



Bandicoot Tails

Newsletter of the Friends of Scott Creek
Conservation Park

No. 190
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Website: www.friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au Facebook: www.facebook.com/friendsofscottcreekcp

Welcome to your autumn edition of *Bandicoot Tails*.

Now that summer is over, we will commence our scheduled bushcare activities at 9.00am, but we will continue meeting at the nearest gate for the location of the activity. An email will be sent to bushcarers advising the location in advance. If any new members are interested in joining us, contact the leader on info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au to receive the emails.

Unless otherwise indicated, all articles and photos by Peter Watton. Please send any contributions for the winter edition to info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au by mid-May.

The President's words:

Let me tell you about a pet peeve I have – maybe it is just a particular quirk. I get very sad when people get kitted up to go walking in the Park and then talk throughout the whole excursion at the top of their voices!

I was recently lent a couple of books by my counsellor (who helped relieve me of Churchill's black dog) that described how we so often ignore the 'soundscapes' we live in.

It seems that the sounds in our natural environment have evolved over possibly billions of years. When we take the time to be 'still' in the bush, and attune our hearing to the sounds around us, we will discover how each creature, plant and landscape has adopted a place in the 'soundscape' that is unique.

For example, each bird species has developed particular calls that do not clash with others. It is almost as if someone has assigned a unique wavelength to each species. Some have songs that enter into a few wavelengths, but these different calls do not clash or compete with others. It is also important to note that scientific measuring equipment has detected that some call in frequencies beyond our human ability to hear. (Like the famous dog-whistle that only dogs can hear.)

The dawn chorus of Twisted Chimney Track or near Mackereth Cottage (especially pre-fire) reveals that it is almost a synchronicity of sounds, each one fitting in, or waiting it's turn to be heard – or noticed.

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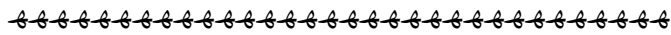
And it is more than just the birds. The special sounds that accompany the other wildlife in the Park also fit in to the spectrum. And, what's more, so does the sound of wind through the varying heights and types of trees and plants.

I'll back off a bit. By all means talk to one another when walking together in the Park. But for a great experience, set aside some time to be attentive to the soundscape you are living and moving in. It may also be an idea to evaluate how your own sounds fit into this environment too.

Oh, and it also works with hearing aids in, so no excuses.

Jim Spiker

President Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park.



Christmas Get-together:

After a last minute brush with covid, we swapped venue for our regular Christmas Get-together and headed down to the foothills and Panorama to the presidential palace. After a brief general meeting, we had a good chat and dinner, followed by presentations of long service badges and certificates by Jen.



Above: An evening of good company, good food and a good chat.

Below: Long service badges and certificates were awarded by Jen to (left to right) Peter, John, Bob and Jim.



Book Review: Joelle Gergis, *Humanity's Moment*:

Joelle Gergis, *Humanity's Moment*, A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope, Black Inc. Collingwood Vic., 2022.

This is not what you would expect from a climate scientist. Although a lot of what you might expect is in there; raw and frightening statistics, evidence of humanity's blatant destructiveness of the environment, incredulous examples of how political and industry leaders pursue their agendas in the face of cataclysmic consequences for not just people, but the whole world. The evidence put bluntly is something like, if we keep doing what we are doing to the environment, only several billion ants will survive into the next century.

What is not expected is the personal story of the emotional cost to this climate scientist, who has had a distinguished career with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Gergis has stared into the abyss, and it has shaken her very being. This is a deeply personal book, that draws you in to the experience of being human in a critical time. It weaves the facts with the doubts and confronts the false conclusions of the 'deniers', whilst being courageous in stating how much it hurts to be ignored.

However, this book does not leave you empty of all hope. She writes:

"Humanity's destruction of the natural world is now so great that we must urgently scale up international efforts to restore natural ecosystems if we are to stabilise Earth's climate. The climate and ecological crisis are one and the same. According to the IPCC, effective conservation of 30-50 per cent of the Earth's land, freshwater and marine areas would help protect biodiversity, build ecosystem resilience and maintain ecosystem services that are vital to food production and human health and wellbeing."

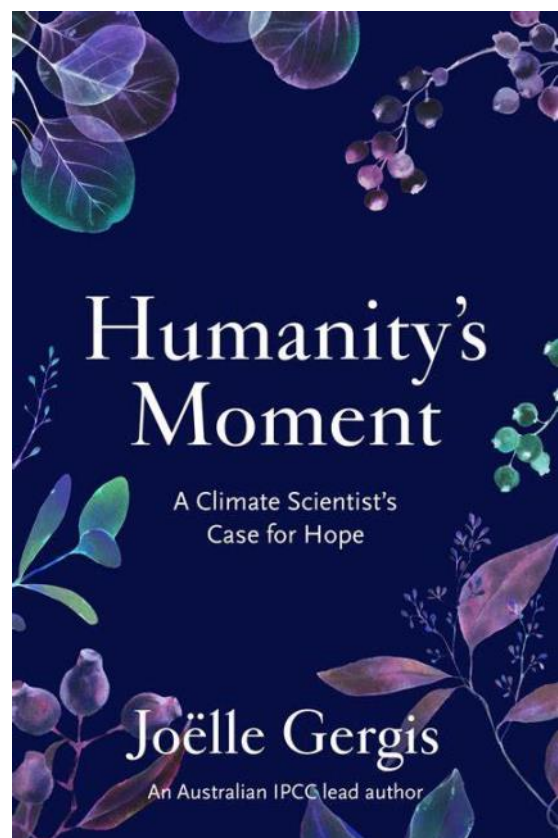
Gergis reminds us that what the individual does, makes a difference. Our volunteer work in SCCP is an accumulation of effort that effectively reduces the impact of climate change in this small part of the world. In a final note Gergis quotes David Attenborough: *"...We must not give up hope. We have all the tools we need, the thoughts and ideas of billions of remarkable minds and immeasurable energies of nature to help us in our world...All we require is the will."*

Do not be surprised if this book increases your resolve to care about how we live in this time. The Epilogue describes many inspiring cases where individuals leap into action when disasters strike and are at work long before 'official' responses are implemented.

Jim Spiker



Above: Q&A from Launch of *Humanity's Moment* by Joëlle Gergis at CLIMARTE Gallery in Victoria



Autumn is upon us

Jason Tyndall (2022)

As the edges of summer disappear, the earth starts to wake. The change in temperature and soil moisture slowly begin to break the dormancy of many bulbs and tubers – although some will remain until winter sets in.

As the autumn rains sweep across the park it will begin its seasonal transformation. The fruiting bodies of fungi will begin their quest for light from their underground web of mycorrhizae. The orchids will begin their quiet display knowing that they are the first of years mosaic of wildflowers to greet us.

Here are some beautiful life forms that you may encounter over autumn:

Common Midge Orchid

Corunastylis sp. Adelaide Hills Woodland

One of the smaller and inconspicuous orchids throughout the Park, especially in open areas (such as firebreaks). These orchids occur in colonies and thrive in burnt landscapes. Their small stature reminds us to stop and appreciate the smaller things in life.



