DEAR EARTHWATCHER,

Welcome to the Wildlife of Australia’s Rainforests expedition! You are about to begin a journey of discovery in the fascinating tropical rainforest environment of North Queensland, Australia. The global significance of these rainforests is recognized by their complete protection as a World Heritage Area. The expedition you are about to join will give you insight into the fragile nature of rainforest ecosystems, and hopefully will also give you an appreciation of their importance and an awareness of the threats our rainforests face with respect to global climate change.

Earth is warming up. Much of this warming can be attributed to the high levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere produced by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels. Our early research examining the predicted impacts of global warming on the endemic vertebrates of the Australian tropical rainforests suggest that climate change could bring about catastrophic extinctions in the Queensland Wet Tropics, and by implication, in mountain systems around the world. For example, using an average prediction for climate change, 60% of rainforest species could become endangered or critically endangered during the course of this century. The situation for the 93 species of vertebrates that are found here and nowhere else in the world is even bleaker: 30% are likely to become extinct in the same time period. We now face the inevitability of some degree of climate change and it is vital that we prioritize ongoing research and management efforts to meet this challenge. We need to determine which species, habitats and ecosystems will be most vulnerable, exactly what aspects of their ecological and evolutionary biology determines their vulnerability and what we can do to manage this vulnerability and minimise the realized impacts.

As a volunteer, your help is essential to collect vital data which will be used to build a better understanding of the effects of climate change on this fragile habitat, and to give us the knowledge to help minimise these impacts. And as you work, you might get lucky and see a rare tree kangaroo hop through camp, or spot a snake basking on the roadside. Many of the animals are shy and difficult to observe, but others are naturally curious and if you sit still for long enough may come within feet of you.

We look forward to greeting you here and to sharing our knowledge and enthusiasm. We hope that you will have a rewarding and inspiring experience.

Best Wishes,

Prof. Steve Williams
Earthwatch scientist
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Images © Prof. Steve Williams, Earthwatch
GENERAL INFORMATION

WILDLIFE OF AUSTRALIA’S RAINFORESTS

EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST: Prof. Stephen E. Williams, Centre for Tropical Biodiversity and Climate Change, James Cook University

RESEARCH SITE: Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, North Queensland

ARRIVAL TIME FOR TEAMS 1A, 2A, 3A: 12:30 p.m.
ARRIVAL TIME FOR TEAMS 1B, 2B, 3B: 9:00 a.m.
DEPARTURE FROM AIRPORT FOR ALL TEAMS: After 2:00 p.m.

Complete travel information is not available in this version of the briefing.
Please contact Earthwatch with any questions.

EXPEDITION DATES

Team 1: Feb. 8–Feb. 22, 2015
Team 1a: Feb. 8–Feb. 14, 2015
Team 1b: Feb. 16–Feb. 22, 2015
Team 2: May 17–May 31, 2015
Team 2a: May 17–May 23, 2015
Team 2b: May 25–May 31, 2015
Team 3: Oct. 18–Nov. 1, 2015
Team 3a: Oct. 18–Oct. 24, 2015
Team 3b: Oct. 26–Nov. 1, 2015
Read this expedition briefing thoroughly. It provides the most accurate information available at the time of your Earthwatch scientist’s project planning, and will likely answer any questions you have about the project. However, please also keep in mind that research requires improvisation, and you may need to be flexible. Research plans evolve in response to new findings, as well as to unpredictable factors such as weather, equipment failure, and travel challenges. To enjoy your expedition to the fullest, remember to expect the unexpected, be tolerant of repetitive tasks, and try to find humour in difficult situations. If there are any major changes in the research plan or field logistics, Earthwatch will make every effort to keep you well informed before you go into the field.
ESSENTIAL ITEMS

GENERAL

- This expedition briefing
- Photocopies of your passport, flight itinerary and credit cards in case the originals are lost or stolen; the copies should be packed separately from the original documents
- Passport and/or visa (if necessary)
- Certification of vaccination (if necessary)
- Documentation for travel by minors (if necessary) (see Volunteers Under 18 Years of Age in the Travel Planning section, pg. 15)

AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS ONLY: Please bring your Medicare card and (if applicable) your private health insurance and ambulance cover policy numbers

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR FIELDWORK

- Avoid dark-coloured clothing during the wet season (November-April), as it attracts March flies (yet, it should be noted that light-coloured clothes won’t completely prevent you from being bitten)
- Lightweight and quick-drying long-sleeved shirts (a must for safety reasons)

FIELD SUPPLIES

- Small daypack
- Refillable water bottle(s)
- Insect repellent spray
- Sunscreen lotion with SPF 30 or higher
- Flashlight or headlamp and spare batteries to wear around the camp at night time (the new lightweight LED ones are perfect for around camp)
BEDDING AND BATHING
- Sleeping bag
- Light sheet for warmer nights (February and October teams). You may not wish to use a sleeping bag.
- Pillow
- Quick-drying towel
- Swimsuit

PERSONAL SUPPLIES
- Personal toiletries (biodegradable soaps and shampoos are recommended)
- Personal medications. Prescription medications must be accompanied by a doctor’s note to enter Australia.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS FOR FIELDWORK
- Gaiters
- Waterproof pants (particularly in February)
- Drybag or plastic sealable bags (good for protecting equipment such as camera from dust, humidity, and water)
- Binoculars (preferable waterproof)

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR LEISURE
- Earthwatch T-shirt (make sure to wear it at rendezvous)
- One set of clothing to keep clean for end of expedition
- Several changes of clothes for around camp (e.g., shorts and T-shirts)
- Camp shoes (e.g., sandals, thongs, light running shoes)
- Socks and underwear
- Pyjamas or other sleepwear

PERSONAL SUPPLIES
- Antibacterial wipes or lotion (good for cleaning hands while in the field)
- Personal firstaid kit (e.g., anti-diarrhoea pills, antibiotics, antiseptic, itch-relief, pain reliever, bandages, blister covers, etc.)
- Spending money in the form of cash, credit, or ATM cards
- Camera, film or memory cards, extra camera battery

OPTIONAL ITEMS
- Earplugs
- Hardware for sharing digital photographs at the end of the expedition
- Travel guidebook
- Books, games, journal, art supplies, etc. for recreational time
- Compass
- Camping mat (e.g., Thermarest) for the field camps. A Thermarest is supplied by the project, you may wish to bring your own for extra comfort.
- Wildlife field guides (we have some on hand, but some volunteers, especially avid bird-watchers, may wish to have their own)

Note: All item lists are accurate to the best of Earthwatch’s knowledge at the time of publication.
THE STORY

Rainforests in the Wet Tropics bioregion were listed as a World Heritage Area in 1988 primarily because of their high biodiversity of species unique to the region. Although the area of rainforest within the region is small on a global scale (around 10,000 square kilometres), there are 83 species of rainforest vertebrates that are regionally endemic. Most of these endemic species are likely adapted to a cool environment, which leaves them particularly vulnerable to climate change.

Globally, average temperatures have already risen approximately 0.8°C / 33.4°F and are continuing to increase. Over the rest of this century, Earth is expected to experience an increase in average temperature of 2 to 6°C (35.6-42.8°F), combined with large increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations and significant changes in rainfall patterns. Although predictions about the effects of rainfall patterns are more uncertain, it is widely expected that rainfall variability and dry season severity will increase in northern Australia. That is, rainfall will be more variable from month to month with longer dry spells and possibly with increased frequency of disturbance events such as flooding rains and cyclones.

