

DR MARGI PRIDEAUX



Margi Prideaux has written about wildlife, international conservation politics and law almost every day for the past thirty years. As an international negotiator and independent academic, with a PhD in wildlife policy and law, her words have been tuned to inform policy audiences in over twenty different international conservation processes. A confident and articulate public speaker, Margi's skill in handling contentious debate is well-honed.

She has five books in circulation. Her numerous shorter musings have been published by *Global Policy*, *Dark Mountain*, *openDemocracy*, *Live Encounters*, *AlterNet*, *Wildlife Articles*, and *Ecologist*.

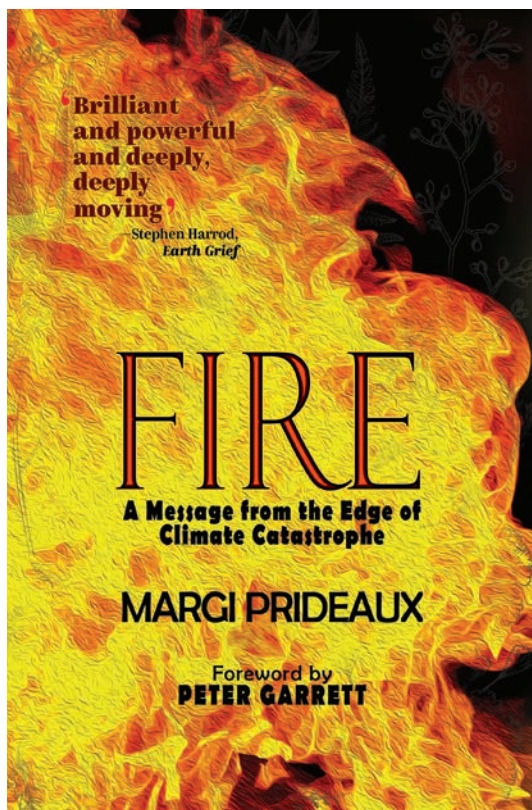
Having lived and lost in Australia's 2019/20 Black Summer climate-driven wildfires, Margi has begun writing in a courageous new direction. 'To save what we love we must become radically local.'

In this new theme her latest book, *FIRE: A Message from the Edge of Climate Catastrophe* is augmented for these times.

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FIRE: A MESSAGE FROM THE EDGE OF CLIMATE CATASTROPHE



FIRE is a love letter to a small community who has a message for the world. The time for hollow words and targets and plans is over. Communities must take back their control and consciously adapt to living in a world with more apocalyptic wildfires, killer heat domes, catastrophic rain bombs, lethal floods and mudslides, deadly droughts, and violent sandstorms.

In 2019 and 2020 fires ripped across Kangaroo Island's iconic landscape in the catastrophic continent-wide climate-event known as Black Summer. In that fatal season, wildfire destroyed a globally unprecedented percentage of Australia's forest biome. Across the country 190,000 square kilometres were decimated, the lives of 33 people tragically lost, over 3,000 houses destroyed, and more than 100,000 farm animals and three billion native animals wiped out. Confronted by a hellfire that burned too hot to contain, even the oldest souls within Kangaroo Island's small community gravely whispered, 'never before.'

FIRE is essential reading for anyone interested not just in humanity's future but our present. 'We have experienced the beginning of the climate change curve and we cannot hand this hell to tomorrow.'

2023, Wakefield Press, 340 pp.
ISBNs: 9781925856552 (hbk) | 9781925856569 (pbk)
9781925856576 (ebk)



PRAISE FOR FIRE

'This book is a revelation; an ambitious, poetic, sweeping account of the Black Summer fires ... a natural catastrophe on a ferocious scale beyond the realm of anything previously experienced, or for that matter, imagined ... a sterling primer for survival in the age of climate chaos which deserves very wide readership. This is a must-read book for the climate crisis era we are now living in.'

—**Peter Garrett AM**, noted environmentalist, former Australian Federal Minister, and Midnight Oil frontman

'An incendiary appeal for sense with regard to climate change, and an excoriating and very brave, very courageous account of the fires.'

—**Peter Goers**, ABC Radio Adelaide

'*FIRE* is brilliant and powerful and deeply, deeply moving. It is not a book I will easily forget. And I suspect that as the years of climate collapse roll on, I will think of and turn to it many times.'