Purple Emperor

Cortinarius archeri

A stringybark-loving fungi that has one of the most spectacular colourings with its rich purple cap with stained rusted edges. The Purple Emperor join other brightly coloured fungi that begin to slowly emerge in autumn.



Rain Moth

Abantiades atripalpis

In the quiet hours following an autumn downpour these giant moths of the earth (with a wingspan of 17cms) will emerge from a pupal case that will be left poking out of the ground. For years the white rain moth grub lives in the ground beneath eucalyptus trees (such as Red Gums) and, as an adult, only live for a matter days as they have no functional mouthparts and often eaten by bats, owls and possums. As an adult their sole mission is to mate and create the next generation of moths.



Cup Gum

Eucalyptus cosmophylla

With gum nuts shaped like thick teacups and in groups of three – this is a distinctive gum within the Park. From autumn to spring the cup gum blooms attracting an array of pollinators. Like many gums their leaves can have swollen lumps or patterns called galls. Insects, such as native wasps, form these galls by laying their eggs inside a leaf. Their grub feeds on the swollen leaf tissue before emerging as an adult.



A poem *Where the Birds Sing and Wildflowers Dance* (Jason Tyndall) that helps our minds transition to the change of seasons:

The bush is starting to wake

The sun begins to set,
casting soft golden light
through the trees.
The air feels cooler
as the birds begin to sing.
My mind wanders
and nestles
itself into the stillness.
The canopies turn
to silhouettes.

The chorus of crickets
grows louder.
The smell of damp earth
fills the air.
The ferns begin
to rustle.
The bush is starting to wake.

Below: Kangaroo Gully and Yacca Hill from Currawong Ridge Track in December.



Park Maintenance and more:

Great news! After a long two years since the Cherry Gardens fire, we have seen the first of our new park signs installed at several of the entrance gates. Starting with those along Gurr Road, gates 4, 5 and 6, and then along Scott Creek Road at gates 1, 2 and 14, the new design is very clean and non-intrusive. In particular, it is pleasing to see a clear statement acknowledging that the park stands on Kurna Yarta—Kurna Country. In simple images it also shows that the park is for non-intrusive activities that do not impact on the park's plants and animals. There are also smaller “Dogs not permitted in the park” signs that were placed at strategic points around the park, while we waited for the park specific signs, to help reduce the number of people bringing their dogs into the park, using the excuse that there were no signs saying it was not allowed. For dog owners wanting to bring their dogs into parks, please check the National Parks and Wildlife Service South Australia website to see in which parks this is permitted:

<https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go-dogs-in-parks>



Deer and goat cull within Mt Bold Reservoir:

In the December 2022 issue of Regional Landcare News, the newsletter from Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu, was the following article on goat and deer control in Mount Bold Reservoir. In a separate report from a contact in SA Water, I was told they used thermal imaging to detect the animals, and hope to include Scott Creek CP in a future control program, which is excellent news indeed. Most of the animals shot were found within the fire scar.



Nature News: Mount Bold goat and deer control operation

The first Mount Bold aerial deer and goat control operation took place from 14 to 16 November 2022.

The operational area included 5,243 hectares of land within the Mount Bold Reservoir Reserve (SA Water) and adjoining ForestrySA land. Over the three days, the operation removed 286 fallow deer and 61 feral goats, using 20 hours of helicopter flight time.

The removal of 61 goats from an estimated population of 50-100 animals is a significant result, and brings the goal of local eradication well within reach.

This was the first aerial shooting operation in the Hills and Fleurieu region that used a contract aerial marksman. Following the success of this operation, a follow up operation is recommended for some time in the next 12 months.

There is also a National Feral Deer Action Plan in draft currently out for public consultation, closing Monday 23rd March. For details see next page and: <https://feraldeerplan.org.au/>



Right: Fallow Deer in the park in December 2021. There have been regular sightings, plus damage to native saplings and scats seen in many areas of the park since the fire.

National Feral Deer Action Plan:



Edition No. 2022/4 December 2022

On the horizon: National Feral Deer Action Plan consultation

Australia's feral deer problem is increasing. In the last 30 years, land managers in both rural and urban areas have reported that six feral deer species have changed from being novelty sightings to being widespread in many parts of the country.

In recognition of the current threat to the environment, agriculture and the community from feral deer, the Australian Government is supporting the development of a National Feral Deer Action Plan to provide a coordinated and strategic approach to managing Australia's feral deer problem.

The plan will be focussed on supporting farmers, communities, organisations and government agencies to limit further spread of feral deer into new areas and reduce the impacts of large populations on the environment, primary production and communities.

The plan is being developed by a working group, all members of which are working in partnerships or consultation with stakeholders across Australia. The working group is supported by the National Deer Management Coordinator, Dr Annelise Wiebkin. A draft of the plan is expected to be put to the public for consultation by the end of 2022, to enable feedback to identify effective options and programs to strengthen feral deer control across Australia.

For more information on the National Feral Deer Action Plan and the public consultation process, visit <https://feraldeerplan.org.au/>.



Above: Chital deer migrating under a fence in Queensland. Source: Luke Woodford

Bushcare activities:

During summer we passed the two year anniversary of the Cherry Gardens fire, which burnt through 500 hectares of our beautiful park. Following a couple more cancellations of scheduled bushcare activities due to weather and fire bans, we trialled a Catch Up Bushcare (CUB) session, with the aim of making up for a lost day. This was very successful, with six of our bushcare team coming along the Tuesday following a cancelled Sunday session. We held a second CUB session later in the month, which was more about catching up on cancelled sessions from before Christmas, with nine of the team turning up this time. These efforts helped up achieve a great deal of follow-up of priority woody weeds control, which we had been struggling to get around to.

Almanda Bush Gardening:

The Almanda Bush Gardening team continued work along Bryophyte Flat, removing invasive weeds and protecting habitat and food plants for the Southern Brown Bandicoot. During January several activities were dedicated to planting sedges and tea-tree along the banks of Scott Creek.

The following article was provided by one of the Bush Gardening Team, Steve Davey:

The (Greater) Almanda Project

Our work seems to have a mind of its own, generating momentum in line with the changing seasons and compelling us to move along the length of the waterway like spawning salmon.

What started so many years ago with John and a pair of secateurs at the head of Almanda Creek, where it issues from the swamp, has progressed into the Scott Creek and may one day reach Mackereth Cottage.

We started work in the newly dedicated section of the park even before it was dedicated (but don't tell anyone) and we've reached a place where the hillside descends steeply to the creek and all but bars our way.

I can no longer count the number of years we've been doing this riparian work under the guidance of John with his eye for what ought to be and for what can be. It is only very recently I've come to understand how he mysteriously sees into the future and sets about recreating what his mind's eye can perceive. This isn't gratuitous praise, but an observation based on what now appears before us in the areas we have covered.

Right: A planted State Rare Showy Copper-wire Daisy (*Podolepis jaceoides*).

Below left: One of the Bandicoot sanctuaries planted post-fire.

Below right: Native Raspberry planted in one of the Bandicoot sanctuaries, with some of the many Manna Gum seedlings that germinated post-fire.





