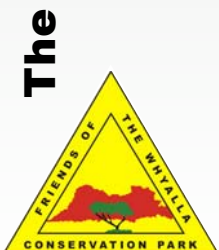




News letter of the
 Friends Of Whyalla Conservation Park
 PO Box 805 WHYALLA SA 5600
 Volunteers Working For Conservation

The Myall Post



August 2004



President's Message

This week's rains have been most welcome, as the drought was really beginning to have a major effect on the plants of the park. If we should have a little more rain between now and the Father's Day Walk in early September, then we should see a better range of species in flower.

While doing the planning walk in the False Bay area, I found a number of Aboriginal campsites. The first issue that intrigued me about these sites was where did these people get the water that they needed for daily living? The World Health Organisation says that the absolute minimum needed per person per day is 5 litres. This amount rises to 20 litres per day if washing and cleaning needs are included.

My eyes could see no place where fresh water was available anywhere close to these campsites. The Mallee scrub on the red sand appears to be waterless, even when you dig down a metre. The Tea-tree scrub on the white sand dunes offers little better chance of finding water. Maybe they dug a soak on the clay flat between the two dune systems and obtained their water there. We will never know.

The campsites also had flakings from the making of stone tools. Some of the flakings were of stone that can only come from the Middleback Ranges 50 km away. This is a long way to carry a piece of rock. I know what it takes to make a blade from such material and it is difficult.

I was impressed by the skill of those local Aboriginal people, who were able to live successfully in a very difficult environment. They knew about the natural limits of the environment and worked within them. Maybe our society could learn something from their approach!

Clint Garrett

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Bev and Rodney Dunham, Yvonne Ward and Ella Smith physically remove Carrion Flower at the July working bee from a very large recently discovered infestation.

Important Dates

Make sure that these dates are entered into your diary!

Working Bee
Saturday 14th August @ 9:00am
Wild Dog Hill

Committee Meeting
Thursday 26th August @ 7:30pm
267 Landrace Rd

Father's Day Walk
Sunday 5th September @ 2:00pm
False Bay
(see separate article)

Working Bee
Saturday 11th September @ 9:00am
Wild Dog Hill

A handy fridge-magnet calendar will be distributed with the next newsletter - be on the lookout!

Bin Roster

The following individuals or families have volunteered to empty the bins and check the Park on the weekends beginning:

August 6th - Johnson

August 13th - Prenzel

August 20th - Prenzel

August 27th - Garrett

September 4th - Poyner-Sharp / Smith

Please remember to wear clothing which will identify you as a Friends member and NPWS volunteer if at all possible. **Don't forget to look out for syringes!**

If you would like to volunteer for the roster, please call Denise Sharp on 8645-4442

Bird Of The Month



Field Guide to the Birds of Australia

Black-Faced Cuckooshrike

This is an easily recognisable bird. Personally I find it's appearance neatly handsome. It is light grey almost all over. The belly is white and the outer wing and tail feathers grade to black. The face is black. On an immature bird the black facial mask is incomplete with only a trace of black starting to develop on a really young bird. Similar looking birds that are sometimes found around Whyalla are the Masked Woodswallow and the Black-faced Woodswallow. However they are much smaller with the Black-faced Cuckooshrike being nearly twice the size, almost as large as a Magpie.

They have a very distinctive undulating flight, which once seen is easily recognisable. Regarded as partly nomadic and partly migratory, it can be found all over Australia. My records indicate that it is present all year in Whyalla. Food consists mostly of a variety of large insects caught by pounce-diving from a suitable perch. Nesting is in spring and summer. A small saucer shaped nest of twigs and bark and bound with cobwebs is built on a horizontal tree fork. They have two or three greenish-olive usually blotched eggs. As expected for their size, hatching and fledging are approx. 3 weeks each.

Ella Smith

2004 Friends Forum

2004 Friends of Parks Forum
22nd, 23rd & 24th October
Clare Valley

This year's forum will be hosted by the Friends of Spring Gully Conservation Park, Friends of Martindale Hall Conservation Park and Friends of Burra Parks.

There are four tours to choose from on Saturday afternoon, and an art exhibition and the conference dinner will be held at Quelltaler Winery at Watervale.

An information pack on the Forum (which includes a registration form) can be obtained from Denise Sharp.

Meeting Report

At the committee meeting on Thursday 22nd July, two guests were present.

- Tracey Murray from the 2nd and 4th Whyalla Scouts was present to report on the project work that the scouts had been undertaking in the Park. Over the last two years, the scouts have been walking through the Park in a grid pattern in the non-summer months looking for rabbit warrens and carrion flower. Rabbit warrens have been tagged with pink marker tape, and carrion flower infestations have been marked with yellow marker tape. The committee expressed it's appreciation of the work that Tracey and the scouts have been undertaking.
- John Charlton from the Eastern Eyre Animal and Plant Control Board also attended the meeting to talk about the upcoming work that the Board and Whyalla City Council will be undertaking to map carrion flower in the region. A Whyalla City Council employee will be using a quad bike to search the broader region (also in a grid pattern) for carrion flower and other pest plants and animals. Details of each discovery will be plotted using a GPS unit.
- The committee also discussed the July working bee and the jobs required for the August working bee.
- A brief discussion was held regarding preliminary planning for the Father's Day walk.
- The calendar of events was explained for the benefit of the committee members who could not attend the meeting when it was drafted.

