



*Friends of*  
**Belair National Park**  
*Inc.*  
*Volunteers working for Conservation*



Patron: Dr. David C. Paton AM

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

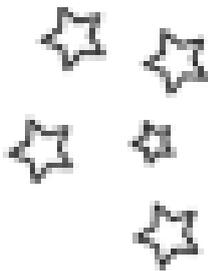
The Friends of Belair National Park Incorporated (the Friends) is a group of community volunteers with a shared interest and passion for contributing to the preservation of the significant biodiversity and heritage of Belair National Park (the Park) and is a non-political organisation. The Friends formed in 1985 and now have around 280 members. The objectives of the Friends are:

1. To provide voluntary assistance in the conservation and management of the Park in close cooperation and liaison with the staff of the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) or its successors.
2. To provide cultural and social activities for the enjoyment of members and the public.
3. To provide support for the protection and preservation of the natural and historic values of the Park.
4. To raise funds for special projects to benefit the Park and for administration and social activities of the Friends.

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### Wirltuti / Spring



The Southern Cross in Kurna culture is referred to as Wirltu (eagle's foot or eagle). Wirltuti is indicated by the position of the Southern Cross in October. Mild warm temperatures.

Purta (to burn and blaze or rage like a storm) refers to the seasonal winds.

Warri (wind), Piturru (thunder) and Karntu (lightning).

#### Plant and Animal Indicators

Eggs of young birds, lizards eaten. Blue crabs, garfish abundant in shallows, shellfish, crustaceans collected. Grass tree: heart of tree eaten raw. Yabbies come out of mud. Tiger, Brown and Black snakes and lizards come out of hibernation.

*Courtesy: Bureau of Meteorology*



We acknowledge the Kurna and Peramangk peoples as the traditional custodians of the land which is now Belair National Park. We pay respect to Elders past, present, and emerging, and acknowledge the ongoing connection to the land, waters, sky, and spirit.

Image: Seven sisters and the coloured stone by Doras Miller, a Mirning Woman from Koonibba, South Australia

## President's Report

This year we are celebrating the 40th Birthday of the Friends of Belair National Park. A small, active and dedicated group formed the FoBNP in 1985. From these humble beginnings the FoBNP has grown into the strong and diverse group that we are today, with 277 members.

### Happy 40th Birthday to all members of FoBNP

Congratulations to all the members who have helped make this a special occasion.

The work we undertake as volunteers is vital and it is also very varied. Our largest and perhaps best-known task is "Bush Care" – cleaning out weed species to encourage native species to flourish. Over the past 40 years a significant amount of work has been done by our dedicated volunteers and the Park looks wonderful as a result of the effort.

Beyond bush care, several of our members are involved in vital but smaller activities, which includes setting up and providing afternoon tea for our regular monthly meeting and guest speaker. These social and educational roles within FoBNP are as important as our Bushcare work. Having a guest speaker at each of the monthly meetings gives us a chance to hear very interesting and knowledgeable people from diverse backgrounds.

On page 15 of this newsletter is a brief item about *our history* using the extensive collection of group photos that show members doing a great variety of tasks. Exploring and talking about the photo and the events they show was a fantastic experience. There is so much history and knowledge hidden in our cupboards and filing cabinets. We must not lose this knowledge and we must not lose sight of our history. We are a diverse group who enjoy being together to advance the quality and value to the community as set out in our Objectives.

On page 13 of this newsletter there is an item about the presentation of the *Emerging Environmental Steward Award 2025* to Alex Chu. This is an important award made each year by us to encourage and support young people training in environmental studies. Congratulations to all the Emerging Environmental Steward Award winners over the years.

Over the past few years FoBNP have worked with Stirling and Blackwood Kindergartens on the revegetation of the old tennis court area near Joseph Fisher Ground. The students have collected funds to pay for the tube stock from State Flora and then work with us to plant the tube stock to form a Bandicoot safe habitat. My thanks go to Stirling Kindergarten who have made a donation of \$450.00 that they have raised over the last year and a bit for this project.

Thank you all for your involvement, 2025 is an exciting year!

