



# Friends of Ferguson Park



Newsletter No. 119 June 2017

President: Geoffrey Bishop, "Ferndale" PO Box 194, Uraidla SA 5142 Ph: 8390 3138

**Newsletter Editor**  
Sarah Telfer  
Ph: 0427 313344

**Park Working Bees**  
**First Sunday of**  
**month 10am, Main**  
**Gate, Hallett Road**  
**Stonyfell**

**Park Working Bee**  
**Dates 2017**

1 January  
5 February  
5 March  
2 April  
7 May  
4 June  
2 July  
6 August  
3 September  
1 October  
5 November  
3 December

## Working Bees Update April 2017 – June 2017

In April and May hay bales and rocks were placed in known vulnerable areas of Stonyfell Creek in an attempt to slow down erosion over the coming winter.

Track maintenance continues with the establishment and maintenance of strategically placed water 'diverters' to try and halt the movement of soil on walking tracks. Bill maintains that observing water and/or soil movement during or immediately following rain is the best way to understand what is happening and take action accordingly – luckily he lives across the road from the Park!

Target weeds included Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Pusstail Grass (*Pentameris pallida*) and Rice Millett (*Piptathrum miliaceum*).

Wendy and Martin have set up a Friends of Ferguson Facebook page. They would appreciate contributions to add to this page (i.e. photographs, short articles, links to articles of interest, details of future events).

Wendy and Martin are also organising a Friends of Ferguson display at the Burnside Library later this year. It is hoped that this might attract some new members to the Friends group.

## Soursob spray trial (commenced 15th August 2016)

### Purpose

To trial different rates of hand-spraying of Soursob (*Oxalis pes-caprae*), with a view to maybe eradicating the pest, but at least to provide some bare ground for a season or two to allow natural, or assisted, germination of native plant species.

### Equipment used

9 litre Hardi hand sprayer, with hand pumped pressurisation. No agitation, except by shaking the vessel. Jet: Hardi Yellow boom spray type, flat fan jet, near new, with 120 mesh nozzle filter.

### Calibration

- Six 5m X 5m trial plots were established, covering a total area of 150 square metres or 1/67<sup>th</sup> of 1 hectare. A light rope with steel weights at each end was used to mark out each plot. The corners were marked with a 600mm bamboo stake.
- A 5m X 5m plot was sprayed with water on a clean garage floor, after charging the sprayer with 3 litres of water, and 50 strokes of the vessel pressurising pump.
- Walking backwards and spraying at about a 250mm swath width (= double overlap of the spray pattern at 500mm above the target) several times, the average rate of application was 400ml per plot. The chamber air pressure was

reinstated with 3 pumps after every 2 plots. 400ml X 6 plots uses 2.4 litres of 'brew' x 67 = 160 litres per hectare which is ideal for very good coverage, but

- the dilution of the Roundup necessitates the addition of extra wetter. (agricultural broadacre water rates range from 80 to 300 litres per hectare.)

#### Plot Locations (see map below)

- Plot 1: 10 paces north-east from the Park main gate on Hallett Road
- Plot 2: Plot is about 30 paces from main Park gate on Hallett Road along the northern fork and the plot is 5m in on the northern side of the track.
- Plot 3: Plot is about 40 paces from main Park gate on Hallett Road along the northern fork and the plot is 5m in on the northern side of the track.
- Plot 4: From the park bench in the middle of the Park, take the main track toward the north-east corner of the school. About 50 paces from the park bench is a cross path. Turn left. About 15 paces along, Plot 4 is on the right (northern side of track).
- Plot 5: From the "Jay Memorial" (80m east of the park bench), go 40m on the uphill track. On the right (southern side) 5 paces off the track, is Plot 5. It has been sprayed a second time, at 90 degrees.

#### Treatment

Plots 1 to 4 were treated at the standard rate. Plot 5 was sprayed twice, in different directions. Therefore, mix up 6 plots worth of brew. This is a standard brew used widely in broadacre crop and pasture establishment.

#### Rate of application

Water (Rain): 160 litres per hectare = 2.4 litres in this brew

Roundup 360 (Glyphosate) at 1.6 litres per hectare is 100:1 = 24 ml in this brew

Goal (Oxyfluorfen 240g/L) : at 100ml per hectare / 67 = 1.5ml in this brew

Wetter TX (Octyl phenol ethoxylate 1040g/L) : at 1% of brew = 24ml in this brew

- Roundup is the main ingredient which 'switches off' the growing of the plant.
- Goal is a 'spike', which at very low rates, enhances the action of Roundup.
- Wetter TX enhances the wetting of the plant leaves, and rain fastness.

History shows that this brew at this rate leaves no residue in the soil or waterways. Soil biota destroy any trace. Annual spraying is not expected to have any effect on the germination of native species which do not get any spray on their leaves.

