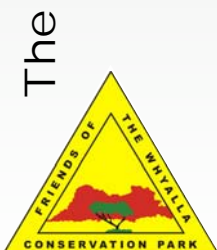




Newletter of the  
 Friends Of Whyalla Conservation Park  
 PO Box 805 WHYALLA SA 5600  
 Web: www.fwcp.org  
 Volunteers Working For Conservation

# The Myall Post



July 2006



## President's Message

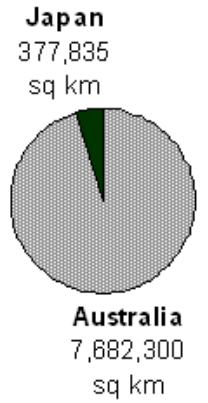
One of the great advantages of my job is that I get to work with exchange students. Over the years, I have had students from most European countries, the Americas, South Africa and Asia. As well as seeing them at school, Marg and I have hosted Japanese students and a teacher. Very few of them are really prepared for the size of our country and the scarcity of people over much of the area.

My most recent Japanese student thought that she would be able to cycle from Whyalla to Sydney while she was here. She thought that here would be a paved and lighted footpath alongside of the highway with rest stops at regular intervals. She knows better now!

In spite of our low population density Australia has one of the worst records of species extinction of any developed country. This could be a consequence of our perception of the size of the country. To some it does not matter if you knock down a hectares of forest here or put up a factory there. Providing what the market demands is seen by some as good. What this approach fails to see is that there are many Australian species that are adapted to living in a few restricted locations. Destroy

a feeding or breeding area and you destroy that species.

Japan by contrast has many people (126 million) in a very small area (*right*). But from the late 17 century onward, forest conservation and replanting as been an important part of government policy. As a result approximately 70% of Japan remains forested and provides habitat for its species.



Does this mean that Japan is a world leader in conservation? Far from it! Japan is able to maintain its environment by importing resources from all over the world. It is exporting habitat and species loss to other countries. Japanese companies would argue that they are only supplying what the market demands.

The message is that we are all part of one global community and what we do as consumers has effects around the globe, whether we are Australians or Japanese.

Clint Garrett



*Unfortunately someone or several people with no social conscience, ethics or morals broke into the Friend's shed at Tanderra prior to the afternoon of Monday 3rd July and helped themselves to a wheelbarrow full of hand tools. See page 3 for more details.*

# Important Dates

Make sure that these dates are entered into your diary!

Committee Meeting  
Saturday 27th July @ 7:30pm  
267 Landrace Rd

**AGM + BBQ**  
**Saturday 29th July @ 4:30pm**  
**Whyalla Yacht Club**  
*Please note changed date!*

**Public Meeting**  
**Greg Johnston**  
**“Conservation In The Wild, In Zoos And Back Again”**  
**Saturday 29th July @ 7:30pm**  
**Whyalla Yacht Club**

*The following dates are assumed given the regular nature of the Friend's calendar, but are not yet confirmed*

Working Bee (provisional)  
Saturday 12th August @ 9:00am  
Wild Dog Hill

Committee Meeting (provisional)  
Thursday 24th August @ 7:30pm  
267 Landrace Rd

# Park Roster

The following individuals or families have volunteered to empty the remaining bin, check the toilet, and check the Park on the weekends beginning Friday:

**July 21st** - Garretts

**July 28th** - Hughes / Hollingworths

**August 4th** - Deans

**August 11th** - please ring Denise

**August 18th** - Garretts

**August 25th** - your name here

**August 1st** - opportunity of a lifetime!

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!** **Remember, if you are not a financial member, you are not insured and you should not be on this roster!**

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

# Bird Of The Month



## Wedge-Tailed Eagle

The Wedge-tailed Eagle is the largest Australian bird of prey with a wingspan of up to two and a half metres. In flight one can see the distinctive diamond shaped tail. They often circle higher and higher on thermal air currents. With eyesight better than twice that of a human, they can distinguish their prey such as rabbits at a distance of one and a half kilometres.

As well as rabbits which are their main prey when available they will also take small wallabies and kangaroos and ground dwelling birds and reptiles. Carrion also forms part of the diet especially from road kill.

This species is common and widespread across Australia, although my impression is that it may now be suffering from a population decrease. Adult birds pair for life and keep several nests within their territory. Each year that the season is suitable for breeding they will repair one of their very large stick nests and line it with leaves. They usually nest during the winter but with the eggs taking 45 days to hatch the chicks arrive in spring. Commonly there are two eggs but even if both hatch usually only the stronger young bird survives to fledging which takes up to three months.

Ella Smith

# Theft

On Monday 3rd July a member of the Whyalla Revegetation Group reported that the Friend's shed at Tanderra had been broken into.