Working Bees

July

Seven members attended the working bee on July 10th.

Bev Dunham and Yvonne Ward checked on the young myall trees that had been planted at the June working bee and gave them some extra water.

John Barratt touched up the toilet with some paint and sealed a crack in the concrete floor.

David Poyner, Denise Sharp, Ella Smith and Rodney Dunham (and eventually the other three) removed carrion flower from an extremely large infestation that had recently been discovered by scouts performing project work in the Park.

August

At the upcoming working bee next Saturday 14th August, the following jobs are scheduled:

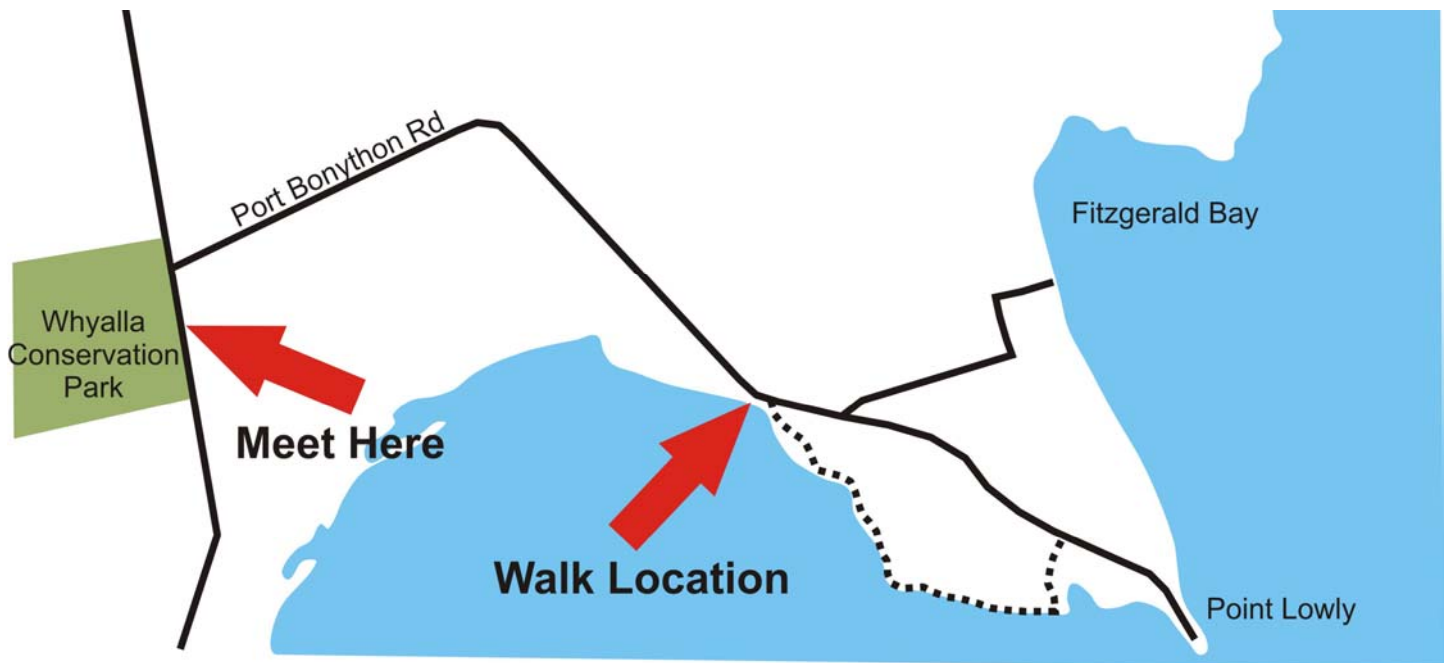
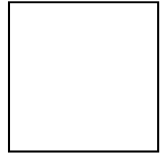
- Check on and water the young myalls
- Repair the fence on the northern boundary
- Place a new spring on the toilet door
- Remove flowers and fruits from plants that remain at the carrion flower infestation
- Check previous infestations for regrowth



The new fence along the western boundary of the new section of the Park. Shown is the self-closing gate at the south-western corner.



Friends of the Whyalla
Conservation Park
PO Box 805
Whyalla SA 5600



Father's Day Walk

Our first public event for 2004/05 will be a guided walk on Father's Day, Sunday September 5th at 2:00pm.

The group's guided walks on Father's Day and Mother's Day are fairly popular. Normally, they are held in the Park, but for a change the committee has decided to explore a vegetation type that does not occur in the Park.

The walk will be held in mallee and dune areas in nearby False Bay, just off the Black Point road.

Further details of the Walk will appear in the next edition of the Myall Post.

Contacts

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