

2025 Friends of Parks and Nature Award finalists

Nature Foundation Habitat Restoration and Protection Award

GOLD AWARD - Friends of Brownhill Creek



Received by Diane Mather and Jasmin Packer. Presented by Jem Shimmield, Senior Conservation Land Manager, and Kelsey Bennet, Conservation Land Manager, Nature Foundation

Title: Bandi Bushcare: Habitat Restoration and Protection in Wirraparinga-Brownhill Creek

The Bandi Bushcare project, led by Friends of Brownhill Creek members Dr Jasmin Packer and Dr Rosslyn (Rossi) von der Borch, creates and nurtures a diverse community of volunteers that work to protect and extend habitat for the endangered southern brown bandicoot (marti) in the Brownhill Creek Recreation Park. The project combines scientific research with hands-on habitat restoration, including targeted weed removal and native species regeneration across four priority zones. Volunteers, known as the Bandi Bunch, work weekly in the park, mapping biodiversity and trialling innovative bush care methods aligned with regional recovery plans. The initiative fosters community engagement through events, partnerships with Kaurna elders and local organisations, and creative outreach like wildlife ambassador bandanas for dogs. As a “living lab,” Bandi Bushcare not only restores ecosystems but also builds a vibrant, skilled volunteer community dedicated to caring for nature.

SILVER AWARD - Friends of Kenneth Stirling Conservation Park



Received by David Jarvis. Presented by Duncan MacKenzie, President, Friends of Parks and Nature Inc.

Title: Kenneth Stirling weed management and bush regeneration

For just under 30 years, the Friends of Kenneth Stirling Conservation Park have dedicated their time to conserve the native vegetation in the Kenneth Stirling Conservation Park. Their efforts focus on bush care and weed management, including manual removal, targeted spraying, and monitoring of invasive species, which has significantly improved the ecological integrity of the park. Operating in challenging terrain and conditions, the group also contributes to vegetation mapping and track maintenance. Their work has enhanced habitat resilience, protected rare and threatened species such as *Veronica derwentiana* ssp. *homalodonta* and *Gastrodia sesamoides* (potato orchid), and aligned with regional biodiversity and land management goals. Their dedication, ecological knowledge, and practical on ground work have delivered continuing benefits to both the environment and the community.

Green Adelaide Wildlife Protection and Recovery Award**GOLD AWARD - Friends of Bool and Hacks Lagoons**

Received by Bradley Clarke-Wood. Presented by Adrian Skull, Board Member, Green Adelaide

Title: A birds-eye view of wetland connectivity across a drying region: a case study of magpie Goose/Pat-om movements around the Limestone Coast

This project lead by Friends of Bool and Hacks Lagoons is a collaborative, data-driven effort that combines science, community, and culture to protect a threatened species and its ecosystem. The project is vital for preserving the threatened Pat-om (*Anseranas semipalmata*) and the biodiversity of South Australia's Limestone Coast. The project focuses on mapping the bird's flight paths between fragmented wetlands, offering insights into ecosystem services such as nutrient dispersal and the role of refugia during dry periods. This data is essential for informing habitat restoration and management strategies for the species, making it a key conservation effort. A distinctive element of this project is its partnership with the Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation, integrating Indigenous knowledge into the conservation of a culturally significant species. The project will directly influence conservation strategies by revealing critical wetland habitats used by Pat-om, ensuring effective management.

SILVER AWARD - Friends of Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park

Received by Stuart Paul, Director, Park Operations and Community Partnerships on behalf of Friends of Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park. Presented by Duncan MacKenzie, President, Friends of Parks and Nature Inc.

Title: Monitoring and translocating the Flinders Ranges Gudgeon

The Friends of Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park group has played a vital role in conserving the endangered Flinders Ranges Gudgeon (*Mogurnda clivicola*) through sustained monitoring and translocation efforts. Since 2017, members have conducted biannual week-long expeditions to three springs in and around Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park, collecting water samples, assessing habitat quality, and tracking fish populations. In 2025 we were part of the monitoring expedition that captured more than 1300 fish at the translocated sites, which demonstrated a successful translocation. The group's research has helped define the species' ecological needs, supported park management planning, and resulted in four peer-reviewed publications, demonstrating the tangible impact of their volunteer efforts.

