

**GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP connects, supports and leads local communities to improve the health of Ginninderra Creek & surrounding environments**



ACT and Region Frogwatch Program & the Ginninderra and Yass components of Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch operate from the GCG office

Web: [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au);  
Office: Kippax Health Centre, Holt ACT  
Phone: 02 6278 3309

## GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP NEWS **NOVEMBER 2017**

Please distribute this newsletter to others in your networks and groups, or refer them to the link at [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au).

### *From the Convenor*

We invite all members of GCG to attend the **AGM** on Monday 11 December, 5 pm, followed by the **Christmas Party**. Details are below. Also below is information about progress with the **Strategic Plan** and our urgent need for **funding**. In other news, we are thrilled that GCG has been chosen as winner of the Conservation Council's 2017 Environment Award for '**Member Group of the Year**'! More information below. Also, we **welcome** Fiona Spier who has now formally joined the office team in the Projects Officer role, and Belinda Pratt who has taken on the role of Financial Administrator.

*Sandy Lolicato*

#### **IN THIS ISSUE** (hyperlinked)

**From the GCG Office, Frogwatch & Waterwatch:** [General GCG and Landcare](#); [Frogwatch](#); [Waterwatch](#).

**In Ginninderra Creek catchment:** [Umbagog](#); [Aranda Bushland](#); [Hall](#); [Mt Painter](#); [North Belconnen](#); [Crace](#); [Mt Rogers](#); [Mulligans Flat](#); [Jaramlee Park](#).

**Around the region:** [Froggy observations](#); [Wild Pollinator Count mid-November](#); [Snakes Alive in January](#).

#### SUMMARY OF UPCOMING DATES

[Acknowledgement](#)

## **From the GCG office, Frogwatch and Waterwatch**

### **GENERAL GCG & LANDCARE**

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and GCG CHRISTMAS PARTY, Monday 11 December 5pm.**

GCG's AGM will be held on **Monday 11 December from 5 til 6 pm** in the **Old Kippax Health Centre** (where the GCG office is). All welcome! As part of the AGM, Bruno Ferronato will give a short presentation on turtles and the health of turtles in our catchment.

#### ***The Christmas party will immediately follow the AGM***

Come to the Christmas party and help celebrate GCG's many 2017 achievements in Frogwatch and Landcare and Waterwatch, which would not have been possible without YOU – our wonderful volunteers!! This get-together, with free drinks and food will be held **in the courtyard** at the **Old Kippax Health Centre, Holt**. Local heroes awards will be presented to outstanding volunteers. All Landcare, Waterwatch and Frogwatch volunteers will be warmly welcomed!!

## STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic planning process is progressing well. Future funding now must be secured, to ensure that we can deliver on the outcomes in the plan and make an impact on the catchment.

## FUNDING CRITICAL: COORDINATING WITH LANDCARE ACT

As advised to GCG members previously, the financial position at GCG is very tight for next financial year. To this end, SACTCG and GCG have jointly placed a budget submission to the ACT Treasury for funding. The recently developed 'strategic plan on a page', which outlines GCG's vision, mission, program priority areas and foundational attributes, was also sent as part of the budget bid. We appreciate all the input provided by our members to the strategic planning process. Any statements of support for the GCG or Frogwatch budget bids would be appreciated.

We are also working closely with Landcare ACT in facilitating a coordinated approach (with ACT NRM) to National Landcare Programme (NLP2) funding. Dr Ken Hodgkinson and Sandy Lolicato attended the first AGM of Landcare ACT (LACT). Under the leadership of Dr Peter Bridgewater, the organisation is having an increasing presence in influencing sound NRM decisions in the ACT and region. Karissa and Peter Bridgewater are both continuing to work with the National Landcare Program to influence funding at the national level.

