



NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2005

ANOTHER YEAR - ANOTHER AGM

It seems such a short time since I wrote the last Newsletter almost exactly a year ago. In case you think nothing has happened and you have been forgotten, please read what follows and do your best to attend the approaching AGM, or at least send in a proxy.

Please consider this to be my annual report, and I will happily expand or fill in on any issue.

In summary, our activities and achievements were as follows:

YFRWs

Again, from helicopter and ground observations, wallaby numbers have improved with slightly higher numbers than last year and spreading their areas of residence, with one pair being frequently sighted near the first point into Minnitinni creek from the Camping area.

Dr Peter Hornsby who has been studying YFRWs for over 25 years, came on one of our baiting trips and prepared an assessment and report which will be available at the AGM, but in summary, commented as follows:

- The area is eminently suitable yellow-footed rock-wallaby habitat
- Reintroduction of the species should be seriously considered, preferably using one or two males from the extant population as sires for a breeding programme
- Irrespective of whether or not reintroduction occurs, a water point should be installed at the upper (western) end of Pristine Gorge
- If reintroduction goes ahead, a hard release method should be used, with the proviso that care is taken optimize the time of year for actual release

- Consideration should also be given to a reintroduction of the brush-tailed bettong in Pristine Gorge

Anyone ready to take any of this up as a project?

FACILITIES

Not only are there two water heaters, but there is electric lighting (yes – you can now read in the toilet), the roof and paving have been extended over the sink – all done by Kym Groves and friends.

Harry Erdmann has also modified the taps so that they work with low water pressure.

Please enter showers with care as the cool/damp floor felt nice to one brown snake.

The water supply was a problem for some months when the Pinnacle Bore windmill shaft sheared off and the tank contents were used up.

Once again, Kym and friends acquired an original Southern Cross Manual, and with the new knowledge, advice and some spare components from ex-farmer friends, rebuilt and re-commissioned the windmill.

A repair of the 15 Mile Bore may even be considered.

PEST CONTROL

SSAA members have put down 87 goats in the past year, with a further 69 shot by the Bounceback helicopter team.

The three monthly fox baiting program has been continued with assistance of two non-member volunteers Tom Brauer and Alex McDonald – many thanks to them both.

Both walking and driving transects have to be done – so please volunteer your help. Accommodation is provided at Oraparinna.

GREENING THE BUNKERS CR

Tony Cathcart's submission to the Envirofund for funding assistance for a revegetation project was successful to the tune of \$14,650, and is virtually completed.

Congratulations and thanks to Tony and his many helpers in gathering seeds, propagating plants, fencing, planting, and now watering.

Tony has also represented us at Blinman Progress Association meetings, has installed a rain gauge which indicates that the BCR has had 111mm of rain this (calendar) year, and is now in the process of acquiring and breeding Flea Beetles for biological control of Salvation Jane.

THE BUILDING

The roof and shell of the building is up. Concrete slab and internal fit-out is to follow and hopefully be ready for an official opening around Easter 2006.

We have to thank Neville Davey, Ken Warren, Robert Taylor and Phil Baur for organizing materials and doing the very, very hard work in putting up the building, which was not helped by some prefabricated components not being quite "right".

A concrete pouring work bee will be organized soon.

Kym Groves (again) has designed and constructed a solar powered lighting and power system. (Sorry, it will not power electric blankets).

A UHF radio base station is also ready to be put in.

FENCING

Although all fencing has been substantially renewed, it still requires periodic checking and repair. Considerable effort has been put in by members and friends to carry out this task on an equitable and practical basis with our neighbours. Some input into this issue from members would be appreciated.

THANKS

I would like to thank the Committee for their time, expertise and efforts in dealing with Association affairs.

So far we have not developed a system of distributing honors (Order of a Yellow Foot?) or awards (have to think of one) to those mentioned above who have done so much, and very much deserve our gratitude.

More volunteers are always welcome.

Kaz Herbst – Vice President