



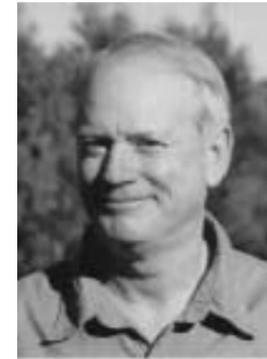
Eighth Annual Report

2004

www.nwf.org.au

Financial Report 2004

Chairman's Report 2004



After almost five years in the chair, I thought it might be worth reviewing the sorts of projects most likely to succeed in capturing the attention of the trustees and gaining funding from the Foundation. The Foundation is in the process of updating our guidelines, which should be posted on our website by the new financial year. The following provides some of the context to the changes being made.

Our core objective remains to support projects that enhance or maintain the vitality and diversity of the Australian natural living environment. Over the Foundation's formative years, we had a particular emphasis on advancing the interests of native birds and the habitats upon which they depend. This has now widened to focus on other native fauna (e.g. the Green Turtle Dreaming project) and creating habitat in general, particularly on a landscape scale (e.g. Ned's Corner).

From the outset, we have followed my father's founding guidelines - to support projects that are innovative, add to our knowledge and understanding, and make a long term difference to the status of species of the environment.

We have aided publishing of environmental research or of field guides where they strive to make knowledge accessible. Publishing is expensive and often beyond the reach of community or research organisations, yet far from being the icing on the cake, publishing as a CD, video, exhibition or book, when combined with a sound distribution plan, provides the means of adding to the sum of human knowledge. A question we always look to answer when we receive a grant application from a PhD project is: what mechanisms are in place to disseminate the research results to those who could best make use of it?

Another question we seek to answer is: what partnerships are in place? Are the people or organisations behind this project working collaboratively with others who inhabit the same sphere of interest? No matter how small the patch of the natural living environment that is under scrutiny, its future wellbeing is dependent on the interaction of many different people and groups. Preserving isolated fragments may constitute good gardening, but it is not an option if we are to maintain or enhance biodiversity in the long term across landscapes.

With this holistic, big picture approach in mind, it follows that the most effective projects in looking after the long term interests of the natural living environment on a catchment-based scale are likely to involve a partnership approach as well as some form of community capacity building. Like the web of life itself, such projects promote connectivity, embracing diversity rather than seeking to ram through solutions like some sort of lone ranger.

At a more prosaic level, we look for a coherent plan of action backed by an adequately assembled budget. I have always liked the old maxim that if you don't know where you are going, you may end up somewhere else. Ideas and figures conjured out of the air are bound to lack substance. We expect some evidence of solid legwork in putting a project together.

Cover illustration: Community consultation workshops held in the old shearing shed at Ned's Corner. The Norman Wettenhall Foundation funded the workshops to ensure local input into Trust for Nature's management plan for this 30,000ha 'showcase' property fronting the Murray River, west of Mildura.

Finally, a good innovative idea will help to capture our attention. While there's nothing wrong with another planting project or straight forward research on how habitat changes are affecting a specific species, governments, corporations and institutions have a natural inclination towards supporting such familiar strategic approaches. Financial prudence may well insist that mainstream institutions ought to remain risk averse, but we see ourselves as playing a part in backing unproven projects with potential. More of the same does not appear as though it will save the environment. We would like to put the Foundation's resources behind new ways of thinking and doing. We can afford to take risks where a project is innovative, interconnected, well planned and we think that it may in the long term make a difference.

Departure of Scott Anderson

There was a major changing of the guard in administration over the past year with the departure of Scott Anderson, who has worked so capably and professionally as Administrator with Norman Wettenhall Foundation since its inception. While he continues to maintain an interest in Foundation activities, he has handed over the administrative role to Leonie Mugavin, who has a background in information management.

