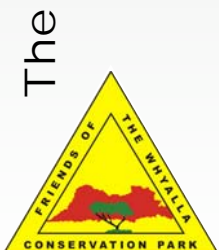




News letter of the
 Friends Of Whyalla Conservation Park
 PO Box 805 WHYALLA SA 5600
 Web: www.fwcp.org
 Volunteers Working For Conservation

The Myall Post



March 2006



President's Message

Editor's note: My apologies to Clint for not getting this newsletter out prior to the election - the message is still relevant however!

As the date of the state election draws closer I urge members to have a look at the environment policies of the two major parties and consider those issues when voting. So far as Friends groups are concerned, here are some of the significant promises being made. (I don't know whether these are "core" or "non-core" promises)

The ALP is promising to recruit 20 extra rangers, whose roles will include:

- providing a point of contact for visitors seeking information in the parks
- revegetating the land
- eradicating feral pests
- providing dedicated support to our park volunteers
- working with natural resource management boards on local projects.

Two of these rangers will be located in Adelaide and the remaining 18 will be allocated across the state. I hope that this will mean that some of the pressure will be taken off our local ranger staff. Significantly, there is only \$2 million over 4

years for new capital expenditure in parks.

The Liberal Party are campaigning on the slogan *Parks for the public*. Their policy includes the creation of habitat corridors and recreation trails to link parks and reserves by 2026. They recognise that the long-term survival of Parks is becoming increasingly reliant on volunteers and community involvement. They will reinstate the National Parks and Wildlife Committees that have been removed and commit to providing ongoing support for Friends of Parks Groups. This will provide them with greater confidence to commit to long-term management plans. However, there is no commitment to a figure for capital expenditure.

It is interesting that while economic issues have been given considerable attention, environment issues have rated very low in both parties' announcements. It seems that many of our politicians still have not understood that it is the environment that supports the economy and not vice versa. Ecosystem services are calculated to be worth 3 times the traded goods economy.

Putting significant money into protecting the environment makes good economic sense.

Clint Garrett



These are the exposed seeds of the Bullock Bush displaying a large orange aril on each seed. The aril attracts birds to eat the seeds and disperse them in their droppings.

Important Dates

Make sure that these dates are entered into your diary!

Committee Meeting
Thursday 23rd March @ 7:00pm
71 Jenkins Ave

General Meeting
“Orchids @ Landscape of WA”
Clint Garrett
Thursday 23rd March @ 8:00pm
71 Jenkins Ave
(see separate article last page)

Working Bee
Saturday 8th April @ 9:00am
Wild Dog Hill

Committee Meeting
Thursday 27th April @ 7:00pm
267 Landrace Rd

Working Bee
Saturday 13th May @ 9:00am
Wild Dog Hill

Park Roster

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

March 24th - Nield

March 31st - Fennell

April 7th - Carter

April 14th - Sharp - Poyner / Smith

April 21st - vacant

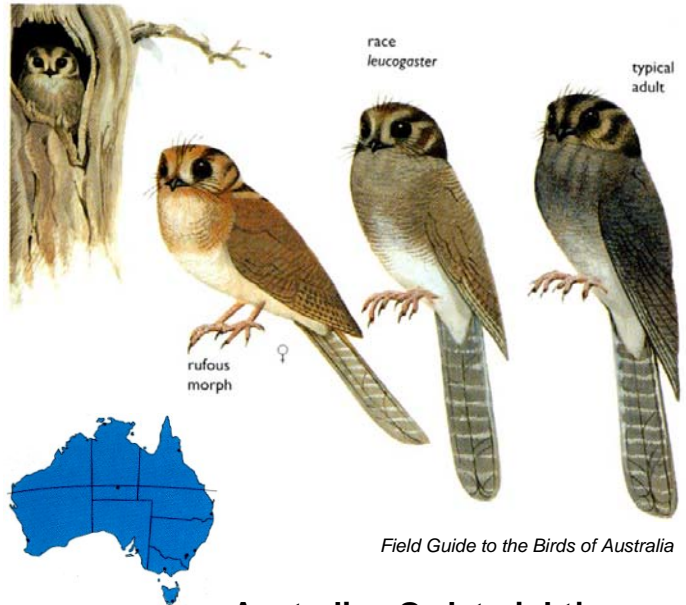
April 28th - vacant

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



Australian Owlet-nightjar

For an Australian nocturnal bird the Owlet-nightjar is quite small, about the size of a starling. While it shares characteristics of both frogmouths and nightjars it looks mostly like a miniature owl. It is rarely seen but is common and widespread all across Australia wherever there is at least some woody habitat.

