

Increasing Habitat Connections

The Temby family protects and buffers remnant bushland

CASE STUDY

INCREASING HABITAT
CONNECTIONS
MORRONGING



ABOVE: After the planting - Healthy Seedlings

(photo: Julie Palmer)

INSERT: Pre planting scene shows the bareness

(photo: Julie Palmer)

PROJECT TITLE

Increasing Habitat Connections -
The Temby family protects and
buffers remnant bushland

PROJECT MANAGER

Julie Palmer, SWCC

PROJECT DURATION

October 2012 – June 2013

PROJECT

Restoration of Ecological Linkages
through Revegetation at Morrongoing
– this is a sub-project of the “Building
the Toolibin, Dongolocking, Tarin
Rock Ecobridge” project

PARTNERSHIPS

Landholders, Robert Temby and
Meryn Clune, the Dumbleyung
Landcare Zone, The Great Southern
District of Department Environment
and Conservation and it’s sub-
program Land for Wildlife

BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries of this project are
the diverse range of native flora and
fauna which exist here. The native
vegetation provides crucial habitat
for the endangered Red-tailed
Phascogale which is present.
The community benefits from
this project as it is contributing to
sustainable agricultural practices
ensuring the ongoing protection
of these natural places for future
generations present in this area



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Department of
Environment and Conservation
Our environment, our future



This project is supported by the South West Catchments Council, through funding from the Australian Government's Program, Caring for Our Country and the Government of Western Australia.

The Murronging property has been farmed by the Temby family since Robert's grandfather returned from the First World War, where he served as a 10th Light Horseman. Robert Temby and Meryn Clune now manage the property and it is Robert's keen eye for the changes that have been happening to remnant bushland that gave the impetus for this project.

Robert and his parents has always enjoyed diversity of native plants and birds that call his farm home, so he was quick to notice that the grass trees that had always been a feature of the property were dying off. He assumed that grazing by stock was at least partly to blame and decided that this rocky remnant would need to be fenced off. He also thought it would be a good opportunity to test his theory that native bushland, given the chance, would naturally heal itself.

Robert felt he needed some technical and financial support, so he approached Land for Wildlife. The property's location is the key. It lies in the Dongolocking area, which forms part of the Tarin Rock Ecoscape. This is a landscape-scale project implemented by the Department of Parks and Wildlife to conserve the remnants of a highly diverse ecosystem with nationally listed endangered fauna and flora, including the Red-tailed Phascogale.

It was therefore logical to provide Robert with the support he needed. And so Land for Wildlife partnered with the South West Catchments Council (SWCC) and the Dumbleyung Landcare Zone to support Robert's project, with SWCC providing key funding through its 2011-2013 C4oC investment plan.

The remnant vegetation that required protection grows naturally in uneven patches, so fencing works naturally incorporated areas with little or no vegetation into the fenced-off blocks. These areas then required native seedlings to be planted to speed up the regeneration process. In all, Robert has now erected 3.5 km fencing to exclude stock from 52.5 ha, planted out almost 16,000 seedlings over 9.51 ha and set up a monitoring and control program for rabbits, foxes, cats and kangaroos. Land for Wildlife has also set up photo monitoring points to obtain clear information on Robert's theory that allowing natural regeneration will be effective.

The project did face some issues, including poor rainfall after planting out the seedlings and difficulties with weed control in some areas. In spite of this, 95% of the seedlings survived. Valuable lessons have also been learnt, including the following:

- Soil moisture is crucial for seedling survival especially in dry seasons.
- Some species such as York gum, wattles and sheoak will regenerate once stock no longer have access .
- The resilience of local native provenance seedlings and their ability to survive in dry seasons is often underestimated. That said, high standards at nurseries are important to ensure seedlings are strong, healthy and prepared for the shock of planting.
- Understanding the growth characteristics of native vegetation that you are working with is important. For example, Robert thought that burning wandoo branches would liberate seed, but has learnt that wandoo fruit takes three years to develop and will shed their seed naturally when ripe. Robert says: "Its really nice to be able to stand on a high point of the landscape, look out and see trees".



ABOVE: Robert enjoying the winter sun amongst vigorous young trees (photo: J. Palmer)

....my family has
always been into
planting trees ...

Robert Temby

The project has successfully engaged a farmer in on-farm biodiversity conservation, and Robert now aims to include further revegetation of certain areas for windbreaks, to provide shelter to stock and reduce the impacts of water and wind erosion.

This project contributes to one farmer directly working on 52.5 ha and engaged in activities that contribute to the ongoing conservation & protection of biodiversity over 224ha.



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working together to make a difference today and
develop a sustainable environment for tomorrow.