

## Jongsma, Annemieke

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**From:** Barbara Willoughby-Thomas [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 22 May 2019 7:28 PM  
**To:** LA Committee - ETCS  
**Subject:** Supplements to ACT Wildlife submissions  
**Attachments:** Attachment A 2003-brigalow-declaration.pdf; Attachment B Netting.pdf; Attachment C Fencing.pdf; Attachment D Lynda DM turtle.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hi Anna

It was lovely to meet you all again today. Thanks so much for the opportunity. Thanks also for inviting me to email these extra items.

I hope some of it will be useful to the Review process:

Firstly here's a link to an excellent article which quotes Professor Hugh Possingham (from QLD Uni and world expert on maths for Biodiversity. In summary:

Possingham says Australia is still underspending on nature conservation and this is responsible for a continued decline in species and landscape function. "Our spending would have to go up about five to ten fold," he says.

**Attachment A** The famous "Brigalow Declaration" 2003 - Produced by leading Scientists about land clearing in Queensland. The effects of land clearing on decline of biodiversity and the inevitable threats humans face, are explained in in lay-mans terms. The situation may equally apply to the land clearing in Canberra.

**Attachments B and C** - ACT Wildlife education initiatives on tree netting and barb wire fencing. We also use the Hotline to send callers information on better practices.

**Attachment D** The sad story from Twitter, about one turtle in Dickson - time to think carefully about road making.

If the Committee haven't already read it, many people recommend the Award winning book "**Dark Emu**" by **Bruce Pascoe**, as an introduction to how we might re think our Eurocentric attitude to Australia's landscape and nature. I know there are farmers in South Australia growing Australian native produce, who can't keep up with world demand.

See this article [Farmer can't meet demand for Australian Native produce](#)

Thanks again and have a good weekend.

Regards  
Barbara Mabbott

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[REDACTED]



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**Thank you for your co-operation.**

# The Brigalow Declaration

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2003

*On open letter to the Prime Minister John Howard and Queensland Premier Peter Beattie on the need to end the clearing of mature native bushland in Queensland*

Dear Prime Minister and Premier Beattie,

We the undersigned Australian scientists write to you concerning the issue of land clearing in Queensland.

We endorse the leadership that you have both recently shown on this issue. We encourage you to implement a solution as fast as possible.

The large scale destruction and removal of native woodlands, forests, wetlands and grasslands remains the biggest single threat to biodiversity in Australia, rivalled only by the impact of introduced species. Evidence for the large and irreversible negative impact of vegetation clearance on Australia's biodiversity is unquestionable (DEST 1995; Garnett & Crowley 2000; SOE 2001; Possingham *et al.* 2002; NLWRA 2002; Cogger, *et al.*, 2003).

In Australia 500,000 hectares or more of land (SOE 2001; ACF 2001) is still cleared annually. Around two-thirds of this is mature bushland which has not previously been cleared. This rate of clearing is only exceeded by developing nations such as Brazil, Indonesia, the Congo and Bolivia (UNFAO 2001).

The great majority of clearing occurs in Queensland, which clears at least 75% of the total areas cleared in Australia (SOE 2001; QCC *et al.* 2001; Benson 2001; Queensland Herbarium 2001; DNR 2003).

Solving the problem of land clearing in Queensland has been identified as one of the most cost-efficient means of minimising our continent's ongoing loss of biodiversity (Possingham *et al.* 2002).

For every 100 hectares of native woodlands cleared about 2000 birds, 15,000 reptiles and 500 native mammals will die when, or soon after, their habitat is destroyed. A recent study conservatively calculated that in total over 2.1 million mammals, 8.5 million birds and 89 million reptiles die from land clearing operations in Queensland each year (Cogger *et al.* 2003).

These direct losses are exacerbated by secondary changes to the fragments of native vegetation that remain as clearing progresses. For example, small and isolated fragments of native vegetation become more susceptible to invasion by introduced weeds and feral animals. These compete with, or prey on, the remaining native species. Native species in

small fragments are more susceptible to local extinction from natural events such as wildfire and disease.

The direct and indirect losses of species at a local scale increases the probability of regional and ultimately state-wide and national extinctions. Such extinctions are now rapidly accelerating in southern states where extensive clearing has occurred, and are now beginning in the more recently cleared districts of the Brigalow belt of southern and central Queensland. For example, there is now a well documented pattern of accelerating extinctions occurring amongst woodland birds (Robinson & Traill 1996; Garnett & Crowley 2000; Ford *et al.* 2001). While many regions have already lost significant numbers of native species, regional extinctions will continue long after vegetation clearance ceases as the phenomenon known as the "extinction debt" runs its course (Possingham 2001).

