

Bush Babbler Volunteer E-news



Edition 2 | 4 May 2020

Hello! In case you missed the first edition, the 'Bush Babbler' is the Volunteer Programs electronic newsletter. Aiming to bring some light-hearted banter and joy to you all during these challenging COVID-19 times.

Thank you so much for the positive feedback! It's great to hear from you (our awesome volunteers), what you've been doing; and to hear that many of you have been getting out and about enjoying our parks in this beautiful autumn weather. With that in mind, we wanted to let you know about a few things you can individually do in our parks or from the comfort of your home, especially if you're in self-isolation.

With this rather chilly turn in the weather announcing that winter on the way,... we'll be focussing on the importance of maintaining good mental health and wellbeing in future editions.



Anyone is welcome to contribute, so please don't hesitate to provide content or feedback on things you'd like read, see or do.

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

Getting to know you...

This edition we get to know **Adrian Cheater** one of our awesome volunteer rangers who came into the Volunteer Ranger Program in the first intake of volunteers; and was involved in the successful pilot program at Morialta Conservation Park and Innes National Park. Whilst recovering from a recent surgery, Adrian has been volunteering his time in-between university studies to provide valuable administration support to the Volunteer Programs team - thanks Adrian!

What do you do when you are not volunteering?

Other than being a professional dad joker, I currently study Ecotourism at the University of Adelaide. As you can't be a professional dad joker without being a dad, I also spend much of my time with two boys aged 2 and 4 and a wife significantly older than 2 and 4. As a family we love to travel. My eldest is a huge 4x4 fan and our rig gets us almost anywhere. He even has a 4x4 themed birthday this year.



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

I used to travel annually to Nepal to go climbing until a recent run of surgeries. The highest I have been so far is 6,189m.

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

My most memorable holiday was actually a recent trip to Yosemite National Park. I recently initiated my midlife crisis (as my wife calls it) by selling the business we owned, leaving my career and returning to study. This trip felt like a bit of a rebirth into a focus on conservation, and outdoor endeavours. The park itself is also a humbling arena for thought and reflection. The powerful monolith of El Capitan gave a great sense of strength, something I was seeking after recent surgery.

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?

I am always curious to speak with those who push their personal limits through adventure. Unfortunately many who undertake such endeavours don't last long. I would love to share a meal with **George Malory**, one of the early pioneers of Himalayan Mountaineering; **Dean Potter**, well known for pushing Yosemite Climbing to its limits; and **Alex Honnold** who is thankfully still alive, participating in the sport of free solo climbing (climbing with no ropes) and recently claimed the 914m of El Capitan in this style. To ask those who are no longer with us if the ultimate consequence they paid was worth it and understand the mind of someone sitting on that edge would be such an experience.



What is your favourite SA park and why?

Favourite park in SA is a tricky one. For sheer enjoyment, a recent trip to Innes National Park as a volunteer was an absolute blast, but what the new Glenthorne National Park represents and its potential as a blank canvas has me really excited.

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

Meru! It's no surprise a climbing film is my number one, but for slightly different reasons than the love of climbing. Without giving much away one of the climbers in this film is seriously injured and eventually makes a come back to his passion, something that through the bulk of the narrative seems impossible. I use this film as fuel to my inner fire.

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 from Home– Get Your Virtual Nature Fix

Guess what? Even in this time of change, you can still enjoy SA national parks and nature from the comfort of your own home! We have some really handy resources and virtual tours to keep you and your family entertained during this period of social distancing, isolation and home schooling.

These virtual tours were initially created by the AMLR NRM Education team as a resource for teachers to assist with outdoor learning. They can be used before and after visiting parks, and can even be used by students in the classroom, kids learning from home or even volunteers.

Each tour contains a number of activity stops based around environmental and sustainability learning concepts tied to the curriculum; with additional information about plants, animals, learning ideas and links to further resources. This is a great resource and tool for volunteers to learn about our parks.