## WINNER! – CONSERVATION COUNCIL MEMBER GROUP OF THE YEAR

GCG was awarded the Conservation Council's Member Group of the Year award at the Conservation Council Spring Mingle last Friday night (27 October). This award recognises the outstanding contribution that GCG and member groups have made in maintaining and improving the environment. The award is a testament to all the hard work you, our volunteers, are doing in making a difference in the catchment. This award also helps to lift our profile as a critical organisation for our community. Sandy Lolicato (*centre in the photo*) accepted the award on behalf of GCG, presented by Rod Griffiths (*right*), Conservation Council Chairperson.



## EROSION CONTROL WORKSHOP for Hall/Wallaroo

**Erosion Control and Water Movement in the Landscape**, 9–12 Saturday 3 December, location to be advised when you register. This workshop is facilitated by GCG, for rural landholders in the Hall/Wallaroo area.

*Topics:*

- Gully and riparian erosion – how, why and when should we fix it?
- The movement and storage of water within a functional local landscape
- A range of low-cost, human-scale techniques, using locally available materials to tackle a variety of erosion issues.

*With a hands-on component to:*

- Demonstrate the application of principles for low cost erosion control
- Provide skills in interpreting the landscape
- Allow the opportunity for hands-on experience in addressing erosion

For more information, contact Karissa at [landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au) or phone 6278 3309.

## LANDCARE SURVEY

The National Landcare Network is running a very short, anonymous survey to help paint a better picture of how long people have been involved in Landcare (both as professionals and/or as volunteers). We are asked to complete it here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FKYGRBD> and also to circulate the link and request to others as widely as possible (they appreciate Facebook posts). Data collected will be of potential use in a number of NLN projects.

*Karissa Preuss, Catchment Coordinator*

## FROGWATCH

### **FROGWATCH NEEDS YOUR HELP. Throw me a line!!!**

This is not the first time: The future of Frogwatch is unsure, as the program has no secured funding after June 2018. What we desperately need is sufficient AND ongoing core funding to run the highly successful program at its full potential, rather than spending a ridiculous amount of time chasing very small grants to make ends meet. We recently have put in an ACT budget submission for adequate funding and are currently working on a strategic plan.

HOW YOU CAN HELP? Simply send us a 1-liner (or maybe more) with a short statement of support for Frogwatch. We will collate them all into a supporting document to be handed over to various ministers in support of our budget bid!! Please do send your statement(s) to [landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au)

The Budget bid is at [this link](#). It is a public document.

### **FROGWATCHERS – It's time to send in your observations!**

Mid November is the official cut off and experience has shown that the longer these field data sheets sit in a corner, or on your desk, the harder it gets to punch in the numbers and to upload the recordings. So *better do it soon – definitely before the mad pre-Christmas rush sets in!!!*

Make sure to **upload your recordings** for each survey **or** (if that proves too much trouble) to **email them to me** (please put the site code and the date of the survey in the subject line): [frogwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:frogwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au).

### **END OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT**

Sad but true: with the end of October comes the end of the weekly monitoring at your adopted sites for the Climate Change project!! This project has collected weekly data at sites throughout the ACT over the last three years. This data will be used to determine the impact of climate change on timing of frog call behaviour, by comparing with historical data provided by Frogwatch and Will Osborne. What three crazy years we have had, with 2015 the coldest winter in 15+ years, 2016 the wettest winter in eons and 2017 the driest one on record. Martin Westgate (Fenner School), Bernd Gruber (UC) and Danswell Starrs (ACT Government) cannot wait to get their hands onto the data and start analysing it.

**Everyone involved in the Climate Change project:** please enter your data as soon as possible. My goal is to get **the full data set** to the statistics experts **by Tuesday next week, 7 November!!**

By the way, this has been our last year of funding for this project, kindly and generously supported by the ACT Government. Most definitely my Christmas wish list will be asking for more funding for this awesome project!! So better keep your fingers crossed!!

For more froggy information see below, in [Around the region](#).

