



News of Friends of Grasslands

Supporting native grassy ecosystems

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May-June 2019



The sign at the entrance of Stirling Park (Gurubung Dhaura) on the dirt parking area off Fitzgerald Street, Yarralumla. The sign summarises the values of the Park and the involvement of FOG, Ngunawal people and Canberra Camps. *Left-right: front row, John and Paul; back row, Sue, Dennis Richardson, Geoff, Glen Keys, Sally Barnes, Terry Weber, Sarah and Chris Faulks. Photo: Adriana Simonin.*

FOG meets NCA Board at Stirling Park

At 8 am 26 February 2019, members of the National Capital Authority (NCA) Board met members of FOG at Stirling Park (Gurubung Dhaura) for a walk to see FOG's work there. The event was arranged by Sally Barnes, NCA CEO, based on a similar FOG event in April 2018.

Geoff Robertson outlined the benefits to FOG of its partnership with NCA and the importance of basing the restoration on the local Ngunawal people's land-management knowledge. FOG's vision, Geoff said, was for these NCA lands to be recognised as important large woodland and grassland areas that need to remain as intact elements in the chain of woodlands and grassland patches throughout Canberra. FOG urged the Board to consider designating the woodlands as a conservation zone, and increasing funding for weeding, pathways and signage.

John Fitz Gerald, next, used large maps to show the size of the estate and the work FOG is doing. Then a 45-minute walk took the group to areas regenerating naturally, weed-control sites, sites of Indigenous and European cultural heritage, and new plantings.

Overall, the Board members and NCA CEO showed great interest in, and appreciation of, FOG inputs to landcare and interaction generally over many years, as well as in preparing and running the walk. They enjoyed this opportunity for the stroll and discussion in the fresh air.



Welcome to our new members!

Tony Whelan, ACT; Penny Chapman, NSW;
and **Peter Clay, ACT.**

Nature in the city

FOG has followed up its 16 June 2018 submission to the Nature in the City Inquiry. On 10 April 2019, Geoff Robertson tabled an oral submission and appeared before the inquiry. Questions by MLAs focused on the links between tourism and the Franklin Grassland concept plan. A copy of the hearings of the committee may be found on ACT Hansard. Copies of original and oral submissions may be found at: <http://www.fog.org.au/Submissions/20180615.htm> and <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/j65e2abx1ndpnse/AAANvQXn5h3SGpDFfw4vTgVpa?dl=0>.

Goodbye to York Park

York Park* has been central to FOG's 'heart' for many years. It is one of Canberra's several high quality grassland remnants identified in the early 1990s, and one of two sites in Barton where people can see what was once part of the extensive Limestone Plains. Despite Natural Temperate Grassland being a critically endangered grassland community, the site has now been signed off for development under the EPBC Act in the closing days of this government – in our view a poor decision that puts short term financial gain ahead of the environment. Before the decision, Fiona Game established the Friends of Golden Sun Moth at York Park, and organised a picnic there on 31 Mar 2019 at which I gave a short presentation summing up the significance of York Park and FOG's advocacy for it (*photo, right*).

Geoff Robertson

See Friends of Golden Sun Moth at York Park, at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2260493007603708> and for handout, <https://www.dropbox.com/s/7ne5ptsst6ie2ui/2019-03-20%20The%20Significance%20of%20>

*Block of land at corner of Sydney Ave and National Circuit, ACT.



Collective of cicadas?? (in last newsletter)

Just one response. Thanks to Shirley Pipitone, who said:
"A very brief comment: re picture on page 8 –
I'd call them a choir of cicadas!"



See p.16 for newsletter contents ... and a call for donations!

Activities to look forward to

4 May Saturday, 10 am: *Cassinia* control party at Mcleods Creek, Gundaroo NSW

Come and help remove *Cassinia arcuata* (Sifton Bush) seedlings at Mcleods Creek Nature Reserve, just outside Gundaroo NSW. Already, 3000 trees and shrubs have been planted in the endangered Box-Gum woodland by dedicated volunteers from the Gundaroo and Canberra communities. But *Cassinia arcuata* is invading.

Cassinia arcuata is native to the Southern Tablelands region, but it can potentially outcompete recruiting native flora. Much *Cassinia* has already been removed by NPWS staff, Green Army, contractors, and FOG – and volunteers are needed to help maintain that progress.

Secateurs and long-handled loppers are provided, and there will also be morning tea. **Register by 3 May** with Susannah Power, ph. 0417 295 995 or susannah.power@environment.nsw.gov.au. Susannah will give you directions if you've not been to Mcleods Creek before.

10–12 May: grasslands and opera at Morundah NSW

A FOG and ANPS group will be at Morundah NSW on the weekend 10–12 May. We have arranged to visit a couple of conservation blocks managed by Coleambally Water, on Saturday 11 May. Then, in the evening, most of the group will attend the performance of *Don Giovanni* (opera by Mozart) at Morundah Theatre (see <https://www.facebook.com/events/812645549092235>).

There are still seats available. Please **register** for this trip with margaret.ning@fog.org.au, and she will book the opera tickets.

Saturday 1 June, World Environment Day dinner

Conservation Council ACT Region's annual fund-raising dinner is on **Saturday 1 June, 6.30–10.30 pm**, at Gandel Atrium, **National Museum of Australia**. Former Senator Bob Brown is guest speaker. FOG will have a table (or two).

Register with margaret.ning@fog.org.au to join the FOG group at this prestigious event. However, buy your tickets from Conservation Council, <https://conservationcouncil.org.au/civircrm/?page=CiviCRM&q=civircrm%2Fevent%2Finfo&reset=1&id=112>

Eastern Broad Acre Winter Tour, Sunday 16 June 1.15–4 pm + Cafe visit afterwards

This will be an exciting winter event, so rug up. We plan to visit up to four sites which will include grasslands at Bonshaw, West Majura, Amtech, and East Fyshwick along the Molongo River. The tour will provide an opportunity to see some extensive Canberra grassland landscapes and learn about their likely inclusion (some as offsets) in an extended future grassland reserve system. It will be an opportunity to examine their quality and consider the work required to preserve and restore them. It will also assist FOG to provide more informed comment on their future development. Please **register for this event with Maree Gilbert**, to obtain more details including meeting place. We plan to carpool for the tour, to take a 1 km return walk at one site, and to adjourn to a nearby cafe for hot chocolate after the tour. maree.gilbert@internode.on.net

A visit to grassy woodland in Griffith ACT, Sunday 21 July, afternoon

Early advice of another interesting visit, **21 July**. You can read about the site on pp. 7–8 of this newsletter. More details of our meeting place, etc., nearer the time. Register with ann.milligan@fog.org.au.

2019 ACT workparties at Stirling Park and Yarramundi

Your help is needed and always welcome.

Tools are provided. You need to wear gardening clothes (including hat) and solid footwear appropriate for the work and the weather, and bring your own drinking water. The workparty convenor **provides morning tea**, making these into pleasant social occasions.