Above left: Native bees overnighted in this Showy Copper-wire Daisy (*image John Wamsley*).



Above right: A State Endangered Tall Daisy (*Brachyscome diversifolia*), clearly produced many flowers and seeds.

The original Almanda section was an impenetrable mass of blackberry, succeeded by every weed known to man when the blackberry was first removed. The creek banks have now reached a semi-stable compromise with the invaders and numerous species formerly smothered have now been able to spread. Our deliberate introductions, in every single instance propagated by John from locally sourced seed or cuttings, include white matted Pratia, swamp Mazus, fishbone and hard water fern, matted St John's wort, native sow thistle, native broom and lax marsh-flower all formerly from Fox Bog, plus creeping Poa, big headed daisy, spiny flat-sedge, mat grass and Almanda Blue from Almanda Creek, ruddy ground fern, lax twig-rush, water Plantain and native Caraway from elsewhere in the park.

The very necessary working tracks we installed, and for which we received a little criticism at times, have now blended back into the landscape and in some instances have been obliterated by the great fire, but good access can still be gained because the formerly all-pervasive blackberry is gone or well controlled.

Not all of our efforts have worked out. Kangaroos ate nearly all of our laboriously planted *Acacia pycnantha* seedlings in the area we called Quoyii Flat and the fire wiped out the rest. John spent many patient hours nicking thousands of seeds to prepare them for planting.

The same fire has, overall, been a tremendous boon to our work. John remarked that it advanced our efforts by many years, cleaning out the bulk of the blackberry, allowing what remained to be more readily removed. It dealt a great blow to the invading willows and swept the ground clean, giving us a head start, though at the same time it promoted phenomenal growth from many other weed species. Some weeds reached Triffid-like proportions in the ash enriched soil.

Below left: Some of the hundreds of plants propagated by John Wamsley and planted by the team to stabilise the creek banks and provide habitat for the wildlife, as a replacement for the weeds that previously infested this area.





Above left: Section of Scott Creek where weed control and revegetation by volunteers has been complemented by contractor work on Blackberry and Weeping Willows.



Above right: Close up of Weeping Willow that was treated by volunteers, supplementing work done by contractors on the southern side of the creek.

These we tackled as they arose but we're realistic about the work ahead. Bracken has been brought under control by repeated slashing to weaken its underground parts, but this will need to be an on-going effort. Likewise, broom never sleeps.

One of the most heartening successes involved a small patch of ground where John quietly spread the silky tea-tree seeds he had collected. The fire came through and provided an ideal seed-bed. When good rains followed the seed germinated and one of the specimens is already about two metres high. This will be an important species in the creek restoration, forming, as the willows did, a dense mat of roots to hold the creek bed together.

The bandicoot sanctuaries we planted have shown extraordinary growth, complementing the patches of blackberry deliberately left untouched as shelter in the fire-altered landscape. Within the circular shelters were planted chocolate lily, bulbine lily, yam daisy, blade grass, three species of apple-berry and native raspberry.

It seems that every few weeks we discover something previously hidden or newly growing. This includes animal species of all kinds from the little transparent shrimp and aquatic insects in the creek to the people-friendly eastern water skink, the kingfishers and crakes, or the delightful bandicoots which come looking for food. The most persistent of these bandicoots has no tail, so she is easily recognised.

Below left: The hillside behind Bryophyte Flat, previously covered in Blackberry and Hawthorn and now regenerating with SA Blue Gum and understorey.



Below right: There are still many Weeping Willows to be treated along Scott Creek, which will be a mixture of volunteer and contractor work.



The last plant discovery was of the rush called Cladium, which John spotted when it produced its large brown inflorescences. This plant isn't by any means uncommon, but it was the first sighting along our section of the creek, and a welcome addition to the arsenal of restorative species.

Our most recent efforts have involved the planting of hundreds of sedges and rushes, once again propagated by John. These thrive along the Scott Creek where water is abundant all through the year. The species used are tassel sedge, tall sedge, leafy twig-rush and silky tea-tree in the creek itself, together with tall daisy, showy copper-wire daisy and pale vanilla lily along the bank.

Willow roots have created numerous separate ponds, some of them quite deep (as we have from time to time found out) and this mosaic will need to be re-created as what is left of the willows are poisoned and eventually rot away. Perennials like sedges and water-loving tree species like the tea-tree, also planted at the water's edge, can achieve this. We are currently experimenting and hope our plantings survive the winter floods.

The post fire tree seedlings we carefully protected are growing so well that what is left of our track is becoming difficult to negotiate in the dense copses of manna gum and wattle. On the steep hillsides above the creek where the blue gums suffered badly after the fire, there is now a veritable closed forest of germinating seedlings providing a continuous carpet of green under the bare trunks.

Hundreds of planted lilies and daisies, including yam daisies, which bandicoots are said to favour, have responded well in the open places left by the fire, although the aspect is constantly changing as canopy plants mature.

We appreciate the work done by Peter himself and by the contractors he has organised, to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the fire to access previously impenetrable areas.

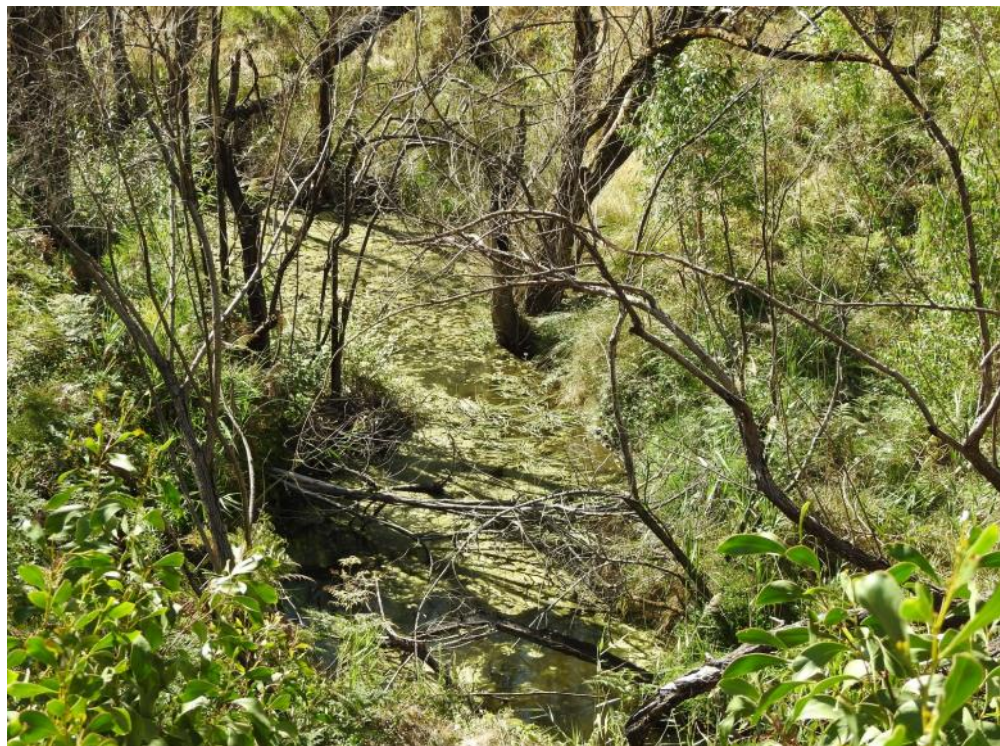
Our volunteer numbers remain very small. My personal view is that we can only show what can be done, and it is up to society as a whole to decide if the earth is worth nurturing into the future. In the end we only get the earth we deserve.