Also, remember South Australia's national parks are open and you can still take a short walk in your local park. Just practice social distancing, good hygiene and follow the rules about public gatherings that are intended to keep us all safe and well. Please do not visit our parks if you are required to self-isolate.

For further information and to access these great resources, please visit the [Parks SA website](#).

Poem



Sourced: [Heysen Trail Facebook](#)

Take the Lead – Dogs in Parks

We all know pets can provide us with lots of joy and entertainment... and many of us enjoy walking our furry companions in our local dog-friendly parks. So here's some important information to enable you to 'take the lead' and ensure everyone (including our four-legged friends) have a good experience in our parks by walking your dog on lead or encouraging others to do so too! Not sure whether your local park allows dogs- check the [Parks SA website](#) or contact the park office before you go.

Does my dog really need to be on a lead (it's only little)?

Yes! If your dog is off lead, it is more likely to impact on native wildlife, other visitors in the park and be at risk itself (no matter the size of your dog). Things to remember...

Protect Our Wildlife – Dogs can kill, injure and disturb wildlife as well as spread parasites and disease.

Keep It Fun For Everyone – Not all visitors like or are comfortable with dogs.

Keep Your Dog Safe – Poison, other dogs and wildlife can cause injury or disease.

Respect Other Visitors – Dogs can pose a danger to other visitors such as horse and bike riders.

Be A Responsible Dog Owner – Take dog waste home with you and train your dog to walk safely and happily on a lead.



Assistance dogs are welcome in SA parks and reserves and must be restrained at all times and under effective control. Please contact your local parks office for information on any potential hazards in a park that may affect an assistance dog.

What does 'effective control' mean?

Having your dog on a lead of no more than 2m in length OR voice control that ensures the dog will obey at all times. Unless you can ensure your dog will respond to your voice commands every time and I mean every time, then you need to walk your dog on a lead in public areas.

So where can I walk my dog?

There are many parks and reserves in which you can walk your dog, particularly in and around Adelaide- please see the [Parks SA website](#) for locations and general information regarding dogs in SA parks. Just remember to stay on designated walking trails and keep your dog on a lead 2m or less at all times- *Take the Lead!*

'Species' in the Spotlight – *The shy serpent*

As we move into the cooler months, snake activity is mostly on the decline. However, there is a secretive little serpent that is well adapted to these Autumn temperatures, and will most probably still be active well into May – the Pygmy Copperhead *Austrelaps labialis*.

There are 3 species of 'Copperheads' in Australia, all preferring cooler climates. As the name suggests, the Pygmy (or Dwarf) Copperhead is the smallest (average size is 500mm), and is only found in South Australia (the Mount Lofty Ranges, Kangaroo Island and the lower part of the Fleurieu Peninsula). The other two being:

- Lowland Copperhead *Austrelaps superbus* (found in the extreme south-eastern of South Australia, through Victoria to the extreme south-eastern corner of NSW. Tasmania and some of the islands of Bass Strait).
- Highland or Uplands Copperhead *Austrelaps ramsayi* (Upland areas of Victoria and NSW).



In the Mount Lofty Ranges, the Pygmy Copperhead occurs almost exclusively in high altitude stringbark forests with dense undergrowth, and on Kangaroo Island it is found in coastal dunes, open grasslands, samphire and woodland. This is a shy species, usually found near some form of water (a creek or dam) where it primarily feeds on skinks and frogs. Due to this diet, they can be difficult to keep in captivity, as they won't readily feed on mice and rats like other snakes. They are also known to be cannibalistic in captivity and the wild.

Are they dangerous?

Pygmy Copperheads are venomous, however tend to be secretive and avoid encounters with humans. Due to their small size, small fangs and low venom delivery, they are not regarded as dangerous to a healthy adult. However, as with other Australian elapid snakes, a bite should not be ignored and snake bite first aid should be implemented immediately.

