



Friends
of
Belair National Park
Volunteers working for Conservation



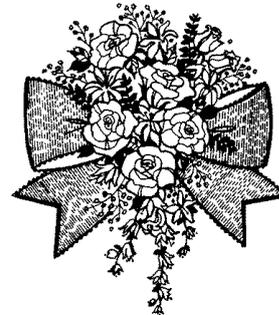
Established 1985
Friends group of the decade 2004
Best Newsletter 1996 - Friends Group of the year 1998

NEWSLETTER 2, JUNE, 2007

Please note this is a quarterly newsletter. 4 per year. March, June, Sept and Dec.
Deadlines are the 3rd Monday of the month preceding its issue.
Contributions can be emailed to Michael Cerchez at cerchez@chariot.net.au



CONGRATULATIONS
ERIC AND MARY
ON YOUR
GOLDEN WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY IN MARCH



Notes from the President.

Since the last newsletter even though it seemed like a fairly quiet time quite a few things have happened. We have had 3 meetings, which were well attended, 2 interesting guest speakers and a barbecue. In March the guest speaker was Duncan McKenzie, who was most informative on Glue Pot Reserve.

At our May meeting our guest speaker was P Pulis who impressed us with the conservation work that is being carried out by the SEAGAS corporation along the gas pipelines that have been laid from Victoria to Adelaide.

A number of members attended Dean Cordes retirement function at the main oval pavilion. I met with representatives of RSL and Veteran Affairs to view progress that has been made on the walking trail linking the Cherry Orchard with the Sequoia Grove. In May 5 of our members attended the annual general meeting of Friends of Park Inc at Sunnybrae Farm. Meetings and consultations have commenced for the upgrade of the playground precinct in Belair National Park. This redevelopment is likely to go ahead before the entrance redevelopment, which is being redesigned at the moment.

VMU8 - North of Playford Lake, East of Sir Edwin Avenue

Ron Tamblyn took an interest in VMU8 long before joining the Friends. It was within walking distance of his home and badly infested with everything feral. It was so overrun with Aleppo pine, pittosporum, olive and boneseed that Park management

suggested it was not a preferred restoration site. However, Ron took it on as his 10-year challenge, starting with the massive boneseed.

Well - he's been there for over 10 years and it has now become his 15-year challenge, but what a difference! In 2002 with Doug Riley's help, pines were cut (and burnt by the CFS), others ring-barked. In 2003 Eric's team assisted by pulling huge regrowth of boneseed, while Doug and I started work on the olives from the lake along Peroomba Creek. I had done my apprenticeship with Doug along Kurra and Workanda Creeks and can happily say I have assisted in killing hundreds of the pest trees. As you know, Doug has now hung up his Park boots but the challenge goes on. My job is to clear the base of the trees, exposing as much root as possible, ready for Ron's drill and poison. When I feel like a change of position I remove plantain, phalaris, boneseed regrowth, etc.

Over the years Ron has propagated and planted grey box to replace the pines. Last year and early this year we carried water across the block but gave up during the long dry, as it was very time-consuming. We've had a lot of casualties but some have survived.



During the last 3 years Ron and I have worked with week-end weeders who have come, stayed a while and given up for various reasons. We continue Wednesday and Sunday mornings and still have a long way to go, but it looks a very different block from what it was 10 years ago.
Betty

INTRODUCING THE NEW SENIOR RANGER

Nalini Klopp has been appointed to the position of Senior Ranger – Volunteer Support. *Reporting to the District Ranger Southern Mount Lofty, this position provides DEH with a stronger focus for engaging volunteer groups in supporting park management works aligned with park management plans, and for influencing the allocation of volunteers to DEH identified projects. She will also provide improved guidance and direction for volunteer groups and DEH staff who liaise with these groups.* Nalini will not be replacing Liaison Rangers. Leah Egan will remain as our Liaison Ranger for the present.

Nalini was able to come to our May meeting to introduce herself and speak about her role. Nalini is a local and grew up in the area and is very familiar with Belair Park



FOX BAITING, SOUTHERN LOFTY DISTRICT 2007

Fox Baiting was carried out in four of the reserves in the Southern Lofty District in Autumn 2007: Belair National Park, Scott Creek Conservation Park, Mark Oliphant Conservation Park and Onkaparinga River National Park.

