

**NEW**

PEOPLE, PLACES, AND CREATURES OF MELANESIA

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Faunal connectivity  
for island wetland  
conservation

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# Wildlife Awareness & Monitoring of Melanesia



## Contents

### Features

#### 8 Adventures in Conservation

As a scientist your appreciation of a functional and free ecosystem will deepen the closer you look. Jared Diamond, a well-known American geographer and ornithologist, recommended that Tetepare be designated as a bird reserve in the late 1970s.

#### 10 Conservation of the Fijian Crested Iguana (*Brachylophus vitiensis*) through diet and habitat studies

The Fijian Crested Iguana, *Brachylophus vitiensis*, which is endemic to the Fiji Islands is currently listed as Critically Endangered under current IUCN criteria (2006) and is the only Fijian reptile listed as Endangered in the Fiji Biodiversity and Action Plan.

#### 12 Faunal connectivity for island wetland conservation

A fundamental problem is the poor recognition of the processes that link the highest headwaters of streams and rivers, through estuaries, mangroves, seagrass beds and out to the coral reefs. Our research in the Melanesian region (Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Solomon

Islands) is building a picture of how these systems are connected in terms of fauna and water quality and what the implications are for conservation management.

#### 18 Voyagers without Boundaries

The conservation of species like the leatherback turtle is not an isolated endeavour but a pursuit that brings together governments and communities in a partnership that works across borders and supports both the health of the natural environments and the people that rely on these natural resources for their cultures and livelihoods.

#### 20 Leatherback turtle survey in Solomon Islands

This survey (ground and aerial) shows the Solomon Islands supports only a very limited number of nesting beaches for leatherback turtles. Also, to obtain accurate information on the nesting population size of leatherback turtles in Solomon Islands, it is of particular importance for the ground work which has been initiated at the index beaches in Santa Isabel and Rendova Island to be done properly and meticulously through to the end of this nesting season.

#### 22 The elusive Black Wallaby of Goode-nough Island.

Making the link from conservation planning and outcome definition to on-the-ground monitoring and action is the key to Conservation International's approach to conservation. However, a rare forest wallaby living in dense forest on a steep volcanic island like Goodenough Island, under customary land tenure is likely to present some implementation challenges not easily anticipated in desktop planning.

#### 28 "...Where art thou Syzygium...?"

Vanuatu is an archipelago that awaits discovery by the enthusiast. Entrenched within the chains of Melanesia is her cohort of volcanic and coral islets that are indicated, to not only have close floristic links with Fiji and New Caledonia, while harbouring some of the oldest plant families yet to be researched by science.

**Above:** Forest gecko, Solomon Islands.  
**Cover page:** Inland lake, Papua New Guinea (Photo: Aaron Jenkins)

