational workshops.



Errol Hunter

Errol is a proud Djabugay, Birri Gubba and Ewamian man who is renowned for his work as a First Nations guide. He weaves culture and understanding of landscapes into environmental experiences, educating people from around the world on both the natural and cultural significance of the Wet Tropics. Errol supports respectful engagement with Country, and encourages volunteerism and longer-term engagement.

Errol mentors young people, shares knowledge on artifacts, and is a cultural site advisor.



Ingrid Marker
Cassowary Keystone Conservation

Ingrid is a lifelong advocate for the environment. As founder of the Cassowary Keystone Conservation community group, she is committed to protecting the southern cassowary including caring for orphaned, sick and injured birds. Ingrid has collaborated with various ecologists, environmental organisations, policy advisors and the Djiru Traditional Owners to lobby for strategies that will provide protection for keystone species like the cassowary.



Prudence Hewett
Daintree Rainforest Foundation

In 1994, Prudence invested everything she had into the purchase of 160 acres of freehold property in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. For more than 3 decades she has lived in and managed the property, championing the importance of community involvement in environmental management. Prue advocates for the priority protection of the southern cassowary and runs a long-term project monitoring twelve wildlife camera traps to record sightings of cassowaries, dingoes and feral pigs.

Thorsborne Award for Conservation and Rehabilitation

Recognising contributions to the improvement of the natural values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. This category acknowledges those who rehabilitate and protect the natural features of the Wet Tropics, including its flora and fauna.

Margaret Thorsborne was a previous recipient of the Cassowary Award for Community Conservation, which was renamed the Thorsborne Award in 2016 to acknowledge Margaret and her late husband Arthur's contributions to the Wet Tropics. Arthur and Margaret shared a lifelong passion and commitment to nature conservation and environmental activism.

Sponsored by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships—
Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

[Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships](#) protect and manage our parks, forests and the Great Barrier Reef for current and future generations. We are part of the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation—a department that recognises the value a clean environment, innovative society and economy. As a diverse organisation, the department brings together key areas of work to achieve our objectives for a better Queensland.

Congratulations to all entrants in the Thorsborne Award for Community Conservation and Rehabilitation.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service conserves, presents and shares Queensland's parks and forests in partnership with dedicated individuals and community groups. We are proud to sponsor this award.

Connect with
Queensland National Parks





Annie Shoemberger NightWings

Annie's dedication to the Wet Tropics has included nursing more than 100 flying-foxes back to health. After purchasing a 15-hectare ex-sugarcane property in the Daintree, she approached Rainforest Rescue to help transform it back to thriving rainforest. In 2016, they held the first community tree planting day with a handful of people, naming the site NightWings in honour of the flying-foxes. Since then, hundreds of volunteers have worked with Annie and Rainforest Rescue to plant nearly 100,000 trees.



Cathy Retter Kuranda Envirocare

As president of Kuranda Envirocare, Cathy has been dedicated to protecting and rehabilitating the Wet Tropics, including facilitating tree plantings along the Barron River over the last two decades. Cathy has delivered citizen science projects, such as monitoring and protecting the habitat of the critically endangered Kuranda treefrog. She has been instrumental to community response to threats to the Wet Tropics, such as the yellow crazy ant invasion and inappropriate development and has effectively lobbied government at all levels.



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Cassowary Keystone Conservation

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Nyree and Stephen Gray

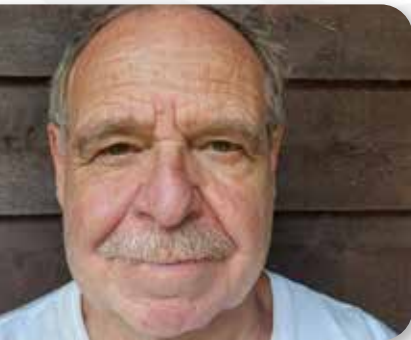
Nyree and Stephen have a long-held passion for conservation and rehabilitating areas of the Wet Tropics. Since 2020, they have transformed a neglected 8-hectare farm at Mena Creek from an ecosystem of 2m high guinea grass to one with 19,000 trees that will create forest corridors for wildlife and reduce sediment runoff on to the Great Barrier Reef.



Vern Hansen (posthumous)
Kuranda Envirocare

After retiring in 2004, Vern dedicated hundreds of hours to Kuranda Envirocare's revegetation nursery where he was well known for propagating swamp orchids and was an avid seed collector. Vern compiled a photographic record of thousands of Wet Tropics plant species with details of distribution, when to collect and how to germinate seeds.

Vern passed away in 2023, but his legacy lives on. Before his death, he donated hundreds of plant books to the community.