*Anke Maria Hoefer, Frogwatch Convenor*

## WATERWATCH

### **LAUNCHED! – CATCHMENT HEALTH INDICATOR PROGRAM REPORT 2016–17**

Thank you, to all the volunteers, for your support on collecting water samples, and helping with water bug surveys and Riparian Condition Assessments. The results of this work are published in the

Annual CHIP (Catchment Health Indicator Program) Report. The 2016–17 CHIP report for 2016–17 is now available online: [http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au/Files/CHIP/chip%202016\\_17%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au/Files/CHIP/chip%202016_17%20FINAL.pdf)  
In addition, here is a link to WIN's Facebook page, about the CHIP report launch a few weeks ago in southern Canberra:

<https://www.facebook.com/WINNewsCanberra/videos/vb.154161871315519/1515703651827994/?type=2&theater>

#### ***VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: WATER BUG SURVEY***

We are currently conducting water bug surveys in our catchment and would love to hear if you are interested in helping in the surveys. Water bugs are a great indicator of water quality and by sampling them, we can get a better understanding of the health of our catchment. Please get in touch with Bruno at [waterwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:waterwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au) if you want to participate.

*Bruno Ferronato, Waterwatch Convenor*

## **News from within Ginninderra Creek catchment**

### ***Umbagog Landcare, Latham***

On **Saturday 4 November, from 9 am**, we will be cutting and daubing the Box Elder starting to sprout along the creek. We will focus on the area downstream of the Want Place bridge to consolidate the work we already have done. However, please meet at the Florey Drive carpark so we don't lose people.

We now have permission to plant some more *Casuarinas*, but because of the timing of the decision, close to summer, we will put off planting until after the heat of summer.

**Meeting point:** carpark off Florey Drive, Latham. People will need to sign on and off so they are covered for insurance purposes.

**Contact on the day:** Celina [0435574243](tel:0435574243).

**What to bring:** Please wear long sleeves, long pants, thick socks and sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen, drinking water and gloves.

*If the weather is too wet I will send out an email an hour before the working bee, so please check your email prior to coming along.*

I hope to see you there.

*Celina Smith, Convenor*

### ***Friends of Aranda Bushland***

Our work parties are on the **first Sunday of the month**, 9 am – noon. See our website for details: <http://friendsofarendabushland.org.au>. Weeding is always our main activity and is never-ending. However, we have a core of dedicated weeders who prefer weeding to any other landcare job, and do it at every work party.

#### ***Erosion control***

We continue to work on controlling erosion in the deep gully that cuts through the Snowgums Reserve. One strategy is to put up barriers made of star pickets and netting, across the gully floor in a double-V formation, and to pack branches and debris behind them. Another idea is to divert the sheets of water that flow into the gully head, by constructing low, wide rollovers to guide the water towards the large wetland area further to the east. This requires careful analysis of the gradients.

#### ***Fence removal***

At our last work party we completely removed an unnecessary fence left over from the time when the area was part of a farm. It was hard work but it has greatly improved the beauty and amenity of the area, allowing us easy access to our beautiful new area close to Caswell Drive. *Can you spot the old fence line in the photo?*

### ***Coir logs***

Also at our last work party, we constructed a pile of coir logs, using sheets of coir extracted from mattresses at the Hume mattress-recycling facility. With grant money from the Molonglo Catchment Group, we have commissioned more logs to be made at this place. These will be used in the erosion channel.

### ***Orchid Walk***

Our annual orchid walk on 15 October attracted 25 visitors and we had an enjoyable couple of hours roaming around under the guidance of our three orchid experts – Cath Busby, Matt Mullaney and Ian Falconer. After the cold, dry winter, there were not many orchids to be seen, but we did see one that had never been found before in our area.