At a larger scale clearing leads to fundamental changes in the functioning of ecosystems and landscapes, such as changes to water flows both above and below the ground. Of particular concern is rising 'dryland' salinity caused by the removal of long-lived and deep-rooted native plants. Salinity results directly from the removal of native vegetation during land clearing operations (NWLRA 1999; Hatton & Nulsen 1999).


Recent research in Queensland has highlighted the widespread threat of salinity in that state (DNRM 2002).

In addition to threatening farmland and water supplies salinity threatens remaining biodiversity. Remaining native vegetation, particularly in lower parts of the landscape can be degraded or destroyed by rising salty water tables (NWLRA 2001). Increases in salt loads in wetlands and rivers kills aquatic species sensitive to moderate or high salt levels (NLWA 2002).

Scientists see vegetation clearance as such an important issue that it was the topic of the first position statement issued by The Ecological Society of Australia (ESA 1995). The evidence for vegetation clearance being a primary and preventable threat to biodiversity has changed little since that statement was issued.

We understand that there is currently an opportunity to bring forward effective controls for clearing of mature native vegetation in Queensland.

We urge you to act decisively on this issue.



**Professor Hugh Possingham** (DPhil, Oxon)

For and on behalf of the following 420 biological scientists on the attached list who are signatories of the Declaration.

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## Fatal attraction

Native animals, increasingly displaced from their natural habitat by tree clearing and extreme weather, are resorting to flowering and fruiting trees in our gardens.

Tree netting is a popular way to protect fruit from wildlife, particularly in urban areas, but the wrong type of netting can be deadly. Hungry animals are easily caught in 'bird netting', which has a mesh size greater than 1cm square.

The rescue statistics show that most animals die with horrific injuries or require long term care before release.



*This is the wrong type of netting - you can easily poke your finger through. It fails the 'finger test'.*

## Tragic tangles

Birds, bats, lizards, snakes and the occasional possum are the main victims of inappropriate netting. Animals become tangled in large mesh netting and cannot free themselves. While struggling to escape, the net cuts ever deeper into the animal.

### Net disposal

Like ghostnets in the ocean, unwanted netting can continue to maim and kill. Ensure that discarded netting cannot become a hazard to wildlife.

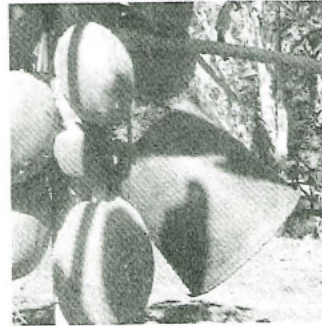


## Tree netting guide

### 2 ways to protect your backyard fruit and wildlife

#### 1. Protecting individual fruit.

Search online for 'fruit protection bags', look for *Green Harvest* and *The Native Shop* for a range of bags and sleeves. Plastic garden pots can also be useful.



*Cover individual fruit*



*Fruit protection bag*

#### 2. Protecting the whole tree.

We recommend a densely woven net that will not trap wildlife and doesn't need a frame, such as the *Fruit Saver* nets, *Hail Guard* or *Vege Net*. These nets are all white - the colour best seen by animals at night. Go to our website for videos about these nets and other ideas.



*Hail Guard over polypipe frame, fixed to the ground*

## The right netting

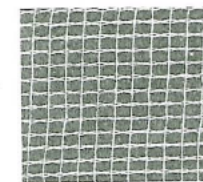
**Our 'finger test' - choose netting that you cannot poke your finger through.**

For smaller trees up to 13m in circumference, we recommend *Fruit Saver* nets, available in 2 sizes.

For larger trees, buy *Hail Guard* off the roll from Fernland Agencies [www.fernland.com.au](http://www.fernland.com.au) and *Vege Net* in 2 sizes from [www.greenharvest.com.au](http://www.greenharvest.com.au).

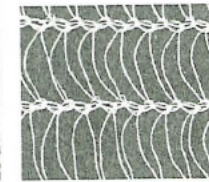
### 3 good nets which pass the 'finger test'

*Netting shown 1:1 life size*



#### Fruitsaver

2 sizes for small and medium trees



#### Hail Guard

Off 6 m roll



#### Vege net

2 sizes, 6m x 10m and 6m x 20m

## Fruit Saver Fruit Tree Nets

This fitted box-shaped net has a long skirt that gathers around the trunk of the tree.