The thieves had broken the lock off a roller door and jimmied the door upwards. The thieves then filled one of the Friend's wheelbarrows with hand tools which they wheeled out of the shed.

Police attended the scene and collected evidence and approximately \$1,600 worth of equipment is missing.

## 2006 AGM

The Friends of the Whyalla Conservation Park will hold their 2006 AGM at 4:30pm on Saturday 29th July at the Whyalla Yacht Club.

As usual, all committee positions will be declared vacant and nominations to fill the positions called for. The committee positions are:

- President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Publicity Officer
- 4-5 Ordinary Committee members

Our group has struggled a bit in the past to find members willing to volunteer to be part of the committee, and for the last 12 months the position of Treasurer has been vacant. If you are willing to spend 3 hours in a meeting on the evening of the fourth Thursday of each month, then please consider volunteering for the committee.

On the other hand, please do not feel that you should avoid the AGM in case you get "volunteered". The group will not pressure anyone into joining the committee if they do not want to.

Following the AGM all members are encouraged to stay for a BBQ dinner. All food and a selection of drinks will be supplied except you should bring a sweet to share.

Later on at 7:30pm, former member Greg Johnston will be speaking about his recent research work - see the article in the next column. This event is being extensively advertised and we are encouraging non members to attend.

## Eremophila Festival

The Friends of the Arid Lands Botanic Garden at Port Augusta have sent us some information about their upcoming Eremophila Festival.

**Fifth Eremophila Festival**  
*incorporating*  
Open Gardens Scheme  
and "ARID" a Sculpture Exhibition

**Saturday and Sunday**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006**  
**10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**  
Gold coin donation  
Ph 86424013

Native plant sales, things to do, things to see, things to watch, things to taste, something for the children, music, entertainment, raffle.

Special feature. Water saving and conservation: talks displays and exhibits.

## Greg's Back!

Following the 2006 AGM, the group is lucky to have Whyalla ex-pat and sometimes member, Greg Johnston, speak about his recent work for the Adelaide Zoo.

Greg's talk, which is titled "**Conservation in the wild, in zoos, and back again**" will begin at 7:30pm on Saturday 29th July at the Whyalla Yacht Club.

Anyone who wants to attend the talk is welcome, it is not restricted to members. A gold coin donation from those attending will help cover the costs for supper, which will be supplied.

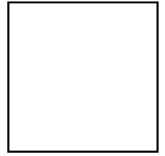
Greg describes himself thus;

*Dr Greg Johnston BSc(Hons) PhD is Senior Research Scientist, Royal Zoological Society of South Australia. In this position he is responsible for building and coordinating research activities at the Society's two properties, Adelaide Zoo and Monarto Zoological Park. His own research interests are in animal behaviour, ecology, evolution and conservation biology. Greg spent his first 25 years in Whyalla. Subsequently he has worked at Ben-Gurion University in Israel and has been a visiting Research Fellow at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. He has done extensive field research in Australia and New Guinea. Greg is an Honorary Research Associate in Evolutionary Biology at the South Australian Museum and an Affiliate Senior Lecturer at the University of Adelaide. In 2004, Greg was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study conservation research in zoos around the world. Presently Greg is working on several reintroduction programmes for native mammals, the evolutionary biology of dragon lizards and reproduction behaviour in Australian Pelicans. He is married to a quantitative geneticist, and they have produced two bemused children. He plays banjo badly, but with enthusiasm!*





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



## Reports

Ten members turned out for the June working bee on Saturday the 3rd. Members spent the morning clearing vegetation from the main track into the Park.

In many places, the trees and shrubs had grown so that branches extended out over the track and were dangerous to passing traffic. Many shrubs had also grown through the fence, making it difficult to maintain.

At the July working bee on Saturday the 8th, members met at the Tanderra shed and catalogued and photographed the remaining equipment following the break-in. The damaged portion of the roller door was cut away and the door fixed securely (but permanently) in place.

At the June committee meeting the following items were discussed:

- Clint reported on the work being carried out by Buttlingara to clear the vegetation away from the Pt Augusta Road fence in front of the new section of Park (see photo - right). The wire for the fence has fallen over as the tie wire that held it up has rusted away. This work will allow our fencing contractor to pull up the wire and re tie it to the droppers.
- Preparations for the AGM were discussed
- The committee agreed that the group should hold another Native Plant Sale in 2007. Preparations for the sale need to begin in August / September.
- The committee debated the merits of having alternative dates and times for working bees. Some other Friends groups with many retired members have weekday working bees. The committee would like member's opinions on whether or not they would prefer to attend a working bee on, for example, a Wednesday. Alternatively, is Sunday a better day? Please let a committee member know your preference.



## Contacts

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