



Bandicoot Tails

Newsletter of the Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park

No. 177

December 2019 – February 2020

Website: www.friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/friendsofscottcreekcp

Welcome to your bumper summer edition of *Bandicoot Tails*, here's hoping for more moderate weather and, perhaps, some rainfall this season. A reminder that we will be starting our regular scheduled working bees half an hour earlier during summer, meeting at the Almanda car park at 8.30am. Please let the leader know if you will be late and want to meet at the work site, in case there is a late change of location.

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

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The President's words:

Another year has come and gone, and we held our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 12th November at the Cherry Gardens CFS station. After the brief formalities, Peter Hunt provided us with a wealth of information and a slide show concerning land snails and slugs of Australia, with more detail provided about those that occur in SA and Scott Creek CP in particular. See a brief summary about the talk on page 4 later in this newsletter. I have included my 2019 President's report below, which was tabled at the AGM.

A couple of updates before that.

At the AGM, Jim handed over a letter from Jason Irving, Manager, National Parks Strategy and Policy, which had just been received in the mail. The letter was to formally advise us of the proposal to proclaim the addition of the Mackereth Cottage parcel of SA Water land to Scott Creek CP under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972.

I guess more recently we had been taking this transfer for granted, based on meetings on site with the Minister for the Environment and Water, David Speirs, and subsequent discussions and emails, but this was the first formal documentation we had received from the Department about it.

If you look at the maps of the Park included in this newsletter, under Working Bees and Contractor report and on the last page after our activity schedule, you will see that our cartographer, Rick Williams, has now included this section in our maps as Working Bee Area 34 – Mackereth Cottage.



Also at the AGM, Lindsay Carthew introduced himself to me. Previously we had only chatted on the phone and exchanged emails. We discussed some of the work funded by the Carthew and Fisher families' Carthew Foundation donation earlier in the year, and the above transfer of the Mackereth Cottage land to the park. Since then Lindsay has deposited the second of three annual \$10,000 donations he undertook to make. This went into the Landcare Australia's Fund Landcare account, for processing and transfer to our account for further work under the Almanda Project. Once again I thank the Carthew and Fisher families for their strong support, and Landcare Australia for enabling the tax deductible donation to take place using their Fund Landcare platform.

President's Report for Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park AGM

12th November 2019

Once again the Friends group had a very busy and productive year, both in the Park, associated admin duties at home, and through a variety of social activities and events. I have provided a summary below:

- Almanda Project – we completed the milestone half-way point of our ten year Almanda Project this year. The Almanda Report 2019 has been completed and is now available on our website for downloading. The report covers details about the fundraising and on-ground work undertaken in the Park for the year, by both contractors and our volunteers. It includes maps of the project areas and many photos, a financial report and a list of supporters. While there is a focus on creekline restoration under the Almanda Project, all other on-ground work managing the Park's vegetation is included. We continue our regular three main working bees each month, with some members also going out separately to undertake specific spraying and other weed control, and the weekly bush gardening at Almanda Creek under the guidance of John Wamsley, which has increased to twice a week and even more frequently, to help combat the winter and spring growth of the many herbaceous weeds that emerge there. The equally quick growing native species regenerating at this focus site for our open days makes the work very rewarding. This year's open day was held in spring for the first time, to provide an opportunity to see some different wildflowers along the walking track.
- Funding – thanks to everyone who chose to support our work in the park by providing funding this year. These include NR AMLR, through Mark Fagan (District Officer) and Kat Hill (Volunteer Support Officer), who continued their support through the three year Scott Creek CP Plan, approved for \$25,000 pa under the NR AMLR Land Management Program (\$20,000 through Sustainable Landscapes and \$5,000 through the Volunteer Support Program); NR AMLR also funded a \$5,000 Community Environment Grant; DEW funded a \$5,000 on-park Volunteer Support Grant; the Adelaide Hills Council approved a \$2,500 Community Development Grant; and we received two \$10,000 donations, one from the Carthew and Fisher families through the Carthew Foundation, and another from a member of the group who prefers to keep their name out of publicity. Both of these were made possible as tax deductible donations thanks to Landcare Australia. We also received a number of smaller donations and proceeds of sales of maps and other publications throughout the year and at our open day.
- Bird Banding – thanks to Don and Jim for coordinating our bird banding program this year. While the birds have not always cooperated with us on these days, we have invariably enjoyed an outing in the Park, with lots of cuppas and good conversation in between banding and taking measurements of those birds that did come our way. We received visits from a number of people over the year, including local and not so local families and birdos. Most of the bird species were our regulars, including various honeyeaters and thornbills, Grey Fantails, White-browed Scrub-Wrens and Superb Fairywrens, a few Grey Shrike-thrush, Golden Whistlers and Scarlet Robins. A couple of less frequent species in the nets were the nationally vulnerable Bassian Thrush, the beautiful Collared Sparrowhawk, and a Laughing Kookaburra that was not laughing.