The significance of the impacts of anthropogenic climate change on biodiversity is recognized now throughout the world. This project addresses recognized priorities for research, and the results of this research continue to have a huge influence on policies at all levels of management and government. Our long-term monitoring sites in the Wet Tropics range from the coastal lowlands of the Daintree Rainforest to the cool mountain-top rainforests of the Bellenden Ker Range. Earthwatch teams will concentrate on intensive sampling over an altitudinal gradient in two of our long-term monitoring sites.

RESEARCH AIMS

We aim to illustrate the complex impacts associated with global climate change to allow more accurate predictions of how global warming will affect individual species, biodiversity, ecosystem processes, and the possible location and size of remaining refuges. This information may help alleviate the problems by protecting refuges and movement paths to these refuges, minimizing human impacts, and instigating active management for individual species. Researchers must collect this detailed information on the factors affecting distributions now in order to preserve the unique biota of the Wet Tropics.

Specifically, the project aims to:

- Survey established sites across altitudinal and latitudinal gradients in the region to obtain empirical measurements on distribution and abundance of selected vertebrate, invertebrate, and plant groups over the gradients most likely to be affected by climate change.
- Establish long-term monitoring sites in key areas where global climate change is predicted to have initial impacts.
- Produce accurate, robust models explaining spatial patterns of distribution and abundance of Wet Tropics rainforest vertebrates and many species of insects and plants.
- Predict the spatial extent and severity of global warming on individual species and the biodiversity values of the region using predictive models based on both field data and experimental data.
- Quantify the level of threat to both species and geographic areas.
- Produce recommendations aimed at maximizing the preservation of the regional fauna under greenhouse conditions by defining refugial areas, corridors of connectivity between present distributions and future refuges and prioritising species and areas on the basis of range stability and resilience to the effects of global warming.
- Provide baseline field data to other associated research projects within the Centre for Tropical Biodiversity and Climate Change research (CTBCC) and the Queensland Regional Initiative.
- Make conservation recommendations for long-term preservation of the tropical rainforests of the Wet Tropics.
In addition to the outcomes associated with predicting the effects of global warming, this project addresses many fundamental issues of the macroecology and conservation biology of the Wet Tropics vertebrates, including:

- Abundance and range size relationships.
- Determinants of abundance, distribution, and biodiversity.
- Relationships between habitat structure and assemblage structure.
- Effects of biotic interactions on realized and potential distributions.
- Interaction between these processes and spatial scale.

The results will have many uses in conservation planning and sustainable management of the natural resources of the region and tropical ecosystems around the world.

**HOW YOU WILL HELP**

Gathering all the necessary data to achieve this project requires people power, which is where you come in. You’ll help with all aspects of the fieldwork. Two to four volunteers at a time will assist on each of the sampling activities, for which a variety of techniques are used depending on the needs of the project. These vary each trip and may include surveys for birds, reptiles, arboreal mammals, microhylid frogs, ants and a suite of environmental and habitat features. Tasks may include, but are not limited to:

- Taking environmental measurements (e.g. temperature and humidity).
- Assisting a staff member on bird transects.
- Searching for reptiles (mostly litter skinks).
- Survey and sorting.
- Conducting nighttime spotlighting and frog surveys.
- Collecting invertebrates.
- Taking measurements of habitat and vegetation.
- Downloading environmental data from microclimate data loggers.

Field groups will consist of one local expert engaged in full-time research in the region and a maximum of four volunteers for each activity, allowing three activities to be conducted at a time. The activities will take place at almost all times of the day, starting with dawn bird surveys and continuing right through to late-night spotlighting and frog surveys. Most activities will take between two and four hours each.

Groups will engage in a variety of activities over a typical day, and you’ll rotate through these activities to maximise your experience and learning opportunities. We will arrange rotations to minimise excessive fatigue as much as possible; for example, those engaged in late-night activities will not usually do dawn bird surveys the next day. There should be plenty of time for extra experience in any particular activity that interests you.
Australia’s Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (WTWHA) is situated in the northeast of Queensland. The region extends for about 450 kilometres between Townsville and Cooktown. The tropical rainforest is mostly associated with a series of mountain ranges running parallel to the coast. In the Daintree part of the region, the scenery changes from coral reefs and beautiful beaches to lowland lush tropical rainforest and then into spectacular mountains covered in cooler upland rainforests. The mountain ranges are generally about 1,000 metres in altitude but some areas rise to over 1,600 metres. Vegetation in the region varies from dry savanna dominated by eucalypts to the moss-draped mountaintop rainforests. The spectacular biodiversity and scenery of the region make the area a world-class destination.

The rainforests are the remnants of a huge forest that once dominated the whole of northern Australia. In recent history they have been subjected to selective logging in many areas and clearing and fragmentation in some areas, primarily on the Atherton Tableland and the coastal lowlands. Despite these impacts, most of the upland rainforest is now completely protected in the WTWHA and is in relatively pristine condition.

The Wet Tropics is home to well over 2,000 vascular plants and easily has the highest animal diversity in Australia, with approximately one-third of the Australian vertebrates (approximately 700 species) in an area that covers 0.1% of the continent. Many of these species are regionally endemic and found nowhere else in the world. Many spectacular species can be seen, including the cassowary, bower birds, parrots and cockatoos, large pythons, primitive-looking rainforest dragons, and frogs so small that an adult male will fit onto your fingernail.

Primary sites visited during the expeditions will vary trip to trip depending on the research needs. Week 1 can take us to either Noah Beach, Mt Windsor, Mt Lewis or South Johnstone. Week 2 can take us to either Carbine, Mt Windsor, South Johnstone, the Daintree or Shipton’s Flat. The project covers a range of altitudes in both regions from sea level to about 1,300 metres.

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

The climate in North Queensland is tropical with temperatures ranging from 14oC / 57.2oF degrees in winter to a high of 33oC / 91.4oF in summer. The area has a wet and a dry season; the wet season runs from the first monsoon rains, usually in November and ends around May.

**CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT**

The cultural atmosphere in North Queensland is very relaxed and friendly even by Australian standards. Generally, the climate and social atmosphere allow for very casual dress standards. For information on the climate and weather and hazards of the area, see the Project Conditions section on pg. 16.
On arrival, we’ll have lectures and training sessions to orient you to the general biogeography, flora and fauna of the region. Another talk will be given on the “dos and don’ts” of rainforest fieldwork, including the most likely hazards and ways to avoid and/or deal with them. All volunteers will be trained in a variety of field skills and survey techniques.

Demonstrations will be given on each separate activity in the field prior to commencement of that technique. These will include:

- Bird surveys.
- Lizard surveys and morphological measurement and temperature preference experiments.
- Nocturnal spotlighting (e.g. possums, tree kangaroos, frogs, owls, and geckos).
- Microhyllid frog surveys (wet season only).
- The use of a variety of scientific instruments important to the study (e.g. data loggers for air and soil temperature).
- A variety of other field activities depending on student projects. These vary for each trip.

Additional talks will be given on the major patterns of biodiversity in the region, various threats to this biodiversity and a thorough description of climate change and impacts.

Volunteers signed up for the full 15-day expedition will enjoy a recreational day in the middle of the project. This is spent in Cairns, and the group will decide earlier in the week what they wish to do. All activities on this day are at the volunteer’s own expense. Options include a snorkelling or diving trip to the Great Barrier Reef, exploring Cairns, walking or biking to Crystal Cascades Waterfall, or relaxing by the pool at the accommodation.