For the price of one nuclear submarine (for example) we could save every remaining animal and plant species in the state. It isn't really about money, but about communal will and enlightened leadership. One follows or complements the other.

In the meantime, we can only continue to weed and plant, or gaze in awe at the machinations of nature, whose wonders and astonishing regenerative capacity we barely understand.

Steve Davey

Right: Eulamphrus Reach, a section of Scott Creek, which remains a veritable green oasis during the height of summer.





Above left: Jenny and Janet searching for Montpellier Broom amongst the tall wattle regrowth.



Above right: The team working on Tree Lucerne near the old school site on Mount Bold Ridge Track.

Scheduled bushcare activities during spring:

6th December 2022—5 volunteers started by returning to central Viminaria Creek to finish off treatment of English and Montpellier Broom then, after morning tea, moved south along Mount Bold Ridge Track to work on English Broom, Tree Lucerne and Silver Wattle, also treating a few Blackberry, Margined Watsonia and Montpellier Broom.

11th December 2022—7 volunteers returned to the old school site on Mount Bold Ridge Track to continue treating English Broom, Tree Lucerne and Montpellier Broom, with some more Silver Wattle and South African Daisy.

24th December 2022—6 volunteers gathered on Christmas Eve to patrol the upper parts of Fantail and Fairy Wren Creeks, parallel to Frith Road from gate 20 to the western edge of the park, predominantly for Boneseed (one patch of about 500), but also finding a couple of Sollya, one over 3m tall, plus one small Gorse, a few South African Daisy and many thistles.

3rd January 2023—7 volunteers headed up to the north-western corner of the park, to follow up previous control of Sollya and Erica, also finding a few Boneseed, Montpellier Broom and a couple of small Olive seedlings.

8th January 2023—cancelled due to hot weather.

10th January 2023—6 volunteers turned up to our first CUB (Catch Up Bushcare) session, with Jenny leading a group of five to continue patrolling the upper parts of Fantail and Fairy Wren Creeks for



Above left: Removing regrowth Erica from the north-western corner of the Panhandle.



Above right: Erica removed from the Panhandle during January.



Above left: Our Liaison Ranger Brent working on Sollya on Yacca Hill as part of a Ranger day out in the park.



Above right: A bunch of Sollya seedlings removed from a pretty small area on Yacca Hill.

Boneseed and Erica, last worked on before Christmas. Meanwhile, Peter joined a team of rangers from NPWS SA to work on more post-fire regrowth of Sollya on the western side of Yacca Hill. There would have been several thousand young plants removed within a relatively small area, reinforcing the insidious nature of this pesky fire-responsive garden escapee from Western Australia. Many thanks once again to our ranger friends, with nine helping out, including young Jack, who has also joined us at bird banding outings in the past.

28th January 2023—10 volunteers returned to the old school site, between gates 7 and 8 on Mount Bold Ridge Track, to finish off treatment of English Broom, Tree Lucerne, Montpellier Broom, with a few small Blackberry, Erica, Sollya, Watsonia and South African Daisy treated opportunistically.

31st January 2023—9 volunteers came out to our second CUB activity, to return to the Panhandle, working across both Fantail and Fairy Wren Creeks, lower down the slopes than our last two visits. We found and dispatched many Boneseed and Erica, plus a few Sollya, but there were a couple of large infestations of Erica at the lower parts of each creekline that will require either a follow-up visit or contractor assistance. One large Olive and some bigger Erica were waypointed for future drilling and filling.

7th February 2023—8 volunteers made their way down to the northern fenceline of the Panhandle from gate 20, to work on Montpellier Broom on the flats, also dealing with lots of South African Daisy and a few Broadleaf Cotton-bush and Spear Thistle.

12th February 2023—8 volunteers returned to the Panhandle, continuing along the track further west



Above left: Cutting and swabbing Sollya along the fenceline at the top of the Panhandle.



Above right: Working on Montpellier Broom along the flats of the Panhandle.

from where our last session finished, working on more Montpellier Broom, South African Daisy and Spear Thistle, also treating some small Blackberry and a few Rose and Sollya. During the morning we had to change strategy, as the Montpellier Broom was so numerous that we ended up leaving any less than about 30cm tall. This meant that taller ones that were more likely to flower and seed later this year were prioritised. As it turned out, Glenn had brought his spray unit with him and decided to stay afterwards to spot spray these smaller plants, meaning the whole patch ended up being treated on the same day.

26th February 2023—We shifted our regular session to the Sunday, to avoid forecast thunderstorms, still getting 7 volunteers along to follow-up previous work between Helipad Hill Track and the fenceline at the end of Yakka Track. We found the expected large number of Montpellier Broom, some to 2m tall, but were overwhelmed by the huge number of *Acacia longifolia* (Sallow Wattle), from hundreds of plants under 30cm to large patches of ones growing 3-4m tall. There was also a patch of equally large *Acacia baileyana* (Cootamundra Wattle) in one patch. On top of these was a scattering of Boneseed, Dog Rose and Blackberry, plus two flowering *Buddleja davidii* (Butterfly Bush), which was identified here last year.

Additional independent bushcare activities:

11th December—after the bushcare activity at the old school site on Mount Bold Ridge Track, Peter stayed on to carefully spot spray many of the Tree Lucerne, English Broom, Montpellier Broom and patches of St John's Wort remaining.

24th December—after the bushcare activity, Peter stayed on to drill and fill a large three-stemmed Boneseed, an Olive and a couple of large Dog Rose, then sprayed Blackberry near gate 20 and a patch near the fenceline further west towards the park boundary, opportunistically also targeting some Scabious, thistles and Plantain.



Clockwise from top left: (1) Erica that resprouted post-fire, with many stems from the single large lignotuber. (2) First step is to break off all lateral stems and branches to expose the lignotuber. (3) Lignotuber is broken up with mini block splitter. (4) Pile of branches removed from some of the Erica in this part of Viminaria Creek.



19th January—Phil and Janet patrolled for priority weeds along Yacca Track to the fenceline, and then back up across Helipad Hill, finding and removing many smaller Boneseed, and noting the location of *Acacia longifolia* and Montpellier Broom that will require a follow-up bushcare activity to deal with them, due to the large numbers found.

26th January—Janet and Phil patrolled along Mineshaft, Stockyard and Echidna Tracks from gate 16 to gate 17, treating lots of Boneseed and some Spear Thistle as they went, waypointing Dog Rose and Montpellier Broom for future treatment.



Above: One more cuppa before getting back to work.

4th February— following bird banding along Mineshaft Track, Peter sprayed Blackberry up Eys Gully to the north, and then headed to Eulamphrus Reach (section of Scott Creek east of Dorset Vale Road culvert) to drill and fill several Weeping Willow.