Please **register by two days before** the workparty so there are enough tools and tea for everyone, and so you can be told if the weather forecast has led to a cancellation. Workparties are cancelled if there is lightning; or there is heavy rain; or the forecast is for 35°C or more; or there is a total fire ban.

When you register, you'll be sent more details about the workparty: such as tasks, targets, and where to meet for Stirling Park, Yarralumla. Yarramundi Grassland is at 245 Lady Denman Drive, ACT 2611.

Stirling Park woodland 9 – 12.30

Register: Jamie.Pittock@fog.org.au, ph. 0407 265 131.

Sunday 5 May: creek and woodland clean up, based at the car park on Alexandrina Drive between Flynn Drive and Mariner Place, Yarralumla, hand-removing Ivy and Purple Top, cutting and daubing regrowth Privet, spraying weeds, maintaining plantings and collecting rubbish.

Sunday 26 May: register to find out details.

Yarramundi Grassland 9 – 12.30

Register: Jamie.Pittock@fog.org.au, ph. 0407 265 131.

Sunday 26 May: (yes, same as Stirling Park)

Sunday 30 June: register to find out details.

Gully restoration, 14–18 May, Gundaroo NSW

NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service will hold community field days on **14–18 May at Mcleods Creek Nature Reserve**, near Gundaroo NSW, to cost-effectively stabilise eroding drainage lines. These are 'Learn by doing!' field days. The team will reshape gullies, cover exposed soils, construct sediment collection points, spread straw and logs, and plant or sow trees, etc., into the creeklines.

Register (essential) with Ranger Susannah Power, ph.0417295995, email susannah.power@environment.nsw.gov.au, if you have time to learn in these hands-on sessions, or if you'd like to share your experiences and knowledge about this type of work. Equipment and lunch are provided. Bring your own hat, water bottle, workboots and clothes to get messy in.



FOG matters

FOG Advocacy by Naarilla Hirsch

March

1. The Commonwealth decided that the proposal to expand Mugga Quarry was a controlled action, and the preliminary documentation was available for comment during February. The FOG submission repeated our earlier views about the lack of a strategic approach to developments in this area, and concerns about the success of the proposed plantings. FOG also queried the proposed offset and a number of aspects of it.

2. A second EPBC referral this month concerned the next stage of the Snowy 2.0 project. FOG's comments on this included several concerns about offsets, and the view that it is essential that the advantages and disadvantages of overhead versus underground transmission lines in the Kosciuszko National Park be clearly understood, and that the option with the least long-term environmental impact be selected.

FOG also asked that environmental values of Bago State Forest be understood before it is decided which part of this forest should be impacted.

We noted that community engagement is to be part of the EIS and asked that we be advised of this, in particular with the opportunity to make input concerning any potential impacts on the three Threatened Ecological Communities in the study area.

If there is any FOG member who wishes to be involved in this, please let me know at advocacy@fog.org.au.

April

3. On 24 May 2018, FOG, amongst others, made a submission recommending that a development application at Kent Street Deakin not be allowed until an integrated plan had been prepared for the Red Hill area. One issue is the impact on Box-Gum grassy woodland and hollow-bearing trees. We were recently informed that this development application was rejected as it didn't comply with the requirements for assessment in the merit track, as it needed an environmental impact statement. No doubt this battle will continue in the future.

4. The advocacy group is following up on the recent *Canberra Times* article that suggested that one proposed route for a realignment of the Monaro Highway may cut through Jerrabomberra Grassland and impact on Grassland Earless Dragon habitat.

The full text of FOG submissions appears on our website.

President's report by Geoff Robertson

Our AGM was as usual a well attended and relaxed affair where the old committee was largely re-elected. Special thanks to Paul for his great administrative skills and Janet who ably handles our finances with ease. Each of our returning committee members, **Andrew, Juliey, Ken, Margaret** and **Rainer** continue to pick up various important tasks, and we welcome **Maree** to the committee. **Kat** and **Tony** called it a day; many thanks to you both for your many contributions over many years., and **Kim** stood down from the committee as vice president as he and Yola have moved to the coast. Kim is a past president and, apart from Margaret, the longest serving continuous committee member. On many occasions he has guided FOG along its path; he will be missed.

The annual report (<http://www.fog.org.au/AGMs/2018%20annual%20report.pdf>) was accepted. A highlight for 2018 was FOG's volunteer contribution, conservatively estimated as worth \$410,000. The report also describes the many FOG activities and office holders and coordinators who provide essential and amazing contributions to our grassy ecosystems.

Much else is happening, as the newsletter reader will observe. I urge you to follow up on some items, e.g. take the cat containment survey and/or put in a submission. If you would like to follow up on any matter, please contact me, Geoff.robertson@fog.org.au or ph. 02 6241 4065.

Concept plan for Franklin Grassland

Earlier newsletters have reported on FOG's focus and proposed submission on Franklin (a.k.a. North Mitchell) Grassland and the many activities FOG has been involved in at that reserve. A preliminary draft concept plan is being circulated for comment, and yours are welcome (see <https://www.dropbox.com/s/mrktkcftz5f03ws/Franklin%20grassland%20-%20%20%20submission.pdf?dl=0>). It was presented to the Offsets Unit, EPSDD, on 27 March.

MLAs visit ACT grasslands

On 12 April, FOG, EPSDD and Ginninderra Catchment Group hosted a visit to grasslands at Yarramundi Reach and Gungahlin by ACT Legislative Assembly members Michael Pettersson, Suzanne Orr and James Milligan who showed great interest. At Mulanggari, MLAs were shown a range of sites that illustrated the structure of grasslands, the importance of rock cover, the impact of cool burning, and the surveying of Striped Legless Lizards. While at Franklin Reserve, we visited a high quality grassland area and habitat for Striped Legless Lizard and Golden Sun Moth, and discussed FOG's submission on Franklin Grassland. (For FOG briefing notes, see <https://www.dropbox.com/s/pq8wog4wtrhk14z/Handout%2012%20April%202019.pdf?dl=0>.)

Cat containment

The ACT Government has released its draft policy on cats (see <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/cats-and-dogs>). As above, I encourage readers to take the survey and/or make a submission to urge total cat containment in Canberra. Roaming cats have a devastating impact on rare native fauna and have a shorter life expectancy than contained cats. Responsible cat owners contain their cats and many provide enclosures to allow cats to move freely between indoors and outdoors.

ACT woodland strategy

The EPSDD has released its draft woodland strategy for comment (<https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/woodlands>). FOG encourages its members to read the draft strategy and associated action plans and, if you wish, put in a submission, **due by 24 May**.



Articles

Close up on *Sporobolus creber* by John Fitz Gerald

This native perennial grass, *Sporobolus creber*, shares the common name Slender Rat's-tail Grass with its related species *S. elongatus*. I chose this for a closer look since the species has grown and flowered well this summer around Canberra.

