

EAST COAST NATURE NEWS

Local voices for a living landscape

Our little round-up of what's happening in natural resource management across Glamorgan Spring Bay.

Watch out for Tasmanian Devils on our roads this summer!

The Tassie devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*) is unique to our island and a true wildlife icon. But its survival is threatened – primarily due to Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD) – a transmissible cancer that has caused local populations to become extinct across the State.

While devil populations on the East Coast may be holding on, successful breeding is key. During late spring and early summer young devils are dispersing from their mothers' dens and searching for new habitat. Some may mature early and breed in their first year, allowing a young mum to raise a litter of imps before succumbing to the disease.

Knowing they may be on our roads at night – your help is especially important at this time of the year. Young dispersing devils are small and black; they are hard to see at dusk, in the dark, the rain, and on dark and winding roads. As scavengers, devils often venture onto roads after roadkill and some road sections on the East Coast are roadkill hotspots.

You can help by driving slower at night and in the wet, and on certain road sections, and by staying vigilant – scanning the sides of the road and anticipating wildlife. If you come across a road-killed devil, you can report it using the online [Roadkill reporting app](#). This will help researchers understand the extent of devil roadkill and monitor the spread of DFTD across the State.

Other details you may observe and report include the sex of the devil, whether you think it has facial tumours, and if it is a juvenile or adult. But remember, safety first! Never put yourself or others in danger and only stop if it's safe to do so.



Photo : JJ Harrison (<https://www.jjharrison.com.au/>)



Meet Pippa the Conservation Detection Dog

 **Swansea Town Hall**

 **Thursday, 11 December at 11:30 am**

 **Bring water, sunscreen, and a hat**

Following in the footsteps of Mel Kelly and Fonz, the east coast's legendary weed sniffing conservation K9, Morgan McPherson from Enviro-dynamics has been training Pippa, a young springer spaniel, to detect the root rot fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

Pippa is part of a team of specially trained dogs supported by a Saving Native Species grant. Their mission is to help stop the spread of *Phytophthora dieback* across Australia and aid the recovery of threatened species and ecosystems impacted by this disease.

Phytophthora poses a serious threat in Tasmania. It causes dieback, killing native plants, weakening entire ecosystems, and spreading easily through soil carried on boots, tyres, tools, and water run-off.

To raise awareness and demonstrate how we're tackling this issue, Pippa will showcase her incredible scent detection skills in the field. She'll even perform a car search, proving how her nose can identify the pathogen before it becomes a bigger problem. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn more about dieback, understand the scale of the threat, and see how dogs like Pippa are playing a vital role in protecting Tasmania's bushland.



Swift Parrots Return

Swift parrots (*Lathamus discolor*) have returned to Tasmania for this year's breeding season, after spending the winter months on the mainland. These beautiful parrots rely on flowering eucalypts, especially blue gum and black gum, for food, and they nest in the natural hollows that form over many years in large, mature gum trees.

The Landscape Recovery Foundation's swift parrot team is currently out in the field monitoring breeding behaviour and building our understanding of the environmental factors that influence nest success for this critically endangered species. With so many blue gums blooming along the east coast this year, it's no surprise we're finding swift parrot nests, like the one pictured, across several key breeding areas in the region.

Loss of breeding habitat remains the biggest threat to this charismatic little parrot. The protection of large old gum trees, which are vital for both feeding and nesting, is more important than ever.

This work is funded by the Australian government's Saving Native Species program, and you can learn more about our work here:

<https://landscaperecovery.com.au/stories/swift-parrots-beating-the-odds>

**IN BRIEF
Shorebird Update**



Last issue the Friends of Orford Bird Sanctuary had erected temporary fencing and signage to protect the nesting birds at Spring Beach. Latest report is that 3 hooded plover chicks have been spotted at the southern end of the beach and another two at the northern end. Thanks everyone for giving the birds some space.



Are you spreading weeds?

Compost and sheep and horse manure are good for the garden, but can also contain weed seeds. If you are selling or buying roadside manure you may be inadvertently spreading weeds. It is important to know where the manure comes from and its potential to carry and spread declared weeds. The [Biosecurity Act 2019](#) introduces in Tasmania a new legal obligation known as the general biosecurity duty – or GBD. Under the GBD, any person dealing with plants or animals (or their derived products) who knows, or reasonably ought to know, that a biosecurity risk is posed, or is likely to be posed, has a legal duty to ensure that the risk is prevented, eliminated or minimised so far as is reasonably practicable.

PASSIONATE ABOUT THE EAST COAST ENVIRONMENT?

JOIN THE EAST COAST CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

The ECCC, established by the Landscape Recovery Foundation in partnership with Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, plays a key role in protecting our natural resources and implementing the NRM & Climate Resilience Strategy.



- ✔ Meet quarterly
- ✔ Share your skills and ideas
- ✔ Help guide local action on biodiversity, land management, climate resilience & more

We welcome people from all walks of life – from agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, tourism, business and conservation, to cultural heritage, communications, finance, and community voices.

Expressions of Interest are now open!

<https://landscaperecovery.com.au/east-coast-catchments-committee>

