



## SAVING OUR SPECIES

# Pink-tailed Legless Lizard

2022-2023 annual report card

### Summary

<b>Management sites</b>	Googong-Burra Region
<b>Action implementation</b>	1 (of 1) management action was fully or partially implemented as planned for the financial year.
<b>Total expenditure</b>	\$54,275 (\$51,513 cash; \$2,762 in-kind)
<b>Partners</b>	Environment and Heritage Group; Molonglo Conservation Group; Peet Limited



**Scientific name:**  
*Aprasia parapulchella*

**NSW status:**  
Vulnerable

**Commonwealth status:**  
Vulnerable

**Management stream:**  
Landscape species

Photo: Stuart Cohen

# Priority management site: Googong-Burra Region





## Local government area:

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional; Snowy Monaro Regional

## Partners:

Molonglo Conservation Group; Peet Limited

## Population outcome

-  On track
-  On track (inferred)
-  Not on track (inferred)
-  Not on track

The species population is inferred to be on track based on threat management being on track. The population trend is unknown at this time.

## Monitoring

*Species population monitoring by one or more methods indicates response to management over time and provides an outcome measure.*

<b>Monitoring metric</b>	Species presence
<b>Annual target</b>	Undertake presence-absence surveys on 20 sites. Undertake presence-absence survey in the Googong SE Block
<b>Long term target</b>	Presence of <i>Aprasia</i> at each site.
<b>Monitoring result</b>	The surveys are presence/absence based, so the value reflects tangible data collected. 35% of sites (7 sites out of 20 surveyed) had species present, 10 individuals overall.
<b>Scientific rigour of monitoring method</b>	High
<b>Conducted by</b>	Molonglo Conservation Group

Species population monitoring was not conducted at this site this financial year - logistical delays.

## Investment

Participant	Cash	In-kind
Molonglo Conservation Group	\$0	\$2,762
Peet Limited	\$51,513	\$0

## Management actions

The following actions are those identified as being required in financial year 2022-2023 to secure the species in the wild.

Threat	Management action	Implemented as planned?
Habitat degradation through pasture improvement including slashing, ploughing and sowing of non-native species.	Build community support for species through strengthening online presence- increase social media campaign at least 200%. Produce podcast to promote activities. Produce NSW curriculum aligned resource for schools to educate about species using Googong as the focal site. Produce poster to display in site area to generate interest in project and species. Launch online cat containment resource.	Yes

## Threat outcome

Assessment on the status of critical threats at this site.

Threat	Annual target	Threat status
Habitat degradation through pasture improvement including slashing, ploughing and sowing of non-native species.	Consult with landholders about ongoing management of sites, including environmental impacts of high rain events.	Not assessed

## Site summary

In the wake of COVID-19, we've shifted most proposed on-ground events and community engagement into the digital sphere as part of a contingency response plan. The benefit of having a stronger online presence is that there is a longevity to the resources developed and an increased audience reach. With an online presence, we have also been able to more efficiently collaborate and share resources with the community. While the Molonglo Conservation Group website is still under development, we have had great success expanding into new demographics through social media. We have continued to upload regular posts to social media including Facebook and Instagram to bring attention to *Aprasia* and to celebrate the achievements of the project. In the 2022-2023 period the Molonglo Conservation Group reached a cumulative 18,951 individual reach on Facebook, and Instagram increased to 1,438 which is a 376.2% increase from the last financial year. This connectivity cannot be understated heading into the conclusion of the project, as there are now tangible resources available through online access to Googong and broader community to support ongoing conservation efforts.

Wildlife Ecologist and Herpetologist Damian Michael (Charles Sturt University) was engaged for the October 2022 presence and absence surveys. Surveys were conducted across 19 participating landholdings as well as 1 in the Googong township SE sanctuary block. The surveys were successful with 35% of sites containing the species, including 4 entirely new locality records. 10 individuals were found across these 20 sites in this period. A survey prior to the beginning of the project found 4 individuals in the Googong township SE sanctuary block, and surveys conducted during the project prior to 2022 resulted in only one skin shed, so these results are a great success.

