



FRIENDS OF DEAL ISLAND



Greetings all,

What a successful year we have had, plenty to celebrate and be thankful for.

We are back on track with our goal of two working bee's a year with one held in November 2022 and another in March 2023. Working bees take considerable planning and organisation and I am very grateful to Stuart for his leadership, time and organisational skills that have enabled the last two working bees to proceed and be so successful.

We pride ourself on always taking a mix of new and island experienced branch members on each working bee even with our limit of 6 per working bee. Jo Burke was a new member on the last working bee and her reflections are included in this newsletter.

We joined forces with our fellow island branches, Friends of Tasman Island and Friends of Maatsuyker for the Australian Wooden Boat Festival in February of this year. What a fantastic event raising both awareness and funds for our branches.

I'm excited by our project work on the release of ragwort beetle on Deal. A successful trial collection on Bruny this summer in consultation with John Ireson (Ragwort specialist) confirmed the availability of beetles in sufficient numbers to make the project viable. We are now focussed on securing all necessary approvals and targeting grant funding for a planned harvest, transfer and release next January. We see this project as vital for any significant reduction of ragwort going forward.

A big warm welcome to all the new members who have joined our branch over the last 12 months or so, keep an eye out on emails for dates for our AGM in early spring .

Happy reading

Cheers
Jo Widdowson
President
Wildcare Friends of Deal Island



Working Bee March 13 - 23rd 2023- Stuart Dudgeon

Participants

Mike Comfort, Stuart and Georgie Dudgeon, Jo Burke, Graham Bailey, Christine Bowman.

Summary

The working bee group spent a total of nine days on the island and two three quarter days travelling packing and unpacking gear. Eight days were spent undertaking weeding and heritage maintenance tasks, the ninth spent exploring the lighthouse precinct and Big Squally Cove.



Key outcomes were the prepping and completing the painting of the exterior of the fuel and paint stores and Privy, re-weeding sea spurge areas, conservation works on the Whim, commencing internal painting of the visitors house, and reworking smaller more isolated pockets of Ragwort.

Timing for the sea spurge follow up was perfect as much of it was flowering with no evidence of seed having dispersed from the 3278 plants located and removed. Given plants contained seed it was decided to build a storage container for storage of the seeding plants.

Ragwort, not surprisingly continues to expand its range with a number of new locations found on the slopes leading up to the saddle between flagstaff hills. Plants ranged from flowering only to releasing, or having released seed

The working bee group was made up of a mix of experienced and new members. This led to many good discussions on technique, and FoDi's overall role and achievements. The weather once again proved to be perfect for completion of the tasks allocated.

The group was once again warmly welcomed by the caretakers, this time Duncan and Michelle. they were keen participants on several of our weeding days and are committed to continuing to assist with our weeding efforts.

Logistics were made much easier with the majority of the supplies being ordered through Walkers supermarket and packed and weighed by Christine (A Big Thank You)

[Full report can be accessed here](#)



Australian Wooden Boat Festival 2023

Once again we joined forces with Wildcare Friends of Tasman Island and Wildcare Friends of Maatsuyker to hold a stall at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival as we have done now for many years.

It had been a while since the last Festival due to COVID and everyone was obviously well and truly ready for a celebration of the beautiful boats, marine themes, entertainment, food and drink AND just out for a family-friendly few days. The weather did not disappoint, it was magnificent, the atmosphere was relaxed, friendly, interested in all that was on display, and as such, it was a buzz being on the stall with fellow islander groups.

Over 4 days our amazing volunteers talked to soooooo many visitors to the stall, educating them on the work of Wildcare, our island groups and assisting them with the purchase of merchandise or raffle tickets. Our branch alone received a net amount of \$2,440 being merchandise sales and share of raffle ticket money after costs and GST etc



A lot of man hours go into the preparation and planning for the wooden boat festival stall. Massive thanks to Alison Moore for her work with myself on the planning and preparation, the pre-festival raffle sales and her time (& Angus's) setting up, manning and packing up stall.

I would also like to thank the following people who answered our call for help to man the stall over the 4 days of the festival:

Graham Bailey, Cassandra Strain, Phillipa Foster, Christine Bowman, Georgie Dudgeon, Lee & Don Cameron, Lou Leol, Jane Davis, Mike Comfort, Marilyn Pauley, Jenny Tudehope and Lorraine Cotter. (I hope I didn't miss anyone..)



I also wish to acknowledge and thank the Wildcare Tasmanian Nature Conservation Fund Grant Committee for their grant to fund the stall over the festival.

The successful promotion of Wildcare and our respective branches was indicated by the increase in branch membership around and after the festival, Sharon Smith (Wildcare CEO at the time) acknowledged our efforts and asked that thanks and congratulations be passed on for the excellent effort on the stall representing Wildcare so well and inspiring many about the island work.



Merchandise - Winter Warmers!!

We are fortunate to have some fabulous merchandise. Jump on to our branch page and have a look when you get a chance!

We have a couple of specials we are going to run for the next few months so get in early and grab a bargain..

1. Deal Island card 3 pack - \$16.50 inc postage

The pack contains 3 cards. One each of the Archipelago, Fieldworks and Cape Barren Geese.

The Archipelago and Fieldworks cards feature images by Tasmanian Philip Wolfhagen, one of Australia's leading contemporary artists. The Cape Barren Geese card is

illustrated by our very own Di Masters - FODI member and artist. Envelopes and postage included.



[click here to order](#)

2. Headskinz/Buff/Neckwarmer - \$16.50 ea inc postage

Call them what you want these are an essential item for winter and can be worn dozens of different ways! Custom designed multifunction headwear with beautiful Cape Barren Goose feather print. A special blend of stretchy polyester microfibre they offer sun, wind, dust and dirt protection for your face (and head) whilst looking fabulous!

[Order online here](#)



DID YOU KNOW

You can view the Museum collection online through ehive?
[click on here](#)
Pretty cool hey..

Where can I find more information on Deal Island and the Friends of Deal Island??

Great Question!

Our Branch files have a huge amount of information including previous newsletters, minutes of meetings and David Reynolds draft of "[Deal Island an Historical overview](#)"

Branch files can be found [here](#) (click on files - just above "Where we work")

Reflections of newbie

Deal Island. What an amazing place! For me, this island has everything – the highest lighthouse in the southern hemisphere, sandy beaches, rocky coves, crystal clear waters teeming with colourful seaweeds and an amazing array of fish, wallabies (SO many wallabies), olive-green whip snakes, sea eagles, noisy cape barren geese, history and tragedy, shipwrecks and plane wrecks...and then there is the sea spurge, ragwort and horehound. I learned to identify these invasive weeds, as young plants and as plants in flower, how to tell them apart from their faux-amis (native plants that look similar), how to dig them up or pull them out, when to bag them and how to dispose of them. I also learned that I am capable of surviving 13 days without alcohol (who knew?). It was hard, but very satisfying work, expertly directed by the ever-capable Stuart Dudgeon. I felt well prepared for the working bee, having read Jon Marsden's Smedley's report from 2021/22, having looked at photos of the weeds, and having googled the history of the island. Sadly I found myself under-prepared for the evening Catan tournaments, and categorically failed to put a single win on the board.

My highlights: the team-work and camaraderie (both out in the field and in the kitchen where amazing meals were prepared) and snorkelling at Squally Cove over the wreck of the Karitane.

Unfulfilled goals: to beat Stuart at Catan and to fix the remaining sagging banners in the museum now that I've figured out how to do it (secret goal: to remove the agapanthus from the care-taker's front garden, if I'm allowed to).

I hope to come back!

Jo Burke

