



# WILD TIMES

January 2016 Edition 54

## How many days on an island?

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF FREYCINET

It was supposed to be 8, but hey team, due to lumpy seas we can only get you there for 5. Oh well, at least we can get stuck into a few jobs here at Coles Bay for a few days. So we oil the seat and lookout at Friendly Beaches, we oil the numerous timber slats for the new chain ladder at Hazards Beach which we had cut and drilled beforehand. We take a load of rubbish to the tip, we clear the workshop area of weeds and tidy up part of the workshop. We find 2 Sea Spurge on Muir's Beach. We go to the Douglas Apsley National Park and clear the drains and check the people and vehicle counters. We pick up rubbish at the Wineglass Bay car park, up to the lookout, and around all the campgrounds. Can't face another night of food we had packed for the island? Let's go to the pub!

### It's Friday! We are go!

6 people and their gear, the working bee gear, the summer campground host program gear, 3 boatloads. The weather is great. The island is ... shhhhh, paradise! But we only have 5 days! We lug the gear up to the cottage, we set up the 2 large turbo tents. Someone get inside and push up! What do I do

with this bit? Anyone got some more tent pegs? Boxes of stuff everywhere. Anyone found the toilet paper? How do you start the gas fridge? I think the solar panel lead goes through the shed roof somehow. Hey, I found a fruit cake and some lollies! Ranger Fiona Everts is a sweetie. And a new coffee percolator and coffee? Boy, you sure spoil the vollies Fee!

Everyone kitted up? Look out for ticks, long pants and shirt? Let's spray periwinkle and gnash gorse. The periwinkle looks good except for the large open patch but in other areas it has gone or there are only small seedlings. The boss is pleased. We treat it all with 15 loads (150 litres of herbicide). We pull or paste a few thousand gorse, very few flowering size, but we do not have time to venture further afield as planned as we are due to leave on the Tuesday changeover to the first of the campground hosts. We asked with skipper Steve on Monday at 4pm. He talks weather stuff but it boils down to ... sorry guys, the seas are too lumpy. Talk tomorrow. Expect the unexpected version 2? We gnash a few thousand more gorse,

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we cut up the old carpet used for the successful solarisation of the periwinkle and cart it along the beach ready for it to be taken off the island, and we have one day mostly confined to base due to rain, but on Wednesday night we get the nod, and on Thursday we have a smooth fast trip back to Coles Bay.

We leave the island knowing that the main gorse infestations have been cleared, the periwinkle has been severely knocked back, the pygmy possum is safely back in the oven glove after trying out Mike's wine cask, and the base camp is looking tickety-boo. How many days on the island? It was 7.



Clearing the track



Painting the timber



Spraying the weeds



**Malcom McDonald**  
CEO

## CEO report

Happy New Year to all readers of WILDTIMES. Let's work together to make 2016 the best ever for Wildcare. This will call for teamwork, commitment and a preparedness to stick to the task, whatever obstacles or challenges arise.

I would like to share this thought-provoking piece from Peter Tongman. It offers a moment for reflection and is highly relevant to volunteering.

*I haven't time, I'm rather busy, perhaps I will if I'm free. My work, my home, my garden need me, I'll really have to see. One day I might think about it, when I'm older, then I will. For the present, I can't do it, some time later, not until. I don't think you need me really, I have such a lot to do. Someone else can do it somehow, it doesn't matter who. If I had a bit more money, if I had some time to spare. One day it will be convenient, one day, sometime, perhaps next year. But please – don't think that I don't care.*

### Marketing and communication plan

Wildcare is now served by three important planning documents. We have had in place a strategic plan and a fundraising plan. The latest edition is a marketing and communication plan. This plan offers strategies to better inform the community of the work and activities carried out by Wildcare, in line with the goals in the strategic plan. It seeks to enhance and encourage two-way communication with all members of Wildcare and the broader Tasmanian community, including digital and social media channels. Driving community participation and engagement with Wildcare and with programs, activities and events provided or supported by Wildcare is another key objective. The Wildcare Board of Management is currently reviewing a draft of the marketing and communication plan, before its eventual adoption.

