

Fotpin update #8 March 2012

Dear Friends of The Pinnacle:

Last month, in Update #7, I gave a commitment to more frequent reporting on what fotpin is doing and the activities you can be involved in.

In this Update I will cover erosion control, the fotpin presentation at the ACT Weed Forum, our next kangaroo count, fotpin's Autumn Walks program and our July AGM. Key contacts for each project are listed if you want to be involved or to know more:

Erosion control (John Brannan, john.fotpin@gmail.com)

I noted in Update #7 that John and I were looking to make a funding application for coir logs for erosion control in the Bottom Pinnacle. Since then ACT Parks has committed to supplying us with 60 coir logs and stakes, funded under the Woodlands Strategy. Half the logs have arrived, as well as the stakes, and I will soon be organising a working bee for one Saturday morning. If you would like to help transport them to the Bottom Pinnacle, carry them to the gully or help install the logs please let me know. David Tongway will be supervising their placement.

John will subsequently be organising a brushpacking working bee, and if you would like to take part in this please contact John. Brushpacking is bundling and installing woody material designed to slow surface flows and encourage grass growth and litter accumulation, preventing erosion and maximising soil health and the infiltration of moisture into the soil. Brushpacks and coir logs act as *coarse* and *fine* 'leaky weirs'. This is a very different and less frequent fotpin activity, and I hope many fotpins find to join us and learn about this first-hand.

Presentation at the ACT Weed Forum (Pax, fotpin@optusnet.com.au)

The ACT Natural Resource Management Council invited fotpin to give a presentation on our weed control activities at its Weed Forum, 9th March. The Forum's program, our presentation and my report is at fotpin.org.au/misc/ACT_weeds-forum_2012.html.

The invitation to fotpin was, I believe, a direct result of having developed the Weed Plan, the enormous effort we're making implementing the Weed Plan, and the monitoring and reporting effort evidenced on our website.

Next kangaroo count (Pax, fotpin@optusnet.com.au)

Our next kangaroo count is planned for Sunday 3rd June. If you can, please put this in your diaries. We will need at least 20 people, preferably older kids or adults, to be part of the sweep counts in the morning and afternoon – so a big turnout is needed.

We will repeat the technique used last year will. The success of the technique was attested to by the results. The estimate from the morning count was 762 while for the afternoon it was 783, a difference of only 21, or less than 3%. The average of 772 was taken as the "official" result of the count. See fotpin.org.au/sweep-count_110501.html for more details.

The purpose of the count is to track the roo population and to manage it to ensure it does not become a threat to the Pinnacle Nature Reserve, either by excess grazing pressure or through soil erosion. Our website contains a great deal of useful background information – see [Managing kangaroos on The Pinnacle](#).

If you can join us for any event this year, please make this the one; apart from anything else, it's a lot of fun for all the family.

Autumn Walks program.

We recently announced our [Autumn Walks program](#). There is something there for everyone: a leisurely stroll to enjoy nature at our doorstep, more active walks and discussions further and into Bottom Pinnacle, or exploring our connections to the Lower Molonglo Valley.

Down the Creek with David Tongway. Sunday 15th April 9 am. We will traverse a few erosion gully scenarios on both the upper and lower Pinnacle, and discuss soil erosion in the landscape context, including observations of our efforts to control gully erosion. We will also discuss soil properties that pre-dispose soils to erosion and how small management adjustments at early times can prevent bigger problems from emerging. A hand-out will be provided. Boots, gaiters, hat and sunscreen recommended.

Third Saturday walk with Rosemary Blemings. Saturday 21 April 9 am. Rosemary guides another monthly walk exploring and explaining the seasonal changes at the Pinnacle Nature Reserve.

Down by the River - and Beyond, with Pax. Sunday 6 May 8-30 am. The Pinnacle Nature Reserve is part of a nature corridor across the Belconnen Hills, with connections to Black Mountain and the Murrumbidgee River. This is the first of a series of expeditions to explore those corridors. River levels permitting, we will cross the Valley to the magnificent views of the Murrumbidgee Valley and the little known Uriarra Travelling Stock Route. Please note level of difficulty is high with challenges in crossing the river and negotiating riparian zones. Wear sturdy hiking boots, bring water, snacks and lunch. Bookings are essential, as we may need to change our plans due to the weather.

Grass Experiment Walk with Don Driscoll. Saturday 12 May 9 am. We will venture down, down, down to the Bottom Pinnacle, to visit two of our grass experiment sites. Don will explain what the experiment is for, talk about some of the preliminary results, and teach small children the actions that go with some of our native grasses. Fun for all ages. The walk will finish by climbing up, up, up and back to the carpark. Bring over-energetic children to wear them out.

I hope you can join us for at least one of these fabulous walks. See the [Autumn Walks program](#) or [This week on the Pinnacle](#) on the website for more details.

July AGM.

Our next AGM is planned for July 2012. A key feature of AGMs is to establish a Coordinating Committee for the coming year, and I hope we will see some 'new blood' on Committee. In accordance with our rules several of us must vacate our positions (phew!) – Warren must vacate the Treasurer's position and me the Convenor's. The Secretary and Coordinator positions have remained vacant during the year, with several of us sharing the load along the way. If all positions are filled its easy for everyone. The workload is not great, Committee meetings are very sociable, and a healthy, resilient group needs everyone to do something to help it run.

If you might be interested in coming onto Committee please let me know, you might like to join us for the last Committee meeting before the AGM.