



Friends of Sturt Gorge Newsletter

www.fosg.org.au

No. 24: July 2011

This edition: Hindmarsh Island visit, Upcoming events, Craighorn planting, Promoting the Gorge, Magpie Creek Ash & Olive Control; The Gorge in Winter; Drill-and-fill; Vandalism; Training Updates; New Maps; Calendar.

Hindmarsh Island Landcare visit

On Sunday April 17th seven members joined the Glaziers at Goolwa to find out what they've been doing since moving down south. Starting at the Hindmarsh Island Landcare Group's nursery just over the bridge, we were given a guided tour of sites where local landholders are revegetating paddocks and watercourses. We had a perfect day, and loved seeing wetlands bursting with life and beautiful remnant vegetation on the river cliffs. A big thank you to Angela, Pat and Dave for this great opportunity to explore their new patch.



Chris, Joanne and Pat explore the Glazier's patch

Upcoming events

FOSG Showcase

Join us on **Saturday 24th September**, 1-4pm, Sturt Gorge Recreation Park. Members will take you on a guided tour of project sites including Horner's Bridge and Western Link Trails, Magpie Creek State NRM Grant area, the historic ruin, and the beautiful grey box grassy woodland off Broadmeadow Drive at Flagstaff Hill. RSVP by Sept 19th for catering and a timetable on 7120 6340.



Craighorn Planting

July 9th was the annual Million Trees revegetation day in the Craighorn Farm area of the Park. About 15 volunteers braved the cold and rain to revegetate one of the former Minda Farm paddocks with about 800 plants including *Olearia* sp., *Kennedia prostrata*, *Allocasuarina verticillata* and *Acacia* sp..



Amy and the enthusiastic planting volunteers

Promoting the Gorge - Chris Thomson

Lesley Hooper, director of Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten, has noticed Rick, Dennis and myself heading into the Gorge with our tools and has become interested in seeing what the area might offer her children. She organised a walk to look at 'trees' on the 31st of May and I met her down there and explained what work the FOSG was doing.

She subsequently invited Amy to speak at their Art Show, where the children shared the paintings and models of trees they had created with their families and friends.



Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten children exploring the Gorge

The Kindergarten is keen to involve the children in growing some plants for the Friends to use in the Gorge. Amy has submitted an NRM Achiever Grant for a project "Healthy Gums on Starlight" which would involve the Kindergarten community in a nearby area off Starlight Crescent. We are clearing olives and boneseed from around remnant grey box trees (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*), and the project will involve planting understorey species around these trees and monitoring birds. Both aspects would involve the local community and the Kindergarten. We'll keep you posted.

Magpie Creek Olive and Ash Control



Over the last year, you might have noticed a lot of activity along Magpie Creek off Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights. We contracted Better Bushland to frill and poison mature olive and ash trees along Magpie Creek, funded by a 2010 State NRM Community Grant (\$8000) and a 2010 DENR Volunteer Support Grant 2010 (\$2000).

We contributed 302.5 volunteer hours (worth \$6523), removing small olives, ash, briar rose, and bridal creeper from the creekline and surrounding hillsides. We are also weeding around the small area of revegetation we undertook in June 2010, which is growing really well; some of the plants, including the Correas are already in flower.



Before and after photos of Magpie Creek, taken March and June 2011

The Gorge in winter

If you are lucky enough to be out walking in the Gorge at the moment, keep an eye out for these. Clockwise from top left - the Australian floral emblem, *Acacia pycnantha*, or golden wattle; scented sundews (*Drosera whittakeri*) growing about 5-10cm high; caterpillars of the Wanderer butterfly, feeding on the leaves of the introduced broad-leaved cotton bush, *Asclepias rotundifolia*; and the inconspicuous field wood rush (*Luzula meridionalis*) which grows about 20 cm in height in grassy woodland.



Working Bee methods - drill and fill

The weed control work that the Friends undertake is guided by our Vegetation Management Plan, and by the Bradley Method of bush regeneration. These principles and detailed instructions for individual species of weed can be found in publications such as 'Stop Bushland Weeds: a guide to successful weeding in South Australia's bushland' by Meg Robertson (2005, NCSSA).

Our preferred method for treating mature trees of olive and ash is drill-and-fill. This involves drilling holes a couple of centimetres deep at about 2cm intervals around the entire base of the actively growing tree, and filling these mini-wells with a 1:5 mix of glyphosate to water. This leaves the plant to die in situ, maintains some habitat structure, and reduces the erosion and weed infiltration that could occur if trees were cut down or dug out.



Drill holes at base of olive tree

Vandalism in the Park

We are concerned that some teenagers have been seen carrying saws and hatchets into the Park in Flagstaff Hill, and subsequently large and small native, and non-native trees, have been found felled. Plants, stakes, and protective plastic mesh cages have been ripped out of the ground along the creekline and walking track leading from Renwick Street down to Gorelon Track.

This destruction is distressing for the members that have been devoting up to 15 hours of work a week at these sites. If you notice anything of concern, please contact Ranger Kat Mroczek on 8130 9064. If it is an emergency that needs immediate assistance, dial 000, or call 1300 650 411 and leave a message on pager number 465283 for the Southern Lofty Duty Officer.



Gum that has been sawed off

Training Update: Venemous Animals

Working or walking in the Gorge in warmer weather, there is a good chance you will come across reptiles. Snakes listed as being found in the Park include the eastern brown snake, red bellied black snake and little whip snake. As a result, many of our members have attended training provided by DENR to learn more about the ecology of snakes, snake behaviour and first aid for snake bite.