*David French, President*



*Photographs: Raechel Bos*

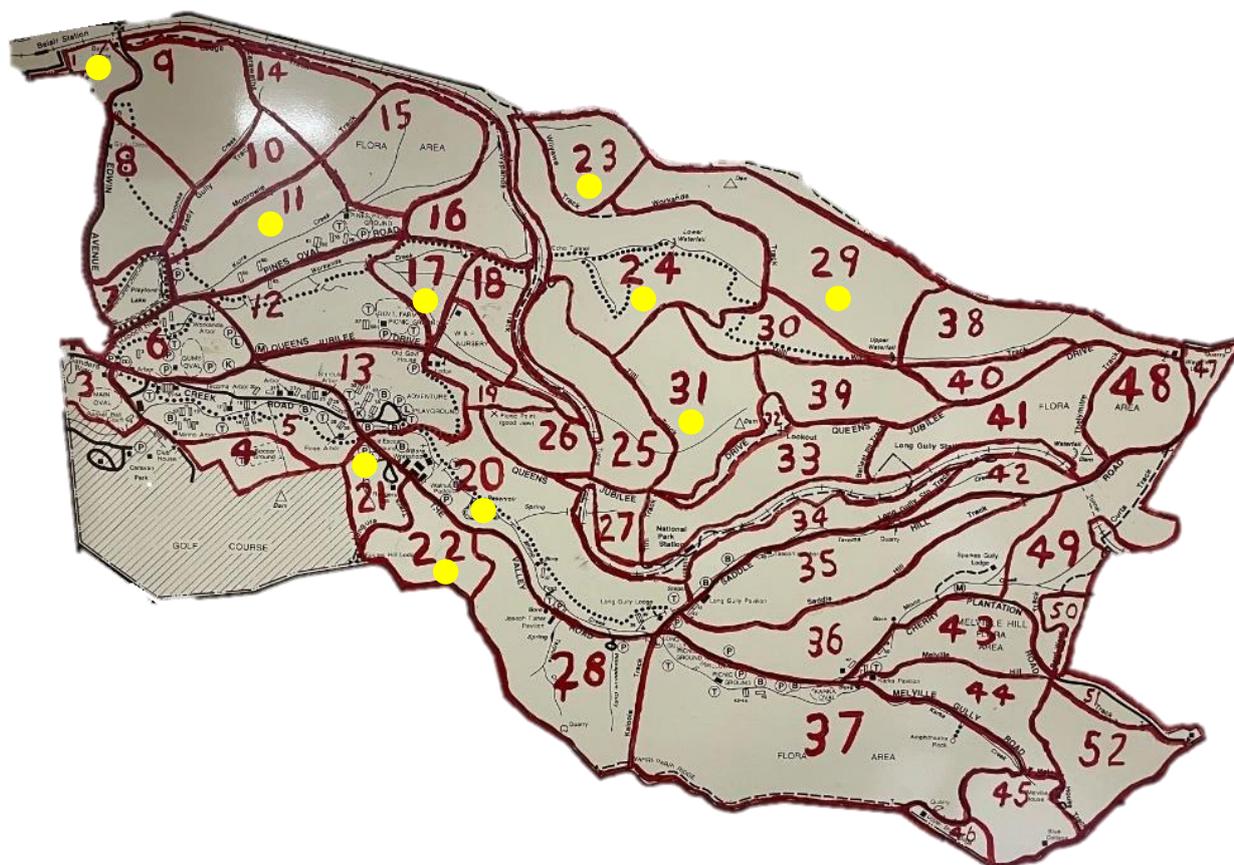
## Bushcare

Bushcare is the targeted removal of competitive weeds allowing nature to thrive through natural regeneration. We aim to manage for best habitat value for our amazing biodiversity in one of Australia's 15 biodiversity hotspots.

- Tuesday and Friday morning (8.30-10.30am) every week
- Saturday morning (9.00-11.00am) on third Saturday of the month

Cancellation Policy: Bushcare is cancelled for safety reasons on days of a Total Fire Ban, a forecast of 34 degrees or higher, a Severe Weather Warning for the Mt Lofty District, or heavy rainfall.