- Events – in addition to the Almanda open day, we held a clean up the park day in March, with the assistance of the Mt Lofty Rangers 4WD Club, had visits to Laratinga Wetlands in Mount Barker and to the SA Museum to see the Australian Geographic Nature Photographer of the Year exhibition, and regular monthly lunches at local cafes. Jenny represented the group at an SA History Week event at the Longwood Institute, with Donella helping set up, and the group hosted a bushcare workshop at the Scott Creek Hall for private landowners in the area, which we received grant funding to run.
- Mackereth Cottage – we received two visits by David Speirs, Minister for the Environment and Water, regarding the transfer of the SA Water land on the corner of Dorset Vale Road and Matthews Road, and containing the ruins of Mackereth Cottage, to the Park. These visits were arranged by local MP Josh Teague, and the Minister made sure the long-standing issue was resolved, ensuring paperwork was signed and approved by cabinet. The land has been re-surveyed, and we are hopefully very close to the transfer being finalised now, so that we can join the work being done either side of it, along Almanda Creek and Scott Creek.
- Publications – as mentioned at last year’s AGM, stocks of Marie Steiner’s history booklet *Scott Creek from Settlement to Conservation Park* were running low and a reprint was needed. This update has now been completed and new stocks are held. The bird brochure needs some work before an updated version is published, something we hope to arrange in conjunction with our group’s 30th anniversary next year. In the meantime, a small print run of the existing format topped up supplies.
- Volunteer hours – thanks to Jenny for once again compiling our volunteer hours and passing them along to DEW. There was a total 2,951 FoSCCP volunteer hours contributed for the year to 30th June 2019, which adds up to the equivalent of \$123,115.72 using the rate of \$41.72 per hour that DEW value these at. Thanks to all of our volunteers, including those with roles on the committee or who attend our meetings and help run our group’s activities, those who contribute to on-ground work in the park, managing weeds and bird banding, those helping with admin, attending events or simply coming along to social activities. The hours are broken down as follows (we don’t include the social activities):
 - 1,481.5 working bee hours (731 hours for regular working bees plus 577 hours for Wednesday’s Almanda Creek working bees and 173.5 hours additional informal work)
 - 664 hours bird-banding, including data management and net repairs
 - 119.5 hours on park events, including public walk, “Clean Up the Park” event, Minister Speirs’ visits
 - 24 hours at displays outside of the park, including Friends of Nature Forum, Scott Creek PS fair, Longwood Hall history event
 - 647 hours on administration and meetings, including Bandicoot Tails, Facebook and grant writing and acquittals
 - 15 hours on the website and cartography



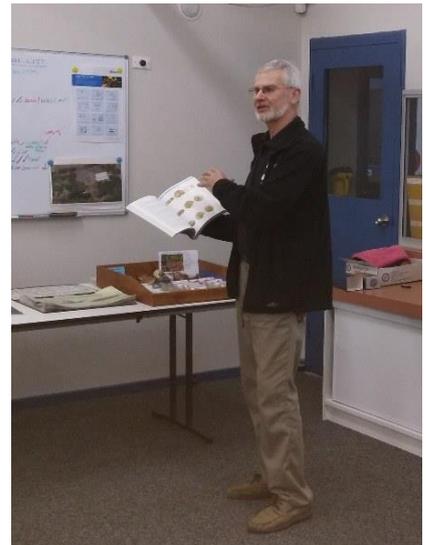
Peter Watton

President FoSCCP

Would you recognise an Australian native snail if you saw one?

Peter Hunt's interesting 2019 AGM talk not only provided some useful tips, but an appreciation for our 125 cryptic species who have a role to play in South Australia's biodiversity – unlike the extensive and costly damage caused by the 14 imported ones to agriculture, horticulture, gardens, etc. along with our 12 slug species, all of which are also non-native! Our native species aren't likely to do any such harm, being restricted to native vegetated areas and eating debris, fungi, etc. Unfortunately they can still suffer from efforts to control the invaders, a particular issue as they are slow territorial expanders.

Peter's knowledge has developed as a long term member of SA's Malacological Society and his voluntary work with Dr Tony Robinson on reviewing the SA Museum's collection of terrestrial snails and slugs. Their findings and many images are included in the recently published "Australian Land Snails Part 2" by Dr John Stanisc (he's known as the 'snail whisperer'!).



Spotting our native South Australian snails can be a challenge, especially as some are very small (as small as a pinhead), although the introduced Giant Panda Snail is the size of a tennis ball! Like all snails they seal themselves away to avoid drying out (aestivation) – so our drier SA state has less species than the wetter parts of Australia (there are 3,000 species altogether in Australia). Like other snails, they are most active at night, but other challenges include being plainer and more likely to be found underneath things (ground cover/debris, rocks, down in the ground, etc.).

It seems they moved to a terrestrial environment after evolving in a marine setting – to which some then returned, while others now live in estuarine, tidal, freshwater and other settings. Peter also explained that the top of the shell is the oldest part and ID photographs need to be taken to show where the head comes out. The points Peter made were well illustrated by his many photos and shell collection.

* Reputable websites may have some helpful photographs. See also

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/snail-whisperer/10213976>

And now we may recognise a welcome discovery when down on our knees removing weeds.

Jenny Dawes



Top right: Peter showing the new publication “Australian Land Snails Part 2” by Dr John Stanisc.

Above: Peter Hunt’s presentation on snails and slugs at the AGM.

Right: Peter discussing his snail collection with our Peter Watton.

Working Bees:

We seemed to have a bit of mixed bag with weather conditions during spring, with some absolutely perfect weather, mixed in with fire bans and a bit of drizzle. Fortunately the fire bans were not on our scheduled working bee days, though they did affect some of the weekday Almanda Creek crew activities.

Leading up to our Almanda Open Day, some additional time was spent helping get the track and area ready, including some Erica control up the eastern side of Almanda Valley. Much of the work in Almanda Creek concentrated on the numerous herbaceous weeds that tend to inhabit these wet areas once the larger woody weeds and Blackberry are removed.

John Wamsley has had the team working tirelessly on introduced grasses as they come into flower later in spring, with the hope that much less seed will fall this year so that there will be less to germinate next year. Like all of our weed control in the Park, if we can break the cycle of new seed production, we can start to reduce our future work.

Some of the working bees were a little light on for numbers, with a few people still away or with clashes with work commitments, but we had close to full numbers at the last of our three scheduled activities for November, with ten coming out to work through a large part of Panhandle south. During the morning we removed some quite large Boneseed, including the Boneseed forest (more of a woodland) that Jenny had found in here some months back. There was also one of the few patches of Gorse we have in the Park, which got despatched.

