

**GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP connects, supports and leads local communities to improve the health of Ginninderra Creek & surrounding environments**



ACT and Region Frogwatch Program & the Ginninderra and Yass components of Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch operate from the GCG office

Web: [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au)  
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## GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP NEWS

**MARCH 2018**

Please distribute this newsletter to others in your networks and groups, or refer them to the link at [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au).

### *From the Convenor*

GCG, like the other Catchment Groups, is in a funding crisis and still does not have secure funding beyond June. We have submitted a budget bid for core capacity to deliver on our Strategic Plans across the two themes of community and landscape-scale restoration, which includes supporting members. Without this funding there will be serious gaps in community environmental management in the ACT. Staff and Executive are doing extensive work to follow up. Contact Karissa for more information ([landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au)).

Sandy Lolicato

### *Acknowledgement of our funding bodies*

#### **CLEAN-UP DAY SESSIONS in early March (see news items for details)**

Crace Landcare Group (4 March)

Friends of Mulligans Flat (4 March)

Jarramlee Park Landcare (4 March)

Umbagog Landcare Group (4 March)

Waterwatch (4 March, with Giralang Pond Landcare))

Franklin (10 March, local MPs with GCG & Friends of Grasslands)

**BELOW:** Observations, notes & updates from **10 GCG landcaring groups, Waterwatch** and **Frogwatch**. Also, Clean-up day at Franklin. Landcaring work at Hall Cemetery. ASOC regional heritage art exhibition. Talk on Bettongs and biodiversity. Sales of native plants. Open Garden walks at Mcleods Creek, Gundaroo. Look out for cockatoo roosts. Spot an Echidna. 'Bat Night' invitation. Canberra Tree Week invitation. Cultural biodiversity trial invitation. Frog pond story.

### **GENERAL GCG & LANDCARE - news from GCG Office**

We are all back 'on deck' in the office with lots of activity happening and plans in place for supporting communities to improve environments in the Ginninderra and Yass Catchment over the next six months.

Wasn't it good to see the creeks flowing last weekend with the soaking rains, and that the flow receded relatively slowly as the rainfall rewet the soils of the catchment. I hope no-one was flooded, however.

The weekend before the rain, on Saturday 17 February, we held an Erosion Control workshop in Wallaroo for rural Landholders. This workshop enabled **16 people** to hear Cam Wilson's instructive talk on factors in gully erosion and ways to reduce it and let the land restore itself, including an on-site visit to a local property. Later this year we hope to have Cam back for some hands-on practice. Watch out for that in the newsletter.

#### **GRASSLAND RESTORATION**

Grassland restoration continues to be a key focus of GCG. We have been working with ACT NRM on developing an ACT-wide Grassland Restoration project for a tender they are submitting to National

Landcare Program. If successful, it is proposed that GCG will lead this project and work with Greening Australia, Friends of Grasslands and ACT Government in a 12-month planning phase, to then be followed by 4 years of on-ground restoration at priority grasslands sites.

GCG is also working with Friends of Grasslands, Suzanne Orr and Andrew Leigh on a Clean-Up event at the North Mitchell/Franklin Grasslands on Saturday 10 March (see more in ***Around the Region*** below).

### **ACT GOVERNMENT PROJECT TAKING PLACE IN OUR CATCHMENT AREA (GUNGALIN)**

Please consider volunteering for this citizen science project to take place at the end of 2018. The Gungahlin area is part of Ginninderra Catchment. Responses are needed soon (the original response date was *last* Monday).

#### SCIENTISTS WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO UNDERSTAND LOCAL URBAN MICROCLIMATES

The ACT Government is participating in a national citizen science microclimate monitoring project in partnership with RMIT University. Outputs from this research will help inform government policy on city cooling measures. The project will measure and record microclimate data from three locations (Gungahlin, Woden and Tuggeranong town centres) to see how buildings, street layouts and greenery affect temperature, wind and moisture. This is to be done by three teams on three consecutive weekend afternoons in summer 2018/19. The project is seeking to recruit 105 volunteers (over 18 years old) to help carry out this research. It will occur over one weekend afternoon in summer 2018/19.