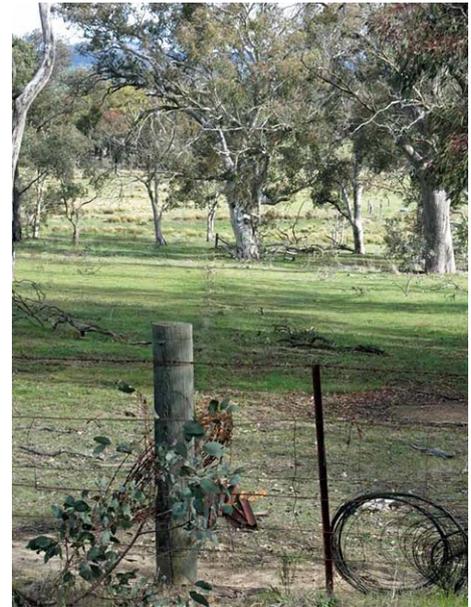
### ***School bushwalk***

On 25 October we escorted a group of 30 children from Aranda Primary School on a two-hour walk through the bushland, showing them orchids, native pines, weeping-grass lawns, tree hollows for birds, aboriginal sites, erosion work, and many other things.

### ***Ngunawal Pathways***

On 22 October, Wally Bell, a Ngunawal elder, led a walk on the lower slopes of Black Mountain and the Aranda Bushland, during which he showed us a selection of wooden and stone tools (even some made of glass), a water-collecting tree, and the ring tree on Bindubi Street. He described how the rivers and streams were the great direction markers of the landscape, and how the people travelled along the higher ground between them.

*Jenny Andrews, Convenor*



## ***Volunteers and wildflower display at Hall***

Bob Richardson has sent four photos summarising work by a Hall volunteer group in October. (For general news from Hall Village, see <https://www.hall.act.au/> )



Fiona Spier (GCG's new Projects Officer) with Karissa Preuss (right), our Catchment Coordinator, at Hall.



Hall Creek, 2017



Recent clearing of blackberry at Hall Creek Park.



Tree planting at Hall Showground supported by Hall Rotary.

### WILDFLOWERS AND ORCHIDS AT HALL

You may be interested in going to Hall Woodlands at the moment. I discovered the magical realities yesterday and went again today (29 October). There seemed to be most of the species in *Woodland Flora* (a wildflower ID guide published by Friends of Grasslands Inc.), which may be an exaggeration but there is so much to see it's easy to spend several hours there. Today kangaroos were active and there were at least 33 bird species over the two visits. In the first paddock's lower levels there's lush grass where there were also Milkmaids *Burchardia umbellata*. They've been at Hall Cemetery and North Mulligans in the past.

I parked off the corner of Gibbes and Hoskins Streets. I walked past the horse yards, went through a step-through and walked 250 m north past a small dam. Then through another step-through and right into increasingly rich & floristic grassy woodland. At an easterly corner that fences off the forest I went through the fence strands on the right and followed a well worn pedestrian - roo path mostly north-east. Once into the shrub layer it's difficult not to step on native plants. Beginning with *Stylidium* I found more and more treasures. I wonder if there's a species list for this woodland? There's also access from Victoria St I believe, as several people came through from that direction. Four out of six really appreciated what was there even before I began to show my enthusiasms.

*Rosemary Blemings*

### FRIENDS OF GRASSLANDS WORKING BEE AT HALL CEMETERY WOODLAND

On **Saturday morning 11 November, from 9 am**, Friends of Grasslands welcome you to join the group tackling the weeds infesting the woodland around the cemetery. Morning tea and tools are provided, and you should wear gear appropriate for gardening work in long grass, and for the weather, and bring drinking water. Contact [John.Fitzgerald@fog.org.au](mailto:John.Fitzgerald@fog.org.au) by Thursday 9 November to tell him you'll be there (so there is enough tea!).

### *Friends of Mt Painter, Cook*

Our next work party is on **Sunday 19 November**, from 9 am to noon. We will be weeding in the north-west corner of the reserve, starting from the end of the dirt road that turns off Coulter Drive, half way between its junction with William Hovell Drive and the big roundabout where Redfern and Springvale meet.