In May 2023, 3 wildlife cameras were installed inside the Googong township SE sanctuary block and each camera recorded high fox presence. The cameras were installed at points of vulnerability in the boundary fence to determine if the foxes were accessing the site through these points, and we were able to determine that they were. This gives us insight into how to correct the fence and restrict access more efficiently. The timing of these cameras inside the site coincided with the Parks and Conservation Service scheduled aerial fox treatment. The cameras will be reinstalled after PCS concludes their treatment and repairs have been made to the fence. Our findings for fox presence in May act as a baseline for ongoing monitoring in the site, ideally the next time we install the cameras and review the data there will be a reduced amount or total absence of foxes inside the sanctuary. The site lessee has been contracted to implement ongoing fox treatment into his current control regime. This has been determined to be the best way moving forward to ensure that the site is being actively protected against fox predation against *Aprasia* as they have a strong knowledge base of the site as well as the movements and behaviours of the residing foxes.

The apron of the boundary fence of the Googong township SE sanctuary block was pinned down in November 2022, significantly reducing points of vulnerability and predator access. The Conservation and Ecosystems Management class from Canberra Institute of Technology undertook this task, pinning 750 individual pins into the ground. Several turtles were also relocated, having become physically trapped in the fence apron. As aforementioned, there are still points in which need further pinning where predators have created access points.

In November 2022 just under 250 individual tube stock were planted on the Googong township SE sanctuary block, including *Themeda triandra*, *Leucochrysum albicans*, *Xerochrysum viscosum* and *Wahlenbergia stricta*. These species were selected to promote the ideal habitat conditions for *Aprasia*, this small amount will increase the optimum native seed bank in the soil profile while not overwhelming the integrity of the grassland. Some further revegetation work is due to be done to address light erosion along the creek line.

In January 2023 Project Officer Elyssa Castles went on site in the Googong township SE sanctuary block with Henry Xu, a podcast producer for Canberra: Conversations in the Capital to discuss the project and increase broader community education about the species. The episode went live in May 2023 and had hundreds of listeners across multiple platforms including iTunes and Spotify. Cross promotion saw our social media audience increase and we were contacted with positive feedback about the project and ideas for further collaboration. This includes upcoming collaboration with Wildbark at Mulligans Flat to continue educating the broader network about *Aprasia* and supporting habitat network connectivity.

In May 2023 the first 3 parts of Luna the Stay-At-Home Cat were published. This series was created to help young people learn about cat containment, what it means for the environment and their home. This series supports a curriculum aligned resource that helps promote the idea that it is the responsibility of pet owners to ensure that their pets aren't a danger to themselves, the public or wildlife. This series showcases that cats are able to live fulfilled and enriched lives in the home, and provides children and their families with a tool to open dialogue within their communities about the importance of cat containment in relation to the environment. This series is part of a broader cat containment campaign that will involve onsite demonstrations and education building within the community. The Anglican School Googong and Googong Public School have been involved in this process and are eager to engage in upcoming presentations. The activity resource, critical thinking curriculum alignment and the books are being provided to the schools and we will continue to engage and offer our ongoing support if these resources are being utilised in classrooms. These books were published as ebooks and are accessible through the National Library of Australia [www.trove.nla.gov.au](http://www.trove.nla.gov.au). Large physical copies have been printed for internal use only, this includes going onsite for presentations.

Activity resources have been developed to support the education package and upcoming school site visits with ACT Snake Remover Gavin Smith. These activities were aligned with the NSW curriculum to build understanding and strengthen engagement with the Googong landscape and *Aprasia* habitat. An additional activity was created for a more tactile learning approach, as it's unlikely young people in Googong will see *Aprasia*, this activity acts as substitute. The activity has children making their own "pinky pet" to act as a representation of the species through size, colours and length. Tactile activities like this provide a multi-sensory experience that stimulates various aspects of cognition and development, allowing children to learn in a fun and engaging manner.

In May 2023 a poster was created, printed and distributed around the Googong township. The poster was created to match the previously developed brochure by Annabel Boyer and intends to provide basic information and education about *Aprasia parapulchella* and highlight that Googong is home to the species. This poster compliments the ongoing education we are providing in the Googong township including at the schools. This poster is now on display at The Anglican School Googong, Googong Public School, Our Place Early Learning, Moker Bean Cafe, Googong Foreshore Depot, the community noticeboard and a copy was provided to the Googong Sales Office.

ICON water supported and funded an *Aprasia parapulchella* sculpture to be installed in *Aprasia* Park along with corresponding signage. We commissioned a Mastersmith artist who designed and fabricated the sculpture, and it is due for installation prior to an upcoming event in September.

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Saving our Species 2022-2023 annual report card for Pink-tailed Legless Lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*). For more information refer to the specific strategy in the Saving our Species program.