



# Friends of Ferguson Park



Newsletter No. 134 – July 2022

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 2022

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

## Working Bees Update

May 2022 – July 2022

**May** - Sally reported on the trail construction project which has been completed. Our ranger, Jesse Evans, was on site almost every day of track construction and was very helpful. The group showed their appreciation by presenting him with a book titled 'Fire Country' (thanks to Sally for organising this).

Jesse informed the group that he is organising signs re 'no bikes' in the Park. Bill suggested barricades, however Jesse explained that this can lead to complaints re access. Geoffrey suggested an email to the District Ranger requesting clarity on the 'No dogs' dogs issue. Jesse explained that education was the main tool used at the moment. The group also discussed the need for an update of the Park Management Plan to acknowledge indigenous people and also to try and incorporate some ecological burning.

Jesse brought along some logs for fixing the steps across Ferguson Creek and this job was undertaken. Other jobs on the day included Pentaschistis patrol and control of Ash seedlings in Stonyfell Creek.

The **June** working bee was cancelled due to very wet weather!

A planting day along the recently re-surfaced "Quarryman's Track" was organised for the first Sunday of **July** and the weather was fine but cold. See article below for further details.

## An indigenous name for Ferguson Park?

It was suggested back in May that we might investigate a dual naming of Ferguson Conservation Park and bestow an Indigenous name for the Park. The likelihood of finding an existing Kurna name for the area is low but one for the wider surrounding area may be possible. An alternative would be to create a descriptive name that picks up on an aspect of the park.

To further this idea, I have contacted Kurna Warra Karrpanthi at the University of Adelaide, the leading group dedicated to Kurna language revitalisation and maintenance. Last year the group provided a name for the City of Burnside's Laurel Avenue Community Garden in Linden Park. The name adopted is *Pirkurna Wirra*, loosely translated as 'communities/group of people' and 'forest of trees/garden'.

Once we hear back from the University group, we will need to consult with DEW and then investigate the process required for official geographic naming. *Geoffrey Bishop*

## Revegetation of newly re-surfaced Quarryman's Track 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022

On a crisp, clear winter's morning a total of 18 volunteers gathered to plant a variety of tubestock species along the edges and in close proximity to the newly re-surfaced section of the Quarryman's Track. This adds up to approximately 100 volunteer hours recorded towards the trail upgrade.

The plants (approximately 385 in total) were provided by the City of Burnside's

Biodiversity Nursery and included a range of indigenous tree, shrub, grass, ground-cover and herbaceous species.

Special thanks must go to James, Sally and Geoffrey for organising and coordinating this event. Thanks also to Colin Harris's daughter Judy for bringing some of the Knightsbridge Girl Guides to assist. Also thanks to Elaine and James for providing morning tea, which included home-baked muffins (still warm) with lime butter and a citrus cake. *Sarah Telfer*

### Quarryman's Track upgrade – revegetation project



*Sarah, Andrew and Martin (always in shorts no matter the temperature!)*



*Colin Harris and Judy Harris – nice to see father and daughter working together*



*Fred, Neil, Wendy, Cindy and Sally hard at work*



### Illegal fort construction

Since late June (2022) members of the Friends group have noticed forts being constructed illegally in Ferguson Park by groups of youths. We are currently aware of three fort sites within the Park. One ground level fort is located in scrub near the central seat; another near the creek on Stonyfell Road; and one treehouse has been partially constructed in a native pine also near the creek. At each location there is significant disturbance of native plants and habitat together with evidence of trees such as native pines and acacias being cut down and used in construction.

On 24<sup>th</sup> June, Bill Bainger, Jane Wilson and Sally Wilson encountered a group of 5-6 youths constructing the central fort using equipment which included saws, pruning axes, hammers, spades, etc. All known sites have been reported to NPWS, which has undertaken to increase patrols in the Park. A local journalist from the Adelaide East Herald has been approached to report on the issue, together with the related problems of bikes and dogs in the Park. The Friends group also propose that NPWS put up new signage outlining the conservation status of the Park and the penalties for prohibited activities. *Sally Wilson*



*One example of the damage being done to the Park by illegal fort construction.*

### St Peter's Girls progress with photo-points

I did two short lunchtime sessions with the St Peter's Girls' School Environment Group in Term 2. Our focus was to repeat the photo-points originally set up back in December 1997. In the second session, on 16<sup>th</sup> June, the girls managed to locate a further three sites. (The original marker posts have long disappeared). The sites have changed significantly over the 40 years and some have proven very difficult to relocate. This of course, was good for the girls' observation skills and they were pleased when they made a discovery.

There are a total of 16 sites spread across the Park and the group has another seven to locate and photograph next term.



It has been great working with the girls, mostly Year 10 students, and some were involved last year too. They work well as small teams, collaborate with each other and ask questions. At the second session we also had time to investigate the numerous Echidna scratchings and diggings in The Triangle.

*Geoffrey Bishop*

### A rare find

While doing planting at our July gathering the digging did more than create a hole for a plant, it disturbed a centipede (as shown in the picture below LHS), approximately 7cm long. It wasn't annoyed at being disturbed and stayed long enough for a photograph and then disappeared into the leaf litter. This is the first time I've found a centipede in the park. I sent the image to Gerhard Weber (Friends group member) and he sent one he took in about 1993 (photograph on RHS), and it seems to be the same species.



As Gerhard indicated, centipedes are very difficult to name from just a photograph. Even James Smith's book on Adelaide fauna is very scant on details of centipedes found in the region. Centipedes are carnivorous and feed mainly on small insects, spiders and other invertebrates. They live in soil, under logs and rocks. They can inflict a painful stab from venomous claws located under the head. The long final pair of legs (tail end) is used for grasping prey. *Geoffrey Bishop*

### Good season for Monadenia

The winter season appears to be to the liking of Monadenia/African Weed-orchid (*Disa bracteata*). This photograph is not in Ferguson Park but shows a group of plants on my disused white clay tennis court. Last season, there were five flowering plants near the site shown (all were removed before seed was set). There are six plants in this photograph, and of these, three are likely to flower this season. Plants tend to flower from about year three so these were there last season but not found in my surveillance of the court.

The plants are easy to spot when the flowering spike is evident. Without the spike, learn to recognise the dark blue-green leaves which are burgundy-purple on the underside and are quite soft to the feel. Plants should be dug out prior to flowering but take care to remove both bulbs, one this year's food supply and a second one that forms during the growing season ready for next year. Plants bear numerous small green-hood orchid flowers and produce abundant fine powder-like brown seeds.



Monadenia was first found in the Adelaide Hills in 1988 and is now very widely distributed, often occurring in the same environment as our native terrestrial orchids. It is a *well-designed weed* so don't underestimate its ability to spread.

*Geoffrey Bishop*

### Friends of Ferguson 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations

The Friends of Ferguson Conservation Park group will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022. This was the second Friends group to be established in South Australia (the Friends of Fort Glanville Conservation Park was the first group). We will be celebrating this significant milestone later in the year and details will be circulated to all members and the wider community.