This Autumn the baiting program was run for an 8 week period. Forty-three bait stations were baited in Belair National Park. Fox Off baits were initially laid at each bait station, then checked weekly by Park's staff. Baits are buried under the soil. When baits were taken from a station, they were replaced with a fresh bait. When a station had not had a bait taken for 3 weeks, the old bait was replaced with a fresh bait. All baits were retrieved at the completion of the program.

Bait takes vary between stations. Approximately 60% of Bait Stations had all of their baits taken.

Approximately 90% of all baits laid in Belair were taken.

The proportion of baits taken in Autumn 2007 (90%) was increased from Autumn 2006 (64.5%), a marked difference in bait takes.

Bait takes were shown to be much higher for Belair National Park compared to all other parks in the 2007 fox baiting program.

- The results show that a 6 week baiting program is ideal as at this time there is shown to be a peak in fox bait takes.
- It is unknown at this stage if foxes have consumed or cached the baits, although two dead foxes were reported in Belair NP during the baiting period.
- Personal communication with the Bandicoot Officer Kirsten Long indicated that during her recent studies in Scott Creek Conservation Park, very few fox scats (droppings) were found in the month of March, suggesting that the fox baiting at least in that reserve was having an impact. This is yet to be confirmed statistically however.
- The fox baiting program is hoped to assist native animals in Belair National Park, and is being coordinated with a rabbit control program, also showing success in opportunistic rabbit sightings down for the last 3 months. Formal rabbit and fox population surveys have not been undertaken for BNP however.
- The next fox baiting program will be undertaken in Spring 2007.

(Extracts from a report supplied by Jen Pitman Ranger Southern Mount Lofty District.)

South Australian native declared the second most primitive flowering plant on earth

By R.C.Foster

There is big excitement in the botanical world (*Nature* 446:312-315, March 15, 2007) because a small Australian plant has been shown to be the world's second most primitive flowering plant. The most primitive is *Amborella*, a shrub found only in New Caledonia. Analysis of the DNA of *Trithuria submersa* has shown that this small (5cm tall) submerged aquatic herb, a member of the family Hydatellaceae, comes immediately after *Amborella* in the flowering plant family tree.

Trithuria was formerly classified with the lilies and grasses in the monocotyledons and placed in the family Centrolepidaceae, four members of which occur in Belair National Park. The DNA data shows that *Trithuria* has no relationship to the Centrolepidaceae, and suggests that it evolved before the rise of the monocots. It is now classified with the waterlilies.

The Hydatellaceae family was thought to contain 2 genera, *Hydatella* and *Trithuria* and about 8 species confined to Australia and New Zealand. However in the last 10 years several more species have been discovered, including some in India. Three species of *Trithuria* occur in Australia, *Trithuria submersa*, *T.bibracteata* and *T.lanterna*. *Trithuria* is recorded for all mainland states as well as Tasmania where it was first collected and named by Hooker in 1858. There are 5 species of *Hydatella*, 4 in Australia and 1 in NZ.

Trithuria submersa flowers consist of 4 leaf-like "petals" enclosing 2 long-stalked male florets and a group of 9 long-stalked, female florets. There are illustrations of the plant and its flower

in Black's *Flora of South Australia* Part 1, p.176 and Jessup and Toelken's *Flora of South Australia*, Vol. 4 p.2000.

I first learned about *Trithuria* as an undergraduate in England 50 years ago, in lectures on the origin of the flower, described by Darwin as an "abominable mystery". The problem was that both the conifers and the fossil plants that preceded the flowering plants in the geological record have separate male and female flowers. How did the modern flower, with both male (stamens) and female parts (pistil) together in the same structure, arise from the unisexual structures of their ancestors?