## Annual General Meeting

The Wildcare AGM will be held at 11.00 am on Saturday, 19 March 2016 in the Gnomon Room at the southern end of the Wharf Pavilion, Crescent Street, Ulverstone. It is located on the Leven River. Further advice on guest speakers will be communicated via the Wildcare website. RSVP to [ceo@wildcarea.org.au](mailto:ceo@wildcarea.org.au) on or before 10 March 2016.

## Broom and other annoyances

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF MARIA ISLAND Story by Peter Booth

Our customary four annual 'Broom Extermination' working bees (Bernachies Valley and Skipping Ridge) saw the return of many regular island weeders, boosted by the welcome addition of some enthusiastic 'first timers'. Systematically threading our way through the bush, locating previously weeded sites, monitoring, recording and clearing regrowth, it was very satisfying to see the dramatic positive change in the forest understory since our first forays 10 years ago.

Seed lying in the soil will continue to germinate in future years but current regrowth is very patchy; seedlings in some areas but with some previously dense infestations relatively weed free. Occasionally we find 'one that got away' but these have often been subject to browsing and a few showed signs of the biological control (a psyllid) which was introduced last year. As in years past, a few plants sought a haven on the heights of the quarry, but a

short session on the face put paid to their clandestine attempt to recolonise the area.

Providing we can sustain our efforts over the 200 discreet sites through the bush, the days of Broom on Maria Island appear to be numbered.

An annual day's clearance of residual Spanish Heath at Robey's Farm and biannual checking and clearance of Sea Spurge at Riedle Bay added variety to the work and a welcome change of scene.

We thank Parks, who provided invaluable assistance with transport, not to mention laying on the regular Saturday night BBQ's. The last one of the year, in particular, we will always remember – the BBQ to end all BBQ's. And last but not least there is always the trip across Mercury Passage with ferry fares courtesy of a Wildcare grant. Thank you.

Friends of Maria take a well-earned break!



# Bruny Quarantine Station

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF BRUNY ISLAND QUARANTINE STATION Story by Kathy Duncombe

In October 2011, a new Wildcare Group – ‘Friends of Bruny Island Quarantine Station’ (FOBIQS) was formed to “Support the management, conservation and public appreciation of the Bruny Island Quarantine Station.”

An initial meeting of about 20 interested parties, including Bruny Islanders, non-residents, members of Parks & Wildlife and Wildcare was held on site. The Station consists of 320 acres of native bushland, plus buildings and ruins from all eras of its history. An interpretative tour was conducted to inform the group of the different eras of the Quarantine Station. The meeting developed a future 2016 Vision for the Bruny Quarantine Station. As 2016 approaches it is encouraging to reflect that most, if not all, of our visions have been fulfilled.

- The Health Officers Quarters is now habitable for volunteers.
- The Quarantine Station is now open to the public five days a week during Daylight saving, weekends and public holidays for the rest of the year.
- We have a self-guided heritage tour in place with informative interpretive signage across the Station precinct.
- We have ‘volunteer caretakers’ on site all year round on four week rosters.

During 2015, with visitor numbers on the rise, Wildcare FOBIQS have been actively improving visitor facilities with the kind support of a National Conservation Grant from the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife via Wildcare – Parks for People.

A new Interpretation Centre is being developed in the Plant Quarantine Head House to help visitors learn about the rich fabric and history of the Station. New displays will include birds, orchids, shrubs, ground layer plants, fungi, small trees and eucalypts found on site.

The Quarantine Station has an intriguing past. The site was a State and Commonwealth Quarantine Station, it held German internees during the World War 1, became a quarantine site during the 1918-1919 flu pandemic and later, a plant quarantine station. It was proclaimed as a State Reserve in 2003, and has since been managed by Parks and Wildlife.

The site is receiving return visitors, as it appears that people don't initially realise how much there is to see. Locals are bringing their visitors and friends as the Station becomes one of the key attractions on Bruny Island. Prominent signage flags seem to be a key factor in guiding visitors to the Station.

Walker coaches, UTAS and walking clubs have brought groups on site. Once the new facilities are operational (improved toilet access and undercover facilities) it is hoped to encourage more school groups, photographers, artists, walking groups, Probus groups etc. to visit the site during 2016.

We have had many different ‘volunteer caretakers’ over the past years and each has added their own observations and suggestions to the site. Volunteer caretakers provide a physical presence at the Quarantine Station. They provide information about the heritage self-



Winter caretakers, Sandra and Rob James

guided walk and the natural history of the area, carry out minor maintenance, and assist with coordination of other PWS and Friends of Bruny Island Quarantine Station activities at the site.

