



QUEENSLAND TRUST FOR NATURE
ANNUAL REVIEW 2017

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Cover image: QTFN volunteer Thomas Kaliga was dwarfed by this majestic blue gum when he took this photo at our Aroona Reserve.

MESSAGE FROM THE TRUSTEES

We are pleased to present the Queensland Trust for Nature's Annual Review for 2017. The Review illustrates our continued evolution and renewed focus on building strong collaborations and partnerships to support QTFN's strategic purpose and long-term vision.

This year we farewellled Robert Allan who retired as a Trustee of QTFN. Our sincere gratitude goes out to Rob who was appointed in 2012. Rob's expertise in communications and strategic engagement has been fundamental to policy development and strategies that support QTFN's growth into the future. Rob's love for the natural world and commitment to the Trust will be missed.

Following Rob's resignation, Adrian Volders was appointed as Trustee. Adrian has been a member of the Funds Management Committee since 2014. Adrian knows the Trust's operations well and has broad experience in natural resource management, water quality as well as biodiversity offsets. Adrian brings fresh perspective and energy to the role.

Challenges facing Queensland's biodiversity and habitat protection continue to mount and here at QTFN, we know the work we do is part of a much larger picture. We have a small team and Queensland is a huge and diverse area. We understand the importance of growing solid relationships with volunteers, education providers, community groups, business and government. By working

together, we form part of a much larger movement based on broad networks that increase the transformative impact of our work.

Three things are critical to our focus here at QTFN – connection, relevance and flexibility. Connection of habitat is critical to survival of species. Connection with our supporters, volunteers, community and governments is critical to our operations. Remaining relevant means we need to keep up with trends and changes in our environment, we need to collaborate and work with others to make them part of our work and us part of theirs. Everything we do requires flexibility and responsiveness. We need to be agile, available and adaptable to change, challenges and opportunities. These attributes are at the core of our operations and our culture. They are central to our vision moving forward.

Looking ahead, we already have a packed calendar for 2018 and we are especially proud to be named as host of the 2018 Australian Land Conservation Alliance national conference to be held in Brisbane in October 2018. Each year, the importance of conservation on private land grows and the ALCA conference

is a great opportunity to bring together delegates from many different fields from all over the country to talk about private land conservation. We invite you to join us in Brisbane between 24-26 October.

In these pages, you will get a snapshot of the Trust's operations in 2017. There is always far more happening than we can squeeze in and there is always more to do. As Trustees, we acknowledge with gratitude the tireless efforts of our Executive General Manager, Nerida Bradley, our dedicated staff, volunteers, community groups, students, friend and supporters of QTFN. With all our operations focused on finding ways to secure enduring natural corridors, our supporters can feel confident their investment in biodiversity and ecosystem impact is founded on our commitment, energy and integrity.

These pages look back over the last year and in doing this we hope to share with you some of our excitement and energy as to all there is to come in 2018.

Graham Marshall
Molly Robson
Adrian Volders

TRUSTEES

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE GENERAL MANAGER

Collaborations and partnerships are central to everything we do at QTFN; there is a role for everyone as part of the broader QTFN team.

Some key collaborations have continued to flourish in 2017. Of particular note is our continuing work with UQ's Wonder of Science (WOS) program. Our relationship with WOS started at Avoid Island and continues to grow. The potential of the collaboration was recognised by CommBank's employee funded Grassroots program which has committed to supporting our new program with WOS, Camp Koala, at Aroona for the next 3 years. Corporate partners like CommBank are critical to our work and with WOS and others we are excited to deliver programs aimed at building commitment to science in school students and shaping the leaders and scientists of tomorrow.

QTFN's work with the Department of Environment & Science's Nature Refuge Program continues. Eight new nature refuges will be finalised in early 2018 and we are proud to coordinate with the Queensland Government to deliver new private protected areas in many regions. These are voluntary agreements entered into by private landholders who, by registering Nature Refuge covenants on their title, ensure the protection of the special ecological values of their land for future generations.

