

## NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2003

### CLARIFICATION

There appears to have been some lack of clarity in what I reported in the January Newsletter on the process of the siting and installation of the GRN station on Mt Caernarvon.

To avoid misunderstanding, item (d) should have read: "When site works commenced, a local resident was asked to monitor progress. On seeing the site and earthworks, her reaction was that of very strong disapproval. On receiving her reaction, another member and I promptly visited the site, and on checking, found that the site layout had been changed (from that agreed to) and the area increased by 50%. Sharing her disappointment with the visual impact, the Association requested a review of the project".

Once again we would like to stress that the Association is very happy to supply detailed information and discuss matters with any Association or community member – so please make contact with us if anything appears unclear or wrong.

### GOOD NEWS

Good news first seems to be a good way to start, so be advised that our finances are sufficiently stable to do away with any camping fees for members and their immediate families. A revised copy of the CAMPING "rules" is attached – please note and retain.

Camping fees for non-members (NB – who must be accompanied by the inviting and responsible member), will still apply.

### YELLOW FOOT SURVEY

The Dept of Environment and Heritage carries out helicopter survey of known Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby colonies to monitor population, distribution, etc. This year's survey spotted one animal at Minnitinni and six at "Pristine" Gorge (one north of Minnitinni). The probability is that the "real" number is higher and the usual statistically derived multiplying ("Lee") factor is 2.7, so we may have a population of approximately 15. The helicopter also spotted a mob of some 30 goats south of Minnitinni, which will have to be hunted down if they have established residence in the area.

### CONSERVATION RESERVE STATUS

The Committee has received requests for, and has noted some activities, which are not easy to reconcile

with the objectives of a **conservation** reserve (as opposed to a **recreational** reserve).

Please be aware that the NHT funding is conditional on the purpose of conservation, with special emphasis on the Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby. All activities must therefore comply with conservation intent as detailed in the Management Plan that has been formulated on that basis. If you wish to do undertake some activity, please run it past the Committee first.

I can supply a copy of the Management Plan, which is reviewed and submitted annually to Environment Australia.

### GRN

The remedial work on the Government Radio Network installation should be just about completed, so its intrusion on Mt Caernarvon should be minimised.

The Channel 4 UHF repeater is functioning and available for emergency use.

We suggest that you use channel 14 for chatter, and "scan" 4 & 14 in case someone is in need of help.

### BOUNDARIES

A recent accident involving unauthorised visitors, one of who fell and was seriously injured, has highlighted the need to clarify our boundaries and improve access control. This is being undertaken and will be reported at our AGM.

### TRACK USE

The Association does not have the funds to maintain all tracks and would prefer to leave abandoned tracks to revegetate and to be left for emergency or essential use only. Members are therefore asked not to use the track west of the campsite area, which leads to the old lookout – it is only a short walk, and the view is clearer without the dust.

Please stay on the main tracks and use the "middle" track to the north stockyards with great care, especially at creek crossings. We are trying to conserve a wilderness area.

Please also remember the rules of the Skytrek and the fact that it is a commercial operation by Willow Springs Station, which provides significant income to the Association. Please understand the commercial implications and restrict the use of the Skytrek route (especially Mt Caernarvon) to members with immediate

family and carefully limited number of accompanying friends. If you wish to enter Willow Springs Station or do the Skytrek Tour, you must seek their permission and comply with their conditions.

## TASKS AND PROJECTS

Firstly, your help is sought at all times – but **please** let the Committee know that you are available, and please consult before you do anything – it saves everyone a lot of “corrective” work and waste of effort. There is a list of tasks and projects and here is an outline of what is current:

**BIRD REGISTER** – we need to monitor and record bird populations. If you are a bird watcher or have any interest in that direction, please contact: John Drummond (tel: H: 8337 5958), who has established and volunteered to run the register.

**RABBIT WARREN LOCATION** – we intend to apply for NHT funding to help with rabbit control. The funding is usually on the \$1 for \$1 basis, and as the location is as expensive as the destruction, and involves only walking time (with GPS in hand), this will be our \$input. Jim Ayliffe (tel: H: 8390 1882, M: 0407 186 465) has volunteered to do the planning and recording of the systematic mapping of warrens – he needs walkers.