Bushcare volunteers contributed **511 hours** of their time during May (165), June (152) and July (194) in these VMUs:



### Case Study – Impact of welcome rain

With rain finally arriving in June and softening the ground, we began another lap of the VMU's but skipping adopted blocks where there were few weeds evident. Overall, there has been much less weed response than we expected. Like the farmers that have had issues with temperatures being too low for some germination after the rain came, it would appear this could be the case in Belair, particularly with broom.

Areas we have visited that have only had one initial weeding so far haven't shown signs of recruits. However, we have removed a number of 20-30 cm tall plants that would no doubt produce seed later this year, although sparse. Boneseed early dicot leaves have been seen, but only in quite small groupings so far.

During July, despite the number of weather-related cancellations, our volunteers contributed an exceptional number of hours. We continued to move rapidly through our cycle of VMU follow ups, partly due to the low emergence of some weeds, no doubt due to dry conditions at first and then followed by rain in colder conditions. As part of these visits we have also been able to push weed fronts, like we normally do.

VMU	Hours	Key actions
1	22	Follow up of small broom mainly, plus other sparse weeds.
11	20	Very sparse weeds, but mainly smaller broom and boneseed.
17	8	Clearing <i>Watsonia</i> along the creek.
20	38	<p>Checking over the kindy planting area and special mention to Dee, Robin, Ian and other helpers who have kept up hand watering in this very dry time. Pushed the weed boundary of mature boneseed, broom etc, on the hillside and toward the north and east up to the railway.</p> <p>One observation while working in VMU 20 was the impact of experimentation with the new chemical Method 240SL on <i>Buddleia</i>. You may have noticed the patch of trees infested with it at the bottom of Nookoo track. If you walk around to the south of that patch, you will see most of it is now dead. It is hard work getting into the base of the plant, and it is horrible dusty stuff to work in. The drilling and injection process is fast and the least time possible is spent in there. The work on <i>Buddleia</i> west of echo tunnel by contractors, that was drilled and filled with glyphosate, has also been successful, but that was a day's work for two people and I did several times the number of plants by myself in just a few hours.</p>
21	18	Mainly sparse broom and boneseed but also many small olives. Lots of kangaroos in this area adjacent to the old golf course and lots of the broom defoliated, presumably by them in the dry conditions. Not dead though and with them switching to grass, no doubt these plants would have seeded later in the year if not removed.
22	20	<p>Working from Nookoo Track area, in the large area that Ross killed all the dense olive, we worked towards the area we worked to in VMU 21. Most of the weeding was of small olives but it was interesting that many long dead olive trees had very few recruits under them, while some had very dense recruits.</p> <p>We have worked through this block a number of times with our volunteers in the past. The best explanation I can think of is just that these patches were missed, with such a large area for the group to cover. With the time taken for young olives to produce seed, plus the high level of kangaroo grazing on the young olives, the risk of them producing fruit is low for some time. It is very pleasing that there were very little 'seedling' olives.</p>
23	44	Great work has been done and Marcel Essling's adopted block is looking as weed free as I have seen it. Our Friends of Parks grant will commence contractor work by Robert Lawrence again soon, on small bulb weeds and bridal creeper, but we pretty much cleaned up all the broom and boneseed recruits that could have gone to seed this year. This diverse site contains some of our most threatened orchids.
24	64	For those that had for many years worked in this area that is immediately east of the rail line, it was a bit of a shock to see how little weed recruits there were. As we moved to the south of VMU 23, there was a reasonable amount of broom recruits, but the absence of the forest of weeds and native recruitment is just stunning. I hope some of the many walkers that use this track have noticed the same. We continued to push the weed front of big boneseeds in the vicinity of the lower waterfall.