**Keen to volunteer?** Email your name, contact phone number and location preference to David Alexander (ACT Government) [david.alexander@act.gov.au](mailto:david.alexander@act.gov.au). David will acknowledge your participation and make contact in Spring 2018 to reconfirm your availability on the time and date set by RMIT.

*Karissa Preuss, Executive Officer*

## **WATERWATCH**

**SUNDAY 4 MARCH, 9.30 – 11.30 am.** Come and join in the **CLEAN-UP DAY AT GIRALANG POND**, with the Giralang Pond Landcare Group, and take this *great opportunity to learn about your local wetland!* The work is followed by a **barbecue from midday**. *Bring your own* food to cook (on the bbq provided) and drinks.

For the clean-up you'll need to *bring your own* hat, gloves, sunscreen, water, long trousers and closed boots or gumboots. Bags, extra gloves and drinking water will be provided.

The Waterwatch team will be hosting an interactive wetland display for the kids, with water bugs and other wetland critters.

**Meet at** Giralang Pond Weir, off Smalley Circuit.

**Register at** [www.cleanupaustaliaday.org.au/Giralang+Pond](http://www.cleanupaustaliaday.org.au/Giralang+Pond) or sign up on the day.

**WATER BUG SURVEYS** are coming up soon at the sites along Ginninderra Creek, in March and April. If you are interested in joining Bruno to learn about water bugs, please get in touch via [waterwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:waterwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au)

**TURTLES ON THE RADIO.** Bruno's turtle project at Jerrabomberra Wetlands was on the radio last week. The first nest of turtles has hatched successfully, much earlier than expected. The team placed grids over the nests as soon as the turtles had finished laying, and this has outsmarted the foxes that normally dig up and eat the eggs.

*Bruno Ferronato, Waterwatch Coordinator*

## **FROGWATCH**

### **FROGWATCH DATA PORTAL now on CANBERRA NATURE MAP (CNM)**

The CNM team is integrating the Frogwatch portal and all the Frogwatch data into Canberra Nature Map, at <http://canberra.naturemapr.org/>. The Frogwatch database remains an independent entity

although embedded in CNM. This will have huge benefits for Frogwatch. For example:

- much needed data base improvements, which have been tried and tested for the CNM;
- ongoing fine tuning of the system;
- strong increase in data access and sorting features;
- automatic integration of all FW data into the ALA;
- easy online log on and (in the not too far future) maybe even via an app.

### **FROGPHONE DEVELOPMENT WITH UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA (UC)**

Frogwatch, working with the UC wireless communication team, is preparing a publication about our new invention (the Frog Phone) that allows us to survey frog calls by simply telephoning a site. Not only does it record the calls, the device also measures the air and water temperature during each phone survey, and sends the information via SMA to a centralised database!! Pretty cool!!

### **CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT**

This project has officially finished after 3 years of weekly monitoring between June and November. Interestingly, 2015 was rather cold, 2016 rather wet and 2017 rather dry ... that's three extreme years in a row! Keep your fingers crossed that we can keep going with this awesome project!!

### **FROGS ARE GOING WILD AFTER ALL THIS RAIN**

We have heard from a number of people that ACT frogs have muchly welcomed the recent rain event!! It has brought a last hurrah for the breeding season!! It's pretty certain that the resulting tadpoles will be challenged by winter because they will not have enough time (and warmth) to develop into frogs before then!! Go frogs go!!

### **GRILL'D FROGS?? or is it FROGS @ GRILL'D?? – for all of March**

Frogwatch has been selected to participate in 'Local Matters at Grill'd Canberra Centre' this March. Local Matter is a community donation program in which each Grill'd restaurant puts \$500 back into the community each month, split into three donations: \$300, \$100, \$100.

Everyone can help Frogwatch win the \$300 donation this month. When you buy a burger at Grill'd Canberra Centre you'll be given a Local Matters token to put into a jar labelled Frogwatch. If we have the most tokens at the end of the month, we get the largest donation.

