



December 2013

Christmas break has come upon us so quickly. We have been working hard to get loose ends tied up before we all head off for a well deserved break.

To finish the year off, we thought we would update you with a couple of things and take the opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Filling your stocking

Gift giving is quite an art form and it is never more put to the test than in the festive season. What can you buy uncle Frank who you only see once a year? What about the cousin Kylie who loves books but not much else and aunt Edna who has everything anyway?

It is these sorts of dilemmas that can make Christmas not so much fun so we have added some of our products that might make great gifts or stocking fillers. We can still be contacted over the break so call us today.

The Snakes of Western Queensland A Field Guide is an easy-to-use reference book for travellers, naturalists and locals alike. This 136 page handbook is a great way for either the expert or lay-person to get better acquainted with the snakes of the region. It's an excellent addition to the glove-box, bookshelf or library and includes over 100 vibrant, full colour photographs.

RRP \$19.95 Postage and Handling \$8

Frogs of the Lake Eyre Basin – A Field Guide, is a 140 page handbook that will satisfy the curious naturalist in all of us. The concise text is supported by vibrant photographs of the 44 native frog species of the Lake Eyre Basin as well as the omnipresent Cane Toad.

RRP \$19.95 Postage and Handling \$8

Westering, an award winning 80 page collection of bush verse of western Queensland, exudes passion for the outback and a love of the land, its lifestyle and its people. Forwarded by bush legend, RM Williams, Westering paints a vivid picture of wide horizons, and a way of life, far from the confines of civilisation, that is rapidly disappearing. Penned by former Australian Champion performance bush poet, Mark Kleinschmidt, it epitomising what tens of thousands flock to see every year..... the Outback!

RRP \$12.00 Postage and Handling \$8

Weed Deck This 137 page reference booklet is full of information about Channel Country trees, shrubs, grasses, forbes and cacti. The introduced species, poisonous or problem plants and Weeds of National Significance (WONS) or plants that are potential weeds, are all marked (as of 2006). Produced by the Channel Landcare Group and the Georgina Diamantina Catchment Committee and authored by Rhondda Alexander, the original print run was funded and distributed cost free. Subsequent unfunded runs are priced at a cost recovery rate of \$5.00. Postage and Handling \$8

Women on Top is a collection of stories from 11 gutsy women who have, while juggling work and home life, overcome adversity to succeed against the odds through determination, humour or heart. Our very own CEO, Leanne Kohler, has written an honest and candid chapter about making the hard decisions that enabled our organisation to adapt to changing circumstances and to survive.

RRP \$29.95 Postage and Handling \$8

LEB Map - This colourful poster map (1108mm X 867mm) is surrounded by more than 40 photos and loads of information about rivers and wetlands, plants and animals, climate, terrain, towns, homestead names, Aboriginal lands, parks and reserves, land use, the management of natural resources in the Lake Eyre Basin and more.

RRP \$40 Postage and Handling \$15

New to our range of products are 5 informative Natural History posters, depicting common examples from within the Queensland section of the Lake Eyre Basin (Desert Channels Region).

Each beautifully photographed matt finished poster, with accompanying text, is 594mm X 841mm. Posters include; Birds (19 species), Reptiles (20 species) Fauna (18 species), Flora (16 species) and Regional Weeds (10)

RRP \$10 Postage and Handling \$15

This new addition to our product range is a colourful and informative map about the Great Artesian Basin, giving some of its history and a host of interesting pieces of information about this great water supply that runs beneath much of the region.

RRP \$40 Postage and Handling \$15

Growing Outback Gardens is a 117 page, full-colour book that sets you on the journey to making an attractive garden that can cope with the harsh extremes of the Outback environment. With a combined four decades in the Outback, authors Mike Chuk and Jeff Poole take you through how to plan a garden, select plants, irrigation systems, mulches, worms, vegetables, fruit and flowers. What more could you ask for if you're into sowin' things and growin' things.

RRP \$19.95 Postage and Handling \$8

The WoWW Factor

Desert Channels Queensland has been invited to provide representation on the War on Western Weeds (WoWW) advisory committee.

A 5 year initiative, the project is run by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to address prickly acacia problems in Western Queensland. By working with landholders and key stakeholders, it aims to provide knowledge, networks and innovations to assist in the fight on prickly acacia.

