



## FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER NEWS

OCTOBER 2018

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

on 0424 263 565 or at [friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com)

### OCTOBER WORK PARTY

**Date:** Sunday, 21 October

**When:** 9am – 12 noon

**Location:** Stromlo Gully

**To reach the location:** Either walk down the gully to the west of the dip in the summit path between the summit gate and the summit of Mount Painter, OR park on the city-bound side of William Hovell Drive, at the end of the guard rail 800m from the intersection with Coulter Drive, walk on to the reserve and follow the orange markers

**Tasks:** Checking on erosion control measures and plant guards

**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.**

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Saturday, 10 November, 2 - 7pm:** a stall at the Celebrate Cook Festival at the Cook shops, celebrating the suburb of Cook's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and 15 years of the Raad Family operating the supermarket. If you would like to be involved, please contact Sarah (details at the top of this page).
- **Sunday, 18 November:** monthly work party

In the 2017-18 year, 340 volunteers contributed 21,093 hours of work on the reserves of Canberra Nature Park. This contribution to the work of the Parks and Conservation Service's work is valued at \$711,000. The most common type of work we undertook was weeding, which occupied 36% of the hours worked. At the 2018 Volunteering Awards – Canberra Region, Parkcare was highly commended in the 'Profound Influence' category.

## WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING OVER THE LAST THREE MONTHS

**Accompanying Macquarie Primary School's Kindergarten classes to the summit.** It was their first school excursion, a great one for the kids who love exploring and climbing the rocks. It's also good for the teachers who know it is not easy to lose a kid on the hill, and there is no need to keep telling them to keep quiet, as may happen on excursions elsewhere.



**Accompanying the excursion of geology students from the University of Canberra to Mount Painter.** A couple of us joined the students and their lecturers as they examined how geology and position in the landscape influence native vegetation. We followed a transect from the volcanic rock of the hill to the sedimentary rock of the Wildflower Triangle.

**Securing tree guards round the Drooping Sheoaks planted in 2016.** It was a cold and frosty morning for our July work party: some special views to begin with, followed by clear skies and warm sun. Seventy-five per cent of the seedlings planted are still alive.



**Planting grass and lilies in the Wildflower Triangle.** On a cool and windy day, on 19 August, 19 brave people turned out to plant 250 seedlings, including some passers-by, newly arrived in Canberra who decided to join us. The purchase of the plants from Greening Australia's nursery was funded from Evoenergy's Tree Planting Fund. We are very grateful to Evoenergy for supporting us. And we thank the rangers, Marty and Michelle, for auguring the holes for us, and the extra help from Persephone, a student who adopted the planting for a project for her conservation management course.

The planting is part of the grassland restoration project that Friends of



Mt Painter and the Parks and Conservation Service are running. After the hazard reduction burn in March, we sprayed the exotic grasses in part of the grassland and, where there was a large patch of dead Paspalum, we planted the natives. We also made an experimental planting of the contents of several large polystyrene boxes of Chocolate Lily bulbs that we were lucky enough to be given.



*Planting (previous page), securing a plant guard (left) and mulching with bark chips (right)*

We also participated in another planting session, on that occasion helping Friends of Aranda Bushland on 2 September to plant trees and ground cover plants along the creek in their grassland area. It was good to work on someone else's patch for a change and meet new and old friends from the other side of Bindubi Street.

**Establishing what is regenerating naturally in our burnt grassland.** In the course of several walks through the area, including one with some Friends of Aranda Bushland, we have found more than 20 species of plants. Some of them, like orchids and lilies, we did not know were there. Before the burn, they were hidden from view by large grass tussocks or struggled to thrive in the shade of the tussocks. Despite the dry season, some are flowering, even though they are very small.



Billy Buttons (*Craspedia variabilis*)



Common Woodruff (*Asperula conferta*)

**Displaying our work.** One weekend in September was occupied by a display at Jamison Plaza by us, the other local Parkcare groups, Friends of Grasslands, Ginninderra Catchment Group and the Southern Tablelands Ecosystem Park. Together we mounted an engaging and colourful account of parts of the natural world in our area and the activities that our groups carry out. A goodly number of people stopped to talk, look and carry off the hand-outs available.



**And finally,** we wound up our September activities with a work party among the old eucalypts in the Old Road Reserve. We took out many small hawthorns and a few other woody weeds.

### RESEARCH WITH KANGAROOS

At the recent Ecofocus seminar that showcased research by the ACT Government's Conservation Research unit, two speakers reported on work underway on kangaroos, one dealing with contraception and the other with the use of drones to count kangaroo numbers. An effective contraceptive has been identified following trials that involved anaesthetising females and implanting the contraceptive. As this is a time consuming process that allows only small numbers of females to be treated, trials are now underway with dart delivery of the contraceptive to enable larger numbers of animals to be treated. If this proves successful in reducing fertility, it is expected to be used more widely to supplement culling as a method for controlling kangaroo populations. More information is available here: [http://www.environment.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1195077/Technical-Report-Fertility-Control-of-Eastern-Grey-Kangaroos-in-the-ACT-Assessing-Efficacy-of-a-Dart-Delivered-Immunocontraceptive-Vaccine-March-2018.pdf](http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1195077/Technical-Report-Fertility-Control-of-Eastern-Grey-Kangaroos-in-the-ACT-Assessing-Efficacy-of-a-Dart-Delivered-Immunocontraceptive-Vaccine-March-2018.pdf).



### GLYPHOSATE

Following recent publicity about the possibility that glyphosate may cause cancer, our attention has been drawn by Daniel Iglesias, Director of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service (PCS), to an article summarising the evidence on the risks associated with using glyphosate: see the [Conversation](#). Glyphosate is used in small amounts on the reserve by PCS staff and Friends of Mount Painter to control invasive grasses and to paint the cut stumps of woody weeds. Daniel stresses the importance of following label directions and wearing the appropriate protective equipment.



Left: Yellow Burr-daisy (*Calotis lappulacea*) and right: Urn Heath (*Melichrus urceolatus*)