Grill'd Canberra Centre is at Canberra Centre, Scotss Crossing Entrance, 148 Bunda St, Civic.

And for a lovely frog pond rescue story, see [Around the Region](#), below. As you see, Frogwatch is working at full steam ahead, despite an unsure future (funding uncertainty) beyond 30 June.

*Anke Maria Hoefer, Frogwatch Coordinator*

## **Catchment 'happenings'**

### ***CLEAN-UP working bees AROUND THE CATCHMENT***

**4 March:** **Crace;** **Giralang Pond** (Waterwatch); **Jarramlee Park** (Dunlop); **Mulligans Flat;** **Umbagog** (Latham). Details are in the landcare groups' news below. Some of these are not 'official' events.

**10 March:** **Franklin/North Mitchell**, run by MP Andrew Leigh (federal) and MLA Suzanne Orr (ACT), working with GCG and Friends of Grasslands. Details in [Around the Region](#), below

### ***Crace Landcare Group***

**Clean Up Australia Day in Crace. Sunday 4 March, 10–11.30 am** at Crace Recreation Park. Meet near the barbecue area. Gloves, litter pickers and rubbish bags will be supplied, and at the end of the working bee there will be a **morning tea**, sponsored by Crace Community Association!

*Fleur Leary, Convenor*

### ***North Belconnen Landcare (Evatt)***

*North Belconnen Landcare Group meets regularly on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 8.30 am unless advised otherwise. See Open Groups on Facebook for updates on our group.*

North Belconnen Landcare Group will continue to meet on **Wednesdays and Saturdays at 8.30 am**,

while Lenore is away during 2–21 March. The task is to keep the plants alive during this time. Ken will lead the group if watering is needed.

After 21 March things will be back to normal, with our usual activities. However, by then, 8.30 am may be a bit too early to start. Please check the Facebook page for North Belconnen Landcare Group (found in Open Groups) for updates on times.

In other news, our site received 110 mm in the recent rain. And Ken Hodgkinson and his helpers have been busy preparing their plots for autumn burning.

*Lenore Hodgkinson, Convenor*

### ***Sutton Landcare (just north of Mulligans Flat)***

Sutton Landcare group has been invited to run a stall at the Sutton school fete on Saturday 7 April, with a focus on weed identification. We are happy to run the stall. However, **we need someone who can identify weeds** to come and help.

Please email us at [sutton.landcare@gmail.com](mailto:sutton.landcare@gmail.com) if you are willing to share in this pleasant event. You don't have to be a Sutton person.

*Arnold Dekker, President, Sutton Landcare Group*

### ***Mt Rogers Landcare (Spence, Melba, Flynn, Fraser)***

Our **next working bee is on Monday 5 March**. We'll meet at Mildenhall Place, Fraser, at 9 am.

1. See our blog at <http://mtrogerslandcare.blogspot.com.au> for news and observations from Mount Rogers, and for photos of our new sign rock (installed in December) at Wickens Place, Fraser. Here it is now after vandalistic 'tagging'. ☹️

Rachel Tokley (TCCS liaison person between landcarers and the various government agencies) has arranged for the ACT Government's Graffiti Unit to address the vandalism.



2. We have discovered that a Hazard Reduction Burn (HRB) is planned for Mt Rogers soon. The first we knew about it was when our caring group members noticed last weekend that trees had been cut down, others had had branches removed, and others, the oldest ones, had tapes tied around them. The debris had been dumped in the bush. Between us, we have spent more than 15 hours noting and reporting the damage, taking photographs, writing to ministers, alerting contacts in TCCS (Mt Rogers' land managers) and agonising over what has happened. It transpired that this work began on Friday 23 February and that the activities are in preparation for the next Hazard Reduction Burn 'when weather permits'.

The target HRB area is above the main track, west from 'Snow Gum Corner' (above Jacob place) as far round as the Notice Box (above Rechner Place) and extending up the slopes to meet the track that passes the single tank/reservoir.

