

## Over-logging has some predictable consequences.



Grange State Forest in mid 2011, with a proliferation of exotic weeds inhibiting regeneration, providing a seed bank of weeds that will slowly spread into adjoining exclusion zones, and providing an ideal habitat for Bell Miner Birds.

The Bell Birds are already present at Grange, and an outbreak of the devastating Bell Miner Associated Dieback (BMAD) is now only a matter of time.

Exotic weeds also increase the flammability of the forest which, when fire inevitably erupts, will have a highly negative impact on adjoining rainforest margins, slowly eating away at those fire-intolerant ecosystems.

## **And this is what Bell Miner Associated Dieback looks like**



The NSW Scientific Committee, in declaring BMAD to be a Key Threatening Process (KTP), identified canopy reduction greater than 35% as being a trigger for the dieback. Despite this, and being represented on the BMAD Working Group that was responsible for nominating the disease as a threatening process, Forests NSW routinely logs a minimum average of 40% basal volume.

That 'average' level of logging sees upwards of 80% of canopy loss in many areas throughout the forest, and Forests NSW refused to consider the potential impacts of BMAD, or even acknowledge or report the presence of the disease.



Twelve months after heavy logging at Wedding Bells, a vigorous growth of *Lantana camara* has taken over, smothering native vegetation and inhibiting regeneration.

Walking for some 200m along the edge of the logging, ecologist Mark Graham and I recorded almost as many exotic species as there were native species in the logged area.



6 months after logging at Candole State forest. Again, more than 75% of the canopy has gone, allowing exotic weed invasion.

## Exotic weeds are not the only problem.

In wetter forests, particularly at higher, colder areas, native vine species proliferate, forming dense mats over the logging debris, smothering all emerging vegetation.

In the picture at right (Clouds Creek State Forest) the background vine thicket is the result of extremely heavy logging in 1998. As can be seen, no eucalypt regrowth is visible.

Logging in the foreground occurred in 2009 and removed seed trees. The vine regrowth is clearly visible in the following picture.





Native Water Vine, *Cissus hypoglauca*, already swamping logging residues in clouds Creek, just months after loggers departed. Again Bell Miners have moved in since the 1999 logging event, and dieback is already occurring.

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