There are also many opportunities during each day for recreational time, when you can swim in a beautiful freshwater creek or waterfall or just relax.

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**EARTHWATCH RECREATIONAL TIME POLICY**

Project staff will generally accompany participants from the rendezvous to the end of the expedition. For recreational days, when no research activities are scheduled, Earthwatch scientists will offer either a team activity or a range of recreational activities that comply with Earthwatch standards. Participants may also remain at project accommodations. Those who pursue other options must sign a release form.

If there is a period of time during a regular research day when no research activities are scheduled, adult participants may leave the project site on their own; they will have to sign out first. Unless contacted for help, project staff will not search for a participant unless he or she fails to appear the following morning or for the next scheduled research activity.

Earthwatch will assess the general risks of adult participants leaving the project site, but cannot guarantee participant safety or an awareness of all issues. In some cases, due to local conditions, adult participants may have to stay at the project site during recreational time, which will be clearly communicated on site.
ITINERARY AND DAILY SCHEDULE

Weather and research needs can lead to changes in the daily schedule. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

**DAY 1:**
Rendezvous in Cairns and travel to Rainforest Destination 1; set up camp; talks on safety, logistics, and sampling techniques.

**DAY 2–6:**
Sampling activities.

**DAY 7:**
Morning sampling activities, pack up camp, drive to Cairns. Farewell to some team members.

**DAY 8:**
Recreational day in Cairns.

**DAY 9:**
Pick up new team members, travel to Rainforest Destination 2; set up camp, talks on safety, logistics and sampling techniques.

**DAY 10–13:**
Sampling activities.

**DAY 14:**
Close down traps, etc. and pack up; presentation of expedition results; dinner and party.

**DAY 15:**
Departure for Cairns.

**TYPICAL DAY IN THE FIELD**
A typical day of full sampling will involve getting up before dawn (for people doing bird surveys that morning), having a quick breakfast and hot drink, and then going to a site to spend about two hours conducting bird surveys. Other volunteers will get up a bit later, have breakfast, and prepare equipment for the day’s activities. The team will then have a break for morning tea. Some groups will do reptile surveys for about three hours in the middle of the day, then measure the lizards and return them to the sites where they were caught. Other activities during the day may include sampling for ants, examining the microhabitats of frogs in the leaf litter, downloading data loggers when necessary and measuring the animals caught that day. Generally, mid to late afternoons are unscheduled, so you can rest or swim before dinner preparation. After dinner, one to three groups will go spotlighting for mammals, geckos, and microhylid frogs. The remaining team members get to relax and have an early night.

**TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predawn</td>
<td>Bird survey*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reptile survey</td>
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<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Research activities or free time</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusk to late night</td>
<td>Spotlighting*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Volunteers will alternate between the bird survey and spotlighting to reduce tiredness.
Most teams will spend two nights in Cairns, six nights at either South Johnstone Forestry Camp, Noah Beach in the Daintree, or in the Windsor Uplands during week 1 and six nights at either Carbine, South Johnstone Forestry Camp, Noah Beach, Mt. Windsor or Shipton’s Flat Camp during week 2 (depending on Prof. Stephen William’s research needs). During the two nights in Cairns, which will take place in the middle of the expedition, the team will stay in four-person cabins at the Crystal Cascades Holiday Park.

CRYSTAL CASCADES HOLIDAY PARK IN CAIRNS
Two nights will be spent at here, where you can rest, rejuvenate, and wash clothes. It is situated in the rainforest with a mountainous backdrop, yet only 15 minutes from the city of Cairns. The amenities are spacious and modern with team members staying in cabins with en suite bathrooms. For more information, visit crystalcascades.com.au/accommodation.html.

SOUTH JOHNSTONE FORESTRY CAMP
The South Johnstone campsite has facilities that include toilets and a small building used as a kitchen and storeroom. It also has three covered tables that provide refuge from wet weather and shelter for some of our activities, such as leaf litter sifting, insect sorting and reptile measuring. There is a beautiful creek running past the campground with fresh, clear water, which is perfect for swimming. In the wet season the flow can be fairly fast in places, but not dangerously so, and swimming will be possible year round.

SHIPTON’S FLAT CAMP
Our camp in Shipton’s Flat is situated in a lush and shady setting along a creek about 15 minutes from the 260- million-year-old Black Mountain. We will stay in tents on unpowered sites but we will have access to a composting toilet, a sheltered area and the creek to relax and cool off in. The area is highly significant and belongs to the traditional owners of Shipton’s Flat. It boasts an amazing variety of birds and wildlife so have your camera ready. You never know, you might be lucky enough to spot a Bennett’s tree kangaroo hopping through our camp.

MT. WINDSOR NATIONAL PARK
Mt. Windsor National Park, Queensland, is about 48kms northwest of Mossman and is largely closed to the general public. We will stay in tents on unpowered sites but the rangers kindly let us use the old Barracks for cooking and storing gear. The tank water allows for flushable toilets and the cool creek is wonderful to cool off in after a day in the field. You may even be lucky enough to spot a platypus in the creek or a northern quoll while surveying this beautiful part of the region.

DAINTREE: NOAH BEACH
The Noah Beach camp site is set in a picturesque region of the coastal lowlands. We will stay in tents on unpowered sites, with access to biocycle toilets. Stunning views of rainforest and beach surround us here. We also visit nearby swimming holes with fresh, clear water and pull-over for cassowary that we occasionally spot beside the road.

CAMPSITE ALTERNATIVES FOR BAD WEATHER
Weather conditions in far north Queensland are normally fairly stable with hot and humid summers and milder, drier winters. However, the climate is monsoonal and there may be instances where it is necessary for us to make last-minute changes and choose to stay at an alternate camp and sampling site. In this case, possible alternate campsites are either Kingfisher Lodge for sampling in the Mossman Gorge and the rainforests of Mt. Lewis, or Lamb Range Camp for sampling in the rainforests of Mt. Edith.

KINGFISHER LODGE
This campground sits at the base of the Carbine range and is a beautiful spot for bird-watching and central to many of the sites in the area. It has a large shelter area with good kitchen facilities and electricity and a laundry area with a washer and a drier. There is hot and cold running water and a proper toilet and shower block. Occasionally the team may choose to camp in the rainforest at a higher elevation. This camp will be much more basic (e.g., there will be a shared chemical toilet) but will enable concentration of the project sampling at the higher altitude sites which would be unreachable from Kingfisher Lodge.
LAMB RANGE CAMP
As the name suggests, the Lamb Range camp is situated in the foothills of the Lamb Range at the northern edge of the Atherton Tableland. Facilities will be minimal, but a flushing toilet, cold shower, and drinkable water will be available. The camp is located on Lake Tinaroo, which will provide beautiful scenery and opportunities to swim and observe wildlife, including a wide variety of water birds.

SLEEPING
At all camp sites, all staff and volunteers will be sleeping in tents, with one person per tent. These are supplied by the project. You are welcome to bring your own if you prefer, but please bring only a small, lightweight tent for ease of transportation to the camp. If you bring your own tent make sure it is very waterproof; it is almost certain that you will experience some rain, sometimes heavy and consistent. The project will have additional small waterproof tarpaulins to provide extra waterproofing for tents if necessary. Bring a reasonably warm sleeping bag and sleeping mat. Thermarests are supplied by the project, but you may wish to bring your own for extra comfort. Wet weather can make camping less pleasant, but with a dry tent, dry clothes, and good food and company it won’t be too arduous.