Rachel and Brian Bathgate (both of TCCS, formerly TAMS) have been very supportive and helpful. They also hadn't been informed beforehand. On 26 February Rachel emailed: "I just spoke with the Fire Unit.... They will also provide an update on what consultation will be undertaken prior to the burn. Brian Bathgate or myself will then be in touch with you once all the information is gathered from the Fire Unit."

In summary:

- The map of the species found on Mt Rogers shows that there is very little space for a broad-scale burn without serious effects on individual species or habitat microcosms. Patch and cool burning will be just as vital for this area of Mt Rogers reserve as the methods applied on Black Mountain or other Canberra Nature Park components.
- We will be pressing very strongly for consultation, information and timely warnings before the actual event.

- HRBs are an ongoing battleground between what the Fire Management science says for asset protection and what ecologists know about ecosystem dynamics and needs.
- Cool burns and patch burning are now recognised as requirements. In previous decades HRB methods involved much greater areas and devastation.
- At least swathes of Mt Rogers haven't been burnt in this way for scores of years. That doesn't alleviate the distress, fear, anger and loss we feel at the destruction of our world.
- The outrage felt is justified because there has recently been a shift in attitudes towards keeping communities informed about what is happening on land they deem special, essential for their wellbeing and that they spend hours voluntarily caring for.

*Rosemary Blemings, Convenor*

### **Umbagog Landcare, Latham**

Caroline Wenger will lead our **Clean Up Australia Day** at **9–11 am** on **SUNDAY 4 MARCH**, replacing our usual monthly Umbagog Working Bee. We always have a great day cleaning up the park, especially after the downpour this weekend which will probably have brought a considerable amount of rubbish to leave at Umbagog.

If you haven't been to a working bee for a while this is a good opportunity to touch base again with Umbagog Landcare. We welcome friends and family to get involved in this Australia-wide event.

**Meeting point:** carpark off Florey Drive, Latham, 9 am. People will need to sign on and off so they are covered for insurance purposes. **Contact on the day:** Caroline, mobile [0428 349 473](tel:0428349473).

**Please bring** gloves, and **wear** light protective clothing such as long sleeves, long pants, thick socks and sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen and personal drinking water. Please bring gaiters if you have them.

If the weather is too wet Caroline will send out an email an hour before the working bee to people on her list, so please check your email prior to coming along (or text her if you're not on the list).

*Celina Smith, Convenor*

### **Jarramlee Park Landcare, Dunlop**

We will have a Clean-Up working bee on **Sunday 4 March**. This is not an official event: it's just us doing a landcare job, aiming to collect any rubbish from around the bus stop and along Ginninderra Drive. Collection of gloves and bags will be from 26 Pomeroy St at **10 am**.

Our neighbourhood received a flyer advising that the ACT Government, Urban Stormwater Pond Research Project, is going to do research on Jarramlee Pond over the next two years with water sampling until June 2019. This project includes lowering the water in the pond by 1.5 metres, leaving 3–4 metres of exposed bank; then allowing natural rainfall to fill it up again; then lowering it again. This also happened with a University of Canberra project some time ago. We were advised it was happening, and met with the student. That time, the pond was lowered just once and a rain event filled it up again. It seemed to finish there, and we never received feedback about the results. Fassifern Pond will be used as a 'control'. We have found this a good time to collect rubbish from the edges!

We have some concerns as we have Water Primrose now (photo above) in at least three sites on the bank, and currently there are Black Duck ducklings and baby Eurasian Coots on the pond (photo right).

We are ordering a few pond plants to be included for our next planting day, in either late April or May, and we will need advice as to whether we can, or should, get them in! This planting will be infill in the floodway, where dead trees and bushes were taken out by our group. There are still more bushes and trees to be taken out



in the floodway and around Jarramlee Pond. Many of them are 'cut and dab' jobs. Date still to be determined.

Our next meeting is on **Monday 5 March**, 26 Pomeroy St, at **7.30 pm**.