One theory suggested that the modern flower is derived from a stem that first produced some stalked male reproductive organs, followed by some stalked female reproductive organs. Telescoping the stem to bring the male and female structures together and loss of their stalks would result in the modern flower. On this view the male and female parts became associated before petals and sepals evolved. It also proposes that the flower of *Trithuria* is very primitive. However, other botanists held to the opposite view that *Trithuria* is like Poinsettia (*Euphorbia*), the "flower" of which consists of a group of stalked male flowers, each reduced to a single stamen, plus a single stalked female flower reduced to a pistil. Both male and female flowers once had sepals and petals like other members of the Euphorbiaceae, but they lost them in response to an arid environment. Similarly *Trithuria* florets may have lost their petals and sepals in response to their aquatic environment. In this view, like the Poinsettia flower, the *Trithuria* flower is highly advanced.

The new DNA data supports the view that *Trithuria* is anciently primitive and that the typical flowering plant flower is in fact a composite head of once separate male and female flowers. The Nature paper says that even in 2007 no one has any idea how the flowers of *Trithuria* are pollinated. They also point out that being so small and growing submerged or on wet mud *Trithuria* is likely to be overlooked. It grows on Kangaroo Island and on Southern Eyre Peninsula. Does it occur in Belair National Park also?

Free Bush For Life workshop

Free Bush For Life workshops will be held throughout Adelaide between April and October this year. The one-day workshops help train volunteers in past and present vegetation conditions of South Australia, bush management techniques such as minimal disturbance weeding methods and bush regeneration principles.

At a workshop participants receive:

- Information on Native Vegetation and its importance
- Training on Native Vegetation Management
- Hand-on experience in conserving Biodiversity
- Information on monthly activities on Bush For Life sites
- Learn how to manage our bushland and ensure the protection of threatened plant and animal species

Trees For Life's bush management program currently has more than 700 volunteers who help protect more than 2500 hectares of vital bushland across the greater Mt Lofty Ranges, including threatened ecological communities with 29 national, 194 State and 1088 local occurrences of conservation-rated species.

2007 Adelaide workshop schedule:

June 13 – Balhannah

June 21 – Norton Summit

June 30 – Kapunda
July 4 – Gawler
July 14 – Mt Barker
July 21 – Minlaton
Aug 4 – Strathalbyn
August 1 – Belair

Aug. 29 – Elizabeth
Sept. 1 – Willunga
Sept. 13 – Stirling
Sept 20 – Mt Pleasant
October 10 – Belair

To book in for any of the above workshops, please phone **Trees For Life on 8406 0500.**

Tania Kearney

Media & Communications

Trees For Life

5 May Terrace, Brooklyn Park, SA

p: (08) 8406 0511 f: (08) 8406 0599 m: 0439 404 612

e: taniak@treesforlife.org.au w: www.treesforlife.org.au

BUSHCARE TRAINING UNDER ENVIROFUND GRANT

Following on from last year's successful workshops, Friends of Parks Inc., in conjunction with Trees for Life, have arranged further training courses for 2007 as follows:
Bush Regeneration, & Advanced Bush Regeneration Workshops April & May.

Plant Identification Workshops

Wednesday 12 September 2007 at Para Wirra Recreation Park, OR

Tuesday 18 September 2007 at Belair National Park.

These workshops will cover basic plant botany, the use of plant identification books and practical identification.

They will be held in the Volunteer Centres at both venues from 9am to 3.30pm. The maximum number of participants is 15 for each workshop. Tea and coffee will be provided but please bring your own lunch.

Grass Identification Workshops

Saturday 6 October 2007 at Para Wirra Recreation Park, OR

Saturday 10 November 2007 at Belair NP

These workshops will cover basic grass botany, the use of grass identification books, and practical grass identification.

The maximum number of participants for each workshop is 15. They will be held from 9am to 3.30pm in the Volunteer Centres of the Parks. Please bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided.

For all courses please bring with you:-

- ❖ A pen and notebook;
- ❖ Your lunch;
- ❖ Suitable clothing for the day such as wet weather gear or a hat and sunscreen and
- ❖ Sturdy shoes or boots.

If you wish to attend any of these workshops, please complete the attached form and return it to me. Remember, there are limited places for each workshop, so first come, first served.

