

FRIENDS OF WAITE CONSERVATION RESERVE

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2001

New Series - NUMBER 1



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Waite Conservation Reserve! Now that the Friends group has been officially launched, I thought it might be an opportune time reflect on the significance of the reserve, its exciting potential and some of the reasons to become involved in its management.

There are many reasons people are attracted to the Waite CR. For the landscape enthusiast, there are rugged cliffs and magnificent views of the city and surrounding ranges. For the fitness fanatic, there are challenging hills and invigorating bushwalking trails. For the naturalist, koalas, kangaroos and echidnas, 65 local bird species and literally hundreds of plants to ensure exciting new discoveries on each visit. For the historian, abundant evidence of the toils of our early settlers as they strove to make a home in a wild, unfamiliar landscape.

But, taking a step back, there are even deeper reasons to value the reserve and work actively to preserve and enhance its natural qualities. It is one of the last representatives in the Adelaide region of box grassy woodland, a habitat type that is poorly conserved Australia-wide. Because this habitat type tended to occur on the richer soils, it was disproportionately cleared for agriculture and has suffered greatly from logging, grazing and weed invasion. The Waite CR has been no exception, so we now find ourselves guardians of a very fragile ecosystem constantly under attack. Although grazing and logging has ceased, weed invasion is accelerating and is a serious threat to the many rare plant species in the reserve. The dedicated efforts of many people over the past 10 years have seen some exciting regeneration, but it will take many more years of careful management to nurse the reserve back to ecological health.

We are indeed fortunate to have such a spectacular location in which to carry out our work (play?!). I hope you can find some time to join in the with the Friends and reap the benefits of these rewarding activities!

Scott Field

PATRON SOUGHT

There would be many benefits to an organisation like ours if we could have a suitable, high profile Patron. Such a person may be able to bring influence to bear in many circumstances which might adversely affect the continuing, desired development of Waite Conservation Reserve.

Do you know, or know the name of, someone who might be considered by the Committee for this position? If you do, please let the Secretary know about it.

WORKING BEES WILL BE HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

Sun, April 8. Sat, April 21. Sun, May 13. Sat, May 26

8am – 1pm

Meet at Wild Dogs Glen, top of Hartley Grove

Tasks at this time of the year will be mostly olive control, and possibly some track maintenance.

Please bring the following:

- **Personal gear including sun/ rain protection, food and drink, work gloves, stout footwear.**
- **Small first-aid kit and mobile phone.**
- **Some, or all, of the following: mattock or similar digging implement, secateurs, pruning saws, loppers.**
- **Hammer and chisel for treatment of olive stumps. This will also require the use chemicals (vinyl gloves supplied).**

If you do not have any of these, don't worry, some gear will be available, and pulling olive seedlings will only require gardening gloves. There will certainly be some way that you can contribute.

If you unable to attend from the starting time, a notice will be posted at the park entrance which will give directions for finding the work parties.

Be aware that you bring tools and other gear at your own risk. Don't bring more than you can keep track of, and don't bring anything too valuable to break or lose. Olives are tough on tools. Please mark your gear so there is no room for confusion about ownership.

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the committee of The Friends of Waite Conservation Reserve was held on 5 March, 2001, at which officers were elected and some tasks determined. They are as follows:

President	Dr Scott Field
Vice Presidents	Bryan Both Ian Mosel
Secretary and Publicity Officer	Andrew Baker
Treasurer and Membership Secretary.	Lynda Yates
Recruitment Officer	Tanja Lenz
Schools Liason	Chris Kaczan
Working Bee Co-ordinator	Bryan Both
Editor, Newsletter	Ian Mosel
Members	Dr Jennifer Gardner (ex officio – Manager, Waite Conservation Reserve) Ian Gardiner Phil Shearman

A Draft Constitution for the Association was presented, and after some discussion was amended appropriately for adoption. The amended constitution was adopted formally at the subsequent committee meeting of 19 March, 2001, and is available by e-mailing Andy Baker, or requesting a copy from him by phone.

Perhaps the most important feature of the Constitution is that of the aims of the Association, which are:

- **To assist in the conservation and ecological restoration of Waite Conservation Reserve.**
- **To encourage the community use and enjoyment of the Waite Conservation Reserve.**
- **To promote the Waite Conservation Reserve as a research and educational resource.**

The Committee, on behalf of the Association, will be working hard to achieve each of these aims.

Of primary concern, and a job which is essential for the aims to be achieved, is the ongoing control of pest species in the reserve. Of most significance are the exotic plants which are a continual threat to native flora and fauna. In order to get on top of this problem, **working bees** have been organised to deal with the most important weeds.

We encourage you, and perhaps family members, to join in with other Friends to help us deal with this menace as well as be involved in other work activities.

PLANTS OF WCR – The River Red Gum

*Over time the River Red Gum (**E. camaldulensis**) has become barnacled with legends. This is only to be expected. By sheer numbers there's always a bulky Red Gum here or somewhere else in the wide world, muscling into the eye, as it were: and by following the course of rivers in our particular continent they don't merely imprint their fuzzy shape but actually worm their way greenly into the mind, giving some hope against the collective crow-croaking dryness. From: "Eucalyptus" by Murray Bail (Text Publishing, 1998)*