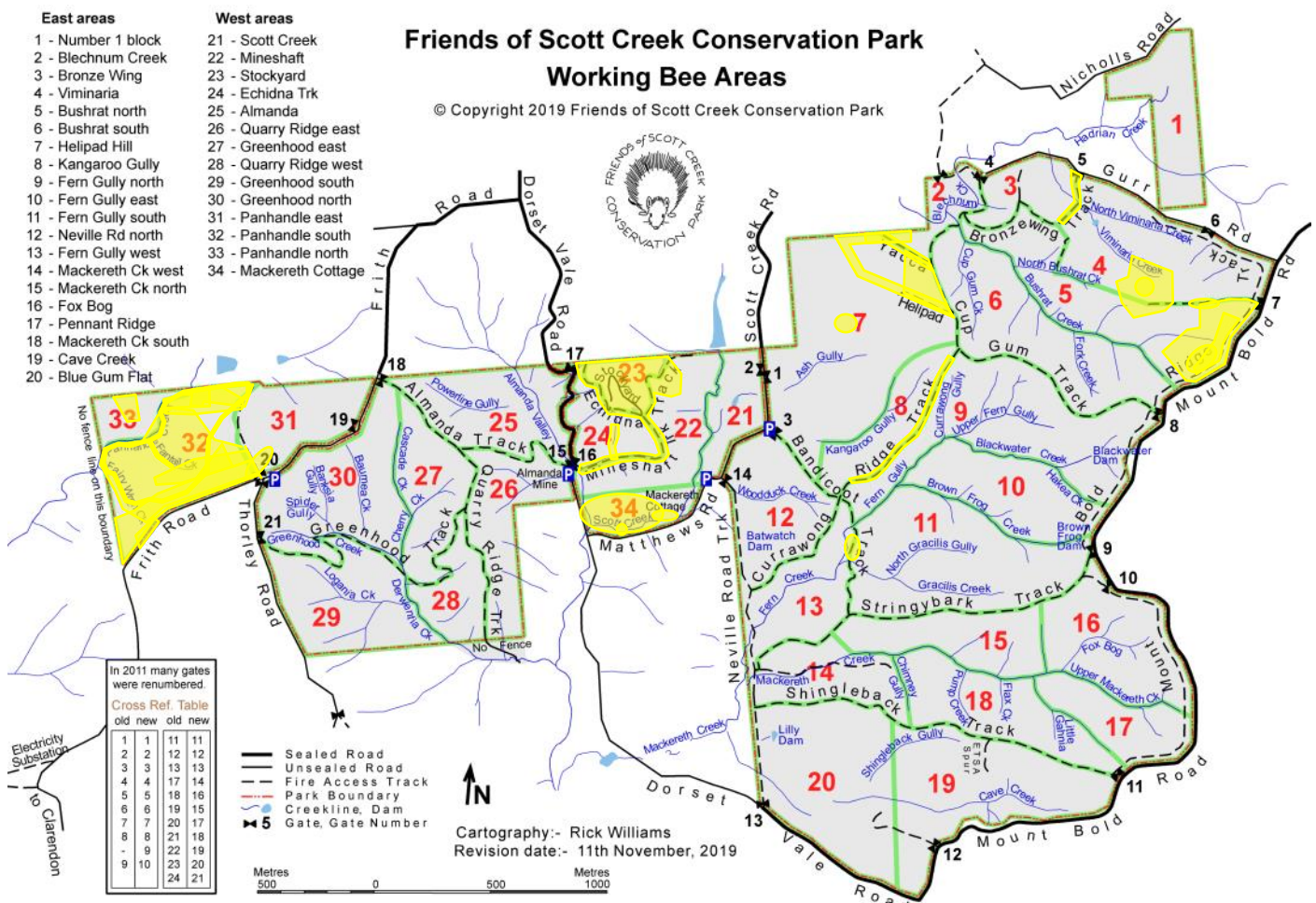
7th February—after the bushcare activity in the Panhandle, Peter stayed to drill and fill some of the Prunus and Hawthorn there and the previously waypointed Olive and large Erica up Fantail and Fairy Wren Creeks, opportunistically removing Boneseed and treating a couple of large Sollya along the way.

12th February—as reported above, after the bushcare activity in the Panhandle, Glenn stayed to spot spray the large number of smaller Montpellier Broom left by the main group.

19th February—after bird banding Peter stayed to work on Erica in Viminaria Creek and spray Stinkweed.

26th February—after the bushcare activity, Peter and Glenn stayed to spray Stinkweed and Fleabane along Currawong Ridge and Bandicoot Tracks.

Peter Watton



Funding and Contractor report:

As is often the case, summer was a fairly quiet period for contractor work in the park, and we are still to arrange the next lot of work following up previous years' treatment of Blackberry up several creeklines, plus the larger Erica infestations, Sollya on Yacca Hill west and Erica, Sollya and Montpellier Broom in the Panhandle.

Funding update:

- Submitted the final report and financial statement for the acquittal of our 2021-2022 NPWS On-Park Volunteer Support Grant for \$5,500 (including GST).

Below is a list of the main work that contractors have completed during summer:

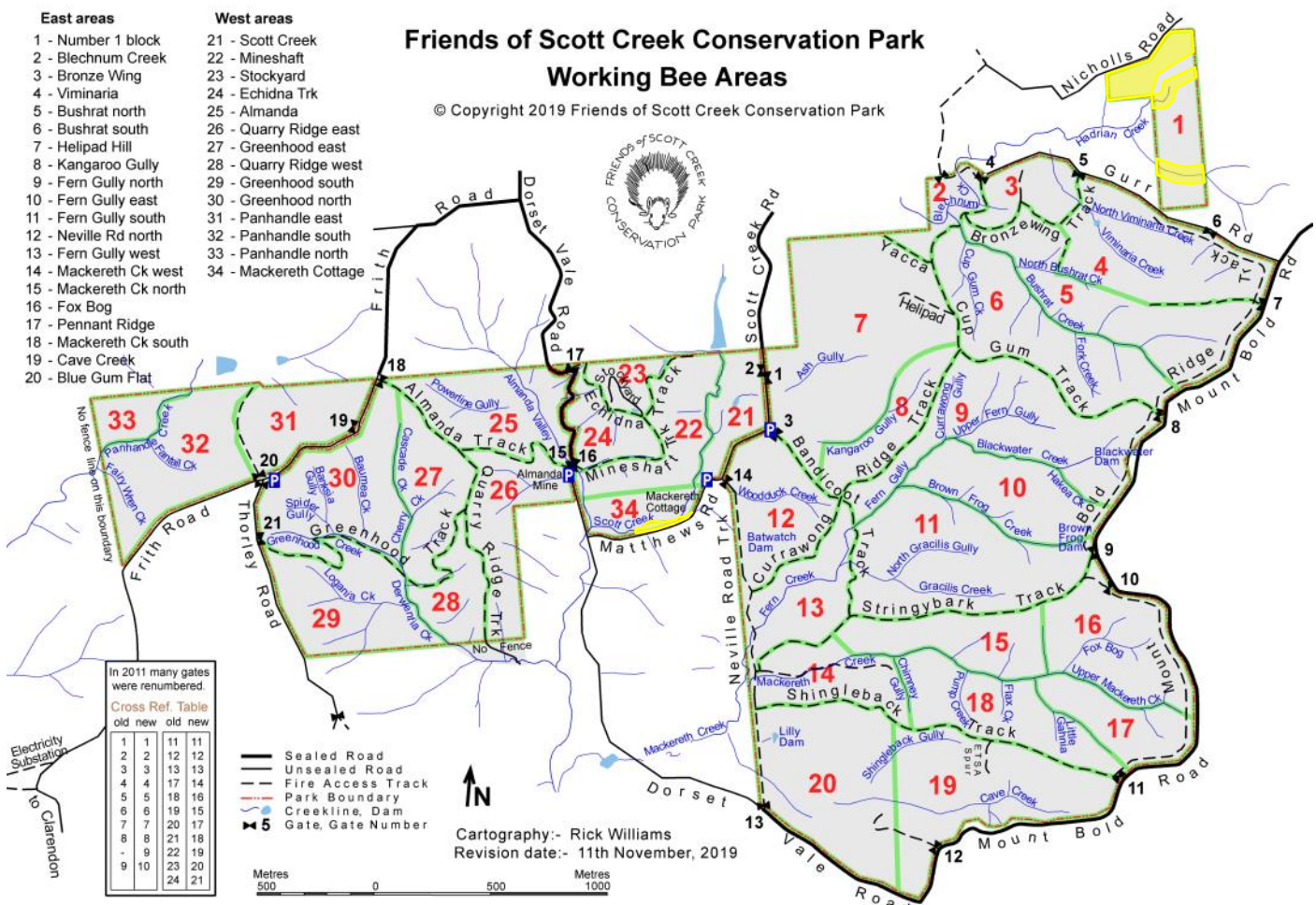
- Scott Creek south bank alongside Matthews Road—Mint Green continued their work on Blackberry and Weeping Willows, funded jointly by the NPWS On-Park Volunteer Support Partnership Grant and funding from the Bandicoot Superhighway project.
- Number 1 Block—Mint Green has returned to deal with the many priority weeds within this area, including Montpellier Broom, English Broom, Boneseed, Tree Lucerne and Erica.



Above: Part of Scott Creek being worked in by Mint Green.

Peter Watton

Grants & Funding, Contractor Liaison & Reporting





We received an invitation to the Suzanne Elliott Charitable Trust's (SECT) Minglearama in February, a gathering of some of SECT's partners to share their stories and further their connections.

A reminder that we were made aware of this Trust by our members Andrew and Jenny Biven, who have had an on-going partnership with SECT in conjunction with another project they are involved in. Andrew prepared the initial application for a \$10,000 grant, and then I filled in the finer detail. The grant was for more contractor assistance in helping managing fire responsive weeds last year, and we were very grateful that the Trustees supported us.

The event was held at Gallery Yampu at Birkenhead, with afternoon tea and partners allowed to give a brief (2¹/₂ minutes!) "elevator pitch" about their project. I talked briefly about our group, the fire, and our work helping the park recover, supported by a slideshow of some lovely photos of the park and some of its prettier plants and animals.

Peter Watton
Bushcare—Grants & Funding, Contractor Liaison & Reporting



Above left: The Trustees of SECT.



Above right: Peter, Jenny and Andrew at the Mingle-arama.

Below: One of the partner groups gives their elevator pitch at the Mingle-arama.



Bird Banding Notes: December 2022—February 2023

The most obvious thing of note is that Superb Fairy-wrens were starting to make a comeback in February. The SFW's are up from 7 to 18 for the quarter. Without that increase the last quarter would have been our lowest on record.

But moving to the optimistic side, we banded our first ever Painted Button-quail. It was a juvenile bird, evidenced by its' light-yellow eye. At The Plantation we also banded a very prickly Grey Currawong (eight sharp toes and beak!).

Of concern is the absence of Red-browed Finches and Silvereyes. A few honeyeaters are starting to be heard, but in very low numbers due to the lack of nectar-production in trees and lower plants. Brown Thornbills continue to show up – there is one study that has posited that they will come back into recently burnt terrain when there is long-term unburnt bush adjacent.

There were 5 recaptures for the quarter, all at 2+ years old or less. Some of these will have survived the January 2021 fire – only the Almanda Track site was not burnt then.



Above left: White-browed Scrubwren at Twisted Chimney.



Above right: Betty and Jim at Almanda Track site.

Bird	3/4 Dec Pennant Ridge	17 Dec Almanda Track	21 Jan Twisted Chimney	4/5 Feb Mineshaft Track	18/19 Feb The Plantation	Total
Brown Thornbill	1	2			2	5
Striated Thornbill	1	1				2
Golden Whistler					1	1
New Holland Honeyeater				1		1
Buff-rumped Thornbill				1		1
Painted Button-quail					1	1
Eastern Spinebill				2		2
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	1			1	1	3
Grey Fantail				2	1	3
Red-browed Finch				1		1
Grey Currawong					1	1
White-browed Scrubwren			1		1	2
Grey Shrike-thrush					1	1
Superb Fairy-wren			2	9	7	18
TOTAL	3	3	3	17	16	42



Above left: Yellow-faced Honeyeater.



Above right: A surprised looking Superb Fairy-wren.



Above left: Eastern Spinebill.



Above right: Red-browed Finch, not seen much recently.



Above left: The paparazzi watch as Jim releases a Buff-rumped Thornbill (circled).



Above right: Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike (BFCS) devouring a caterpillar, see Jim's description next page.

At Mineshaft Track we were entertained by Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes (Don's favoured BFCS) hunting through the epicormic growth. We have several photos of the demise of a large green caterpillar being battered on a branch by a BFCS – the theory goes that it was being stripped of its toxic eucalyptus diet.

Please check the program at the end of this newsletter for dates and times of future banding sessions. Visitors are welcome to 'come and see' banding without having to commit to an early start. If you would like to receive an email notice, get in touch with me at president@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au.

Jim Spiker
Bird Banding Coordinator



Above: We had quite a crowd along at Mineshaft Track banding in February.



Above: A first for our bird banding program in the park, a juvenile Painted Button-quail, which has a State Rare status.



Below left: Jim and Peter measuring the Grey Currawong.



Below right: Jim preparing to release the Grey Currawong.



Photo Gallery:



Above: Juvenile Brown Goshawk seen at bird banding at Twisted Chimney Track.



Left and below: A selection of arachnids seen in the park during summer.

