

2019-08-HFNC-activities-events

Hello friends & members of HFNC – here are our activities/reports for Aug. 2019

General Meeting Thursday 15 August, 7.30 pm at HIRL – sightings, club business, environmental matters and reports.

HFNC Excursion Sun 18 August – Lake Fyans and Devil Gardens, northern Grampians area. Members & visitors will leave Hamilton Visitor Centre at 9 am and travel to the area via Halls Gap.

Excursion Report – sorry, report for the July excursion to the Wannon Scenic Reserve has not yet been compiled.

Working Bees Reports – we have had 2 working bees planting 3 local provenances of trees (Silver Banksia, Drooping Sheoak and Sweet Bursaria) at the Kanawalla Rail Flora Reserve since our last General Meeting in June:

- Sat 22 June – 130 trees were planted and guarded by 7 members – see Attachment 1
- Sun 28 July – 137 trees were planted and guarded by 3 members – see Attachment 1

The total number of tree planted this year (incl. 17 replacements from 2018 planting and others planted at times other than at the working bees) is 306. As a result of the activities of Black Wallabies and a mob of 50 Kangaroos that inhabit the adjacent Blue Gum plantation, we have to put high mesh guards on all of our planted seedlings. We still have the major part of that task ahead of us.

Work at the important Wannon Flora Reserve has also continued, with control of *Acacia paradoxa* and *A. longifolia*. We have cut out all of the *A. longifolia* and a small part of the *A. paradoxa*. The work will continue there but we were not successful in obtaining a Landcare Grant to expedite the process. Both native species are proving to be a threat to the botanic diversity of the reserve, and the Hedge wattle is also a major fire concern for fire and a harbour for rabbits. A summary progress report is given below – see Attachment 2.

Rod Bird

Secretary,
Hamilton Field Naturalists Club

Attachment 1: HFNC Kanawalla Tree Planting 2019 – work progress report

22 May 2019 – sprayed 50-60 spots S side east of old cypress block

23 May 2019 – sprayed 70 spots on NE corner

24 May 2019 – replaced 8 *Banksia marginata* (4 from Yatchaw & 4 from Pierrepoint) and 9 *Allocas. verticillata* (Old Res) representing a 10% loss from the 166 planted in 2018.

13 June 2019 – planted 14 Pierrepoint *Banksia marginata* just S of junction of Station Ground and narrow reserve. Fitted wire mesh guards.

17 June 2019 – planted 16 Yatchaw *Banksia marginata* at same area above

20 June 2019 – crow-barred 27 holes on E side of track running S from the HPk Rd gate

21 June 2019 – crow-barred 23 spots on N edge of old cypress block.

22 June 2019 – HFNC Working Bee (RB, DL, PH, RZ, YI, GC, SP) – 130 trees planted, plastic guards fitted and 68 mesh guards installed. Work finished 3 pm.

2 rows of *Allocas. verticillata* along the track

26 Old Res *Allocas. verticillata* planted Nth of old cypress block

9 Tarrington-area *Allocas. verticillata* planted E of old cypress block

26 HPk *Bursaria spinosa* planted E of old cypress block

15 LLIN *Bursaria spinosa* planted

30 Pierrepoint *Banksia marginata* planted

24 June 2019 – watered in 30 trees and crow-barred 10 more spots not done on 22 June.

26 June 2019 – planted 6 Old Res *Allocas. Verticillata* and 4 HPk *Bursaria spinosa* at NE corner and watered another 30 trees not done on 22 June.

27 June 2019 – marked out and spot-sprayed 75 more spots not far from earlier plantings, to plant at the next working bee. Also spot-sprayed Phalaris plants encountered

28 June 2019 – spot-sprayed about 100 small patches of *Oxalis purpurea* along the E fence S of the junction. Also marked out and sprayed 61 more spots in SW corner of Station Ground.

9 Jul 2019 – prepared and fitted 30 mesh guards on trees

13 Jul 2019 – prepared and fitted 30 mesh guards

14 Jul 2019 – prepared and fitted 30 mesh guards

16 Jul 2019 – crow-barred 50 spots prepared earlier towards the N end

28 Jul 2019 – HFNC Working Bee (RB, PH, RZ) – 87 holes crow-barred, 137 trees planted and plastic guards put on. Work finished 4 pm.