The species grows naturally mostly in the eastern half of both New South Wales and southern Queensland but is also recorded in Victoria. *Sporobolus creber* is not favoured by pastoralists since it is useful as stockfeed only when young and before flowering. High densities of the grass in pastures are regarded as resulting from long-term overgrazing. It does, of course, contribute to native biodiversity.

The grass is erect and tufted without large leaf volume (photo 1). The inflorescence is a long spike-like panicle. For *S. creber*, all panicle branches

are held tightly against the axis of the inflorescence, and neighbouring branches overlap little or not at all (photo 2); it is a key feature used in identification of this species.

I recommend a close look with a magnifier when flowers are producing pollen. The masses of anthers and stigmas are fascinating (photo 3).

Sporobolus is derived from Greek words for seed and throwing. One species of central North America even has the common name Prairie Dropseed. Each spikelet of *S. creber* has just one floret in which the lemma is distinctly gaping, so much so that the ripened grain becomes visible while still attached to the mature inflorescence, which at this stage takes on a red-brown hue (photo 4). Every grain is truncated and angular (photo 5) and looks a little like a crystal of raw sugar. Though I do not show it here, a wet grain becomes quite translucent.



2. Detail of one *Sporobolus creber* inflorescence to show panicle branches tightly held against central axis, and the distinct gaps between adjacent branches.



1. A patch of *Sporobolus creber* growing in open grassland of north-west Canberra. Plant height is around 1 metre.



3. At the time of flowering, grey lemmas contrast with purplish anthers and green branched stigmas.



4. Micrograph of two mature inflorescences showing many conspicuous red-brown grains. Scale bar is 1 mm long.



5. Micrograph of separated *Sporobolus creber* grains, with scale bar 0.5 mm long.

Both micrographs were taken at the National Seed Bank of the Australian National Botanic Gardens. They can be reproduced freely if attributed and linked to the Creative Commons licence CC BY, <http://creativecommons.org.au/learn/licences/>.

Sources of information include

Grasses of the NSW Tablelands, by H. Rose, J. Kidson, C. Rose & C. Edwards. NSW DPI.

PlantNET: NSW Flora Online, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/>.

Grasses of New South Wales, by S.W.L. Jacobs, R.D.B. Whalley & D.J.B. Wheeler. University of New England.



The Grass-carrying Wasp, an *Isodontia* sp. (genus), making nests lined with grass

Michael Bedingfield

In December last year while walking on the Urambi Hills, I came across an ancient fallen tree trunk that had hundreds of small borer holes in it. I noticed a few of them had the seed-head tips of grass stems poking out of them. While I was checking out these interesting holes a black wasp landed close to one of them carrying a short section of a grass blade. It crawled into the hole, dragging the grass with it. After some time it emerged and flew off. The large tree trunk, formerly a Red Box, *Eucalyptus polyanthemus*, was survived by regrowth from the roots that had supported it in younger days. I walked around it, and counted at least 60 holes with bits of grass stuffed into them. The chosen grass was *Bothriochloa macra*, Red Grass, which grows abundantly on the Urambi Hills. I watched and waited and after a while I saw another wasp carrying a piece of grass to a different hole. There were several wasps flying around this tree trunk with its generous supply of cavities, investigating them or carrying pieces of grass to one of them.

The industrious insects were native Grass-carrying Wasps, with the scientific name of *Isodontia*. Only a little is known about this genus of wasp in Australia. When a sighting of one of these wasps was first reported on Canberra Nature Map in 2017 there was great interest as the name *Isodontia* was not familiar to FOG's experienced entomologists Kim Pullen and Roger Farrow. See reference (a), the conversation there, and the photos clearly showing the busy wasp at work. My sighting and photos are at reference (b). The Atlas of Living Australia (reference (c)) lists eight species of *Isodontia* and they all have similar habits.

There is hardly any literature available on the Internet about the *Isodontia* genus in Australia. But it does occur in other countries and there are more than 60 species worldwide. There is some information about species from the USA.

The female wasps use pre-existing holes as nests for their young. At first they line the cavities with blades of grass or grass stems. After the nursery is prepared they hunt for small tree crickets or less often grasshoppers, locusts or other crickets. They capture and paralyse the prey with their sting, then carry the immobile insects through the air to the nest. Eggs are laid on the prey. There may be several eggs laid in a communal or partitioned



nest. The entrance to the hole is sealed by packing it tightly with more grass stems. This protects the young from predators and parasitic wasps. The grass stems protrude from the hole making a very visible statement. When the eggs have hatched, the larvae feed on the inert but alive crickets. When they have finished the provisioned food they spin a papery cocoon inside the chamber where they undergo metamorphosis and later emerge as adults. More than one generation may occur in a given year. During the difficult cold winters the juveniles survive protected in their chambers. They remain dormant as pupae in their cocoons and complete the transformation to adults when the weather is warm enough.

The adults feed on nectar and have a role as pollinators. Social wasps, such as the European Wasp, *Vespula germanica*, are quite aggressive and will defend their nests vigorously. But the Grass-carrying Wasps are solitary and not aggressive and don't defend their nests. They will sting only if seriously threatened. This genus belongs to the family Sphecidae, which are known as Thread-waisted Wasps. Their abdomen is connected to the thorax by a very narrow 'waist' known as a petiole. The ones I saw were 18–20 mm in body length. Species in the genus are hard to distinguish from one another and generally have mostly black colouring.



Old dead trees with hollows often provide dwellings for nesting birds and arboreal mammals and are recognised as an important part of the ecology. Similarly, a large hardwood fallen tree will take decades to rot away completely and during that time it can provide refuge for a multitude of insects, such as beetles, cockroaches, termites and ants. The fallen remains of the ancient Red Box on Urambi Hills provide the Grass-carrying Wasps with many hollows for nesting. They should enjoy its protection for many generations to come.

Images © Michael Bedingfield

References

- (a) <https://canberra.naturemapr.org/Community/Sightings/Details/3387169>
- (b) <https://canberra.naturemapr.org/Community/Sightings/Details/4086602>
- (c) <https://bie.ala.org.au/species/urn:lsid:biodiversity.org.au:afd.taxon:a4edddc8-c513-4265-b69b-afc5fcb99b66#classification>
<https://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/grass-carrying-wasp>
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the_grass_carrying_wasp_a_solitary_wasp_that_builds_nests_in_unusual_places
<https://www.houzz.com/ideabooks/58817932/list/meet-the-grass-carrying-wasp-a-gentle-pollinator-of-summer-flowers>
<https://bugguide.net/node/view/5691>



***Boronia polygalifolia*: a nice little grassland plant with an ill-fitting name**

Jenny Liney

When my husband and I moved to Potato Point, NSW, in the mid-'80s, there were numerous healthy, reasonably intact grasslands on headlands, roadside verges, vacant building blocks and other more or less undisturbed sites. I enjoyed trawling through these grasslands, identifying grass species and forbs such as trefoils, lily type species, e.g. *Tricoryne*, *Burchardia*, *Hygrometrica*, and small sedges and rushes as I went. The majority of the forb flowers were yellow, purple/blue, or occasionally white.

