



fotpin update #53 August 2026

AGM Report	2026 Landcare Awards	William Hovell Drive Offset	Kangaroo Cull
Native Species	Weed Control	Improving The Pinnacle Dam	Guided Walks
	Revegetation	Western Edge	

This year, like most years, has been a busy one for fotpin. We've clocked up over 1,000 hours of weed control, thanks to the efforts of our weeding teams led by Bob (and Gilbert) and Len, along with our solo weed sprayers. Warren has included a full summary of the 2025-26 season's weeding below. I want to thank all our dedicated weeders for their extraordinary efforts, and also acknowledge the assistance of the PCS rangers for doing some weed control themselves and for bringing in contractors to spray African Lovegrass, mainly around the edges of the reserve.

We also took part in a range of events where we set up display stalls aimed at raising awareness of The Pinnacle and the work we do. These events included school fetes, local markets and fairs, and the annual Joint ParkCare display at the Jamison Centre.

While there has been no net change in our number of members (113), our mailing list continues to grow (currently a total of 373) and we see a steady rise in the number of visitors to our website as well as our pages on facebook and Instagram. We are also now seeing figures on the number of reserve visitors who scan the QR codes on our interpretive signs. The Kama Link sign near the 5-ways junction is particularly popular, consistently topping the list of scanned signs.

The reserve is looking quite nice at the moment, thanks to some good rain in the last few months, although in most places the grasses (and many native forbs) have been closely cropped by the largest kangaroo population that we've seen since fotpin began 16 years ago. After a very dry spring and a hot dry summer that suppressed a lot of the early exotic weeds and grasses, many of the native grasses flourished with the March rain. The predictions for the coming spring and summer sound pretty dire, with a strong El Niño on the way apparently. But we had bumper rain in March and again in May and above-average rain in June and July, so hopefully we'll have enough moisture in the ground to prepare us for what is to come.



Red Grass
(*Bothriochloa macra*)



Barbed Wire Grass
(*Cymbopogon refractus*)



Cotton panic
(*Digitaria brownii*)



Nine-awn Grass
(*Enneapogon-nigricans*)

Some of the native grasses that were quite prolific this year (Photos: Warren Bond)

AGM Report

This year's AGM was held in a new venue for us, due to ongoing construction at our usual home at Weetangera Primary. After quite a bit of hunting around, we finally approached Hawker Primary School, who were very generous in allowing us to use their staff room at no charge. The consensus after the meeting was that Hawker Primary should be our ongoing venue for future AGMs, and the school has shown support for that idea.

Our guest speaker this year was PCS District Ranger Leah Colebrook, our local ranger, who spoke on a range of topics, including planned work on the reserve dam, the problem of people taking wood from the reserve, trail and e-bikes on the reserve, and the new offset area between the current reserve western boundary and William Hovell Drive (see below). Questions from the audience also covered the kangaroo cull and how roos are counted now, control of weeds and African Lovegrass in particular, and rabbit and fox control. More details of Leah's talk are available in the [Draft Minutes of the AGM](#).

Leah was also happy to be co-opted as Returning Officer for the election of the new Coordinating Committee, which was elected (or re-elected) as follows:

Convenor: John Brannan

Secretary: Anne Aisbett

Treasurer: Warren Bond

Ordinary members: Alana Wilkes, Denise Hall, Len Taylor, Pax

I am delighted that everyone has volunteered to continue in their current roles, and particularly happy to welcome Pax back. As many of you will know, Pax was one of the founding members of fotpin and was in fact the principal driver behind the formation of fotpin back in 2010. He has already put in many hours of weed spraying since his return and will no doubt bring his usual energy to his role on the committee.