VMU	Hours	Key actions
29	231	<p>We continued to push the weed front of large mature boneseed. This is the last part of the border of the Park that is not dominated by large weedy shrubs and we have come within sight of the past weeded front.</p> <p>In July, Wendy Simpson adopted this large and important block. This is a large part of the Conservation 1 zone of the Park but one that hasn't had as much attention as the zoning done in 2001 suggests it should.</p> <p>Our bushcare and contractors have done a lot of work in recent years and made huge ground but the highest level of care is when we have an adopter keeping an eye on things. Our visit this week from the west is another area where it is amazing how few weeds have recruited and how dense the native vegetation cover is now.</p>
31	46	<p>The Saturday team continued helping out adopter Ben Mattson on this important but large block containing mixed <i>Eucalyptus fasciculiflora</i> (Pink Gum) and <i>E. leucoxylon</i> (Blue Gum) woodland. We removed invasive boneseed, bridal creeper and some other weeds.</p> <p>We were lucky enough to see some local native orchids flower including a carpet of <i>Acianthus pusillus</i> (Small Mosquito-Orchid) and quite a few fruiting fungi including these <i>Pholiota communis</i> shown here.</p>



A foggy but fruitful Friday morning with lots of Boneseed removed.  
 Contributor: Craig Baulderstone and Sharon (main photo 11/07/2025)

## Bush Buddies – Term 3

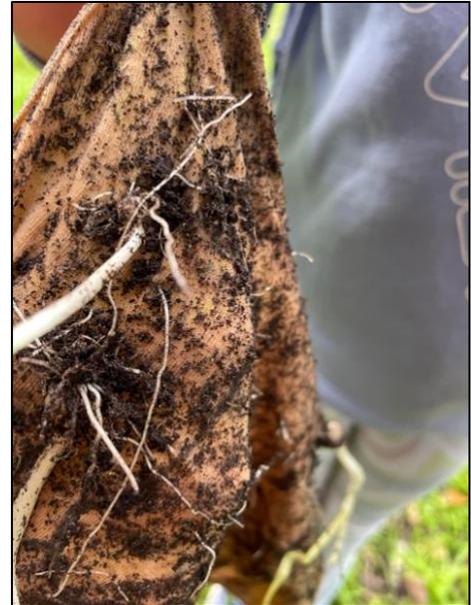
Bush buddies is a nature and science-based outdoor program for children in years 3-6 (aged 7-11 years) held each Tuesday (3.20 to 4.30 pm) during school terms. Children have an opportunity to mix with like-minded children, have fun and learn more about flora and fauna in the Park.

### Term 3 Activities

Bush Buddies continues on Tuesdays after school. Now in its third year, some of the Buddies are in their third year of attendance, which is testimony to their passion for being out in nature. A special thanks to the Department for Environment's Citizen Science Grant which has enabled us to purchase hand held microscopes, binoculars, a printer and other miscellaneous equipment to support Bush Buddies.

A recent activity which intrigued the Buddies was 'Soil Your Undies'. This is a project initiated in America to get farmers interested in their soil microbial health and adopted by the Murraylands Landscape Board. Bush Buddies buried cotton undies for several months and unearthed them to look at decomposition and if and how the undies were breaking down.

Recent activities have also centred on making the centrepieces for the Friends of Belair 40th birthday celebration. Bush Buddies spent a session looking for moss and sustainably collecting small amounts (without harvesting all in one place) around buildings special mini moss gardens, have created poems about nature and arting the 4 & 0's for the 40th celebrations. Later this year Bush Buddies will again have a tree in the Blackwood Christmas Tree Festival.



### HELP

Bush Buddies can't run without its volunteers, however, and we are in dire need of new people to assist for an hour and a half on Tuesdays from 1515 to 1645. Volunteers can be as involved as they like from organising natural science and nature-based activities, experiments, art and games or baking the weekly afternoon biscuits/slices/cakes or supervising a sub-group of children with enthusiasm and some Belair nature knowledge.

Volunteers must be fun, kind, patient and **MUST** have a police check to be involved. It's a perfect volunteer gig for university students studying environmental science or natural resource management, rangers or interpretation. Please contact Karan Coombe-Smith 0403 690 695 or [karan.coombesmith@gmail.com](mailto:karan.coombesmith@gmail.com)

*Contributor: Karan Coombe-Smith*

## Obituaries – Remembering the contributions of recently deceased members

### We remember:

#### **Judith O'Hara**

Judith joined FoBNP in 1993, was an active member for 32 years, and was a Life Member.

