

FRIENDS OF WAITE CONSERVATION RESERVE Inc.

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President's message

I have a farming background. As a consequence I have more than a passing interest in the weather. We experienced record summer heat culminating in an extraordinarily wet finish, with 7 times

working bee program. I am mindful though that any work we do must fall

within the policies and priorities set down by the university.

Secondly, the nature of the work done by the contractors has changed from that done previously. The university crew undertook a range of tasks throughout the year – treating various weeds at seasonally appropriate times; collecting seed and growing, planting and maintaining tubestock for re-vegetation; undertaking slashing for fire-prevention

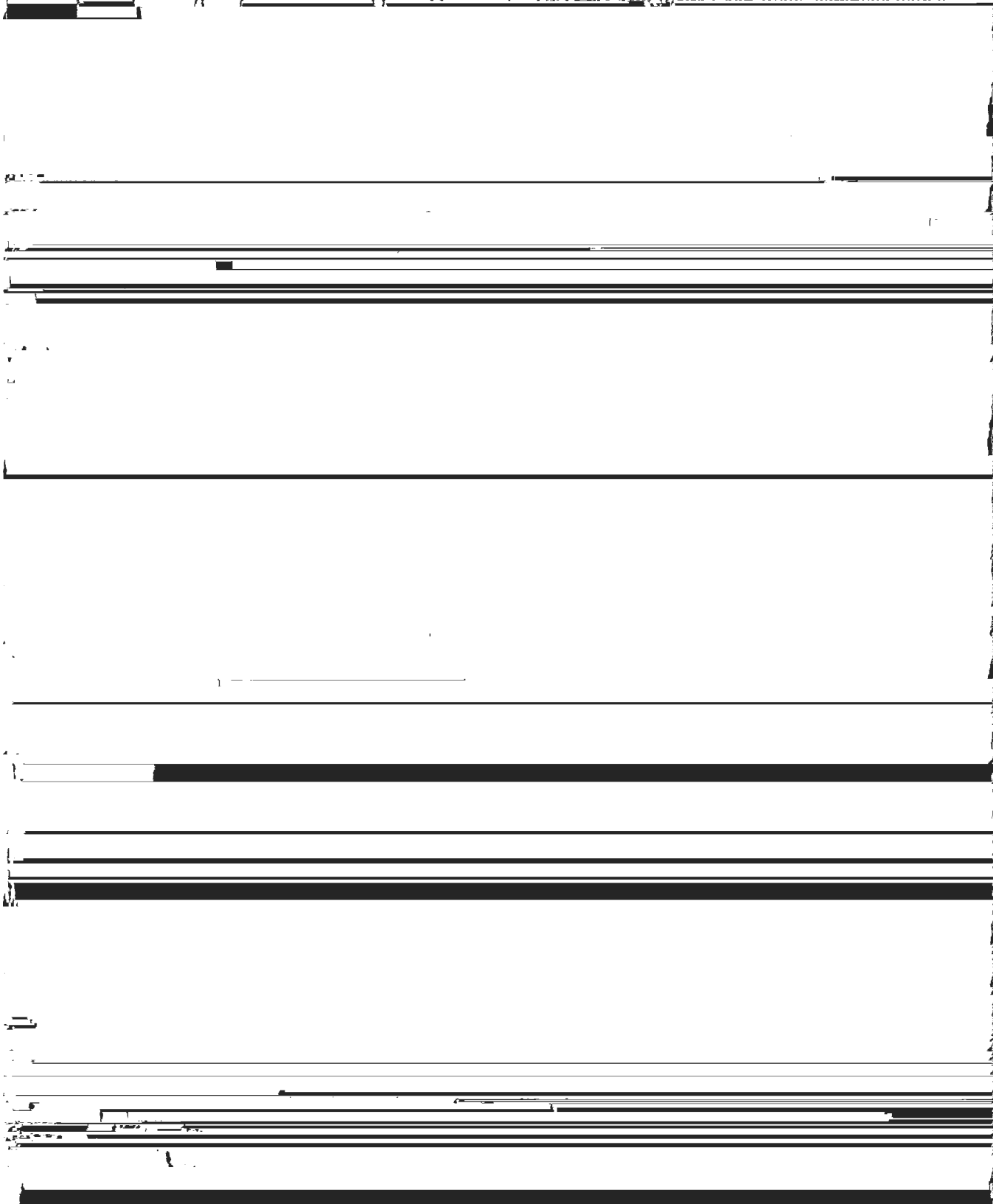
diminishing forest of olives. In contrast,

COMING EVENTS

the contractors will not have the same year-round contact with the Reserve and this will limit their capacity to undertake some of the tasks done by the previous crew. Their strength will be getting stuck into targeted pro-

Loop Trail Launch

It seems like forever ago but on 12 October last year we launched the new White Loop Walk, complete with a



Spring Working Bee 2013 Report

For the October to December Working Bees we worked on areas from the southern end of Stone Reserve, through Pultenaea Hill and Urrbrae Ridge ending up in Leafhopper Gully for the final one.

As we walked through each area we pulled out any small olives we came across but also focussed for some of the time on the patches of seasonal weeds such as Ehrhata, Cape Tulip, thistle and African Weed Orchid/ Monadenia (*Disa bracteata*), hopefully getting as many as possible before they seeded.

Although the spring rain was minimal, the winter rains had been good and the woodland was full of native flowers blossoming, birds, butterflies and insects. It was a real pleasure working in such a place in such great weather.

Unfortunately there had been some vandalism on the new Loop Walking Trail so Peter Bird spent some time cementing in some sign posts and attaching trail markers. Apparently an echidna led him to one of the missing posts so it was not all bad!

We are also very grateful to Jennifer for making herself available on the weekends to supervise us, bring the tools and help with all the weeding as well as her fulltime job administering the Arboretum, Urrbrae House as well as the Waite Conservation Reserve.

On a sad note we regret that Annette our BBQ Chef who has faithfully supplied us with a delectable BBQ and hot cups of tea at the end of our WB over many years is to retire. Her cheerful presence will be sorely missed. She has our heartfelt thanks.

Helen Pryor

Ornithologica VI—The downside of walking dogs

As a former dog owner and bird lover my interest was piqued by a recent article in 'Australian Birdlife' the high quality three-monthly publication of Birdlife Australia (formerly Birds Australia). The author, Bob Holderness-Roddam, addressed the issue of impacts of dogs on Australian birds, including their conservation. Many people will be aware of the problems that dogs and beach-users in general cause to some beach-nesting birds, made worse by the prime time of human use

which requires "rapid take-off, steep climbing and faster-than-usual flight". Thus emergency flight is very energy-intensive for birds and these interruptions may occur several to many times per day. Moreover the spot where birds choose to feed often supplies the best foraging opportunity for them and relocating may force them to use sub-optimal areas.

To give an example of the energy demands that emergency flight places on birds, Holderness-Roddam cites a Great Knot (a migratory wader) gaining 2.77 kilojoules of energy by eating a large bivalve. This amount of energy provides this bird with resources to sleep for six

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS