

## fotpin update #9 June 2012

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Dear Friends of The Pinnacle:

Updates such as this are intended to keep you informed of our recent and planned activities. This Update covers the following issues:

- [the 2011-12 Weeding Season](#);
- [the Belconnen Hills Woodlands Strategy](#);
- [remediation of ripped rabbit warrens](#) (and planned mapping in August);
- [the proposed kangaroo survey](#);
- [more erosion control activities in Bottom Pinnacle](#); and
- [our July AGM](#).

Key contacts for each project are listed if you want to be involved or to know more:

### **Weeding Season 2011-12** (Warren, [fotpin.web@internode.on.net](mailto:fotpin.web@internode.on.net))

One thing we're learning fast is that every weed season is different. While 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 were both quite wet years, the rainfall distribution was very different resulting in very different weed prevalence. In addition, the occurrence of at least two separate wet periods this season (spring and late summer) produced several germination events. As a result the weeding teams have had a busy season indeed. The key targets have been St. John's Wort, Verbascum, Briars and Spear thistles among our priority weeds, as well as Fleabane which is not thought to have the detrimental effects of some of our priority targets, but which has been obvious and widespread this year.

The weeding teams have risen to the challenge and put in a combined effort more than 50% greater than last year. Spraying effort has been a massive 200% more, as a result of us having more accredited sprayers (and despite some extended periods of wet weather). Hopefully, successfully tackling the multiple germinations, and having a lot less weeds reach maturity, will have combined to have made a significant contribution to reducing the seed bank and, therefore, future germinations.

For more information, see the [weeding effort](#) page on our website.

### **Belconnen Hills Woodland Strategy** (John, [john.fotpin@gmail.com](mailto:john.fotpin@gmail.com))

There is continuing progress in implementing the strategy in the Belconnen Hills reserves. The fencing work required in the Bottom Pinnacle and North Kama has now been completed, and we'll be meeting with representatives from Parks and Greening Australia in the next couple of weeks to discuss the level of fotpin involvement in the upcoming plantings.

Several plantings are planned, some involving supplemental planting of shrub-layer and groundcover species in areas that already have some remnant trees, while others will involve planting tubestock in open areas to fill some of the gaps in the landscape. The aim is to provide "stepping stones" between the existing remnant woodlands so that birds and other wildlife have pathways that allow them to move safely across the area.

The first of the new plantings actually took place at Mt Painter on Mother's Day, effectively unveiling the strategy, though the official launch is still to come. At this point, we don't have any specific dates for the plantings in the Bottom Pinnacle and North Kama, but it seems likely that the first plantings will be happening during August, and possibly even sooner. Watch this space!

### **Remediation work for ripped rabbit warrens** (John, [john.fotpin@gmail.com](mailto:john.fotpin@gmail.com))

Some of you may have noticed some fairly large areas of disturbed ground where rabbit warrens have been ripped up at The Pinnacle. While warren ripping tends to be a bit messy, it has been proven to be the best long-term deterrent to rabbit infestation.

In the past, warrens ripped in this way have been left untended and have often become a magnet for invasive weeds. But this time, a little more thought has been given to remediating this damage. The ripped sites were

seeded by Parks with sterile rye corn seed, and they will be following this up with native grass seed in coming months.

At those sites where the ripping has disturbed native shrubs, Parks have given us permission to go back and plant new shrub seedlings on a like-for-like basis, and this will be happening soon after the reserve re-opens on June 12th. If you'd like to help out with this, email me.

Fotpin weeders have been collecting warren location information with their GPSs, and this has helped guide Parks warren ripping activities. Committee has decided that we should once a year conduct a thorough resurvey of active rabbit burrows across The Pinnacle, Bottom Pinnacle and North Kama. ACT Parks have indicated that late August is the best time to do this, on an annual basis, and so if you might be interested in developing your GPS skills and mapping warrens in one of the many 'paddocks' at the Pinnacle - please let me know.

#### **Kangaroo survey 2012** (Pax, [fotpin@optusnet.com.au](mailto:fotpin@optusnet.com.au))

As many of you know the kangaroo survey planned for Sunday June 10<sup>th</sup> was cancelled. ACT Parks made the decision not to carry out the survey during the park closure period based on their experiences with the anti-roo culling protestors, in particular that the protestors have been markedly more aggressive and determined than in previous years.

Committee is considering whether to reschedule the survey. It's not a simple decision to make given the organisation involved, that there are activities planned for the coming months (erosion control, plantings, warren mapping) and that the days are getting shorter. On the other hand the survey information gives greater context to the findings of the grass experiment, many people are still keen to do it, it provides accurate information to Parks for making kangaroo management decisions and is a great way of engaging new people in The Pinnacle and surrounds. I think I've talked myself into it!

[Note that in response to an inquiry from a local resident, the Coordinating Committee developed a [position statement on kangaroo culling on the Pinnacle](#) and placed in on the website during the culling period.]

#### **Erosion control** (Pax, [fotpin@optusnet.com.au](mailto:fotpin@optusnet.com.au))

In mid-April we held our first substantial erosion control activity. Parks supplied 60 coir logs and stakes and, with Parks rangers, we sourced woody material (most Cootamundra Wattle) from around the reserve to create protective covering for the logs. For more info about this activity, see the [erosion control](#) webpage.

There is more to come. Parks are ordering a further 120 logs and with these and more woody material we'll collect, we'll conduct further works in two other eroding areas of Bottom Pinnacle. The funds for the coir logs are from the Woodlands Strategy. At almost \$50 per unit, it's a significant investment the ACT Government is making in this important task, working with us and effectively taking our advice on the materials required. Many thanks to member David Tongway, an international expert and consultant on landscape function and soil conservation, who leads this fotpin program.

If you might be keen to join us for the next erosion control working parties, tentatively planned for August, please let me know. Just a few hours from many people will make all the difference!

#### **July AGM** (Pax, [fotpin@optusnet.com.au](mailto:fotpin@optusnet.com.au))

Our next AGM is planned to be held towards the end of July. A key feature of AGMs is to establish a Coordinating Committee for the coming year, and I hope we see some 'new blood' on Committee. In accordance with our rules Warren must vacate the Treasurer's position and I the Convenor's (we've been in the roles for two consecutive years). The Secretary and Coordinator positions have remained vacant during the year, with us variously sharing the load along the way. If all positions are filled its easy for everyone. The workload is not great, Committee meetings usually involve wine, cheese and bikkies, and a healthy, resilient group needs everyone to do something to help it run and renewed.

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.