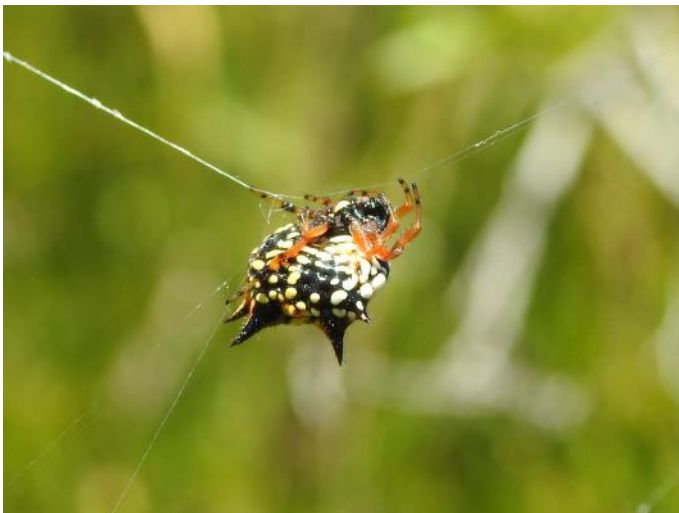


Photo Gallery:



Above left: Blue-banded Bee on the flower of a Scarlet Bottlebrush (*Callistemon rugulosus*).



Above right: Ants were farming the scale on this Cup Gum (*Eucalyptus cosmophylla*).



Above left: A very well disguised Slender Gumleaf Grasshopper.



Above right: A Praying Mantis visited us on our bird banding table.



Above left: This Koala was quite active, for a Koala, during our bird banding session along Mineshaft Track.



Above right: A White-faced Heron down near the northern fenceline in the Panhandle, the neighbour's dam isn't far away.

Calendar of Environmental Events coming up:

Friday 3rd March is World Wildlife Day

On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March – the day of signature of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973 – as UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants.

'Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation' is a theme which provides the opportunity to highlight the people who are making a difference.

Partnerships operate on a large scale or involve a few children or a school, working in their local community to bring about change and promote sustainability. It will mean many things to different people, with each of those meanings being valid. For some, it could be organizing a school sale to benefit a conservation group, for others it could be posting photographs online or painting pictures to raise awareness of endangered species. It could be in highlighting the IGO partnerships that are already mobilizing thousands of people in the pursuit of global goals. In every case, there is an answer to the question: What is the part you play in wildlife conservation?

This upcoming year, World Wildlife Day (WWD) falls on CITES' 50th Anniversary. Throughout the past 50 years, partnerships have been at the heart of CITES, with Parties to the Convention working with the shared goal of ensuring sustainability of endangered species. UN agencies, private sector organizations, philanthropies and non-governmental organizations have been mobilized, working for conservation, the sustainable use of wildlife and in the fight against illegal trade and the depletion of wildlife. At national and local levels, partnerships are essential in every country across the globe to focus on the conservation of species and ecosystems. WWD will celebrate the bridge that CITES has been for these partnerships to form, making a significant contribution to sustainability, wildlife and biodiversity conservation.

Sustaining existing partnerships and building new ones is critical for the future of life on earth. WWD should offer hope and a way forward. We know that we need to change our relationship with nature. Our health as a species depends on having healthy wildlife populations, healthy ecosystems and the biodiversity that allows for a healthy planet. This will need a concerted effort from groups working together, which is exactly what World Wildlife Day 2023 will be focusing on, with the theme: Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation.

<https://wildlifeday.org>

Friday 3rd March is School Clean Up Day &

Sunday 5th March is Clean Up Australia Day

Can you imagine the good we could do, if all of Australia came together on one day and took practical action to improve the environment? What a difference we could make! Let's see how many people we can bring together on Sunday 5 March and make a real impact...



**WORLD
WILDLIFE DAY**
3 MARCH



It's hard to believe that what was started over thirty years ago, by Ian Kiernan, AO, an "average Australian" who had a simple idea to make a difference in his own backyard has now become the nation's largest community-based environmental event, held annually on the first Sunday in March.

Over twenty million Aussies have stepped up over the years, donating their time to improve the environment.

Pip Kiernan, Chair of Clean Up Australia says "Our environment is facing pressure unlike ever before. As all Australians know, over the past two years, we've seen severe bushfires, cyclones and floods, and increased pressures on our biodiversity and an ever-growing volume of waste which leaks into our natural and marine environment."

"Australians tell us every day that they are concerned about the world we live in but often feel frustrated and unsure how to make a positive impact. Clean Up Australia Day is a great opportunity to work together and take practical action. Together we can all make a real difference," Pip continued.

"Signing up now means you're making a pledge to improve and protect Australia's environment. Whether you are 9 or 90, participating in a Clean Up Australia event changes the way you think about your everyday habits and the practical changes each of us can make. Everyone who gets involved tells us how rewarding the day is and how it has made a lasting positive impact." Pip said.

<http://www.cleanup.org.au/cleanupsustraliaday>

Tuesday 21st March is International Day of Forests

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 March the International Day of Forests (IDF) in 2012. The Day celebrates and raises awareness of the importance of all types of forests. On each International Day of Forests, countries are encouraged to undertake local, national and international efforts to organize activities involving forests and trees, such as tree planting campaigns.

The theme for each International Day of Forests is chosen by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The theme for 2023 is "Forests and health."

<https://www.fao.org/international-day-of-forests/en/>

Background

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 March the International Day of Forests in 2012 to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. Countries are encouraged to undertake local, national and international efforts to organize activities involving forests and trees, such as tree planting campaigns.

The organizers are the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations in the field.

Too precious to lose

When we drink a glass of water, write in a notebook, take medicine for a fever or build a house, we do not always make the connection with forests. And yet, these and many other aspects of our lives are linked to forests in one way or another.

Forest sustainable management and their use of resources are key to combating climate change, and to contributing to the prosperity and well-being of current and future generations. Forests also play a crucial role in poverty alleviation and in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet despite all these priceless ecological, economic, social and health benefits, global deforestation continues at an alarming rate.



Wood helps to provide bacteria-free food and water in many kitchens, build countless furniture and utensils, replace materials as harmful as plastic, create new fibers for our clothes and, through technology, be part of the fields of medicine or the space race.

It is vital to consume and produce wood in a more environmentally friendly way for the planet and its inhabitants. Let's protect this easily renewable resource with a sustainable management of forests.

Did you know?

Forests are home to about 80% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity, with more than 60,000 tree species.

Around 1.6 billion people depend directly on forests for food, shelter, energy, medicines and income.

The world is losing 10 million hectares of forest each year - about the size of Iceland

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/forests-and-trees-day>

Saturday 25th March is Earth Hour

Show your support for Earth Hour and #ShapeOurFuture.

This Earth Hour, we're calling on Australians everywhere to sign up to switch off and join a worldwide community of millions supporting stronger action on climate change.

It's never been more critical to come together to protect our world than at this moment. Climate change is impacting our precious environment right now. We've watched Australian communities and wildlife endure raging bushfires and devastating floods in quick succession.

We still have time to make a difference for the planet we call home. Whether you're an individual, school, business or community, we all have the power to Shape Our Future.

Australia's wildlife and landscapes are at risk due to the impacts of climate change. It's not too late to show your support to #ShapeOurFuture.

<https://www.earthhour.org.au>



Saturday 22nd April is Earth Day

Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

In the decades leading up to the first Earth Day, Americans were consuming vast amounts of leaded gas through massive and inefficient automobiles. Industry belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of the consequences from either the law or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. Until this point, mainstream America remained largely oblivious to environmental concerns and how a polluted environment threatens human health.