BATHROOMS
For the majority of the project duration there will be no electricity or hot showers available, but the project can provide basins and a bush shower, and there will be plenty of opportunities to swim in rainforest creeks.

ELECTRICITY
Crystal Cascades in Cairns has a reliable supply of electricity (240 volts, three-prong plugs; see image). No other sites have electricity. We recommend that you bring spare batteries for all your electronic equipment.

INTERNET AND COMMUNICATIONS
Only the site in Cairns has Internet access, which is free of charge.

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES
All camp sites are situated in remote areas. They are not close to any towns or any facilities or amenities to buy food or do laundry, etc. Crystal Cascades Holiday Park is a short drive from shopping centres and restaurants and it will be possible to access these during your stay here. Laundry facilities are available at Crystal Cascades Holiday Park at a cost of $4 per load (this fee may change).

FOOD
The Earthwatch scientist firmly believes in the value of good food, and a wide variety of fresh foods will be available throughout the expedition. Volunteers will assist with meal preparation and clean up on a rotational basis.

Below are examples of the foods you might expect in the field. Variety depends on availability. This list provides a general idea of food types, but please be flexible.

BREAKFAST: Cereal, toast, fruit, occasional pastries
LUNCH: Bread, cold meats, canned tuna, cheese, fresh salad ingredients, fruit
DINNER: Stir-fries, curries, casseroles, pasta, barbecues, fresh vegetables, meats
SNACKS: Simple desserts typically available; additional snacks, fruit, nuts, biscuits, cheese and crackers, etc. provided during the day and at morning and afternoon teas
WATER: Potable creek water at the South Johnstone campsite; tap water available everywhere else; bottled water available for purchase at your own expense
OTHER BEVERAGES: Coffee, tea, and other uncaffeinated beverages always available

Special Dietary Requirements
Please alert Earthwatch to any special dietary requirements (e.g., vegetarian or vegan diets, diabetes, lactose intolerance, nut or other serious food allergies) as soon as possible, and note them in the space provided on your volunteer forms. Accommodating special diets is not guaranteed and can be very difficult due to availability of food, location of field sites, and other local conditions.
TRAVEL TIPS
SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ROAD

LUGGAGE
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: Do not bring more luggage than you can carry and handle on your own. If travelling by air and checking your luggage, we advise you to pack an extra set of field clothing and personal essentials in your carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost or delayed. Many airlines have strict baggage policies. Please check with your airline(s) on baggage weight limits, liquid restrictions, fees for checked baggage, etc.

CHECKING LUGGAGE: Please note that if you will be taking an international flight that has one or more connections within the country of your destination, you must collect any checked bags at the airport where you first arrive in the destination country. After proceeding through customs, you will have to recheck your luggage before flying on to your final destination.

MONEY MATTERS
PERSONAL FUNDS: No personal funds are required during the expedition, but you may want to have some money (cash or credit cards are best) for snacks, drinks, souvenirs, or to participate in recreational activities. Money exchange is available at the Cairns International Airport in the baggage claim area or public arrivals hall, and you can also draw funds in Australian dollars at ATMs, which are easily found in Cairns. Most Visa and MasterCard credit cards will work in Australian ATMs, but it is a good idea to check with your bank beforehand. There will be little opportunity to exchange traveller’s cheques.

LOCAL CURRENCY: Australian dollars.
AIRPORT FEES AND/OR DEPARTURE TAXES: All taxes are included in airfare.

YOUR DESTINATION
LANGUAGE: English
CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS: Tipping is not customary in Australia, except when exceptional service is provided.
TIME ZONE: GMT/UTC + 10.

TELEPHONE DIALING CODES: When calling Australia from another country, dial the country’s international dialing code, followed by 61 and the number. When calling within Australia omit the 61 and dial 0 then the area code. When calling another country from Australia, dial 0011, followed by the other country’s country code and the number. Note: you should check with your cell phone provider to obtain any carrier-specific dialing codes you may need; many providers have dialing procedures that may differ in whole or in part from these directions.

ELECTRICITY
The electricity in Australia is 230 V and 50 Hz so you may need to bring a converter if you are from another country. The plugs have three prongs, as illustrated by the picture below. You should be able to buy one at the airport when you arrive, but it may be more expensive so it is a good idea to buy one at home before you leave.

OTHER USEFUL LINKS:
COUNTRY INFORMATION FROM AROUND THE WORLD: countryreports.org
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAP MACHINE: plasma.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine
ONLINE UNIT CONVERSIONS: onlineconversion.com
WORLDWIDE WEATHER: wunderground.com or tutiempo.net/en
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT’S TRAVEL SECURITY WEBSITE (information on security measures in place at Australian airports): travelsecure.infrastructure.gov.au

Wildlife of Australia’s Rainforests 2015

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PASSPORTS AND VISAS

WILL YOU NEED A PASSPORT?
Yes. In most cases, your passport must be valid for a minimum of six months after the date of entry into the country you are visiting.

WILL YOU NEED A VISA?
Citizens of every nation except for Australia and New Zealand need to apply for a Visa to enter Australia. There are 3 types of tourist visas available for various nations [ETA, EVistor & Visitor subclass 600]. You can complete a questionnaire directly on the Australian Immigration website (immi.gov.au/visawizard/) that will determine which of these visas is right for you. Alternatively you can also check with your local travel agent or a visa agency to find out. Participants are advised to check visa regulations well in advance of travelling.

INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS REQUIRING VISAS ONLY

TYPE OF VISA TO GET: Tourist
The purpose of your visit is for vacation, holiday or travel. Immigration officials do not always understand the concept of a “working vacation” or “volunteering.” Words such as “working,” “volunteering,” “research,” or “scientific expedition” can raise questions concerning the country’s foreign labour laws and about official scientific research permits and credentials, etc., to which volunteers will not be equipped to respond on their own. All required research permits for the project are in place and have been approved by the proper authorities.

WHERE TO GET A VISA: Depending on which visa you are eligible for, you can apply for it online at immi.gov.au/ or contact the nearest Australian embassy or consulate to find out how to apply. This process can take weeks or even months. We strongly recommend using a visa agency, which can expedite and simplify the process.

SUGGESTED AGENCIES

IN THE U.S.: Travisa; 212-613-2223; travisa.com
IN EUROPE: CIBT, Inc. [U.K.]; uk.cibt.com
IN AUSTRALIA: Ask your travel agency if it can send your visa application on your behalf.

COST OF A VISA: If you are a EU passport holder, your visa will generally be for free. Other visas can cost AU$20 or even AU$115 in some circumstances. A visa agency will charge an additional fee.

CONTACT INFORMATION: You may be required to list the following contact information on your visa application and immigration form:

Cassandra Nichols
Earthwatch Australia
126 Bank Street
South Melbourne
VIC 3205, Australia
E-mail: cnichols@earthwatch.org.au
Ph.: +61 (0) 3 9016 7590
PROJECT CONDITIONS
THE FIELD ENVIRONMENT

GENERAL CONDITIONS
The information provided is as accurate as possible, but please keep in mind that once in the field conditions may change.

