

FRIENDS OF WAITE CONSERVATION RESERVE Inc.



COMING EVENTS

Friends AGM—29th
May 2013

Working Bees:
May 4th and 19th
June 1st and 16th
July 6th and 21st
Aug 3rd and 18th
9am -12.30pm



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

President's message

It has been a long dry summer with a hot sting in its tail. My rain gauge hasn't done any useful work since August last; spring was a non-event. Consequently many of the tubestock we planted last year have crashed and burned. Every now and then we do a lot of hard work for not much reward. It happens. I'm sure there is a relevant old adage that applies here – something about not crying over spilt milk and climbing back in saddles.

The silver lining is that there were few summer weeds... not counting olives. Olive seedlings germinate mostly in the cooler months but they are a weed for all seasons. Notwithstanding that rain should come soon, it may be a while before soil moisture is sufficient to warrant tree-planting. In the meantime perhaps we can busy ourselves with searching for and pulling olive seedlings. Autumn is a great time to do this but especially this year when there is so little growth to hide the seedlings.

Last Newsletter I reported on the successful receipt of an NRM Community Grant to create a revegetation demonstration site along part of the high-profile Yurrebilla Trail. In a case of biting off more than we could chew it became increasingly obvious that the Friends did not have the capacity to deliver the project in the allotted time and the Committee regretfully decided not to take up the offer.

At the same time the group was successful in securing a Community NRM Action Grant to upgrade our walking trail brochure and interpretive signage to alert passing walkers to our efforts. Work on this is continuing apace. To date we have selected a new route, drafted text for the guide and five new signs, and are currently working on their design and layout. The project is due for completion by the end of winter, ready for the herds of spring walkers.

Last spring's members' activity set me on a path back to my youth. Our butterfly walk in November ignited a flirtation that I had as a teenager but had only dallied with since. As a result I spent summer trying to track down some of the more cryptic butterfly species ...and ended up near-doubling the Reserve list.

Another spring activity was our participation in the University of South Australia's Great Koala Count. Several Friends and assorted others braved hot weather and strained necks to ensure complete coverage of the Reserve to survey the population.

And new birds just keep on coming, with two additions to Reserve list in the last few months. See bird, butterfly and koala articles in this issue.

Peter Bird

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FROM THE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE PROFILE



Clint Garrett

Prior to moving to Adelaide, Clint has been an active member of the Whyalla Community for 37 years. For much of that time he taught Geography and Biology at Edward John Eyre High School, even though his original degree was in English and History. In 1995, Clint was awarded the National Excellence in Teaching Award as the most outstanding Secondary Teacher in SA & NT.

Outside of teaching Clint has had a high level of community involvement. In 1987, he was a founding member of the highly successful Friends of Whyalla Conservation Park and was its President or Secretary for most years since then. He has had a long commitment to environmental issues and along with his former wife, Margaret, was recognised as the most outstanding volunteer in National Parks in 1999. In 2005 the couple were recognised with a "Best Friends of Parks" Award. He has been the group's principal fundraiser and has grown more than 10,000 plants for sale to the public.

Clint was also responsible for founding Advancing Whyalla: an organisation devoted to promoting the city, developing local leaders (including youth leaders) and promoting better environmental practices. Both of the above organisations have awarded him life membership in recognition of his service to them.

Clint has served on the committees of a number of other community groups over the years; these include: Scouts, False Bay/Fitzgerald Bay Management Committee, Whyalla Yacht Club, Whyalla

Marine Sports Association and Rotary. The Rotary Club of Whyalla has awarded him a Paul Harris Fellowship in recognition of his work with exchange students and for the Whyalla community.

Between 1995 and 2002 Clint was elected as a Whyalla City councillor and served the city through local government. In 2007, he was selected as Whyalla's Citizen of the Year in recognition of his contribution to the community.

In 2011 Clint moved to Bunbury Western Australia, but he returned in early 2012. He now lives in Edwardstown with his partner Erinne Stirling. Together, they enjoy gardening, cycling, photography and canoeing. Facebook users can see some of Clint's photographs by accessing his page. Joining the Friends of Waite Reserve is a logical continuation of his previous work. Now that he has almost recovered from aortic valve surgery, he hopes to be more able to take part in working bees and other more physical activities of the group.

