



# Friends of Sturt Gorge Newsletter

www.fosg.org.au

**No. 25: Dec 2011**

**This edition:** Excellent training opportunities; Upcoming events; Protecting *Senecio hypoleucus* plants; Sturt Gorge Showcase; SA Herpetology Group walk and talk; Grant Successes and Progress; Calendar.

## Excellent training opportunities

This year our members have taken up some great training opportunities - offered through Friends of Parks Inc, the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board (AMLR NRMB), Trees for Life, and formal courses such as Red Cross First Aid supported by our Office for Volunteers 2010 grant.

In October, I attended a Grassy Woodlands workshop with the renowned Anne Prescott, through the Land Management Program of the AMLR NRMB. It was held on a beautiful working property at Charleston where stock have been excluded from a ridge of pink gum woodland for the last two years. The picture top right shows the incredible natural regeneration that has occurred, and we walked through this area learning how to assess the health of the woodland (middle photo), identify native grasses, and management options.

I would encourage any members who want to develop new skills or take a refresher to let the Committee know, so that we can keep our eyes open for workshops or grants to support you.



Pink gum woodland, Charleston



Assessing vegetation structure



Native grasses on the lower slopes

## Upcoming events

There are a couple of working bees left for the year - trail maintenance and two weed controls on the north. See the calendar at the back for more information.

Our annual picnic at Karinya, Shepherds Hill Rd, is on **Tuesday 17th Jan 2012** from 7pm. Please bring a plate of food to share; BYO drinks and chair. Don't forget \$10 to renew your family's membership for the year.

## Protecting *Senecio hypoleucus* plants

The August working bee on the northern side of the Gorge focussed on relieving several *Senecio hypoleucus* plants, rated as 'Uncommon' in the Southern Lofty region, from encroaching olive trees.



## Sturt Gorge Showcase

On September 24th we ran our first and very successful *Friends of Sturt Gorge Showcase* to promote the projects we have been working on. With five stops around the Gorge, 29 people joined the tour over the afternoon, including City of Mitcham Mayor Michael Picton, members of other Friends groups, our members and the public.



Showcase starts at Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights

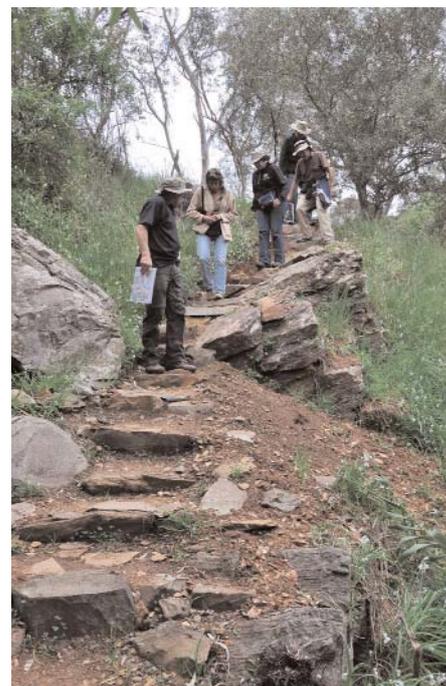
We provided afternoon tea and information about each of the sites we visited, including statistics of the hours and types of work completed, and photos showing the sites before our work began. People were impressed by how much work we have undertaken, and were interested to see parts of the Park they had never visited before.



Magpie Creek ruins



Speaking with Mayor Picton, Broadmeadow Drive, Flagstaff Hill



Horner's Bridge Trail

Here are a selection of photos from the day and a summary of the site statistics.

### Showcase Summary

#### Stop 1. Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights

Work began in 1999. Volunteer Hours up to June 2011 = 1904  
Grant funding secured for this site = \$15,990

#### Stop 2. Horners Bridge Trail, Craighburn

Work began in 2010. Volunteer Hours (2010 only) = 247  
Grant funding secured for this site and trail equipment = \$8504

#### Stop 3. Broadmeadow Drive, Flagstaff Hill

Work began in 2001. Volunteer Hours up to June 2011 = 2630  
Grant funding secured for this site and equipment = \$22,834

#### Stop 4. Renwick Street, Flagstaff Hill

Work began in 2008. Volunteer Hours not including 2011 = 1142  
Grant funding secured for this site = \$830

#### Stop 5. Western Link Trail, Bedford Park

Work began in 2009. Volunteer Hours not including 2011 = 695



Comparing old photos at Renwick St



David (right) leads the group along the Western Link Trail

## SA Herpetology Group walk and talk

Shaun Thomas and Peter Matejic, from the SA Herpetology Group, were our guest speakers at the September General Meeting. Armed with reptilian friends, an impressive slide show and stories galore, they regaled us for a good two hours about the reptiles and amphibians that we have, or should have, in the Sturt Gorge. We were very lucky to be able to handle an Eastern water skink and a dragon (see photo right).

On October 8th, Peter led walk in the Gorge to show us sites where the threatened Cunningham's Skink has been found. We didn't find any on the day, but we all now know what makes a perfect habitat for them. Recently, some of our members have returned to an area next to the Sturt River and removed some ash trees that were completely shading a rocky face where Cunningham's were found in 2007 but haven't been seen since.



