



Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby Preservation Association Inc
PO Box 376, Campbelltown SA 5074

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2014

THIRTEENTH YEAR

We have just completed our thirteenth year of operation and are about to have another Annual General Meeting. This Newsletter is not just a progress report – we have serious matters to resolve, so please read carefully, consider and act.

MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

The AGMs of the last three years have had a quorum by only one or two proxies. Folks – this cannot go on and the workload on “the few” is not sustainable if progress is to be made! I seem to be repeating the following words from last year: “The foresight, generosity and support of the “Magnificent 100” is recognised, respected and indeed honoured in the establishment of the Association and the Reserve. However, some are getting old, and some seem to have sat back after having done their good deed – please understand that we have to have at least demonstrated interest if not full active participation”.

Some memberships have changed hands, and more will do so as those on the waiting list take up memberships that become available.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE

The substantial campsite facilities including (limited) solar power, BBQs, water, toilets and showers are in use, especially at popular times. So make bookings as early as possible. Standard conditions of booking and usage apply (see website). The Committee only asks that users take care of everything provided.

The SIBELCO Barytes Mine operation has ceased and some facilities will revert to the Association for our use. This includes three houses, sheds and workshop. Refurbishment of the buildings will be required. The possible benefits of infrastructure items and commitments in terms of workload, responsibilities and costs are yet to be identified.

THE WALLABIES

The Bounceback helicopter survey did not take place this year. Regular sightings have confirmed a colony have now taken up residence near the camp site around Minnitinni Creek.

REVEGETATION

Our two revegetation patches near 15 Mile Bore are still benefitting from kangaroo and rabbit control. Unfortunately, although three rabbits have been shot, several may still be there – please check and take action when in the vicinity. Keen eyed members located two stands of very rare “Slender Bell Fruit” trees, (extinct in NSW).

More seedlings are at the “potted” stage, awaiting more growth and favourable conditions for planting. All offers of assistance with revegetation are sought and will be most welcome.

ANNUAL REPORTING

YFRWPA Inc received financial support from the Natural Heritage Trust (Commonwealth Govt) for the purchase and establishment of the Bunkers Conservation Reserve. All these things come with strings attached, ours being a Financial Agreement for 999 years (only 986 remaining), which requires annual reporting and review of the Management Plan to confirm that our primary objective and function remain as preserving the Yellow-footed Rock-wallabies and the local environment.

THE WEBSITES

We are indebted to Charlie Onody for establishing and maintaining the websites, www.yellowfoot.org and www.caernarvontrack.com – please look at them and be impressed, especially if contemplating or promoting a visit. The Committee seeks information and suggestions from all visitors.

FINANCES

Reduced income from Caernarvon Track 4 WD tour has placed some stress on Association finances. The levy of \$100 per member has been substantially collected. Members MUST attend the AGM to make the next decisions.

Remember that donations to the “YFRWPA Bunkers Block Project” are tax deductible and can be made by Bank Transfer to the following Account:

- Account Name: Bunkers Block Project Fund
- BSB: 105-099 Acc. No. 025 075 540

Please include Bank transfer notification to email address: mark@yellowfoot.org

THE CAERNARVON TRACK

The Association operated "CAERNARVON TRACK" 4WD self-drive tour is now well established. Public use and the resulting income is gradually improving, with local tour operator input being investigated and negotiated.

Many thanks to Kym, Charlie and Brian who have been making contacts, preparing a "Tour Guide", exploring publicity options, negotiating, and attending to site access. Without their efforts we would be without a future.

Access control gates are installed and the use of the new member key system is essential.

FERALS AND PESTS

Members have only reported 28 goats eradicated during the past year with an unknown number shot by the DEH helicopter. The resident Reserve population is now thought to be only transient animals. Rabbits are seen in small numbers – shoot and trap, and fill in any rabbit holes you see.

As the DEWNR six monthly aerial fox baiting includes the BCR and our baiting program is carried out in parallel with the Flinders Ranges NP we only have to do ground baiting transects twice a year.

The BCR is part of the SA Arid Lands NRM organised dog control "Biteback" program and no dogs have been sighted for about four years.

Again, many thanks to Marcus Agaciak, Jorge Navas, Alex McDonald and Peter Knapp for the dedicated assistance in the walking transects.

We have applied for a Destruction Permit for 50 Euros – specifically those within or adjacent to the revegetation areas. Sheep spotting has been much easier with access to the southern areas.

THE HELPERS

The Association is almost totally dependent on volunteer (member and non-member) effort to fulfil its obligations and to achieve its objectives. Please note that these are to operate a conservation reserve for the specific purpose of **preservation of the Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby and the environment** to IUCN category IV standard, not just for recreation.

Without the Committee members and special input by Jacqui and Kym Groves, Alex McDonald, Charlie Onody, Brian Whittenbury, John and Paul Drummond, Marcus Agaciak, Jim Kennelly, Bob Temby, Warrick Duff and others who have put in a lot of effort – the YFRWPA and the Reserve would not be progressing without their efforts – again, many thanks to them all!

OTHER INTERESTS

The Flinders University Speleological Society, continues locating, checking condition and reporting on the state of local caves.

Wally Klau from Birds Australia and member John Drummond have visited the Reserve again this year to extend the Birds List.

The mineral exploration carried out under the SA Government issued Mining Exploration Licence EL4810 over the western area of the Reserve has resulted in no identification of any commercial deposits and that intrusion is now ended.

DEWNR and Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered has commenced a 3 year program to reintroduce Quolls in FRNP (SSAA financial support of \$20,000 pa). Possums are to follow, and the BCR is under consideration as a potential future release site.

A Fitness group ("Fitwits") with an interest in wilderness areas, hiked within the BCR with very favourable comments and a generous donation.

THE FUTURE

Special mention must be made that the decision as to what to do with the Barytes Mine site infrastructure that has huge implications for the Association and its members in terms of responsibilities and costs. Will the commitments be appropriate, beneficial and realistic? Please attend the AGM and have your say! As usual, members' constructive suggestions are welcome - especially if help is offered.

VISITING

Please remember that there are a number of conditions and rules to visiting the Reserve:

- 1 Please pre-book your visit with the Secretary.
- 2 Please make yourselves familiar with visiting conditions/rules (see website).
- 3 Please ensure that you look out for other vehicles when driving, and maintain UHF radio communication whilst at the Reserve.
- 4 Please look in the filing cabinet for copies of information, and complete and return the report forms to YFRWPA.
- 5 Please note: **New keys are essential to enter and travel around the Reserve.**

Please seek the facts, discuss, consider and attend the AGM!

Kaz Herbst
Vice President