Great Koala Count

It is a testament to the hardiness of the Friends group that all who promised to help out on the day of the Great Koala Count on 28 November showed up despite temperatures in the high 30s. The count was organised by Chris Daniels' Urban Ecology group at the University of South Australia. Widespread publicity ensured broad participation, including by the Waite mob.

Eighteen volunteers in 13 groups were sent to all parts of the Reserve to systematically survey the entire koala population present on K-day. Each group was asked to scan all trees in their area and record details of koalas including GPS locations, tree species and photographs of each animal.

A total of 20 were reported but likely double-counting meant there were probably 18 seen. Most occurred in Blue Gum (8) and Red Gum (6) with some in Grey Box (2) and surprisingly even in introduced Lemon-scented Gum (2). Perhaps they found the twist of lemon cooling on such a hot day.

Peter Bird



A koala lets it all hang out to cool on the Great (but hot) Koala Count (photo: Peter Bird)



Reclining nude (bare) (Photo: Janis Richardson)

Butterflies

The butterfly walk on 24 November 2012 was a lovely gentle event. We wandered around noting many of the 40 or so known larval food plants in the Reserve and recorded 9 species of butterfly, 4 as eggs and 7 as adults. Not spectacular but a respectable number seeing the list on the website showed only 11 species at the time. Some months later the tally stands at 20 with the chance to grow it further (see list). All it took was a determination to spend more time in the Reserve over summer and a butterfly net.

There are too many species to mention them all so I will focus on a just a few. Some are common. The great orange Wanderer is well known. It lays its eggs on the introduced Broad-leaved Cotton-bush and its strikingly banded caterpillars can often be seen on its toxic leaves. The Common Brown is even more common, the males numerically dominant early in the season and the females later after emerging, mating and then immediately entering torpor during the summer heat. I counted about 300 on a very hot morning in late November – all apparently males. The Common Grass-blue is also abundant, but not until I netted a few LBBs (little blue butterflies – the equivalent of little brown birds in the ornithological world) did I start to get a

handle on other cryptic members of the group. Now I find we have at least 6 species with more yet to be discovered.

The blue butterflies of the *Ogyris* genus are some of the most beautiful and enigmatic in South Australia. Despite iridescent blues and purples they often go unnoticed due to their rapid, erratic flight, camouflaged underwings and because they spend most of the time in the tree canopy attending mistletoes - their larval food plant. I couldn't recollect if I'd seen them before in the Reserve so on a sunny weekend in late January I set myself the task of staking out a dense patch of Box Mistletoe at Netherby Knoll to find out. I was soon joined by one and after several mad dashes and failed swishes I eventually fluked a capture and was able to confirm it as a Broad-margined Azure. It turns out they are quite common with at least 5 seen one day.

I have always known Chequered Swallowtails since seeing them in my youth and being blown away by their intricate cream and black patterning. So I can be confident that I had not seen one in the Reserve until a couple of summers ago. Now they seem to be a regular, if still uncommon, feature. It appears they have responded to the planting of large numbers of Native Scurf-peas *Cullen australasicum* - the food plants for their amazing caterpillars. I have several times seen laying adults, eggs or caterpillars, suggesting we now have a self-replacing breeding population in the Reserve.

Peter Bird



The beautiful Chequered Swallowtail caterpillar on Native Scurf-pea at Netherby Knoll (photo: Peter Bird)

BUTTERFLIES & THEIR LARVAL FOOD PLANTS OF WAITE CONSERVATION RESERVE

PAPILIONIDAE (Swallowtails)

Dainty Swallowtail	<i>Papilio anactus</i>	<i>Citrus spp*</i> (campus only)
<u>Chequered Swallowtail</u>	<i>Papilio demoleus</i>	<i>Cullen australasicum</i> ⁺

PIERIDAE (Whites & Yellows)

<u>Cabbage White*</u>	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	<i>Brassicaceae*</i>
<u>Wood White</u>	<i>Delias aganippe</i>	<i>Amyema miquelii</i> , <i>Lysiana exocarpi</i> , <i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>
<u>Caper White</u>	<i>Belenois java</i>	<i>Capparis mitchellii</i> ⁺ (arboretum only)

LYCANENIDAE (Coppers & Blues)

