

# Bush Babbler Volunteer E-news



**Edition 1 | 17 April 2020**

Welcome! This is our first edition of the 'Bush Babbler', the Volunteer Programs electronic newsletter. Our team wanted to keep you updated whilst also bringing some light-hearted banter and joy to you all during these challenging COVID-19 times.

As many 'birdo's' would know, Babblers are very active birds that are often found in noisy social groups ie. they like a good chat! So do we and many of our volunteers- there's nothing better than coming together to give back to our environment and community. Although, we can't get out and about in parks face to face; it's vitally important that we stay connected with each other in other ways.

We're hoping to send this out regularly, as one way for us to stay connected with our awesome volunteers. Anyone is welcome to contribute, so please don't hesitate to provide content or feedback for future editions.

We hope you enjoy it and stay safe from the Volunteer Programs Team.....Gill, Ian, Amanda Amy, Carly, Pam, Edi and Carol.

## A little bit about the Volunteer Programs Team

The Volunteer Programs Team provides state-wide policy advice and support for volunteer management across the department and the Friends of Parks Inc. Board; including the coordination of the Campground Host Program and Volunteer Ranger Program.



### **Our team members are:**

- Gill Peacey – Manager, Volunteer Programs
- Ian Radbone – Coordinator, Volunteer Partnerships and Strategy
- Amanda Parker – Coordinator, Campground Host Program
- Amy Anderson – Coordinator, Volunteer Ranger Program
- Carly Dillion – Volunteer Support Officer
- Pam Smith and Edi Jarman – Administration Officers
- Carol Schmidt – Community Partnerships Program Manager

We also have a number of awesome volunteers (Mary, Adrian, Lee) who come into the office and help us too!

## Getting to know you...

This edition we get to know **Carly Dillon** who has started with Volunteer Programs Unit in late March as the Volunteer Support Officer. She has worked in DEW (and its various department names) since 2011 in a few different roles in Adelaide and Northern and Yorke Region. Carly's previous role was a Landscapes Ranger and she was the Volunteer Support Officer for the Northern and Yorke Region.



### What do you do when you are not working?

Living on the Yorke Peninsula I enjoy fishing, spending time on the beach and swimming. I enjoy getting away camping, it's a great IT detox. Earlier this year I started playing social Night Owl Bowls, the game is a lot more challenging than I first thought. At home I love cooking and baking as well as spending time in the garden. I enjoy a good glass of wine; I have lived in two wine regions, the Barossa and Clare Valley so have a few favourites from these areas. I enjoy seeing my family and friends in Adelaide, video calls are the next best thing at the moment to catch up with them.

### What is one thing others may not already know about you?

I love old movies, my all-time favourite is Singin' in the Rain with Gene Kelly and was filmed in 1952.

I might be a bit of a Christmas Grinch but Christmas is not Christmas without a bit of Bing Crosby playing White Christmas.

### What has been your most memorable holiday to date and why?

New Year's Eve just gone, I was camping on the Yorke Peninsula with friends when my partner Aaron got down on one knee and proposed.

### If you could invite any 3 people in the world (dead or alive, besides your partner or family) to dinner who would they be and why?

- Jane Goodall; many years ago I saw her talk in Adelaide when Zoos SA hosted her talk, I was working at Adelaide Zoo at the time. I found her fascinating, the things she has seen and the stories she would have to tell.
- Tim Flannery; he is so passionate about the environment and Conservation.
- Robin Williams; to add some silliness to the table.

### What is your favourite SA park and why?

Innes National Park. I am a little bias as I live here with my fiancé Aaron who is one of the Park Rangers. I love how the bush meets the sea and spectacular coastlines. Seeing Mallee fowl, emus, kangaroos and Wallabies is always exciting.

### Are there any movies could you watch multiple times or what TV series have hooked you?

I've been hooked to The Walking Dead and am up to season ten, I am waiting for the next season of The Handmaid's Tale and I finished watching the Game of Thrones last year.

### You could be next!

We plan to ask a range of volunteers and staff to share a little information about themselves in future editions. So be ready when the VPU staff come knocking!

## Parks – What’s open and closed?

South Australia’s national parks are available for local people to visit their local park, so long as visitors follow all State and Federal Government COVID-19 guidelines.

At this stage, the Adelaide Botanic and Wittunga Botanic Gardens will remain open.

However, all campgrounds in SA parks will close, along with DEW-managed hut and homestead accommodation.

Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens, Cleland Wildlife Park, Seal Bay, Naracoorte and Tantanoola Caves and Old Adelaide Gaol will close also in the interests of public health and safety.