2017 also saw the continued growth of our relationship with UQ's Koala Ecology Group undertaking an exciting research project at New Acland

funded by the New Hope Group. New Hope have been active in organising corporate volunteering and other support for QTFN for a number of years. We continue to work with Conservation Volunteers Australia and Greenfleet to undertake critical land management work on our properties. In many spheres, we are growing relationships with industry organisations, universities, councils and government agencies. All the relationships we have are critical to how we operate. On behalf of all the QTFN team, I thank our partners for their ongoing support and commitment.

Thanks must also go to the scores of volunteers who have worked with QTFN in the last year. Without their skills, time and commitment, the work we do would not be the same. Volunteers help in the office or out in the field and all our volunteers come with a smile. We are privileged to work with them and sincerely thank them for their contribution to the future of Queensland's biodiversity.

2018 is shaping up as an important year for QTFN. More and more, we are embracing the power of technology, social media and what this can mean for our work. We are doing business in ways not even imagined a few years ago and looking forward we are keen to see what this can mean on the ground. In 2018, not only will we launch a new website, we are also hosting the Australian Land Conservation Alliance annual national

conference – PLC18: Accelerating Connection. The conference will explore how we can accelerate investment in private land conservation as an industry with value for the whole of the Australian economy.

I hope you feel the sense of excitement and positivity that emanates from the QTFN team. QTFN is staffed by a small team of amazing women. I cannot understate my appreciation for the drive and commitment of the team and the families and others that support them. Add to that the multiplier effect of volunteers and project partners and it is inspiring to take a moment to look back to see how much we have achieved in the last 12 months.

Nerida Bradley

EXECUTIVE GENERAL MANAGER



WORKING WITH LANDHOLDERS

Every day we work with Queenslanders on the ground and in the know. Here are some of the ways we connected with landholders in 2017.

Nature Refuges & Certification

In 2017, QTFN continued working with the Queensland Government to create nature refuges on privately-owned land. Working with landholders and the State Government, we have been able to protect over 126 hectares of land and create 13 new private protected areas.

Our staff also assessed 10 private properties as potential nature refuges, with declaration of two new refuges by the Minister. This is in addition to another six new refuges declared state-wide. The ecological values of these properties are now permanently protected.

Workshops & Seminars

Early in the year, our ecologist Felicity Shapland presented a seminar about managing fires on large properties as part of a series run by Ipswich City Council (ICC) and the South-East Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium (SEQFBC). Felicity spoke about QTFN's experience managing fires on our Aroona property and the challenges we face there, including very steep terrain, minimal resources and the need to coordinate with several rural fire brigades.



QTFN's Felicity Shapland presents to local landholders at the ICC and SEQFBC Fire Management Workshop.

In May, we held a community information session at Mt Mort about the vulnerable brush-tailed rock-wallaby. This was an opportunity to share our research and talk to local landowners about their land management practices and potential habitats.

Later in the year, our Conservation Manager, Tanya Pritchard presented to a group of landowners from the West Moreton Landcare Group. She spoke

about our conservation work across Queensland with a particular focus on our sustainable grazing operation at Aroona and the successful brush-tailed rock-wallaby research and recovery activities we have done there.

Tanya also presented to a large audience at the Little Liverpool Range Initiative community event, highlighting the importance of connecting local, regional and state wildlife corridors.



Ipswich City Council's Tim Shields speaking to landholders about the local brush-tailed rock wallaby population at QTFN's community information session at Mt Mort.

BULIMBAH NATURE REFUGE

The Bulimba Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee (B4C) purchased a 129ha property in 2015 to provide a buffer area to the World Heritage-Listed Mt Barney National Park. The property provides habitat for koalas and Glossy Black Cockatoos, as well as other local wildlife.

QTFN worked with this motivated community group to protect a vital wildlife corridor. Our role was to undertake the nature refuge assessment process.



'We have made this investment to achieve a social and environmental return not a financial one. As such it is a social investment in the region's future.'

Michael Petter, B4C President



QTFN's Tanya Pritchard with B4C's Michael Petter and Wayne Cameron.

The group were successful in securing a nature refuge declaration on the property and – acknowledging the traditional spelling of the area – created the 'Bulimbah Nature Refuge'.

We were thrilled to help B4C establish the nature refuge for this significant Queensland property. Our organisation is an avid supporter of B4C and the important work they do.