Wattle Blue	<i>Theclinesthes miskini</i>	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>
Saltbush Blue	<i>Theclinesthes serpentata</i>	<i>Atriplex spp.</i>
Long-tailed Pea-blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i> , <i>Vicia sativa*</i>
Common Grass-blue	<i>Zizina labradus</i>	<i>Medicago polymorpha*</i> , <i>Trifolium*</i> , <i>Cullen australasicum</i> ⁺
Icilius Blue	<i>Jalmenus icilius</i>	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>
Fringed Heath-blue	<i>Neolucia agricola</i>	<i>Pultenaea largiflorens</i>
<u>Rayed Blue</u>	<i>Candalides heathi</i>	<i>Plantago lanceolata*</i>
Satin Azure	<i>Ogyris amaryllis</i>	<i>Amyema miquelii</i> , <i>Lysiana exocarpi</i>
Southern Purple Azure	<i>Ogyris genoveva</i>	<i>Amyema miquelii</i>
<u>Broad-margined Azure</u>	<i>Ogyris olane</i>	<i>Amyema miquelii</i>

NYMPHALIDAE (Brush foots)

Marbled Xenica	<i>Geitoneura klugii</i>	<i>Austrostipa</i> , <i>Brachypodium*</i> , <i>Ehrharta*</i> , <i>Poa</i> , <i>Themeda</i>
Common Brown	<i>Heteronympha merope</i>	<i>Austrostipa</i> , <i>Brachypodium*</i> , <i>Ehrharta*</i> , <i>Poa</i> , <i>Themeda</i>
Tailed Emperor	<i>Polyura sempronius</i>	<i>Brachychiton populneus*</i>
Meadow Argus	<i>Junonia villida</i>	<i>Arctotheca*</i> , <i>Scabiosa*</i> , <i>Goodenia</i> , <i>Plantago lanceolata*</i>
Yellow Admiral	<i>Vanessa itea</i>	<i>Parietaria debilis</i> , <i>Urtica urens*</i>
<u>Australian Painted Lady</u>	<i>Vanessa kershawi</i>	<i>Arctotheca*</i> , <i>Chrysocephalum</i> , <i>Helichrysum luteoalbum</i>
Wanderer*	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	<i>Gomphocarpus cancellatus*</i>
Lesser Wanderer	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	<i>Gomphocarpus cancellatus*</i>

HESPERIIDAE (Skippers)

Phigalia Skipper	<i>Trapezites phigalia</i>	<i>Lomandra densiflora</i> , <i>L. multiflora</i> , <i>L. nana</i> , <i>L. sororia</i>
Mottled Grass Skipper	<i>Anisynta cynone</i>	<i>Brachypodium</i>
<u>Southern Grass-dart</u>	<i>Ocybadistes walkeri</i>	<i>Brachypodium*</i> , <i>Cynodon dactylon*</i> , <i>Pennisetum*</i>
White-banded Grass-dart	<i>Taractrocera papyri</i>	<i>Cynodon dactylon*</i> , <i>Austrodanthonia caespitosa</i>
<u>Orange Palm-dart*</u>	<i>Cephrenes augiades</i>	palms* (campus only)

TOTAL: 20 species recorded for Reserve or arboretum in **bold**

9 species new to the list underlined

8 additional species known for Adelaide but not from Waite

⁺ confirmed breeding on this plant species



Meadow Argus butterfly

The Wild Dogs of Wild Dog Glen

In 1850 Alfred Hardy¹ wrote to his sister Harriet (who was to marry J.S. Mill) describing his house 'Hartley Grove' as being situated "in a very romantic and beautiful spot high up in the mountains that border Adelaide in a deeply wooded glen that by the natives is called Wild Dog Glen; these wild dogs or jackals are very numerous and at night their cry is wild and startling." The dingo had arrived in Australia from Asia roughly 3,500 to 5,000 years ago long after the first inhabitants arrived and as far as we know traditionally the Aborigines did not use the dingo for hunting. In Kurna language there is the word kadli which means tamed wild dog and the word warrakadli which means untamed wild dog. There was however soon after white contact an explosion of wild dogs, many introduced as they were seen to be essential to the new settler.