**TRAIL MARKING** – as not all of our members are experienced hikers/hunters – Brian Whittenbury (tel: H: 8381 7503, M: 0408 854 124) has undertaken to mark a trail around our most important wallaby conservation area to try to avoid “geographical embarrassment” by anyone. The intent is to use only (re-) movable markers, independent of any natural features, and to remove any existing inappropriate markings.

**BUILDING WORKS** – these, range from towel hooks, to paving, plumbing, signage, BBQ installation, fence repairs and modifications, etc, to a shelter and storage building. For those who dislike cold showers – we have ordered two “rocket” (outback type chip heater) water heaters. Please join “the few”, Bob Temby (tel: H: 8527 7007) has volunteered to coordinate and plan these works. I can supply a list of what needs to be done – and we are open to suggestions.

**BAITING** – this is one of the regular tasks to control predation by foxes, cats or dogs, and offers an opportunity to carry a rifle and “down” the goats that are occasionally found in the Reserve. This involves walking and/or driving – contact me for dates and details (tel: H: 8339 3507).

## THE AGM

The year has flown and it is time to report, review, vote, plan, etc. I hope that members will accept my Newsletters as a form of ongoing reporting and I will, of course, be there to answer questions and give whatever detail you request. Many thanks are due to those on the Committee and those who have “put shoulder to the wheel” in baiting, site works and undertaken ongoing projects and activities.

Special thanks to our very busy Secretary, chief plumber and negotiator – Jim Kennelly; Mark Spencer for clearing up and formalising our finances; Brian

Whittenbury for patiently shifting signs; Brenton Arnold – the EA/DEH representative who travels from Port Augusta for meetings, and is “the man in the middle” in many ways; Brendan Lay (DPI) who has been doing his very best to “hide” the GRN station by moving rocks literally with his bare hands.

Many thanks also to Jeanine and Peter Baker for a generous donation to our (tax deductible) Project Fund, and to our non-member volunteer and friend Tom Brauer for the donation of a 2kVA generator.

Our achievements for this year include:

- carried out the quarterly baiting program with the Flinders Ranges NP
- showers and toilets tiled and functioning
- 15.9 km (ie. all defective) fencing renewed
- GRN installation including professional standard UHF repeater completed
- remedial work to minimise visual impact of GRN nearing completion
- 139 goats put down by members, and 15 by NPW-SA helicopter (very few seen)
- bird register established and awaits inputs
- water line from Pinnacle Bore – leaks fixed

## MEMBERSHIP(S)

The Secretary reports that all 100 memberships have now been taken up and there are some people who are now on a waiting list. If by any chance you have lost interest, or need to recover your membership cost, please contact the Secretary who will put you in touch with someone who may wish to purchase it from you.

## COMMUNICATION

As usual, please make contact if you have any queries or wish to make suggestions. Your feedback and constructive input is not only important – it is essential for effective and fulfilling involvement by all of us.

Your contacts are:

- Gil Hartwig – President  
tel: 8260 4752, [hargil@senet.com.au](mailto:hargil@senet.com.au)
- Kaz Herbst – Vice-Pres  
tel: 8339 3507, [kazoom@esc.net.au](mailto:kazoom@esc.net.au)
- Jim Kennelly – Secretary  
tel: 0419 866 978, [kennelly.jim@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:kennelly.jim@saugov.sa.gov.au)

### ***Kaz Herbst – Vice President.***

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The Association provides a forum for Yellow Foot Members who wish to get together, interact with one another and use this as a way of getting to meet more of our club members. Any persons who are willing to get involved and want to contact other members can contact me at [longjohn@internode.on.net](mailto:longjohn@internode.on.net) or leave a message with Jim Kennelly and I should get it. I hope that all members can get to know one another and make new contacts - so don't be shy - put your best foot forward and hopefully everyone can get involved in our little project. See you at the AGM. **Colin Chambers**