A summary of projects that received grants in the 2004 financial year follows along with a financial statement for 2003/04. To read more about projects we fund, visit our website. As well as case studies, you can download submission guidelines or transcripts of the Norman Wettenhall Memorial Lecture series, view past Annual Reports and the background to the Foundation's principles, formation and trustees.

Since its establishment in 1996, the Norman Wettenhall Foundation has distributed \$546,652. For the financial year 2003/2004, Foundation grants totalled \$119,169. Total assets were \$1,934,790 as of 30 June, 2004.

Donations to the Foundation are always gratefully received. All donations to the Norman Wettenhall Foundation are tax deductible.

Gib Wettenhall
Chairman
Norman Wettenhall Foundation

The fourth in the Norman Wettenhall Memorial Lecture series held at Museum Victoria, represented a departure from the past format. Rather than one single lecturer, three speakers offered different perspectives on how they believed an increasingly scarce resource - water - ought to be shared.

Constructed over 16 years from 1969, the Thomson Dam in Gippsland is the largest earth and rockfill dam in the southern hemisphere. The tussle over how water ought to be allocated from Victoria's last and largest dam provided a case study of the colliding conflicts and hard choices that face us all in the future. Whose interests should take precedence? How do we find innovative solutions that ideally involve change, collaboration and compromise so that all interests are taken into account? These are questions that go to the heart of the dilemma of how we move towards a sustainable society and were the subject of debate at the Lecture

Champion for the environment was Dr Paul Sinclair, Director of the Healthy Rivers Campaign for Environment Victoria. The dam is destroying the health of the Thomson River and the Gippsland Lakes, he claimed.

He was followed by farmer John O'Brien, who said water allocations to irrigators in central Gippsland have been cut by 10 per cent and the future of their farms is at stake if security of supply from the Thomson is not restored. John is the Chair of the Victorian Farmers Federation Water Resources Committee.

The final speaker was Professor John Langford, Director of the Melbourne University Water Research Centre. As a hydrologist, John Langford undertook the strategic planning for the Thomson Dam in the 1970s. He claimed that if the Thomson is made to serve 'special interest' groups, there will be nothing left for the citizens of Melbourne.

Each speaker talked for 15 minutes, then fellow trustee Bill Weatherley facilitated some lively questioning from the audience to the three members of the panel.

**THE NORMAN WETTENHALL FOUNDATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2004**

INVESTMENTS

Shares and notes quoted on prescribed Stock Exchange (market value \$2,359,726)	1,779,399
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	1,779,399

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at Bank	9,575
CBA Cash Deposit	94,783
Sundry Debtors	53,430
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	157,788

TOTAL ASSETS	1,937,187
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CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accrued Expenses	2,397
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,397

NET ASSETS	1,934,790
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ACCUMULATED FUNDS	1,934,790
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STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Dividends Received	169,064
Interest Received	11,538
GST Refund Net	(115)
Payments to Suppliers	(11,908)
Grants to Individuals and Institutions	(119,169)
Grants returned	45
Net cash provided by operating activities	49,455

The Earthwatch Institute, NSW

Assisting farmers to understand the benefits of biodiversity

The Foundation supported the Institute's research project *Bio-assess - assessing the colonisation and persistence of woodland birds and other biota* in revegetation based in the Upper Billabong Creek catchment, near Holbrook in NSW. The project aimed to assist farmers in understanding the biodiversity benefits of revegetation of their land and to help them improve the design and management of their revegetation efforts. Earthwatch volunteers were involved in a range of tasks from mist-netting, nest searches, bird observations and tree health assessment. The research has broad application for planning and implementing bush regeneration activities, Landcare groups, land use planners and farmers.



Support of \$11,000 from the Foundation covered key research costs and a number of fully funded fellowships for student participation in the project.

Earthwatch volunteers on bird observation duty.

