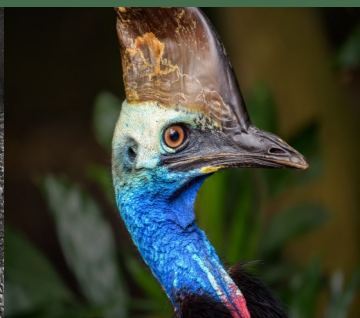
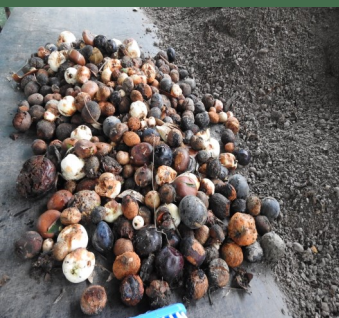


RAINFOREST
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

2020/2021
ANNUAL
IMPACT REPORT



A message from Our Chairman

While Australia continues to adapt to the impacts of COVID-19, we continue to fulfill our conservation mission to safeguard and preserve for posterity the critically endangered flora and fauna of Australia's oldest and most precious rainforests.

Every single minute, approximately 36 football fields worth of trees are lost to deforestation around the world. That's a staggering 51,840 football fields a day!

The Daintree is one of the most biologically diverse rainforests in the world, it is the largest continuous area of rainforest in Australia, spanning more than 2,600 km² and is the fourth largest rainforest in the world.

We at Rainforest Conservation Foundation continue to expand the footprint of the Daintree Rainforest, through the acquisition of land for vital revegetation. Restoring previously developed land back to its original pristine condition is our core mission.

As we move into a new financial year and continue to *save, restore, and preserve* the ecological wonders of the Daintree National Park, I want to personally thank all our donors and supporters. Your generous donations and community support ensures Rainforest Conservation Foundation will continue to save our precious rainforests from further deforestation. Thank you!



Anthony Gellert
On behalf of the Board and Staff
Rainforest Conservation Foundation
October 2021

Save. Restore. Preserve.

Rainforest Conservation Foundation is committed to **saving and protecting threatened tropical rainforests** and the critically endangered wildlife unique to those habitats.

Through community engagement and local partnerships in and around vulnerable areas, we are working towards our **goal of saving and restoring** existing tropical forest and thereby achieve our vision to preserve **our precious rainforests for future generations**.

This is achieved by:

- Saving what we still have
- Restoring what's been lost and
- Preserving our precious rainforest eco-systems for the benefit of future generations



Rainforest Conservation Foundation's mission is to raise funds to buy back privately-owned blocks of land in the Daintree area, restoring them to their original, pristine condition and then place conservation covenants upon their titles, thereby preserving the saved rainforests in perpetuity for the benefit of future generations.

The acquisition and restoration of these blocks of land, located primarily in and around the Wet Tropics, remain an integral component of the Cassowary Corridor that extends from Tully in the south to Cape Tribulation in Far North Queensland. This region is, and always has been, a key focus of Rainforest Conservation Foundation's conservation efforts.

Why is the Daintree Rainforest so important?

Australia's tropical rainforests are amazing. They are repositories for thousands of species, leading scientists to describe them as **'mega-diverse' ecosystems**.

In the whole of Europe, there are only 50 different tree species; 171 in the whole of temperate North America; but in just four, one-hectare plots in the **World Heritage Listed Daintree Rainforest**, scientists have counted 736 different tree species. Some of these are found nowhere else in the world!

And it doesn't stop there. Our Wet Tropical Rainforests are home to more than 60% of Australia's bats and butterflies, 30% of our marsupials and frogs and nearly 50% of all our bird species.

One of the many reasons saving these rainforests is so important, is that all this biodiversity flourishes in less than 0.5% of Australia's land area, in fragmented forests along Australia's coast.

Protecting this truly remarkable repository of diverse flora and fauna is paramount to Rainforest Conservation Foundation and is a key driver of its conservation effort. It cannot be achieved without the generous support of our donors. Thank you.



736 tree species

60% of Australian bats and butterflies



30% Australian marsupials and frogs

50% Australian bird species



Conservation Outcomes 2020/2021

Thanks to the generous support of our amazing, valued donors, the Rainforest Conservation Foundation has successfully undertaken the following conservation endeavors throughout 2020/2021 and we are excited to share this update with you.

Benella Rainforest Nature Reserve

Benella Rainforest Reserve is the headquarters of our field operations, it is where our seed propagation nursery is located and our Donor Engagement Centre. Our focus throughout 2020/2021 has been preparing the property for nature refuge covenants, maintaining the property as a refuge for cassowaries, collecting seeds for propagation and improving the nursery's overall native seeding output.

Nature refuge covenants are also being established for two other properties, Emerald Waters Reserve, where we conduct extensive conservation training and Coopers Creek Reserve, a future location for visitors to appreciate the Lower Wetlands rainforest habitats. These covenants are expected to come into effect by 31 December 2022.

