

Narpulungup ews

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from the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park

www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au

CELEBRATION OF SPRING EDITION

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TWERTUP FIELD STUDIES CENTRE – RISING LIKE A PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES

The Twertup Field Studies Centre was damaged beyond repair by a wildfire in Fitzgerald River National Park in January 2008. Following discussion between the 'Friends' and DEC and intensive fund raising, the decision was taken to completely re-build the much loved and visited facility. Three working bees in 2010 demolished the ruin and cleared the site. This included salvaging, cleaning and sorting the original spongolite bricks for re-use in the new building. A further two working bees in early 2012 surveyed and prepared the site for the rebuild. While all this was happening design plans were drawn up, certified by an engineer and approved by DEC. The proposal was for a structurally sound building that would retain some of the features of the original building and yet retain its sense of place at the former quarry site in the national park.

A milestone event occurred over the weekend of 23/24 June 2012. A low loader and truck laden with steel components prefabricated by CPC Engineering in Ravensthorpe and a crane as well as eight volunteers and two park rangers set out for the remote site. As such the re-build is logistically complex and much credit must go to Ric Pepper for his design, planning, supervision and ensuring that it all came together as it did. By Sunday evening the steel frame was completely in place.

The steel frame has been partly funded by an 'Environmental Community Grant 2010' and a 'Great Southern Royalties for Regions Small Grant'. John Mason, with CPC Ravensthorpe's crane, gave a very generous, in-kind contribution by donating his exceptional expertise in manoeuvring the steel into the correct spot for the Twertup working bee. A big thank you to John Wakelam for the use of his low-loader and John Tucker for driving it, Ric Pepper for his truck, and Grantly Morton for making sure we were all 'dieback-free'.



Next issue:
November 2012

If you would like to join us in this worthy community project, you can donate \$40 for a wheelbarrow load of concrete (112 barrows so far, out of 300 required) - post cheques to V. Bilney (Treasurer), PO Box 13, Ongerup 6336. More active people can come to a working bee at Twerup on the first weekend of each month, please phone Ric Pepper 9838 1071.



Ric Pepper and John Mason confer on the plans.



The steel frame completed by late Sunday.

FROM THE QUAALUP WEEKEND

SPINELESS WONDERS AGAIN

The Quaalup weekend commenced on Saturday morning with a presentation of the invertebrates (spineless fauna) of saline rivers and a field collecting exercise conducted by Geraldine Janicke attended by 12 adults and 5 children.

Geraldine pointed out that although we frequently measure water quality as an index of river health, this is only a snapshot at one point in time. If we

this is only a snapshot at one point in time. If we examine the invertebrate fauna we begin to develop an understanding of river processes over a period of time. To do this aquatic ecologists have developed indices of pollution and disturbance sensitive fauna such as the EPT index; E is for Ephemeroptera (mayflies), P is for Plecoptera (stoneflies) and T is for Trichoptera (caddisflies). The difficulty for naturally saline rivers is that there are very few species that tolerate saline conditions. Therefore to understand what is happening in saline rivers we need to examine the halobiontic fauna; that is, those species which favour saline conditions. These include some copepods, ostracods (seed shrimps), amphipods (side swimmers), chironomids (midge larvae), some beetles and brine shrimps. On the south coast of WA we have approximately 25 species of copepods and 30 of ostracods. Studies have shown that midge larvae and some aquatic beetles actually increase in number of individuals as salinity increases.

From the 'classroom' we walked down to the Gairdner River crossing to see what we could find by using nets in different river habitats and in this, the very young amongst us excelled in spite of one accidental immersion. We did a preliminary sort down at the river to find that shrimps, water slaters, various molluscs, aquatic worms, caddisfly larvae and midge larvae were quite common here, despite it being mid-winter. Our catch was taken back to Quaalup where microscopes were set up to reveal the intricate architecture of aquatic invertebrates; in particular the microscopic stone masonry of caddisfly larvae in constructing their elongate, conical tubes. Once again the very young seemed particularly in awe of the intricacy revealed.

On Saturday evening we extended the saline rivers theme by previewing the DVD produced by Steve and Geraldine Janicke 'Salt Rivers', in the elegant Quaalup homestead lounge room. The DVD went beyond the biological aspects of rivers we examined in the morning and looked at the physical processes that influence rivers including geology, land use and climate as well as how we manage and relate to our rivers as a society. The visuals are stunning and well complemented by the music composed by Steve. Steve and Geraldine are to be congratulated for their production and thanked for their substantial contribution to the weekend. The DVD will be available for purchase in the near future. Details will be available

on the website www.janicke.com.au



Geraldine directs collecting at Gairdner River.