—**Stephen Harrod**, Author of *Earth Grief: The Journey Into and Through Ecological Loss*

'Prideaux weaves graphic human stories through the reality of our changed environment. A powerful, must-read for today and the future. A truly incredible book, written with compassion and understanding from within the fire-scar of earth.'

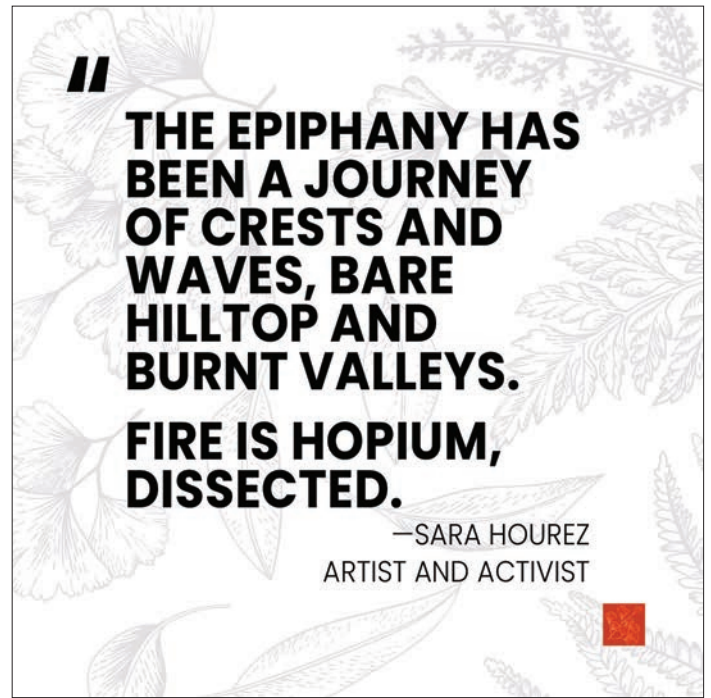
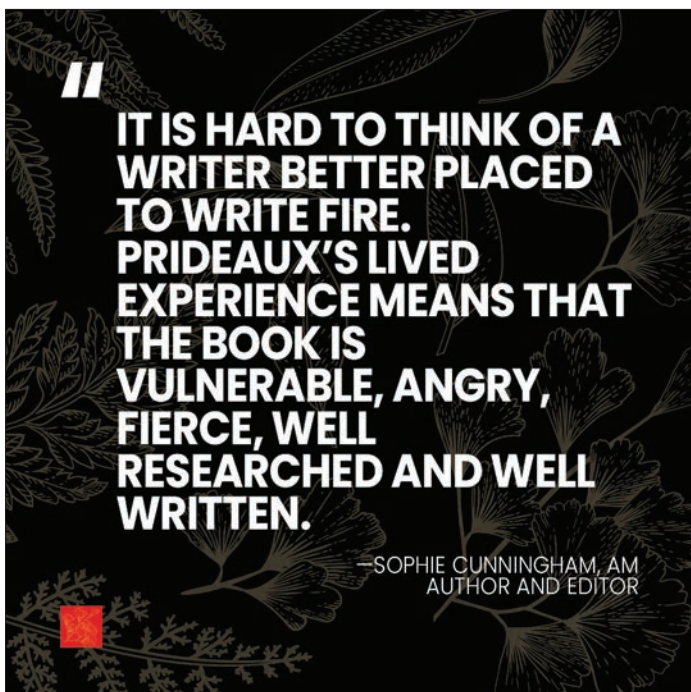
—**Becky Westbrook**, Author of *Evie and the Bushfire*

'An expression of despair, anger and bewilderment. The only way forward is not with more failed government policies, but through resolve and action at the grass-roots community level.'

—**Alan Atkinson**, Author of *Three Weeks in Bali*

'[A] truly a powerful 'call to arms'—one of utmost importance; a must read for all.'

—**Melissa Jones**, CEO, BlazeAid



Praise for Margi's related book: *Birdsong After the Storm*

Clearsighted, passionate and inspiring, Margi Prideaux has written a vital reimagining of the destiny of environmental activism. A clarion call for civil society to step forward and demand greater power.'

—**Micah White**, Author of *The End of Protest*

'At once a window onto civil society and a critique of elite diplomacy, this book's powerful call for a new earth-centred democracy cannot be ignored.'