Sandra discovered three small sized hobnailed leather boot heels as she was energetically chipping weeds during the working bee in September. We wonder who wore the original child sized boots, and when they were worn. The boot heels will be added to the station's collection of artefacts.

The Quarantine Station at 816 Killora Road, Barnes Bay, Bruny Island, is revealing its fascinating past to the public, thanks to the efforts of Parks staff and our dedicated volunteer group. We now look forward to the development of a new/revised strategic plan to help guide our next phase of development.

UTAS students study the Then and Now –viewing display board, 2015





## Redbill update

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF REDBILL POINT

The group sees the reserve as an important natural & cultural asset to be protected and conserved for the community. To accomplish this we participate in, plan, promote and facilitate the sustainable and practical management of the Beauty Point Coastal environment in partnership with Parks and Wildlife.

The group holds regular working bees to mow the grass, remove weeds, re-vegetate damaged or dying flora areas and monitor the coastal environment. We manage public access to the reserve and open and close the entrance gates via a roster system of volunteers. Clean the public bar-b- que areas and manage and remove any litter and garbage.

We aim to promote and encourage stewardship in the general community and hope to soon organise social activities for this purpose for the whole community. We hold fund raising events to help fund small projects and improvements within the reserve.



Socialising over a lunch break

## Lumea update

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF LUMEA

There has been a positive reaction to the track maintenance and rehabilitation done to date. Certainly the dust and track widening problems have been reduced and the hardening of the wheel tracks has reduced puddles and general erosion.

Some residents along the north-eastern foreshore have reported an increase in use of the area, inappropriate speed, early and late in the day disruption and unsociable behaviour. It is not possible to evaluate whether any of this is due to track improvements but in response to these concerns we have agreed to prioritise the project to improve signage.

The feral oyster clean up has been very successful. All plaudits to our community volunteers, Windsurfing Tasmania and the Pipeclay Lagoon Oyster Growers Association (PLOGA).

Also a large off-shore area between the Point and Cremorne has been cleared as well as the foreshore from the north-east point to the large gum tree. We're starting to see some oysters re-establishing themselves along there, so if you want to carry a hammer with you next time you go for a walk at low tide and give them a tap, every little bit helps. Grass seeding was hampered by heavy rain immediately following seeding, followed by cold and dry conditions. This is something that will require ongoing attention.

We look forward to a productive 2016.



Feral oysters Photo: Simon Grove

Mowing one of our biggest jobs



# Sign up for Beatties

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF MOUNT FIELD

It was a good day to have a lunch time BBQ because of the prediction of above 30° in the valleys meant we would be out of the sun well before it peaked.

The first task of the day was to install a sign to mark the Beatties Tarn track, and although a few rocks were encountered at the track junction, sufficient soil was present to allow the task to be successfully completed. A most pleasant break on the shore of Beatties Tarn was made even more so by the absence of pests, such as mosquitoes, march flies and other irritating gnats, even though conditions for them were favourable.

At the old Belcher hut at Lake Fenton mould was cleaned off walls and ceiling of the first room in hut and the window frames painted, which deteriorate quite quickly, and another coat of paint applied the porch. Our other activity was to take measurements from the early wet section of the track that leads to Mount Field East. A grant from the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife has been received to enable boardwalk to be built at the site, as well as place a bridge over the Lady Barron Creek at the start of the walking track.

With that we headed down to the picnic huts at the park entrance for a BBQ lunch and meeting with Trevor from PWS to plan for the activities for our two new grants.



Installing the sign to Beatties track

# A Three Year Hiatus

WELLINGTON PARK BUSHCARE

The walking track to Collins cap has now been cleared to bring it up to a reasonable standard. A little over three years ago, in September 2012 work started on clearing back the thick vegetation that had encroached over the track so much that it required pushing through to progress along to the last 800 metres or so to get to the summit. A second day was spent there in November of that year, but before we could finish the job a serious bushfire devastated the area.

The fire burnt right up to the part cleared and in several places went beyond but it stopped at the very spot that our work finished and didn't burn any of the uncleared section.