Judith initially joined Lynda Knight on the regular FoBNP guided walks and then assisted by recording the walk routes and the flora and fauna observed on each walk. From these early meticulous records, she began compiling walks folders for future leaders' reference. The purpose was to have a resource for guided walks leaders to know what plants were flowering at different times of the year, and where. When Lynda (one of our FoBNP foundation members) retired from leading the walks Judith became the guided walks leader, from 1994 until she retired in 2004.

Judith was a valued member of the Significant Tree Project helping to create a substantial herbarium with the other team members. The project surveyed around 1600 trees in the park from 2002 to 2004. As a member of the herbarium team, she gathered samples of tree leaves, buds, flowers for each tree, along with other FoBNP members.

#### **Jim Trueman**

Jim, and his wife Fae, both joined FoBNP in 1999. He served on the FoBNP Committee for 18 years, first as a member from 2001 to 2003, then as Vice President from 2004 to 2012, and a member from 2013 to 2018.

It's amazing to discover how much Jim managed to fit into 94 years of life as he was not one to talk much about his many achievements. As well as being a member of the FoBNP he also belonged to several other Friends groups and community organisations around Clarendon, where he grew up on the Trueman family farm. He belonged to walking groups and 4-wheel drive groups and was devoted to spending time with his family, which spanned 4 generations. Jim and Fae celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary earlier this year.

Jim and Fae have been recognised with Life Membership and acknowledged for their years of bushcare, eradicating Topped Lavender from the park. Jim was also involved with the Significant Tree Project, on the trees team. This saw him engaged for three years surveying, measuring and recording the park's significant trees. One of Jim's roles was to record the Global Positioning System (GPS) co-ordinates of each tree. Jim also assisted Barb Raine while she was Bushcare Co-ordinator for 2-3 years by looking after the Bushcare tools and sharpening the small and large mattocks.

#### **Margaret Bungey**

Margaret joined FoBNP in 2014, and was a member for 9 years. Especially in the pre-Covid era, she was a regular attendee at our monthly meetings, and joined us on several of our monthly guided walks.

Margaret is remembered with great admiration for her tenacity in getting public transport from her home in the northern suburbs to arrive at Belair in time for our meetings and walks - a journey sometimes of nearly 3 hours each way!

Margaret and her husband had previously been to Belair National Park for bushwalks 20 years ago, so she felt she was on familiar tracks and was always interested to see the orchids and native plants in flower. While a private person and very independent, she had a long-standing interest in the environment and enjoying being in nature.

*Contributors: Alan and Barb Raine, Carol Parrott, Mary Cole and Mike Cerchez*

## Guided Walk – Sunday 15 June

During 2024, guided walks will be conducted between 2.00 to 4.00 pm on selected Sundays between April and November. Please check the website or Facebook for any last-minute changes.

**Route:** Waverley Lodge. Walk west along Queens Jubilee Drive, south along Yulti Wirra Track, north along an unnamed Cross Track, west along Queens Jubilee Drive back to Waverley Lodge.

**Summary:** A well-rugged up group of 14, led by Pete Raine, enjoyed cool but dry conditions on the walk today. Recent rains over the past fortnight have transformed the Park with more moisture in the ground, the growth of mosses and lichens, and the beginnings of fungi, sundews and orchids. But the rains haven't removed the smell from the controlled burn in the north-east corner of VMU 41 from May.

### Upcoming walks

14 September

12 October

9 November



Contributor: Peter Bos

## Guided Walk – Sunday 13 July

**Route:** Karka Pavilion, east on Melville Gully Road, north along Melville House Track, west up Kari Track, west down Berri Werri Track, south along RSL Walk, south down Cherry Plantation Drive and return to Karka Pavilion.

**Summary:** Great monthly guided walk for the Friends of Belair today despite the weather forecast. We timed things perfectly and all stayed dry as well as enjoying a very pleasant Winter's walk seeing some great local native wildflowers including *Epacris impressa* (Common Heath) with its white or red flowers and fungi. The walkers also had a look inside the historic Karka pavilion (pictured below) built in 1924. So nice to see the creeks flowing and everything so green again!



