

# Newsletter

June 2020



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## Paringa Paddock : the latest addition to the National Parks for the region



Paringa Paddock was recently added to the Murray River National Park. Current and future Members of the Friends of Riverland Parks enjoyed a morning exploring the park and becoming familiar with what the area has to offer, and that is a lot. The area caters for the walker, bike rider, fisherman, birdwatcher, plant enthusiast or anyone wanting a day out for a picnic by the river. Enthusiasts John and Faye Brodie shared their vast knowledge of the area. Here John explains the function of the channel in delivering water to the Paddock.

# Newsletter

## 2020 Programme

### Proposed

### Meetings:

2020	19th February AGM	18th March
	13th May	15th July
	16th September	18th November

All meetings 4.30pm in the DEW building (entry via Merritt Avenue).

All members or intending members welcome.

### Programme

Our **next planning meeting** was due to be held in the week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> July, but our liaison ranger is currently on leave and so I have been unable to confirm a time and date for when he is available. When he returns, I will notify members of the details of a meeting time and date.

We will plan for the remainder of this year at that meeting.

Our usual activity for July has been the 4 nights of **Bush Stone Curlew Surveys** at Chowilla game Reserve. Social distancing in a vehicle is not possible and so our annual records will unfortunately have a gap for the 2020 year.

The **bus tour of Chowilla** that was planned for earlier this year is still on hold.

### VALE

Jenny Winn

The Friends were saddened to be advised of Jenny's passing in late June 2020.

Jenny, together with husband Norm, were active members of the Friends of Riverland Parks. Jenny and Norm had conducted waterbird surveys for NPWS providing a report and photos to be included in our newsletter. She was also a keen canoeist, so often her photos submitted for our newsletter included the front of her canoe. Jenny and Norm also attended meetings and supported activities. Jenny's friendship and keenness to learn about the environment will be missed.



# Newsletter

## President's Ramble



Welcome to our new Vice President Mrs Ros Pierce for this year. Otherwise, all positions remain the same.

Our planned programme for the start of the year has been scuttled, but we still hope to visit most of our Parks this year and everyone is welcome to join us at any stage.

It was disappointing that most of our members missed out on the Katarapko flood plain tour that had been organised for March 4. The two people that were included were booked through other sources. Others did not receive our e-mail in time to be included. Hopefully there may be another tour as bookings were very heavy—70 people I believe. It just goes to show how interested everyone is in the project and wants to know what has been happening in Katarapko N.P. and why. The local Department

and Rangers have been sympathetic and disappointed that our members missed out on the tour.

In case you did not know or did not realise our group turns 30 in 2021. That is a lot of volunteer hours that have gone into various projects in our parks, a lot of hard work and enjoyable morning teas. Any ideas on how we should celebrate the occasion?

*Heather Shearer*

## Paringa Paddock

I was pleased to be one of the guides as a number of Renmark locals met with the other Friends of Riverland Parks to explore Paringa Paddock last Thursday June 25<sup>th</sup>.

The enthusiastic introduction by Senior NPWS Ranger Tony Stevens, with reports that planning is already underway for new signage and maintenance of trails was great to hear. Peter Hunter also added information on previous Council work in PP, with a brief outline of the Riverine Recovery Project. The bike trails map was then

used to give a short history of the development of all the different trails, before moving off into the park to join ranger Tony. The group was guided along the old Ranger Walk towards the town end of the park and onto the original Sturt Highway. It was interesting that some members were made aware of the existence of the



road for the first time, while others shared stories of travelling along the bumpy highway or joining emergency groups to build sandbanks to avoid flooding of the connection to Paringa. Back into the park, Tony showed the group the rubbish pits (only recently worked through) which he has targeted as the first major clean-up. He then discussed and answered questions about park compliance and told us that he was keen to gather ideas that would progress the development of the park.



# Newsletter

## PARINGA PADDOCK CONTINUED

After morning tea at the Lions Park, vehicles were then used to explore the remainder of PP. The first stop was the new regulator (on the old highway) with reference back to the recovery programme talked about by Peter Hunter. (Local walkers have been excited to see the water backed up behind the regulator for the first time last week, the channels back to the river full and the frogs calling). Next stop Lock 5 and on to the start of the Goat Island track. Here we again referred to the bike trail map to explain how the water moves through the whole Paddock to the old river and recommended places to hike, ride or picnic. It was then back through the central track, the old highway and onto the present Sturt Highway.



I would like to thank John Brodie for his help with the guiding and anecdotes of the park and river. Also thanks to Geoff Bull who gave us some very interesting historical information about the river and events that happened in this much used pocket of land. (Hopefully he may be able to provide some other stories of the Paddock in the future)

Thanks to organizer Kevin and to everyone who turned up for what turned out to be "a lovely day in the park". See you next time.



# Newsletter

## Katarapko : Tour of the New Structures

In March the Department of Environment advertised tours to the new environmental construction work nearing completion throughout the Katarapko National Park.