Another very productive morning was spent up Bandicoot Track from gate 3, where a patch of Montpellier Broom had been bothering Jenny for a while. We got through the patch alongside the track before morning tea, and then headed up to the Crossroads to patrol for the few Broom (both species) and a couple of Gorse. Other areas worked on during spring included Greenhood north, coming in from gate 18, and between Gracilis and North Gracilis Creeks.



Above: I talked Andrew into assuming this pose, made famous by Steve Davey a couple of years ago.

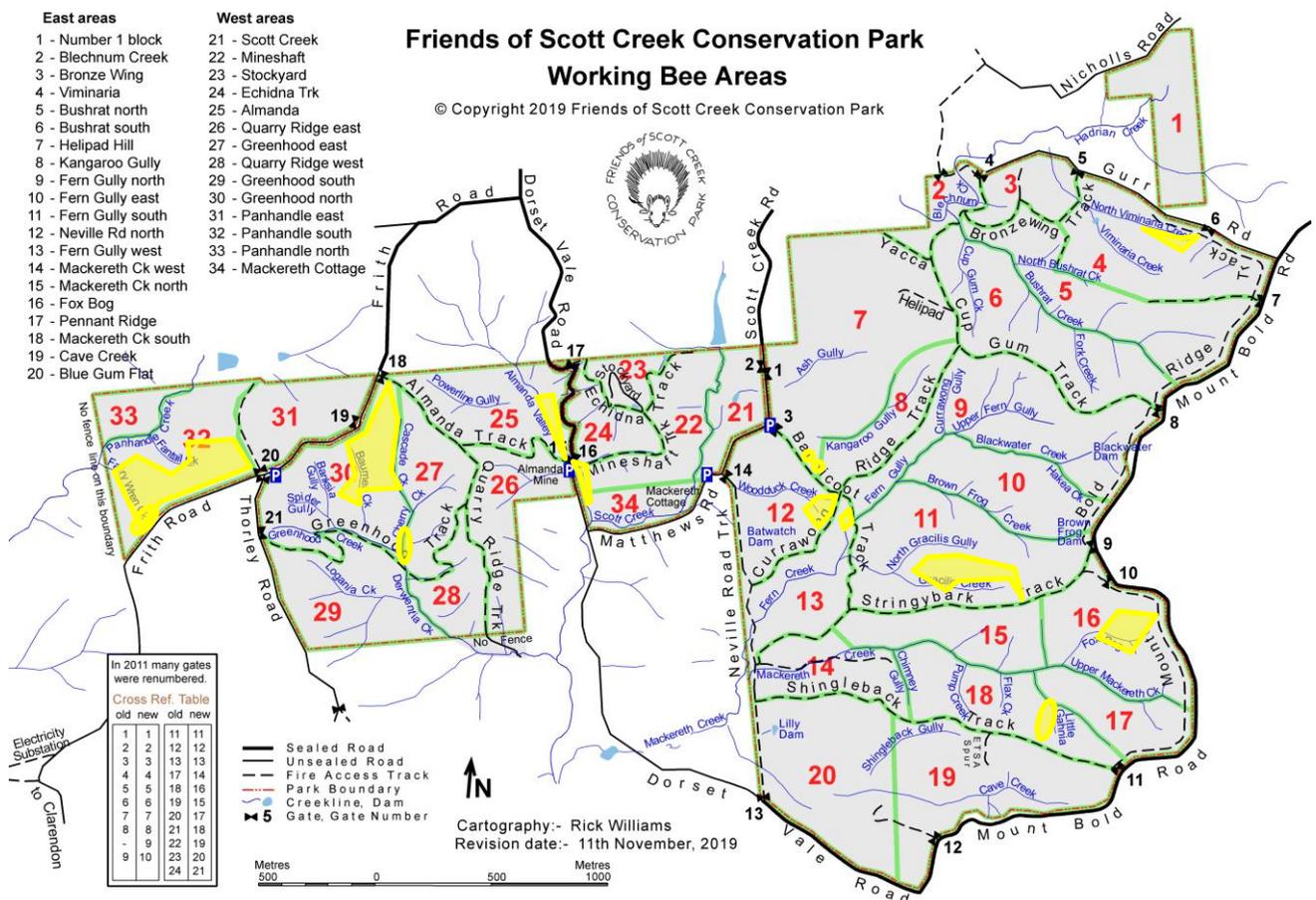


Above: Before and after – a portion of the Montpellier Broom patch off to the side of Bandicoot Track, up from gate 3. We managed to knock the patch off before morning tea, very satisfying.

With the Blackberry in the Park putting on some strong growth, Peter made a start on some of the smaller scale Blackberry spraying, including follow-up of previous areas worked on. This included some spraying next to Bandicoot Track and at the Crossroads, after the working bee in the same area, following up some of the contractor work on the large patches further down the hill towards Fern Creek. This was all before he got to his main target, a patch on the Frith Road fenceline of Panhandle south, close to the abovementioned Boneseed woodland and Gorse patch. This was quite isolated from any other Blackberry, though ended up needing a return visit to finish off, which also enabled some spraying of other woody weeds like Gorse and Rose.



Above: Another before and after – this time part of the Boneseed woodland in Panhandle south, removed in the last Saturday working bee of spring.



