



Friends of Belair National Park

Volunteers working for Conservation
Established 1985



Patron: Dr. David C. Paton AM

Quartely Newsletter September 2012



PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

I was very sad to hear of the passing of Les Loffler on the 9th August. Les was a valued member, who contributed much to the group. We miss him as a key member of the men's weeding team. He also contributed in various other ways. He was a guest speaker. His skills as a woodworker will be missed. He worked on displays. He made the birds which are on display in the volunteer centre. He made gifts for guest speakers and the cupboard for our name badges. Our sympathy goes to Faye and the family.

In my dictionary, "Environment" is defined as that which encompasses surrounding objects, scenery, circumstances, etc, the sum of external influences affecting an organism, living conditions. The key to these definitions are the words encompass and sum of. So why does DEH, DNR, DEWRN have to keep adding letters to its name, thereby wasting money, by changing its stationery and logos? Why couldn't it just be the Department of Environment? Surely Natural Resources and their management are part of the environment. Isn't water part of the environment? Isn't our heritage is part of the environment? Interestingly on the radio, interviewers only refer to it as the Department of Environment.

Question? What defies gravity, that is goes up and never comes down? Answer; Belair National Park entrance fees. The fees are obviously a way of making money, but there must a stage where the increases become counterproductive. There must be a level of pricing that turns people away, whereas a lower price would bring in more people and more money.

The Targa Saga. We have received a reply from the Minister concerning Targa in the Park. The relevant paragraph follows: - "In regards to your concerns about future events, all applications to use the national parks are assessed against appropriate legislation, regulations and relevant management plans. In addition, they must demonstrate that the activity will not cause significant environment impact, adheres to safety standards and has community support". We can see from this that the Saga is not finished. While the Targa Rally is a popular event for some people, it does not really fit into the conservation values of a National Park. There could possibly be a place for a display or parade of the cars in a strictly controlled way in the recreation areas of the Park. The speed limit in the Park is 40KPH. This should apply to all.

Staffing. Unfortunately, we can no longer afford to staff our parks even to the low level of a few years ago. Our Rangers are now expected to do more with less.

On a more positive note we had a successful 3 month with a variety of activities. Planting with Hawthorndene Primary School is always a valuable experience. The Million Trees Planting on Sunday 29th July was also a great exercise, especially as there was a large Buddhist group who

came and really enjoyed the occasion. The monthly walks, guest speakers and numerous weeding sessions have continued successfully.

Michael Cerchez 19/08/12

Free Guided Walks April to November,

on the 4th Tuesday afternoon each month, starting promptly at 2.00 pm.

Ask at the Office, Belair National Park at 1.45 pm, for free entry. All welcome. BYO afternoon tea. See what is featured each month on a quiet 2 hour walk.

Remaining dates for Tuesday walks in 2012 are September 25th, October 23rd and November 27th.

Get a bookmark from Belair Park office to give to a friend. It has all these dates on it.

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Our big walk, the Professor Sir John Cleland Memorial Walk will be held on Sunday morning, 14th October 2012. See details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Enquiries to Jenny on 8278 8986.

Mapping the Flora of Belair National Park

James McGregor

In September 2011 I had taken some time off work and found myself cycling through the park. I quickly became captivated by the incredible floral displays throughout the park and set about trying to photograph as many plants as possible. I would go out each day and wander the many trails on offer with my eyes almost vertically fixated on whatever grew along the trail edge. I would snap my photos and then come home where I would identify the plant and record it on a spread sheet. This pretty quickly got me thinking "could I photograph all the plants in the park?" To answer this the obvious first step was to get a list of the plants in the park, which I found easily on the Department's website. Pretty quickly it became apparent to me that this list was not entirely accurate. There were many plants missing, some supposedly present but clearly extinct and some which just didn't seem right. So I began looking more widely for other lists, and I found several of them stretching back to a compilation by J.B. Cleland and E.H. Ising done in 1936, although there are earlier incomplete lists. I have now collated the records of 10 species lists from the park, plus many State Herbarium records and a list of plants I have found which have not previously been recorded.

For those that are interested in statistics I offer the following:

- There has been a total of around 520 introduced species, varieties and hybrids recorded in the park, although many have not naturalised.
- There has been around 480 native species, varieties and hybrids recorded for the park.
- Of those native species, about 10 are likely to have been incorrectly identified.
- At least 20 species have probably gone extinct in the park since European settlement, mostly orchids.