Pam Smith
Secretariat
Friends of Parks Inc. BUSHCARE TRAINING WORKSHOPS

**To: Mrs. Pam Smith, Secretariat, Friends of Parks Inc.
GPO Box 1047, ADELAIDE SA 5001.**

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE EMAIL

FRIENDS GROUP.....

I wish to attend the following Bushcare Training Workshop/s:

- Plant Identification – Wednesday 12/9/07 at Para Wirra RP
- Plant Identification – Tuesday 18/9/07 at Belair NP
- Grass Identification – Saturday 06/10/07 at Para Wirra RP
- Grass Identification – Saturday 10/11/07 at Belair NP

SIGNEDDATE

FIRE AT BELAIR



On the 24th April at about 5pm the 4th engine on a freight train pulled up near the Belair railway station was obviously on fire. This train must have travelled through the tunnels and Belair National Park. Luckily it didn't start any bush fires in the dry

conditions which existed at the time. The CFS was able to quickly get the fire out with water and foam.



The Perks of Being Over 50

1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
2. In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
3. No one expects you to run anywhere.
4. People call at 9pm and ask; did I wake you?
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
6. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
7. Things you buy now won't wear out.
8. You can get excited about pension plans.
9. You can no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
10. You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.
11. Your eyes won't get much worse.
12. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
13. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
14. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
15. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to a manageable size.

(Copied from SUZUKI 4 wheel Drive Club of South Australia, May 2007)

ORANGE CARDS

PLEASE ONLY RETAIN YOURS WHILE YOU ARE AN ACTIVE MEMBER.
THE GROUP IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE CARDS. PLEASE RETURN YOUR
CARD TO A COMMITTEE MEMBER WHEN YOU NO LONGER NEED IT.

FRIENDS OF BELAIR NATIONAL PARK. ABN 38 093 387 757
PO Box 2 Belair SA 5052
Email friendsofbelairpark@msn.com. Website
www.communitywebs.org/friendsofbelairpark

OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2007

PRESIDENT Mike Cerchez 8339 6801
VICE PRESIDENT Jim Trueman 8278 9359
SECRETARY Jill Salvi 8278 6736
4 Colton Rd BLACKWOOD SA 5051
TREASURER Carol Parrott 6783
COMMITTEE MEMBERS. Eric Cole, Brian DuBois, Faye Loffler, Barry
Palmer, Ron Tamblyn.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE BOOKINGS	Jill Salvi	8278 6736
GUIDED WALKS	Shirley Alford	8278 1525
LIBRARIAN	Pam Tamblyn	8278 6593
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Mike Cerchez	8339 6801
WORKING BEES	Eric Cole	8278 3816

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE HONOURED BY ROTARY

To Bryn Troath, Senior Ranger, Southern Mount Lofty District, Belair National Park who received the Ranger of the Year 2007 Award and to Dr John Butler, Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park who was awarded The National Parks Volunteer for 2007. A special presentation was made to Dene Cordes for his coming retirement

CALENDAR 2007

General Meetings on the first Saturday of the month. 1.00pm at the Volunteer Centre, Long Gully, Belair National Park. Visitors welcome.

July Guest speaker will be Mary Cole with a power point presentation – Activities of Friends of Belair.

Barbecues – Meeting 3rd November is at 12.30pm for a barbecue. Please bring plate of salad or sweet slice to share and \$2.50 donation for meat.

Working Bees on Tuesdays and Fridays, meet outside the Information Centre, Belair National Park

Before 8.00 am Daylight Saving Time, or 8.30 am in the winter.

NO WORKING BEE IF THERE IS A TOTAL FIRE BAN.

Enquiries Eric 8278 3816

Guided Walks are from April to December, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday afternoons. Meet outside the Information Centre, Belair National Park at 2.00 pm. All welcome. Enquiries Shirley 8278 1525.

SPECIAL EVENTS

August -Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th . 23rd Annual Forum of Friends of Parks – Port Lincoln.

Hosted by Southern Eyre Parks Friends. Enquiries to Jill 8278 6736

December -Wednesday 19th Belair Park 116th Birthday and Friends 22nd Birthday.

