



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

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2008

ANOTHER YEAR

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 do come - a little advance information.

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

THE INFRASTRUCTURE

The facilities building is basically finished with the internal painting still to be completed. The floor is still only concrete, but some form of finish may be possible once our bank account can stand it.

We have had two pallets of pavers delivered and ready for laying (levelling needed).

A rainwater tank has been purchased, installed and is even nearly full of rain water.

The second water heater can be temporarily connected, but a bit of plumbing and pressure relief valve are still needed.

The Pinnacle windmill has been maintained and a new plastic totally roofed tank has been installed inside the old steel "squatters" tank.

THE WALLABIES

The annual Bounceback helicopter survey found thirty wallabies in the Bunkers CR, which included about 14 in an extensive rock cleft in the Minnitinni area.

This is an increase which is happening at a time of continuing drought without artificial water points or feeding. They must be very hardy critters.

REVEGETATION

Styles have been constructed and installed (still to be stabilised) to provide access over fencing around our revegetation patches near 15 Mile Bore.

The planting around the campsite area is progressing well, even if the growth seems rather slow.

THE SKYTREK

The SKYTREK is in need of some maintenance, but this is virtually pointless until there is some substantial rainfall to stabilise the soil.

Members are reminded that the Skytrek operation provides an income not only to Willow Springs, but is also a financial mainstay of YFRWPA Inc – i.e. 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 to do the full Skytrek Tour and to use Willow Springs tourist facilities.

THE “yellowfoot” WEBSITE

We are all indebted to our webmaster Charlie Onody for maintaining the website www.yellowfoot.org which is our window 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 992 remaining), which requires annual reporting and review of the Management Plan. I have done this as in previous years, and would again like to acknowledge the assistance of Alex McDonald in overseeing my efforts.

FERALS AND PESTS

During the past year some 179 goats have been put down – with 140 of these by the DEH helicopter in the rather inaccessible SE corner of the Reserve – this is a gradually reducing number which is an indicator of our success.

Rabbits are being seen but in reasonably stable 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 Maxine McInnes, Tom Brauer and Alex McDonald who do walking transects.

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

We have a Destruction Permit for 100 Euros – specifically those within or adjacent to the revegetation areas.

OTHER INTERESTS

The first group is the Flinders University Speleological Society, which continues 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 – a progress report has been received.

The third has been the SSAA-Hunting & Conservation Branch which has conducted an extension to the Australian Army survival course, to cover hunting and related skills and an understanding and appreciation of conservation and indigenous land interests. A letter of appreciation and \$500 donation have been received.

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, Christine Arnold, Jacqui and Kym Groves, Alex McDonald, Tom Brauer, Charlie Onody, Bob Temby, John Drummond, Malcolm Strathearn, David Pearce, Jim Kennelly and others who have quietly slipped in and “done their bit” – the YFRWPA and the Reserve would not be progressing as well as it is – thank you to you all!

THE FUTURE

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

The proposal for the improvement of access to the south-eastern portion of the Reserve is progressing slowly, and we have some indication of cost.

Another is fencing around the facilities area to reduce grazing on newly planted vegetation.

It is 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 – a LANDS Group has been formed so please let us know of anyone sharing that interest.

Whether this is done by expanding the YFRWPA or establishing a separate group will need to be considered when an opportunity presents itself.

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

LAND EXCHANGES

You may be aware that the boundaries of the Reserve are not quite as was envisaged at time of purchase negotiation due to the incomplete formalisation of a land exchange (over 17 years ago) between DEH and Willow Springs. To encourage that process, a group of senior DEH staff was shown over the Reserve during the Friends of Parks 2008 Forum at Wilpena.

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