From left: Warren Bond, John Brannan, Denise Hall, Ranger Leah Colebrook (Photo: Alana Wilkes)

2026 Australian Landcare Awards

Anyone who has been paying attention over the last 15 years of fotpin's existence will be aware of the enormous amount of work that has been put in by Warren Bond. Over the years, he has served several times as Treasurer and Secretary on the committee as well as once as Convenor; he helped design and now supervises the implementation of our weed control program; he has waged a (largely single-handed) campaign against some of the more

prevalent and persistent weeds on the reserve, including Sweet Briar (Rose), Blackberry and Verbascum, and if that were not enough, he also built and maintains our amazing website, which I can attest is the envy of just about every other ParkCare and Landcare group in the ACT. So, his recent nomination for a Landcare award as Individual Landcarer of the Year was long overdue, and I'm delighted to say that he was the runner-up in a strong field of nominees and received a Highly Commended Award at the Awards ceremony held on August 8th.

Congratulations Warren! Richly deserved recognition for all the work you have done and continue to do.



Warren (3rd from right) with other highly commended awardees (Photo courtesy of Landcare ACT)

William Hovell Drive Duplication Environmental Offset

As you may already know, the planned duplication of William Hovell Drive has resulted in the unleased land west of the reserve and north of Kama Link paddock, which we broadly refer to as North Kama, being declared an environmental offset. The offset is needed to compensate for the loss of some stretches of box-gum woodland and some ecologically significant trees along the wider corridor for the duplicated road. One immediate impact of the new offset is that the tenants in the homestead in North Kama were forced to vacate the property and have purchased a home in the Belconnen area. The management plan is unclear as to what will happen to the homestead, stating that it may be demolished "if required". In the meantime, there is some remediation work planned for a contaminated site on the property and the old stables are earmarked for removal.

While the declaration of this offset does not have any immediate impact on us, it will eventually become part of The Pinnacle NR. With this in mind, we have arranged to meet with the PCS officer tasked with coordinating with the Offsets team for this offset. We have already spent some time looking over this area (referred to in the documentation as Block 1616) and have started thinking about what we would like to see happen there. The priorities for the Offsets team will be maintaining and restoring existing areas of box-gum woodland and preserving habitat for endangered or threatened species such as the Swift Parrot and Superb Parrot. But we'd like to see some effort made to improve some of the other bits of relatively high-quality woodland and grassland in the proposed offset, so we'll be pushing to have those areas also be a focus for some of the restoration activities. More information can be found at the government's [William Hovell Drive duplication website](#), and in the [management plan for the new offset](#) (23 Mb).

Kangaroo Cull

The Pinnacle NR was one of the 15 reserves selected for this year's annual cull under the PCS Kangaroo Management Plan. This means that the reserve was closed to the public on week days from 6 pm to 6 am for most of June and July. It was disappointing to see that some of the signs put up around the edges of the reserve warning of the closures were disfigured in such a way as to hide the relevant dates and times of the closures, presumably by anti-cull protestors. As with previous culls padlocks on the gates have also been filled with glue presumably to try to prevent entry by those carrying out the cull, but most of the time just preventing access for necessary routine work within the reserve.

As volunteers who spend a lot of time on the reserve, we see the damage that kangaroo overpopulation does to the vegetation on the reserve and the way that overgrazing threatens all the other fauna that call the reserve home. So, as much as we may regret the manner in which kangaroo numbers are controlled, we very much understand and support the need to keep the local macropod population at sustainable levels.

Pinnacle Native Species (Warren Bond)

The total number of native flora and fauna species reported in the reserve has now risen to 1,116 up from 1,065 at this time last year. The number of native plant species is now 286, an increase of 12, including an orchid species (*Eriochilus cucullatus* [Parson's bands]). Also among the new species was a bird not previously listed, the Pink-eared Duck (*Malacorhynchus membranaceus*) that John Brannan recently observed on the dam, an uncommon addition because the reserve's bird species have been so well documented. Other new species were 14 insects, 6 fungi, 6 mosses, 6 lichens, 3 spiders, a liverwort, an algae and a slime mould.