OFFSETS WITH OUTCOMES

The world's rapid population growth is a challenge to the survival of many wildlife species. Our Offsets with Outcomes program gives land developers the opportunity to direct funds in a way that supports the enduring survival of Queensland's koalas.

We currently manage three separate biodiversity offset areas on behalf of development partners. Four additional areas are currently awaiting final approval. All areas are managed under plans reviewed and approved by the Federal Government.



SUNLAND GROUP PROVIDES ENDURING HABITAT FOR KOALAS

We partnered with Sunland Group in 2016 to provide a quality offset for 'The Heights Residences' – an 85ha master planned parkland community in Pimpama.

Sunland appointed QTFN to manage 38.33ha of offset habitat at our Koala Crossing property, which forms part of the largest remaining stretch of open eucalypt forest in South-East Queensland.

'Sunland are pleased with the careful handling of the process as well as the outcome QTFN provided for our Pimpama development offset. We have the utmost confidence that their Koala Crossing property and management plan will help provide long-term protection of this important koala habitat.'

Andrew Conochie, Development Manager

QTFN has provided a decade-long management plan for the offset, detailing how we will address maintenance to improve the habitat for koalas. This includes conducting weeding, pest management and the monitoring of food and habitat trees. Detailed surveys to monitor the koala population are also planned, incorporating scat surveys and placing GPS tracking collars on some koalas to record vital information about their movements.



ALFIE & MAYA FIND A SAFE PLACE AT KOALA CROSSING

In April 2017, we released two very special koalas – Alfie and Maya – at Koala Crossing.

After being saved by a police officer in late 2016, Alfie attended 'koala kindy' to practice his climbing skills and prepare him to live in the wild without his dedicated carer, Trudi Timbs. Alfie's best friend Maya was orphaned last year when her mother was killed by a dog.

QTFN was delighted to welcome Alfie and Maya to the Koala Crossing family. We acknowledge the tireless efforts of Ipswich Koala Protection Society, Trudi Timbs, the Moggill Koala Hospital and the Queensland Police Service for their efforts in bringing these little guys home.



Trudi Timbs from IKPS releases Alfie at Koala Crossing.

REVERSING HABITAT LOSS AT KOALA CROSSING

The Koala Ecology Group has been working with Queensland Trust for Nature at several sites in Queensland in recent years, including Koala Crossing.

QTFN is actively promoting development of a significant area of koala habitat at Koala Crossing, which will help reverse the regional trend of habitat loss – a key threat to the persistence of koalas in the local area.

In the future, QTFN's revegetated areas will provide both a much-needed safe avenue for koala movement, and long-term homes for resident koalas. It has been a pleasure to be consulted and involved in the development of this koala habitat and indeed to monitor the koalas at QTFN's property. This work is a key element in reversing the loss of koalas that has occurred locally in the last 30 years.

Dr Bill Ellis, Koala Ecology Group, University of Queensland.



Dr Bill Ellis and King Billy

PARTNERING TO PROTECT

Partners in government, education and business are critical to growing our reach.

Queensland to host 2018 ALCA conference

QTFN is proud to be hosting the 2018 Australian Land Conservation Alliance's (ALCA) annual Private Land Conservation conference – PLC18!

In October 2017, the National Private Land Conservation Conference was held in Hobart. Almost 250 people attended the event hosted by Tasmanian Land Conservancy with the theme 'Valuing Nature'. Delegates were invited to test and challenge how the environment's wellbeing is attributed – from natural capital and

ecosystem services, to community and cultural connections, and the inherent value of nature for its own sake.

We are thrilled that the ALCA PLC18 will be hosted by QTFN and held at QUT Gardens Point in Brisbane on 24-26 October. As ALCA's main annual event, the conference aims to grow the national private land conservation network across Australia. With a theme of 'Accelerating Connection' the conference will explore whether there are lessons we can learn

from players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem to accelerate progress through biodiversity challenges and international protected area commitments.

The forward focused theme of 'Accelerating Connection' provides an opportunity for business leaders, landholders, all levels of government, investors and other stakeholders to come together in a way that energises their connections and moulds their thinking about private land conservation.