23rd FRIENDS OF PARKS FORUM 3rd to 5th August 2007

This year the Forum will be hosted by Southern Eyre Parks Friends at Port Lincoln. The theme is “Catastrophe or Sustainability”. For transport, coaches will be hired from Adelaide and can pick up en-route. Excursions will involve visits to Coffin Bay National Park, Lincoln National Park, Wanilla Conservation Park, local sites – Seahorse Farm, Koppio Smithy Village, Arts Studios, Maritime Museum. Four excellent Speakers will address us on matters relating to the theme.

Those members who have attended previous forums usually have a very interesting time, and early notices of this one make it appear a good one. The venue will be the Racing Club, beginning with a Barbecue on Friday night, the big Dinner and presentations to Friends on Saturday night, and Sunday breakfast. Forum business with discussions and speakers will be on Saturday and Sunday mornings, with excursions arranged for the afternoons. August is the whale-watch season, so if you are planning to go, you need to get moving. Contact the Port Lincoln Travel Centre to reserve your accommodation. Tell them it is for the Friends of Parks conference. Ph. 8683 3544, or 1300 788 378.

Contact Jill for more information, 8278 6736. Registration kits will be out very soon.

Phytophthora

Bushwalking and Volunteer Workers Guidelines

Phytophthora (pronounced FY-TOFF-THORA) species are soil and waterborne watermoulds that impact on a wide variety of native plant species, exotic fruits and vegetables. The most susceptible native plant species in SA is the yacca (*xanthorrea* spp.) Myrtle Wattle (*Acacia myrtifolia*), Cone-bush (*Isopogon ceratophyllus*), Common Heath (*Epacris impressa*), Mount Lofty Bush-pea (*Pultenaea involucrata*), Stringybarks (*Eucalyptus obliqua* and *E.baxteri*), and many others. A group of these dying or dead plant species is generally a good indication of PC infection. Early symptoms of infection include wilting, yellowing and dry leaves. *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (Pc), also known as cinnamon fungus, is the most common and destructive species, and requires immediate action to stop its spread. Ornamental plant species such as Pine, Camellia, Hibiscus and Rhododendron, and fruit and vegetables such as apple, apricot, beans, citrus, macadamia, peach and tomato, are also affected by PC.

Bushwalkers and volunteer workers can spread the disease by moist soil and plant material sticking to footwear and tools.

You can help minimise the risk of spreading *Phytophthora* by following these guidelines:

- Park your car in designated car parks only.
- Keep to the designated roads and walking trails at all times.
- Avoid bushwalking when the soil is wet or muddy.
- Start and finish your bushwalk or work with clean footwear and tools (i.e. free of all soil and plant material). Keep your footwear as clean as possible during the walk.
- Remove soil from footwear and tools before leaving an area – don't take boots or shoes home to clean. Don't bring dirty boots or tools from home.
- Use boot cleaning facilities where provided.
- Any equipment being reused such as pots, stakes and tree guards must be cleaned and disinfected.



- Keep plants off the ground at all times.
- Disinfect water obtained from dams and streams.
- Avoid over watering your plants
- Some walking trails or sections of national parks may be closed due to serious infestations or high risk of spread. **OBEDI TRAIL CLOSED SIGNS** - penalties may apply.

How to keep your footwear clean

Bushwalkers are encouraged to carry a hygiene kit in their backpacks to keep their footwear clean.

A “hygiene kit” should contain:

- large and small hard brushes
- bottle of disinfectant, such as methylated spirits (undiluted) or household bleach (dilute 4 times with water)
- small spray bottle.

Cleaning procedure:

- Remove all soil and plant material from footwear using the brushes. Do not put your feet down on the ground.
- Disinfect the entire sole of your footwear with the spray bottle containing the disinfectant.
- Allow the sole of your footwear to dry for approximately one minute.
- Disinfect the brush used for removing soil from your footwear.
- Avoid re-contaminating footwear.



Hygiene kit used by NPWSA staff

Adapted from information supplied by DEH.

~~~~~  
**DISCLAIMER**

*The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors of the articles and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the Friends of Belair National Park.*