Department for Environment and Water Chief Executive John Schutz said parks and gardens will remain open to local visitors as long as people comply with new social distancing and hygiene requirements.

The latest information on SA parks and gardens is available here: [www.parks.sa.gov.au](http://www.parks.sa.gov.au) and [www.botanicgardens.sa.gov.au](http://www.botanicgardens.sa.gov.au)

## Boarder Track Opening – Ngarkat Conservation Park

Are you a 4WD enthusiast? Have you been looking forward to the Border Track opening?

To ensure day visitor safety the one-way section of the [Border Track within Ngarkat Conservation Park](#) will remain **closed** until the end of April aligning with the extended Fire Danger Season.

This decision has not been made lightly, however don’t despair, there are many other tracks and spectacular lookouts in Ngarkat Conservation Park that can be visited during this period.

While [South Australia’s national parks](#) (including Ngarkat Conservation Park) are open for local people to visit as day visitors, people must follow all State and Federal Government COVID-19 guidelines.

## ‘Species’ in the Spotlight – *Beyond the long ears*

With Easter just behind us, it’s only fitting that we talk about the marsupial with the long pinkish-coloured ears and the silky, blue-grey fur - Australia’s Easter mascot, the Greater Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*).

Prior to European settlement, Australia was home to two species of Bilby, but habitat loss, competition from rabbits and livestock, changes in fire regimes, and the introduction of exotic predator species such as the cat and fox, decimated both species and their former distribution.

As a result, the Lesser Bilby, *Macrotis leucura*, is now extinct (last reported alive in 1931 near Cooncherie in north-eastern South Australia) and the Greater Bilby is classified as a species vulnerable to extinction.



Bilbies once covered 70 per cent of Australia but disappeared entirely from South Australia in the 1960s. Between 2001 and 2003, Greater Bilbies (19 of them) were reintroduced at [Venus Bay Conservation Park](#) on the Eyre Peninsula. Ongoing park management including feral cat management within the predator-proof fenced area, feral cat and fox control on the outside of the fence, regular fence maintenance and the control of European rabbits are all part of the recovery actions to support the wild bilby population.

*An adult greater bilby captured on camera at Venus Bay Conservation Park*

Bilbies are a managed species within the zoo industry, which has resulted in a much-needed captive breeding and release program. The bilby population at Venus Bay Conservation Park are descended from animals bred in captivity at Monarto Zoo.

Bilbies are perfectly adapted to the arid climate where surface water is rarely available. They derive most of their water from food, such as insects and their larva, seeds, bulbs, fruit and fungi, which they dig out using their long snouts. Bilbies are a nocturnal species and powerful burrowers. They have poor sight and rely on good hearing and a keen sense of smell. They will construct a deep burrow inside which they stay during the daylight hours, and to minimise threats from predators, they'll mostly stay within 250m of their burrow.

Males are considerably larger than females and depending on food source Bilbies can reproduce all year round. The female's pouch (which is backward facing to prevent sand getting in when they dig) contains eight teats but is rarely occupied by more than two young. Bilby joeys spend about 80 days in the pouch.



*A captive bilby at Cleland Wildlife Park*

I hope the Easter Bilby paid you a visit this Easter. After all, the Easter Bilby is an essential worker!

## Bushfire Recovery Update



South Australia's 2019-20 bushfire event burnt nearly 300,000 hectares of land across Kangaroo Island, the Adelaide Hills, the South East, Eyre and Yorke Peninsula. More than 90,000 hectares of parks and reserves were burnt including 96 per cent of the iconic tourism destination Flinders Chase National Park on Kangaroo Island. This resulted in the closure of some parks on Kangaroo Island, in the Adelaide Hills and in the South East until further notice.

On 6 February 2020 the Kangaroo Island bushfire was declared safe by the CFS, which meant that all bushfire-affected areas were declared safe in SA. A Federal Government Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and state-level independent 2019/20 bushfire review are underway.

A Wildlife Recovery Fund has been created by National Parks and Wildlife Service South Australia and the Nature Foundation to raise funds for the restoration of SA's native plants and animals. Total funds as at 19/03/2020 is \$353,604. WOW!

A Wildlife and Habitat Recovery Taskforce has been established to support a state-wide coordinated response to the bushfires and support the development of the Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Plan. Dr Felicity-Ann Lewis leads the taskforce.

National Parks and Wildlife Service South Australia (NPWSSA) are making daily assessments of the parks and are working to provide public access as soon as possible.