For one reason or another we didn't manage to get back there until now, but it was an ideal day for working. Atmospheric mist was hanging about, but unlike a report from the other side of the range near cathedral Rock, there was no drizzle and at times a diffused sun made an appearance. The last 250 metres of track was cleared by lunch time, the work somewhat accelerated by the use of a hedge pruner, and this section now looks really good.

A party of three walkers arrived, just as we finished the work, expecting a scratchy time getting through and were decidedly pleased with the track.

Enjoying a well earned lunch break



On the botanical side we noticed a pretty little plant in flower, in the burnt area, that none of us has seen before. A suggestion that it might be a *Derwentia* proved correct; it was *Derwentia nivea* a small native that is usually found on mountain moors. A daisy was also present in quantity, which is thought to be *Olearia erubescens*.

*Derwentia nivea* also known as *Veronica nivea*  
Photo: Melburnian, Wikipedia



# Get Outside Fortescue Bay

STORY BY JODIE EPPER

The Get Outside Wildcare branch held their first outing of the year in beautiful Fortescue Bay. Fifty-five people in total came for the day mostly young people aged between 15 and 25. The day was spent enjoying the beach, each other, walking, burying people in the sand, soccer, swimming and fishing.

Some of the young women from Ethiopia, who had only recently arrived in the State, had never seen the sea before. They were pretty excited when they got to see a pod of dolphins frolicking in the bay. Get Outside Wildcare takes people who are newly arrived to Tasmania into the natural parts of the state, into local reserves and parks, and to meet with and spend time with locals – with an aim for connection with people and place.

The Get Outside leaders (who were trained as part of the program last year) were a very important part of the activities. The leaders took four different walks including a lagoon walk, a beach walk, and a rock pool walk. The group also had the opportunity to learn about Aboriginal culture from some local indigenous people (thank you).

# The beetles have landed!

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF DEAL ISLAND

Ragwort flea beetles have now been installed on Deal Island as biological control agents to be used in the campaign to manage ragwort. Ragwort bio-control expert, Richard Holloway, collected 1200 – 1500 of them from a couple of populations on Bruny Island on 11 January. They travelled by car to Hobart, then to Low Head on the 12th and on to Bridport on the 13th. They were flown to Lady Baron, then delivered to Ranger Wayne Dick who promptly delivered them by plane to Deal Island. By the evening of Wednesday 13 January the caretakers would have introduced them to two sites in the main ragwort patch. With less than three days between capture and release, the beetles have an excellent chance of successful introduction. Just imagine them munching away happily on the island's lovely lush ragwort.



# \$6,000,000 per annum

STORY BY ANDREW SMITH

According to the new calculator developed by Volunteering Tasmania, Wildcare Inc members contribute volunteer time worth over \$6,000,000 each year, to caring for reserves, wildlife and cultural heritage. That is an enormous contribution of effort, on the ground making a difference. On top of that we have managed to source support funding of around \$1.5 million for projects over the last 5 years, and provide our own internal funds of \$200,000 towards projects undertaken by our Branches all over the State. And the Gift Fund allocated over \$160,000 to nature conservation and reserve management this year. Got to be close to being the biggest contributor to reserve management, nature conservation and cultural heritage conservation in Tasmania, outside of government. And key to being able to achieve amazing outcomes is the fact that we work in partnership with government, working cooperatively to look after Tasmania. That makes for a Happy New Year and well done to all of us.



**Thank you** to these people for their donations: **Saffire Freycinet**  
**Guests, Robert Brooke, Sonia Singh, Marianne Gee, Craig Parsey, Nicole**  
**Lowrey, Louise Forgie-Wendt, G & R Jones, Patricia Kolarski, Susan & David**  
**Reid, Phil Wyatt, Petra Harris, Rosemary James, Stephen Mattingley, Bruny**  
**Island Safaris, Jim Swinden, Melissa Manton, Stephen Atkinson, Louise Schoe,**  
**Scott Davis, Jill Krstic, Ebony Kaminski, Tracey Simpson, Andrew Smith**

## Share your story

Send your submissions to [wildtimes@wildcaretas.org.au](mailto:wildtimes@wildcaretas.org.au)  
Deadline for the next issue is 1/3/2016.



## Wildcare Inc

Tasmania's largest incorporated volunteer organisation, caring for wild places, wildlife and cultural heritage.

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