Finds from the walk included *Peziza sp.* (cup fungi), *Hypholoma fasciculare* (Sulphur tuft), *Epacris impressa* (Common Heath), *Mycena interrupta* (Pixie's Parasol), *Amanita xanthocephala*, (Vermilion Amanita).



Contributors: Steve Raine and Peter Bos

## Guided Walk – Sunday 10 August

**Route:** Green Shed, walking north to Playford Lake, north up Brady Gully track to Carawatha track and then south along Moorowie track to the lake. Returning to the green shed via the Gums Oval.

**Summary:** August saw one of the biggest turn outs for our monthly guided walks for a while with 26 attendees. This came as no surprise really, given the beautiful sunny weather, a nicely green, rain revitalised park and Playford Lake finally looking like its old self again. The group were delighted to see some great native orchids flowering including the *Corybas diemenicus* (Veined Helmet orchid), *Pterostylis robusta* (Large Shell Greenhood orchid) and *Pterostylis nana* (Hills nana orchid), as well as wildflowers in flower and bud. We also spotted a cheeky Kookaburra sharing lunch with a family near the lake, a couple of koalas asleep in the trees and a mob of kangaroos on the Gums Oval. We stopped briefly at the Gums Oval to drink in the majesty of a huge *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (River Red Gum). A wonderful treat for all ages.



Photos: *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (River Red Gum), *Pterostylis robusta* (Large Shell Greenhood orchid), Playford Lake, *Corybas diemenicus* (Helmet orchid), and many of the group admiring and hugging / measuring the girth of this fabulous tree.

Contributors: Raechel Bos and Steve Raine



## Upcoming event - Living Near Parks Expo

A date for your diary: **Sunday, October 12** at 11:00am – 2:00pm in the Belair National Park.

Catherine Hutchesson MP is hosting an event for Waite residents about how our parks are managed, in terms of conservation, bushfire preparedness and recreation. Community members will also be able to access information on how to get involved with local environmental groups and learn how to manage their properties sustainably.

FOBNP will hold a stall at the event which nicely leads into our regular monthly guided walk, so hopefully we will see a few new faces join us on the walk that day.

## Fungi for Function Surveys in Belair National Park

The Fungi for Function Survey Project is being conducted by Fungimap Inc. over a three-year period, utilising a Citizen Science Grant issued by the State Government to survey potential bushland health indicators using 28 target species that are reasonably easy to identify. These include **plant partners** (mycorrhizal fungi), **plant transformers** (parasitic fungi), **recyclers** (saprotrophic fungi) and **lichens**.



During 2025, surveys were conducted in Mark Oliphant Conservation Park, Deep Creek National Park, McHarg Creek, Hope Forest, Belair National Park and Lenswood. Volunteers from local groups and community members with a diverse range of backgrounds and interests spent a total of 240 minutes (8 people x 30 minutes) in each plot for searching and then 45 minutes for recording and uploading to the Project in iNaturalists.

In Belair, the surveys were conducted over two periods and several FOBNP members participated. In total, 288 observations across the 10 plots were recorded, finding 27 target and non-target species.

### POOR CONDITION SITE (VMU 29)

#### Friday 11<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of July – 5 survey plots accessed from Sheoak Road Gate 10

These plots were considered to be degraded due to the disturbance from previous quarrying activities and mountain biking paths, and having a high concentration of pest plants such as bone seed.

On Saturday, we were fortunate to have Uncle Ivan-Tiwu Copley OAM, a Peramangk-Kaurna man and respected elder, to speak to the group, covering the benefits and uses of various items – lemon myrtle in water, red ocre, use of stones as flints, use of smoke, carrying fire from place-to-place with wood and fungi, reading the land, use of Bull Reeds, *Xanthorhoea* and much more.