Adelaide Airport Limited Community Engagement Award**GOLD AWARD - Walking SA**

Received by Rod Quintrell. Presented by Andrew Winkler, Friends of Patawalonga Creek, on behalf of Adelaide Airport Ltd.

Title: Educating South Australians on our world class walkable state

Walking SA, now in its 33rd year, are dedicated to promoting and supporting all forms of walking across South Australia through a number of channels. With a comprehensive State Trails Database featuring over 800 walks, a monthly newsletter reaching 5,500 subscribers, and active social media engagement with over 36,000 followers, the organisation educates and inspires people to explore nature and improve their wellbeing. It manages 18 walking clubs, runs events like WalkFest, and delivers bushwalking skills training in partnership with NPWS. Through advocacy, education, and collaboration with stakeholders, Walking SA helps shape trail design, policy, and environmental stewardship, all supported by a part-time staff member and nearly 40 volunteers across multiple committees and programs.

SILVER AWARD - Friends of Black Hill and Morialta Parks

Received by John Fleming and Robert Brooks. Presented by Duncan MacKenzie, President, Friends of Parks and Nature Inc.

Title: Improving biodiversity and community support

The Friends of Black Hill and Morialta are a dedicated volunteer group that have transformed degraded landscapes across Black Hill, Morialta, and Horsnell Gully Conservation Parks into thriving native habitats through community-led conservation. Their sustained efforts in weed control, habitat restoration, and biodiversity conservation, not only improve ecological health but also foster strong community connection, while building and strengthening connections between people and place. They have consistently involved school groups, corporate teams, and local businesses, offering opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to contribute directly to on-ground conservation. Through hands-on experiences such as weed control, native plantings, and guided bushcare, participants develop a sense of responsibility, and connection to the land. Their programs inspire volunteers and community members to understand and value the unique biodiversity within Adelaide's hills face zone. Initiatives like the "Free a Tree" campaign in Ambers Gully offer accessible and empowering ways for the public to make a tangible impact, while their engaging and informative website serves as both a volunteer hub and an educational resource.

ElectraNet Innovation Award**GOLD AWARD - Friends of the Heysen Trail and other Walking Trails Inc.**

Received by Peter Clark. Presented by Colleen Luck, Manager of Sustainability, ElectraNet

Title: Installation of rainwater tank telemetry

The Friends of the Heysen Trail have significantly enhanced hiker safety and water accessibility along the remote northern section of the 1200km Heysen Trail by installing telemetry systems on rainwater tanks. In a region increasingly affected by prolonged droughts, accurate and timely data on water availability is crucial. Historically reliant on sporadic hiker reports, the new system remotely measures and transmits tank levels, updating the Friends' website daily. Thanks to the Friends of Parks and Nature Grant, 15 additional tanks were fitted with telemetry in 2025, enabling hikers to better plan their water collection points and ensuring safer, more informed journeys through South Australia's arid landscapes.

National Parks and Wildlife SA Cultural and Structural Heritage Award**GOLD AWARD - Friends of Old Government House**

Received by Wayne and Tina Gallasch. Presented by Stuart Paul, Director, Park Operations and Community Partnerships

Title: Gardening group and heritage group

Friends of Old Government House, established in 1983, have played a vital role in preserving the structural heritage of Old Government House through dedicated volunteer efforts. Evolving from limited beginnings in the Servants' Quarters, the group now actively maintains the historic house and gardens, hosts regular open days and events, including events for History Month. Their work includes significant property improvements such as overseeing the expansion of the Coach House, kitchen upgrades, installing a new toilet block, and garden enhancements like a Rose Arch and restored an old well (originally dug in the 1960's). After receiving advice from architect Ian Hamilton, the group has purchased two portable temperature and humidity data loggers to better understand how the temperature and humidity can be better managed, especially in winter. With growing visitor numbers, especially during History Month, the group continues to expand its offerings, including community celebrations, showcasing their deep commitment to heritage conservation and public engagement.