Unfortunately this inoffensive species is listed as Vulnerable (IUCN Red List) and is on the decline in the Mt Lofty Ranges due to clearance and fragmentation of habitat, and predation by cats, dogs and foxes. Although it is unlikely you will encounter one of these slithering beauties in the wild, your best opportunities for a sighting in the Mt Lofty Ranges or Fleurieu Peninsula would be [Cleland CP](#), Kenneth Stirling CP, [Mt George CP](#), [Cox Scrub CP](#) and [Newland Head CP](#).

Junior Ranger Activities – 'Autumn Diaries'

Got kids at home or looking for something to do whilst volunteering activities are on hold?

'Autumn Diaries' is a nature journaling activity to inspire young people (recommended ages 8-14) to capture observations about nature this autumn. However anyone can join in on the action!

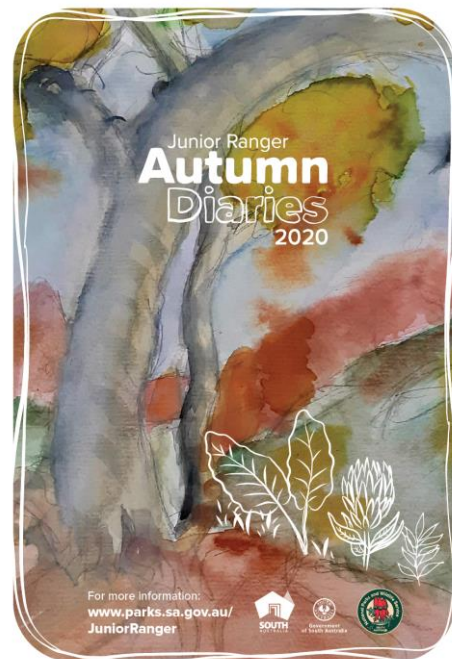
Each week a new theme is revealed on the [Parks SA website](#) with new challenges, along with tips on nature journaling and information about parks during autumn.

[Week 1](#) of 'Autumn Diaries' focused on our coast and marine parks and includes alternative ways to nature journal for those people who don't live by the coast.

Following weeks will explore birds, trees and colour, fungi and leaf litter, animal tracks and traces and the behaviour of large animals.

Share photos of your journal pages by emailing parks@sa.gov.au or tag your Instagram pics with **#AutumnDiaries2020** - prizes are up for grabs for the best ones!

Get your copy of 'Autumn Diaries' [here](#).



Burn, baby, burn...

While for a lot of us our life has changed and we are spending most of our time at home, it's business as usual for DEW's Fire Management team. The autumn prescribed burning program is in full swing, and prescribed burns have so far taken place in many of SA's parks; including Belair National Park, Cleland Conservation Park, Anstey Hill Recreation Park, Sturt Gorge Recreation Park, Coffin Bay National Park and Ngarkat Conservation Park, with still many proposed burns yet to take place.



But what is prescribed burning and why do we do it?

Prescribed burning is the controlled application of fire to a particular area of landscape. The aim is to strategically reduce fire fuel hazards in areas of parks and reserves.

Reducing fuel hazards is important because it can make bushfires easier to control, help prevent a bushfire spreading to residential areas, and ultimately save lives and property.

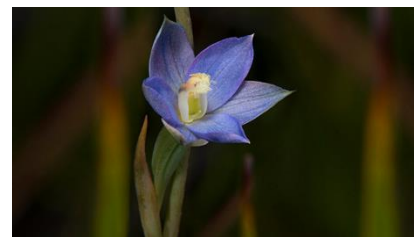
Prescribed burning is also used for ecological reasons, such as:

- the protection and maintenance of animal habitats
- regeneration of plant species and communities that are reliant on fire and
- improved biodiversity within parks and reserves.

Generally, prescribed burning takes place in autumn and spring, and only on certain days when conditions are suitable. The right combination of fuel load, fuel moisture, temperature, relative humidity and wind speed is needed for a prescribed burn to be conducted safely and effectively.