Trust for Nature, VIC

Two day community workshop held prior to preparing management plan for Ned's Corner

Trustee Geoff Park and chairman Gib Wettenhall attended the two day community/stakeholder consultation held at Trust for Nature's flagship purchase of Ned's Corner, a 30,000 hectare pastoral property west of Mildura with over 35km of Murray River frontage. The Foundation provided \$10,000 funding for the workshop, with the aim of ensuring the vision and subsequent management plan adopted by the Trust for Nature was drawn up in partnership with as wide a group of people as possible.

Facilitator Mike Williams led discussion in the old shearing shed, which elicited strong support for Ned's Corner becoming a 'showcase' property that formed partnerships with stakeholders from Parks Victoria to the Sporting Shooters Association to pursue innovative management approaches. A number of the community/stakeholder representatives at the meeting had not previously met and it was widely agreed that the opportunity to network alone justified holding the consultations on a regular basis.

The Foundation supplied grant funding to Trust For Nature last year to undertake a baseline flora and fauna inventory.

Friends of Lord Howe Island, NSW

Eradicating invasive bamboo

Invasive bamboo (*Arundinaria simonii*) is a noxious weed that represents a major threat to the flora and fauna of World Heritage listed Lord Howe Island. A grant of \$9,550 was paid towards the eradication of bamboo from the Valley Garden, Transit Hill. Dense stands of bamboo and other associated weeds have made nesting and burrowing in the Valley Garden difficult for many bird species. Support from the Foundation contributed to the manual removal of bamboo and the planting of more than 1,000 seedlings. Friends of Lord Howe Island are committed to returning to the site at least once annually, over the next five years, to follow up on this work and to treat any future regrowth of the bamboo. With such a commitment, *Arundinaria simonii* will be eradicated permanently from Lord Howe Island.



Friends of Lord Howe replacing invasive bamboo with 1,000 seedlings.

Birds Australia

Handbook of Australian, New Zealand & Antarctic Birds - Volume 7

A final grant of \$10,000 was paid towards Volume 7, the last in the *HANZAB* series. A monumental achievement, the *HANZAB* series provides a comprehensive summary of the biology, together with detailed illustrations, of all 952 species of birds that occur in Australia, New Zealand and Antarctica. This covers a significant proportion of the Earth's surface and represents some 10% of all known bird species. No other continent has undertaken such an in-depth handbook of its bird species.

Field guide

Promoting a greater appreciation of the wildlife of box-ironbark country, VIC

Produced by Chris Tzaros, *Wildlife of the Box-ironbark Country: A Field Guide to Victoria's Goldfields* aimed to promote a greater awareness and appreciation of the wildlife in the goldfields region and features national parks and conservation reserves, species lists and more than 240 photos of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. The book discusses changes that have occurred to the wildlife in the region, conservation threats and status and box-iron bark vegetation as a habitat for wildlife. Also included with the book is an audio CD, featuring bird song, frog calls and other natural sounds from the box-ironbark forests.



The foundation provided \$10,000 towards publication costs.

Feathertail glider.

Department of Sustainability and Environment, VIC

Raising community awareness about remnant wetlands

Aimed at protecting and enhancing the Buloke grassy woodlands in north east Victoria, this project focused on raising community awareness of the importance of remnant wetlands in Victoria's northern irrigation region.

An on-ground component of the project was the rehabilitation of a surface water drain to incorporate seasonal natural habitat for waterbirds, in particular the brolga. Work included the reconstruction of two shallow freshwater marshes along the drainage line and the planting of more than 800 terrestrial plants by the Loddonvale Landcare Group.

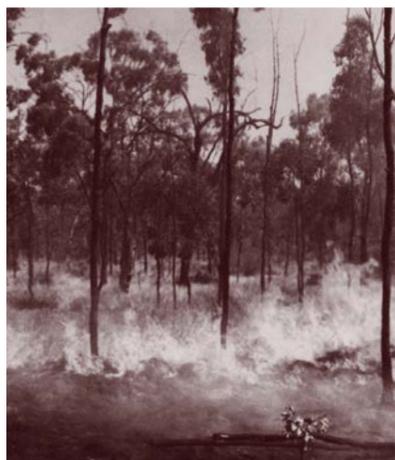
The project liaised with landholders and community groups on the establishment of a community based conservation plan and increased local participation in conservation activities in the region. The Foundation provided a grant of \$6,500.

