

# The Living Valley



## Tweed's Biodiversity Hotspot

THE Tweed's rugged mountain scenery and varied wildlife is central to the recently recognised "Forests of East Australia" Global Biodiversity Hotspot. With over 8000 vascular plant species and more than 2000 species found nowhere else on earth, this area exceeds the endemic species needed for recognition of global biodiversity. Sadly with 77% of natural vegetation cleared or degraded it also meets the criteria for a global biodiversity hotspot and means habitat for our wonderful flora and fauna is rapidly disappearing. The world-wide significance of this is under appreciated.

The good news is that in these 35 Biodiversity Hotspots we can conserve half of the world's living creatures. By protecting natural habitat in the Tweed we are keeping alive ecosystems of unique plants and animals that help maintain nature's most vital services supporting all life on Earth and providing many benefits to humans including clean air and water, fertile soils, food, medicines and renewable resources.

Within the NSW Queensland Border Ranges region there are 108 conservation reserves including national parks, nature reserves, crown land and private conservation properties. While these rainforests, wildflower heaths, open forests, picturesque creeks, varied wildlife and some of the world's best bushwalking are protected much of our native vegetation and biological diversity is on private land and impacted by growing human population and urban development. Simple steps such as restoring native vegetation on waterways, not letting cats and dogs go wandering can protect habitat and native animals including birds, frogs and marsupials. Supporting local food and production is also a win/win strategy for a long term sustainable future in our unique Biodiversity Hotspot.

**Meet the Earth Learning team at  
World Environment Day, Knox Park,  
Murwillumbah on June 2nd!**