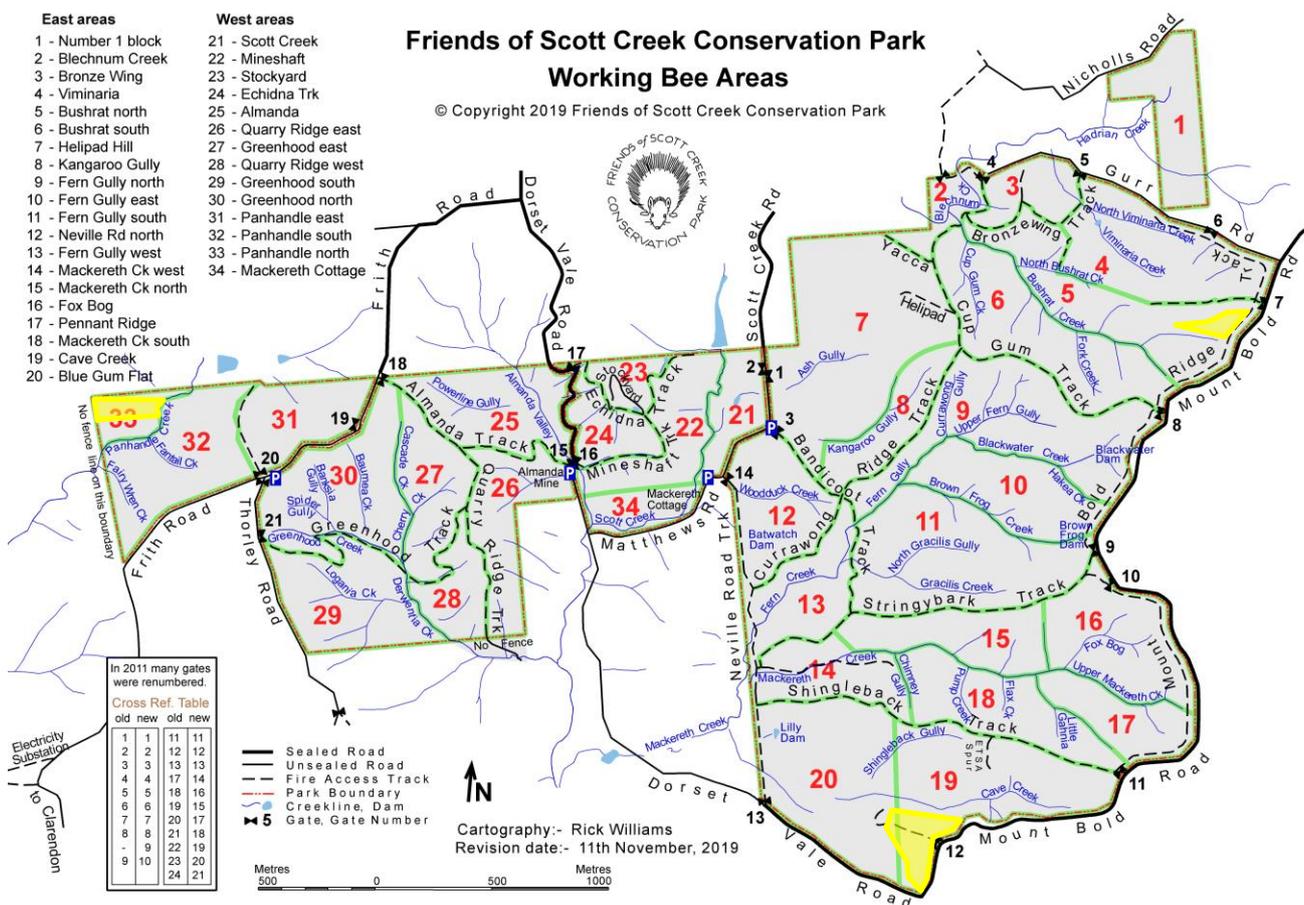
Contractor work being undertaken in the park:

There was a bit of a lull in contractor work in the Park during spring, as budgets were being finalised. This will soon change, as there have already been several visits to work areas with contractors and new work orders issued for the coming months. These will include much of the follow-up of work completed last year, with a particular focus on Blackberry treatment before Christmas where possible. This is to make the most of active growth before the hot, dry summer takes its toll and the Blackberry becomes stressed, which can make herbicide treatment less effective.

Despite this, Better Bushland continued its work on Montpellier Broom follow-up in Panhandle Creek, along with some more Sollya, Blackberry and Erica control further up the western slope. This was part of the three year work plan funded from the Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges (NR AMLR) Land Management Program.

There was some additional funding provided by the NR AMLR for Bridal Creeper control in the region, and part of this was directed to the area around gate 12, west of Cave Creek. This was spread through a reasonably large area and amongst many Yacca (*Xanthorrhoea semiplana*).

The other main work completed in spring was spraying Watsonia and Erica regrowth in the gate 7 site. There was a very large infestation of Watsonia here, with hundreds of young plants growing amongst the larger mature ones. This took up the majority of the time, with only a relatively small amount of the Erica regrowth being spot sprayed at the end. We will have to look at spending some more funding on this to ensure the Erica doesn't get to flowering stage next year. These contracts were completed by TFL Works.



Bird Banding Notes:

It was a mixed three months, with several weather cancellations, but that is winter/spring.

Here are the details of our banding days.

31/8/19 Gate 7 9 birds 6 species 2 retraps

Sunday was rained out.

Both retraps were Buff-rumped Thornbills – a pair, maybe? We caught three of our four resident thornbill species on the day: Striated, Brown and Buff-rumped, but no Yellow-rumped Thornbill. We don't see much of this species any more.

21-22/8/2019 Rained out!

17/9/19 Cave Creek 11 birds 3 species 1 retrap

Jim has begun a banding site at Cave Creek, off Neville Road, in an area slated for a controlled burn, in order to gather data to see if the burn has any effects, short or long-term, on the bird population. On this day, New Holland Honeyeater, with 7 birds, then Superb Fairy-wren with 3 and a solitary Yellow-faced Honeyeater, made up the catch. The solitary retrap was a New Holland Honeyeater, originally banded at Mackereth Creek, about 800 metres northwest. Not far for a NHHE.