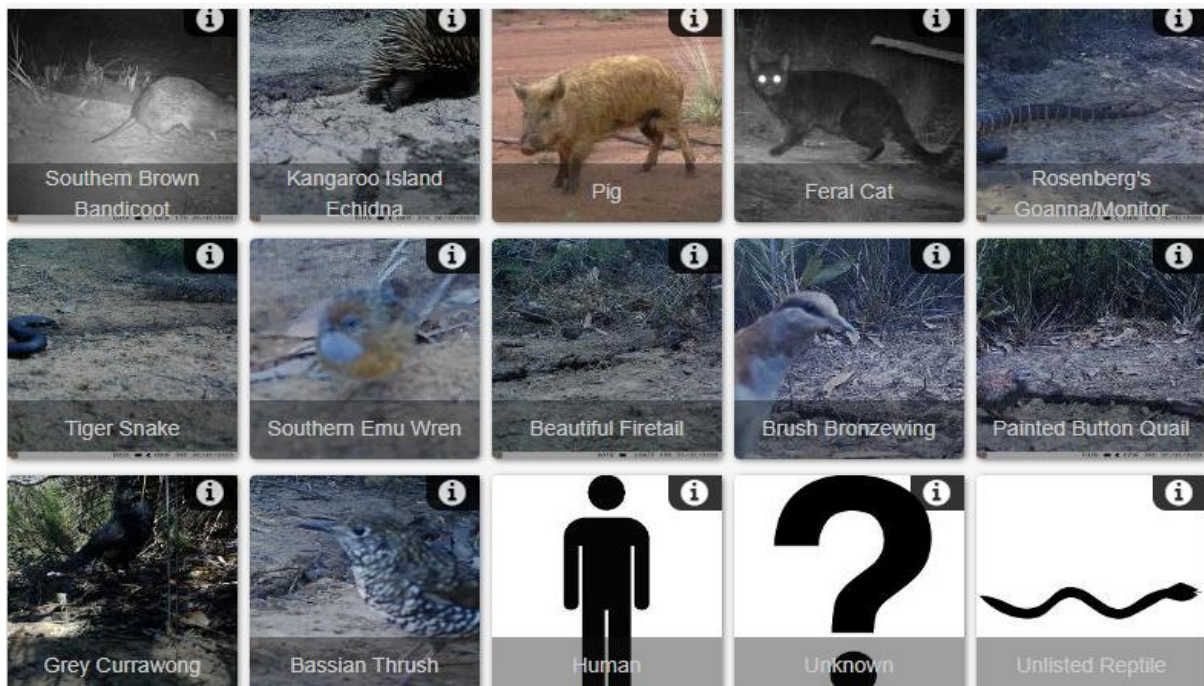
Find out when and where the department's prescribed burns are happening [here](#).

Also, check out [this good news story](#) about how a carefully planned prescribed burn has brought the Naked Sun-orchid *Thelymitra circumsepta*, back from the brink of extinction.



Help with KI Fire Recovery Efforts

DEW science and conservation staff have adopted two new digital tools to support bushfire recovery on Kangaroo Island. Learn how to become a citizen scientist and help contribute to the bushfire recovery efforts.



In response to the summer bushfires, the CSIRO launched the Citizen Science Bushfire Recovery Project Finder website – a collaboration between CSIRO, the Citizen Science Association of Australia (ACSA) and Atlas of Living Australia, which allows members of the public to contribute to recovery projects ranging from air quality, to identifying and confirming animal and plant sightings; all while maintaining safe social distancing practices.

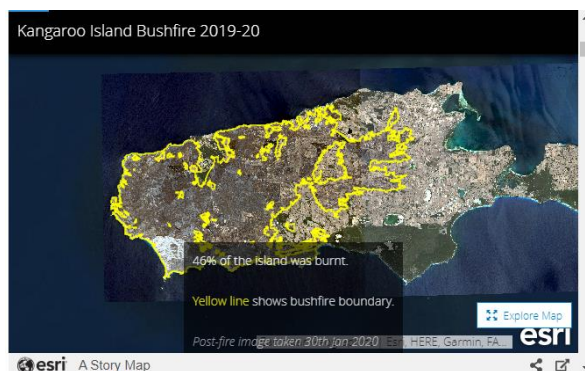
DEW is using the ['Wildlife Spotter' tool](#) to engage interested community members (particularly citizen scientists) to help ID wildlife in over 15,000 photos taken by 70 cameras deployed in parks on Kangaroo Island.