*Pamela Fawke, Convenor*

## ***Friends of Aranda Bushland***

*Our work parties are on the first Sunday of the month, between 8.30 am and 11.30 am. See our website for details: <http://friendsofarandabushland.org.au>.*

### **The end of the blitz**

As the summer declines, we have ceased our short weekly weeding sessions and reverted to the usual monthly work parties. It is now almost difficult to find a St John's Wort specimen in the Snowgums grassland, whereas it was carpeted in them at the beginning of summer, so we are very pleased.

### **The big rain**

We had about 80 mm of rain in Aranda on Sunday 25 February, and expected the grassland to be flooded, but it turned out not to be. The following day there was no flowing water, and only a moderate increase in the level of the large dam. The ground was so parched beforehand that most of the rain would have been absorbed into the soil. We expect a growth spurt in the next couple of weeks, of both natives and weeds.

### **Wedge-tailed eagles**

A pair of 'wedgies' was seen in the grassland recently and we think that they are the ones who built a nest there two years ago. With a bit of luck they will do it again – we'll be watching (photo by Kevin McCue).



*Jenny Andrews, Convenor*

## ***Friends of Mulligans Flat***

*The Friends of Mulligans Flat has over 480 members who have registered on our MyVolunteer database. It is through this database, supported by the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, and Facebook, that we communicate news updates about the Mulligans Flat Wildlife Sanctuary, upcoming events and activities. Apart from the 'standard' park care activities (weeding and rubbish) the Friends can get involved in turtle relocation, Echidna counts, Bettong monitoring, Bush-stone Curlew feeding and assisting in a range of ANU projects.*

*Monthly work parties are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Meet at the Woolshed at 9:30 am. Seasonal work parties are held on a Sunday morning once each season, actual dates being advised closer to the activity. We usually meet at the Woolshed at 10:00 am.*

**Clean Up Australia Day.** The Friends of Mulligans Flat will take part in Clean Up Australia Day on **Sunday 4 March from 9:00 to 11:00 am.**

Meeting at the main car park on Amy Ackman St, Forde, the Friends will be picking up rubbish along the fence between the Mulligans Flat reserve and the suburb of Forde. **All welcome!**

The **next work party** will be on **Wednesday 14 March.**

*Mark Smith, Convenor*

## ***Friends of the Pinnacle (FOTPIN), Weetangera/Hawker***

**KANGAROO COUNT:** We need volunteers to help do the upcoming roo count at the Pinnacle on **Sunday 18 March.**

The count starts from the **Dungowan St entrance, in Hawker**, and will run from **9 am to 4.30 pm**, with a break at midday for lunch. Lunch will be provided. If you can't do the whole day, please turn up for just the morning or the afternoon sweep. Both sweeps will start from Dungowan St. You can

sign on via the ParkCare Hub or just contact John Brannan at [convenor@fotpin.org.au](mailto:convenor@fotpin.org.au) or on mobile [0405 331 405](tel:0405331405).

**HAWKER SCHOOL FETE:** The Friends of the Pinnacle have again been invited to hold a stall at the Hawker Primary School Autumn fete, which this year will run between 10 am and 2 pm on **Sunday 25 March**. This is always a really pleasant event and a good way to spread the word about the reserve and parkcaring among the local community.

If you can spare an hour or two to help staff the stall, please let me know by replying to this email or by giving me a call (or sending a text) on mobile [0405 331 405](tel:0405331405). It would also be great if someone could come a bit early to help set up or stay a little later to help pack up.

**GUIDED WALKS:** Here are several guided walks you can join, at The Pinnacle over coming weeks. For each walk please contact John Brannan for more detail, [convenor@fotpin.org.au](mailto:convenor@fotpin.org.au).

**ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK AT THE PINNACLE** Sunday **22 April**, 9 to 11 am. As part of the Canberra & Region Heritage Festival, we welcome local Ngunawal elder Wally Bell to the reserve to take us on a walk to discover the landscape through the eyes of Australia's first people. Wally will point out and explain the traces of his people's ancient history in the region and how they used its natural resources. All ages welcome.

Meet at the Dungowan St entrance to the Pinnacle Nature Reserve. Wear: sturdy footwear and a hat, and clothing suitable for the weather. Numbers are limited and **bookings are essential**.