The June 24th workshop, held at the Morialta Volunteer Centre, was presented by Geoff Coombe, Andre van Paridan and Chris Cotton. We learnt about the species found in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges region, why it is important to learn respect not fear for snakes, as well as seeing several live specimens. Notes taken at the presentation will be made available in the Members Only section of the web site, if you need a refresher.



A colourful reptilian exhibit

Training Update: Broadleaf weeds in grassy woodlands

An effective method of weed control that worked for everything.....if only it existed! Thanks to funding from the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board, Chris Thomson and Amy Blaylock recently attended a 3 hour training session run by Trees for Life called 'Grassy Ecosystems: management of broadleaf weeds'.

We learnt how to use *Brush-Off* to deal with infestations of small broadleaf and bulbous weeds such as bridal creeper, soursob, guildford grass, cape tulip and plantain, where we are working along a weed front, or where they are growing amongst native grasses, ground covers and lilies.

A key part of the training was learning how to calibrate the spray unit and technique to ensure we applied the chemical at the appropriate per hectare rate. This is critical because *Brush-Off* remains active in the soil for up to 22 months and applying too much can kill plants we are trying to protect. The advantage of *Brush-Off* over Glyphosate is that, used correctly, you can spray it on native plants without killing them, unlike Glyphosate, which can damage or kill any plant it contacts.

This new method will complement the range of techniques we can employ to be most effective for the particular situation and weed species we are working on. These include hand pulling, grubbing, brushcutting, drill-and-fill, spot spraying with Glyphosate, and cut and swab. If you require training, please let us know so that we can provide you with opportunities to attend upcoming courses, or apply for grants to cover our costs.



Peter Wotton demonstrates correct spraying technique

New maps

We have made some adjustments to our popular walking trail maps. So, what has changed? The Park is now shaded a light green, council reserves are in a light yellow, and all surrounding suburb names have been added. New trails have also been added. Printed on 'Monsoon' waterproof paper, they are still a low \$10 - the perfect gift for friends or family!



FRIENDS OF STURT GORGE

Calendar of Events AUGUST – NOVEMBER 2011

Visit our web site www.fosg.org.au

Month	Date	Purpose	Meeting Place/Focus	Man Unit*
Aug	Thurs 4th	Working Bee	9 AM Meet at Fire Access Gate 1 York Dr (opp Pelham St) Flagstaff Hill. Work at end of Marri Track to clear olives & boneseed around <i>Logania</i> plants.	MU26 Pty 4
	Tues 16th	Committee Meeting	7.30PM at Bellevue Heights Primary School	
	Sat 20th	Working Bee	9AM Meet at pumping station on Gorge Rd, Bellevue Heights. Weed around <i>Logania</i> in Site 1, MU10, then sweep hillside up to road for woody weeds.	MU10 and 11
	Mon 22nd	Trail Maint	9AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant – See note below	
Sept	Thurs 1st	Working Bee	9 AM Meet behind Scout Hall, Black Rd Flagstaff Hill to do follow up work on the eastern side of the Marriyerli Track and the northern end loop track.	MU26 Pty 4
	Sat 17th	Working Bee	9AM Opp 21 Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights. Boneseed, olives and briar rose in Site 1 bordering revegetated paddock over Magpie Creek.	MU15
	Tues 20th	General Meeting	7.30PM at Bellevue Heights Primary. Guest speaker, update on current projects and supper provided.	
	Sat 24 th	Showcase	1-4pm. Friends of Sturt Gorge Showcase. Members will take you on a tour of selected project sites around the Gorge. Join us at one or all of the sites. Afternoon tea will be provided. Please RSVP** for timetable/catering.	
	Mon 26th	Trail Maint	9 AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant (below)	
Oct	Thurs 6th	Working Bee	9AM Fire Access Gate 1, York Dr (opp. Pelham St.) Small amount of work to be finished in MU 28 and then olive & boneseed in adjacent area on NW boundary – MU 24.	MU28 & MU 24 Pty 1 & Pty 5
	Sat 15th	Working Bee	9AM Meet by Gate 4, Gorge Rd, Bellevue Heights – work along olive front south of Kurrakilla Trail.	
	Tues 18th	Committee Meeting	7.30 pm Bellevue Heights Primary School	MU17
	Mon 24th	Trail Maint	9AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant (below)	
Nov	Thurs 3rd	Working Bee	9AM Meet Cnr Elgin Way & Broadmeadow Dr. Flagstaff Hill Sweep for boneseed and olive seedlings between Gate 12 & Gorge St & then continue removal of mature olives close to ridge line.	MU 9 Pty 2
	Tues 15th	General Meeting	7.30PM at Bellevue Heights Primary. Guest speaker, update on current projects and supper provided.	
	Sat 19 th	Working Bee	9AM Meet Opp 21 Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights. Work south towards Site 1 MU15 on boneseed and olives, over Magpie Creek.	MU15 Site 1
	Mon 28th	Trail Maint	9AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant (below)	

*Management Unit, Sturt Gorge Recreation Park Vegetation Management Plan (2003)

**RSVP to Amy on 7120 6340 or shawlock@internode.on.net

Please note that sites for these working bees may change due to grant priorities.

Interested in walking trails? Bob Grant leads regular working bees to maintain walking trails within the Park. These are held on the 4th Monday of the month. Please contact him on 73298296 or email bobgrant@adam.com.au for information. **Sunday Working Bees** Extra working bees on a Sunday will be called from time to time – these will be arranged by David Clark.