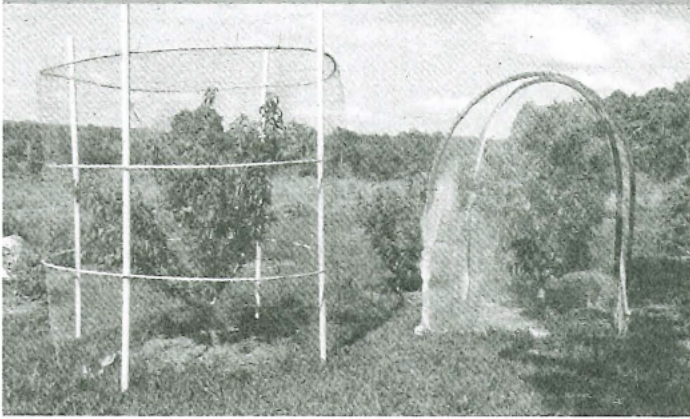
The 2mm woven mesh excludes fruit fly and codling moth as well as birds, bats and possums. It has only a 15% shade factor and is currently best bought online at:

[www.fruittreenets.info](http://www.fruittreenets.info)



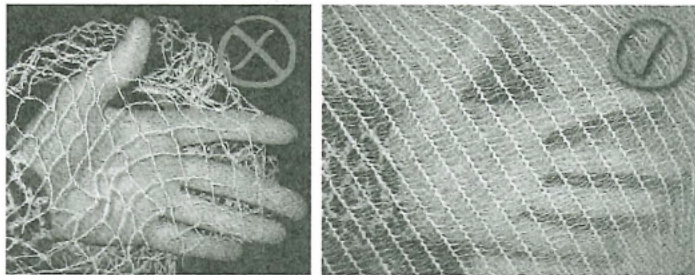
**We recommend only using a densely woven net - use the 'finger test'**

## Helpful hints



Go online to watch our instructional videos showing how to build these two wildlife friendly structures, and more...

- Choose a smaller variety of fruit tree that is easy to protect, prune and harvest. Stay safe, avoid using ladders.
- Use a supporting frame to protect the tree from the weight of the net, and prevent birds pecking fruit through the net.
- Consider how you will access your fruit inside the net, Fruit Saver nets have an access flap for this.
- The base of the net should be secured to the trunk of the tree or to the ground to prevent wildlife getting inside.
- Remove nets promptly after fruiting to prevent damage to new growth.
- Check your nets regularly. If an animal is caught visit [www.fauna.org.au](http://www.fauna.org.au) to find a wildlife carer in your area.



The densely woven net on the right protects your

## Leading the way

Some hardware stores in Australia have taken the lead and stopped selling netting that is potentially harmful to wildlife. Ask your local supplier to stock only fruit tree netting that passes the 'finger test' - netting that you cannot poke your finger through.

### For more information

Visit [www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com) and look for the link to the netting page. Get up-to-date information including instructional videos showing how to net your trees in a wildlife friendly way.



# wildlife friendly netting

[www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com)

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## Protect your garden fruit in a wildlife friendly way!



wildlifefriendlynetting

## 86% of recorded wildlife entanglements occur on the top strand of barbed wire fences



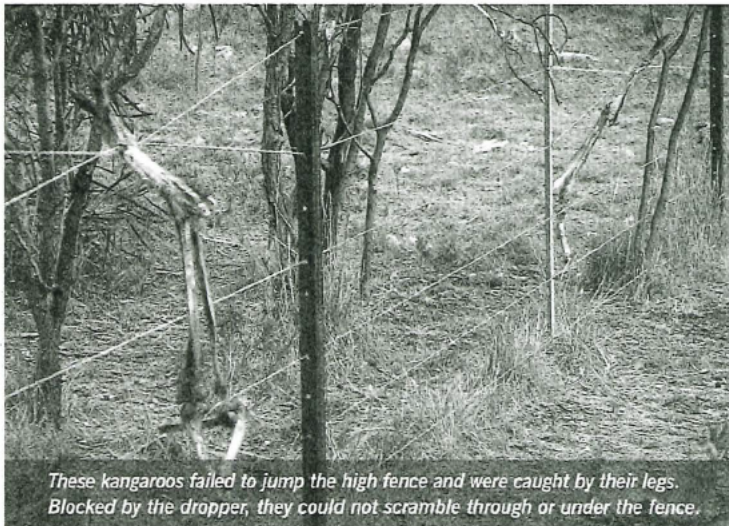
Fences close to water prevent wetland birds from landing and taking off safely  
[www.ozcranes.net](http://www.ozcranes.net)

Each year thousands of animals face a cruel death entangled on barbed wire fences.

Many nocturnal animals like bats, gliders and owls fail to see the fence or cannot clear the height in windy conditions. Over 75-wildlife species have been recorded as fence victims; most caught on the top strand.

Kangaroos and emus can get hung up on plain wire and mesh fences. If the fence is too high the animals' legs can become caught in a twist of wire. Low wires and tension droppers may prevent larger animals from squeezing through the fence.

Wildlife need to move freely and safely across our landscape unless being purposely excluded for safety and other reasons.



These kangaroos failed to jump the high fence and were caught by their legs. Blocked by the dropper, they could not scramble through or under the fence.

## Designing friendly fences

### Stop and think

Do you really need a fence? How will a fence affect the wildlife? If there are no animals to keep in or out, could a line of native trees do the job?