On one memorable occasion I saw a plant with several small pink and white four-petalled flowers. I was quite excited to find a plant with this colouring that I had not seen in a grassland before. It was growing in a grassy roadside bank, together with *Themeda* and other grasses, *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Pratia purpurascens*, and a few *Lomandra longifolia* plants; it was not a free-standing shrub. It looked like a *Boronia*, but I had never heard of one growing in grassland and so small. I was delighted to later find that it was a *Boronia* – *Boronia polygalifolia*.

Boronia is a very familiar name; the specific name – *polygalifolia* – indicates that the leaves resemble those of the *Polygala* genus. *Boronia* after Francesco Borone, an 18th century Italian botanist, and *polygala*, from the Greek *poly* 'much' and *gala* 'milk'. It was once believed that if animals ate the flowers of *Polygala* species they would produce more milk – hence the common name Milkwort. *Polygala* species do not exude a milky sap. The common name *Boronia Milkwort* is often used, but the connection with milk-producing animals is, to say the least, rather far-fetched.

The next question is: why should the leaves of a *Boronia* species be likened to those of the *Polygala* genus?

The leaves of *B. polygalifolia* are opposite, with two grooves on the branchlets separated by decurrent leaf bases, 1-foliate, i.e.



there is only one leaf, but a bump on the petiole shows that at one stage in its evolution the leaves were compound, having two or more leaflets. (Many *Boronia* species have compound leaves.) The leaf is linear to elliptic, 6–30 mm long and 1–6 mm wide with an acute apex, sessile or with a petiole c. 1 mm long.

To compare, the leaves of the *Polygala* genera in Australia are alternate, though occasionally opposite, variably shaped, from 6 mm to 15 mm wide, and generally

petiolate. I could not find any reference to the leaves being foliolate, or to decurrent leaf bases, so any resemblance to Southern Hemisphere *Polygala* species is very tenuous. It is possible, though, that because most 18th century botanists used dried specimens for investigations, the leaves of a herbarium specimen of *B. polygalifolia* could perhaps have resembled those of a Northern Hemisphere *Polygala* species.

Sir James Edward Smith first published the name in 1798 in *Tracts relating to natural history*. Smith was born in Britain in 1759; he was a renowned naturalist with a passion for botany, publishing many books and articles, and was a great friend of Sir Joseph Banks, and also, presumably, Francesco Borone. When Carl Linnaeus died in



Top: *Boronia polygalifolia*, no more than 0.5 m tall (by ERBG*). Above: This stem is about 12 cm long (by ERBG). Left and below: The slightly warty leaves (by ERBG (left) & Jackie Miles (below)).



January 1778, Smith bought the collections for £1000, Banks having previously declined the offer to purchase. Smith subsequently founded the London Linnean Society, a Society that is still active today. The Society 'Promotes Cultivation and Study of the Science of Natural History' in all its Branches. Branches have been established in all Australian states; that in NSW was founded in 1874.

Many botanists were dissatisfied with Smith's published name *B. polygalifolia* (I'm not surprised). Arguments have been put forward in favour of a number of other names: *B. tetrahecodes*, *B. hyssopifolia*, and even *Tetradlea oppositifolia*. Eventually, it was decided that the name J.E. Smith bestowed is, according to the rules of botanical nomenclature, the correct one to use. None of these foregoing names give any clue regarding the historical reason for the specific epithet *polygalifolia*.

*ERBG = Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden



Progress with weed control at Griffith Woodland – a FOG Supported Project

Libby McCutchan

The Griffith Woodland Volunteer Group (GWVG) was established* in March 2018 with the goals of protecting and improving a small area (approx. 2 ha) of grassy woodland in Griffith, a suburb of Canberra.

Some key features of the woodland, causing it to be deemed a worthwhile project, included: five remnant Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* trees estimated to be at least 150 years old (now listed on the ACT Tree Register, through the efforts of Leo Dobes of our group and the GNCA); the presence of abundant rocky outcrops; and an initial count of 34 native plant species including a diverse range of grasses and forbs identified through the use of Canberra Nature Map (CNM).



Planting day: locating and laying out an area designated for planting forbs according to Barbara's design.
L-R: Geoff, Collette, Neil. Photo: Libby McCutchan.

As now avid users of CNM, we have since increased the number of local native plant sightings to 45 species, including nine native grass species. One of these is a relatively dense and large patch of Wild Sorghum *Sorghum leiocladum* which also

caught the attention of the FOG Supported Projects (FSP) team when they were evaluating our 2018 Small Grants Project application.

Early on, we identified imminent threats to the native plant diversity and cover on the site. These were significant existing patches of invasive exotic grass species, notably African Lovegrass (ALG) *Eragrostis curvula*, Chilean Needle Grass (CNG) *Nassella neesiana*, and a small amount of Serrated Tussock *Nassella trichotoma*. The number of invasive plants, and means of treating them, were beyond the capacity and qualifications of our volunteer group.

We were very fortunate, through SACTCG and with the support of RHRG, to be awarded a FOG grant of \$1500 in 2018 to tackle these invasive species, by means of contracting a professional weed sprayer. Spraying was done by hand-gun in October 2018, and then again in December 2018 and February 2019, by Jim Barriesheff of CoreEnviro Solutions, who was recommended to us by TCCS. Some isolated Parramatta Grass *Sporobolus africanus* was also treated. Control of ALG and CNG has been highly successful. Two members of GWVG have now undergone ChemCert training and will be watching for and responding to regrowth over the coming years. GWVG were also awarded a 2018 ACT Government Environment Grant (yes, it was a great year!), to enable us to commence planting, purchase more tools, and undertake follow-up spraying as needed.

The budget included the development of a long-term planting plan, so that our work over coming years remains coordinated and directed towards defined outcomes. We engaged the services of landscape architect (and FOG member) Barbara Payne, of Quandong Designs, who worked within TCCS requirements and ACT Government fire regulations to come up with a Master Planting Plan for the



Some of the Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* on the site. All up, the site has five different local Eucalypt species and one non-local species. Photo: Andrew Zelnik.



Flowering abundant tall growth of Wild Sorghum *Sorghum leiocladum* amongst rock outcrops. Alex Kirk and Libby McCutchan (GWVG) are standing, and Margaret Ning is bending down. Photo: Andrew Zelnik.



Aerial image of Griffith Woodland site and weed treatment areas marked in using Collector App.
Image courtesy of: Jim Barriesheff.

* ACT Government's Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate (TCCS) established the GWVG; we work in an area classified as Urban Open Space. We have support and mentoring from Red Hill Regeneration Group (RHRG) and the Griffith Narrabundah Community Association (GNCA) and the Southern ACT Catchment Group (SACTCG) – which actually made the application to FOG on our behalf.

