



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

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NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2007

WHAT? - ANOTHER YEAR?

Well, time flies and here we are about to have another Annual General Meeting, so here is a brief report to those who are not able to attend, and for those who come, - a little advance information.

For those who cannot come, a reminder – PLEASE send in your proxies so that we have a quorum and do not have to do it all again.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE

Yes, the facilities building has progressed, with external finish, solar powered lighting, UHF radio base station installed, and by the time of the AGM, it is expected that only the internal painting will be left to be done. The floor is concrete, but some form of finish may be possible once our bank account recovers.

We have also received an offer of external pavers for the veranda and surrounds. Transport and installation will be up to us.

The Pinnacle windmill has been maintained and the pump (80ft down) has been refurbished thanks to Jacqui and Kym Groves – quite a challenging job, as those who have climbed to that little platform on a breezy day will confirm.

Two additional water tanks have been ordered – one to collect/store rain from the facilities building roof, and one to provide protected storage for water from the Pinnacle bore which has been tested and shown to be quite clean.

THE WALLABIES

Significant observations of up to twelve individuals (yes – with eight on one photograph) have given us great encouragement, that at last we are achieving what we set out to do.

That this is happening at a time of continuing drought, without artificial water points or feeding, is especially important.

REVEGETATION

The fencing around our revegetation patches has been upgraded, and although the survival rate of our plantings is very low, if you put your head close to the ground along the fence line, you will see the effect of keeping out the rabbits, kangaroos and the odd goat.

The plantings around the campsite area are developing well due to David Pearce who planted them and to the tender care (watering) by visiting members. The windbreak effect should make stays more comfortable when it does blow a bit.

THE SKYTREK

The SKYTREK licence agreement with Willow Springs Station has been renewed after considerable negotiation. The negotiations were protracted and difficult as the Committee was well aware its responsibilities to the membership, and to the difficulties of the pastoral industry, especially in marginal areas.

Members are reminded that the Skytrek operation provides an income not only to Willow Springs, but is also a financial mainstay of YFRWPA Inc – ie we the members, do not have to cover ongoing costs of maintenance, management and development activities from our pockets.

Members are therefore reminded of the Skytrek operation rules, and when possible, to encourage friends and relatives to do the full Skytrek Tour and to use Willow Springs tourist facilities.

THE "yellowfoot" WEBSITE

The establishment of a website has been a great step in this IT age, and we are all indebted to our member (now webmaster) Charlie Onody for putting so much time and effort into www.yellowfoot.org to expose us to the world.

ANNUAL REPORTING

As members are aware, YFRWPA Inc received financial support from the Natural Heritage Trust (Commonwealth Government) 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 (now only 993 remaining), which requires annual reporting and review of the Management Plan. I have carried this out this year as in previous years, and would like to acknowledge the assistance of Alex McDonald in overseeing my efforts.

FERALS AND PESTS

During the past year some 400 goats have been put down – with 282 of these by the DEH helicopter in the rather inaccessible SE corner of the Reserve.

Rabbits seem to be more apparent, but the drought, RHD and "myxo" will probably knock down the numbers. Still, bring your .22 and fill in any rabbit holes you see when you visit.

The fox/dog baiting program has been carried out every three months in parallel with the DEH Flinders Ranges NP.

Again, many thanks to the dedicated (non-members) assistance from Tom Brauer and Alex McDonald who do walking transects.

We also have a Destruction Permit for 80 euros – specifically those within or adjacent to the revegetation areas.

OTHER INTERESTS

Access to the Reserve has been given to three groups in the past year.

The first group is the Flinders University Speleological Society, which has an interest and expertise in checking condition and reporting on the state of local caves.

The second has been an Adelaide University PhD student and his supervisors who have gathered specimens relating to research and study of past weather conditions of our planet.

The third was a group providing adventure and life experience courses for young people.

THE HELPERS

The Association is almost totally dependent on volunteer (member and non-member) effort to fulfil its obligations and to achieve its objectives.

Without the Committee members and special input of Maxine McInnes, Jacqui Groves, Alex McDonald, Tom Brauer, Charlie Onody, Bob Temby, John Drummond, and others who have quietly slipped in and “done their bit” – the YFRWPA and the Reserve would be far from where it is today – thankyou all!

THE FUTURE

A number of issues and projects are possible and the members’ opinions of priorities and directions would be welcome.

One proposal is for the improvement of access to the south-eastern portion of the Reserve. Another is fencing around the facilities area to reduce grazing on newly planted vegetation.

It is also apparent that with unrelenting drought conditions, pastoral properties are coming up for sale, and a group of existing and waiting YFRWPA members are very interested in acquiring more land for conservation purposes.

Whether this is done by expanding the YFRWPA, or establishing a separate group will need to be considered.

Once again, if for any reason you would be happy to transfer your membership to another interested individual who will value it generously – please let the Committee know as we have a waiting list.

VISITING

Please remember that there are a number of conditions and rules to visiting the Reserve – please check with the Committee before going.

Hoping to see you at the AGM.

Kaz Herbst

Vice President