Supporting the growth of women conservation leaders

Nature's Leading Women, developed by the Nature Conservancy, supports women community leaders from Northern Australia and the Pacific. Our Conservation Manager, Tanya Pritchard, visited Solomon Islands' marine-protected areas, in September to participate in turtle monitoring and education alongside rangers from the Arnavon Islands. Tanya observed first-hand the impactful work of women conservation leaders. In November QTFN hosted a field trip to Aroona and Koala Crossing as part of the program's Big Ideas Week, which culminated in an event at the State Library of Queensland where the women presented business ideas. Spotting a koala and seeing the potential for women leaders in conservation were highlights of an inspiring program.



The 'Nature's Leading Women' program participants visiting Aroona.

ACLAND KOALAS CENTRE OF NEW RESEARCH PROGRAM

This year, alongside the University of Queensland's Koala Ecology Group, we teamed up on an important koala research project around Acland.

Koala research in the region dates back to at least 1971, when research was conducted at a local property, Inverness. By building on that long-term data, our study will provide the first report of its kind in Queensland – improving understanding of the local koala ecology, including population dynamics, genetics, habitat and health.

Over five trips, researchers led by Dr Bill Ellis and Dr Sean Fitzgibbon used GPS tracking collars to monitor koalas as they moved around the local area. This research will be compared to the local population at Inverness, as researched by Dr Greg Gordon in the 1970s and '80s.

In addition to tracking all the koalas currently in the program, we found and identified a new koala in New Acland as well as a further ten at Inverness. GPS collars provide researchers with comprehensive tracking data, which allows them to analyse home range, interactions, and movements as well as consider potential risks (such as road crossings). During the course of the study, four young were found on tagged koalas, showing that our conservation efforts are working.

New Hope Group has actively supported the project providing funding and logistical support to the research program, part of which takes place on the mining lease area. New Acland Environmental Advisor Jessica Hannigan says the mine found the initial results of the research rewarding.

Our team thoroughly enjoyed working on this exciting project in partnership with UQ's Koala Ecology Group. We look forward to continuing to work with New Hope Group in 2018 to help inform and guide their environmental management decisions.



UQ Koala Ecology Group's Dr Amber Gillett undertaking a health check on Gail the Koala at Inverness



THE TURTLE EXPERIENCE FOR NEW HOPE GROUP STAFF

In October, we hosted a group of corporate volunteers from the New Hope Group at Avoid Island. The three-day trip was hands-on for the enthusiastic team as they undertook critical island restoration activities.



New Hope Group's Dan Dempsey enjoying his corporate volunteering trip!

These activities are essential, particularly at the start of the nesting season – ensuring the beaches are free of debris as well as weeds that may prevent access to nesting beaches. The team monitored the nesting beaches each night at high tide, and were lucky

enough to witness three nesting flatback turtles.

The New Hope Group team had such a great experience, they are planning a second corporate volunteering trip to Avoid Island in 2018!



Staff from New Hope Group join QTFN's Felicity Shapland and Sea Turtle Foundation's Johanna Karam in clearing debris from the beaches at Avoid Island.

PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES

Sustainable Grazing ticks the BMP Boxes

We are very proud to have received recognition as a Grazing Accredited Producer at our Aroona reserve this year, as part of the Grazing Best Management Practices (BMP) program. Accreditation means we join over 2,000 Queensland cattle producers who have adopted the Grazing BMP.

The voluntary, industry-led program helps graziers identify practices that will improve long-term profitability. Importantly, it also assists graziers to carry out sound environmental management on their properties.

As an operating cattle farm, it is important for Aroona to have a benchmark, so we can ensure we are demonstrating best industry practice. Accreditation demonstrates that our conservation-focused cattle operation is carried out in a way that meets and supports the industry more generally.

It was a great exercise to rigorously examine our existing systems and processes to ensure our practices are exemplary. Accreditation is a credit to QTFN's Tanya Pritchard and our tireless cattle manager Chris Shreiweis who

undertook the hard work of documenting our procedures and processes in areas including animal health and welfare, animal production, grazing land management and soil health.

The program was developed by the Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA), AgForce Queensland and the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (QDAFF) along with a producer reference group. It is supported by the Queensland Government.

QTFN FACILITATES RESEARCH PROJECT AT AROONA

University of Queensland honours candidate Kiarra Field has been working closely with our ecology team to conduct a year-long study of brush-tailed rock-wallabies at Aroona and neighbouring property, Spicers Hidden Vale.