Please **register with** John Brannan, [convenor@fotpin.org.au](mailto:convenor@fotpin.org.au). \* This event is supported with funding made available by the ACT Government under the ACT Heritage Grants Program.

**TREE WEEK BIRD WALK AT THE PINNACLE** Sunday **6 May**, 9 to 11.30 am. Join John Brannan for a special bird walk for Canberra Tree Week 2018. All ages welcome. Meet: at the Dungowan St entrance to the Reserve. Wear: sturdy footwear and a hat, and clothing suitable for the weather. Bring water and a camera and binoculars if you wish. \* FOTPIN would like to thank the Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) for their help in organising this event.



John Brannan, Convenor

## ***Friends of Mount Painter (Cook)***

We meet on the *third Sunday of each month*. The next workparty will be on **Sunday 18 March**, and the one after that is on **Sunday 15 April**. For more information, contact Sarah Hnatiuk, ph. 6251 2228 or mobile 0424 263 565 or at [friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com).

**MOUNT PAINTER'S ECHIDNA** – We saw an echidna on a couple of occasions in October. These are our first records of an echidna on the hill for many years.

**SO FAR IN 2018 WE HAVE:** – Watered the daisies and eucalypts planted last winter. They are doing very well: only six of the 121 seedlings planted have died. Each plant got a drink of three litres from milk bottles filled at the water cube near the gate to the summit.

– Weeded along the summit path. We especially wanted to remove the Saffron Thistles lining and overhanging the path to give walkers a less scratchy journey to the summit.

– Sprayed St John's Wort in the Wildflower Triangle and on the northern slope of the hill up from the houses.

**MOUNT PAINTER KANGAROO COUNT.** The Conservation and Research unit of the ACT Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is planning to count kangaroos on Mount Painter and the surrounding paddocks on **Thursday 15 March**.

Conservation and Research are **calling for volunteers interested in joining the line of counters** who walk across the area noting the numbers of kangaroos that pass them as they go. There will be *one count in the morning and a second one in the afternoon*.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Katherine Jenkins on 6207 8282 or at [Katherine.Jenkins@act.gov.au](mailto:Katherine.Jenkins@act.gov.au).

**A VIRTUAL WALK ON MOUNT PAINTER.** Take a walk on Mount Painter, complete with views at <https://www.weekendnotes.com/mount-painterwalking-trails/>.

Sarah Hnatiuk, Convenor

**NOTE: To contact the Landcare or ParkCare Group Convenors,** email or phone the GCG office, or check the groups' webpages on the GCG website at: [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au) > Landcare > Landcare groups.

## Around the region

### **NORTH MITCHELL/FRANKLIN CLEAN UP DAY & BBQ,**

**10 MARCH, 2–4 PM,** Cristina Stead St, Franklin ACT 2913

Andrew Leigh (federal MP) and Suzanne Orr (MLA in ACT) are holding a **Clean Up Day followed by barbecue** at the **North Mitchell Grassland/Franklin Grassland** area on **Saturday 10 March**. Friends of Grasslands is helping and will lead a guided walk through the area, and there will be talks about the area's environmental values. This large reserve is *assigned to the highest conservation category* in the newly released *ACT Grassland Strategy*. It has areas of Natural Temperate Grassland and numerous flowering forbs in spring, as well as Striped Legless Lizards, Golden Sun Moths, and the rare Ginninderra Peppercross, as well as a natural wetland and remnant Box–Gum woodland. However, the most commonly seen species is Phalaris.

**For more see detail:** [www.andrewleigh.com/north\\_mitchell\\_grasslands](http://www.andrewleigh.com/north_mitchell_grasslands)

### **HALL CEMETERY WOODLAND WEEDING**

Friends of Grasslands Inc. (FOG) will be doing landcare-type work to maintain the environmental values of the woodland surrounding Hall Cemetery on **Saturdays 3 March and 14 April, starting at 8.30 am**. Helpers are welcome. Contact John Fitz Gerald, [john.fitzgerald@fog.org.au](mailto:john.fitzgerald@fog.org.au), for details.