At these five sites, we found 8 target species including 5 recyclers and 3 lichens:

#### Recyclers

#### Lichens

<i>Chlorociboria aeruginascens</i> (Green Wood Cup)	<i>Cladia aggregate</i> (Common Coral Lichen)
<i>Mycena kuurkacea</i> (Bleeding Mycena)	<i>Cladonia rigida</i> (Wood Icicles) (see above)
<i>Phlebia subceracea</i> (Golden Splash Tooth)	<i>Teloschistes sp.</i> (Golden-eye Lichen)
<i>Rhizochaete filamentosa</i> (Yellow Strands)	
<i>Trametes coccinea</i> (Scarlet Bracket)	

We also located *Laetiporus portentosus* (White Punk), a Plant Transformer, and Hairy Bracket, Jelly Bells and *Hypoxylon howeanum*, plus a couple of slime molds including *Physarum luteolum*, *Physarum viride* and a *Comatricha* species.

**GOOD CONDITION SITE (VMU 48)**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> of July – 5 survey plots accessed from Sheoak Road Gate 11**

During wetter years, such as 2022 and 2023, these plots usually have an abundance of fungi, but the dry conditions experienced across the State during the first half of this year has had an obvious impact.



At these five sites, we found 6 target species including 1 transformer, 2 recyclers and 3 lichens:

Transformers	Recyclers	Lichens
Postia pelliculosa (Hairy Bracket)	Phlebia subceracea (Golden Splash Tooth) Rhizochaete filamentosa (Yellow Strands)	Cladia aggregate (Common Coral Lichen) Cladonia rigida (Wood icicles) Teloschiestes sp. (Golden-eye Lichen)

We also located a few other interesting species in the plots including *Cortinarius erthyraeus* (Jammie Dodger), the only plant partner species located. Others include the myxoparasite *Neobarya agaricicola*, a brown puffball, *Stereum illudens* and several slime molds such as *Leocarpus fragilis* (Insect Eggs Slime), *Arcyria*, *Comatricha* and *Physarum*.



*Rhizochaete filamentosa* (Yellow Strands), *Phlebia subceracea* (Golden Splash Tooth) and *Arcyria* sp. (red)

Further information: [Fungi for Function project](#)

Contributors: Sophie Green (Project Coordinator) and Peter Bos.



## Emerging Environmental Steward Award 2025 – Alex Chu

The winner of the TAFE SA / Friends of Belair National Park 'Emerging Environmental Steward Award' for the class of 2024 was Alex Chu. This award was presented by President of the Friends of Belair National Park, David French, at the TAFE SA graduation ceremony on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

Alex has had a lifelong interest in the Environment and all that it entails. This led to him undertaking studies in Conservation and Ecosystem Management – first a Certificate 3, then a Diploma in Conservation and Ecosystem Management. After completing his Diploma, he is aiming to study in the environmental field at university.

Selected from a large field of exceptional applications, Alex's volunteer efforts made him stand out. Alex has jumped all-in to volunteering in the conservation field. He has volunteered with such luminary groups as:

- SA State Herbarium
- the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia
- the Biology Society of South Australia
- the Threatened Plant Action Group
- the Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN)
- Friends of Black Hill and Morialta
- Trees For Life



*Alex and David French.*

Alex is driven to inspire appreciation and protection of Australia's natural environment. Volunteering with the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre since 2021, he has contributed to seed banking and propagation projects that have saved critically endangered plant species, including orchids with fewer than 100 wild individuals. His efforts include world-first conservation breakthroughs and seed collection for global initiatives like the Millennium Seed Bank.

As Secretary of the Biology Society of South Australia, Alex supports field biology events, public education, and scientific outreach. How he finds the time to study is beyond us! Alex's bright future sees him aiming to work as a Technical Officer at the State Herbarium working with endangered and threatened flora - an important area of specialist environmental knowledge. He said in his application "I want to create a future where plants are respected and appreciated."

We at the Friends of Belair appreciate this goal, as we have a number of threatened species within Belair. We hope this award is a step toward this goal and take pride in knowing he will be a future leader in the environmental field. Alex epitomises all that is encouraging about the future of conservation, and we wish him all the very best for his bright future ahead.