In the earliest days of colonisation of Van Diemen's Land the widespread use of hunting dogs, called kangaroo dogs, bred for strength and speed, ensured steady food supplies.³ Convicts were sent to catch kangaroos in the nearby grasslands to supply the settlement. "Until the middle of the 19th century the gun was not accurate enough for hunting"⁴ and "the possession of a single dog, stolen or purchased meant a convict, (*shepherd or settler*) could live independently in the bush."⁵ When seal skins became an export item sealing centres, sometimes including former convicts, were set up on the islands of the Bass Strait and spread around the coast with their dogs for hunting food. Kangaroo Island had been a base for sealers and whalers from the start of the 19th century and there were men living there with Aboriginal women captured from Tasmania and the South Australian coast when Colonel William Light arrived on the *Rapid* in August 1836. Colonel Light wasted little time in setting out to look for a more suitable place for settlement on the mainland employing the sealer William Cooper as a pilot and his two Aboriginal wives (one from Tasmania, Big Sal, and one from Encounter Bay, Sally⁶) for local knowledge, negotiating with mainland tribes and supplying fresh meat using their hunting dogs. (Twenty-two year old Alfred Hardy arrived on the *Cygnat* with Deputy Surveyor Kingston almost a month later so was not with William Light here.)

Another group who would have introduced dogs to South Australia were the tiersmen (a Tasmanian word) again often thought to be former convicts or their descendents who had fled from Van Diemen's Land and the other colonies. Having lived in Australia and being skilled in timber cutting in the eastern colonies they came to live in the Stringybark forests in the higher reaches of the Adelaide Hills by 1837, supplying the much needed timber, posts, fencing rails and shingles for the growing colony. Till then settlers had brought their timber with them or imported it from Van Diemen's Land. In 1843 Daniel Brock collected statistics on these timber cutters in the Brownhill Creek area, both the upper reaches near Crafers and the lower sections, who were clearing the land of timber and setting up small farms.⁷ They would have had dogs which would have bred and gone wild in the area.

Many colonists also brought their dogs as hunters, guards or companions. Even Alfred Hardy had brought his dog but it had an unfortunate end. William Jacob, the youngest surveyor in the group, aged 17 years "about 1am in his shirt and night cap came into my tent to borrow a loaded gun to shoot the other native dog which he said had been several times into his tent. Hardy who was sleeping in my tent, happened to have his gun loaded and lent it to him. We shortly heard the report and soon after poor Jacob made his appearance quite heartbroken, for instead of the native dog, he had killed the favourite little bitch, heavy with pup belonging to Hardy, and to make things worse had broken the borrowed gun."⁸

The dogs of the colonists soon interbred indiscriminately, so that the numbers increased considerably becoming a public nuisance and a threat to stock and other animals. As early as September 16th 1837 the Colonial Secretary advertised in the South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register "Rewards for the Destruction of Wild Dogs: 7 shillings for every female and 5 shillings for every male and 2 shillings for every pup brought dead to this office". A letter in the South Australian Gazette 6th January 1838 stated that "it is my firm belief that there are at this time more dogs than men in the colony."

Eventually in 1852 the first Act was passed for Abating the Nuisance and Damage to Property occasioned by the great number of Dogs which are loose in the Province of SA: *'Whereas the streets of the City of Adelaide and other places within this Province are infested by great numbers of dogs, which are allowed to go loose at all hours of the day and night, to the danger of passengers as well as to the great annoyance of the inhabitants at large: And whereas much loss is occasioned to the owners of poultry, of sheep, and other small cattle, by the ravages of such dogs, as well as by dogs of the native breed.'* It made the registration of dogs compulsory, with penalties for those who did not comply and rewards for those seizing and destroying unregistered dogs. There were amendments to this Act and further Acts passed through the 19th century and into the 20th century as the wild dog problem remained.

But what effect did this huge increase of dogs have on the biodiversity of the country? James Boyce says the dog was central to the rapid change in the colonies both on the society and on the environment.⁹ To date 24 mammal species have become extinct through a variety of causes: loss of habitat and predators including cats and foxes and there is fear of more extinctions to come. (A feral cat can kill up to 10 small animals a night).

However there is another viewpoint on the wild dog as predator. Some research¹⁰ is being done now suggesting that by keeping dingoes as the top predators in the landscape they will control the numbers of other lower-order predators and pests such as cats, foxes, rabbits and deer! When there are no dingoes, cats become more active just post dusk at the time the small mammals and reptiles are most active. When dingoes are present cats only come out much later thus cutting down on the kill rate.