Working with our ecologist Felicity Shapland, Kiarra set up equipment to estimate the population of the different wallaby colonies. She also examined the impact of feral dogs, foxes and pigs on this vulnerable species.

Findings support the success of QTFN's targeted predator management program. QTFN were pleased to be able to support and facilitate Kiarra's research as part of her honours project. The findings will help to inform ongoing pest management activities at Aroona and Spicers Hidden Vale.



UQ's Kiarra Field setting up cameras at Aroona.

WEEDS, FIRES & FERALS: ON-GROUND LAND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Land management is an integral part of the conservation process. Here are some of the techniques we used in 2017.

Controlled burning

Controlled burning is an important land management tool to reduce the risk of uncontrolled wildfires. It is also used to rejuvenate fire-adapted ecosystems and can reduce the spread and recurrence of invasive weeds. During September, QTFN conducted controlled ecological burning at our Avoid Island Nature Refuge in the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

QTFN co-funded the project with the Queensland Government's Nature Refuge Landholder Grant Program and worked with specialist contractors Fireland. We are pleased to report that we have successfully reduced fuel loads that can lead to dangerous and destructive wildfires. QTFN undertakes thorough fire management planning across all of our properties.

Predator control

Wild dogs, foxes and cats are a key threat to wildlife including brush-tailed rock-wallaby and koala populations.

In 2017, QTFN developed a program to monitor the movements of dogs and foxes at Aroona. This enables identification of pack leaders, breeding mothers and pups, and informs decisions as to the removal of predators from the property.

Our monitoring and removal program has proven to be a positive step, with early indications showing that dogs are not actively predating on brush-tailed rock wallabies. We continue to educate and work with the wider local community to ensure that Aroona and Koala Crossing are safe havens for generations to come.



A dead baby brush-tailed rock wallaby, found at Aroona early in 2017. The joey was most likely knocked out of its mother's pouch during a predator attack, with wild dogs and foxes being spotted on the property via remote wildlife cameras.

Weed control

We continued working with the Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) in 2017 to provide vital plantings and weed control at our Aroona and Koala Crossing properties.

CVA volunteers conducted important weed control work, treating seven hectares of the invasive weeds lantana camara, chinese elm and broad-leaved pepper tree at Aroona. At Koala Crossing a team treated five hectares of lantana camara along a creek line and planted 200 koala food trees.

These activities provided practical conservation work experience for over 30 CVA volunteers, and were generous acts of support for our work at QTFN.



Volunteers from CVA at Aroona.



QTFN's Tanya Pritchard during a controlled burn at Avoid Island.



Students make their way down to the beach for turtle research at Avoid Island.



QUT's Briana Holgate, replacing batteries in the listening devices set up at Koala Crossing.



Dr Nancy FitzSimmons and Year 9 student Makayla Rudd from Roma State High School measuring the carapace of a nesting flatback turtle.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

We continue to work with researchers and educators to build innovative solutions to our modern conservation issues.

QUT student undertakes cutting edge sound scaping project

QUT Honours student Briana Holgate continued a fascinating research project this year, building ecological soundscapes at Koala Crossing.

A soundscape is a direct measurement of sound intensity using acoustic measurement techniques and analysis. The main aim of Briana's project is to incorporate data from her sound scaping, as well as spatial mapping and biocondition assessments to generate a visual representation of an area.

Briana selected three sites at Koala Crossing, each with four acoustic sensors that will record for 12 months at 30 minute intervals. These sites will then be mapped spatially and acoustically, providing an assessment of 'naturalness' (how much disturbance has occurred). Also improvement as revegetation continues.

Briana hopes that her project will provide a basis for further research into how environmental indicators can aid development, decision makers and policy. QTFN were excited to be supporting this cutting edge research and look forward to learning the outcomes of the project in 2018.

Students awed by the 'Wonders of Science' at Avoid Island

In December, 10 lucky high school students went on the trip of a lifetime to Avoid Island as part of QTFN's schools program.

The program, now in its fourth year, gives students the opportunity to participate in critical sea-turtle research and get hands on experience in sea turtle biology.

