



FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER NEWS

APRIL 2023

This is the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, 2021-2030: to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems on every continent and in every ocean.

OUR AUTUMN BIRD WALK

Twenty people joined Nicki Taws on 2 April to look for birds on the lower south-western slope of Mount Painter. After three attempts to stage a walk last spring were foiled by rain, it was a relief to have a mild, dry, if cloudy day for this walk. Nicki pointed out about 25 species, ranging from Weebills to a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles. In the shrubby areas, she identified the presence of small species by ear and then pointed out where we might be able to see them: Pardalotes, Grey Fantails, Fairy Wrens and several species of Thornbills. The highlight was a pair of Double-barred Finches. We also saw flocks of Silvereyes migrating north and, of course, the usual larger species like Red Wattle Birds, Currawongs, Crimson Rosellas and Magpies. We are very grateful to Nicki for coming out once again to share her knowledge with us.



Nicki at left searching for birds in the more open areas of the hill while others examine the shrubs.

MAY PLANTING DAY, SUNDAY 21 MAY

May's planting day will be held in the same area as we went on the bird walk. We will be working with a Ranger Assist team of volunteers to plant trees and shrubs that will expand the habitat needed by some animals, especially birds, to move through the landscape. We will be strengthening the corridor of trees and shrubs that extend all the way from the suburb round the southern half of the hill. Details of arrangements for the planting will be emailed closer to the 21st.

Friends of Mount Painter News April 2023 ISSN 2207-0869

Find us on Facebook and our web page: <https://ginninderralandcare.org.au/friends-of-mount-painter>.

Contact us at friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com.

ANOTHER DONATION FROM THE COOK GROCER

Daniel Raad from the Cook Grocer has given a further \$300 to Friends of Mount Painter, one dollar from each of the pairs of Mount Painter socks he sold. We plan to spend the money on plants, including for next month's planting. Many thanks to Daniel for his family's generosity!



Daniel, with Sarah and Debbie, visiting the refurbished sign on the path to the summit. It was Daniel's first opportunity to see what had been achieved with The Cook Grocer's previous donation of \$500.

WHAT FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER HAVE BEEN DOING

Our work during the last three months has been dominated by weeding, particularly St John's Wort which has grown a bumper crop, more than we have ever seen before. The hill has turned from a cheerful, though unwelcome, yellow to the brown of the dying stems and seedheads. Herbicide is the most effective way of killing this deep-rooted weed, but it also damages many native plant species. We have therefore been advised by the Parks and Conservation Service that, when working in areas with high native plant numbers to use the less efficient control measure of pulling out the wort. That removes the above-ground part of the wort but leaves broken roots in the soil which will shoot again next summer.



Tony has been spraying the woody weeds far and wide as well as the weeds in the Crater Patch. And we have continued to chip out and spray African Lovegrass around the reserve perimeter and along the roads, but it is spreading slowly in the west despite our efforts. Some good news is that Cobblers Pegs is much less abundant and the plants much smaller than in previous years.

Weeding St John's Wort and bagging seedheads in the Wildflower Triangle

It was a welcome change of focus to weed and re-mulch the tree seedlings we planted on the upper slopes last spring.



Our new collapsible weeding bags given to us by Tony

Weeding the tree seedlings



A BIT OF DRAMA

In February a large limb broke on a Candlebark tree in the Wildflower Triangle. It did not fall but remained propped up at the break point, looking as though it could fall any time on the path below. Once notified of it, the rangers cut it down very promptly.



Compiled by Sarah Hnatiuk