



Friends of Ferguson Park



Newsletter No. 132 – October 2021

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

Park Working Bee
Dates 2021

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

Working Bees Update

July - October 2021

The winter months saw a concerted effort to control Sparaxis and Cape Tulip in the Triangle and around the revegetation at the park entrance on Hallett Road. This was aided by assistance from the St Peters Girls' Environment Group. Geoffrey has been leading this Group over several sessions (see article below) and they have also been locating previous photopoints in the park and re-taking the photographs.

A reasonably wet winter made the grubbing of bulbs much easier. It also meant that Stonyfell Creek was running strongly and much sediment appeared to be coming down the creek from the Boral sediment ponds upstream. Additionally, discharge from the SA Water pipe continues unabated.

The Track Sub-committee applied for a \$5,000 Friends of Parks grant for track building. Destination Trails, a company which builds sustainable trails, provided a quote for this work, which the Friends of Ferguson will be required to contribute \$2,500 of in-kind support towards (if successful).

The new plaque for the front gate was installed in September and looks fantastic (thanks to Geoffrey for organising this).

A contractor has undertaken weed spraying around Stonyfell Creek – Nasturtiums, Rice Millett, Umbrella Sedge, Periwinkle, annual grasses were targeted.



The replacement for the stolen 1949 bronze memorial plaque at the Hallett Road gates was put in place by Stephen Schubert of Schubert & Sons on 27th September. It looks good and has faithfully reproduced the original design though the bolt covers are now purely decorative.

Thanks to all our members who helped to make this replacement of a historically-significant plaque possible.

St Peter’s Girls Environment Group projects

Two sessions were held this Term involving girls from St Peter’s Girls Environment Group in Weeks 7 and 10. Both sessions were on warm days, especially Week 7 when it was 27 degrees in the shade. The students were dressed in winter uniforms!

Both sessions were spent weeding bulb species that were then in glorious flower. I explained the origin of the weedy species and why they are such a problem. I also gave the group a quick botany lesson in how we use flower parts to identify plants.

The Week 7 group of eight girls systematically weeded mostly Cape Tulip from The Triangle working from east to west but weeding across the area north to south. Many hundreds of plants were pulled and as the ground was still moist, many came out with the bulb attached.

In Week 10, numbers participating were well down due to year camps taking place that week. Six enthusiastic Year 9 girls took part in weeding Sparaxis and Cape Tulip. They weeded Sparaxis from the area to the immediate north of the Hallett Road gates including plants not in flower. They then weeded both species at the western end of The Triangle. A highlight of the session was finding a Tawny Dragon (I think that’s the species), possibly the same one we saw in that area in early September. They also found some blue Sun-orchids in flower.

Geoffrey Bishop

St Peters’ College girls busily weeding in the Park.

Beautiful bouquets of Cape Tulip in full flower.

Plant species diversity in the Triangle

With all the weeding of bulb weeds in the Triangle over winter and spring 2021, a surprising number of sedge, grass, lily, orchid, herbaceous and climbing indigenous flora species were observed, including the following (note that this list does not include trees and shrubs):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anthosachne scabra</i> (Native Wheat-grass) • <i>Arthropodium</i> sp. (Vanilla-lily) • <i>Astroloma humifusum</i> (Cranberry Heath) • <i>Austrostipa mollis</i> (Soft Speargrass) • <i>Austrostipa</i> sp. (Spear-grass) • <i>Burchardia umbellata</i> (Milkmaids) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i> (Small-leaf Raspwort) • <i>Goodenia amplexans</i> (Clasping Goodenia) • <i>Lomandra densiflora</i> • <i>Lomandra micrantha</i> (Small-flower Mat-rush)
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- *Caesia caliantha* (Blue Grass-lily)
- *Caladenia tentaculata* (King Spider Orchid)
- *Convolvulus erubescens* (Australian Bindweed)
- *Dianella revoluta* (Black-anther Flax-lily)
- *Einadia nutans* (Climbing Saltbush)
- *Gonocarpus elatus* (Hill Raspwort)



A patch of Greenhood orchids – Spring 2021 (thanks to Sarita Chadwick for this photograph).

- *Lomandra multiflora* ssp. *dura* (Hard Mat-rush)
- *Microtis* sp. (Onion Orchid)
- *Oxalis perennans* (Native Sorrel)
- *Pterostylis nana* (Dwarf Green-hood)
- *Rytidosperma* sp. (Wallaby-grass)
- *Schoenus apogon* (Common Bog-rush)
- *Thelymitra* sp. (Sun-orchid)
- *Themeda triandra* (Kangaroo Grass)
- *Tricoryne elatior* (Yellow Rush-lily)



A Sun-orchid, possibly *Thelymitra bracteata* (Bracted Sun-orchid) – the stem is damaged in two places by snail or slug damage (thanks to Geoffrey Bishop for this photograph).

One-leaf Cape Tulip

The following information has been taken from *Cape Tulip Weed Management Guide* – a factsheet produced by Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, November 2015.

One-leaf Cape Tulip (*Moraea flaccida*) is a perennial herb which grows from a corm that sprouts annual leaves and flowers to a height of 60cm. Each plant has only one leaf which is flat, 1–2cm wide and up to 1 metre long. Flowers are 3–5cm in diameter with six petals that can vary from salmon-pink through orange to yellow in colour. The fruit is a three-valved capsule up to 5cm long which starts green and turns brown when mature. Seeds are brown in colour, irregular in shape and discharged from the summit of the capsule. Each capsule may contain up to 150 seeds. Corms are 1–2cm in diameter, white in colour but covered in a brown fibrous tunic. Roots are fine, shallow and fibrous.

Corms germinate after the autumn rains and new corms already begin to form before the flowers appear in September. Cape tulips grow quickly through winter and soon after they produce distinctive salmon pink to orange flowers providing a small window of opportunity for effective control. The aerial growth dies by November.

Control methods include foliar spraying or wiping (sponge, weed tongs or a wick applicator) with a herbicide such as metsulfuron methyl, mixed with a good quality penetrant and water at the appropriate label rates. Control by manual removal can be difficult due to many corms formed around the basal corm and in the leaf axils and flowers. The top also tends to break off leaving the corm in the soil.

Where Cape Tulip is growing in a bushland setting, it is possible to carefully grub the plant making sure the entire

root system and all corms are extracted and then disposed of carefully, to avoid creating new infestations. Plants can be effectively removed using a knife or a trowel. Slashing and mowing are ineffective and may increase spread by dispersing corms.

Cape Tulip is declared under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*. It is prohibited to move or sell plants or goods carrying plants or plant parts. The landholder is obliged to control plants.

Sarah Telfer

Bell Yett Reserve

Bell Yett Reserve is a City of Burnside reserve which is situated directly to the north of Ferguson Park on Stonyfell Road. The top paddock of the Bell Yett property was purchased by the City of Burnside in 1971. It now provides a natural setting for quiet recreation as well as a range of sporting facilities.

The reserve includes a continuation of Stonyfell Creek. The eroded creekline has been engineered to place erosive storm flows in a pipe underground while preserving low flows on the surface. Careful restoration work is resulting in the development of a weed free riparian flora along the creek. River Red Gum naturally regenerate in profusion and are thinned as part of the management.

Weeds have been actively targeted along this section of the creekline and appropriate revegetation has been undertaken. Remnant species occurring in the reserve include River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), Grey Box (*E. microcarpa*) and Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*).



The section of Stonyfell Creek at Bell Yett provides a good example of what could be achieved along the section of the same creek which runs through Ferguson Park – if enough resources were committed to it!