It is envisaged this will be done through activities such as: accelerated research and outcomes; development and promotion of weed spread prevention protocols; and development and promotion of new or improved tools to reduce the threat and impacts of prickly acacia in a collaborative manner.

Our very own weed specialist, Peter Spence was the obvious choice to provide representation on the WoWW. DCQ has itself embarked upon a 5 year weed program which includes developing 5

year plans with associated mapping and control work where Peter is responsible for landholder engagement, planning and the organisation and supervision of all onground prickly acacia control activities.

Peter's diverse background provides him with a unique perspective in being able to understand land management issues from both a landholder perspective and a legislative perspective. He understands difficulties and logistics of treating weeds in Western Queensland, and coming from the land, has a deep appreciation of the different pressures and time constraints that landholders are subject to. He can use that knowledge to effectively guide and work with landholders on managing weeds. In addition, he knows the economics of weed control, knowing where certain controls can be better value than others.

It is great to see such synergy happening and to be able to align our work with other organisations. By working together we can be far more effective. The WoWW will aim to meet on a quarterly basis and we will keep you updated on the process.

So what's it to you?

We are looking for sponsorship for the Channel Country Photography Competition (CCPC) and if you are asking the question, "so what's in it for me?" I am glad you did. It is an important question to ask.

The CCPC began in 2010. It was an extension of the popular and widely circulated Desert Channels Group (DCG) calendars, which featured beautiful shots captured by DCG team members. These calendars developed a large following, and were a natural platform on which to build the CCPC, and associated calendar, by involving the wider community in capturing the moods and majesty of the region.

The Channel Country Photography Competition has gained a reputation as the preeminent photographic competition in Outback Queensland. Entrants are challenged to capture the essence of the Queensland section of the Lake Eyre Basin: the landscapes, wildlife and people that are quintessentially 'outback' Australia.

The competition is delivered in partnership with Vast Arts, a regional network run by volunteers to promote the Arts in Central Western Queensland.

And so what's in it for you?

Unlike sponsoring other events, The Channel Country Photography Competition provides year-round exposure, beginning with a heavy media campaign in the lead up to the competition, and around the announcement of results. This is in addition to an ongoing presence throughout the year while the calendar is in use and visible in businesses, government offices and private homes.

With 1000 copies of the calendar printed and circulated, sponsors have year round exposure across western Queensland and beyond.

Media campaign includes websites, Facebook, Twitter, monthly emails that go out to more than a thousand recipients, local newspapers and shire newsletters.

The CCPC provides benefit through association with two community organisations - Vast Arts and the Desert Channels Group. Both organisations have high standing in the rural community: Vast Arts with its championing of the Arts; and DCG through helping landholders improve the health and productivity of our natural environment. This provides access into broad markets often difficult to access through mainstream efforts.

Involvement in the CCPC is an investment in regional Australia through the Arts and sustainable natural resource management. It has a big community impacts and it is a brand the community love. Our investors enjoy the benefits of being seen to help and invest in this region.

If these are things that align with who you are and what you do, or things you aspire to, then this is an investment opportunity with something in it for you.

You can find out more through our sponsorship prospectus. Call Roelie Hartwig today on 07 4652 7815 or email roelie.hartwig@dcq.org.au.

Dancing around Christmas

For the better part of a century, we have fought over whether the iconic pavlova hailed from neighbouring New Zealand shores or on Australian soil. Reportedly named after the famous Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, The classic pavlova is billowing clouds of meringue lavished with

cream and summer fruit. Our cousins across the ditch claim a chef in a Wellington hotel created the dish for Pavlova's visit in 1926. We might think otherwise.

Whatever your persuasion, it is certainly a classic summer dish and here is a slight twist that is perfect for hot Christmas day and makes use of the delicious cherries or berries that are available this time of year.

Spiced Cherry Chocolate Pavlova:

for the chocolate meringue base

- 6 large egg whites
- 300 grams caster sugar
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder (sieved)
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar (or red wine vinegar)
- 50 grams dark chocolate (finely chopped)

for the topping

- 500 ml double cream
- 500 grams cherries, raspberries or summer berries
- cinnamon quill, 6-8 cloves, ginger and orange zest
- 200 ml water
- 250 grams sugar

Method:

Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 4/350°F and line a baking tray with baking parchment.