The microscopes reveal a world of unexpected delight.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS?

If a red dot appears on the address panel for mail recipients of this edition, you have not renewed your membership. We value your membership highly and hope that you wish to continue it. To do so please visit the web site www.fitzgerald-friends.org.au for a membership form. We will shortly be contacting email newsletter recipients whose membership is due for renewal. If you wish to establish your membership status contact secretary steve@janicke.com.au

NORTHERN HEMISPHERE VISITOR TO JERDACUTTUP LAKES

'Friend's' eagle-eyed naturalist John Tucker recently photographed a Red-necked Stint at

Jerdacuttup Lakes. The Stint was leg-banded in Victoria 'some time since 1990'. While the timing is a bit vague what we do know is that these birds breed in arctic Asia and Alaska and fly south to avoid the northern hemisphere winter. This bird has certainly flown to its northern breeding area and return an unknown number of times since it was banded. For such a small bird to fly nearly half way around the world twice a year is an amazing feat of endurance and navigation.



Red-necked Stint at Jerdacuttup Lakes. Note yellow leg band. Photo John Tucker.

SOME SPRINGTIME ACTIVITIES FOR YOU...

WILDFLOWER/RAILWAY HERITAGE WALK

'Friends' and the Ravensthorpe Wildflower Show Committee are jointly hosting this annual event as a walk from Kundip to Lee Creek. The distance is 11 km along the Ravensthorpe-Hopetoun Railway route which has been developed as a walk trail. We will stop for lunch and a cup of tea half way along the route; transport back to Kundip will be arranged. Wildflowers will be at their best and the heritage aspects of the railway are also of interest. If you are interested you will need to know:

- Date? Sunday 16 September 2012
- Where and when to meet? Kundip rest area. Meet at 9.45 for 10.00 AM start.
- What to bring? Lunch, water, camera, binoculars, sunscreen etc in daypack. Dress for weather on the day; ankle supporting footwear is recommended. If allergic to bees bring antihistamines or epi-pen.

There is an option for those who would like a shorter 5 km walk, to loop walk back to Kundip. Please be dieback aware and ensure clean footwear. For further information walk trail pamphlets are available from 'Going Bush Informa-

-tion Centre in Ravensthorpe or contact Andy Chapman on 98381149. Participants need to be aware that although most of the route is a level, firm surface (see photo) there are some creek washaways and fallen timber to negotiate.

CARNABY'S COCKATOO NESTING SURVEY IN COCANARUP TIMBER RESERVE

This year 'Friends' are providing this annual event will take place over the weekend of 5 to 7 October. We will camp out in the reserve in our usual spot over the Friday and Saturday night. You don't need to be a bird expert to come along and enjoy yourself in the magnificent Cocanarup Salmon Gum woodlands.

The plan is to meet at 4.00 PM on Friday at the Cocanarup Road turn-off, 11 km west of Ravensthorpe on South Coast Highway. For those who wish to come only for Saturday meet at the same site at 9.00 AM. While a FWD is not necessary for most of Saturday's activities, the campsite is accessible only by a bush track for which FWD is preferable. To participate you will need to bring your lunch, drinks, binoculars. A camera and GPS are useful but not essential. Wear suitable clothing for the weather conditions on the day; ankle supporting footwear is recommended. As feral bees are present, if you are allergic to them, bring antihistamines or an epi-pen. If camping out you will need your own camping equipment and food etc.

Please be dieback aware and ensure your vehicle and footwear are free of soil and mud before entering the reserve. If there is heavy rainfall immediately prior to the weekend it will be postponed. For further information contact Raana Scott on 0427707047 or email raanascott@gmail.com

RAVENSTHORPE WILDFLOWER SHOW

This year the show is between 8-22 September, between 9.00 AM and 4.00 PM at the Senior Citizens Centre in the main street of Ravensthorpe. Entry is \$4.00. There is also a Gala Wildflower Dinner on 22 September at the Ravensthorpe Entertainment Centre with Angus Stewart from 'Gardening Australia' as the guest speaker. Arrive at 6.30 for 7.00 PM start. Tickets are \$50. Bookings on 0417174299 or 98381277.