And keep an eye on our *Facebook page* (called Friends of Mt Painter) for details of our **butterfly walk with Suzi Bond** on the morning of **Sunday 26 November**.

Contact Sarah Hnatiuk on [0424 263 565](tel:0424263565) or at [friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com) for more information about Friends of Mount Painter and its activities.

*Sarah Hnatiuk, Convenor*

### ***North Belconnen Landcare***

North Belconnen Landcare Group meets **every Wednesday and Saturday at 9.30 am**. These are all age events but child-friendly, with a focus on the Landcarers of the future.

*Our photo shows a junior landcarer weeding with a much older landcarer weeding in the background.*

*Lenore Hodgkinson, Convenor*

### ***Crace Landcare Group***

REMINDER: The next dates for Crace Landcare working bees are this coming weekend, **Saturday 4 November** (location to be advised), and then **Sunday 3 December** at Crace Recreation Park.

*Fleur Leary, Convenor*

### ***Mt Rogers Landcare (Spence, Melba, Flynn, Fraser)***

On Sunday 22 October, seven of us met at Wickens Place, Fraser, ready to re-attack the Tree of Heaven. What a successful morning. We completed all the standing trees and pulled out many seedlings, though there are more to be pulled. The two photos show us during the work, and afterwards on the way down to the carpark.



*Rosemary Blemings, Convenor*

### ***Friends of Mulligans Flat***

*The Friends of Mulligans Flat has over 400 members who have registered on our MyVolunteer database. It is through this database, supported by the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, and FaceBook, that we communicate news updates about the Mulligans Flat Wildlife Sanctuary, upcoming events and activities. Apart from the 'standard' park care activities (weeding and rubbish) the Friends can get involved in turtle relocation, Echidna counts, Bettong monitoring, Bush-stone Curlew feeding and assisting in a range of ANU projects.*

*Our monthly work party is held on the second Wednesday of each month. Meet at the Woolshed at 9:30 am.*

We also have seasonal work parties held on a Sunday morning once each season, actual dates being advised closer to the activity. We usually meet at the Woolshed at 10:00 am.

### **Monthly work party for November**

The next work party will be on **Wednesday 8 November**.

### **Spring Wildflower Walk**

The Friends of Mulligans Flat Spring Wildflower Walk was held on Sunday 22 October. There was quite a large turnout for this event with 45 people attending. Under the guidance of our friendly botanist Michael Doherty we ventured into North Mulligans Flat (also known as 'Little Mulligans') for a delightful walk through the varied landscapes topped off with some wonderful views of the Limestone Plains from the top of the peak. Although the wildflower display was not quite as good as last year', being a lot drier, there was plenty to see on such a lovely day!

### **Turtles on the Move!**

For the third year in a row, the Turtle Patrol has commenced for the spring/summer turtle migration. Each day a Friend or a small group of Friends takes a 6 km walk along the predator-proof sanctuary fence and relocates any turtles trying to get through the fence to the other side. So far this season about 80 turtles have been moved, significantly down on last year due to the drier weather (we think). The Turtle Patrol will run through to late February / early March.

*Mark Smith, Convenor*

## **Jaramlee Park Landcare**

Jaramlee Park Landcare had another work bee on 28 October in the floodway leading to Jaramlee Pond, taking out dead bushes and trees (*see two photos below*). Three more piles of dead wood were taken out from the bank on the other side of the floodway from where previous work was done. Quite a lot of the trees had rotted at the base, as has been the case previously.

There were eight piles waiting to be removed, five from two previous work bees. Unfortunately the mowing was done the day that the first two piles were cleared and the mowers had to work around the other heaps of wood where grass was high and seeding and weeds, mostly cleavers, climbing up through the branches. I am hoping these other six heaps will be gone this week.