Wilfred Gujer
Tigerlodge WildCare

Wilfred is a dedicated wildlife carer who believes in educating people about the importance of native animals. Along with Patricia Flanigan, Wilfred established TigerLodge Wildcare in 2012. This 5-acre property is a sanctuary for injured and/or orphaned native species to recover and rehabilitate before being released back to the wild.

World Heritage Presentation Award

Recognising positive presentation of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. This category salutes the storytellers of our region who promote the Area's outstanding values through interpretive and creative endeavours, including tourism and the arts.

————— Sponsored by Skyrail Rainforest Cableway —————

Skyrail Rainforest Cableway is dedicated to showcasing and protecting the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, home to the world's oldest rainforest stories. As one of the region's most iconic experiences, Skyrail provides the opportunity to glide above the ancient canopy and descend to explore Red Peak/Guriguri Bunda: and Barron Falls/Dindin. We demonstrate strong commitment to the highest standards of education, awareness, and protection of the environment through sustainable practices while acting to protect one of the most fragile rainforest environments on Earth for future generations, creating advocates, and a greater appreciation for a sustainable future.

Skyrail
Rainforest Cableway



skyrail.com.au



Proud Sponsor of the World Heritage Presentation Award



David Stacey

An acclaimed artist, David has had over 20 solo exhibitions and his scientific drawings of plants and animals have appeared in research and education publications. David has a unique eye for celebrating small details, and the precision of his artwork captures the natural beauty of the Wet Tropics.



James Boettcher FNQ Nature Tours

James is the local owner-operator of award-winning FNQ Nature Tours, specialising in small intimate tours of the Wet Tropics with a focus on our endemic wildlife.

James has a passion for creating unforgettable and life-changing connections with the natural world and inspiring the preservation and support of native flora and fauna through responsible ecotourism.



Jason Heffernan
Back Country Bliss Adventures

Jason Heffernan—a Wet Tropics Tour Guide since 2019—is the owner of the award-winning Back Country Bliss Adventures (BCBA) which delivers river drifting and snorkelling tours on the Mossman River. Three species of fish not previously recorded in the Mossman River have been identified by BCBA, and Jason co-authored the journal article, 'Pebbled places preferred by people and pipefish in a World Heritage protected area'.



Jurg Jutzi
Kuranda Conservation
Community Nursery

Jurg founded the Cassowary Art Trail in 2022 in partnership with Kuranda Conservation Community Nursey Inc. The trail—which aims to raise public awareness of the endangered southern cassowary and its importance to Indigenous culture—features painted cassowary statues showcasing the work of local Kuranda artists while educating visitors. Cassowary statues are found across the region including at Mamu Tropical Skywalk, Rainforestation Nature Park and Wildlife Habitat.



Lyn Kulow

Lyn has been passionate about storytelling for four decades and her latest creation is a children's book, 'Litoria Myola: the little Kuranda Tree Frog and his song'. Highlighting a critically endangered species and bringing awareness to one of the environmental issues impacting the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, this heartwarming story shows how people can get involved in taking care of the environment.



Martin Stringer

Martin is a nature photographer and filmmaker with a talent for capturing the beauty of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Through photographing tree planting projects, he has documented rainforest regeneration over the last decade.

Martin says: "Growing a rainforest community is more than just planting a rainforest, it's about reconnecting through culture, nature, and each other."



Matilda Bishop Studio Marobi

Matilda grew up in the rainforest at Mena Creek and at the age of 14 she illustrated, wrote and published her first book inspired by native parrots at Paronella Park.

Since then, Matilda has illustrated and published 7 books (including one for the Bats and Trees Society of Cairns), and her wildlife art has featured in Australian Geographic.



Small World Journeys

Small World Journeys is a multi-award-winning, sustainable tourism and ecotourism certified business in the Wet Tropics that conducts a range of educational programs for school children. These focus on the ecological significance of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the culture of its Traditional Custodians, and involve participants in community service projects.



Wil Kemp
The Savannahlander

Wil is a natural born storyteller with contagious enthusiasm for conservation. His background as a zookeeper combines wonderfully with his long-standing position at the helm of the Savannahlander, where he's known for his willingness to stop the train for wildlife-spotting. Wil ensures anyone on board leaves with an awe and wonder for the amazing Wet Tropics and beyond.



Young Cassowary Award

Recognising the important environmental work undertaken by school-aged people—the future leaders of the Wet Tropics. This category is dedicated to individuals, groups, classes or schools who are involved with environmental awareness campaigns, science experiments, research projects, social action plans, and other significant activities.

— Sponsored by YETI (Youth Empowered Towards Independence) —

Youth Empowered Towards Independence (YETI) is a dedicated support agency for young people aged 12-25 in Far North Queensland. Established in 1995, YETI is a not-for-profit organisation offering diverse programs including day programs, case management, therapeutic counselling, outreach, and research. We prioritise cultural safety, empowerment, and harm minimisation, ensuring that young people actively participate in our services. Our commitment to social justice recognises the intrinsic link between ecological sustainability and social equity. Our multidisciplinary team, including social workers and community development workers, proudly includes practitioners from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.





Butchers Creek State School

A Reef Guardian School since 2016, Butchers Creek State School actively supports external conservation efforts and has an environmental management plan to integrate sustainability into daily operations. The school is part of the Gifted Global Green program where students have learned about soil health, water quality, local biodiversity and sustainability. The school's Soil Savers project showed leadership in promoting sustainable land management practices.



Daisy Cox

Daisy has been volunteering regularly with Rainforest Rescue since 2022 and has been described as a 'tree planting machine'. She has represented Rainforest Rescue at annual community tree planting days and managed their stall at Ecofiesta. Daisy particularly enjoys teaching kids about the importance of trees and nature.



Mount Molloy State School

With a total of just 34 students, Mount Molloy State School place great emphasis on environmental awareness—every student is a nature champion and wildlife warrior, and students nominate to be environmental ambassadors. As well as being a Reef Guardian School, Mount Molloy State School participates in the Gifted Global Green program and citizen science projects.



Mourilyan State School Waste Warriors

Mourilyan State School encourages all students and staff to be Waste Warriors, with three environmental officers elected each year to promote the concept. As well as a recycling program for drink containers, they've implemented organic waste management resulting in an average of 4kg per day of food waste diverted from landfill.



Parramatta State School

Parramatta State School have joined the Gifted Global Green program for year 4 and 5 students with a focus on keeping the Wet Tropics waterways clean and free of rubbish.



St Gerard Majella School Garden Club

The St Gerard Majella Garden Club was established in 2014 to encourage students to learn about sustainability and how to respect and care for their school gardens and local waterways. The garden's produce is sold by students at a stall after school to parents and staff and gives back to the school tuckshop.



Tyler Smith

While he may be young, Tyler has long been a rainforest advocate and regularly attends tree planting days with his family—he prides himself on being at the very first tree planting at NightWings. At just 12 years of age, Tyler’s passion for the environment, his local community and school saw him awarded his school’s Year 7 Community Involvement Scholarship.



Thank you

The Wet Tropics Management Authority thanks our valued sponsors for joining us and playing a key role in celebrating our Wet Tropics champions and their important work. Your support demonstrates your commitment to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and appreciation of the outstanding efforts made by so many in the community.

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About the artists



Beau Pennefather Motlop
Artist

The new Cassowary Awards logo and related designs were developed from the original 'Ancient Guardians' artwork of Beau Pennefather Motlop.

As well as depicting the southern cassowary, the artwork incorporates Wet Tropics landscapes and continuing ecological cycles and features a rainforest shield, which symbolises the cultural values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

Beau's background includes Aboriginal from the Jirrabal tribe, Torres Strait Island descentance from the Wagoedaggum tribe of Mabuiag Island as well as Ngapuhi from New Zealand. His Aboriginal totem is the dingo, and his Torres Strait Island totems are the crocodile, snake, stonefish and remora.

[@beau_motlop_art](#)



Wayne McGuinness
Steel artist (trophy fabrication)

Wayne 'Liwingu' McGuinness is a proud Kungarakan/ Ngadjon/Yidinji man with ties to the Torres Strait. Wayne spent much of his life in the Northern Territory and it was there that he developed his metal working skills, learning to weld at an early age.

Initially employed on mine sites and in construction, Wayne went on to combine his skill as a steel fabricator with his love of Aboriginal art. He has developed a thriving business, based in Kuranda, offering original handcrafted artworks: Aboriginal Steel Art. He has brought the new Cassowary Awards logo to life with the bespoke trophies.

www.aboriginalsteelart.com

Implied film/photo consent

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) and its photographer and videographer will be photographing, filming or otherwise recording the 20th Cassowary Awards (the Event).

It may not be possible for our photographer and videographer to obtain every person's express consent, and your consent may be implied, particularly for staged, group, or participation related images and footage.

Images and recordings of the Event may be used, published or reproduced in any form (in whole or in part) by the Authority and by any medium, including but not limited to newspapers, magazines, brochures, television advertisements, websites and social media to promote, publicise and report on the Event.

If you do not want your image recorded or published, please notify our photographer or videographer, an Authority staff member upon arrival at the Event.





The [Wet Tropics Management Authority](#) was established to fulfil Australia's international obligation to protect, conserve, present and rehabilitate the [Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area](#), and to ensure its survival for future generations.

Our mission is to lead, inspire, advise and support the Australian and global community to protect and share the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in perpetuity.

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