As I was compiling these lists and as it became harder and harder to find and tick off the plants on my list I began to wonder where exactly are all these plants were hiding. There are a few public records of where some plants are, but they are pretty scarce and hard to find, which is a good thing as it keeps collectible plants hidden in the bush, although ironically the most threatened species are precisely mapped on the internet. At about this time by complete chance I happened to bump into Jenny Skinner in the park, we got talking about orchids and before I knew it she was showing me where some of these gems were hidden. I honestly would never have found them without her help. It immediately got me thinking that there is an incredible amount of knowledge about these plants out

there but it is not being recorded. It is by luck rather than design that there are people willing to take on the bodies of verbal and spatial knowledge of from their forebears and carry the torch so to speak until they are ready to hand it on to the next person. This information could very easily be lost and equally is hard to access for other who could make excellent use of it for conservation planning.

So I changed my strategy. Rather than just chasing a photograph of every plant I wanted to go a step better and map every plant, for the whole park. By coincidence Bevin Scholz was doing the same kind of thing, but just with orchids (a much more sensible man!). I sat down with him and Jenny and compiled the first map of where the orchids in the park occur. There is a fair margin of error in it but by and large it is an excellent guide to where these plants are, and Bevin and I are constantly refining and adding to it. To map the other plants of the park I have been systematically zigzagging through the park, recording points where each species occurs. Once I have enough points I can start to draw outlines of where the plants occur and just as importantly where they do not.

This would be the first park of this size to have the flora comprehensively mapped, which would be an exciting feat but of limited use if the project stopped at that. The real value of this kind of mapping is in the interpretation. If you know where the plants grow you can ensure that threatened species are getting adequate protection. Ensure that trails, pipes and powerlines are not ploughing through valuable populations. It can help fire crews plan when the most suitable time of year to burn different areas is based on the needs of the plants. It can be used to know where the flowering plants are going to be and therefore where the most interesting walks are likely to be. The distribution can even be used as a baseline to check for population movement over time in response to fire regime and climate change. But these are only the basic applications. We can take the diversity information and assess where the most threatened species occur or where the most valuable areas to protect are. Replacing the existing conservation zones with scientifically justifiable zones. Modern mapping software can take the location information for each species such as slope, rainfall, aspect, soil type where they are known to occur and extrapolate out predicted species distributions for the region, giving new incredibly detailed insights into what the landscape looked like before clearing and development. Revegetation within the park could use the same information: for example this site is a slightly sloping, south facing ridge in clay loam soil with a bit of Kangaroo Grass growing on it under a Sheoak. With a strong dataset mapping software can tell you the species that most likely occur in that exact situation elsewhere in the bush and therefore the species which are most suitable for revegetation.

This information can help guide animal conservation too by identifying habitat needs. We could look at where the sightings of rare bird species occur and the computer may find that that coincides with certain plant species or set of plant species. The uses are only limited by the imagination.

As I achieve certain milestones I am passing information on to the Friends for your reference

I am only doing the mapping for a few hours on most weekends so this process is going to take a while, which is why I need some help. I do not want to take away from the incredibly valuable weeding work which many people are involved in so I have a list of a few species that I would love if everyone kept an eye out for.

Acacia gunnii
Acacia spinescens
Beyeria lechenaultii
Convolvulus sp.
Crassula helmsii
Cullen australasicum
Dipodium pardalinum

Glischrocaryon behrii
Hypoxis glabella var. glabella
Lobelia anceps
Lotus australis
Ophioglossum lusitanicum
Ozothamnus retusus
Persoonia juniperina
Platylobium obtusangulum
Ptilotus erubescens
Samolus repens
Spyridium parvifolium
Thomasia petalocalyx
Vittadinia spp.

These plants are uncommon, some are possibly extinct, or are highly seasonal and hard for me to map effectively. I will pass on some identification information to help you identify these plants in the field. If you find them can you please make a note of the location (a GPS coordinate is a bonus) and contact me via email.

jmcgregor@greeningsa.org.au

NO Parking.

A reminder when working in the park, keep off the roadside verges, that is where we some of our most precious natives grow, park in one of the many parking bays.