—**Professor Anthony Burke**, UNSW

'An extraordinary book responding with experiential brilliance to the violent storm raging across the whole of planet earth. ... Without exaggeration, a thrilling and indispensable guide to the future.'

—**Professor Richard Falk**, Albert G. Milbank Professor of International Law and Practice, Emeritus. Professor of Politics and International Affairs, Emeritus, Princeton University. Author of *Power Shift*

'[T]he exemplar of what happens when you combine two decades of cutting edge conservation at the practical level by a leading NGO, and critical thinking of what solutions, at the theoretical level, to some of the most pressing problems of our generation are required. This book is radical. ... An excellent piece of scholarship.'

—**Professor Alexander Gillespie**, University of Waikato. Author of *International Environmental Law, Policy and Ethics*; and *Conservation, Biodiversity and International Law*.

'Given that the stakes involve nothing less than the life-support system of the planet, we would be wise to heed Margi Prideaux's deep understanding and astute counsel.'

—**Professor Paul Wapner**, Author of *Living through the End of Nature*



INTERVIEW PRIMER

FIRE is both a memoir charting the wildfire event that devastated Kangaroo Island's landscape during the fateful Australian Black Summer of 2019/20 and an excoriating piece of political scholarship, evaluating the layers of neglect and hubris of bureaucracies at global, national and local levels of government across the world. With clear sight, *FIRE* charts the trajectory of climate change science and what this means for nature and humanity in the near short-term.

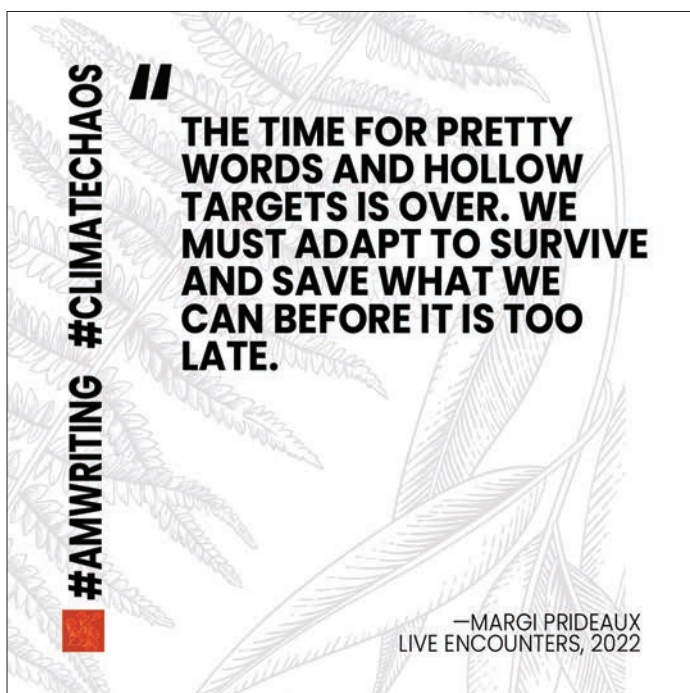
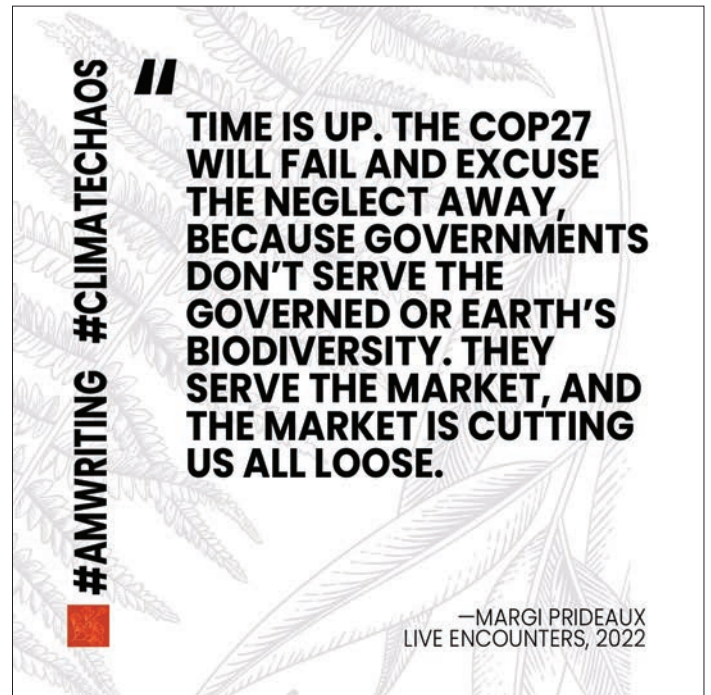
Margi can eloquently and easily speak on all of these topics. She is a frank and confident communicator who does not soften her message with false 'hope', believing 'hopium' is a large part of the problem.