...continues on next page

Progress at Griffith Woodland – a FOG Supported Project, continued

Griffith Woodland. The Plan guides our group on long-term planting aims, as well as features such as seating, viewpoints and walkways.

We will primarily plant forbs, to enhance the condition and diversity of our native grassland areas, and some shrub thickets to re-establish a shrub layer. We've begun planting, putting in 330 forb seedlings early in April 2019.

Few, if any, trees will be added as we have been advised that there are enough!



Kieren (left) and Hamish, planting forbs to rejuvenate our Griffith site, April 2019. Photo: Libby McCutchan.

There was further good news in early 2019 when Griffith Woodland was added to the TCCS weed control program, mainly targeting ALG. This ongoing support will ensure that the encouraging results achieved using the FOG grant will be continued into the future. The relatively small residual funding from the FOG grant will now be used for spraying other priority weeds such as Blue Periwinkle *Vinca major*. We will notify the FSP team when this has been expended.

We are highly appreciative of the FOG grant, which allowed us to rein in serious threats to the Griffith Woodland in the early stages of our work, and before our high quality areas became compromised. We have enjoyed and benefited from the monitoring site visits by the FSP team representatives (Andrew Zelnik and Margaret Ning) and always learn from them. We look forward to continuing this relationship, and welcome visits from FOG members at any stage to teach and encourage us, or to attend one of our working bees.



Fundraising at Bunnings, Fyshwick, to cover future plantings when the current grants have run out. Chris (L) & Libby (R). Photo courtesy of Libby McCutchan.

FOG's Supported Projects grants scheme, using your tax-deductible donations

Andrew Zelnik

You will have noticed our advertisement in the March–April newsletter calling for Small Grants Project applications. And you will have seen newsletter articles (including one above) since September–October 2017, about Small Grants projects completed.

This article outlines the FOG Supported Projects (FSP) initiative, and the grants made so far. It summarises the feedback we have received from grant recipients, showing how this grants initiative is valued and needed.

Thank you, to all of you who already donate to FOG and so contribute to this initiative.

Some background

When FOG became a Registered Environmental Organisation (REO) and gained tax-deductible gift recipient status in 2016, the new status brought management and reporting obligations, and the potential for tax-deductible donations. FOG Committee established a Public Fund to manage such donations, and formed the FSP Sub-committee, to identify and fund external projects that support FOG's objectives and current priorities for native grassy ecosystems.

The FSP Sub-committee initially was Andrew Zelnik, Kim Pullen, Kat Ng, Sarah Sharp and Geoff Robertson. They developed an FSP policy for operation of the Sub-committee and the grants process, which sets out: an annual budget (typically \$3000–5000); limits on individual total grant amounts (typically \$500–1500); types of grants to offer; procedures and criteria for advertising for, and assessing, applications; awarding of grants and tracking of acquittal; and ongoing reporting. To help meet REO obligations, all funds raised through the Public Fund are ideally spent in the same year as they are received and designated for supported projects. In some cases, other FOG funds may be used to supplement grants when there is not enough in the Public Fund.

Feedback from grant recipients

- All grant recipients gave us feedback, and it was overwhelmingly positive and contained no negative responses. (Admittedly this might be expected given all had received grants.)
- Four of the seven recipients were alerted to the Small Grants program through our targeted direct emails to contacts external to FOG. The other three learnt of the grants either by seeing advertisements in the FOG newsletter and e-Bulletin (being members themselves) or indirectly through contact with a FOG member.
- *Summarising six responses*, the recipients applied to FOG because of: “the timing” of our grant advertisement; the “fast turnaround” time for application assessment and outcome notification; the “useful amounts” (i.e. \$500–1500) of funding on offer; and FOG's grant and objectives being a “good fit” or “aligning well” with their project. None of the respondents said specifically that there was no other suitable source of funding available (though we can see it may have been a factor in one case).

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FOG Supported Projects grants scheme, using tax-deductible donations, continued

The number of Sub-committee members is limited to six. Currently there are four members: Andrew, Geoff, Janet Russell (FOG Treasurer) and Maree Gilbert. The Sub-committee is also open to *FOG members not on the FOG Committee*. Experts and other individuals willing to assist, from within or outside FOG, can be co-opted as required.

Since 2017, the Small Grants program has been a core activity of the FSP initiative, offering grants for publications, research, education, on-ground work, advocacy, legislation and planning, publicity, and training. Calls for applications are advertised via the newsletter and e-bulletin and direct emails to external contacts, and on the FOG website (<http://www.fog.org.au/supportedprojects.htm>). Applicants must use the standard current year proforma, which contains information on FOG, the grant application and award processes, and an application entry template.

The FSP initiative is evolving in response to emerging issues and ideas as the Sub-committee strives to improve processes and outcomes, so as to maximise value for money with the grants it makes on behalf of FOG members and other donors.

Update on 2017 and 2018 Small Grants Projects

In 2017, the five grants awarded were for ecological research, education, and on-ground work, and totalled \$4825 (see July–August 2017 newsletter). Four of the project grants have now been acquitted, with the projects largely achieving their intended outcomes. The project still in progress is researching the use of fire for grassland rehabilitation in long unburnt grassy woodlands in western Victoria, and has been delayed by recent hotter and drier-than-expected summers.

In 2018, the two grants awarded totalled \$3000. Each was for \$1500. The one reported in this newsletter (pp. 7–8) was for: ‘Invasive weed control of Chilean Needle Grass, African Lovegrass and Serrated Tussock in a small urban patch of remnant native grassy woodland in suburban Griffith in the ACT’. We liked its potential to be successfully delivered within a preferred 12-month time frame, the group’s demonstrated enthusiasm and ongoing commitment to the site, the level of support from the ACT Government, SACTCG and other local groups, the existing environmental values of the site and their potential for enhancement, and its longer term potential as an educational resource for the local community and as a model for other similar small remnant woodland and grassland sites within the ACT urban fabric.

The other grant is for experimental controlled-grass-plot-based research examining: ‘Does higher water availability allow exotic species to become dominant in temperate grasslands?’. It is part of PhD research by Kyle Hemming at the Institute for Applied Ecology, UC. FOG’s grant contribution is to help in the purchase of seed for locally common native grass and invasive exotic grass species, and plot watering equipment, and for some labour assistance. FOG wants to encourage research on native grasslands and support early career researchers. The time frame (18 months) is longer than preferred, but we considered this research topic to have sufficient merit for a grant.

Feedback from grant recipients

To help the sub-committee understand how grant recipients value the program and where we might improve it, the Newsletter editor contacted all previous grant recipients to ask for their feedback on the grant process. The useful comments received are summarised in the box at right (starting on p.8). They show that the funding from FOG’s Small Grants program has been needed and of value to the grant recipients. It is providing value for money in promoting FOG’s objectives and priorities for conservation and management of grassy ecosystems.