Parson's bands
(*Eriochilus-cucullatu*)

Photo: Warren Bond



Tube spittlebug
(*Chaetophyes compacta*)

Photo: Alison Milton



Fringed crystalwort
(*Riccia crinita*)

Photo: Warren Bond

Some of the species added to our records in the past year.

Weed Control (Warren Bond)

A detailed summary of our effort for the 2025-26 weed control season can be found on the [weeding effort web page](#). Our total effort for the season (1029 hours) was slightly ahead of the last 3 seasons and was the largest for 10 years. More importantly, with the return of Pax our spraying effort was double that in the last two seasons and also the largest for 10 years. Carefully targeted spraying with the appropriate selective herbicides is the most efficient way of effectively killing weeds while minimising the effect on existing or emerging native species and without causing soil disturbance. We aim to maximise the amount of spraying effort.

Most effort was spent controlling St. John's Wort (32% of total) the most widespread and persistent of the major invasive weeds on the reserve. The relatively dry spring and early summer was not particularly favourable for St. John's Wort resulting in it being less prolific,

particularly in the areas that we have been able to spray regularly. That, plus the return of Pax to our spraying team, enabled us to expand the area being controlled. The early rains and above average temperatures in Autumn brought new growth which prompted us to do a third spraying of St. John's Wort in the high value areas we have been concentrating on.

More effort than normal was spent treating Mustard (12%), a medium risk weed that thrived in the conditions of high rainfall following extended dry periods. Paterson's Curse (11%) and Saffron Thistles (8%) also did well in these conditions.

Blackberries continue to require a concerted effort to control, especially in areas close to the southern boundary of the reserve, but there were slightly less in the 2025-26 season than the high numbers in recent seasons (see the [Blackberry control progress](#) website). While the density of Sweet Briars is only 10% of what it was in 2012 (see the [Briar eradication](#) web page), numbers are slowly creeping up again so that as with Blackberries continued vigilance is required. The contributions of all weeders in finding, tagging and waypoint Briars and Blackberries so that they can then be easily found and appropriately sprayed at a later date have been a major factor in our control of both Blackberries and Briars and is gratefully acknowledged. We encourage other reserve users not to tag briars and blackberries unless they are able to submit accurate GPS coordinates to webmaster@fotpin.org.au so that they can be included in the biannual spraying program. Without the location they may very likely be missed unless stumbled upon by accident.

The highly invasive grasses African Lovegrass and, to a lesser extent, Serrated Tussock and Chilean Needlegrass also require continued vigilance. Within the reserve, the waypoints for locations of these weeds are recorded and forwarded to John Fitz Gerald who periodically treats them with a combination of seed bagging, grubbing and spraying as appropriate. We were grateful for the PCS contributions to African lovegrass control this year using contractors to treat it around the northern boundary of the reserve, the edges of vehicle tracks leading into the reserve and other highly trafficked areas. Rangers also carried out some spot spraying of African lovegrass and small areas of Paterson's Curse in the Kama Link paddock.

We have also been encountering increasing numbers of new invasive weeds, such as Cobbler's Peg (*Bidens pilosa*), which is also a challenge for our colleagues next door at Mt. Painter, and to a lesser extent Greater Beggar's Ticks (*Bidens subalternans*). Dwarf Mexican Marigold (*Schkuhria pinnata*), one of the many weeds introduced to the reserve by the revegetation contractors for the Molonglo pipeline a few years ago, continues to flourish adjacent to the pipeline route and is starting to spread more widely.

We're grateful to all who contribute to keeping the reserve's weeds at bay as far as possible and help make the reserve a favoured destination not only for nearby residents but also visitors from afar.

We need to boost our spraying team to ensure ongoing control of the most invasive weeds across the reserve. If you are interested in being involved and would like to find out more please contact Warren (webmaster@fotpin.org.au). PCS provides the necessary training if you decide to join us as well as the equipment and chemicals that we use.

