



UNIVERSITY *of*
TASMANIA

Thursday, 31 October 2019

Bookings now open for new breed of hotels

Architecture and design students at the University of Tasmania have developed a second generation of hotels for furry guests in the State's Midlands region.

The 'ferals' have already visited - Starlings and European Bees, and now it's hoped to capture the returning native species.

Three years ago, first-year University students designed and built a number of 'Species Hotels', a project which accommodated land-dwelling and flying animals, from Tasmanian devils and quolls, to microbats and pardalotes.

Tomorrow (Friday, 1 November) the Species Hotel sculpture walk project returns to the banks of the Macquarie River at Ross.

The work communicates and celebrates the significant contributions by Greening Australia, the University, landowners and the community to relink and restore vital habitat through 750,000 tree plantings.

Project leader Dr Louise Wallis, Senior Lecturer with the University's School of Technology, Environments & Design, said the Tasmanian Midlands represented the last refuge for several species of endangered wildlife, and was a biodiversity hotspot of national significance.

Dr Wallis said the second generation of hotels focused on Woodland birds such as pardalotes, as well as microbats, native bees and small biota, with the tree corridor now bringing striated pardalotes back to the area.

"The work is being informed by workshops held with researchers, school children, artists and designers, and landowners at Ross," Dr Wallis said.

"Over 1000 people have contributed to the educational, consultations and construction activities since 2016. It is so wonderful to be a part of something where you see the native species returning.

"In 2019 we are installing five new hotels and retiring one existing hotel to the environment.

"Students have carefully selected construction materials that are friendly to the environment, donated, durable and cost-effective for a three to five-year lifespan.

"We intend to introduce then retire Species Hotel into the future as our collective knowledge expands with the rest of the teams involved in the greater restoration project. Importantly the project has begun to connect with original custodians of the land.

"Students of all ages want to do something meaningful for the environment. This project has allowed University students and school children to work with fauna and flora, researchers and experts, and with the latest findings about pollination and biodiversity to produce really unique objects for wildlife and educational opportunities for our students."

Media are invited to the installation of the next generation of Species Hotels tomorrow (Friday, 1 November) taking place between 11.30am – 2.30pm on the corner of Boulevards Rd and Church St, Ross.

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