Now we want YOUR support and feedback!

One way to lend your support to the FOG Supported Projects initiative is to make a donation to the FOG Public Fund at any time, ideally before 30 June. **Donations of more than \$2 are tax-deductible. Details are on p. 16 of this newsletter.**

If you would like to join the FSP Sub-committee or know anyone who would, or if you have any suggestions or want further information, please contact us at supportedprojects@fog.org.au.

Feedback continued

Three people also commented specifically on the clarity and relative ease of the grant application and award processes, and non-onerous requirements for deliverables to FOG. Two people valued the potential to use FOG’s knowledge and expertise to assist with their projects, and their existing working relationships with FOG. One also noted FOG’s role as “an outstanding and leading advocate for grassy ecosystem conservation and management”.

- In terms of the level of help the grant has provided to recipients, the most common response was that it provided a timely impetus to either kick start or facilitate their projects, or alternatively to cover some costs and help complete their projects.

If this had not been provided then at worst it would have prevented either project initiation or project completion, or at best it would have delayed completion or made completion more difficult.

For three recipients, the resulting associated advice and technical assistance from FSP Sub-committee and other FOG members has been highly valued and, for a couple of these recipients, it has also provided much appreciated support in the face of difficulties they had been experiencing.

Another benefit mentioned by one recipient was the additional exposure they got via their FOG newsletter report. For another two respondents, the grants provided an opportunity to acknowledge the in-kind contributions and value added by key project partners.

One recipient indicated that the experience of writing the grant application itself was “very useful”.



Glycine tabacina at Griffith Woodland, benefiting from one of FOG’s Supported Projects grants. Photo: Libby McCutchan.



Recent FOG activities

FOG's visit to Gundaroo Common, Gundaroo NSW

Margaret Ning

On Sunday 3 March, over 20 people assembled at Gundaroo Common for a wander with ecologists Alison Elvin and Sue McIntyre. FOG members were approximately 50:50 with an impressive number of locals.

First up, Alison opened up a couple of bags of flowering grasses she had brought along, and gave us an excellent ID session. March is definitely the best month to be looking at local grass species, and discussing identification.

Long time FOG member Helen Willett introduced us to the Common, and explained how it works. The 60 ha Common is on the eastern boundary of the village, and is used for agisting cattle and passive recreation, including walking, dog exercise and horse riding.

The Common contains critically endangered Natural Temperate Grassland with high diversity, including some regionally declining species. There is also Box-Gum woodland with good hollows on the site. Gundaroo Common remnants are of national significance, and the Golden Sun Moth and Superb Parrot have been recorded there. There is a management plan for the Common in place.

The Common has never been ploughed, nor grazed by sheep, possibly fertilised once, and essentially resembles the original grasslands of the area. In 1998, Natural Heritage Trust funds were spent on a survey of the site, the report from which is the basis for the management plan.

As we entered the site, Alison gave a commentary on the areas we passed through, 'warts and all'. The compacted track, the couch binding the soil, and other weeds were all mentioned and discussed. We were kept under pretty good control and Alison managed to keep us all together and listening, which was quite novel for a FOG activity.

She posed questions and discussed possible answers; why do cattle prefer the grasses lower down to those in higher places?; will fertilising kill native grasses?; does disturbance create change?; and so on. Another discussion was of the cryptogams (mosses and lichens) on the site, and their ecological role.

The C4 grasses there (Kangaroo Grass and Red Leg Grass) are invaluable stockfeed. The sward of Kangaroo Grass absorbs the moisture beautifully, rather than allowing water to run off. The verdant Kangaroo Grass should be regarded as a fire retardant, rather than a fire risk like many other grasses. Following rain it can virtually respond overnight. A light, winter patch burn every five years is good to stop the perennial grass getting to the stage where it chokes out and actively discourages other grasses and forbs.

The number of forbs that appear in the spring following a burn can be impressive. Slashing and grazing can also serve to open up the inter-tussock spaces. Sue's experience is that there should be caution burning on marginal and degraded soils, where plant recovery is slow and erosion is a risk. Here we should be encouraging biomass, so as to regenerate top soils.

Another discussion was whether there would have been more trees on the Common in the past. Alison noted that the treed



Notice boards like this one are useful sources of information.
Photo: Margaret Ning.



Our speakers had good listeners, and we had good speakers!
Photo: Andy Russell.



Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra* is invaluable as stockfeed, and it responds quickly to rain, and retains the moisture well, Alison said.

Photo: Andy Russell.

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FOG visit to Gundaroo Common, continued

areas are on the better soils, and that the very frosty areas have fewer trees. Another topic was whether to remove Briar Roses which are essentially good habitat if that is all you have. Answer: keep them until there is a substitute, because Briar Rose is not a weed to panic about. The conversation was similar for Hawthorn. (It is a good idea to pull the fruits off these two prickly weeds, if possible, before they are harvested by birds who then spread the seeds in their poos.)

Then there was the altered hydrology from a nearby dam which had killed a nearby Yellow Box. The dam had been there for ten years and the Yellow Box had only just died. The dam was crying out for structure, needing logs, etc., and the virtues of Tall Sedge (*Carex appressa*) were extolled, with its ability to stop erosion.

We saw Serrated Tussock on the site, both alive and dead. There was also St Johns Wort (SJW), and its ability to kill stock was discussed. Cattle can eat it in winter with no harm done. Then there was discussion of antidepressants ... then back to farmers who have lost lambs and sheep when there is only SJW available to eat. Of course there was discussion of how to get rid of it.



Carex appressa – valuable for controlling erosion in wet sites.
Photo: Andy Russell.

We were given wonderful ecological lessons from go to whoa. Most things we talked about on the day were controversial. Alison, Sue and FOG member Gus all had excellent ecological knowledge of the area.

Geoff talked about traditional land knowledge and how cultural landscapes were managed. Canberra Nature Map was discussed and everyone was encouraged to post photos for the Common and other sites.

Thanks Alison and Sue.



Chloris truncata was also at the site – it's another C4 grass.
Photo: Andy Russell.



The Common is a sizeable patch of land.
Photo: Andy Russell.



An *Epilobium* sp.
Photo: Andy Russell

Hall Cemetery woodland – update

Our 2018–19 season has now finished, with pleasing progress on many invasives, but concerns about species such as Plantain.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the on-ground work.

At our last work morning on 6 April, Laura Williams, ecologist for ACT NRM, came along to tell us about the Government's priorities (see her call for contact on page 15), and to take a look at the Cemetery's woodland.

Let's hope FOG can join with ACT NRM sometime in the future.

John Fitz Gerald



Stirling Park spotlighting walk, evening 16 March

An evening walk to spotlight wildlife in Stirling Park, Yarralumla ACT, attracted nearly a dozen people. They were rewarded by sightings of Sugar Gliders, Common Brushtail Possum and Grey Wolf Spiders. The next twilight walks will be on 21 September and 16 November.