The altitude of the research area ranges from sea level to 1,400 metres/4,593 feet. During winter (May–July) and autumn (August–October) mean minimum (night time) temperatures are around 10°C/50°F in most areas. While winter and autumn are generally very mild in the Wet Tropics, the project’s sampling often occurs at higher altitude and thus can be colder than the average for the region. Summer temperatures (February–April) climb to around 35°C/95°F and higher, and depending on the month, it can be dry (September–November) or humid (December–March). February and May will be warm with high humidity and rain (and good sampling conditions for animals), and October will usually be dry and warm (generally lots of animals around and the breeding season is in full swing). October is considered the dry season, and thus peak tourist season; however, this does not mean that there can't still be significant rain during this period. Rainfall varies widely across the region and from year to year, with an average of approximately 200 centimetres/79 inches per year.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
All participants must be able, independently or with the assistance of a companion, to:

- Enjoy being outdoors all day in all types of weather, in the potential presence of wild animals and insects.
- Tolerate 30°C (85°F) heat and high humidity levels.
- Traverse up and down sloped, slippery, uneven terrain and could involve walking and finding a path through thick rainforest with vines, gullies, and fallen trees. You’ll walk between two to 10 kilometres per day, although not all at once.
- Adapt to irregular working hours (early mornings, late nights, etc).
- Carry personal daily supplies such as lunch, water, and some small field equipment.
- Move through forests at night while being able to identify and avoid obstacles.
- Get low enough to access and check on the ground and in the brush.
- Get oneself up into and down out of a minibus and ride, seated with seatbelt fastened, for a total of about five hours on a potentially rough dirt road.
- Function without a consistent source of electricity. Generators will not always run throughout the night; therefore, the project cannot accommodate electrical devices such as a C-PAP machine.

PROJECT CONDITIONS
THE FIELD ENVIRONMENT

CONDITIONS
Conditions are expected to vary within the limits below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions during</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>October</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Humidity</td>
<td>69–78%</td>
<td>64–76%</td>
<td>57–65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Temperature Range:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24–32°C / 75.2–89.6°F</td>
<td>20–28°C / 68.0–82.4°F</td>
<td>21–30°C / 69.8–86°F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Rainfall:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>448.9mm / 1.47ft</td>
<td>91.4mm / 0.30ft</td>
<td>46.5mm / 0.15ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard Type</td>
<td>Associated Risks and Precautions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Most roads in the research area are dirt and some are in poor condition and very bumpy. Slippery and muddy roads increase the risk of vehicle accidents and getting stuck during the wet season. The team will use four-wheel-drive vehicles with winches operated by experienced drivers. Vehicles are fitted with UHF radios, a satellite phone, first-aid kits, airbags, and a fire extinguisher. Project staff will transport you to Cairns for activities during the rest break. Seatbelts must be worn at all times. Drivers will obey all road rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking/Hiking/Climbing</td>
<td>Sprains, strains, breaks, fractures, etc. can result from walking over uneven, steep, and muddy terrain; through dense vegetation and tangled undergrowth; and over fallen trees and branches. Choose your path very carefully in the forest and wear boots that support your ankles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals/Plants</td>
<td>There are a number of annoying invertebrates, such as leeches, ticks, mites, mosquitoes, spiders, wasps, bees, and March flies. These can mostly be avoided by being aware of your surroundings, tucking pants into socks, applying insect repellent, and not sitting on logs or leaf litter. Participants with allergies to insects should come prepared with the necessary treatment [at least two Epi-Pens, antihistamines, etc.] and inform project staff of your allergies. Participants are encouraged to check themselves for leeches regularly. While snakes are present near the project sites, encounters are uncommon. The most common snakes are tree snakes and pythons; both are harmless. While poisonous snakes are very rare, all snakes should be treated as venomous as it requires skilled identification to tell otherwise. Keep tent doors closed at all times. There is a plant called the “stinging tree” that on contact will give a very painful sting. It is not dangerous unless there is an extreme allergic reaction but it is very painful and should be avoided. While the pain lasts for a few hours, sudden changes in temperature on the affected area will produce an uncomfortable sensation for many months after. Other plants have spines that can ensnare you as you walk through the forest. Cuts and grazes often result from encounters with vegetation. Long sleeves and long trousers help prevent scratches and must be worn at all times. All scratches should be treated with antiseptic and covered, as the humidity in the tropics facilitates infection. Instruction on identifying and avoiding certain plants will be given at the start of the expedition. Many of the fruits and fungi encountered in the forests are extremely poisonous, and the poisons are poorly understood. If you handle fruits or fungi, you must wash your hands well before handling food.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate/Weather</td>
<td>Most people underestimate how harsh the sun can be in Australia, even in winter. Sunscreen (SPF 30 or above), long sleeves, a hat and sunglasses are essential and should be worn even when the sky is overcast; be sure to bring these items with you. Working for long periods in warm conditions can result in rapid fluid loss, so drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Tasks/Equipment</td>
<td>A safety briefing will be given on the first day to familiarise you with specific risks and methods to increase safety. Installation of pitfall traps involves the use of a small pick-axe to dig holes. This work is usually done in a kneeling position, and care must be taken to avoiding striking yourself or others. Project staff will instruct everyone on proper use and safety.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>There are a number of tropical diseases in the area, but the chances of contracting one is very low. Instruction will be provided on how to minimise this risk. Diseases found in tropical regions include Ross River fever, Australian bat lyssavirus, leptospirosis, Q fever, Queensland tick typhus, scrub typhus, meliodiosis, Japanese encephalitis, dengue fever, filariasis, leishmaniasis, onchocerciasis, trypanosomiasis, schistosomiasis, hepatitis, and typhoid. Please see the Health Information section [pg. 18] for immunization recommendations. Most diseases are preventable with basic safety precautions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from Medical Care</td>
<td>Depending on our location, it may take up to two hours to reach medical care. If you have a chronic condition that might require immediate medical care [e.g. heart conditions, kidney problems, severe asthma, etc.], you should seriously reconsider participation in this expedition. Also consider seriously consider your participation if you have any condition or medication that increases your risk of infection or suppresses your immune response. If you are pregnant, you should talk with your physician prior to joining this expedition.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAFETY

HEALTH INFORMATION

ROUTINE IMMUNISATIONS

All volunteers should have the following up-to-date immunisations: DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus), polio, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), and varicella (if you have not already had chicken pox). Please be sure your tetanus shot is current.

Medical decisions are the responsibility of each volunteer and his or her doctor, and the following are recommendations only. Earthwatch can only provide details regarding suggested vaccinations, and we are not a medical organisation.

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Health conditions around the world are constantly changing, so keep informed and consult your physician, a local travel health clinic, the US Centre for Disease Control (cdc.gov), or the World Health Organization (who.int) for the latest health information for travellers.

Any prescription medication brought into Australia needs to be accompanied with a letter from your doctor for Customs Inspection purposes. For further information the regulation of medications, please see: tga.gov.au/consumers/travellers.htm.

Medical attention of high quality will be sought should any serious ailments occur.

ADVICE REGARDING DISEASES

Traveller’s diarrhoea affects many international travellers. Other diseases found in tropical regions within Australia may include (but are not limited too):

ROSS RIVER FEVER: In northern and central Queensland, cases of Ross River virus occur throughout the year, but most cases occur between February and May. The virus is not fatal, but the time it takes to recover fully is prolonged in some people.