The plumage varies considerably across a range of greys and browns, the common factor being that the upper parts are darker than the breast and belly. During the day they roost in tree hollows and crevices. At night they feed on insects which may be caught in flight, in trees, or on the ground. Its call is mostly a “churring” sound which depending on the listener may be perceived as grating, rattling, or even musical.

They nest in spring in any available hollow be it in a tree, stump, rock cavity, or even a hole in an earth bank if that is the best local option available. The clutch of 2 to 5 white eggs hatch in 3 to 4 weeks. The young grow very quickly to adult size in only two weeks, but do not fledge for another week or two.

Ella Smith

Dutchman's Stern Trip

Unfortunately, due to the fact that several members of the committee will be unavailable in late April, the committee has been unable to organise the trip to Dutchman's Stern Conservation Park that was listed in the 2005/06 Calendar.



The film night earlier this month was extraordinarily popular. The picture above shows the early arrivals of the approximately 130 people who attended getting the best positions in front of the screen.

Clean Up Day

The Friend's Clean Up Australia Day activity on Saturday March 4th was well attended with 9 members turning up to clean up the Lincoln Highway.

The day was relatively warm, so the group only managed to complete the western side of the road in front of the new section of the Park.

It was interesting to note that previous clean-ups have had a positive effect. Everyone commented that there was less rubbish collected than in previous years. One noticeably absent type of rubbish was flavoured milk cartons - the container deposit legislation must be having some effect. Unfortunately fast food packaging was still abundant.

Below are Troy Brougham, Denise Sharp, Marg Garrett, Clint Garrett, Lance Dean (in vehicle) and Ella Smith. Not pictured are David Poyner, Alan Nield and John Carter.



Weed Of The Month

Normally, most gardeners would be happy to see their plants growing as well as those in the photo below - except for these particular plants. Unfortunately this flush of green was an extremely thick patch of Three Corner Jacks that were growing in the Park approximately ten years ago.

Three Corner Jack or Spiny Emex, was introduced to Western Australia from southern Africa in 1830 and had appeared in South Australia by 1840.

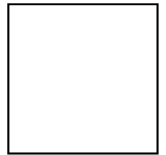
Up to 900 plants per square metre have been observed, and up to 1,100 seeds on an individual plant. The seeds can live more than 4 years if buried in the soil, however few exposed seeds germinate after 2 years. Like many weed species, the plants prefer growing in cultivated soil.

Due to the shape of the seeds, it is easily dispersed, and new infestations can appear along tracks and paths.





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



General Meeting

If you think that the photo of the orchids below is stunning, then Clint Garrett has dozens of them - all just as impressive as this one.

Clint will be giving a talk on his and Margaret's trip through Western Australia last year at the March General Meeting.

**Thursday 23rd March @ 8:00pm
71 Jenkins Ave**

Please give Clint or Marg a call on 8645-7522 if you would like to attend - it'll help them make sure you have somewhere to sit!



Whyalla Landcare

As advertised in the last Myall Post, a meeting was held on Wednesday 1st March to gauge interest in forming a Landcare group in Whyalla. Eight interested persons attended the meeting, with several others sending apologies.

A second meeting was held on Wednesday 15th March, and it was unanimously resolved to form the Whyalla Landcare group.

The group is looking for people who are interested in hands on activities, including maintaining & replanting areas, working with schools, learning more about the local environment; assisting Council in organising national events like Clean Up Australia Day & National Tree Day & being advocates for the environment in our city

For more information phone Gerry Gillen on 8644 0041

Contacts

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