James Cook University, QLD

Research of the impact on birds of different fire regimes

Research into the impacts of fire on birds indicates a variety of responses to fire, with certain fire regimes favouring some species, while disadvantaging others, resulting in the conclusion that a variety of fire regimes are required to maintain a diverse range of fauna.

There is now an emphasis on land managers to implement mosaic-burning patterns that cover a range of fire regimes in the hope that it will maintain biodiversity by providing a variety of habitats. The efficiency of mosaic burning in enhancing overall diversity has not yet been demonstrated in scientific literature and this study aims to provide further information on whether the use of fire as a management tool is beneficial or detrimental to bird assemblages. The research will have long-term implications for conservation managers in tropical regions and will enhance the conservation of bird diversity in northern Queensland. The Foundation provided \$3,160 towards the research led by Leonie Valentine.



This is a dry season fire that was deliberately lit by CSIRO in August 2000 at the study sites.

Environs Australia, VIC

Spreading sustainability into suburban backyards

The Foundation provided \$14,647 in funding to produce a video to support the spread of the *Sustainability Street* concept, which is being auspiced by Environs Australia.

Implemented in over 20 communities in Victoria and NSW, *Sustainability Street* encourages communities to develop local solutions for implementing sustainable projects within their street's backyards. Environs staff kickstart projects by advertising, then holding meetings at a centre within the community. The Foundation-funded video outlines general principles and provides case studies of projects undertaken in other communities such as worm farms and greywater recycling.

Broome Bird Observatory, WA

Guide book to the migratory birds that stopover at Roebuck Bay

Established by Birds Australia in 1988 as a research and education facility, Broome Bird Observatory is situated on Roebuck Bay, 25 kilometres east of the town of Broome. A grant of \$8,770 was paid to the Observatory towards the publication of a guide to the birds of Roebuck Bay *Life along Land's edge - winged and other wildlife of Roebuck Bay*. Roebuck Bay is one of the most important stopover and non-breeding sites for shorebirds in the entire East-Asian Pacific flyway with more than 150 migratory shorebirds from breeding grounds in the Northern Hemisphere depending on the Bay's rich intertidal flats as a feeding area.



Life along Land's edge - winged and other wildlife of Roebuck Bay explores the bay's special wildlife - and the township of Broome - looking at its massive tides, monsoonal climate, history and Aboriginal heritage.

<http://home.it.net.au/~austecol/observatories/broome.htm>

More than 150 migratory shorebirds stopover at Roebuck Bay.

North Central Catchment Management Authority, VIC

Developing skills and knowledge of young leaders

The 2004 Norman Wettenhall Foundation scholarship recipient in the Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program for 2004 was Rohan Gale. The Foundation's grant of \$1,000 enabled Rohan to develop skills and knowledge about rural and regional communities through participation in a series of structured workshops and events throughout the Loddon Murray region. Participants in the Leadership program are able to put these skills into action by creating and implementing a community project throughout the course of the Program.

<http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/Leadership%20Program.asp>

East Gippsland Birds Observers Club, VIC

Amalgamating bird guides for a region

The East Gippsland Birding Guide brings together 14 separate bird guides to act as a self-guided tour to the birds of East Gippsland. The guide contains maps, directions, facilities and bird species, as well as information on conservation, ethical birdwatching and threatened species in the region. The guide contributes significantly to a community awareness of birds and their various habitats in East Gippsland. The Foundation provided \$3,200 towards publishing the Guide.

