



FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER NEWS

JULY 2017

For more information about anything in this newsletter: contact Sarah Hnatiuk
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JULY WORK PARTY

- Date:** Sunday, 16 July
- When:** 9am – 12 noon
- Location:** Summit Sheoak planting
- To reach the location:** Enter reserve between 20 and 22 Booth Crescent, Cook, and follow gravel road uphill to the gate above the water tanks
- Tasks:** Protecting Sheoak seedlings by installing large corflute guards
- Wear:** Sturdy footwear and clothes to protect you from the sun, cold and prickly weeds
- Bring:** Some drinking water, a mug and some food to share for morning tea

All tools provided. No experience needed.



PLANTING IN AUGUST

Friends of Aranda Bushland will join us for our August work party when we will be planting 100 Yellow Burr-daisies on the hill slopes above the noticeboard near the Booth Crescent entrance to the reserve. This work party will be held on Sunday, 20 August from 9am to noon. As the daisies are a rare species, it will be good to have more of them growing on Mount Painter.

Yellow Burr-daisy (*Calotis lappulacea*).
Photo by Lois Padgham.

Even though they are relatively common on Mount Painter, Yellow Burr-daisies are listed as rare in the ACT. In his 2012-13 'Rare Plant Survey of Canberra Nature Park', Michael Mulvaney from the ACT Government's Conservation Planning and Research unit says the daisy:

... is known from about 35 locations in the ACT, chiefly from rocky woodland. Around 10,000 plants occur on Red Hill, with a few thousand plants also occurring on Mt Painter and Tuggeranong Hill. Populations elsewhere tend to be in the few hundreds or less.

Reiner Rehwinkel referred to a similar situation in a 2007 report. He listed the Yellow Burr-daisy as among the rarest species in several hundred woodland and grassland remnants surveyed in the ACT and in surrounding NSW.

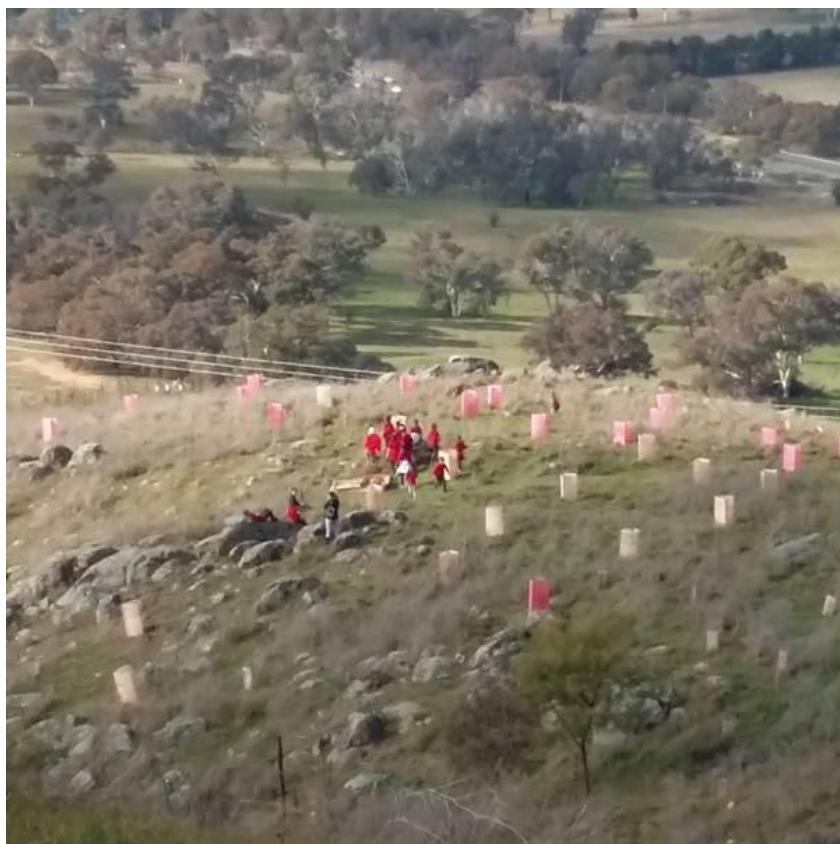
MACQUARIE PRIMARY SCHOOL ON MOUNT PAINTER

Mount Painter was the destination for several Macquarie Primary School class excursions during last term. As part of their learning about their natural and social environments, the students have been exploring their world from school playground through local streets to Mount Painter's summit. The school's philosophy is that, 'For students to connect with the environment, we believe they need to experience it'. Kindergarten and Years 1, 3 and 6 have all had the opportunity to have those connecting experiences recently.



Left: Rest stop at the Cook Memorial on the way up
Above: Looking down on fog in the Molonglo Valley
Below: Climbing on the rocks was great.





Exploring among the Drooping Sheoak seedlings

For much of the year, Mount Painter's summit is weedy, especially with dense clumps of very prickly Saffron Thistles, and there is long grass where snakes and tripping obstacles like rocks and logs might be hidden. Going off the path then is difficult, but now that it is winter, the grass is short and the thistles have died and are breaking down. The students could explore widely and enjoy climbing on the boulders. They liked being up high.

One of the students from Year 3 spent a long time making a very accurate drawing of the view from the end of the summit path. He included rocks, trees, William Hovell Drive and the electricity pylons in the Molonglo Valley below.



HOW MANY KANGAROOS LIVE ON MOUNT PAINTER AND THE SURROUNDING PADDOCKS?

On 10 May six members of Friends of Mount Painter joined the kangaroo counting team from Conservation, Planning and Research for a sweep count of the kangaroos in the area bounded by the suburb of Cook, Coulter and William Hovell Drives and Bindubi Street. We made up a total of 18 people who walked in a line over the area, counting the kangaroos that passed through our line. We made two counts; the morning one yielded a total of 305 and in the afternoon we counted 297 – that gave us a total of about 300 kangaroos living in the area.

THE RESERVE HAS A FINE NEW WOODEN BENCH



Clearing the site

Our new bench is beside the interpretive sign on the side path off the path to the summit. Rangers Phil Selmes and Chris Lambert installed it one foggy morning.



Digging holes for the legs



Above: Making sure the top is level



Right: The plaque attached to the bench

UPDATE ON REVEGETATING THE HILL



- In May we added 21 seedlings to two existing clumps of trees and shrubs on the south east slope. They included nine Broad-leaved Peppermints grown from seed collected by CSIRO from trees on the reserve.
- Eighty-eight per cent of the 400 Drooping Sheoaks planted last July are still alive. This is an astounding result! With the Green Army's help, we are now weeding them and protecting them with larger guards than they were planted with. You can see some of them protruding from their guards if you visit the planting just south east of the summit.

Drooping Sheoak seedling (<http://www.treeproject.org.au/seedling-database/allocasuarina-verticalifolia>)

Compiled by Sarah Hnatiuk