*Contributor David French*

## Welcome to new members of the Friends of Belair National Park

Helen Spurr

Ian Dry

Kain Gardner

Elise and Roy Boase, and Owen and Delilah

For joining or annual renewal information see: [Join - Friends of Belair National Park](#)

## Guest Speaker for June – Sarah Todd (Coromandel Valley Primary School)

### “Engaging students with native wildlife in their local community”

Did you know there are endangered bandicoots living at Frank Smith Park in Coromandel Valley?

A lot of people didn't but a keen-eyed student at Coromandel Valley Primary School spotted one, and with the support and encouragement of their science teacher the students followed up on that sighting and confirmed it. This discovery not only led to a wonderful learning opportunity but also the introduction of a dogs on leash requirement in sections of the reserve to protect the native wildlife.

Sarah Todd teaches science to students from Reception to Year 6 at Coromandel Valley Primary School. In particular she has a strong focus on engaging students with native wildlife in their local community. A question from one of her students started a project at the adjacent Frank Smith Park looking to identify the Southern Brown Bandicoot, a species that is listed as critically endangered.

Receiving a Green Adelaide grant and with the assistance of ecologist Dr Elisa Sparrow, Sarah and the students set up multiple motion sensor cameras within the park. Utilising locations in dense undergrowth they recorded a bandicoot and other wildlife, including a fox, within two days. From there the students built three bandicoot bungalows from pallets and chicken wire and set them up in the park.

This project has led to several highly commendable outcomes including:

- successfully lobbying the Onkaparinga Council to create the dogs on leash zone in the reserve area of Frank Smith Park
- the establishment of the *Friends of Frank Smith Park*
- receiving an *Oliphant Science Award* and *Green Leaders Award*
- contributing to the *Bandicoot Super Highway Project*
- being showcased on television for the ABC Behind the News program



The students also noticed that there are no hollows in the trees at the park and so now are turning their skills to building nesting boxes for possums, microbats and birds. Have a look out for them next time you visit Frank Smith Park.

For more information about the wonderful work being done by Sarah and her students go to:

ABC Behind the News (BTN) (Broadcast 9 May 2023) - [Bandicoot Tracking](#)

SASTA Oliphant Science Awards -Citizen Science category - [Bringing Back the Bandicoots to Frank Smith | South Australian Science Teachers Association](#)

DEW – Bandicoot Super Highway Project - [Helping protect precious bandicoots](#)



Contributor: *Raechel Bos*

## Guest Speaker for July – Ms Valentina Colmenares Quiroga (Biologist)

### “Conservation and Environmental Education in Colombia: Nature, Culture, and Community”



Valentina Colmenares Quiroga is a Colombian Biologist with experience in wildlife conservation, environmental microbiology, and field-based ecological research. She has participated in mammal monitoring projects across a range of Colombian ecosystems, and has worked with communities through conservation programs and community education.

Valentina described the vast beauty and rich variety of terrain across Colombia, from Amazon rainforests to the Andes mountains and Caribbean and Pacific coastal beaches. She also outlined some of the unique environmental, socio-economic, cultural and political challenges facing those working in conservation efforts. She spoke of her work with local communities via field-studies on loggerhead turtles, bats and native frogs.

Valentina also explained the role of *seed guardians* whose work involves preserving biodiversity and native seed varieties. These indigenous leaders champion cultural preservation and traditional farming techniques, along with food management and community autonomy.

Valentina also noted from her experience of working overseas, that when it comes to conservation and education, there are more similarities than differences and always something new to learn.

*Contributors: Steve Raine and Raechel Bos*



## Guest Speaker for August – Our History

### “Taking a trip down memory lane”

From adversity to triumph! Our August speaker was unfortunately unable to attend this month’s meeting, which provided us with a fabulous opportunity to assist with preparations for the 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration. Over many years Betty Wise has carefully photographed and collated multiple albums detailing the impressive improvements made to the park by many bush carers. We brought the albums out for members to reminisce over the pictures and identify the many people captured in these photos.



It was genuinely heart-warming to watch people relive memories and share stories while poring through our photographic archives. A sincere thanks also to Betty whose multitude of photos and meticulous records made this a wonderful afternoon.

*Contributors: Steve Raine and Raechel Bos*

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### Committee

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