

Desert Channels

The Impulse to Conserve



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Libby Robin, Christopher R. Dickman, Mandy Martin (Editors)

Desert Channels is the centrepiece of a project that combines book, art exhibitions and web-based educational materials exploring the distinctive Desert Channels country in south-western Queensland.

This is the production landscape right on the edge of the desert, and the Simpson Desert itself. The region is the main source of all the desert rivers in arid Australia, and its rivers drain into Lake Eyre. The region includes the Channel Country and adjacent Simpson Desert and extends north east of Longreach to include Mound Springs country. *Desert Channels* explores the impulse to protect the varied biodiversity of the region, and the many ways in which this is accomplished.

The book combines visual appreciation of the region with accessible text about its intriguing natural history, its people and their histories and the various ways that people are working to conserve the land, the rivers and the creatures. It is a celebration of what people in the region value about their place, and what visitors might find when they visit.

Desert Channels is richly illustrated, with strong writing by many prize-winning writers, and featuring the artworks of Mandy Martin, one of Australia's premier artists.



SECTIONS

PART 1: Place

Arriving in the Desert Channels Country; Alice Duncan-Kemp (Pinningarra) and the History of the Frontier; Connecting with our Land; Pituri Country.

Interlude I: Landscape Studies 2007: Environmental Projects and the Impulse to Conserve.

PART 2: Landscape

The Story of our Land Revealed through Plants; Mystery and Marvel: The Invertebrate Animal World; Channel Country Rivers: The Pulse of Life; Artesian Springs.

Interlude II: Landscape Studies 2008: Aesthetic Evaluation as an Environmental Tool

PART 3: Biodiversity

Mammals and Birds: Life on the Move; Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish: Going with the Flow; Dragons, Diprotodons, Dinosaurs and Dust: 150 Million Years of Desert Channels Prehistory; Creating a Herbarium for Cravens Peak.

Interlude III: Landscape Studies 2009: Painting in Place.

PART 4: Livelihood

Conserving Desert Australian Livelihoods; The Forum is a Campfire, The River is a Story; Production Lands, Philanthropy and Biodiversity; Conservation Science: Here and Beyond.

Interlude IV: Listening to the Land: Encounter Documentary of Zebra Finches at Oceans Bore.

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Christine Campbell lives on Norwood Station at Blackall where she combines involvement in the family cattle and goat grazing business with a passion for the recording and preservation of Aboriginal and colonial heritage.

Simon Campbell is a grazier from Blackall, with a wide range of interests and experience in national agri-political representation and agricultural research and development strategy and planning.

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Chris Dickman is Professor in Terrestrial Ecology at the University of Sydney.

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Libby Robin is an environmental historian at the Australian National University and the National Museum of Australia.

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