DENGUE FEVER: Dengue mosquitoes do not breed in rivers, swamps, creeks, bush land or mangroves; they breed in containers in our backyard, particularly during the wet season (November to March). Your highest risk area will be Cairns, not while you are in the field.

BARMAH FOREST VIRUS: Barmah Forest virus has similar symptoms to Ross River virus although usually the illness is of shorter duration.

You can decrease your risk of most diseases above by avoiding mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellents and wear protective, light-coloured clothing.
- Avoid being outside during times of heavy infestation of mosquitoes, e.g. early evenings in the warmer months.
- Screen living and sleeping areas.
- Check your home regularly for potential mosquito breeding areas, e.g. any uncovered water containers, small wading pools and old tyres should be emptied regularly.

LEPTOSPIROSIS: Ensure all cuts and grazes are covered if handling animals, plants, or soil in tropical areas.

If you feel ill once you return from your trip, make sure you inform your doctor that you have recently returned from a tropical region.

EMERGENCIES IN THE FIELD

The project will be equipped with a satellite phone and an Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon in the event that a life-threatening emergency should occur. Whenever possible, staff in the field will carry a satellite phone for emergencies to contact the appropriate emergency authorities. All teams will carry a first aid kit and a staff member with a senior first aid certificate will be present.

If an accident or emergency occurs project staff will assess the severity of the problem and notify emergency authorities or transport any injured person(s) to medical attention immediately. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency that cannot be handled by a local doctor, the patient will be taken by car or ambulance to the nearest hospital (Cairns, Innisfail, or Cooktown). From there the patient can be transferred, if necessary, to another medical institution via a Queensland Rescue Service helicopter. It is unlikely that volunteers will be more than 50 kilometres or two hours from medical aid at any time.

PROJECT VACCINATIONS

| REQUIRED: If travelling from countries or region where yellow fever is endemic, you must have a certificate of vaccination. |
| RECOMMENDED: Tetanus is generally recommended for health reasons. |

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PROXIMITY TO MEDICAL CARE

PHYSICIAN, NURSE, OR EMT ON STAFF: Project staff members are not medical professionals.

STAFF CERTIFIED IN SAFETY TRAINING:

CPR: Stephen Williams, Nadiah Roslan, Collin Storlie
FIRST AID: Stephen Williams, Nadiah Roslan, Collin Storlie

NEAREST HOSPITALS:

NAME: Cairns Hospital
ADDRESS: The Esplanade, Cairns
TEL: +61 (0) 7 4050 6333

NAME: Innisfail Hospital
ADDRESS: 87 Rankin Street
TEL: +61 (0) 7 4061 5411

NAME: Cooktown Hospital
ADDRESS: 48 Hope Street
TEL: +61 (0) 7 4069 5433

INSURANCE

Travel insurance is included in the contribution you pay to Earthwatch. The insurance covers your travel medical risks, including medical expenses and emergency medical evacuation, while you are traveling. It also provides trip cancellation insurance and baggage and personal money insurance. This insurance policy is secondary to your existing health insurance policy.

Refer any queries regarding Earthwatch’s travel policy to our insurance liaison at +1 (978) 450-1222 or insurance@earthwatch.org.

If you booked through Earthwatch Australia, please contact them at +61 (0) 9016 7590 or earth@earthwatch.org.au for any queries.

For more information, please see earthwatch.org/expeditions/travel-insurance.

EARTHWATCH’S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOTLINE (OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA)

Call Earthwatch’s 24-hour on-call duty officer in the U.S.:
+1 (978) 461-0081
+1 (800) 776-0188 (toll-free for calls placed from within the U.S.)

HEALIX INTERNATIONAL:

+44 (20) 3667-8991 (collect calls/ reverse charges accepted)
US TOLL FREE: 1 (877) 759 3917
UK FREE PHONE: 0(800) 197 5180
E-MAIL: earthwatch@healix.com

EARTHWATCH’S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOTLINE (WITHIN AUSTRALIA):

+61 (0) 3-8508-5537

After business hours, leave a message with our live answering service. State that you have an emergency and give the name of your expedition, your name, the location from which you are calling, and if possible, a phone number where you can be reached. An Earthwatch staff person will respond to your call within one hour.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND EVACUATION ASSISTANCE

For emergency assistance in the field, please contact Earthwatch’s 24-hour emergency hotline number highlighted below. If you have booked through any Earthwatch office outside Australia, you may contact our provider, Healix International, in the event of a medical/evacuation emergency or for routine medical and travel advice, such as advice on visas and vaccine requirements. Volunteers booking through the Australia office, please contact them at the hotline number below for all emergencies.
PROJECT STAFF
YOUR RESOURCES IN THE FIELD

PROF. STEPHEN (STEVE) WILLIAMS, PH.D. is a rainforest ecologist specialising in terrestrial vertebrates and biodiversity. Steve has organised and led many fauna surveys and expeditions to remote and rugged areas—often involving helicopter drops into inaccessible places and very wet, windy living conditions—in order to fill gaps in knowledge of these wild mountains. Recently, Steve has been involved in spatial modelling as a tool to study biodiversity and this led to using models to predict the impacts of climate change in the region. The results of this analysis were so shocking that he has switched the focus of his research program to understanding the likely impacts of climate change on rainforest biodiversity. He hopes this research will make a difference in the long-term preservation of the unique rainforests that he loves. Steve has also been the owner and operator of an outdoor adventure ecotour company in the region and has enthusiastically shown many people the area, the fauna, and some of the more exciting things to do in the rainforest. Schedule: All teams.

NADIAH ROSLAN is Steve’s research assistant and fieldworker. She is of Malay heritage and was born in Australia’s bush capital, Canberra. Her passion has always been wildlife and the environment. She completed a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Zoology, at The Australian National University and has recently completed a Master of Science at Townsville’s James Cook University. Since joining Steve’s team in December 2012, she has spent time in the field conducting fauna surveys and collecting climate data in a variety of locations throughout Queensland’s beautiful Wet Tropics Bioregion. During the expedition, Nadiah will help lead some of the spotlighting, bird, reptile, and microhylid frog surveys, as well as organise activities and prepare some really delicious camp food. Schedule: All teams.

COLLIN STORLIE is a US-born Ph.D. student who has extensive fieldwork experience with Steve’s team. Collin is currently conducting Ph.D. research concerning the effects of microclimate and weather regimes on patterns of species distribution and abundance, using skinks of the Australian Wet Tropics’ as a case-study group. This research has led to the creation of precise and highly spatio-temporally resolved weather layers for the entire study region covering a period of 60 years. Ultimately, his research will develop a framework for producing biologically relevant weather regime layers for species, and assessing the vulnerability of species to changing future weather patterns. During the expedition Collin will lead some of the spotlighting, bird, reptile, and microhylid frog surveys.

BRETT SCHEFFERS is a post-doctoral research fellow in Professor Williams’ lab. In the field, Brett studies canopy science in Singapore, the Philippines and Australia, with emphasis placed on arboreal amphibian and reptile communities. During the expedition you may help Brett with collecting a suite of Wet Tropics canopy data for our research.