Over the three day trip, students got hands-on with the help of world-renowned sea turtle biologist Dr Nancy FitzSimmons. They measured turtles, read tags, drew nest maps, excavated nests, and weighed and measured eggs. They also witnessed



Students visiting Avoid Island as part of QTFN's schools program and UQ's 'Wonder of Science' initiative.

a dozen nesting females and helped to collect data for the endangered flatback turtle.

Students were joined by two Wonder of Science Ambassadors, as well as QTFN's own Felicity Shapland and Jo Karam from the Sea Turtle Foundation. The crew from Channel 11's Totally Wild also joined the students to film stories about their experience.

QTFN was thrilled to partner with UQ's Wonder of Science program to carry out this trip again this year with the help of a Queensland's Government's 'Advanced Queensland' grant.



Nancy and student weighing flatback eggs.

TOTALLY WILD AT AROONA

Flagship children's program Totally Wild filmed two episodes about conservation at Aroona in 2017.

The programs focused on the predation of brush-tailed rock wallabies. They told of how foxes were introduced to Australia soon after European settlement and are now well established over most of the non-tropical mainland, contributing to the extinction of several small mammal species.

The Totally Wild crew even managed to capture rare footage of brush-tailed rock-wallabies on camera at Aroona!



GRANTS & PHILANTHROPY

QTFN's operations continue to rely heavily on the generosity of philanthropists, as well as the success of several grant programs. We are incredibly grateful to the following people and companies.

CommBank employees give a once in a lifetime wildlife experience

A generous grant from Commonwealth Bank's employee-funded Grassroots Grants program will support our Camp Koala experience for the next three years. Each year, we give 20 students in Grade Six the chance to better understand threats and long-term recovery actions for Queensland's iconic and threatened koala population.

Delivered by QTFN, in partnership with UQ's Wonder of Science program, Camp Koala will educate students about ecological monitoring and reporting techniques. The partnership between QTFN and Wonder of Science offers students the chance to learn in 'real-world classrooms' alongside real scientists. We hope it will also encourage the next generation of ecologists, land managers and decision makers.



QTFN's Nerida Bradley accepting a cheque from Jenny Scott, Branch Manager at Commonwealth Bank.

Vivcourt Trading make major donation to QTFN

Vivienne Court Trading employee, Jay Ryan, elected QTFN to receive a major corporate donation of \$35,000 in 2017!

Founded by Rob Keldoulis in 2011, Vivcourt, as it is known, is owned by a charitable trust. This means that the dividends of the business flow through to the social sector – specifically to charities chosen by the employees.

'I decided on Queensland Trust for Nature because I was familiar with their work and was impressed by the practical conservation outcomes they delivered. I am confident that the contribution will make a lasting impact,' said Jay, a commodities trader.

Vivcourt are pioneering a new way forward for the corporate sector and social responsibility. Thank you again from all the team at QTFN.

Grants

In 2017 QTFN was awarded over \$200,000 through a range of private and government grants. This will provide critical funding for our ongoing work.

We notably received two Community Sustainability Action grants, administered by the Queensland Government's Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. This supported \$50,000 worth of work at Avoid Island for weed removal, removal of marine debris and controlled ecological burning.

Teaming up with Balance of the Earth Trust, QTFN was also given a Community Sustainability Action grant to the value of \$46,500, to carry out vital work at Aroona including restoration works and controlled ecological burns.

The Norman Wettenhall Foundation also granted us funds to conduct further research into the brush-tailed rock wallaby population. Energex supplied funds to support tree planting and habitat restoration activities at Aroona's Spring Creek.

Earth Frequency Festival charity partner

Earth Frequency Festival (EFF) has named us as their charity partner for the third consecutive year.

The music, arts, lifestyle and environmental festival is held at Ivory's Rock, which neighbours our Koala Crossing property. The festival has been running since 2005 and attracts around 4,000 attendees each year.

Over 500 generous festival goers made additional donations last year to assist our conservation work when they purchased their festival ticket. We use these funds to plant trees at Koala Crossing, providing vital food and habitat to support our existing and growing koala population on the property.





QTFN acknowledges the Traditional Owners
of the lands on which we work.
We pay our respects to ancestors
and Elders, past, present and future.

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