

# Land Management Update

lungtalanana, Babel, Chappell, Badger, Big Dog,  
Preminghana, Gowan Brae, Risdon Cove & putalina



AUG2014



This is a quick overview of some of the things the TAC land management team have been up to in the past 6 months. It includes the islands, Risdon Cove, putalina, Gowan Brae and now Preminghana.

For more details, reports, maps, concerns or questions please call Tim Brown or Andry Sculthorpe at the Hobart TAC office.

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Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre Inc.



# lungtalanana



**The fire that consumed the whole island in February 2014 has got us thinking how we can better understand fire and its relationship to Aboriginal land management. Research into past fire history (going back over 4,000 years), the age of sand dunes and surveys into uncovered heritage is well underway.**



Life and death after the fire



Most of the trees on the island have been killed by the fire, but for the grass trees and blue gums it has stimulated new growth. Some of the threats on the island such as gorse (which had just been controlled by the land management crew in early February) and phytophthora will need to be closely watched in these coming months as the island springs back to life.

The TAC is working with Tas Uni, Macquarie Uni and the Australian National Uni to study the history of fire on the island, how it was used and its effects on the island.

Colin Hughes, Caleb Pedder and Nathan Maynard spent several days in May identifying signs of where the old people travelled that had been uncovered by the fire.

All of this information will be useful for management and community now and into the future.



Core samples showing charcoal in profile





# Chappell Island



*The Aboriginal community's connection with the land is strengthened; The land and its ecosystems are healthy; Weeds and pests have been eradicated.*

Vision from the Badger and Hummocky Management Plan 2011-2016



Work continues on Chappell Island to protect rookeries and make it a place community would want to stay. A large area surrounding the accommodation has now been totally cleared of boxthorn, and a long strip along the eastern side has been cleared using the cut and paint method. Shrubs and tree species from the island have been planted in cleared areas, as well as tussocks. Boxthorn is a serious threat on Chappell and takes a lot of time and effort to control.



The crew are also controlling mirror bush which is poking its head on the island and seaspurge on the beaches. Ambrose and co know many of the Cape Barren Geese and tiger snakes by name, and have a growing knowledge of the islands muttonbirding history as they uncover signs of their ancestors. They were able to share this with a community visit in March this year.





# Babel, Big Dog & Badger Islands

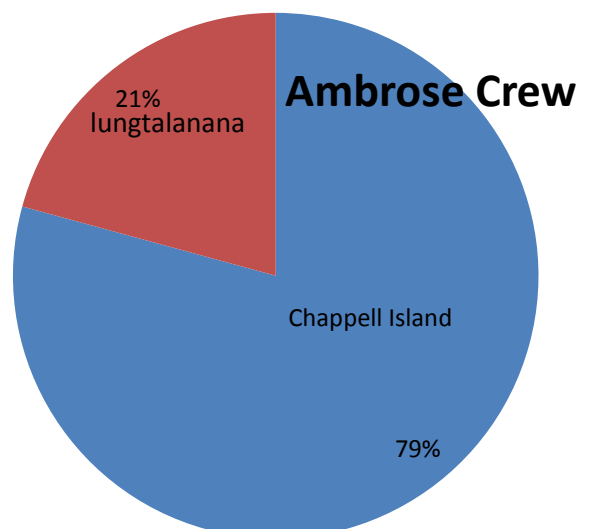
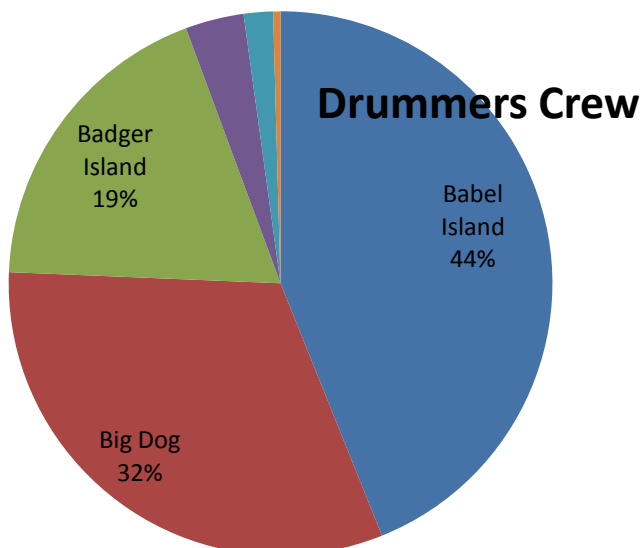
Drummer's crew came back to Babel after the birds had left to continue their work removing boxthorn and planting tussocks to stop erosion and provide more suitable rookery areas. Learning from thick growth of past plantings, the tussocks are now being planted with wider gaps to provide better access for birders.