After the walk, left-right: Sarah Aylott, Jamie Pittock, Sho Rapley, Margaret Ning (in front), AK Bryant, Ben Beeton, Jenny Aylott, Margaret Kiley, Geoff Robertson. Photo: Andrew Zelnik.

Left: Sarah Aylott, Ben Beeton and Alan Ford.
Photo: Geoff Robertson.



Left: Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) in Yellow Box tree (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) close to a large Cherry Ballart (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*). Photos: Andrew Zelnik.

Above: Grey Wolf Spider (*Portacosa cinerea*) on the hand of Sho Rapley (our eagle-eyed wildlife spotter). Photos: Andrew Zelnik.



Cooma show was on 8-9 March 2019

On the Saturday, Sarah Sharp & Margaret Ning represented FOG at the show, with grassy specimens and literature.



Yarramundi Grassland – update

Since the last newsletter, progress on weed control at our Yarramundi Grassland Revegetation Demonstration has continued.

The next important date, **Tuesday 30 April**, is really key for the project: seeds of native grasses and forbs will be sown onto the two scrapes by volunteers.

Since 30 April is also the date for despatch of this edition of *News of Friends of Grasslands*, we cannot report on the seeding here, but we plan to post on the FOG Facebook page.

John Fitz Gerald

Deua NP revisit: Return to Wyanbene: FOG with ANPS, 12–14 April Day1 Wyanbene Mountain, Day 2 Shoalhaven Property

Roger Farrow

ANPS (Australian Native Plant Society) last visited Wyanbene Mountain on a Wednesday Walk in November 2006. On that occasion, we walked up the valley floor from the carpark to the limestone cliff and then turned right onto the track to the saddle.

This time in a joint excursion with FOG, we started on the first day with an exploration of the clearing around the carpark and noted a fine display from the glaucous form of *Senecio linearifolius*, still bearing some flowers. The other common shrub there is *Pimelea curviflora* var. *sericea*. Still in flower were *Brachyscome scapigera* and *Lobelia (Pratia) purpurascens* (not seen in 2006). We also saw the unusual fertile fronds of the Parsley fern, *Botrychium australe*.



Senecio linearifolius



Lobelia (Pratia) purpurascens



Parsley fern,
Botrychium australe



Blanket bush, *Bedfordia arborescens*



Coastal greenhood,
Diplodinium alveatum

including *Asplenium flabellifolium* and several species of *Blechnum*, and the pungent *Plectranthus parvifolius*. The surrounding forest is dominated by *Eucalyptus viminalis*, *E. radiata* and *E. obliqua* with a shrub understorey of *Acacia falcata*, *Choretrum candollei*, *Bursaria spinosa* and *Bedfordia arborescens*.

We traversed through a bracken-dominated understorey finding a couple of unusual plants along the way, including a Greenhood, *Diplodium alveatum*, and a rare Fuzzweed, *Vittadinia tenuissima*, subsequently identified by its filiform leaves, but unfortunately not photographed.

We then joined the very steep track to the limestone spur and saddle on the Minuma Range, with its spectacular views to the East and North.



The imposing limestone face at Wyanbene, showing the lookout featured below.

We then took the steps up to a substantial limestone outcrop where there is the entrance to the only public cave. The crevices in the limestone support a variety of ferns,



Plectranthus parvifolius



Sourbush, *Choretrum candollei*



View point

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Deua NP revisit: FOG with ANPS, 12-14 April, continued

Just below the summit is a large patch of grass trees, *Xanthorrhoea australis*, and sedge, *Schoenus melanostachys*. This area is exposed to the mist-laden clouds from the east and supports some gully rainforest containing *Elaeocarpus reticulatus*, *Hedycarya angustifolia*, *Notelaea venosa* and *Pittosporum undulatum*.



Autumn view of the Shoalhaven River.
Photo: Rainer Rehwinkel.

On this autumn trip, we recorded 14 species not seen on the late spring trip of 2006, although at least two of these are probably misidentifications, namely *Acacia falcata* rather than *A. falciformis* and *Choretrum candollei* rather than *C. pauciflora*.

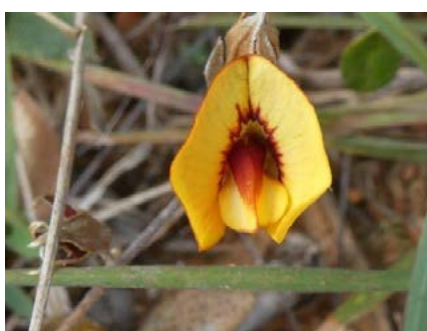
On the second day we visited a nearby property on the Shoalhaven River with an extensive area of secondary heathland (tree overstorey cleared) growing on a coarse Devonian sandstone conglomerate. This supported a wide range of sclerophyllous shrubs, most of

which are spring flowering, but there was the odd flower on *Mirbelia platylobioides* and *Philotheca salsolifolia*. The winter flowerers included *Monotoca scoparia* and *Xanthosia atkinsoniana*, with its parsley-like leaves, while *Cryptandra amara* was in bud. We found rosettes of the newly described Violet, *Viola fuscoviolacea* and several spent midge orchids, *Corunastylis oligantha*. The dominant large shrubs were *Allocasuarina nana*, *Lomatia myricoides*, *Bursaria spinosa* and *Hakea dactyloides*.

The day concluded with a walk along the river bank onto the riverine flats, dominated by exotic grasses, shrubs and trees (Willows) and overlooked by a rock face infested with ivy, although there was an interesting area of native sedge swamp.



Secondary heathland at the Shoalhaven property.



Mirbelia platylobioides



Philotheca salsolifolia



Monotoca scoparia



Xanthosia atkinsoniana



L-R, top-down. *Corunastylis* (*Genoplesium*) *oligantha*; Conglomerate outcrops surrounded by *Lomandra* and other shrubs; *Brachyscome scapigera*; *Viola fuscoviolacea*; Necklace fern *Asplenium flabellifolium*, growing in a crevice on a limestone outcrop.

All photos by Roger Farrow unless shown otherwise.



General matters of interest

Conserving and connecting Box-Gum Woodland across the ACT

ACT Natural Resource Management Programs (ACT Government) has secured Commonwealth funding through the National Landcare Program 2 to enhance and connect areas of Box-Gum Woodland across the ACT.

Funding will support:

- Revegetation (trees, shrubs, ground cover) and fencing;
- Management of large paddock trees;
- Advice on strategic grazing options;
- Threat management and advice (including weeds and pests);
- Exploration of prescribed burns as a management tool;
- Tailored information on native flora and fauna.

For further information please contact: Laura Williams (Ecologist, ACT NRM), ph. 6205 3645; laura.williams@act.gov.au



Minister Gentleman, commenting on African Lovegrass

News of Friends of Grasslands March–April 2019 ran an item by Geoff Robertson on African Lovegrass in the suburbs.