### **ASOC/ACT REGION CATCHMENT GROUPS 2018 ART EXHIBITION AND PRIZES**

**APRIL 14 – 21, 2018**

Ginninderra Catchment Group is a co-sponsor of the Catchment Groups Art Prize, for artworks that will be on display during Saturday 14 April – Saturday 21 April, between 10 am and 5 pm daily at the Fitters Workshop, Kingston Foreshore. The competition, '**Recording the Heritage Sites of the Region in Fine-Art**' was initiated by the Artists Society of Canberra (ASOC), open to all artists, and is sponsored by an ACT Heritage Grant and registered as a Canberra and Region Heritage Festival Event.

**BETTONGS, BULBS AND BIODIVERSITY** – a talk with this title is on **Thursday 15 March, 12.30**, at the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) theatre, by PhD student Catherine Ross, talking about her studies at Mulligans Flat woodland to find out if the return of Bettongs, an 'ecosystem engineer', can help to restore biodiversity in grassy woodlands.

### **SALES OF AUSTRALIAN NATIVE PLANTS, AT ANBG**

**Saturday 17 March, 8.30 am – 1 pm** or sold out, ANBG main carpark, run by Australian Native Plant Society.

**Saturday 7 April, 8.30–11 am**, carpark behind Crosbie Morrison Building, run by the Growing Friends (of ANBG).

### **LOOKING FOR ROOST SITES USED BY WHITE COCKATOOS/LITTLE CORELLAS**

Ryu Callaway is asking people to keep an eye out for roosting behavior of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Little Corellas, especially in **Gungahlin, North and East Belconnen**, and the Inner South. If you notice roost flights (regular movement of birds to/from their roost site in the early morning or dusk), please record the location and direction in which the birds are heading. For any roost sites please provide the location. Any observations will be gratefully received and can be provided by reply email or to [roostcensus@canberrabirds.org.au](mailto:roostcensus@canberrabirds.org.au).

## **OPEN GARDENS CANBERRA WALKS AT MCLEODS CREEK, GUNDAROO, 7 AND 8 APRIL**

Mcleods Creek Nature Reserve (204 ha) was established in 2010. The area has been largely cleared for agriculture, and is currently being restored to preserve the Natural Temperate Grassland and the White Box–Yellow Box–Blakely’s Red Gum Woodland. Rainer Rehwinkel with Susannah Power will lead a **walk through the grassland, from 11 am to 12.30 pm** (you can stop earlier if you wish) **on both the Saturday 7 April and the Sunday 8 April**, for Open Gardens Canberra. Just turn up. Free of charge, though donations are welcome (they will be directed to FOG’s projects).

The entry is on Marked Tree Road, Gundaroo, NSW 2620, approx. 2.4 km east of Gundaroo. For inquiries, contact (Ranger) [Susannah.Power@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Susannah.Power@environment.nsw.gov.au), ph. 02 6229 7059.

## **ECHIDNA SPOTTING**

Guardian Australia (newspaper) is encouraging people to take part in the echidna CSI project. Download the free app, then photograph your local echidna or collect a sample of their scat and help to save the echidna. For details see

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/22/calling-citizen-scientists-more-data-needed-to-protect-echidnas?>

## **HOLD A ‘BAT NIGHT’ DURING FEBRUARY–EARLY JUNE?**

Bat Nights are held in late summer and autumn by bat specialists and community/local government groups throughout Australia and New Zealand, and promoted by the Australasian Bat Society (ABS). The aim is to raise informed awareness about bats, debunk myths and fears associated with them, and demonstrate how better conservation measures can protect native bats and help people live alongside them.

**In raising awareness, it is important that the public do not think they can handle bats.** Please promote this message: “No touch, No risk.”