Bring the sugar and water for the topping to the boil with your spices. Once it is boiled, throw in your cherries and boil for a minute. Add softer berries like raspberries a bit later, take off the heat and leave to infuse.

Beat the egg whites until satiny peaks form, and then beat in the sugar a spoonful at a time until the meringue is stiff and shiny. Sprinkle over the cocoa and vinegar, and the chopped chocolate. Then gently fold everything until the cocoa is thoroughly mixed in. Mound on to a baking sheet in a fat circle approximately 23cm / 9 inches in diameter, smoothing the sides and top. Place in the oven, then immediately turn the temperature down to 150°C/gas mark 2/300°F and cook for about 1 to 1 ¼ hours. When it's ready it should look crisp around the edges and on the sides and be dry on top, but when you prod the centre you should feel the promise of squidginess beneath

your fingers. Turn off the oven and open the door slightly, and let the chocolate meringue disc cool completely.

When you're ready to serve, invert on to a big, flat-bottomed plate. Whisk the cream with 3-4 tsp of syrup and a dash of brandy until thick but still soft and pile it on top of the meringue. Remove the whole spices from the syrup/berry mix and scatter over the berries. Decorate with grated chocolate or chocolate decorations.

Cheap as Chips - Biofuel converter

We can never be accused of always doing the same thing the same way. Over the years we have tried different approaches and reinvented the way we do things to help stay relevant and effective. The recent purchase of a machine to convert waste oil into biofuel is just another example.

The technology, called transesterification, has been around for some time but specialised equipment is required. So when a neighbouring regional body in Charleville had a conversion unit for sale, we jumped at the opportunity.

It may seem a bit unusual but it is a great way to convert old chip oil, normally a waste product, into a tool to fight weeds.

When it comes to weed control, carriers such as diesel are commonly used to apply chemicals. These are often the most costly part of the process. In an effort to help local landholders and Landcare groups, DCG will be producing a biofuel product that can be mixed with chemical and used in spray units.

Some local businesses are already having their oil collected by the local Lions club for a small \$5 fee and so we have created a partnership with them. The Lions will continue to provide this service as a fundraiser but instead of transporting the oil to Rockhampton, it will be supplied to us for conversion.

This is a fantastic opportunity for a positive effect on our environment. If you aren't already having your oil collected, here is a chance for you to play a small part in protecting our region. Instead of throwing away your oil, let the Lions collect it so we can use it in weed control.

A lot of this product will be used to treat particularly invasive cacti infestations. As part of the Australian Invasive Cacti Network, we are committed to help in the fight of treating infestations in

the Queensland portion of Lake Eyre Basin. This product will help remove some of the prohibitive costs associated with weed control.

This will also be part of a trial to determine the best mixes and additives for optimal results. Once some data has been gathered, DCQ will post information on their website for people who may be interested.

A bite before the flight

Desert Channels Queensland continues to branch out its services to the community by opening a cafe in the Longreach Airport terminal.

The Flight Bites cafe will open this January in the airport building and will provide great coffee and refreshment for customers and staff before and after flights.

While some may see this as a bit of a far step from our core business, it is merely a tool to provide extra funding for onground activities. We recently launched DC Events, our catering and event management service, and flight bites is a natural extension of that.

The arrival at the airport is often people's first impression of the town and it is important to have quality refreshments available but even more importantly, we believe we need to do everything we can to get funds for onground activities that government are no longer funding.

With the majority of government funding for natural resource management going to coastal regions and high profile issues such as the Great Barrier Reef, little has been available for the inland regional bodies like Desert Channels Queensland.

Our ability to branch out into other services beyond the traditional environmental scope of a regional body has helped the organisation stay on the landscape for over 10 years now despite changes in political and financial climates.

All profits made by the venture are returned into the region to help protect the natural resources in the Lake Eyre Basin portion of Queensland.

Flight Bites will offer an assortment of savouries and refreshments as well as homemade cakes and we are keen to get any feedback on ideas for food you may like to see served.

We look forward to seeing you there.