Some months ago, FOG member Tony Whelan wrote to Minister Gentleman raising concerns about African Lovegrass. He forwarded to FOG the response from the Minister's office. The response mentioned a number of interesting initiatives by the ACT Government.

Quoting from the response:

'The Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate (TCCS) has implemented a number of strategies to minimise its spread, with priority being given to the protection of high value conservation areas such as nature reserves and native grass sites. TCCS will be expanding the current containment program in areas that adjoin native grasslands and nature reserves, and implementing a reduction and containment program along main roads to restrict the spread to non-infested areas.

TCCS is implementing new strategies to address this, including:

- mowing clean areas before moving into affected areas;
- blowing down or washing down mowers as they move out of affected areas and before they move into clean areas;
- additional herbicide spraying using both knock down and pre-emergent chemicals in targeted locations; and
- creating buffer zones (no mow areas) adjoining conservation sites.

TCCS is also planning to trial other methods such as boom spraying heavily affected areas and control burning the dead material in an attempt to reduce the seed bank build up in the duff layer, harrowing the soil and then over sowing with a dryland grass mixture that will out-compete primary weeds and African Lovegrass.

The expanded African Lovegrass control program began in November last year and treatment will be ongoing over the next three years and expanded to new suburbs where necessary. The Government also has a number of initiatives to help raise awareness amongst Canberrans about weeds.'



Ginninderry development, ACT-NSW

The Ginninderry development has taken another step forward. Yass Valley Council has had the planning proposal for Parkwood (the NSW part of Ginninderry) on display as part of the formal community consultation process. A 3D model has been on display in Yass Library. The Riverview proposal includes approximately 5000 dwellings in the 600 hectares area, of which approximately 394 hectares are proposed for urban development and 217 hectares for conservation purposes adjacent to Murrumbidgee River and Ginninderra Creek. The latest development proposal contains over 50 documents, mostly appendices (<https://www.yassvalley.nsw.gov.au/our-council/public-consultation/article/296#1>). Community comment is now due by 17 May.

Ginninderry Conservation Trust has been established to manage environment and conservation in a 373-ha corridor of land in the ACT between the Murrumbidgee River and the Ginninderry development. Important assets in the corridor include Yellow Box Red Gum Grassy Woodland, Pink-tailed Worm-lizard habitat, and riparian areas under pressure from exotic invasive plants. Pending approval, an area of 217 ha in NSW would also become the Trust's responsibility. The Ginninderry Joint Venture's call, for expressions of interest from the community to join the governing board of the Trust, closed on 30 April.



Regenerative Agriculture Network Tasmania & Stipa Conference ~ Building Soils, Resilience & Profit

Launceston, Tasmania 4–6 June 2019

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/regenerative-agriculture-conference-2019-tickets-59428198341>

The National Biodiversity Offsets Conference. EIANZ – ACT and Victoria Divisions

26–27 August 2019, Canberra

See <https://www.eianz.org/events/event/biodiversity-offsets-conference-2019-hotel-realm-canberra>

Young dark emu: A truer history. By Bruce Pascoe.

The junior version of Bruce Pascoe's book *Dark Emu*. The advertisement says this book will be out on 1 June.

Endangered grasslands may be lifeline in face of climate change

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/08/endangered-grasslands-may-be-lifeline-in-face-of-climate-change>

Coolatai defeated

https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/esdd/2019/quick-thinking-prevents-invasive-weed-outbreak



Contacts for Friends of Grasslands Inc. groups and projects

Website www.fog.org.au

To contact FOG (general & media): info@fog.org.au;
phones 0403 221 117 / 02 6241 4065 (Geoff Robertson)

Membership inquiries & payments: membership@fog.org.au
(application forms are at www.fog.org.au)

To join in FOG activities/events: activities@fog.org.au

To join FOG working bees:

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Yarramundi Grassland, ACT: jamie.pittock@fog.org.au

Stirling Park woodland, ACT: jamie.pittock@fog.org.au

Old Cooma Common, NSW: margaret.ning@fog.org.au

'Scottsdale' (nr Bredbo), NSW: linda.spinaze@fog.org.au

Health & Safety matters: info@fog.org.au

FOG merchandise info (books, etc.): booksales@fog.org.au
(order forms are at www.fog.org.au)

Applying for FOG small grants: supportedprojects@fog.org.au

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Accounts: treasurer@fog.org.au

Newsletters & e-bulletins: newsletter@fog.org.au,
or ebulletin@fog.org.au

To contribute to FOG advocacy:
advocacy@fog.org.au

Website matters: webmanager@fog.org.au

FOG's comprehensive website gives: the calendar of FOG happenings; information about grasslands and grassy woodlands; proformas for applications & orders; all advocacy submissions; all newsletters (including the most recent).

Dates to note, May – July

Sat 4 May	<i>Cassinia</i> control at Mcleods Creek NR
Sun 5 May	Workparty at Stirling Park woodland
10–12 May	Visit Morundah NSW, opera and grasslands
14–18 May	Gully restoration, Mcleods Creek NR
Sun 26 May	WorkpartIES at Stirling Park & Yarramundi
Sat 1 June	World Environment Day dinner
Sun 16 June	Four grasslands and a cafe
Sun 30 June	Workparty at Stirling Park woodland
Sun 21 July	Visit to Griffith (ACT) grassy woodland

Please make a tax deductible donation to FOG
before 30 June to support our FOG grants!

By direct debit: BSB 633 000, A/c 153493960 (Bendigo Bank).
Be sure to (i) put your name in the reference/description box,
AND (ii) email treasurer@fog.org.au giving your name, address
and phone number, to identify your payment. Janet will then
send you a receipt. By cheque: make it payable to 'Friends of
Grasslands', and mail it to **Treasurer, Friends of Grasslands Inc.,
PO Box 440, Jamison Centre ACT 2614.** THANKS!

In this News of FOG ...

FOG meets NCA Board; Nature in the City; Goodbye York Park
Welcome to new members!

Activities to look forward to.

FOG Advocacy. *Naarilla Hirsch*

President's report *Geoff Robertson*

Articles: – Close up on *Sporobolus creber*. *John Fitz Gerald*

– The Grass-carrying Wasp, *Isodontia* sp. *Michael Bedingfield*

– *Boronia polygalifolia*. *Jenny Liney*

– Weed control at Griffith woodland. *Libby McCutchan*

– FOG's Supported Projects grants scheme. *Andrew Zelnik*

Recent FOG activities:

– Visit to Gundaroo Common. *Margaret Ning*

– Hall Cemetery woodland update. *John Fitz Gerald*

– Stirling Park spotlighting walk.

– Cooma Show was on 8–9 March.

– Yarramundi Grassland update. *John Fitz Gerald*

– Deua NP revisit: Wyanbene & Shoalhaven. *Roger Farrow*

General matters of interest.

Friends of Grasslands Inc.
PO Box 440
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