5-6/10/19 Rained out!

19-20/10/19 Gate 4 18 birds 8 species 4 retraps

Finally, a full weekend without precipitation. Species caught were those to be expected, and all retraps were originally banded here. We didn't sight any of our White-browed Scrub-wrens, which was unusual.

2-3/11/19 Gate 20 11 birds 4 species 6 retraps

A disappointing number of birds caught from a normally productive site. The thick Paterson's Curse and high grass may have discouraged the smaller birds from flying low and discouraged the Red-browed Finches, which are normally abundant here. We did score a high percentage of retraps, all of which had been banded at this site in the last 2 years.

16-17/11/19 Gate 11 10 birds 5 species 5 retraps

We hadn't visited this area for over a year, our last scheduled visit here being rained out. The low number of captures was disappointing – some of our net sites, usually productive, yielded nothing. There was a marked absence of bird activity, although the weather was great. However, two retraps were of note: 5+ and 6+ Superb Fairy-wrens, both originally banded at this site.

Don Reid

Right: A pair of Golden Whistlers.



DEW Prescribed Burn Program¹:

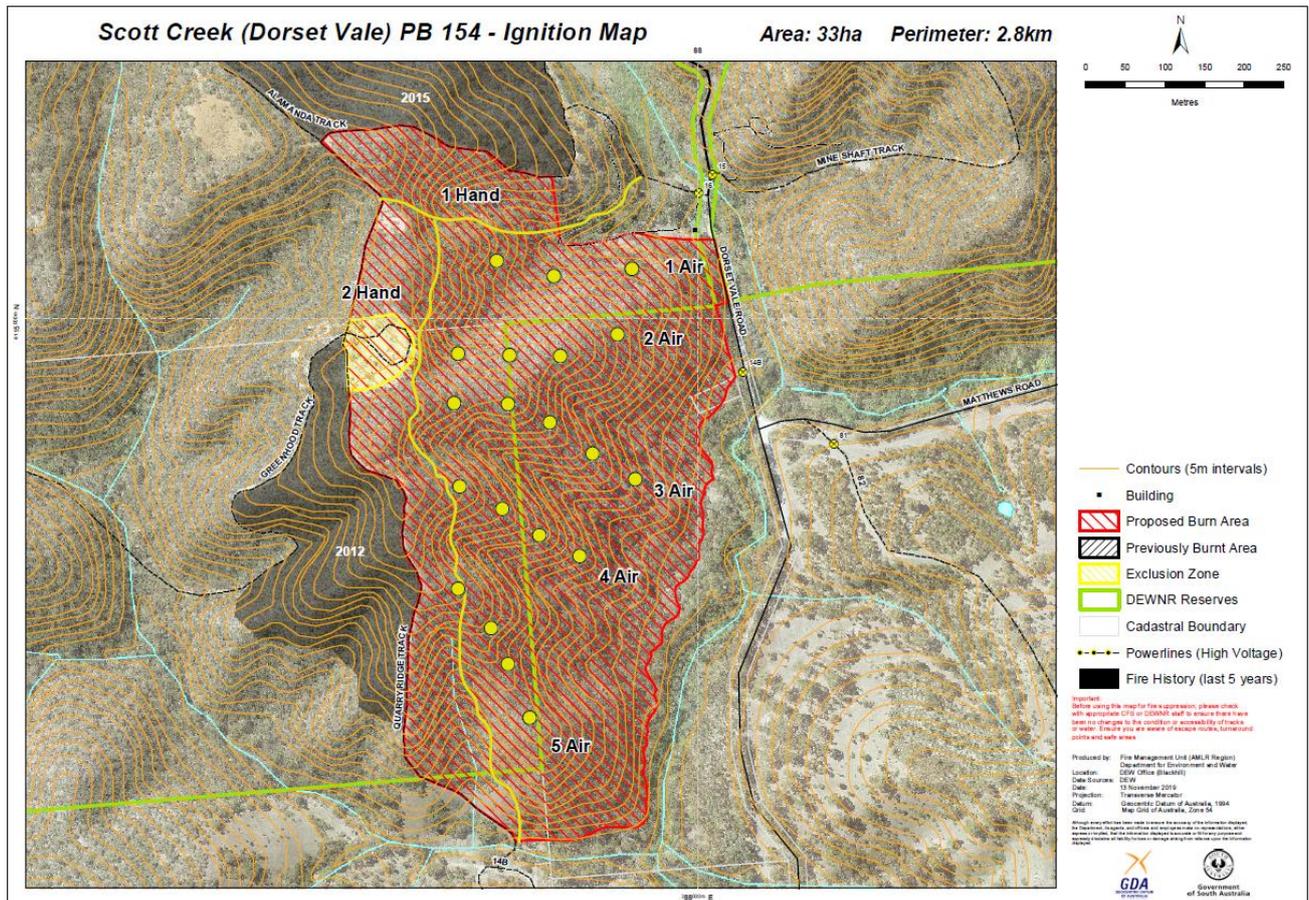


After being advised for the last Bandicoot Tails that the prescribed burn in the area of the Park south of Almada Track and extending further into SA Water land had been postponed until autumn 2020, we found out that it was going ahead in November this year after all. After another couple of false starts due to wet weather, it ended up taking place Sunday 13th around mid-afternoon. I took up an invitation to drop by and see how the burn takes place, and have included a series of photos below to share this with you. Thanks to all the staff involved, from the planning and surveying stage, to the on-ground and airborne staff on the day, and those who came back to ensure it didn't get away during the catastrophic fire danger day that followed three days later.



