



FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER NEWS

JANUARY 2015

JANUARY'S WORK PARTY

- Date:** SUNDAY, 18 JANUARY
- When:** 8.30am – 12 noon
- Location:** Wildflower Triangle
- Meet:** At the Bindubi Street entrance where the bike path goes under the road
- Tasks:** Weeding and watering grasses planted in April, cutting out woody weeds and other weeding
- Wear:** Long-sleeved shirt, trousers, hat and sturdy footwear.
- Bring:** Some drinking water, a mug and some food to share for morning tea. Warm drinks and juice will be provided.

For more information: contact Sarah Hnatiuk on 6251 2228 or 0424 263 565 or sarahhnatiuk@yahoo.com.au

February's work party will be held on Sunday 15 February from 8.30am to 12 noon. We hope to be working on the south-western slopes of the hill, watering shrubs planted last May and continuing to cut out woody weeds where we left off in December.

EVENTS OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS

Friends of Mount Painter have had a busy time in the six months since our last newsletter.

One of the more demanding activities for us was developing **new interpretive signs for the hill** with a grant from Spicers. It took many hours of work with Lois Padgham from the Parks



and Conservation Service who put together text and photos to give us the three very fine signs along the Summit Path. We are also grateful to Charles Tambiah for providing the panoramic shots and for his advice on how to make the most of the signage. The signs were launched for us by Shane Rattenbury, the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, in October.



We combined the launching of the signs with **a 25th birthday party for Friends of Mount Painter**. We were established in 1989 at the very start of Parkcare in the ACT and have operated continuously since then, assisting the Parks and Conservation Service in managing the reserve. The results of this joint effort are visible in the young trees and shrubs that can now be seen from the roads as you drive past and the absence of the largest woody weeds that used to infest parts of the reserve.



We were pleased that some of the significant people from FOMP's early days were able to join us: Philip Bell and Valerie Taylor, the first two Convenors of the group, came, as did David Hogg who produced the plan that has guided the planting of trees and shrubs on the hill.

We have **a new logo** that was developed on the basis of members' suggestions about what it should show by Debbie Saunders and Phil Keaton. It captures the shape of the hill, its location and the bluebell that we find on the reserve. Have a look at it at the top of page 1!

A large group of international volunteers from Conservation Volunteers Australia and a smaller one from the Sunday Assembly helped us with erosion control, weeding, tidying away pink tree guards where plants had died or the guards were broken or dislodged, and protecting young plants with mesh guards.



Reptile surveys on the reserve. You may have wondered why roof tiles have been laid out on the hillside above the bike path through the Wildflower Triangle. As reptiles and amphibians make use of them for shelter, the tiles provide a way of identifying the species of these animals that are present in the area and provide an indication of the area's biodiversity.

A similar survey was carried out last year on the south-eastern and eastern sides of the hill. Mel Snape from ACT Conservation, Planning and Research reported on the results: baby brown snakes, a *Ctenotus* which was not identified to species (either a Copper Tail or a Striped Skink, said to like rocks and not seen often in other reserves) and a couple of *Lampropholis* (very common Delicate or Garden Skinks). Mel commented that 'In total we only detected 6 reptiles across two grids of thirty tiles, each checked seven times. So pretty low really. Possibly this is due to the presence of lots of naturally occurring shelters such that the tiles aren't as attractive as they might be elsewhere'.

2014 REPORT ON LANDCARE IN THE ACT

ACT Parks and Conservation Service's annual publication about the work of Landcare and Parkcare groups in 2014 is now available at http://www.tams.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/675675/Scribbly-Gum-Newsletter-December-2014.pdf. (You may need to copy this address into your browser to open it.) It gives you an idea of the variety and size of the volunteer effort that goes into caring for our reserves and open spaces.

PLANT GUIDE

A gardener's guide to what plants are suitable for new homes has been developed by the Land Development Agency and Greening Australia: see [LDA website](#). While it is intended for people moving into the new suburbs in Molonglo, it may be of interest for people living elsewhere.

For more information about anything in this newsletter, contact Sarah Hnatiuk on 0424 263 565 or at sarahhnatiuk@yahoo.com.au.