Badger Island now has 4 fenced off areas to keep the sheep and wallaby out, this is to trial different forms of regeneration to see how the island would recover if grazing were ever to be removed. The island only has a few boxthorn left, after much of the weed was cut and pasted by the crew early this year.

Big Dog, as all muttonbird islands, had the lowest numbers of birds return this year in decades. Monitoring will continue, including the data from TAC monitoring on Babel and Big Dog. The fireweed that is covering much of the island now should die within the next two years, but we need to make sure that fire is managed to avoid huge outbreaks in the future.

Gowan

Brae 3% lungtalanana 2%





# Gowan Brae



(c) Robert Raven

A group of scientists, as part of the 'Bush Blitz' program, worked alongside community members from all over the state (young and old) on Gowan Brae looking at plants, animals and insects. It was great to see the young folk getting involved. Robert Beeton found a new species of spider (!) and was given naming rights. He named it *miturgopelma paruwi* – palawa kani for 'beetle' after his Dad's nickname.

In the past six months a lot work has been done to make Gowan Brae more accessible to the community. The road has been upgraded, plumbing installed, a composting toilet, new kitchen, the shack cleaned and painted, new bunk beds...

A working group is converting community aspirations for future management of the property into a Management Plan for the property.



(c) Mim Jambrecina





# Preminghana



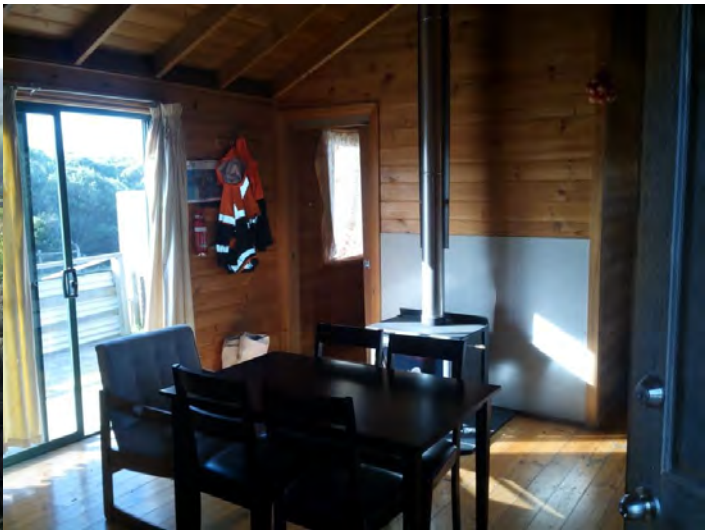
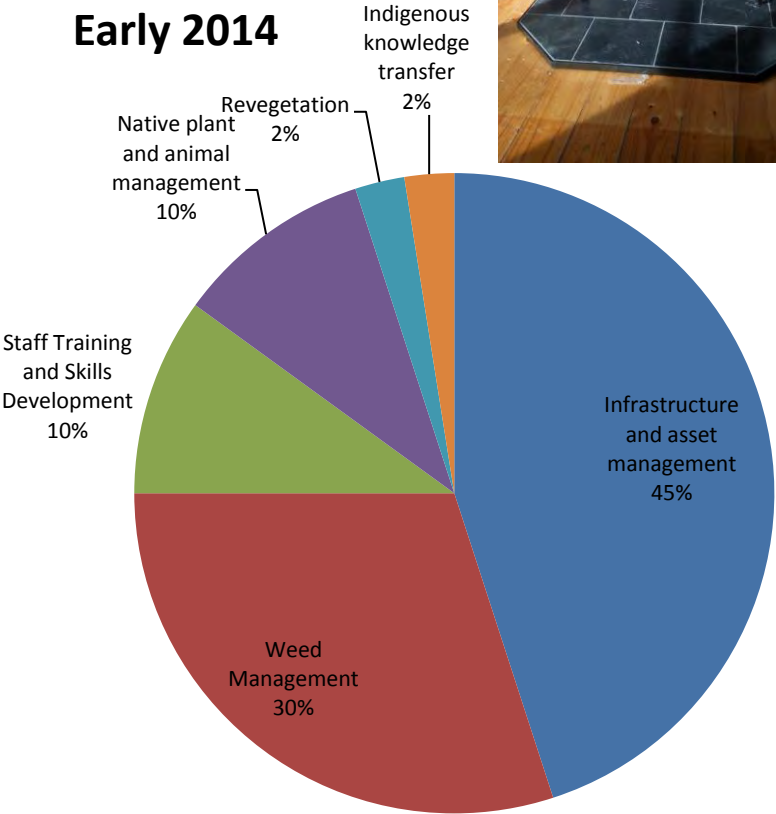
TAC took over management of Preminghana in early 2014. A supervisor and casual crew were assembled in May.