Several Friends of Riverland Parks members put their names forward for these bus tours but were unsuccessful in obtaining spots on the buses due to the large numbers of the public wishing to tour this area.

The public interest is a good sign as it shows that the general public is interested in what is happening within Katarapko.



As a result of the "Friends" hard work within the park in previous years the Department arranged a private viewing for Friends members of which 7 members took up.



We visited 4 sites starting near Campsite 17, Carpark Lagoon, Piggy Creek, The Splash and Sawmill Creek.

At Sawmill Creek, our Patron June Plush had the honour of cutting the ribbon to declare the fish way open. (not official, tongue in cheek)

Two officers conducted the tour pointing out the working of the new infrastructure and the areas it is hoped will be inundated during the flooding process.

It is hoped that an allocation of water

can be obtained later this year to test the system and start to monitor the improvement to the vegetation and the overall improvement to both vegetation and resulting wild life that will follow this watering.

With flows throughout the creek system now being regulated fish numbers should now increase with suitable breeding conditions within the Katarapko creek systems and should also be able to move back into the river system thanks to newly installed fish ways throughout the creeks.

To all members of Riverland Parks, it is certainly worth a visit to check out this new infrastructure and to have a general look as it is now and to watch the improvements in the future as more regulated wetting and drying cycles are carried out.

*Murray Harvey*





## The Friends Parks : Volunteers in Action

There are over 130 "Friends of Parks" groups across South Australia.

These groups are made up of volunteers of various ages who have a passionate interest in their local NPWS park(s).

The role of these groups is to work with NPWS staff to look after and manage "their" park(s).

The overall direction, administration and guidance of these 130+ groups is managed by the Adelaide based Friends of Parks Inc. committee.

### How do I get involved?

Any individual wishing to join like-minded people to voluntarily assist with the management of parks can do so by joining a "Friends of Parks" group. Membership of a group entitles the individual to participate in all activities conducted by the group and as a volunteer will be covered under the state government insurance scheme for any registered activities conducted by the group.

Activities are planned at a general meeting under the guidance of a ranger. They are then advertised in emails and newsletters and all members are welcome to join in the activities.

### What types of activities are conducted by these groups?

Activities conducted by groups vary depending on the interests of the group members and the needs of the staff where assistance is required.

### Who are the Friends of Riverland Parks?

The group was established in 1991.

Members work with NPWS staff to manage all Riverland parks from Morgan Conservation Park through the Riverland region upstream to Dangali Conservation Park and Chowilla Game Reserve on the NSW border. There is around a total of 20 parks in this region ranging in size from one hectare.

With so many parks involved, the group has concentrated its efforts on particular parks at different times in conjunction with the needs of NPWS staff. Over the past almost 30 years we have contributed varying efforts to all these parks.

Some of the activities we have conducted in the parks include:

**Wildlife surveys** - bush birds, waterbirds, frogs, small mammals, small reptiles and particular species- Malleefowl, Common Brushtail Possum, Bush Stone Curlew, Regent Parrot.

**Native plants**- surveys, seed collection, propagation, revegetation.

**Cultural heritage** - restoration of buildings.

**Pest Animal control**- rabbit surveys, fox baiting.

**Pest plant control**- gazanias, bridal creeper and other pest species.

**Walking trails** - design, installation and maintenance.

**Rubbish removal**

# Newsletter

## Paringa Paddock – a new addition to the Murray River National Park

The Murray River National Park consists of 3 (now 4) main sections: Katarapko, Lyrup Flats, Bulyong Island and Paringa Paddock.

A group of Friends of Riverland Parks members met with Renmark residents recently (see Faye Brodie's article) and we were extremely impressed by the potential of this park and what it has to offer to locals and visitors to the area. Whilst we would like to assist staff with this additional park, we would really like to see Renmark residents take the lead in planning the best way forward for this new park.

It is proposed that Renmark based members would make up a sub committee of the Friends of Riverland Parks (FRP) who would primarily oversee the future development of Paringa Paddock in conjunction with NPWS. The reason for being a member of the FRP is to enable formal recognition of the Paringa Paddock members, provide state government insurance cover for people at organized activities and enable the group to apply for grants to assist with implementing projects they plan for the park.

All activities planned by the Friend's group including the Paringa Paddock sub committee will be advertised to all members via email and reported on in the quarterly newsletter. All members are invited to attend and participate in any of these activities.

### How can I join the FRP?

We begin our year at the AGM in February where membership fees etc. are decided. As we are well into this year, joining fees will not be required for new members joining now. To become a member of the FRP all you need to do is download the attached registration form and return it the secretary at [aquila43@bigpond.com](mailto:aquila43@bigpond.com)

### Some activities of the Friends of Riverland Parks



Revegetation



Weed removal



Rubbish removal



Surveys—including biological and malleefowl



Developing walking trails





If not delivered, please return to:  
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Friends of Riverland Parks Inc is a group of volunteers from most sections of the Riverland. Our common aim is to assist the National Parks & Wildlife Service in the conservation of both wet and dry land areas within the local district.