Who is more surprised?



Peter searching a site where Cunningham's Skink has been found



Peter demonstrating how to use a mirror to see into crevices



A Cunningham's Skink from the SA Herpetology Group

## Grant Successes and Progress

### **Protecting threatened plant species in grey box grassy woodland, Flagstaff Hill**

We were lucky enough to receive the full amount applied for from the Federal Government's 2011-12 Community Action Grants. Most of the \$13,552 will be used on olives that are in steeper areas off Broadmeadow Drive in our second highest priority area for the whole Park, Management Unit 9.

This project will also involve our group working with students from Flagstaff Hill Primary School on olives, and will culminate in a community event to promote the project.

### **Bushland Drive Olive Blitz**

We have been successful in our *Volunteer Support Grant 2011*, receiving \$3500 to get *Better Bushland* to work on olives in steep areas of Magpie Creek's northern bank.

Our working bees will start from the top of the hill and work down to meet them. Here is a 'before' photo taken in November looking south across Magpie Creek.



### **Healthy Gums on Starlight**

In November Starlight Crescent residents and Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten families were given a flyer promoting the project. Bird Survey #2 was done on November 18th, and the large river red gums down near the creek line have been completely freed of olives thanks to the tireless efforts of Dennis, Chris and Rick.

The order for local provenance understorey plants has been placed with *Growing Bush*, and Rick has been busy working with children at the Kindergarten to propagate plants for the creek line and around the remnant grey box and river red gums.



## Friends of Sturt Gorge

### Calendar of Events December 2011 – March 2012

Visit our web site [www.fosg.org.au](http://www.fosg.org.au)

Month	Date	Purpose	Meeting Place/Focus	Man Unit*
Dec	Thurs 1st	Working Bee	8.30AM. Meet behind the Scout Hall, Black Rd, Flagstaff Hill. Working in a NE direction from Scout Hall, there is a large number of boneseed plants as well as a few olives.	MU26 Pty Area 4
	Tues 13 <sup>th</sup>	Working Bee (special)	8:45 AM Meet at reserve, end of Mountbatten Drive. Supporting a Conservation Volunteers Australia team with DENR to work on olives along Magpie Creek.	MU15 Pty Area 12
	Sat 17th	Working Bee	8.30AM Meet opposite no. 10, Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights and continue olive and other woody weed work down hill from November working bee (Volunteer Support Grant)	MU17 Pty Area 7
	Mon 19th	Trail Maint	8.30AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant – See note below	
<b>NO DECEMBER MEETING</b>				
Jan	Thurs 5th	Working Bee	8:30 AM Opp No.62 Broadmeadow Dve, Flagstaff Hill Continue to work in area around <i>Glycine</i> plants to reduce pressure of woody weeds (Community Action Grant)	MU9 Pty Area 2
	Tues 17th	General Meeting	7.00 pm Picnic meeting at Karinya Reserve, Shepherd Hill Road, Eden Hills. Bring a plate to share. Please bring a chair.	
	Sat 21st	Working Bee	8.30AM Opp 21 Bushland Dve, Bellevue Heights. Work south and west of Site 1 on olives and other woody weeds (Volunteer Support Grant)	MU17 Pty Area 7
	Mon 23rd	Trail Maint	8.30AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant – See note below	
Feb	Thurs 2nd	Working Bee	8:30 AM Meet at Fire Gate1, York Dr (opp Pelham St) Flagstaff Hill. Work either side of the Marri Track near the northern end – olives & boneseed.	MU26/24 Pty Area 4 & 5
	Sat 18th	Working Bee	8.30AM End Gorge Rd, Bellevue Heights. Sweep through Site 1 west towards Site 2 above path for follow up on woody weeds post-burn	MU11 Pty Area 9
	Tues 21st	Committee Meeting	7.30 PM Bellevue Heights Primary School staff room	
	Mon 27 <sup>th</sup>	Trail Maint	8.30 AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant – See note below	
Mar	Thurs 1st	Working Bee	9 AM Meet opp 52 Broadmeadow Dr, Flagstaff Hill. Sweep of worked area and continue along ridge line freeing up old growth gums (Community Action Grant)	MU9 Pty Area 2
	Sat 17th	Working Bee	9 AM Opposite no. 10, Bushland Drive, Bellevue Heights and continue olive and other woody weed work down hill from December working bee and east (Volunteer Support Grant)	MU17 Pty Area 7
	Tues 20th	General Meeting	7.30 pm Bellevue Heights Primary School staff room. Guest speaker, supper and library.	
	Mon 26th	Trail Maint	9 AM Trail Maintenance – Refer to Bob Grant – See note below	

\*Management Unit from Sturt Gorge Recreation Park Vegetation Management Plan 200)

ON FIRE BAN DAYS WORKING BEES ARE CANCELLED

**Interested in walking trails?** Bob Grant leads regular working bees to maintain walking trails within the Park. These are usually held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month. Please contact him on 7329 8296 or email [bobgrant@adam.com.au](mailto:bobgrant@adam.com.au) for more information.