The photos form part of the department's *KI Dunnart Survey Project*, which is helping the bushfire recovery effort by recording how many native and feral species pass monitoring sites within the remaining unburnt patches of native vegetation. This data will help us to understand surviving populations, assist with feral predator control and inform recovery actions for species of concern like the Kangaroo Island Dunnart, Little Pygmy Possum and Southern Brown Bandicoot.

This is one way for the public to have a real impact on bushfire recovery efforts and contribute to traditional science efforts - with your help researchers can better understand the impact of the fire on our biodiversity and ecosystems.



With 70 cameras deployed across Kangaroo Island's parks to date, there are thousands of photos which need verifying by people on an ongoing basis. With this assistance researchers are able to focus their efforts in the field on maintaining feral cat control measures and searching other areas of remnant habitat.

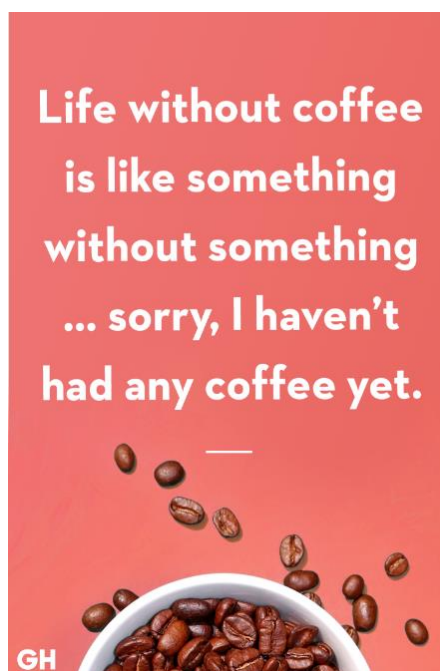


Anyone can help with ID-ing Kangaroo Island wildlife photos by creating a free account on the [Atlas of Living Australia](#) website.

In addition to the wildlife identification tool, a new visual storytelling online map [ArcGIS StoryMaps tool](#) has been developed to combine photos, mapping and text that tells an interactive parks and wildlife Kangaroo Island bushfire recovery story.

Check it all out on the [NPWSSA bushfire recovery webpage](#).

You know what they say...



Technology Tips & Tricks

This edition we bring you a few general productivity and typing tips:

- ❖ **Bring back a closed tab** - Accidentally closed a tab? Simply press Ctrl + Shift + T to reopen the most recently closed tab and get back to what you were doing (Cmd + Shift + T on Macs).
- ❖ **Undo everywhere to fix those little mistakes** - Did you know you can undo almost any action? Ctrl + Z is the ultimate hot key, however note that undo doesn't just apply to typing. If you accidentally delete or move a file, you can hit Ctrl + Z to bring it right back to where it was (Ctrl + Y will redo whatever you undid).
- ❖ **Delete an entire word Instead of deleting a single letter** - pressing Ctrl + Backspace will delete the entire word behind the cursor. This makes deleting text quicker if you muck up a whole word.
- ❖ **Move cursor to beginning of the next or previous word** - Moving the cursor around manually while typing is a great way to make your work take longer than it needs to. To speed up the process, move the cursor around with keyboard shortcuts. To move it to the beginning of the previous word, use Ctrl + Left Arrow. To move it to the beginning of the next word, use Ctrl + Right Arrow. In macOS you can accomplish the same using the Option key. To select words/paragraphs as you're going, hold Shift + Ctrl + Arrow (up or down will select entire bodies of text).

