



Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves

NEWS LETTER

Number 68, September 2021

New Garden Seat

Woorabinda Lake and its surrounds can now be viewed from a wonderful new garden seat, courtesy of several generous donors from the Friends of Woorabinda group. The seat has been placed on the site of the old caretaker's cottage, which was removed some years ago.

Our hard-working group of Thursday bush-carers put much work into removing introduced garden plants from the site before planting it up with native plants. This work has greatly improved the attractiveness of the area and the hope is that as this garden becomes more established, park users will be encouraged to consider growing more such plants in their own gardens.

The garden seat is an original creation by Jerry Keyte of Willunga. It features some decorative ironwork on the stand, a large slab of timber as the seat itself and a curved branch as a backrest.



Jerry Keyte installing the seat base



Adding the final touches



In use!

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New Information Sign

Adelaide Hills Council has commissioned a new information sign which is to be installed in place of the existing sign in the shelter by Woorabinda Lake.

A sub-committee of the Friends of Woorabinda group is working with Council and the designers to put together words and images which will help visitors appreciate where they are and what they can see within the Reserves.



A draft of the new information sign

Save the Date!

Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves will hold their Annual General Meeting on Friday 12th November 2021 at Woorabinda Environment Centre.

Covid-19 or other restrictions allowing, the meeting will begin at 6:30 pm and will be followed by a barbecue.

More details later.

More respect for native wildlife

At present many visitors to Woorabinda are being delighted by the number of turtles which can be seen in the lake. They may not realise that almost 20 years ago turtles vanished from the lake due to being drowned in illegal yabby traps and by vandalism. (See *Mount Barker Courier* article from 2002 reproduced below).

Turtles, along with Rakali (Native Water Rat) were then not seen for about five years at Woorabinda. Fortunately more sensitive management and

enjoyment of the area has seen them both return.

However, there is still room for improvement. For native wildlife to continue to survive in the Woorabinda Reserves it is essential that visitors abide by Council rules and tread gently. Most people do. Nevertheless, off-leash dogs are still chasing kangaroos and harassing other native wildlife.

For the future of wildlife this must stop.

Native animals killed at lake

The Adelaide Hills council and Friends of Stirling Linear Park have condemned the killing of native animals in Woorabinda Lake, at Stirling.

A turtle has been found hacked into pieces at the park and water rats have been drowned.

Acting chief executive officer Michael O'Connell said the council was saddened to learn of the killing of the animals.

"The death of the turtle appears to be the result of the use of yabby nets, which are not permitted in the lake," Mr O'Connell said.

"The death of the water rats seemed to be caused by cruel behavior of some person or persons.

"Native animals are protected and cruelty to any animal should be condemned.

"The presence of wildlife in the park, particularly in the lake, is a wonderful feature of the area."

Mr O'Connell said the council would erect signs to promote the protection of wildlife in the park. Friends' group chairman David Ragless said the turtle was thought to be one of only eight in the lake.

"It had been hacked into pieces and found by a distressed passer-by," he said.

"The native water rat is rare, with only two breeding pairs known in the lake."

Mr Ragless said vandals had also caused damage to buildings and a bird hide donated by the Stirling Lions Club.

Mature trees in Hender Reserve had been cut down and signs had been defaced, pulled down and thrown into the lake.

Mr Ragless said everyone in the community needed to do more to protect the unique and precious Hills asset.