52 Tarrington area *Allocas. verticillata*

35 Yatchaw *Banksia marginata*

32 Pierrepoint *Banksia marginata*

5 LLIN *Bursaria spinosa*

13 HPk *Bursaria spinosa*

29 Jul 2019 – crow-barred another 12 holes and planted & guarded 2 LLIN *Bursaria spinosa* and 10 Yatchaw *Banksia marginata* near the power line that crosses the rail reserve.

31 Jul 2019 – 10 cyclone mesh guards prepared and installed on trees near power line

03 Aug 2019 – 12 cyclone mesh guards prepared and installed on trees near the junction.

04 Aug 2019 – sprayed *Fumaria* & Cleavers at the embankment, some *O. purpurea* near the E side and phalaris elsewhere at N end. Also sprayed around some of the planted trees S from the gate.

Total trees planted in 2019 = 17 (replacements) + 130 + 10 + 137 + 12 = 306 (130 mesh guards to be made)

Attachment 2: HFNC Wannan Flora Res 2019 project – work progress report

Working Bee -25 May 2019 – control of *Acacia paradoxa* and *A. longifolia*

This was attended by RB, PH, RZ, DL and A. Wilson from Wannan Falls.

We worked from 10 am to 12 noon. There was some intermittent light drizzle from 10.30am.

We prepared 4 plots each approx. 10 m x 10m and applied 2 treatments to the *A. paradoxa*:

- Cutting of the shrubs below any branch or live twigs – 2 plots
- As above plus application of 50% concentration of glyphosate to the cut stump within 30 seconds of the cutting – 2 plots

There were 2 plots with a dense stand of shrubs and 2 with dispersed shrubs, towards the edge of the wet heath area in the NE part of the reserve. The cut material was left in situ, after cutting up into a few smaller sections.

For *A. longifolia*, the aim was to cut any shrubs found below any branch or live twig. The SE part of the reserve was treated, including a portion of the road reserve in the SE corner. Western Vic Roads are expected to remove the wattle from the road reserve within the next few months.

Follow up work

2 July – RB (1 pm-4 pm) cut *A. longifolia* and many small *A. paradoxa* on S side of reserve. Also cut 65 stakes from *A. paradoxa* for use at Kanawalla. Crested Shrike-tits heard in the area.

6 July – RB cut another 63 stakes from *A. paradoxa* to use at Kanawalla. Also cut down many small *A. paradoxa* shrubs. Koala seen in the SE part of the reserve, climbing down from an old Manna Gum. Many rabbit burrows and signs of activity.

21 July – PH & RB (10-11.30 am) cut out the remainder of the *A. longifolia* in the SW part of the reserve. The reserve appears now to be clear of this species but more remains on the highway reserve. Many smaller *A. paradoxa* were lopped off while searching for *A. longifolia*.

From 11.30 am-12.30 pm, we cut 40 stakes for use at Kanawalla.

The CFA (organised by Andy Govanstone with SGSC) have blitzed the *A. paradoxa* on Powells Lane road reserve (both sides) and along the track on the N side of the reserve. The material has been removed from the sites.

Crested Shrike-tits were seen as they searched under the bark on Manna Gums in the reserve.

Something needs to be done about rabbits – but NOT ripping of burrows, which is too disruptive of the native vegetation. The SGSC is responsible for the management of this reserve and DELWP has instructed HFNC not to disturb soil or the non-target vegetation during our works.

Alternative control of rabbits include a new strain of calicivirus available from NSW, or fumigation of burrows. The removal of rabbits will be difficult until the cover of *A. paradoxa* is greatly reduced.

Future work

Despite many hours of work preparing an application for funding – and months of delays getting approvals to remove *A. paradoxa* and *A. longifolia* – that application through the Landcare Grant to remove the *A. paradoxa* has not been successful in July 2019. We can re-apply in 2020, after greatly reducing the amount requested. That would allow us to tackle the fringes of the pest, keeping it out of the heath area and removing small seedlings from the other open spaces. Whether or not we receive funding, we need to discuss what we can do to keep the E end clear of the pest species.