



FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER NEWS

JULY 2019

For more information about anything in this newsletter: contact
Sarah Hnatiuk
on 0424 263 565 or at friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com

JULY WORK PARTY

- Date:** Sunday, 21 July
- When:** 9.30am – 1pm
- Location:** Eastern slopes of Mt Painter, starting from the bottom of Horse Paddock Gully
- To reach the location:** Enter the reserve between 20 and 22 Booth Crescent, Cook, and take the dirt track running half left from the entrance. Go through the gate at the start of the track between the horse paddocks and the hill.
- Tasks:** Guarding young trees, and removing guards from trees and shrubs that no longer need them. And a bit of weeding if there is time.
- Wear:** Sturdy footwear and clothes to suit the weather
- Bring:** Please bring some drinking water, a mug and some food to share for morning tea.
Other drinks will be provided.
- All tools provided. No experience needed.

Our monthly work parties are on the third Sunday of each month.

The work parties for the rest of 2019 are on:

- Sunday, 18 August
- Sunday, 15 September – joint work party with Friends of Aranda Bushland on Mount Painter
- Sunday, 20 October
- Sunday, 17 November
- Sunday, 15 December

A special event is the butterfly walk with Suzi Bond on Sunday, 1 December.



WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING OVER THE LAST THREE MONTHS

Two walks.



Bird walk with Nicki Taws. On 28 April, Nicki took us through the young woodland on the lower, western slopes of the hill. We saw and/or heard 32 species ranging in size from Weebills to a Wedge-tailed Eagle. It was hard work tracking the tiny birds in small, mixed flocks that flitted past. A Peregrine Falcon overhead caused much concern amongst them. On the basis of what we saw that day, Nicki rates the health of the woodland as good, at least as far as birds are concerned. This was an encouraging comment considering that the part

of the reserve we walked through was relatively treeless less than 20 years ago. Anyone who would like the full list of birds seen with Nicki can request it from friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com.

Walking with the Macquarie Primary School P&C. On Sunday, 26 May, Jane Lake and Sarah Hnatiuk led a walk along the western edge of the reserve for some families and teachers from Macquarie Primary School's P&C. The destination was the canoe scar tree.



Planting in the Wildflower Triangle. We held a planting morning in May as part of our program to add biodiversity to one of the grasslands in the Wildflower Triangle. We planted 250 tubestock from Greening Australia's nursery, including daisies, lilies and a sedge. Ranger Marty augured the holes for us and transported bark chips to the site for mulching the plants. Ten members of FOMP and the local community turned out to plant, and we were joined by eight Radford College students and a teacher. It was a good day!



We hope these plants will do as well as the grasses we planted last year: all 200 of the Kangaroo Grass and River Tussock planted then have survived and grown well. We took the guards off them



for re-use on the new plants, and then discovered that the kangaroos like Kangaroo Grass but not the River Tussock. The Kangaroo Grass was well-chewed while the River Tussock was left untouched.

Lots and lots of weeding. As we found out more about the invasiveness of the weed, Cobbler's Peg, that we discovered in March, we moved away from our usual program of weeding to concentrate on removing as much of the Peg as possible. It is not only in the summit area as reported in our last newsletter;

we have found occasional, single plants all over the reserve and scattered, small patches where kangaroos have rested. We have pulled out thousands of plants and removed many bags of seedheads, but despite our efforts and the help of Ranger Marty's slashing, we did not get to all the plants. It looks as though CP will be an ongoing problem for several years.

Here are some of the characteristics that make it a very successful weed:

- It survives all but extreme drought.
- Above ground parts are killed by heavy frosts but plants will grow back quickly from roots. It can withstand temperatures down to -15°C .
- It has allelopathic influences, that is, chemicals produced by the plants inhibit the growth of other species. This contributes to its capacity to outcompete native vegetation.
- It grows rapidly.
- A single plant produces 3,000–6,000 seeds which can survive in the soil for 3-4 years.
- Seeds adhere very readily to clothing and animal fur which allows them to be carried far and wide.

(Information from Invasiveness Assessment - Cobblers pegs (*Bidens pilosa*) in Victoria, Victoria Resources Online,

http://vro.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/vrosite.nsf/pages/invasive_cobblers_pegs#.)

A NEW WALK OPENS UP

You may have walked down the tree-lined, north-south laneway from the Cook horse yards only to find your way barred at the end by a fence. But now there is a gate, in fact two gates, in the fence that allow you to easily enter and explore the Old Road Reserve running at right angles to the laneway. If you prefer not to retrace your steps, you can return to the suburb by way of Bindubi Street and the Wildflower Triangle. Another new circular walk! See the map on the next page.



