



Friends of the Pinnacle AGM May 2024

Convenor's Report

The past year has been one of steady progress on a number of fronts, with some notable highlights. The year began with a bang in the shape of the inaugural, and highly successful, Environmental Volunteers Conference in August, which afforded an important opportunity for ParkCare and other environmental volunteers to speak directly to government, environmental scientists, and each other.

Spring was particularly busy, with a record number of guided walks in the reserve, including our first ever Tree Walk and Warren's highly informative History Walk. It is my hope that we can continue to expand our program of walks and other community-facing events. Landcare ACT's current "Diversity and Inclusion" program aims to bring more people to Canberra's reserves, specifically through the Women in Nature program, the Youth Roving Group and the Pride Grows (LGBTQIA+ community) Roving Group. We've already hosted a couple of visits by ANU Intrepid Landcare, who are spearheading the Youth Roving Group activities (see below), but I am eager for the Pinnacle to host events that involve the other arms of this program.

We were also kept busy with outreach, holding stalls at the annual Joint ParkCare Display at Jamison, two events hosted by the Hawker Community Gardens and the Hawker Primary School fete.

As well continuing our ongoing program of weed control work, we assisted PCS with two planting events in Kama Link paddock, following on from the ecological improvements begun by the Offsets Management team. In the second of those plantings, we worked with the ANU Intrepid Landcare team of young environmental volunteers. This enthusiastic group of students were a pleasure to work with, and we were fortunate to have them back for a second visit in February to help with some weeding work with Len's team in Weetangera and Eastern paddocks.

Some of you will have noticed the improvements that are in progress on the tracks up to The Pinnacle summit. This is long overdue work that PCS budgeted for some time ago, so it is good to see the contractors getting on with the job. They've done a nice job so far on the Summit track on the western side of the hill, so hopefully they'll do a similarly competent job on the track down the southern slope.

Another milestone we reached this year was recording our 1,000th native species in the reserve. Warren keeps a careful tally of all native flora and fauna recorded at the reserve, so it is thanks to his diligence that we have numbers to back up what we already know – that The Pinnacle is an amazing place! (See Weeding & Biodiversity below for more.)

Weeding & Biodiversity

While not as challenging as the previous years with all their rain and rampant weed growth, this has still been a difficult year. A long dry spell in Winter and early Spring was followed by heavy rain as Spring moved into Summer, making weeding, and spraying in particular, difficult. In all, our weeding teams spent a total of 657 hours controlling weeds in the reserve between July last year and the end of March this year, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone on the weeding teams for all the hard work they put in, week in, week out. We are one of the hardest working groups in Canberra in terms of our consistent weeding effort, and our weeding teams deserve the highest praise.

As always, particular thanks are owed to Warren, who has spent more time than anyone out in the reserve spraying weeds, as well as many hours spent coordinating and logging all the effort put in by all our weeders.

Our total native species count currently stands at 1029, up from 914 this time last year. The number of native plant species is currently 270 (an increase of 4 since last year). The Pinnacle Nature Reserve Species Richness Score ([SRS](#)) introduced earlier this year by **NatureMapr** ranks 5th out of all the Canberra Nature Reserves.

Molonglo 3 Watermain Pipeline Corridor Revegetation

A couple of work parties during the Spring and Summer established three fenced plots on the stretch of pipeline corridor running from the Icon water tanks compound down to the creek crossing. I need to thank our ranger at the time, Julian Lolicato, for supplying the steel fencing we've used for the plots. The aim of the plots is to establish native groundcover by protecting new growth from the roos but more so from the abundant rabbits in the area. We also spent an afternoon scraping the topsoil off part of one of the plots to remove the seedbank of weed species as a trial to see whether it might be easier to establish native species in the scraped area with less competition from exotic species. Once we have successfully established some native grasses and forbs in the current plots, we plan to progressively shift the protective fencing down the slope towards the creek with the aim of (eventually) generating a corridor of native groundcover all the way to the creek. Obviously, this is a long-term project, and we're interested in hearing from anyone else who might be interested in contributing to this revegetation initiative.

Weetangera Paddock Revegetation

Len Taylor and his team continue to work on promoting the restoration of native grasses and forbs both inside and outside exclosures in the Weetangera paddock. Len has successfully propagated hundreds of native grasses and forbs to be planted in the project area in Weetangera paddock and continues to apply the lessons learned through his trials. He and his team are to be congratulated for their efforts and the positive outcomes they are achieving.

Interpretive Signage

This project, which was funded by an Environment Grant from the ACT Government, has been delayed due to a decision by the ACT Government to replace our maps on some of the signs with their own maps, and we are now waiting for their signage designers to get back to us with the revised maps. Once that happens, we should be able to complete the final designs fairly quickly, since virtually all of the other design work has been completed. In my report for last year's AGM, I confidently predicted that the signs would be completed and installed by Christmas 2023, so I hope you will understand if I am loath to make any predictions this year. However, I am optimistic that our signs will be completed in a matter of months, rather than years.

Among other things, this project has taught us how complex, wide-ranging and valuable the creation of interpretive signage can be. In the course of this work, we have met with local landowners, including the descendants of local families who leased the land now occupied by the reserve. We have consulted with geologists, Ngunawal elders, local wildlife photographers and the designers at Screenmakers, the Queanbeyan firm who will be fabricating and installing the signs. It has been an enormously educational and sometimes frustrating process, but we are confident that the end result will be well worth the wait.

Membership

Fotpin membership now stands at 110 (up from 109 last year), and the total number of people on our email contact list is now 349 (up from 336 last year).

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Warren for setting up and running the Zoom session for members who chose to attend the AGM virtually, and my thanks as always to Weetangera Primary School for allowing us to use their staff room for the meeting. And thanks also to everyone who brought along the delicious snacks for afternoon tea.

Cheers,

John Brannan