

Melanesian

ISSUE 8

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SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN MELANESIA



Nature

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6 *Wedelia* - invader of Melanesia: Worst weed in the Pacific?

Can a pretty daisy be compared with the likes of the *Anopheles* mosquito, the dreaded malaria vector; the brown tree snake that has brought the birds and lizards of Guam to virtual extinction; or the fire ants that threaten endemic lizards and cause blindness in dogs in New Caledonia?

12 Notes on *Discodeles malukuna*
One of the most conspicuous frogs in this area is *Discodeles malukuna*. Compared to the other anurans of the upland forest of Kolombangra, *Discodeles malukuna* are robust, heavy bodied frogs (64.5-to-104.0 mm) with wide, truncated heads.

14 A Threatened Island Arc: Environment catastrophes looming over Solomon Islands?
Drastic environmental changes are a daily occurrence on Solomon's far northwest province.

22 Biodiversity and the incredible resource of local foods
Diversity in Melanesian food systems is gradually declining as lifestyles change and people depend less on subsistence farming to provide their food.

28 **The fight against an invasive vine, big leaf *Merremia peltata***
Approximately 2,300ha (92%) of

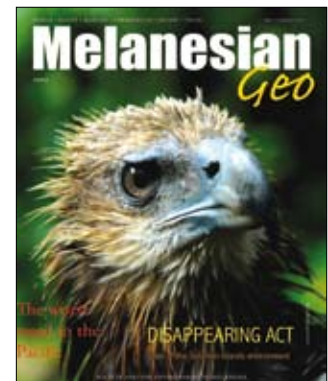
Vatthe forest has been invaded. Of this some 1,300 ha are beyond the ability to control and need to be replanted.

32 Kolombangra, united by a crater
Prompted by several enthusiastic overseas scientists and supported by KFPL, the landholders decided to set up an organisation that would take a lead in the conservation interests on Kolombangra on behalf of all landowners.

38 Empowering Communities to retain their resources
This provides a model of how remote subsistence communities can realise their development aspirations without compromising the natural resources that support them.

42 Kukuvojo: speaking from the grave
Unfortunately, large size, independent young, and ground dwelling habits are a deadly set of traits for an animal to have on an island where cats, rats, and dogs have been introduced.

43 Red-backed button quail are still on Guadalcanal
Mayr (1945) said of the sub-species of Red-backed Button-quail (*Turnix maculosa salomonensis*) found only on the north-coastal grasslands of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, that "Most field naturalists will look in vain for these birds, even in their proper habitat."



Cover: The endemic Solomon sea-eagles (Photo: Patrick Pikacha)