



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

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2010

OUR NINTH YEAR

We have just completed nine years of operation and are about to have another Annual General Meeting. Here is a brief report to those who are not able to attend, and for those who do 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

The facilities building is finished with the painting completed and vinyl floor sheeting laid in the two rooms. There are two double bunks and two single beds – all with mattresses - but bring your own pillows, linen and blankets.

The rainwater tank is full. Both water heaters are connected – just remember to bring your kindling and please don't chop wood on the paving slabs – use the chopping blocks provided.

You will notice the automatic weather station which not only records rainfall, but will even give you a weather forecast.

Please note that the 240V power outlets are only fed from a “modified sine wave” 600VA inverter i.e. very limited power and not suitable for some electronic equipment. Please check your gear before connecting (no liability by YFRWPA for any damage to your gear – your liability for power supply repairs).

THE WALLABIES

The annual Bounceback helicopter survey again located a satisfactory number of wallabies in the Bunkers CR. They are doing well and should benefit from the high amount of rain that has fallen.

REVEGETATION

We have styles to provide access over fencing around our two revegetation patches near 15 Mile Bore, however due to almost total loss of our first planting of propagated plants, it was intended to install access gates to allow contour plough seeding. However, due to the high rainfall - surface seeding may be tried.

The plants around the campsite area are progressing well in response to the rains and being watered (with rainwater).

THE SKYTREK

The SKYTREK has been affected by rain and is “challenging” in parts. A vehicle counter/scanner has been installed to monitor how many (and who?) are actually using the track.

Members are reminded that the Skytrek operation provides an income not only to Willow Springs, but is also a financial mainstay of YFRWPA Inc. We, the members, do not have to cover ongoing costs of maintenance, management, insurances and development activities from our pockets. Members are therefore expected to respect the Skytrek operation rules, and to encourage friends to do the full Skytrek Tour from Willow Springs and to use their tourist facilities whenever appropriate.

Some of you may have noted that the Association had to close access to the Skytrek for a time to assure the flow of payments due to the Association under the Skytrek Licence Agreement.

THE “yellowfoot” WEBSITE

We are all indebted to Charlie Onody for maintaining the website www.yellowfoot.org which is our window to you and 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 990 remaining). This requires annual reporting and review of the Management Plan to confirm that our primary objective and function remains as preserving the Yellow-footed Rock-wallabies.

FERALS AND PESTS

During the past year a total of some 80 goats have been put down with about 50 of these by the DENR helicopter in the rather inaccessible SE corner of the Reserve. The total has been a gradually reducing number, a process of attrition, with no known “resident” population within the Reserve. A cleared track route to the SE part of the Reserve is being organised.

Rabbits are being seen in higher numbers. Bring your .22 and fill in any rabbit holes you see when you visit. The fox baiting program has been carried out every three months in parallel with the DENR Flinders

Ranges NP. Aerial bating is undertaken in FRNP but “sharing” with YFRWPA seems a problem even after our offer to pay. The Bunkers CR is also part of the SA Arid Lands NRM organised dog control “Biteback” program.

A cat trap has been purchased – anyone visiting may use it.

Again, many thanks to the dedicated (non-members) assistance from Maxine McInnes, Tom Brauer and Alex McDonald who have been doing walking transects.

We have a Destruction Permit for 100 Euros (specifically for those within or adjacent to the revegetation areas). It appears that euro numbers are increasing and a cull may be necessary.

OTHER INTERESTS

Access to the Reserve has continued by the Flinders University Speleological Society, which applies its expertise in checking condition and reporting on the state of local caves.

Wally Klau from Birds Australia and member John Drummond explore the Reserve to maintain an extensive Birds List.

Contact has been established with Conservation Volunteers Australia to explore possible activities of mutual benefit.

DENR and the Friends Of Parks Walking Trails Support Group have been given approval to rationalise the “Wilkawillina Hike” Little Bunkers Trailhead (i.e. move to Wirrealpa Road).

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 not just for recreation.

Without the Committee members and special input of Maxine McInnes, Jacqui and Kym Groves, Alex McDonald, Tom Brauer, Charlie Onody, Brian Whittenbury, John and Paul Drummond, Malcolm Strathearn, Marcus Agaciak, Jim Kennelly and others who have put in a lot of effort – the YFRWPA and the Reserve would not be progressing as well as it is – again, many thanks to them all!

The availability of more hands is becoming critical as some of us are reaching our “use by” date – so please let us know if you can help.

THE FUTURE

As usual, a number of issues and projects are possible and the members’ opinions of priorities and directions are welcome (especially if they help).

The proposal for the improvement of access to the south-eastern portion of the Reserve is progressing slowly, and the marking of the route is nearly complete.

Further land acquisition is possible by expanding the YFRWPA or establishing a separate group – please let the Committee know of your interest in case an opportunity presents itself.

Once again, if for any reason you would be happy to transfer or donate your membership to the

Association or another interested individual – it will be valued generously. Please let the Committee know as we have a waiting list.

RESERVE BOUNDARIES

You may be aware that the boundaries of the Reserve are not quite as was indicated to us at time of purchase negotiation due to the incomplete formalisation of a land exchange (over 19 years ago) between DENR and Willow Springs.

Unfortunately, there has been little progress on this issue by DENR and there appear to be new complications (and reluctance?) to resolve this past “bungle”. This leaves the YFRWPA with a dysfunctional situation on the “Block 101” boundary – which will be discussed further at the AGM.

RESERVE CLOSURE

As part of the highly successful “Bounceback” program DENR will be conducting a helicopter shoot in the region during 2-12 March 2011. The shoot in and around the Bunkers Conservation Reserve is programmed for 9 March 2011. Safety protocols will be in place and members are advised that the Reserve will be closed on the day of the shoot. Anyone intending to visit the Reserve during the period needs to verify the precise date of the closure. This date will be published on the “yellowfoot” website.

VISITING

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

- 1 – Please book visit with the Committee before going. (email through website)
- 2 – Please make yourselves familiar with visiting conditions/rules (see website).
- 3 – Please look in the filing cabinet for copies of information and return the report forms to YFRWPA.

Hoping to see you at the AGM.

Kaz Herbst

Vice President