

Natural Values Atlas Newsletter


Issue No. 1 2019

First Edition

Hello from the NVA team, and welcome to the first edition of the NVA newsletter. From here on, we are intending to issue a newsletter twice a year. The objective is to keep users informed as to any NVA updates and changes and to hopefully enlighten less experienced users about the types of functionality and services the NVA has to offer. We also hope to include articles about how the NVA is being used in the Tasmanian community and perhaps even some user generated NVA news about natural values related activities in the state. If you have any suggestions in regard to NVA related news which you think we might include you can send the details to NVA support at

support@naturalvaluesatlas.tas.gov.au

NVA User Tip

If you have run an Observation Search and you are displaying the search results on a map (using the 'Show Map' button) you can use the 'Select Feature' tool  to filter your results so that only the records you have selected with the tool are displayed in the table of results. Activate the tool by clicking on it, then click on the feature you are interested in on the map. The table of results will be filtered to just show the record/s you have selected. To return to the full list of search results, click on the Select Feature tool to deactivate it.



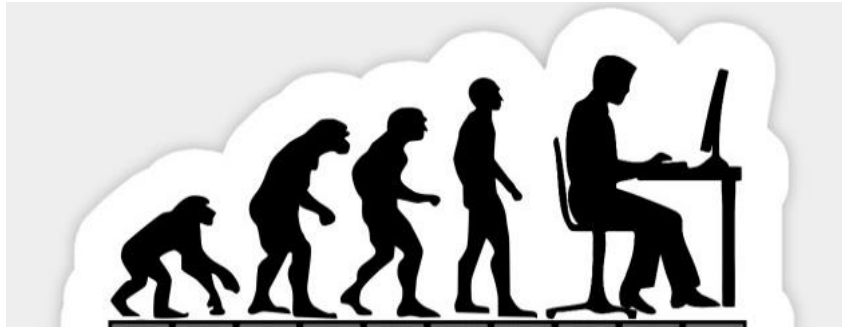
Drosera arcturi growing on a Cushion plant (*Donatia novae-zelandiae*).
Photo: D. Storey.

iNaturalist

NVA users can record incidental species observations in the field using the iNaturalist mobile app.

iNaturalist is an online network of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists with the objective of mapping and sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe. Anyone who wants to, can download the iNaturalist app onto their mobile device, and use it to collect species records in the field. The NVA team have set up a project in iNaturalist (called Natural Values Atlas Tasmania) which users can join and then submit data under. The NVA Team intend to periodically harvest the data (we are thinking perhaps monthly) and load it onto the NVA. Records will need to be 'research grade' as defined by iNaturalist, meaning the records must have an accompanying photo for ID confirmation. If you are uncertain of a species identification, the iNaturalist online community can assist with identification via the photos you provide with your record. The app will automatically record the location co-ordinates for your photo/ observation, as well as the observation date and observer name (your iNaturalist user ID).

NVA Evolution



For some years now the NVA team have been planning to upgrade the NVA user interface to make it both more contemporary and more user friendly. In early 2018 we decided it was time to delve into upgrading the system and so over the next 18 months to 2 years we are intending to undertake a significant revamp of the NVA user interface. We are referring to this project as 'NVA Evolution'.

Throughout 2018 the NVA team has been consulting with users about their use of the NVA and the sorts of system improvements they might like to see. Initially, in January 2018, we emailed users with a user survey and then subsequently, later in the year, we conducted some face to face consultation with selected user groups.

The most common requests from users were:

- Easier access
- More modern, intuitive user interface
- Improved search functionality
- More modern professional looking reports
- More customisable reports
- Enhanced map functionality
- Simplified/streamlined data entry
- Improved export functionality

This feedback from users in combination with the experience and knowledge of the NVA Team is being used to inform and guide the NVA Evolution project. Now that the planning is almost complete, work on development of the new system will get underway (mid 2019).



Green and Gold Frog (*Litoria raniformis*) Photo: Anng, iNaturalist

ALA Data

The NVA team are in the process of bringing the NVA up to date with the additional Tasmanian species data housed in the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA)

Users of the Atlas of Living Australia will be aware that there are significant quantities of Tasmanian species records on the ALA, which are not currently in the NVA. The ALA is largely an aggregation service which brings together data from a wide range of sources, including the NVA. Over the years, a number of groups/organisations have supplied Tasmanian species data to the ALA, which has unfortunately not been provided to Tasmanian state repository (the NVA). As a consequence we estimate that the ALA holds approximately 1.5 million species records which are not currently in the NVA. The NVA team are currently in the process of harvesting and quality checking the ALA data and we hope to load the checked, cleaned data into the NVA over the next six months. ALA users should also be aware that there is a significant number of NVA records which are not currently in the ALA. The ALA last harvested NVA data in 2014. Since then approximately 200,000 new species records have been added to the NVA. Once the NVA is more closely synchronised with the ALA we hope to establish systems to allow more regular transfer of data between the two repositories and thereby ensure that NVA data is as current and complete as possible.