Total Grants 2003 - 2004

NAME	AMOUNT
Environs Australia - to produce a video to support the <i>Sustainability Street</i> concept.	\$14,647
The Earthwatch Institute - to assist farmers understand the benefits of biodiversity	\$11,000
Birds Australia - towards volume 7 of the <i>Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds (HANZAB)</i>	\$10,000
Trust for Nature - to support the community consultation and management plan projects at Ned's Corner	\$10,000
Chris Tzaros - to produce a field guide to wildlife of the box-ironbark country	\$10,000
Friends of Lord Howe Island - to eradicate the noxious weed " <i>Arundinaria simonii</i> " (bamboo) from the Valley Garden, Transit Hill	\$9,550
Birds Australia - towards a guidebook on the migratory birds of Roebuck Bay, near Broome.	\$8,770
University of Queensland - to research patch occupancy and historic population dynamics of logrunners in fragmented subtropical rainforests.	\$7,342
Department of Sustainability and Environment - to raise community awareness about remnant wetlands	\$6,500
Euroa Environment Group - towards the protection of the Grey-crowned Babbler.	\$5,000
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education - towards the publication of the stories of people from Manmoyi	\$5,000
University of Sydney - to research the ecology and evolutionary significance of temperature-dependent sex determination in reptiles	\$4,000
Balnarring Primary School - to produce the Balbirooroo Wetlands brochure	\$3,500
St Arnaud Field Naturalists Club - for the purchase a computer, digital camera, associated software and a GPS location unit.	\$3,500
East Gippsland Bird Observers Club - to produce the East Gippsland Birding Guide	\$3,200
James Cook University - research into the impact of different fire regimes	\$3,160
University of Melbourne - research into uncertainty in modeled species distribution data and the implication for conservation management	\$3,000
North Central Catchment Management Authority - towards the Loddon Murray Community Leadership program	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$119,169

Mission

The objectives of the Foundation are:

- i. to support and encourage research, education and recording of all aspects of Australia's natural environment; and
- ii. to build capacity in local communities to effect long-term beneficial change in the natural environment.

Principles

- Projects should be well-considered, well-planned and include a clear budget. Projects should also indicate how the success of the project will be measured and how advice of the project's outcomes will be shared.
- Preference will be given to individuals or projects that demonstrate a collaborative approach, working in partnership with local communities and/or organisations.
- Innovative projects will be encouraged, particularly where they serve as a model for like projects elsewhere in Australia.
- Applications that demonstrate a holistic approach to environmental management are encouraged.

Exclusions

- Projects concerned with advocacy, buildings, art, general education, social welfare and medical research or health matters.
- Capital or endowment funds established to provide a corpus for institutions.
- Domestic or international travel, unless critical to the application.

Procedure

1. In no more than three pages, applicants are asked to provide a brief description of the proposed project, including:
 - i. project rationale
 - ii. project objectives
 - iii. strategies
 - iv. budget breakdown of project costs
 - v. level of funding sought
 - vi. measures of success

Supporting documents, of no more than 10 pages, may also be provided to support an application.

2. Where appropriate, the submission should indicate the project's relevance to the local community and provide evidence of local support. Where the project involves a publication, details should be provided on the quantities concerned and intended modes of distribution.
3. Graduate students seeking funding should include a curriculum vitae and a recommendation from their Supervisor or Head of Department.

The Foundation meets quarterly and advice on each application is issued promptly thereafter.

Subsequent to funding

Funded projects are required to provide regular reports, as specified by the Foundation at the time of an offer being made.

Funded projects are required to publicly acknowledge the Foundation's support by, for example, displaying the Foundation's logo on published material or signage.

Where a project's commencement is conditional on other sources of funding, the Foundation's grant will not be released until written confirmation is received of a grantee's success in gaining additional funding.

Grantees who do not proceed within 12 months of receiving grant approval will be required to re-submit.



Mr Gib Wettenhall (Chairman)

Dr Sarah Ewing

Miss Patricia Feilman, AM

Mr Geoff Park

Mr Ian Sinclair, FCA

Mr William Weatherly

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