Dam Area Renovation

Earlier this year, we began a discussion with the PCS rangers about finding ways to improve the condition of our dam. While the quality of the existing vegetation around the dam is actually quite good, there are other issues that we can address. In particular, there is long-standing sheet erosion happening on the western edge of the dam due to the steepness of the bank and the fact that this is an area commonly used by visitors to the dam. The rangers have already deposited some mid-sized logs and branches onto this slope, most of which have been pushed into the dam itself, presumably by dam users unhappy with the obstruction. So we've arranged with the rangers to have some coir logs fastened in place along the bank, after which mulch will be applied. We will then organise one or more planting events to get some ground cover vegetation and shrubs established in amongst the logs and mulch. Once we have the coir logs and the plants and guards in place, together with some signage to explain what we are trying to achieve, we will use mulch to mark out a new path

further back from the water's edge in the hope of encouraging dam users to avoid the eroding slope.

The outflow from the dam is also in need of attention to prevent the formation of an erosion gully at the southeast corner, but we are still in discussions over how best to address this issue.

Guided Walks Programs



Bird walk attendees hamming it up for the camera (*Photo: John Brannan*)

We ran a total of 5 guided walks over the past year, including 3 bird walks, John Fitz Gerald's walk in the Forest to study its post-fire recovery, and a joint walk with the ACT Conservation Council as part of their "Branching Out" program.

Planned walks for the coming spring include more bird walks, including a joint walk with Canberra Birds (formerly the Canberra Ornithologists Group), a wildflower walk and at least one more walk yet to be decided.

Last year we announced a Families' walk, but had to cancel the event due to a lack of interest. This year, we would like to revisit the idea of a walk aimed at families and children, and would love to hear suggestions from anyone who might be interested in such a walk.

Revegetation Projects

Icon Water Tank Compound and Weetangera Paddock

The trees and shrubs we planted (and in some cases replanted) in the Icon water tanks compound have done well, despite the dry spring and some hot, dry spells during summer. The few plants that we lost have been replaced by the ever-reliable Mitchell Kelly and Cybele McNeil, and the remaining plants are now flourishing, particularly the eucalypts. We are optimistic that, in time, the trees and shrubs will break up the very inhospitable ground in the compound and pave the way for future plantings of native groundcover species. Regular spraying to keep the St. John's Wort and other weeds under control will help to make that easier.

We are still keeping an eye on the fenced plots further down the pipeline corridor, waiting for the right conditions to sow native grasses and forbs. If the current good rain continues through to spring, then we may well be in a position to proceed. Until then, John Fitz Gerald has been diligently jumping on the worst of the weeds that inevitably pop up.

Weetangera Paddock

Len Taylor's revegetation work in Weetangera paddock continues, with mixed success. Wattle plantings last spring suffered somewhat during the hot weather but the majority survived. Len and his team are to be congratulated for their persistence with their revegetation efforts. Over the years, they have tried both direct sowing and tubestock planting, including some tubestock raised from seed by Len at home. One of his notable successes has been Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans*), a native everlasting daisy with yellow and white flowers that is classified as endangered both locally and nationally. In some areas where it was planted 5 years ago, the numbers have now tripled, showing that it is well established and obviously thriving. A terrific outcome and all down to the untiring efforts of Len and his team.

Canberra's Western Edge

One issue that has arisen recently that indirectly impacts on the reserve is the growing threat to the critically endangered ecosystems that make up the western edge of Canberra. This area runs up from Tharwa in the south up to the new suburb of Strathnairn out near the junction of the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee rivers. This is an area that includes large stretches of woodland and grassland that are home to many of the birds and other fauna that also call The Pinnacle home. The ongoing destruction of habitat around Canberra's fringes has seen many bird species that were once common either decline markedly or disappear completely. It is disappointing to think that more valuable habitat may now be threatened. You can find out more about the campaign to save the Western Edge by visiting the Conservation Council [web page for this campaign](#).

John Brannan
Convenor

14 August 2026