You're welcome 😊

Just a bit of Fun



Soul Food

Home is where the heart is and a good feed can make all the difference to your health and wellbeing. Here is a one pot perfect for these cooler nights, either at home or away camping.

One-pot Balsamic Tomato & Mushroom Chicken

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

8 x 125g chicken thigh cutlets (or chicken thigh fillets for a quicker cook)

4 flat mushroom (320g), sliced

2 cloves garlic, sliced

8 sprigs fresh thyme or pinch dried thyme

250g fresh cherry tomatoes (or 400g can of cherry tomatoes)

1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

Crusty bread, to serve



1. Heat oil in a large, heavy-based frying pan or camp oven over high heat. Season chicken; cook, in 2 batches, for 2 minutes on each side or until browned. Transfer to a bowl or plate.

2. Reduce heat to medium. Cook mushrooms, garlic and thyme, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until browned. Add tomatoes, cook, stirring, for 1 minute; season. Return chicken to pan; cook, covered, for 15 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.

3. Drizzle chicken with vinegar; serve with bread.

Serving suggestion: serve with barbecued corn or a green salad. If camping, serve with potatoes cooked in the coals instead of bread. *Enjoy*

Upcoming Activities & Initiatives

Have 'Your Say' – Volunteering Strategy for SA: Beyond 2020

Your help is needed to determine how best to promote and sustain volunteering in South Australia.

A second strategy to support and enhance volunteering in SA is being developed. The strategy aims to create the best volunteering experience for everybody. It will be guided by feedback provided by the volunteering sector, volunteers and members of the community. There are two surveys on '[Your Say](#)', one for organisations and one for community members (YOU!). The information compiled will feed into the strategy. So if you want 'your say' in the strategy, head over to complete the survey!

At a loose end?

Have nothing to do now that your usual volunteer activities are on pause?

Volunteering SA/NT are taking registrations from those interested in spontaneous pandemic volunteering opportunities and referring them to appropriate community service organisations. Some organisations may need volunteers to assist with support activities for vulnerable people, including transportation and delivering supplies, well-being checks, call centre support, administration or computing tasks.

After registering, you will only be contacted if/when there is a suitable volunteer activity for you to undertake during this emergency. Express your interest [here](#).

There are also still plenty of **environmental volunteering options** that can be done online. Check these out:

FrogID is a national citizen science project that is helping the Australian Museum learn more about what is happening to Australia's frogs. People can get involved in Frog ID count and help save Australia's frogs by downloading the Frog ID app and start to find and record frog calls in their area.

TurtleSAT is a project that gathers important evidence on Australia's freshwater turtles so there can be appropriate safeguards out in place to protect turtles into the future. People can get involved by recording and mapping their observations and submitting the information to TurtleSAT.

BioCollect is an advanced, but simple-to-use data collection tool for biodiversity science that was developed by the Atlas of Living Australia. Here you can search for citizen science projects that you can help with from your own home. Some projects that may be of interest are:

- ❖ **Camera trap digitisation – Bushfire Recovery Projects:** join global volunteers to classify species in camera trap images
- ❖ **Butterflies Australia:** Collect butterfly sightings records -
- ❖ **Wildlife Spotter:** Become a wildlife spotter citizen scientist and assist researchers by looking for animals in wilderness photos taken by automated cameras around Australia

Check out this FREE upcoming online workshop from KESAB:



Learn how to make your own beeswax wraps

Making beeswax wraps

Wednesday 6 May | 12:30-1:30 pm

Want to learn how to make your own reusable beeswax wraps at home? Join KESAB's live-streamed step-by-step tutorial. Register [here](#).

Starting a garden in Adelaide?

Are you a complete beginner when it comes to gardening? Or perhaps a seasoned professional? Either way, download this nifty free eBook '[Starting a Garden in Adelaide](#)', produced by permaculture practitioner Nadja Osterstock. Did I mention it is FREE?

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@sa.gov.au or 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](#)