Initial priorities were to get the infrastructure up to scratch, to allow for safe, effective and comfortable visitor and worker facilities.

Like Gowan Brae, community aspirations were workshoped in July and are being drawn up into a plan. Specific reports on weed and fire management have also been compiled.

On ground work has re-started on the gorse.

## Preminghana Early 2014





# RISDON COVE AND PUTALINA LAND MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre

winter 2014

## OVERVIEW

The focus for the land management program over the last 12 months has been to continue to maintain results of previous works, and to put into practice the vision for what we are trying to achieve at Risdon and putalina. The land management plans for the areas both highlighted the need for to make Risdon and putalina places where Aboriginal community would want to spend time. This is achieved in part by restoring the cultural landscape and maintaining healthy country, and partly by focusing on catering for peoples needs while they are visiting by ensuring good facilities. The work at putalina and Risdon includes:

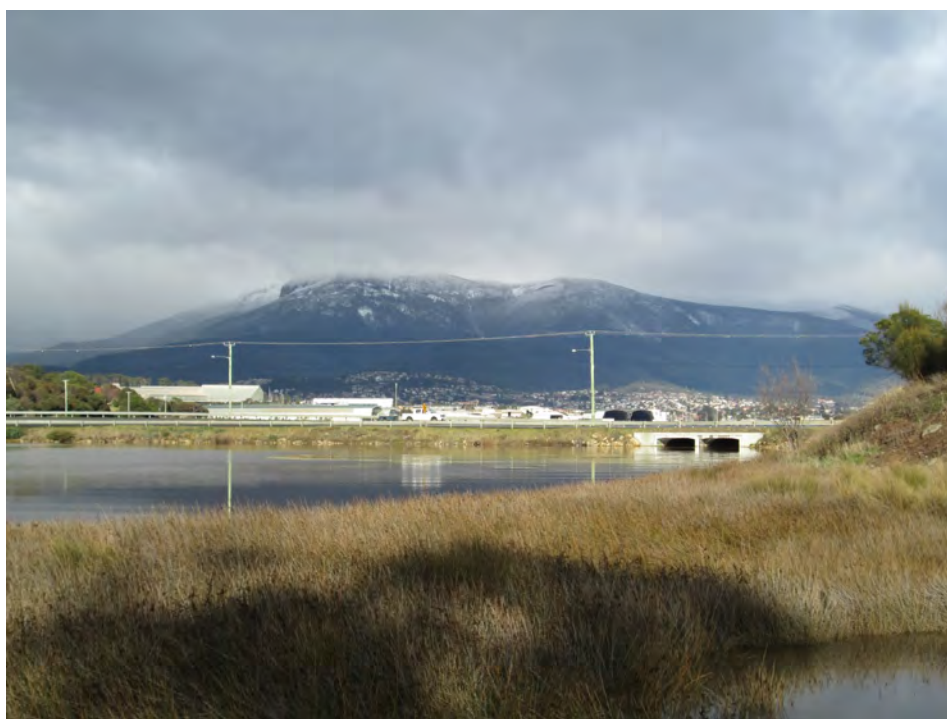
- Cultural and natural heritage management
- Strategic weed control
- Feral animal control
- Education and visitor use

The TAC also runs other programs on these lands which Land Management Program can support and which help to provide meaning and context for the land management aspirations.

### *Did you know:*

*The TAC's land management program is funded by the Working on Country and Indigenous Protected Areas programs.*

*These programs are essential for the current land management work to continue. This current round of funding has 4 years remaining. Changes of government and policy make the future uncertain, but we hope this funding will continue as it has over the last 15 years.*



Looking towards kunanyi from Risdon Cove wetlands winter 2014

*The Aboriginal community connection with Risdon Cove is strengthened; The land and sea and their ecosystems are healthy; The significance of Risdon Cove as a gathering and educational place for the Aboriginal community is maintained and enhanced.*

*Vision from management Plan 2011*



## Weed Control

Risdon Cove also has Boxthorn, although not in the quantities present on the Islands (luckily). This year we have seen the removal of the last patch of mature Boxthorn. Continued follow up for re-growth will be necessary for a few years to come. The methods are pretty much the same as on the Islands; cut and paste and burn dead wood. We also plant out the burnt areas with Poa grass to guard against new weeds, provide habitat clumps for native animals and bring back native grasses.



