

HFNC Report on Kanawalla Rail Flora Reserve works 2021

Rod Bird

Background

HFNC applied to VicTrack in 2004 to manage the Kanawalla section of the disused Hamilton-Cavendish rail reserve. Despite a history of grazing after the line closed in the late 1970s this reserve contained valuable remnants of the Basaltic Plains Grassy Woodlands, of which less than 0.2% remains in the public domain.

Details of the history of removal of pines and cypress (2004-08), the planting of local indigenous native species (2006-08 & 2018-20) and the work in controlling weeds (2004-20) may be seen in the 2020 Works Report.

Summary of species and numbers of trees, shrubs and grasses planted at Kanawalla from 2006-20

Species	Source	2006	2007	2008	2018	2019	2020	Total
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Hamilton	-	50	-	-	-	-	50
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Old Reservoir	42	-	-	60	56	35	193
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	N Ham Rail Res	100	165	-	-	-	-	265
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Tarrington	-	-	-	-	61	-	61
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Kanawalla Rail	-	-	-	-	-	30	30
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Yatchaw Rail	50	177	-	65	45	45	391
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Hawkesdale Rail	22	-	-	-	-	-	22
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Pierrepont Rail	-	-	-	41	63	96	191
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Old Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	15	15
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Lake Linlithgow	74	8	-	-	43	-	125
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Hensley Pk Rd	-	-	-	-	22	-	22
<i>Eucalyptus ovata</i>	Hamilton	48	48	-	-	-	-	96
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>	Hamilton	47	-	-	-	-	-	47
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>	Kanawalla Rail	-	-	-	-	-	47	47
<i>Ozothamnus ferrugineus</i>	Lake Bulrush	-	-	20	-	-	-	20
<i>Poa sieberiana</i>		50	-	-	-	-	-	50
Totals		433	448	20	166	290	268	1625

Seedling survival from 2020 planting – less than a dozen seedlings were lost from the planting and only 2 or 3 were *Banksia*. Black Wallabies or Eastern Grey Kangaroos have browsed some of the eucalypts and it was necessary to provide more protection for them by inserting a ring of rabbit netting into the top of the ringlock cylinder. Older *Banksia*s have also been browsed and many of our guards have been too short to prevent some damage.

Fauna list – The Bird List so far is 67 species. An Eastern Blue-tongue (*Tiliqua scincoides*) was seen on 17 Nov.

Flora List – the native plant list stands at 87 species.

Weeds – Work on Cleavers *Galium aperine* (GA) *Fumaria capreolata* (FC), *Sparaxis bulbifera* (SB), *Oxalis purpuria* (OP), *Oxalis pes-caprae* (SS), *Rosa rubiginosa* (RR), *Gladiolus undulatus* (GU) *Phalaris aquatica* (PA) and *Dactylis glomerata* (DG) continues. St John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* (HP) and Canola *Brassica napus* (BN) are problems at the northern area. A bush of Burgan *Kunzea ericoides* (KE) about 100 m S from the Hensley Pk Rd gate was cut out and poisoned in 2020 – a crop of seedlings then emerged in 2021.

Activities in 2021

- 18 Jan – RB (3 hr) weeding BN & HP from N corner and road reserve and fitting mesh sleeves to top half of cyclone mesh guards on 20 eucalypts from 2020 planting. Wallabies have trimmed many.
- 19 Jan – RB (3.5 hr) made and fitted 20 mesh inserts to tree guards on eucalypts planted in 2020.
- 20 Jan – RB (4 hr) finished making & fitting fine mesh inserts to eucalypts planted in 2020.
- 20 May – RB & PH (9 hr) weeded trees N end and sprayed (10 L) around guards and on PA clumps. Pulled BN from entrance area. About 6 trees from 2020 have died. Wallaby browsing continues.
- 19 May – RB (4 hr) sprayed around more trees (19 L) down to the narrow section. Also sprayed FC & RR on mound area.

- 21 May – RB (4 hr) – finished spraying (13 L) around trees down to McFarlanes Rd. Also 8 patches of OP (2 on W fence at the centre) plus PA & Cocksfoot clumps.
- 26 June – RB, DL, RZ, YI, JS, FR & PM (18 hr) HFNC working Bee weeding 2019 & 2020 trees; also removing many FC seedlings from station mound.
- 3 Oct – RB (2 hr) wiping GA, FC, RR & 3 SB in the N half. Light rain fell later.
- 5 Oct – RB (3 hrs) spraying (20 L) weed around trees on West side. Plus GA, OP, RR & PA clumps. Also sprayed the first 100 m of track from HP Rd gate & clumps of PA. Outbreak of Cleavers (GA) a ‘new’ problem at 4 places – N end of mound, drain line N of mound, Cypress block E side and S of power line on S block (both sides of track). The GA were sprayed.
- 6 Oct – RB (3.5 hr) and sprayed (16 L) on OP, GU, GA, RR & PA and spraying around trees planted last 2 years in N half. Two new OP sites NE of pool & 1 site SE of pool.
- 7 Oct – RB (7 hrs) sprayed (18 L) around trees planted last year at Sth end plus on OP & GA. Also set up 10 yellow marker stakes at weed sites to assist control next year. Sprayed 100 m of track at S end plus weeds outside the gate.
- 21 Oct – RB (3 hr) hand-weeding/wiping GA and a dozen emerging seedlings of KE, inserting 8 white marker stakes to help monitor weeds next year, and shape-pruning (to remove low-level forking) many of the sheoaks on the Nth end. A small patch of SB and more GA towards NE corner were treated.
- 17 Nov – RB (4 hr) repaired fence at NE corner. Sprayed (6 L) parts of track at both ends, major infestation of GA S of power line on W side (and some on E side). Hoed out GA remnants on adjacent area that had previously been sprayed. Pulled BN from roadside near HP Rd Gate. Herbicide-wiped about 50 RR at N end of mound.
- 28 Nov – RB (0.5 hr) pulled several Canola (BN) plants from HP Rd area and inside the reserve.
- 14 Dec – RB (1 hr) sprayed (7 L) on phalaris, cocksfoot, a few St John’s Wort and Burgun NW area

Tree-planting sites from 2020

