




# LIVING PLANET

Exclusive magazine for WWF supporters

#52



## PLATYPUS REWILDING IS A GO!

### GRAND COMEBACK TO ROYAL NATIONAL PARK, THANKS TO YOU

Koala celebration:  
you've helped plant  
250,000 trees –  
and counting!

Gliders and glossies:  
their futures are  
looking brighter,  
thanks to you.

How you helped  
'Bossy Boots' Raine  
return to the wild.

A man in a light-colored WWF uniform is holding a hedgehog wrapped in a green cloth. He is looking down at the hedgehog with a gentle expression. The background is slightly blurred, showing an indoor setting.

## UNITING FOR NATURE

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### A message from CEO, Dermot O’Gorman

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Welcome to the latest issue of **Living Planet** and thank you from the bottom of my heart, for your generosity and support this year. The way you’re championing a better future for nature is nothing short of amazing.

In this edition you’ll read about the platypus you’ve helped bring back to Sydney’s Royal National Park. Greater gliders are taking up residence in hi-tech nest boxes you helped install. And we’re celebrating the 250,000th tree being planted in koala heartland. These achievements are yours, thank you.

Now to look forward. You might remember we launched **Regenerate Australia** in the wake of our worst bushfires in living memory. It remains Australia’s most ambitious program to restore nature. And it’s only been possible, thanks to you.

But nature loss and climate change rages

on, not only here, but in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world. We’ve listened, and it’s clear we need to expand upon the Regenerate Australia program to our **global region**.

With you by our side, together we’ll **Regenerate Nature** and work towards creating a nature-positive world. Embracing not only innovation and new technologies but also listening and learning from First Peoples’ knowledge.

We’ll build regenerative solutions – in the First Peoples’ recognised areas of Sky, Water and Country – that will allow nature to heal.

It’s a big ambition, but I know it’s possible thanks to our teams, our partners and most of all: YOU. I’m looking forward to keeping you updated as we go on this journey together.

**Dermot O’Gorman**  
CEO, WWF-Australia



*WWF-Australia conservationists Darren Grover, Tanya Pritchard and Dr. Prishani Venetas at a tree planting event in Swan Bay, New South Wales.*

# WE ASKED - YOU PLANTED! MILESTONE REACHED AS 250,000TH TREE GOES INTO THE GROUND

© WWF-Australia / Property Shot Photography



*Tanya Pritchard, WWF-Australia's Landscape Restoration Project Manager, is all smiles at a community tree planting event in the Northern Rivers, NSW.*

We're thrilled to announce a monumental achievement in koala conservation, made possible by you. The 250,000th tree has officially been planted in the Northern Rivers region, New South Wales, thanks to the incredible efforts of our dedicated partners, Bangalow Koalas, the tireless work of volunteers, Indigenous ranger groups and landowners, **and most importantly, you.**

It's an incredible accomplishment, especially considering how the region was ravaged by floods only last year. Through supporting groundbreaking programs, you're helping to restore vital wildlife corridors, giving koalas a place to call home, to be safe from predators and abundant food so they can survive and thrive.

As Bangalow Koalas president Linda Sparrow said, ***"You can see the corridor beginning to come about. It's worth all the blood, sweat and tears."***

Thank you for helping koalas. **Let's keep planting!**



© WWF-Australia / Mark Symons

*Raine, the rescued koala joey found on the ground shivering at a home on the Brisbane River at Wivenhoe Pocket.*

## 'BOSSY BOOTS' RAINE - WHERE IS SHE NOW?

Remember Raine – the koala joey who defied the floods? Found by the rising waters of the Brisbane River, carers rated her body condition at a dismal four-five out of ten. But Raine had other ideas.

With a healthy determination and an even healthier appetite, Raine made a speedy recovery and became a bit of a bossy boots to her fellow rescued joeys. Just five months after her rescue, Raine was released back into the wild, ready to do her part to boost koala numbers. With habitat destruction driving koalas to the brink, Raine's inspiring story gives us hope. Every koala counts! **Thank you for doing your part in protecting our Aussie icons.**



© RSPCA QLD

*Raine the rescued koala joey with koala carer Marilyn, after receiving a check-up with partners RSPCA, Qld.*

## GREATER GLIDER UPDATE: HOW YOU'RE PROTECTING AUSTRALIA'S FLUFFY-EARED WONDERS



Thanks to your support, hundreds of new homes for greater gliders were installed last year. In partnership with Greening Australia and ANU, we set about to create hi-tech nest boxes. The boxes mimic the hollows of old trees, helping to protect gliders from habitat destruction and our warming climate. We're excited to report that the gliders have started moving in!

In Tallaganda National Park, New South Wales, Dr Kita Ashman, WWF-Australia Threatened Species and Climate Adaptation Ecologist, found three greater gliders in just the second box she checked – probably a little family.

***“I just burst into tears, I was so surprised and so happy,” she said. “The species had just been uplisted to Endangered, highlighting how threatened they are, so seeing greater gliders using the boxes after only 10 weeks was joyous.”***

Their natural homes – ancient tree hollows which can take over 250 years to form – have been devastated by deforestation. This has caused their numbers to crash by up to 80%. These new, insulated and fire-resistant homes will give the greater gliders a better chance of survival.

By providing them with safe homes, you're helping their recovery and that of other forest-dependent animals. **Thank you.**

*Greater glider inside a nest box. These hi-tech nest boxes are thermally appropriate and long-lasting to assist the recovery of greater gliders.*

## MORE GLIDER GREATNESS:

### Unlocking secrets of the forest canopy

The greater glider is the world's largest gliding marsupial – and a very mysterious animal. With our partners at the University of Sydney, we're aiming to transform our understanding of this wonderful species.

In the fire-ravaged Tallaganda State Forest, researchers are tracking the movements of greater gliders using tiny GPS collars. These collars will record their movements every 30 minutes, from dusk to dawn, for 30 days. This data will provide a level of detail previously impossible.

In addition to shedding light on how greater gliders are able to navigate burnt forests, the researchers hope to see how fire-damaged habitat changes glider behaviour. This information is crucial to future conservation efforts.

**Thank you for helping unlock the secrets of the forest canopy.**

*Hats off to our amazing partners, the University of Sydney.*

# MEET FIREFLY - THE GLOSSY CHICK BRINGING HOPE, THANKS TO YOU

## A growing success story!

The Northern Rivers region of NSW has witnessed its own special miracle – the successful hatching of a rare glossy black-cockatoo chick. With the species already listed as Vulnerable, the devastating 2019-20 bushfires destroyed up to 50% of the cockatoo’s habitat. However, thanks to your support and the tireless efforts of our conservation partners, a breeding pair was discovered in the Tweed Valley last year.

As part of the project, a team of citizen scientists - known as the Glossy Squad - was formed. They used a sensor camera to witness mother, Prez, and father, Mr Prez, raising their daughter, Firefly, from egg through to fledgling.

When the day came for Firefly to fledge, Glossy Squad members cheered as she flew off with her parents.

Project Manager, from WildBNB Wildlife Habitat, Harry Hackett, summed it up beautifully:

***“All I could think was, ‘Go well little Firefly, may your life be long, and may the survival of your species be helped by the great work of so many people.’”***

Thanks to your support, the vital work to save this rare and vulnerable species continues. Dr Leonie Valentine, WWF-Australia’s Senior Manager for Species Conservation said:

*“This important work assists with the recovery of glossies here by identifying remaining critical habitat, providing artificial nesting hollows, and replanting vital food trees.”*

With another 48 nesting boxes now installed, we’ve got high hopes that Firefly will be joined by other breeding pairs, creating a



Father Mr Prez (left) and mother Prez (right)  
© pixofnature.com/ Locky Cooper

hub of glorious glossy activity that will help secure the species’ future. **Thank you for taking action to protect them.**

*Glossies Northern Rivers is a conservation partnership between WildBNB, WWF-Australia and NSW Government Saving Our Species, made possible by you.*



When her mother returned Firefly would launch into vigorous calls begging to be fed.  
© pixofnature.com/ Locky Cooper



## REWILDING: WHY IT MATTERS

Rewilding Program Manager Rob Brewster shares his passion for bringing back Australia's native wildlife.

### What is rewilding, and why do we need to rewild Australia?

Rewilding involves reintroducing missing animals back to their former homes—not only for cultural reasons but also to restore vital elements of ecosystems. More complete and vibrant ecosystems are more resilient to invasive species, drought, and even bushfires – and this can benefit both wildlife and humans.

### Can you give us an update of what's happening across Australia?

Several exciting rewilding projects are underway. In Booderee National Park, on the NSW South Coast, a feral predator-proof fence will pave the way for eastern quolls to be returned. Ten platypus have now returned to Royal National Park in Sydney, missing in the region for perhaps half a century. And as part of our Marna Banggara partnership in South Australia, another 73 brush-tailed bettongs have joined the 120 successfully reintroduced to date. A recent health check of the females has identified plenty of full pouches!

### Why are you so passionate about rewilding?

Growing up, I spent a lot of time in the bush and witnessed some amazing animals. However, some of these animals that I saw only 20 years ago are now missing from our ecosystems. I don't want future generations to miss out on the incredible experiences I had as a child. Rewilding is not just important for the environment but also for our own psychological well-being – having an interesting environment to live in is something that benefits us all.

### What would you say to WWF-Australia supporters who make this work possible?

Thank you for helping to restore our landscapes. Your help is contributing to the return of our cultural heritage to the bush. Our vital keystone mammals help improve ecosystem resilience to everything from drought to fire, to a warming climate. **Your support is vital to the future of Australia.**

## PLATYPUS REWILDING IS A GO

### Rob Brewster on bringing platypus back from local extinction:

The reintroduction of the first 10 platypus to Sydney's Royal National Park shows that we can move beyond just protecting what remains, and actually restore what we've lost. It's the first program of its kind for platypus in NSW and aims to re-establish a self-sustaining and genetically diverse population. The platypus were brought from southern NSW, then our partners at Taronga Zoo gave them health checks and fitted them with monitoring transmitters. Now we'll track the platypus with our other partners at UNSW to assess whether they are successful in re-establishing in the park.

This is such a special moment. Platypus are silent victims of climate change and habitat destruction. This reintroduction aims to restore balance to the ecosystem – and it underlines our commitment to landscape restoration.

**Another significant achievement in restoring Australia's wildlife and wild places, thanks to you.**

\*Rewilding Booderee is a collaboration between National Parks Conservation Trust, Parks Australia, the Australian National University and WWF-Australia, with support from Shoalhaven City Council, Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species and Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council.

The Marna Banggara project is jointly funded through the Northern and Yorke Landscape Board, the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, the South Australian Department for Environment and Water, WWF-Australia and Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife.

Rewilding the Platypus is in partnership with University of NSW, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Taronga Conservation Society Australia.