### Avoid barbed wire

When fencing livestock, consider using a combination of plain wire and electric fencing. If using barbed wire, the main issues are fence placement, visibility and type of top strand, especially in entanglement hotspots.



### Reduce tangle hotspots

To reduce the risk to wildlife, avoid placing barbed wire fences on ridge lines, near feed trees, across wildlife corridors, over or near water bodies.



Visit our website for details of a tool to easily split polypipe

To remedy an existing hotspot:

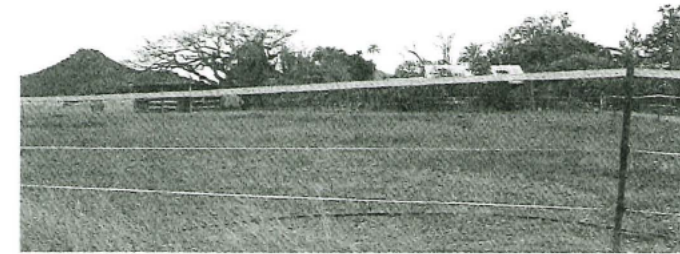
- replace barbs with plain wire
- cover barbs with split polypipe
- make the fence more visible.

### Increase visibility

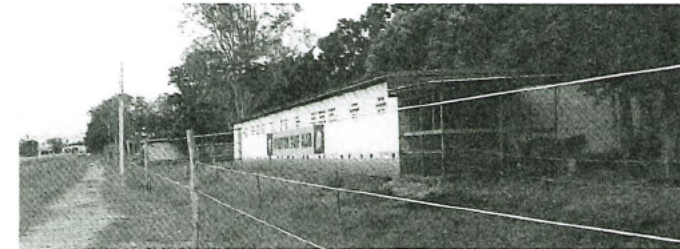
Wire gates are often hard to see and a danger to humans and wildlife. Plastic bags offer a short-term fix. A better way to improve visibility is to use white nylon sighter wires or white electric fence tapes that flicker in the breeze.



## Friendly fencing in action



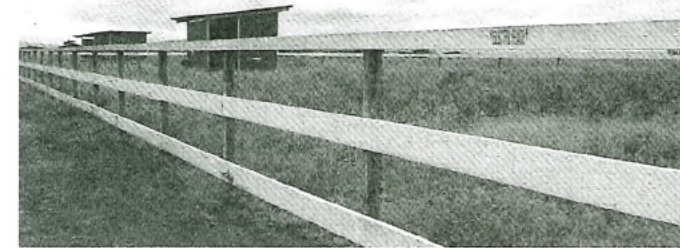
Go to our website for details of the range of available white sighter wires. This includes nylon coated, solid nylon and electric wires.



40mm white electric fence tape on the top strand increases visibility. It can be used active or inactive on all fence types, including barbed wire.



Wise placement of a fence can make a big difference. To avoid the risk of a tangle hotspot on the ridgeline this fence was placed below the ridge.



Post and rail fences can be made from wood or plastic. This one is also electric.

**WFF is safe and effective for wildlife, people and livestock.**

## A tale of two fences

### In the city

Louise lives in the city near a park and found a glider caught on a barbed wire security fence. She worked with the Council to find a solution. The Council replaced the barbed wire with plain wire and planted more trees near the fence to shorten the gliding distance.



Glider membranes are extremely vulnerable to barbed wire

### In the country

Geoff, who lives on a rural property with cattle, found a flying-fox caught on his barbed wire fence. The bat had come to feed on a nearby native shrub.

Geoff decided to keep the shrub as it was an important feed tree for various animals. He covered the top two strands of barbed wire near the shrub with polypipe painted white.



## What can you do?

- Encourage wildlife friendly fencing in your local area. Talk to neighbours, councils, NRM groups, fencing contractors and suppliers.
- Monitor barbed wire fences in your local area. Report any entangled animals to your local wildlife rescue organisation, found at [www.fauna.org.au](http://www.fauna.org.au)

Do not approach a trapped animal as it is likely to struggle and do more damage. Where possible, leave the rescue to an experienced carer who will untangle the animal with minimal further injury. Do not handle flying-foxes.



# wildlife friendly fencing

[www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com)



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## Doing some fencing? Make it wildlife friendly!



wildlifefriendlyfencing

< **Lynda\_The\_Mundane**  
@LMildwater



Hi im sorry to dm you out of nowhere but im near Dickson wetlands & today i turtle as big as a dinner plate was run over, he was deqd but it was so bad i did take pic but wouldnt post or send without warning as it had me crying. I just think ppl need to knpw animals living at wetlands do cross roads & im not sure how tp make ppl aware of it & thought you may know. Ive emailed the rspca Regards Lynda



16/11/18, 2:16 pm



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Approved by the Australian Government, Canberra.