

Leaving THE RAT RACE BEHIND

We decided to buy land in Queensland during a trip here in 2013. At that time, we were living in The Netherlands as partly retired professionals who were sick of the rat race.

When back in The Netherlands we started an internet search that included all properties of about 10ha or more between the NSW border and Bundaberg. Armed with about 80 properties to look at we came back in 2016 and spent five weeks looking at what we had chosen on the internet and also other properties that we found through land agents. We were very quickly disappointed. Property prices were low, so most farmers were holding onto their good land until better times. What was for sale were the dregs.

At the last moment, after nearly five weeks here, the sale of a good piece of land in Kilkivan fell through and we were lucky enough to be next in line. This land was much bigger than we needed, and a bit further from the coast than we wanted, but it ticked all the rest of the boxes.

We bought this 106.5ha property without much further thought thinking "so what if we have too much land, we get more nature!" We were very happy with the idea that we had a piece of naturally forested and hilly Australian bush that had nothing on it but a power pole, a few dams and a header tank.

We went back to The Netherlands happy with our purchase, sold everything there and moved here in September 2018.

That was when the real work began as we discovered that the

land had weeds that had to be removed and that cattle did not want to stay on their side of the fence. Getting rid of the lantana will also keep us busy for a few years. An expensive and tiring spraying and fencing program followed. Eventually we had managed to keep the cattle from trampling any regrowth!

What ensued was the building of an all-weather road, 6km of walking paths, a shed, a house and two Eco-Villas. We built the two Eco-Villas ourselves as most tradies took off to the coast to take advantage of the covid-related building boom.

As we are not farming the land, we needed the Eco-Villas as income. That income was slow in coming, and not helped by the floods, so we decided to add six off-grid camping/RV sites that are gaining in popularity.

We have lots of wildlife that is helped by the fact that we are between two National Parks. We recently discovered that we even have a Koala, and that makes us really happy. To encourage them, we have started a project that will get water up into the treetops where they can drink in safety. Funding for this comes in part from the 10 cent bottles and cans that guests leave behind.

We welcome any Land for Wildlife members who want to visit this part of the country and we will happily give you a 10% discount. Visit us online at neureumpark.com or follow us on socials.

Mark and Ina
Land for Wildlife members
Kilkivan, Gympie
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