Priority area native veg community –Boxthorn control



Periwinkle control at putalina using black plastic

### What are we protecting?

Places of natural value can provide us with a sense of well being, a well being derived from the experiencing of environments or places in which the presence, energy or richness of a functioning ecological landscape may be experienced.

Areas that have survived the worst ravages of European invasion allow Aboriginal people today the ability to see, feel, smell and be absorbed within an environment which imparts a shared experience with the ancestors.

So too is preserving what remains of the ancestral landscape in degraded or damaged areas.

Preserving remnants in degraded areas is of importance in contributing to the overall character particularly where other important cultural elements exist.

Natural environments hold cultural resources of known and unknown qualities. As we reconstruct the knowledge of the past through education and experiencing our lands, we come to realise the values they hold more and more.

By ensuring continuity of native vegetation communities and species we preserve our inheritance from the past for the future.

## Overview

Priority weeds for control are:

- Periwinkle (*Vinca major*)
- Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*)
- Boxthorn (*Lycium ferrocosimum*)
- Bridal Creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*)
- Gorse (*Ulex europeaus*)

These weeds pose a serious risk to the native vegetation communities that exist. The priority areas for weed control have been mapped based on the level of existing infestation. These areas are targeted and protected first so they don't get worse. Sometimes though to eradicate a weed we chase it wherever it goes to try to totally remove it from the property.

**Periwinkle control** by covering with black plastic and revegetating with native grass after it dies off has been undertaken at Risdon and putalina. Over a thousand plants have been planted in these areas in the last 12 months. With follow up weed control and maintenance these areas are showing promise.



Planting at Risdon Cove after Periwinkle removal



Bridal Creeper– a new found foe at Risdon Cove



## putalina huts

The top hut at putalina is an important historic building for the Aboriginal community. Works to ensure its survival were carried out earlier this year including reflashng the roof, applying preserving stain to the outside walls and fixing a leaky roof.

The Morgan Mansell hut and toilet block underwent similar treatment. One of the issues arising now is the deterioration of the *Morgan Mansell Community Camp* sign, which is fading and flaking away. Do we replace it with a different sign ? Replicate it with a new sign ? Or try to touch it up as best we can?.....



Restoring the Top hut at putalina



## Aboriginal Childrens trail

The land management workers at Risdon Cove and putalina have been lucky enough to have an opportunity to do activities that involve sharing knowledge with the children from the Aboriginal Childrens Centre. Over the past year the land management team have been involved in school holiday activities to teach the kids different cultural activities such as making bark canoes, huts, cooking on the fire, learning about bush food and plants.

The presence of the Childrens Centre on Aboriginal land has opened up opportunities for this sort of thing to occur on a regular basis and we hope to build on it for the future.

Reopening an old overgrown track at Risdon Cove and installing a new walkway constructed from logs from the property has been a highlight for workers at Risdon.



Section of log walkway on the Risdon Cove childrens trail



## Fire Management

Fire has been used as a management tool at Risdon Cove in a variety of ways since the land was returned in the late 90's. It can be useful for weed control, or removing unwanted vegetation or changing the landscape to suit a purpose.

We are hoping to employ a regular fire management regime that helps to fulfil our goals of increasing native grass cover and reducing highly competitive pasture grasses that are dominating the grasslands.

The TAC is developing a monitoring method to determine which fires are the best for our land. Some of these methods were inspired by a workshop in Cape York that members of the land management team and other *pakana* went to in July 2014. The workshop was run to share traditional knowledge from the Cape region to other land managers around Australia.

*Risdon Cove is part of a whole cultural landscape. The numerous cultural materials within this landscape demonstrate Aboriginal peoples' connection to the land and adjacent waters. Many important heritage places are known throughout Mumirimina country. RCMP 2011*



Dense exotic pastures dominate much of the grassland at Risdon Cove



Trial burn to develop methods for cool and hot burns in phalaris grass.

**The workers:** the past 12 months has seen quite a few different faces in land management at Risdon and putalina, we'd like to thank them all for the blood sweat and tears each one has put in. It's not always an easy gig working on the land but everyone has contributed in their own way thanks especially to Sheldon Thomas, Cody Summers, Darryl Maynard, Linton Burgess, Andrew Jones, Jack Spotswood Macdonald, Nathan Maynard, Danny Macdonald.

For any questions about works occurring or further information please contact the Risdon-putalina coordinator Andry Sculthorpe ph: 62 340700 or email: [andry.s@tacinc.com.au](mailto:andry.s@tacinc.com.au)

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