All staff schedules are subject to change.
RECOMMENDED READING
YOUR RESOURCES AT HOME

SCIENTIFIC MEDIA

BOOKS:

FIELD GUIDES:

WEBSITES:
- Centre for Tropical Biodiversity and Climate Change: jcu.edu.au/ctbcc
- Wet Tropics Management Authority: wettropics.gov.au/
- Wet Tropics information: barrierreefaustralia.com/wet-tropics/rainforest1.htm
- Information on Cairns, North Queensland: cairnsinfo.com.au

SOCIAL MEDIA: EARTHWATCH AUSTRALIA
- FACEBOOK: facebook.com/EarthwatchAustralia
- TWITTER: twitter.com/Earthwatch_Aus
- YOUTUBE: youtube.com/user/EarthWebBoy
- INSTAGRAM: instawebgram.com/i/earthwatch_aus
- PINTEREST: pinterest.com/earthwatchaus/
- GOOGLE+: plus.google.com/+EarthwatchSouthMelbourne/posts
- FLICKR: flickr.com/photos/earthwatchaustralia/

SOCIAL MEDIA: EARTHWATCH INTERNATIONAL
- FACEBOOK: facebook.com/Earthwatch
- TWITTER: twitter.com/earthwatch_org
- YOUTUBE: youtube.com/earthwatchinstitute
This document contains important information concerning Earthwatch Institute policies and participant rights and responsibilities for inclusion in an Earthwatch expedition. Please read this document thoroughly and sign the Liability Release section of your Earthwatch Participation Form to indicate that you understand and accept the risks inherent to your expedition and the policies, rights, and responsibilities enumerated in this document. You will not be permitted to participate in an expedition until Earthwatch has received the signed release form.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

It is permissible to share photos, videos, and stories of your expedition with family, friends, local media, and in a public forum. Sharing your new perspectives and experiences is welcomed and encouraged.

However, please recognize that all information, data, and images shared or gathered in the course of your expedition’s field work become the intellectual property of the Earthwatch scientist. Co-opting or plagiarism of data, images, or information gathered during an expedition for use in a scientific thesis, master’s, or PhD work, or for profit or for the academic or business use of a third party without the permission of the Earthwatch scientist is strictly prohibited. Please be aware that data gathered during the interviewing of local people become the intellectual property of the Earthwatch scientist. Earthwatch scientists have the right to place additional restrictions on your ability to share data or certain research-related images. Conversely, an Earthwatch scientist may give written permission to use data and images for academic or profitable activity. Please be sure to ask what is acceptable to the Earthwatch scientist.

Fellows or scholarship recipients are sometimes required to submit a written report reflecting what they have learned on a project, sometimes as a step toward developing a curriculum. Earthwatch scientists have the right but not the obligation to review and edit materials involving information gathered on one of their expeditions.

DISCRIMINATION

Earthwatch does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or any other reason prohibited by applicable law and respects participants’ right to privacy. However, you must be aware that local laws in countries in which Earthwatch operates may not be antdiscriminatory and that the possibility exists that local residents may not have an awareness of preferred practice regarding discrimination.

Discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated on Earthwatch teams. Disruptive behavior or verbal, physical, or any other type of abuse or harassment will also not be tolerated. Violation of Earthwatch’s nondiscrimination policy is grounds for expulsion from the program without a refund.

INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Earthwatch scientists, their staff, their colleagues, and their associates are prohibited from becoming romantically involved with participants during the entire duration of the period that the team is in the field. Romantic relationships that may otherwise seem permissible may eventually create an unpleasant or unproductive work environment and are therefore prohibited for the duration of an Earthwatch project.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Please recognize that the relationship that exists between Earthwatch scientists and staff and participants is analogous to the student-teacher relationship. Therefore, please be aware of the following policies.
Sexual harassment of participants by the Earthwatch scientist or Earthwatch staff is prohibited. Likewise, sexual harassment of other participants, Earthwatch field staff, or local people by participants is also prohibited.

Sexual harassment infringes on an individual’s right to an environment free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtones of conduct either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment does not mean occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature.

Sexual harassment refers to conduct which is offensive, which harms morale, or which interferes with the effectiveness of Earthwatch expedition teams; such conduct is prohibited. Lewd or vulgar remarks, suggestive comments, displaying derogatory posters, cartoons, or drawings, pressure for dates or sexual favors, and unacceptable physical contact or exposure are examples of what can constitute harassment. No one should be touched in areas that would be covered by a bathing suit. It is important to realize that what may not be offensive to you may be offensive to participants, the local population, or Earthwatch field staff.

Any individual who feels subjected to sexual harassment or has any knowledge of such behavior should report it at once to the Earthwatch scientist, Field Team Leader, or other Earthwatch staff member. The Earthwatch scientist or Field Team Leader will notify Earthwatch when an accusation of sexual harassment or abuse is made or when such conduct is witnessed.

All reports of sexual harassment will be handled with discretion and will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Any participant who is found to have engaged in conduct constituting sexual harassment will be removed from the expedition at his or her own expense. If a minor is involved in allegations of sexual harassment, his or her parents or guardians will be contacted.

**DRUGS**

Laws on drug use in most countries are severe and may impose lengthy prison terms or the death penalty. The manufacture, possession, use, purchase, or sale of illegal drugs or other illegal substances while on an Earthwatch expedition is strictly prohibited. Prescription drugs may only be purchased and used by the individual indicated on the prescription in keeping with their intended use guidelines.

**ALCOHOL**

Local statutes, customs, practices, ordinances, and regulations with regard to the use, possession, sale, or purchase of alcohol are applicable to all participants and project staff on Earthwatch expeditions. Participants and project staff on Earthwatch expeditions must comply with the law of the country in which a project is located regarding the minimum age required to consume alcohol. In addition, restriction on the use, possession, sale, or purchase of alcohol may be set by the Earthwatch scientist. Any restrictions on the consumption of alcohol should be clearly outlined by the project staff in the on-site briefing to participants at the start of the project and in the expedition briefing.
Consumption or possession of alcohol or smoking is not permitted on any Earthwatch Teen Team, regardless of local law. Excessive consumption of alcohol by staff or participants is not acceptable on any Earthwatch project. Intoxication can jeopardize personal safety, in addition to the safety of the team. It can also cause delay and hinder response in the event of a crisis or emergency situation.

Earthwatch staff and the Earthwatch scientist have the discretion to remove individuals from the project who consume alcohol in a time and manner that endanger the safety and/or productivity of the expedition.

MINORS
Earthwatch considers participants less than eighteen (18) years of age to be minors. Minors are not permitted to participate on any of Earthwatch’s standard teams unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, in which case the minimum age is fifteen (15). Guardians accompanying minors on standard teams must be 21 years of age or over. Minors on standard teams do not receive additional guidance or supervision from Earthwatch beyond what is offered to the adult participants. The total number of minors on standard teams may be limited on a project by project basis; this will be noted in the expedition briefing. A maximum of two minors may accompany each parent or guardian on a standard or Family Team. Earthwatch has developed teams specifically for 15-, 16- and 17-year-olds (“Teen Teams”) as well as teams specifically for families (“Family Teams”) with children as young as 10 years. These teams focus on the same research activities and have the same expectations as our regular teams, but with more facilitation and support. Exceptions for some projects may be made at the discretion of Earthwatch and the Earthwatch scientist. Due to a more in-depth screening process for certain programs that select candidates based on school year rather than age, there may be 18-year-olds fielding on the same team as 15-, 16- and 17-year-olds. Please be aware that some Earthwatch projects do not allow participation by minors in any circumstance.