Above: Hoses laid out along a control line.

Below: DEW map of the prescribed burn.



¹ <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/fire-management/upcoming-prescribed-burns>



Above: Ground crews lay out hoses and connect to the fire hydrant near gate 15.



Above and below: The edges of the prescribed burn area are lit first using drip torches, to ensure the fire remains within the proposed boundaries. This particular burn area remained a bit too damp and green to get an even consistent burn throughout.





Above and below left: Ground crews keep the control lines wet down so that the fire doesn't encroach onto the mown grass area.



Above right: The helicopter getting prepared to light the centre parts of the burn area at the Thorley Road air strip. A large version of the drip torch, which hangs below the helicopter on a cable, is used for this.

Below: The helicopter in action, with a close-up of the flames that can just be seen dripping from below.





Above: The prescribed burn from north along Dorset Vale Road.



Above left: While the helicopter returns to the air strip to reload, ground crew remain inside their vehicles for safety.



Above right: The burn area in SA Water land opposite Matthews Road.



Above: The prescribed burn five days after it took place.

The Miracle of Almanda – part 2:

The last time I wrote about the Almanda Creek restoration I omitted two important things. One involves the idea of a *community* of living organisms as opposed to a *collection* of such, and the other is about the animals we have personally encountered.

My early understanding of the way in which plants are grouped together came from books like R L Specht's 'The Vegetation of South Australia' and the various biological survey reports from different regions or parks within the state.

I found the idea of these groupings (then called 'associations') intriguing, and wondered if they were fixed in place or merely accidental juxtapositions. No explanation was given for their existence, and the same species could form multiple groups. I admit to being cynical about the science at the time, especially when some groups only existed in very limited, one-off areas within a park. I never considered there might be hidden factors which researchers knew nothing about.

John Wamsley takes pains to describe these groupings in a different way, speaking of *communities* in which plants, animals and microorganisms are interdependent in a complex way. When the links are broken, as, for example, when land is cleared, certain plants within the community can no longer grow there. In order to restore the original diversity we must allow natural processes to proceed in the order dictated by a progression, starting with the ruderals (or colonisers) and then, as the soil biota is altered, leading to the complete collection. Whether this is possible in completely degraded areas is something we don't yet know. John says cultivation and fertilising leads to the greatest destruction.

Similarly, we don't know where the tipping points are for wider ecological collapse, and this has drastic implications for the planet.

What has become apparent through our work at Almanda Creek is just how resilient the natural order can be, with almost a new species being added to our list every week during spring, when so many little herbaceous plants are in evidence.

The seed stock is very obviously still present, even after decades of disruption from farming activity, not to mention having a former silver mine operating across the road. Little is known about the viability of native seeds, but logic says that for a species to achieve continuity in Australia's drastically uncertain climatic conditions, the seed must survive for a very long time. This is surely to our advantage in restoration work.

We are still babes in the woods where our knowledge of biological interactions are concerned. Why are there manna gums along Almanda Creek and not red gums? Indeed, Red gums are comparatively rare in the park yet they are the dominant tree over large areas of the hills.

Why do the exotic grasses in the creek valley seem to have a 'tree-line' above which they are reluctant to grow? Are the native plants suppressing the exotics? If we knew we might have a means of helping to control the undesirable species.

John notes, anecdotally, that areas containing Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) seem to have a greater biodiversity than those without this wattle and that when the wattles under the powerlines were cut off at ground level the orchids growing right next to them died.

Similarly, we find native grasses like Weeping Rice-grass (*Microlaena stipoides* var. *stipoides*) surviving beneath Mount Lofty Ground-berry (*Acrotriche fasciculiflora*) while areas around it may be bereft. John believes enough of what the desirable species need (whatever that may be) manages to be present, protected by the Ground-berry.

Other mysteries, like the mechanisms by which plant communities colonise widely separated but similar niches may remain the province of the dim, distant past. One thing is certain, we will never run out of questions.

The other part of Almanda I wanted to mention is the wondrous 'up close and personal' interactions we have had with native animals. Some experiences I have shared but others are strictly one-on-one. The southern

brown bandicoot encounters remains tops for me. These things seem to happen when we least expect it, as if the animals know when we are distracted. I had only caught the most fleeting glimpses of bandicoots on a couple of occasions over the years, but one morning on the east side of the creek one of these animals came within a couple of metres of me without noticing my presence. What I clearly remember is the golden sheen to its fur. I think they could be renamed 'golden' bandicoots rather than 'southern browns'. A few weeks later I again got close to a bandicoot, this time a younger specimen, in grass at the side of the road along Scott Creek.

I can't help wondering how much the species diversity along the creek valley owes its existence to the activities of bandicoots and other animals who open up the soil and spread seed. The more the environment comes to resemble the original habitat, the more amenable it is to animal populations and those populations, in turn, promote their own ideal habitat. Again, our knowledge of such interactions is pitifully limited.

There is something utterly different about encountering an animal in the wild as opposed to seeing it in captivity. I think it is the experience of what I was speaking about before, that is, the way in which everything *fits together*. An animal in its natural setting is more than itself, for it represents a component of something larger.

Chris Thomson and I had a prolonged exposure to a crested shrike-tit preening itself in full view while we studied it. This animal is doubly remarkable for being so uncommon. The sensation for me was of enrichment and privilege. And as for the very shy spotless crane, we know it is there deep in the aquatic vegetation from its little clucking sounds but are yet to see it. The general bird-song in that part of the park is well known to anyone who has visited.

