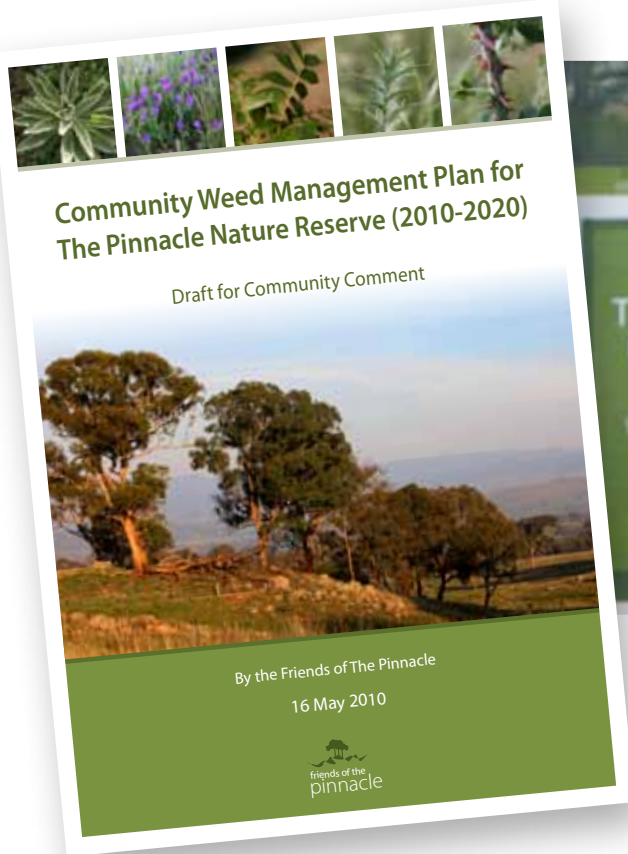




# friends of the pinnacle newsletter

Issue No.1 JUNE 2010



*Matilda House welcoming us to Country*



***FOTPIN** released in May a Community Weed Management Plan for The Pinnacle.*

*We were joined by **Dr Maxime Cooper** (ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment) and Welcomed to Country by Matilda House (Ngambri Elder). **Andrew Leigh** – ALP Candidate for Fraser - released the plan on behalf of the ACT Minister for the Environment.*

## LAUNCH OF OUR WEED PLAN

Our weed plan was spawned from early weeding efforts, and the need to know the what, where and how of weeding at The Pinnacle. The weed problem was characterised during a weed survey in spring 2009. The draft Plan was released after taking on board comments from Parks, Conservation and Lands.

The Weed Plan targets various weeds including African Love Grass, St John's Wort, Briar Rose, thistles and exotic grasses. It prioritises weeds, paddocks and control treatments, and estimates volunteer time to treat these weeds and avoid seed set. Volunteer effort is presently ~ 720hrs/yr, this needs to increase to ~1200hrs of fieldwork if we are to fully implement the Plan.

***Pax***

## BIRD MONITORING

One way that we're monitoring the effects of our efforts up at The Pinnacle NR is by keeping track of the local birds. Back in February, we picked out a bird survey site in each of the Pinnacle's eight paddocks, and in March we started conducting systematic monthly surveys of those sites. Our hope is that we'll have time to establish a baseline from which the impact of any changes we make can be gauged.

Winter is always an interesting time at The Pinnacle, with the arrival of a whole new raft of migrants. These include the beautiful Scarlet, Flame and Rose Robins, as well as Golden Whistlers and White-eared Honeyeaters. And this year, with all the wonderful rain, the nesting season seems to have begun early, with at least one pair of Yellow-rumped Thornbills already busy building a nest! This year already looks like being a bit special. Let's hope so!

*John*



Scarlet Robin  
*(photo by David Cook)*



Golden Whistler  
*(photo by Lindsay Hansch)*



White-eared Honeyeater  
*(photo by Lindsay Hansch)*

## KANGAROOS AND SOIL EROSION

When kangaroos are in high concentrations and the number of trees is small, the persistent camping, trampling and grass consumption results in soil erosion. In the picture, about 20 mm of surface soil under a tree has been disturbed by kangaroos digging hip-holes and general scrabbling about. This is equivalent to 28 kg soil per square metre of soil or 280 tonnes per hectare. The soil is so finely divided that it is easily eroded by wind or water. The soil fabric has been destroyed, so that silt, sand and clay particles have been separated, allowing light materials such as clays and organic matter to blow away. The exposed sub-soil has much lower capacity for colonisation by new plants, and in any case is again disturbed on a daily basis. The only solution to this is to decrease the number of kangaroos.

*David*



*Kangaroo physical disturbance has released 20 mm of soil into easily eroded particles*



*Rabbits numbers at The Pinnacle are unsustainable*

## RABBIT WARREN MAPPING

In April our volunteers completed the GPS plotting of rabbit warrens on The Pinnacle. This was an essential project, requested by PCL as a key input to the control of rabbits on The Pinnacle. The results were vital for PCL to arrange contractors to undertake the work.

PCL briefed our group on what was required, lent us several GPS units and provided the paperwork for recording results. We divided The Pinnacle into 8 areas and assigned an area to each group (usually a pair) to plot the warrens. It was not an easy task - the warrens are often well hidden and we aimed to get them all. (This never happens in practice but we got close!!)

Thanks to our efforts, the project was completed on time and the work promptly commenced on the eradication – mainly by gassing and poison. We observed the contractors work and were satisfied that the job was done well.

It must be noted that this task will never end, a repeat will be required in about 2 years at the most - or we will be back to where we started. We will never reach our goal of restoring the native vegetation if this does not happen. Don't be deceived by the lush green of The Pinnacle following the welcome rain – most of it is exotic species and weeds. All work in progress.

*Gilbert*

## friends of the pinnacle afternoon tea



The FOTPIN is holding its first General Meeting on Sunday 25th July at 2.30pm at Weetangera Primary School. The meeting is an important part in forming FOTPIN, and will include the election of an interim committee. All FOTPINs and interested members of our community are invited. Contact [fotpin@optusnet.com.au](mailto:fotpin@optusnet.com.au) for details, and to RSVP.