PARTICIPANTS AND DRIVING
Participants are not allowed to drive project vehicles (including motorcycles or all terrain vehicles) or aircraft during an expedition. In select circumstances, participants may be able to drive boats under the direct supervision by project staff. These circumstances are predetermined by project staff in collaboration with Earthwatch. Participants must respect the restrictions for boat driving in place for each project.

If a project environment is such that participants can drive their own vehicles to the rendezvous, those who have driven themselves to the project may not drive their own vehicles to, from, or for project activities, including the transport of project equipment after arriving at the site.
Participants who have driven themselves to the project may choose to utilize their own vehicles during recreational time, but project staff will brief them on any driving restrictions. All driving during recreational time is done at your own risk. Please be advised that the only exception to the above driving restrictions is emergency situations.

Riding in other participants’ vehicles is not covered under the participants’ insurance policy for the expedition. Riding in another participant’s vehicle is done at a participant’s own risk.

**IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY**

In the event of emergencies, judgments must be made by Earthwatch field staff and participants. While Earthwatch makes an effort to ensure that qualified people make the most informed decisions possible, occasionally first aid may be administered and other immediate steps taken by expedition participants who are not licensed medical providers.

Each Earthwatch expedition has safety protocols and emergency procedures in place. Earthwatch encourages team members (the field staff and participants) to exercise their best judgment with regard to their own safety and the safety of other team members. Other participants may perform “Good Samaritan” actions, or actions taken to assist fellow participants during emergency situations in the field. However, Earthwatch does not encourage or expect you to jeopardize your own safety or that of others in attempting to rescue or assist your fellow team members.

**RIGHT OF REFUSAL**

Earthwatch reserves the right to refuse an applicant’s participation in an Earthwatch project at any time and to terminate any work being done by a participant and require the participant to vacate the project site if the Earthwatch scientist, Field Team Leader, or other Earthwatch staff member in his or her absolute discretion considers it appropriate. In this event, the participant (and his or her parents or guardians, if appropriate) will be responsible for arranging and paying for any accommodation, travel, or other arrangements which may be necessary following the termination of a participant’s involvement in a project, for whatever reason, and will not be eligible for a refund.

Earthwatch may not refuse an applicant’s participation in a project for discriminatory reasons (race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or any other reason prohibited by applicable law). However, an application may be denied in the interest of team compatibility or due to logistical limitations. Earthwatch will make reasonable efforts to accommodate participants with disabilities, and the organization endeavors to find appropriate expeditions for those participants who have physical limitations. Refusal of an applicant is an unusual event and is generally done either because of an applicant’s failure to meet the essential eligibility requirements of a particular project or in the interest of team compatibility. In the event that an applicant is refused participation for health reasons, Earthwatch will refund in full any deposit or payment made toward the expedition.

Earthwatch scientists have the right to refuse special requests, such as visits by media (film, photography, or print), special groups, or teams [students, donors, etc.], if they conflict with Earthwatch scientist schedules, safety, research objectives, or general performance of the team.

Any participant found in violation of any of the policies described in this document (“Participant Rights and Responsibilities”) is subject to removal from the team at his or her own expense. By signing the Liability Release section of your Earthwatch Participation Form, you are indicating that you have read and understand the policies in this document. Removal of a participant from a team is at the discretion of the Earthwatch scientist, Field Team Leader, or other Earthwatch staff. In addition, Earthwatch will support the right of the Earthwatch scientist, Field Team Leader, or other Earthwatch staff to send a participant away from a project once in the field should his or her behavior compromise the safety, research objectives, or general performance of the team, or if the participant has violated a stated policy. In the event that a minor is dismissed from a project, Earthwatch will contact the participant’s parents or guardians prior to his or her dismissal. Should a participant be removed from a team, he or she is responsible for any and all costs associated with departure from the team and will receive neither refund of the minimum contribution for the expedition nor any expenses incurred by participation on the expedition.

(November 2012)
COMMUNICATIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Telephones will be available for emergency communication while in Cairns. However, while the team is based at the field camps, communication will not be readily available as mobile phone and Internet reception will not be available. The project will have a satellite phone for emergency communications only. Generally, two separate groups in the field will be able to contact each other over short distances via UHF radio, but not by satellite phone [satellite phones remain off in order to maintain full charge to call authorities during an emergency]. In the event of an emergency the first point of contact will be emergency services at phone number 000. After this first contact the satellite phone can be used to attempt to contact base camp or Earthwatch directly.

The Earthwatch Australia office can be contacted on the following numbers:

- **DURING OFFICE HOURS:** +61 (0) 3 9016 7590
- **AFTER HOURS (IN EMERGENCIES ONLY):** +61 (0) 3 8508 5537 (see box for calling instructions).

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Personal communication with outsiders is not always possible while participating in an expedition. Earthwatch encourages volunteers to minimize outgoing calls and immerse themselves in the experience; likewise, family and friends should restrict calls to urgent messages only.

CONTACT INFORMATION

While the team is based in Cairns [mid-expedition] we’ll have telephone access, a local post office, daily courier service and limited access to e-mail services. There is mobile reception in Cairns, and you may use your own mobile phones during non-research time if you choose.

VOLUNTEER CONTACT INFO

In case of an emergency you will be able to be contacted during the two-day rest break by calls made to Crystal Cascades Caravan Park.

**PHONE:** +61 (0) 7 4039 1036
**E-MAIL:** enquiries@crystalcascades.com.au

The satellite phone cannot be contacted from the outside, as it must remain turned off to maintain battery charge for emergency situations.

Again, all volunteers are asked to remember that Earthwatch expeditions offer a rare change to escape from hearing ringing phones and other’s phone conversations, and to regulate their cellphone use with respect for fellow volunteers and staff accordingly.

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**EARTHWATCH’S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOTLINE (OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA):**

Call Earthwatch’s 24-hour on-call duty officer in the U.S.:
+1 (978) 461-0081
+1 (800) 776-0188 (toll-free for calls placed from within the US)

**HEALIX INTERNATIONAL:**

+44 (20) 3667-8991 [collect calls/reverse charges accepted]
**US TOLL FREE:** 1 (877) 759 3917
**UK FREE PHONE:** 0(800) 197 5180
**E-MAIL:** earthwatch@healix.com

**EARTHWATCH’S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOTLINE (WITHIN AUSTRALIA):**

+61 (0) 3-8508-5537

After business hours, leave a message with our live answering service. State that you have an emergency and give the name of your expedition, your name, the location from which you are calling, and if possible, a phone number where you can be reached. An Earthwatch staff person will respond to your call within one hour.
MESSAGE FROM EARTHWATCH

DEAR EARTHWATCHER,

Thank you for joining our expedition! We do appreciate your decision to be involved in hands-on environmental science and conservation, as a significant personal contribution to a sustainable planet.

As an Earthwatch volunteer, you have the opportunity to create positive change.

While you’re out in the field working toward that change, we are committed to caring for your safety. Although risk is an inherent part of the environments in which we work, we’ve been providing volunteer field experiences with careful risk management and diligent planning for over 40 years. You’re in good hands.

We hope this expedition will inspire you to get more involved in conservation and sustainable development priorities—not just out in the field, but also when you return home. We encourage you to share your experiences with others, and to transfer your skills and enthusiasm to environmental conservation efforts in your workplace, community, and home.

If you have questions as you prepare for your expedition, contact our Earthwatch office. Thank you for your support, and enjoy your expedition!

Best regards,

Professor David McInnes
Chief Executive Officer