On what I call an experimental hydraulic engineering exercise in Scott Creek, John and I got an uninterrupted view of an eastern water skink. Seeming to emerge from the water by magic, it took no notice of us, being intent on hunting insects at the base of a tree. This was the first time I had seen such an animal. That's something in itself, for I'm sixty eight years of age. You see how special it is, not to mention how beautiful these animals are. Imagine the small skinks you might commonly see, with their elegant markings, but twenty times larger.



Above: An Eastern Water Skink from around the corner in Scott Creek.

Most recently, John inadvertently flushed out a fine specimen of a red-bellied black snake on a plant hunting expedition at Lilly Dam. It slithered into the water and then poked its head up to investigate what had so disturbed its slumber, before giving us a great view of its sinuous swimming habits and finally hiding itself.

No matter your feelings about snakes, this species is quite beautiful. As unlikely as it seems, I hadn't seen a snake in the park before.

The fact that these and many other animals can thrive along Almanda Creek or in other areas of the park is testament to the quality of the natural systems, the *communities* which sustain them and which we have been able to nurture back into a semblance of health.

Without ascribing any anthropomorphic quality to it, there is obviously a profoundly complex and vast ordering principle to the systems within the natural world. My experience is that all questions about meaning cease to matter when we experience this world in its untrammelled state.

Some things are worthwhile for their own sake.

Stephen Davey

Almanda Open Day:

Thanks to our team of dedicated volunteers who organised and attended our fourth Almanda Open Day on Sunday 13th October. This year we decided to hold the event in spring, to make the most of the wildflower display at this time of the year.

We had about 80 people come along and see what we are achieving in our Almanda Project. There was the usual self-guided walk along Almanda Creek, which is a demonstration site for what creekline restoration looks like, and the adjacent Almanda Swamp. John Wamsley talked about the importance of biodiversity and the project, while we had a display with information about the park and the Friends group activities, Scott Creek Primary School provided refreshments and ran a raffle, Warrawong Sanctuary brought along some of their animals to see and hold, and there were nature play activities for the children.



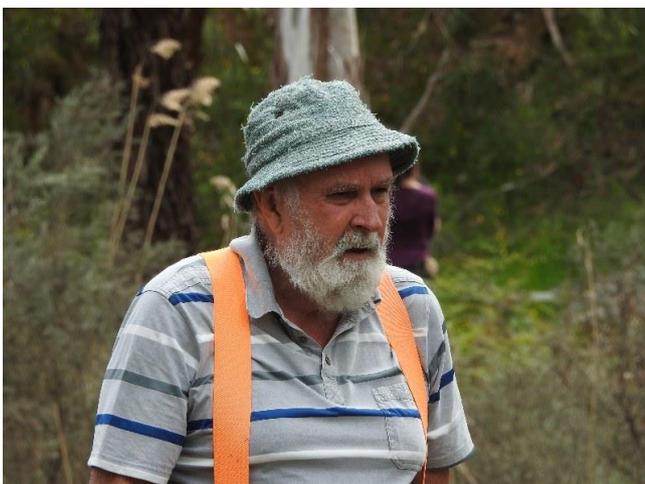
The weather was pretty good, though a bit windy, and there was a little precipitation as we were packing up mid-afternoon. All in all another successful event...and our new banners looked great (thanks to funding from Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges for these).



Above left: Volunteers and visitors with Warrawong 2U.



Above right: The bird banding display.



Above: John Wamsley talks to the visitors about the importance of biodiversity and the restoration of Almanda Creek.



Bush Blocks for Private Landholders workshop:

On Saturday 19th October, the Friends group hosted a workshop at Scott Creek Memorial Hall for private landholders with bushland on their properties. This was funded from part of the 2018-19 Community Environment Grant we received from Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board earlier this year.

Twenty local landholders gathered to listen to Anthony Abley (District Ecologist Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges) and Peter Watton (Bush For Life Operations Manager with Trees For Life (SA) and President of our Friends group), who provided information about the value and importance of natural vegetation growing on their properties and how to manage it.

After an indoor session at the hall, the workshop moved across the road to look at some of the local environmental weeds at the school oval and discuss management techniques and strategies. The importance of looking after what we already have was emphasised by the numerous orchids and other native plants that were growing in this same area.

The workshop was very well received and provided an excellent link between the local community and our group.



Above: Anthony talks to the group about biodiversity and the importance of native vegetation being protected on private properties in SA, **and below:** looking at orchids at the oval.



Above and below: Peter talking to the land holders who attended the workshop about native vegetation management at the school oval across the road from the hall.



Photo Gallery:

A display of spring-flowering blue flowers in the Park.



Top to bottom, left to right: Blue Pincushion (*Brunonia australis*), Blue-spike Milkwort (*Comesperma calymega*), Hand-flower (*Cheiranthra alternifolia*), Twining Fringe-lily (*Thysanotus patersonii*), Long Purple-flower (*Patersonia occidentalis*), Totem-poles (*Melaleuca decussata*), Common Vanilla-lily (*Arthropodium strictum*).

Calendar of Environmental Events coming up:

Wednesday 11th December is International Mountain Day

The International Mountain Day has its roots in 1992, when the adoption of Chapter 13 of Agenda 21 “Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development” at the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

and Development put a milestone in the history of mountain development. The increasing attention to the importance of mountains led the UN General Assembly to declare 2002 the UN International Year of Mountains. On this occasion, the UN General Assembly has designated 11 December, from 2003 onwards, as “International Mountain Day”. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the coordinating agency for the preparation and animation of this celebration (IMD) and is mandated to lead observance of it at the global level. The Water and Mountains Team of the FAO Forestry Department is responsible for coordinating this international process.²

‘Mountains matter for Youth’ is the theme of this year’s International Mountain Day, which is celebrated on 11 December.

Young people are active agents of change and the future leaders of tomorrow. They are custodians of mountains and of their natural resources, which are being threatened by climate change.