Our valued Rainforest Conservation Foundation Donors are always welcome to visit the Benella Rainforest Reserve and those who were able to visit throughout 2020/2021 shared their experiences with our team, explaining how they had a great time learning about the mysteries of the Daintree ecosystems, one of the oldest rainforests in the world, and assisting Golly, our resident Daintree Conservation Officer with the planting of native rainforest trees.

This reserve is funded with donors donating through The Fundraising Centre, The Jacksonville Zoological Society, and other donors that allocate funds to general support.

Benella Rainforest Nursery

Golly Watson, our Daintree Conservation Officer, has been busy throughout 2020/2021, propagating and planting more than 2,000 trees! As part of our efforts to regenerate our reserves in the Daintree, a further 3,000 seedlings have been cultivated in the nursery as at the end of August 2021.

The process doesn't stop at planting the tree, we carefully maintain our planted trees with regular watering in dry months, weed maintenance until the trees gain canopy coverage and where necessary, if there are gaps in the coverage, we plant further trees.

Funds raised contribute to the operation and maintenance of the nursery and for the maintenance of trees already planted for a period of five years.



Rainforest Conservation Foundation are researching new ways to scope out the land and the most effective and efficient way to plant trees, making use of available water. We also undertake research to determine the original species endemic to the region, and how and when to gather their seeds.

Rainforest Conservation Foundation aim to have a large regeneration project established by 2022. We are in the process of improving our seed collection process and hope to double our nursery productive capacity next year.



Cassowary Corridor

The Benella Rainforest Reserve sits within a region which is identified as both a priority cassowary habitat management area and an important bird area. We maintain our Benella Rainforest Reserve as an important wildlife sanctuary.

Currently, 14 properties covering over 230 acres are being held pending transfer to the Daintree National Park. The transfer of these properties will ensure the continued development of the Cassowary Corridor in the Daintree, thus providing a safe and rich foraging habitat for the cassowaries.



Rainforest Conservation Education

114 students visited the Benella Rainforest Reserve throughout 2020/2021. These numbers are down on previous years due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and imposed travel and public health safety protocols.

For those students who were able to visit the Benella Rainforest Reserve, they spent the day with Golly, our Conservation Officer, touring the facilities, looking at many of the ancient flowering species that the Daintree is renowned for and spending time in the nursery, potting or planting the trees that will one day be replanted into the Daintree.

Feedback from this experience has been positive and Rainforest Conservation Foundation hope to expand these educational tours throughout 2021/2022, COVID-19 permitting.

Rainforest Conservation Foundation has also developed its own Training Academy that focuses on training disadvantaged youth in conservation-related jobs that are portable and offer the participants the opportunity for full-time employment in the future. However, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, we have been unable to conduct training courses this year.

Rainforest Conservation Foundation are in the process of establishing our top 30 list of trees that we grow in the nursery, creating boardwalks for a Rainforest tour on the reserve and other fun things to see and do at Benella. So watch this space...



2020/2021 Funding Allocation

Local Funding

Thanks to our amazing donors, Rainforest Conservation Foundation has invested more than **\$128,000** into local conservation projects!



**Benella Rainforest Reserve
Education Centre: \$37,680**

**Benella Rainforest Reserve Tree propa-
gation and planting: \$44,994**

Creating a Cassowary Corridor: \$45,647

International Funding

Rainforest Conservation Foundation also provided more than **\$37,000** in financial assistance for international conservation projects!



WINNER! 2021 Cassowary Awards: Golly Watson

We were delighted that Golly Watson our highly esteemed Daintree Conservation Officer won the much-coveted **Peter Hitchcock Community Champion** award at the 18th annual Cassowary Awards, held in June 2021.

The Cassowary Awards are the only awards program in Australia to recognise community contributions to world heritage management. The Peter Hitchcock Community Champion award recognises those who provide an inspiration to others through their commitment to and hard work advocating for the area through championing solutions and raising the profile of issues affecting the wellbeing of the area. **Well done Golly!**



How you can continue to support Rainforest Conservation Foundation

Donations

The Rainforest Conservation Foundation relies heavily on financial support from the community. Support from our donors ensures Rainforest Conservation Foundation continues to **Save, Restore and Preserve** our priceless rainforests. They are the lungs of the earth. Together, we can ensure our rainforests are restored and preserved for future generations.

Volunteering

Benella Rainforest Nature Reserve welcomes the community to get involved in our conservation efforts in the Daintree. Contact us to find out more.

Socials

If you haven't done so already, head on over to our Facebook and Instagram pages and like and follow. Help us spread the message out about conservation and the wonderful work being done to protect our natural wonders that are our rainforests.



**Rainforest Conservation Foundation thanks all our generous donors for their continued support throughout 2020/2021, we couldn't do all that we do without you.
Thank You!**

www.rainforestconservationfoundation.org
ABN: 44 073 434 563
hello@rainforestconservationfoundation.org