Bat nights can be as simple or as grand as you like, from a bat talk to a community group with a walk to detect insectivorous bats or to a flying-fox colony to watch the flyout, to a full Bat Festival. They can include Citizen Science bat surveys, bat book readings in a library, bat parties, batty cruises or presentations on the latest bat research, or any combination. Bat Nights can be hosted by individuals, community groups or local government. Other ideas: building bat boxes; an ‘Evening Bat Run (or Walk)’ or ‘Bike for Bats’ around the time bats fly if you know they are in your area; a visit to a bat clinic or bat exhibit at a zoo or museum; bat shaped biscuit baking; planting trees to benefit bats; a photographic competition on bats; an expert presentation on bats; ....

ABS can badge and promote your event and *help find speakers if needed*. The ‘ABS Bat Facts’ is sent to all registered events, to give out factual information on bats, and they have sample presentations and photographs to help you. Please contact Bat Night Coordinator Maree Kerr, at [batnight@ausbats.org.au](mailto:batnight@ausbats.org.au), for further information and to discuss and register an event.

**To learn more about bats, the ABS Bat Conference is on 3–6 April 2018** at Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, Western Sydney University, Richmond, NSW, <http://ausbats.org.au/2018-conference-agm/>, with a public forum on the afternoon of 3 April. Earlybird registration closes 7 February.

## **INVITATION TO BE PART OF TREE WEEK 2018**

The purpose of Canberra Tree Week (first held in 2014) is to celebrate the many benefits of the trees that make up the Canberra landscape. This year, Canberra Tree Week will be held during **30 April to 6 May** to showcase the beautiful autumn colours of some of Canberra’s trees.

TCCS would like to invite Landcare/ParkCare groups to join in the celebrations by attending some of the events or hosting an activity/working bee with a tree focus (they don’t have to be introduced tree species). To see some of the great events that were held in Tree Weeks 2015, 2016 and 2017, visit <http://www.tccs.act.gov.au/city-living/trees/canberra-tree-week>.

If your group is interested in hosting an activity during Tree Week 2018, please **contact Sam Ning** by

**16 March**, and provide the name of your event, the date, time and location, and a brief summary of what it is you are hosting and where people can get more details. For further information, please don't hesitate to contact Sam Ning, Tree Protection Officer, Transport Canberra and City Services, phone [02 6207 8145](tel:0262078145) or email [samantha.ning@act.gov.au](mailto:samantha.ning@act.gov.au).

### **MALLEEFOWL LORE – BRINGING CULTURE AND BIODIVERSITY TOGETHER, 7–8 APRIL**

A special weekend event on 7–8 April will induct Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants into Malleefowl lore and explore the question '*Can Traditional Kinship, Country, Culture and Lore bring about species protection & sustain long-term engagement in environmental management?*'. This trial of a new cultural approach model has been arranged by the Knowledge Services Team, Office of Heritage and Environment, based at Wagga. It will be held on the Aboriginal managed Rick Farley Reserve adjacent to Mungo National Park, western NSW, funded by the NSW Environmental Trust.

The reserve, 7 hours' drive from Canberra, has camping facilities with toilets and limited showers. To discuss participation and find out more details as they become available, contact Geoff Robertson (of Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C) and FOG), [geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au](mailto:geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au) or 02 6241 4065.

### **FROG POND RESCUE!**

Here's a lovely pond-renewal story from Lucy Bastecky. A few weeks ago, we had a quick get-together in her backyard because, to her dismay, her backyard pond-liner had disintegrated!! It seemed that all the frogs had left for good and only 1 surviving tadpole could be found in the sludge that was left in the deepest part of the pond. Action was needed. That is what Lucy has to say!!

"The pond 'refresh' has been a tremendous success and part of that was getting your advice. Thank you so much. I saved the only tadpole that seemed to be in that sludge of the old pond - the one you deftly brought out with the net. Then within two days, the frogs were calling. I have Spotted Grass frogs. Within a week, even though it was early February, there was heaps of spawn. Since then, we have frogs calling all the time. In the afternoon and through the night. The last thing I have to do is buy a submersible solar pump which will be happening this week."

*Below are some action shots of the pond's revival.*



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## **Ginninderra Catchment Group is grateful for support from**

[\[back to top\]](#)