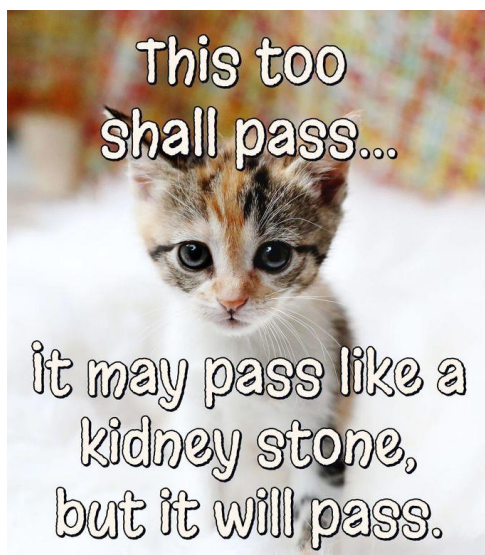
For more information and news on the bushfire recovery efforts in SA's parks and reserves, and to find out how you can help, visit the [Parks SA website](#).

## Have Your Say – Landscape Act Regulations

Consultation has now begun on the draft landscape regulations to support the new *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*, which means the new Act is on track to become fully operational from 1 July 2020. Community members are encouraged to provide feedback on the draft regulations by Monday 27 April, through the [YourSay website](#).

Please note the regulations are being distributed separately to targeted key stakeholders, other government agencies and peak bodies for comment.

## You know what they say...



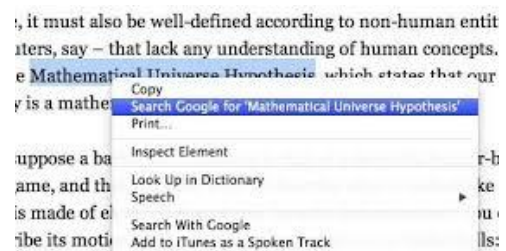
Sourced from: <https://www.coolfunnyquotes.com/author/anonymous/>

## Technology Tips & Tricks

Already tried turning your device 'on and off' again? Never fear we're here to provide you with some handy IT and technology tips and tricks to help you in this brave new world!

### Search Google with a Right-Click

Are you ever reading something online, see a term or person you're interested in, and want to learn more? To do it quickly in most browsers, highlight the text or phrase first, then right-click on the selection. You'll see the "search google" (or other search provider) option in the menu, which when clicked, opens Google search results on the topic in a new tab.



## Just a bit of Fun



You can't run through a campsite. You can only ran...



Why? Because it's past tents. 😊

## Soul Food

Home is where the heart is and a good feed can make all the difference to your health and wellbeing. Try this tried and tested recipe courtesy of Gill. Usually these bliss balls make a great energy boosting snack to take with you hiking or camping but would be just as good to increase your stamina while tackling the gardening at home.

### *Bliss balls*

- 500gm pitted dates
- 1 cup pepitas
- 1 cup roast sunflower seeds
- 1 cup almond meal
- 1 cup shredded coconut (plus ¼ cup for sprinkling)
- 1 cup raw cacao
- ¼ - ½ cup liquid cocoa
- 2 ½ cups roast nuts (almonds, brazil nuts, hazel nuts, walnuts or macadamias, plus slivered almonds)
- ¼ cup roast buckwheat
- Desiccated coconut, finely chopped nuts or cacao (to coat)



Pile all dry ingredients except half the nuts into a food processor and blend finely. Add cocoa gradually and mix until it's a sticky, doughy blob, not gloopy.

Add remaining nuts and massage in. Shape mixture into balls and cover in desiccated coconut, finely chopped nuts or cacao.

Store in freezer (for future campground hosting or volunteer ranger activities!).

Enjoy!



## Keep Updated on COVID-19

Remember the only information that counts comes from reliable resources. The [SA Health website](#), the [Government of SA website](#) or the [Australian Government Department of Health website](#) are good places to get the facts from scientists and people who are public health experts.

## Contact Us

Do you have any tips, tricks, ideas, stories, recipes, photos etc. that you would like to share and have included in a future edition of the Bush Babbler? Send contributions through to Amanda or Amy – we would love to hear from you!

Please email either: [amanda.parker@a.gov.au](mailto:amanda.parker@a.gov.au) or [amy.anderson3@sa.gov.au](mailto:amy.anderson3@sa.gov.au)

Also, don't forget you can keep in touch on our Facebook pages too...

[Volunteer Ranger Program](#)

[Campground Host Program](#)

[Friends of Park SA](#)