Margi asserts the time has passed for people to be shielded by gentle reassurance. Now radically local action is needed, and that will only happen through truth-telling.

Six contentious questions

Six contentious questions you can confidently put to Margi:

- 1) Fire is part of many natural landscapes. Isn't what we are experiencing now—fires, floods, cyclones, and droughts—just part of the cyclic climatic pattern?
- 2) You are brutal in your assessment of government and you speak and write openly of government failings. Is your judgement too harsh given everything governments must do for their societies?
- 3) 'Three billion animals perished or displaced' is a big number. Can you defend this claim?
- 4) What went wrong in Australia during the Black Summer wildfires and then the devastating floods across the country the very next year? Are you suggesting the tragedy could have been averted?
- 5) You level the accusation at the global media that its attention is short term. News channels across the world covered the Black Summer events for weeks. What part of the story is the media missing?
- 6) Climate change is a global problem and people are exhausted by feeling responsible. You state clearly that we can't change the scale of impact being felt right now, and worse impact is already baked-in to the near future. If this is right, realistically, what can people do that will make any difference at all?



MARGI'S BOOKS

FIRE: A Message from the Edge of Climate Catastrophe. Wakefield Press. 2023

Tales from the River. An Anthology of River Literature (with Donna Mulvenna). Stormbird Press. 2019

Birdsong After the Storm: Averting the Tragedy of Global Wildlife Loss. Stormbird Press. 2018

All Things Breathe Alike: A Wildlife Anthology (with Donna Mulvenna and Jessica Groenendijk). Stormbird Press. 2018

Global Environmental Governance, Civil Society and Wildlife. Routledge. 2017

MARGI'S RECENT ESSAYS AND COMMENTARY

'Governments have failed. We must save ourselves from the climate crisis'. openDemocracy. November 4, 2022

'Surviving Climate Change, Towards Relational Thinking'. Live Encounters. November 2022

'Birdsong in the Bardo'. Dark Mountain, Requiem. Issue 19, Spring 2021 (pp 38-45)

'Speaking Unspoken Truth'. Live Encounters. November 1, 2020

'From the ashes of Australia's wildfires.' The Ecologist. March 11, 2020

'Embracing Wild Kin'. Live Encounters. October 2020

'Just Conservation Embraces a Wild Tapestry'. Live Encounters. November 2018

'Wild Wisdom'. Live Encounters. May 2018

'Trading in Bones'. Live Encounters. December 2017

'Buffering the Storm With Earth-Centered Democracy'. TRACKS: Their Future is Our Future. CMS CoP12. November 2017

'Why Baby Elephants Are the Innocent Victims of Tourism in Southeast Asia' (excerpt from All Things Breathe Alike). AlterNet. November 2017

'Our Addiction to Palm Oil Is Wiping Out Wildlife and Threatening Food Security' with Badrul Azhar. AlterNet. October 2017

'Move Over, Paris: New Global Pact Could Finally Grant Planet Earth a Right to Survival'. AlterNet. September 2017

'Palm oil or tuna ...'. Live Encounters. July 2017

'To Prevent Species Extinction Due to Trump's Lack of Climate Action, Local Communities Must Step Up (Yes, This Means You)'. AlterNet. January 2017

'When a tiger has no value'. openDemocracy. November 2016

'Wildlife as Persons: Tantalising New Ways To See Our Wild Kin'. Live Encounters. November 2016

'Wildlife conservationists need to break out of their Stockholm syndrome'. openDemocracy. August 2016

'Zoos are the problem, not the solution to animal conservation'. openDemocracy. June 2016

'Wildlife NGOs: From Adversaries to Collaborators'. Global Policy. November 2013

'Protecting Elephants, Manatees and Polar Bears: The Elusive Commodity of International Cooperation'. Global Policy. February 2013

'Dolphins as Persons?'. openDemocracy. January 2010