Could we have wild dogs again in Wild Dog Glen? Quick Answer from Peter Bird: It is not likely to be soon as currently dingoes are a declared pest south of the dog fence in South Australia and must be controlled by all landholders.

1. Having TB, Alfred's parents thinking he would be better in a warmer climate, managed to secure him a job with Col William Light's Survey party as a junior assistant surveyor. He'd had a good secondary education (some trigonometry?) but was too ill to do law like his younger brother Arthur who followed him out later (also with TB).
2. Mabel Hardy: *A History of the Hardy Family in SA* State Library Archives
3. James Boyce: *Van Diemen's Land* p24 Black Inc 2008
4. James Boyce: *Van Diemen's Land* p4
5. James Boyce : p4
6. Hallett Shueard: *The Forgotten Men* p 126,p326 Peacock Pub 2013
7. R. Martin : *Under Mount Lofty* p41 District Council of Stirling p41
8. G. Dutton: Col Wm Light p177 from Woodforde Journal 19th Nov 1836 (Woodforde was the Survey Party's Surgeon)
9. James Boyce: *Van Diemens Land* p 206
10. E Ritchie, Deakin University on The Science Show, Radio National ABC Radio 9 March 2013

Helen Pryor

Additions to the birds of Waite Reserve

Square-tailed Kite

Following the working bee on 18 November I noticed a large raptor soaring way out over the Reserve. Too distant to be sure of its identification, I nevertheless had a sneaking suspicion about its identity. When later at Netherby Knoll the Noisy Miners started screaming, I raised the binoculars on cue as the offending raptor appeared over the Grey Box. Three seconds later it was gone, sailing back over the tree tops but not before I had clear views of its distinctive white face, red-brown underparts and yes, its long squared-off tail.

Square-tailed Kites are extraordinarily rare in South Australia with perhaps only a pair or two present in the state. Miraculously a pair has bred in the Williamstown area over the last two or three seasons. It would be nice to think that the Adelaide Hills Face Zone including our own patch might provide sufficient habitat to also support a breeding pair one day.

Little Wattlebird

The box mistletoe was flowering profusely at the bottom of Wild Dogs Glen when I visited on 10 February. It was a hot afternoon so I was disinclined to sweat up the hill and took up a reclining position (a bit like the koala) at one of the tables. New Holland Honeyeaters and Eastern Spinebills were busy

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Friends of Waite Conservation Reserve Inc. Annual General Meeting 2013

When: Wednesday, 29th May 2013, 7.30 – 9.30pm

Venue: Urrbrae House, Waite Campus, off Fullarton Road, Urrbrae

All Enquiries: Please contact Jennifer on 8313 7405 or Helen at helenpryor10@yahoo.com.au

“Replacing weeds with Native Grasses: a small property case study”

An illustrated talk by Bob Myers

Bob and the Native Grass Resources Group were the initiators of research, publicity and promotion of native grasses from the mid-1990s, a commitment that continues. At home on 40 acres at Birdwood, Bob has worked since 1997 to restore a once degraded part of a large grazing property from the ground up with native grasses first. Bob is an inspirational man and a great speaker with loads of hands-on experience.

The talk will be preceded by a brief AGM
Supper provided



(continued from page 6)

feeding in the mistletoe along with a couple of wattlebirds. But hey, did that wattlebird just say ‘cookay-cock’ and ‘kwock’? Sure enough, further investigation confirmed that a pair of Little Wattlebirds was also bouncing around in the mistletoe. Common enough in Adelaide suburbs, I have long had an ear out for this species in the Reserve but had only ever recorded its common red-wattled cousin. It will be interesting to see whether these birds return next summer to again chase the mistletoe.

Peter Bird

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Stephen Wait
Brenda Keen
Edie Bransbury

President: Peter Bird (0418-853 -834) pjbird@chariot.net.au

Secretary: Helen Pryor (helenpryor10@yahoo.com.au)

Editor: Penny Paton

Treasurer: Lynda Yates **Membership Secretary:** Meg Byrt

Committee: Jennifer Gardner, Clint Garrett, Peter Lang, Penny Paton, Stephen Wait.

Address: Friends of Waite Conservation Reserve, University of Adelaide, Waite Campus
PMB 1, GLEN OSMOND 5064

Phone: 8313 7405

Email: jennifer.gardner@adelaide.edu.au

Website: www.waite.adelaide.edu.au/reserve/