We found some garden *Euphorbia* under a bush, lots of Cleavers ('sticky weed') and Paterson's Curse. Our next **work bee** is on **Sunday 12 November 10.30 am**, when we will be glyphosating weeds and woody weeds. Our next **meeting** is on Monday 4 December. And we are going to have a Xmas lunch for our group in December.

*Pamela Fawke, Convenor*



### **NOTE:**

To contact the Landcare Group Convenors, email or phone the GCG office, or check the groups' webpages on the GCG website at: [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au) > Landcare > Landcare groups.

## Around the region

### *Froggy observations*

Yepp- and this has been observed across the state: **frogs are in lesser numbers this year and very many ponds are pretty empty**. This year's dry conditions might just give us a little peek preview into how it will be **to live in a dryer and warmer environment in the future**.

Frogs have been shown to recover speedily from natural disasters, like fire etc, if there is appropriate habitat available for hiding and 'hanging in there' until better conditions have eventuated.

Unfortunately, many of the dry or almost dry ponds have a lack of vegetation cover- aquatic, riparian and in close proximity to the wetland. In contrast, the outstanding ponds that have many species calling are generally well vegetated, instream and in the surrounding area. Time will tell how our local frogs are coping with the lack of water. This year's observation very clearly support the eminent need for serious 'climate proofing actions' in our local environment, including frog habitat.

My biggest hope for this waterless year is that dry ponds might lead to **DEATH TO THE GAMBUSIAS!!**, which would be amazing and in the long term definitely beneficial for every pond riddled with these unwanted guests. Especially if we can run a public education session on Gambusia and how to avoid spreading them at the time when the ponds start refilling (and beyond). *We definitely do not suffer from a lack of great project!!!*

Anke Maria Hoefer, Frogwatch Convenor

### *12–19 November: The spring Wild Pollinator Count*

Be a citizen scientist! All you need to do is *watch a flower for 10 minutes* on any warm, sunny day during the week 12–19 November and submit your observations about *insects that visit the flower*, via the website at <https://wildpollinatorcount.com/>. Any flower, native or non-native.

You will also find the simple instructions at the website.

And don't forget you can use the official social media hashtag **#ozpollinators** to share interesting pollinator sightings and information about Australia's wild pollinators all year round, e.g. on Twitter.

### *Snakes Alive! – 15 to 21 January 2018*

This amazing annual exhibition of Australian Reptiles and Amphibians is not to be missed!! It is organised by the ACT Herpetological Association, a great bunch of very enthusiastic people that like to share their wealth of knowledge and their appreciation for our herpetofauna. The exhibition will run from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2018, 10 am to 4 pm daily, at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Each day several feeding sessions are on show as well as interesting talks about herpetological facts. Kids and adults simply love this event and it is a fantastic activity for the school holidays and the perfect gift for Christmas, easily combined with a voucher for a picnic or a visit at the ANBG's café!!

## UPCOMING DATES

(\*indicates working bee)

\*4 November Crace Landcare

4,5 November Weed Swap at Parkwood green waste tip (& Mugga Lane)

\*4 November Umbagog Landcare

\*5 November Friends of Aranda Bushland

7 November Due date for Frog observations (Climate Change) and Census too, if possible

\*8 November Friends of Mulligans Flat

\*11 November Weeding at Hall Cemetery woodland (Friends of Grasslands)

\*12 November Jaramlee Park Landcare

(continues on next page)

12—19 November Wild Pollinator Count

\*19 November Friends of Mt Painter

\*26 November Mt Rogers Landcare

26 November Butterfly walk on Mt Painter

3 December Erosion control workshop

\*3 December Crace Landcare

11 December AGM followed by the Christmas Party

15—21 January Snakes Alive!

\*Every Wednesday and Saturday, North Belconnen Landcare

\*Thursdays, Friends of the Pinnacle (FOTPIN)

**Ginninderra Catchment Group is grateful for support from**