Photo right: on the Railway Heritage Walk

BREAKING NEWS—SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS

We have recently been advised of five successful grant applications, two directly to 'Friends', which will enable three separate programs within the FRNP and surrounds. These are:

- \$3M to SCNRM for Dieback control.
- \$30 000 to 'Friends' for the continued restoration of Twertup Field Studies Centre as an Environment Community Grant in the Major Conservation and Environment Organisation category. To be used for stone masonry and brickwork.
- \$14 330 to 'Friends' from Caring for Country for roadworks to maintain public access on Twertup Track.
- \$26,500 to Friends of the Western Ground Parrot to monitor WGP Populations in the Biodiversity Conservation category.
- \$250,000 to DEC for the Western Ground Parrot survival captive breeding program, and feral cat control.

'Friends' President, Anne Gadsby said, 'the challenge now is to use these funds effectively to implement plans which are already in place and organisations like SCNRM will have a major role to play as they produced a report in 2009 identifying critical areas and strategies.'

'Friends' are grateful to Minister Marmion for his support for critical programs in FRNP and surrounds.





Department of Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future 

Dieback Management Community Workshops

The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) recently held a series of dieback management workshops with the communities of Bremer Bay, Jerramungup, Ravensthorpe and Hopetoun. Thirty people attended to provide their input on the Fitzgerald River National Park Dieback Management Plan between 23 and 25 May.

The workshops provided people with the opportunity to express their views, concerns and ideas relating to Dieback management and have input into the development of the Fitzgerald River National Park Dieback Management Plan. Dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) is an introduced pathogen that threatens 40 percent of the State's flora species, and consequently degrades fauna habitat and disrupts ecosystem function. It can be spread through movement of soil, water and plant material especially by vehicles, machinery and footwear.

Dieback occurs in discrete areas within Fitzgerald River National Park and in a number of areas in the adjacent landscape. Recently, new infestations have been found on Doubtful Islands Rd, Gordon Inlet Rd and Old Ongerup Rd. Current management within the Park includes compulsory training and strict hygiene procedures for staff and contractors, road closures in wet soil conditions, containment measures and education. The Fitzgerald River National Park Dieback Management Plan will guide decisions and activities within the Park related to the threat of dieback disease.

DEC Albany District Manager Mike Shephard said he was impressed with the broad range of ideas and input from the attendees and encouraged by the level of commitment shown by the community to preserving the natural values of the Fitzgerald River National Park.

Attendees expressed an interest to be kept well informed about the location and effects of dieback disease infestations, and for tourists and transitory visitors to receive targeted educational messages using technologies such as phone applications and social media.

There is a strong desire in the community to keep the Park as open and accessible as possible to the public, but not to the detriment of the Park's health. Facilities for cleaning vehicles and equipment need to be provided and inspections of vehicles entering the Park conducted. Community members would like to see more resources go towards combating this threat.

Members of the public seeking further information about Dieback, and how to prevent its spread, are encouraged to check out a new display at the Hopetoun Community Resource Centre. If you missed the workshops and would still like to provide input into the plan, please contact one of the local Dieback Rangers: Carol Ebbett 0488 451 119 or Geoff Young 0428 371 022.

A LATE CALL FROM TANGAROA BLUE...

Tangaroa Blue is looking for volunteers to join us for the 9th Annual West Australian Beach Clean Up being held over the weekend of October 13th and 14th. Since the WA Marine Debris Project started in 2004, volunteers have helped remove over 457 319 pieces of marine debris from the state's beaches, helping to protect marine life and seabirds and the local marine environment. This year we are hoping to clean up as much of the Western Australian coastline as possible. It's a pretty ambitious goal but with the help of everyone out there we truly can make this the biggest and best WA Beach Clean Up yet!

Volunteers are invited to register as individuals or groups and nominate a beach or stretch of coastline they will clean up over the clean up weekend. All materials, volunteer insurance and logistical support will be provided, all we need is lots of energy and many hands to help remove marine debris from the coast. If you are interested in helping out please contact renee@tangaroablue.org

For more information on Tangaroa Blue and the Western Australian Beach Clean Up efforts over the past 8 years please visit the Tangaroa Blue website - www.tangaroablue.org



The steel frame of the new Twertup stands proud and true like a phoenix over the ashes as the sun sets on 24 June 2012.

The Phoenix is a mythical bird of Arabia. It was said to build a nest of spices, sing a melodious song, set fire to the spices by flapping its wings and be consumed by fire but to later come forth with new life.

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