VALE

From the Advertiser

LOFFLER, Les.

Passed away suddenly August 9, 2012. Aged 67 years Beloved husband of Faye. Loving father of Natalie (deceased), Steve, Ben and Tim and his extended family Keren, Nicole and Veronica. Devoted Grampsie of Alysha, Jared, Megan, Tom, Joshua and Georgia. Now at home with his heavenly Father.

Les was a member for eight years. Refer to the presidents comments for more detail.

From the Advertiser

REECE, Paul Garner.

Passed away suddenly on June 4, 2012. Aged 64 years.

Paul was a member for 2¹/₂ years and will be remembered for guiding Tuesday walks and sharing his wide knowledge of orchids of the Mount Lofty Ranges.

EAST GERMANY, AFTER 22 YEARS.

The last time Peggy and I visited East Germany was in May 1990. The Berlin Wall had just fallen and Communism was about to end. It was a fairly drab and depressing place. Buildings had not been painted. Shops had very few goods. People queued for food. The cars were either the locally made 2 stroke Trabi or a few Russian makes. The pollution from old factories and the burning of brown coal was dreadful in the air and in the rivers. The main modern buildings were the stark communist era apartment buildings.

In May this year, when we visited Gera, the city where I was born, it was pleasing to see the changes. Gera is the third largest city in the State of Thuringia, 60 km south of Leipzig. Gera dates back to 995 AD and has been almost destroyed several times in wars. World War II and the communist era did not help. However, many buildings have now been restored and more are in the process of being restored. There are now new department stores and plenty of well stocked shops. Cars are now late model European makes. The pollution is no longer in evidence. The house where I was born has been well renovated and now, with its neighbours, is divided into pleasant apartments. We were lucky enough to be there on a holiday and the inhabitants



seemed to be having a good time in the parks and gardens, drinking those huge beers and consuming the local delicacy, Thüringer Rost Bratwurst.



Dresden was also a very interesting East German city to visit. Dresden is the capital of the State of Saxony, next to Thuringia. The centre of Dresden suffered greatly from Allied bombing in February 1945. There was heavy use of high explosives and incendiary bombs targeting the city centre. Dresden was known as the Florence on the Elbe because of its beautiful buildings and artistic collections, and it's a wonder there was anything left of its' beauty, after such severe bombings and the communist era. It was pleasing to see a city in regeneration with many of its significant buildings beautifully restored. One of the most noticeable things was the great number which had blackened stone work from the firebombing. In 2005 the restoration of Dresden's Frauenkirche was completed ready for the City's 800th anniversary. The stones of the ruins had been kept and catalogued during the Communist

Era, and a number were able to be used in their original location in the building. They stand out as fire blackened amongst the new stone work. This is now, once again, one of the World's most beautiful and architecturally significant churches.

The stark apartment buildings of the Communist Era can be refurbished and made reasonably attractive for present day use. For example the Dresden Youth Hostel shows what can be done with a rather drab building if it is gutted and refurbished.



Michael Cerchez

Working Bees.

Tuesday and Friday mornings. Enquiries 8278 3816
Meet by Belair Park Ticket Office
BEFORE 8.30am winter time, or
BEFORE 8am daylight saving time (from 7th October 2012)

Working Bees on other days, meet by arrangement.
For Mondays, phone 8277 9596
For Sundays or Wednesdays, phone 8278 3805

Membership forms and information are available from the Belair National Park Office or on our website or telephone 8278 6736.

DAYLIGHT SAVING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA. 2012/13
7th October 2012 to 7th April 2013

MONTHLY Meetings 2012

Usually (not always) on the first Saturday of the month.
1 pm at the Volunteer Centre, Long Gully, Belair NP.
Usually with an interesting speaker first, then the meeting. Visitors very welcome

Saturday September 1st 1.00 pm.
Speaker: Jen Pitman (our own Ranger who needs no introduction!)
Topic: The Healthy Habitats Project.

Saturday September 29th is the October meeting
(Friends' 28th Annual Forum is on the first weekend in October)
29/9/12 1.00 pm Speaker: Chreena Thomas.
Topic: "Living in an Environmental Village".
Chreena is a resident of Christie Walk, an environmental village in the city of Adelaide. She will talk to us about the village and the experience of living there.
<http://www.urbanecology.org.au/eco-cities/christie-walk/>

Saturday November 3rd 12.30 pm Barbecue
Please bring a salad or sweet slice to share and donation for meat.