However, the stage was set for change with the publication of Rachel Carson's New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book represented a watershed moment, selling more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries as it raised public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment and the inextricable links between pollution and public health.

Earth Day 1970 would come to provide a voice to this emerging environmental consciousness, and putting environmental concerns on the front page.

Today, Earth Day is widely recognized as the largest secular observance in the world, marked by more than a billion people every year as a day of action to change human behaviour and create global, national and local policy changes.



Now, the fight for a clean environment continues with increasing urgency, as the ravages of climate change become more and more apparent every day.

As the awareness of our climate crisis grows, so does civil society mobilization, which is reaching a fever pitch across the globe today. Disillusioned by the low level of ambition following the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015 and frustrated with international environmental lethargy, citizens of the world are rising up to demand far greater action for our planet and its people.

“We need to build a global citizenry fluent in the concept of climate change and inspired by environmental education to act in defense of the planet.”

— EARTHDAY.ORG President Kathleen Rogers.

<https://www.earthday.org>

22nd May 2023 is International Day for Biological Diversity

International Day for Biological Diversity History

International Day for Biological Diversity seeks to raise awareness about biological diversity and the issues surrounding it. This day aims to highlight effective strategies that can help protect biodiversity. Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on the planet. Today, habitats are degrading and leading to a reduction in biodiversity, a problem that directly affects human well-being, poverty reduction, and global sustainable development.

International Day for Biological Diversity was established in 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly. It is observed annually on May 22, a day that commemorates the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992.

<https://www.wincalendar.com/au/International-Day-Biological-Diversity>

Biological diversity is often understood in terms of the wide variety of plants, animals and microorganisms, but it also includes genetic differences within each species — for example, between varieties of crops and breeds of livestock — and the variety of ecosystems (lakes, forest, deserts, agricultural landscapes) that host multiple kind of interactions among their members (humans, plants, animals).

Biological diversity resources are the pillars upon which we build civilizations. Fish provide 20 per cent of animal protein to about 3 billion people. Over 80 per cent of the human diet is provided by plants. As many as 80 per cent of people living in rural areas in developing countries rely on traditional plant-based medicines for basic healthcare.

But loss of biodiversity threatens all, including our health. It has been proven that biodiversity loss could expand zoonoses - diseases transmitted from animals to humans- while, on the other hand, if we keep biodiversity intact, it offers excellent tools to fight against pandemics like those caused by coronaviruses.

While there is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a global asset of tremendous value to future generations, the number of species is being significantly reduced by certain human activities. Given the importance of public education and awareness about this issue, the UN decided to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity annually.

<https://www.unep.org/events/un-day/international-day-biological-diversity-2023>



Autumn Program of Activities March–May 2023

The Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park welcome visitors to all of our activities, which include regular bushcare, bird banding and bush gardening.

For enquiries and information: E info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au W www.friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Bushcare activities: During autumn we will meet at **9.00am** at the **nearest gate for the activity location**.

An email will be sent to bushcarers advising the location in advance.

Any **new members** interested in joining us, contact the above email address to receive the email.

Be prepared for walking through sometimes rugged bushland, including areas recovering from fire, and bring a small backpack to carry your morning tea.

Bird Banding activities: Contact the Bird Banding Coordinator (see next page) to receive emails about activities.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Local activities will be **cancelled** if a **fire ban** or **severe weather warning** is announced for the **Mount Lofty Ranges**. Bird banding will also be cancelled in conditions that may adversely affect the birds.

See links to BOM & CFS websites below.

BOM website: <http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/meteve/dorset-vale>

CFS website: https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bans_and_ratings

Month/Day	Date	Activity	Location
MARCH 2023			
Saturday, Sunday	4, 5	Bird Banding	AB: Almanda Battery, Almanda Carpark, 7:30 am
Tuesday	7	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Sunday	12	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Saturday, Sunday	18, 19	Bird Banding	DV: Derwentia Valley, via Gate 21, 7:30 am (Last CDST)
Saturday	25	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Tuesday	28	Social Lunch All Welcome	Joan's Pantry—Hawthorndene at noon (Watahuna Ave opposite the oval)
APRIL 2023			
Saturday, Sunday	1, 2	Bird Banding	FB: Fox Bog, via Gate 9, 7:00 am (Start CST)
Tuesday	4	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Sunday Easter	9	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Saturday	15	Autumn Walk All Welcome	Meet at gate 3 at 9:00am for a morning wander up to bird banding, then along Currawong Ridge Track and up Cup Gum Track to Tom's Outlook.
Saturday, Sunday	15, 16	Bird Banding	XR: Crossroads, Via Gate 3, 7:00 am
Tuesday	18	General Meeting All Welcome!	Time and venue to be confirmed
Saturday	22	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Saturday, Sunday	22, 23	Bird Banding	Gluepot Reserve – Jim leading this
Wednesday	26	Social Lunch All Welcome	Sheoak Café—Belair at noon (cnr Sheoak and James Roads, parking on three sides)
Sunday	30	Outing	Monarto Safari Park—more detail to come
MAY 2023			
Tuesday	2	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Saturday, Sunday	6, 7	Bird Banding	TC: Twisted Chimney, via Gate 13, 7:00 am
Sunday	14	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location
Saturday, Sunday	20, 21	Bird Banding	PR: Pennant Ridge, via Gate 11, 7:30 am
Thursday	25	Social Lunch All Welcome	Brass Monkeys Café—Blackwood at noon (down alley between Bendigo Bank and Blackwood Pharmacy Main Rd)
Saturday	27	Bushcare	Post-fire weed regeneration will determine location

Office bearers:

Any queries on Friends activities, please contact the relevant person below, general queries to info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

President: Jim Spiker (M) 0430 247 705, Email: president@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Vice President: Peter Watton (M) 0427 010 949, Email: info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Treasurer: Andrew Biven (M) 0404 878 344, Email: treasurer@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Correspondence Secretary: Email: secretary@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Administration Assistant: Jenny Dawes (H) 8388 2297 (M) 0427 841 425, Email: info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Minute Secretary: Anna Dutkiewicz (M) 0415 494 090, Email: webmaster@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Membership Officer: Lorraine Billett (H) 8278 6623 (M) 0427 093 839, Email: lorry66@tpg.com.au

Other roles and positions:

Bird Banding Coordinator: Jim Spiker (contact details above)

Bushcare Coordinator: Jenny Dawes (contact details above)

Assistant Bushcare Coordinator: Glenn Giles (M) 0413 615 514, Email: gilesgd81@gmail.com

Bushcare — Grants & Funding, Contractor Liaison & Reporting: Peter Watton (contact details above)

Bush Gardening Almada Creek: John Wamsley (M) 0407 716 074, Email: john@johnwamsley.com

Editor Bandicoot Tails & Facebook: Peter Watton (contact details above)

Website Coordinator: Anna Dutkiewicz (M) 0415 494 090, Email: webmaster@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Social & Events Coordinators: Jenny Dawes (contact details above), Sue Braddock-Smith (M) 0447 028 458, Email: almanda11@bigpond.com