The 2019 International Mountain Day’s theme is a great opportunity for young generations to take the lead and request that mountains and mountain peoples become central in the national and international development agendas, receive more attention, investments and tailored research.

The day will also be an occasion to educate children about the role that mountains play in supporting billions up and downstream – by providing freshwater, clean energy, food and recreation.

International Mountain Day is a chance to highlight that for rural youth, living in the mountains can be hard. Many young people leave in search of a better life and employment. Migration from mountains leads to abandoned agriculture, land degradation and a loss of cultural values and ancient traditions. Education and training, market access, diverse employment opportunities and good public services can ensure a brighter future for young people in the mountains.³

Sunday 2nd February is World Wetlands Day

World Wetlands Day is celebrated internationally each year on 2 February. It marks the anniversary of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971.



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Energy

World Wetlands Day was first celebrated in 1997. Since then government agencies, non-government organisations and community groups have celebrated World Wetlands Day by undertaking actions to raise public awareness of wetland values and benefits and promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands. These activities include seminars, nature walks, festivals, announcement of new Ramsar sites, newspaper articles, radio interviews and wetland rehabilitation.⁴



The international theme for World Wetlands Day 2019 is ‘Wetlands and Biodiversity’.

² www.fao.org/international-mountain-day/overview/en/

³ <http://www.fao.org/international-mountain-day/2019-theme/en/>

⁴ <https://www.environment.gov.au/water/wetlands/world-wetlands-day>

Summer Program of Activities December 2019 – February 2020

The Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park welcome visitors to any of our activities, but it is best to contact us beforehand to confirm details. For enquiries or information see contact details at the end of this program or on our website www.friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au.

NOTE: Activities in the park and social events in the Adelaide Hills will be cancelled if a fire ban or severe weather warning/thunderstorms are 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 next page.

Working bees: during summer meet at the earlier time of 8.30am, Almanda Mine Car Park, Dorset Vale Rd

This enables everyone to sign in and be brought up-to-date with last minute changes. BYO morning tea and a small back pack to carry it, in case we are working further from the cars.

There are also some regular mid-week bush gardening activities at Almanda Creek and bird banding in a couple of special project sites in the park, contact our Administration Assistant for details.

| Month | Date | Activity | Location |
|------------------|--------|---|---|
| DECEMBER | | | |
| Saturday, Sunday | 30, 1 | Bird banding | Scott Creek, Mackereth Cottage car park, 6.00am |
| Tuesday | 3 | Working bee | Gate 20 Area 33 Sollya, woody weeds |
| Friday | 6 | General mtg followed by the FoSCCP Christmas get-together All Welcome! | At Butler's residence, 5 Trevelyan Court, Coromandel Valley. General meeting at 5.30pm followed by Christmas get-together 6.00pm start. BBQ available, BYO meat, drinks, chairs and a salad/ sweets to share. |
| Sunday | 8 | Working bee | Gate 1 Area 7 south Sollya, Erica |
| Saturday, Sunday | 14, 15 | Bird banding | Gate 9 Upper Fox Bog, 6.00am |
| Saturday | 28 | Working bee | Gate 7 Area 4 (central & east) Viminaria Creek, regenerating Erica |
| JANUARY | | | |
| Saturday, Sunday | 4, 5 | Bird banding | Gate 7 Upper Bushrat Creek, 6.00am |
| Tuesday | 7 | Working bee | Gate 4 Area 2 (NW), woody weeds |
| Sunday | 12 | Working bee | Gate 3 Area 9 (north central) PW's Erica patch |
| Saturday, Sunday | 18, 19 | Bird banding | Gate 13 Mackereth Creek, Twisted Chimney Track, 6.00am |
| Tuesday | 21 | Social Lunch All welcome! | The Artisan – Blackwood at noon (down lane beside Bendigo Bank) |
| Saturday | 25 | Working bee | Gate 13 Area 14 Twisted Chimney Track's north slope, regenerating Erica & Boneseed |
| FEBRUARY | | | |
| Saturday, Sunday | 1, 2 | Bird banding | Gate 20 Frith Rd, 6.00am |
| Tuesday | 4 | Working bee | Gate 21 Area 27 west of Cherry Creek, woody weeds |
| Sunday | 9 | Working bee | Gate 21 Areas 29-28 (lower Derwentia Creek), woody weeds |
| Tuesday | 11 | General mtg All welcome! | Cherry Gardens CFS, 294 Cherry Gardens Rd, 7.30pm |
| Saturday, Sunday | 15, 16 | Bird banding | Gate 21 Thorley Rd, Derwentia, 6.30am |
| Wednesday | 19 | Social Lunch All welcome! | Fred's – Aldgate at noon (220 Mt Barker Rd) |
| Saturday | 22 | Working bee | Mackereth Cottage carpark, Scott Creek north-east bank, regenerating Broom |

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

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

Office bearers: Any queries on Friends activities, please contact your office bearers, general queries to info@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

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Vice President & Correspondence Secretary: Jim Spiker (M) 0430 247 705, Email: secretary@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

Treasurer & Minute Secretary: Donella Peters, (H) 8339 5639 (M) 0407 417 247, 10 Boomerang Cres, Aldgate, 5154. Email: treasurer@friendsofscottcreekcp.org.au

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Bird Banding Coordinator: Don Reid (H) 8388 2123 (M) 0488 174 992, Email: dre00249@bigpond.net.au and Jim Spiker (contact details above)

Working Bees: Peter Watton (contact details above), Jenny Dawes (contact details above), Glenn Giles (M) 0413 615 514, Email: gilesgd81@gmail.com & John Wamsley - *Almanda Creek mid-week activities* - (M) 0407 716 074, Email: john@johnwamsley.com