Saturday December 1st 1.00 pm.
Speaker Mr. Robin Coles.
Topic: "Aboriginal Rock Art in the Adelaide Hills".
Robin is a Botanist who has worked for many years documenting the art and culture of the Peramangk people of the Adelaide hills area. He is a tutor for the Workers Education Association of South Australia (WEA) and has conducted tours with the WEA to aboriginal painting and archaeological sites in the Mount Lofty ranges for 25 years. He has published a book, together with Richard Hunter (deceased), http://www.axiompublishing.com.au/flypagetpl/shopproduct_details/262

No meeting in January.

Saturday February 2nd 2013
Annual General Meeting.
also Speaker: Shauna Potter
Topic: "The work of Biosecurity SA".

Shauna is a WoNS National Coordinator with Biosecurity SA. She will talk to us about her research in the management of pest plants (eg Bridal Creeper). There is some info at:
http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm_biosecurity/weeds/weeds_of_national_significance

The future of Forums.

For over twenty years there has been an annual Friends of Parks forum run by various groups on behalf of the FOP board.

There is no listed forum for next year.

What is the future of forums?

This question has been put to the FOP board by your committee.

The president of FOPInc has assured us that this matter will be discussed at this years forum.

For example

Do we have a forum each year?

what format will it be in?

Is there a specific person (a member of the board or not) who can travel to groups and guide them in running a forum?

A forum in alternate years with some other type of meeting in gap years?

For those going to this years forum can you get yourselves up to speed on these questions and any others you can think of.

Feeding Birds

We would like to draw the attention of the Friends,
to the fact that it is not permitted
to feed Birds
in Belair National Park.

- OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2012

PRESIDENT	Mike Cerchez	8339 6801
VICE PRESIDENT	Jim Trueman	8278 9359
SECRETARY	Jill Salvi	8278 6736
TREASURER	Carol Parrott	8278 6783
COMMITTEE MEMBERS.	Mary Cole, Brian DuBois, Barry Palmer, Mark Pedlar, Isabel Storer.	

FUNCTIONARIES

GUIDED WALKS	Jenny Skinner	8278 8986
LIBRARIAN	Shirley Alford	8278 1525
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Brian & Noeline DuBois	8270 4215
SIGNIFICANT TREES	Ron Tamblyn	8393 9803
VOLUNTEER CENTRE BOOKINGS	Jill Salvi	8278 6736
MEMBERSHIP	Carol Parrott	8278 6783
WEBSITE	Brian DuBois	8270 4215
WORKING BEE COORDINATOR	Mary Cole	8278 3816
WORKING BEES for		
Tuesday or Friday,	Mary Cole	8278 3816
Sunday or Wednesday	Betty Wise	8278 3805
Monday	Vaike Aldridge	8277 9596

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SPECIAL EVENTS

Friends of Parks 28th Annual Forum at Naracoorte Caves. 5-7 October 2012.

For information phone Jill 8278 6736.

Professor Cleland Memorial Walk

This year, the Friends of Belair National Park, will be holding their annual Sir John Cleland Memorial Walk on Sunday 14th October meeting at 9.45am for a 10am start. We will be leaving from the pavilion at Government Farm Oval 2 and the walk will take approximately 2-2.5 hours. Participants (including well behaved dogs on leads) need to have a reasonable level of fitness. BYO hat, sunscreen, water and snacks. For more information ring Jenny on 82788986 or email jenke@slmember.on.net.

Birthday Party

Held on the 19th of December to celebrate the birthday of Belair National Park.

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Membership Payments

1) Pay the treasurer at a meeting

2) Forward payment to

The Treasurer
Friends of Belair NP
PO Box 2, Belair 5052

3) Pay by internet use the following account information and notify the treasurer by email.

acmeparrott@picknowl.com.au

Bank SA

BSB 105-078

Acc No:- 306250940

Acc Name:- Friends of Belair Park

Annual renewal is \$10 a single, \$15 for a family regardless of when it is paid.

If joining after 30th June, your first half year is discounted to half price, so please pay \$5 for single, or \$7.50 for joint membership.