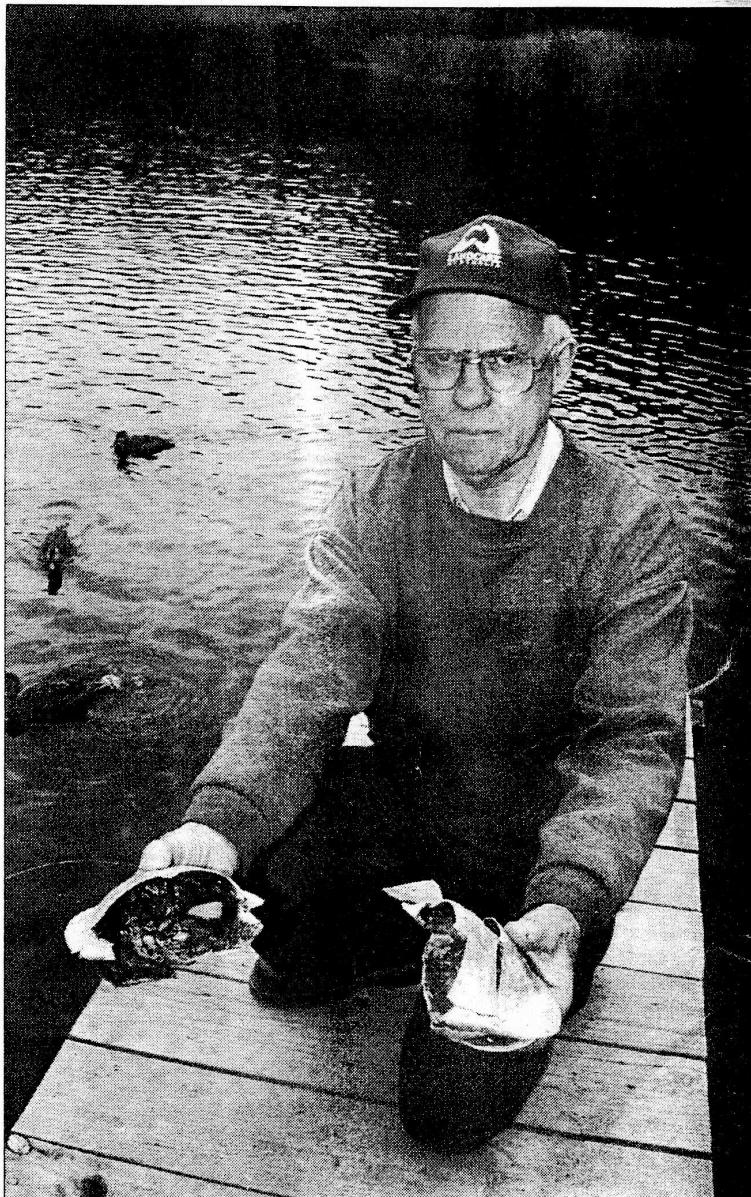
Official conservation status

Friends member Jack Benlow said the park had official conservation status and Hills residents needed to be educated in caring for an important part of the district.

"We need more signage stating that there should be no fishing, more education for users of the park and more vigilant people to protect the lake from vandalism," he said.

"The lake is an extremely valuable resource, with water quality almost pristine.

"Up to now there are no signs to indicate that the park has any special value — thus we frequently see dogs swimming in the lake and now the tragedy brought about by someone trying to catch yabbies."



Friends of Stirling Linear Park chairman David Ragless with the remains of a turtle found hacked to pieces at Woorabinda Lake.

From the *Mount Barker Courier*, 2002

Bushcare working bee report

Our seven Sunday bushcare working bees held since the working bee report in the previous Newsletter have been attended by an average of 13 volunteers.

We have continued to follow up weed regrowth in areas where we have already worked. As our well-experienced working bee members know all too well, this mostly involves following-up weeds infiltrating from the edges of the good bush and removing scattered or isolated weeds growing from seeds left behind by weeds that we have already removed in previous years.

Another recurring source of weeds within areas of good bush is seeds deposited by birds. An example is weeds found underneath Native Cherry (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*) in some of the best bush in Woorabinda. Here, birds rest in the dense foliage and at times eat the Native Cherry

fruit and deposit seeds from surrounding gardens, including Ivy, Violets, Weedy Pittosporum, Bluebell Creeper, Cotoneaster and Boneseed. This will be an important ongoing activity.

Where possible, we have also continued to expand our work into adjoining new areas. An example of this approach is our work over the last few years on removing Watsonia in the area of good bush to the northeast of the car park adjoining the Woorabinda buildings. In this area, we have removed scattered Watsonia regrowth in areas previously worked on and pushed outwards into denser areas of Watsonia that we have not previously worked on. Much of this area is now relatively weed free and a pleasure to be in but will require ongoing monitoring.

We recently welcomed a new member, Julia, and are always keen to welcome others to join us.

Sunday Working Bees 2021 – 9 am to 11 am

| Date | Location | Meeting Place |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| September 19 | Woorabinda | Woorabinda Drive |
| October 17 | Madurta | Madurta Avenue |
| November 21 | Woorabinda | Woorabinda Drive |
| December 19 | Stirling Park | Branch Road |

To receive reminder notices for the Sunday working bees or to find out more about them call Philip Hicks (0437 812 870) or email him at lhicks@chariot.net.au .

Thursday Working Bees 2021 - 9 am to 11 am

Last Thursday each month

| | | |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| September 30 | October 28 | November 25 |
|--------------|------------|-------------|

The locations of the Thursday working bees vary, so call Jane (8339 7245) for the location of the next working bee to join in.

Our bushcare working bees help to restore native bush by removing invasive weeds. Everyone's welcome: people new to bushcare will be helped by FoWBR members to recognise plant species and to carry out minimum disturbance weeding. Working bees finish with some morning tea. It's lots of fun!

Contributors to this issue include Brian Donaghy, David Ragless, Philip Hicks and Merilyn Browne.

Disclaimer: Contributors' views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the editor, the committee or the general membership of the Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves Inc.

Affiliations: The Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves Inc. is a member of Friends of Parks Inc. It is a registered Landcare Group and a member of Greening Australia, Trees for Life and the Central Hills Green Web.



Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves Membership application/renewal

I/we would like to join/renew membership of the Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves Inc. (Strike out words not applicable)

Membership fee for both individuals and family: 1 year, \$10.00, 5 years, \$40.00

\$.....membership fee is enclosed.

\$.....donation is included. (Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax-deductible. A separate receipt will be issued.)

*Payment included / Bank transfer made (*please circle your payment method)

Name.....

Address.....

.....**Phone**.....

Email address for sending Newsletter.....

Please return this form to: Brian Donaghy, Friends of Woorabinda Bushland Reserves Inc., 3 Branch Road, Aldgate 5154

Bank transfer details:

BSB: 105-079

Account: 040748240

Please include your name and "Subs" or "Subs/Don)" for identification of your payment.