#### Actual distribution of the brew

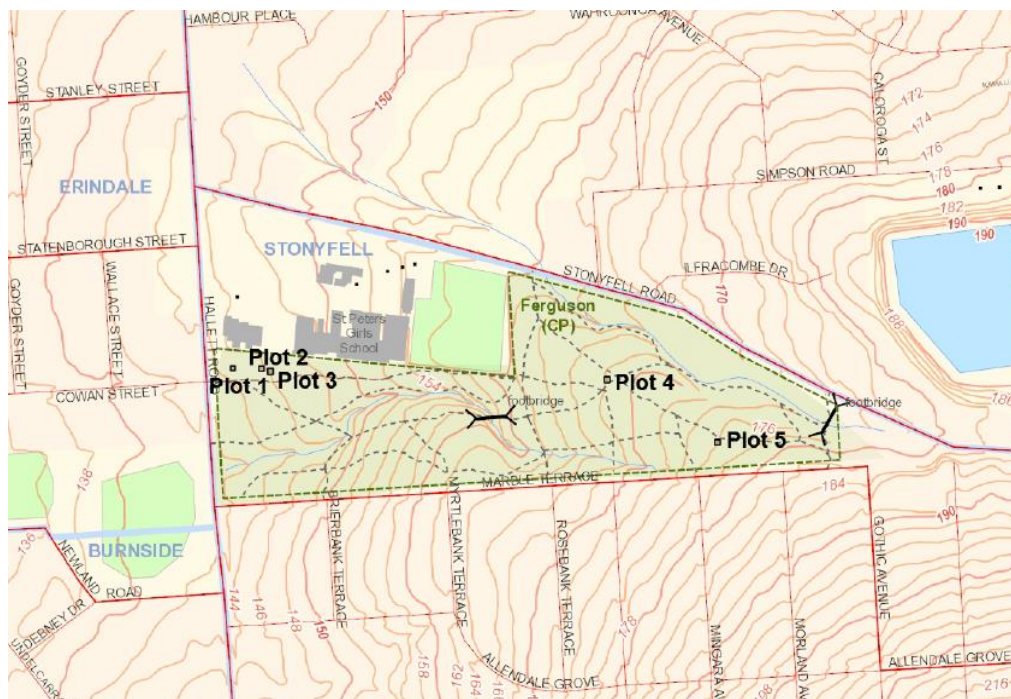
6 plots worth of spray (2.4 litres) ran out at about 5.6 plots. The southern half of Plot 5 did get double dose as attempted. The northern half was mainly air, with a 'fog' of spray. Three rinse-outs of the sprayer, totalling 2 litres, were spread over a square metre, north of the track near Plot 5.

#### Plant & weather conditions

- The soursobs had been flowering for weeks, and the flowers were in decline at the time of spraying. Plots 1, 2 and 3 had only a few, or no flower stems or flowers. Plot 2 Soursobs are much lower and smaller, suggesting maybe soil compaction in the past – maybe a stockyard(?).
- No rain had fallen for several days. Soil was good and moist. Wind speed was nil. Gentle north wind all day. Spraying done from 7.30 am to 8 am. There was no dew on any plants and no rain was recorded for several days after spraying. No frosts occurred before or after.
- While spraying Plots 2 & 3, a cleaner was sighted in the school kindy outside area. No other people were sighted.

#### 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2016 - Observations

All plots were showing distinct, normal yellowing or 'going off' signs, except the northern half of Plot 1, which appears unaffected by spray, possibly due to it being the very first of all to be sprayed. Maybe there was insufficient material flushed through to remove all traces of freshwater rinsate.



*Soursob trial plot locations*

### What germinated in autumn 2017?

The season 'broke' in late April – early May. Unsprayed areas of the park show a very thorough germination of annual weeds, grasses and soursobs.

Temporary cane markers were replaced with wire sticks, carrying white corner markers, and complete, large cattle ear tags, numbered FFCP Nos. 1 – 5. (Plots 1 – 5).

### Observed germination comments

- All big tags are on the SE corner of each 5m X 5m plot. Tiny white tags mark the other 3 corners of each plot.
- Plot 1: Green Tag: 10% Soursob reduction. Annual grass is dominant.
- Plot 2: White Tag: 70% Soursob reduction.
- Plot 3: Blue Tag: 90% Soursob reduction. 90% annual grass reduction; 1 wattle germinated
- Plot 4: Red Tag: Same as Plot 3. No wattle.
- Plot 5: Yellow Tag: Same as Plot 4.

### Bill's comments

- The plots were all quite conspicuous, due to the reduction in cover of Soursob and annual grasses, even though half of the bamboo cane corner markers had been removed.
- Control of Soursob is much better than anticipated. Further germination of undesirable species before re-spraying in July-August is unlikely.
- Even though Plot 5 was sprayed at double rate, control is no better than Plots 2 to 4.
- The poor control in Plot 1 seems to be an example of inadequate 'priming' of the sprayer with the spray mix, to eliminate all rinsate from the spray line. In future, we need to spray the first cupful of spray into a jug, and return it to the vat, before commencing weed spraying.

### This Year (2017)

I request and urge the FFCP to authorise me to repeat last year's spray program, on the same plots. I plan to cover any observed germination of natives before spraying the plots.

I plan to leave the southern half of Plot 3 and Plot 4 un-sprayed, to gauge the effectiveness of 1 year's spray versus 2 or 3 year's spray.

*Bill Bainger, Stonyfell*



*Stoneyfell Creek erosion control works – May 2017 working bee.*