

*Snape Reserve
Committee of Management*



Robust Bracket (Fomitiporia robusta)

Annual Report 2021 - 2022



Silky Desert Mouse

Snape Reserve Committee of Management

Annual Report

Weeds

Ian Flux co-ordinates the effort to reduce the weeds on Snape Reserve. His personal effort of 2 days a week is the major contribution to this work, which takes around 43% of the total time spent by the volunteers. His report follows.

Weed numbers on the reserve were high throughout the year and this required as much time and effort in weed control work as in previous years. Unfortunately, through ill health Leon Ryan a valued member of the work team retired, and this has meant more work has been done by other members. A summary of the years weed control work follows.

Last winter and in May this year, using weed wands and knapsack spraying, thousands of Wild Sage were treated with glyphosate around Red Gum Swamp, Callitris Swamp and along Old Racecourse Road. Currently there is very little of this weed to be seen on the Reserve.

Amsinkia unfortunately is still a major weed on the reserve. Black Box Swamp and spots close to the dam are of particular concern. Many days were spent at Black Box Swamp dealing with this weed during winter last year.

Malta thistle numbers were down in many areas, but large numbers were hoed at Black Box Swamp and the western end of Callitris Swamp. It is particularly pleasing only three small patches of Malta thistles were found at Wimmera Woodruff Swamp, once the worst area for this weed on the reserve

Several days were spent spraying Veldt grass just to the west of the front gate, and several days work was spent spraying Veldt grass to create a clear strip at the north end of Willow Wattle hill. Veldt grass is still being sprayed and hoed around Brian's Shed and this area is now looking close to natural Australian bushland.

Overall, Marshmallow numbers on the reserve are down on previous years except for the New Patch and along Lehman's fence line where this weed has been found in large numbers. Control work is ongoing.

Large numbers of poppies were hoed at Red Gum Swamp, some at Black Box Swamp and at Willow Wattle Hill where there were also considerable numbers of whip thistles.

Heliotrope control work required much effort because there are still large numbers emerging following summer rains. Past efforts have reduced this prolific weed somewhat, but it is still a major problem on the Reserve. Many areas of this weed were spot sprayed more than once with herbicide and many days of hoeing were also done. Keeping the rank dead grass mowed in areas where this weed is in high numbers makes control work much easier.

Two large areas were sprayed with herbicide following ripping for revegetation work scheduled for early July. The revegetation is organized by Hindmarsh Landcare.

Bindii numbers were fewer this year than in the past due to control work. The New Patch remains an area of concern.

Table 1. in the Appendix gives a more detailed view of the status of major weed species.

Rabbits

There has been no evidence of rabbits on Snape Reserve over the last 12 months.

Foxes

Fox numbers have remained low over the year.

Bees

- From mid March to mid April *Bacillus thuringiensis* was added to the bird drinker, which killed many feral bees without harming the birds.
- Bee hives have been placed in two locations adjacent to Snape Reserve apparently with no water meaning there is a likelihood more feral bee infestations on the reserve.

Cultural Survey

In February 2022 Darren Griffin from Barengi Gadjin led a group who surveyed Snape Reserve looking at evidence of aboriginal use of Snape Reserve.

Many Black Box trees that had bark removed were identified and will be registered with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

Two camp sites were also looked at and will be registered with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

Darren will write a report on the findings of the group for Trust for Nature and Snape Reserve Committee of Management.



Darren Griffin examines a bark removal watched by Lindsay Smith and Sandra Knight



Lindsay Smith and Darren Griffin

Cultural Burns



The burn planning group on 24 February 2022.

Back: Michael Sherwin (CFA), Ian Morrison (CFA), Dan Idczak (CFA), Peter Harradine (FFMV), Adam Blake (TfN), Lindsay Smith (Snape Reserve CoM) , Laurie Norman (Barengi Gadgin)

Front: Dave Bone (Parks Vic), Damien Skurrie (Parks Vic)

- A number of on-site meetings have been held with CFA, Parks Vic, Forest Fire Management and Barengi Gadgin planning for a control burn to be held when conditions are favourable.
- On 21 April Mary Argall and Sue Smith carried out a flora survey on the two burn areas
- On 5 May Jonathan Starks carried out a bird survey on the two burn areas and has offered to do a follow up in June if there has been no burn by then.
- On 10 May two motion cameras were placed on the northwest corner of each of the burn areas to survey fauna.
- Lists of flora and fauna were provided to Ian Morrison of the CFA.
- The burn is expected this Winter if conditions are conducive. There will be a 10-day advice prior to the burn.

Revegetation



Lindsay Smith and Leon Ryan planting
near Callitris Swamp July 2021



Lindsay Smith and Greg Bourke
planting south of Nine Creeks Track
June 2022

Over July and August 2021 the following plants, grown by Mary Argall, Cliff Unger and Lindsay Smith, were planted in many locations across the reserve:-

- 176 *Acacia brachybotrya* (Grey Mulga)
- 40 *Kunzea pomifera* (Muntries)
- 13 *Acacia euthycarpa* (Wallowa)
- 41 *Dianella revoluta* (Black Flax Lily)
- 38 *Callistemon rugulosus* (Scarlet Bottlebrush)
- 1 *Santalum acuminatum* (Quandong)
- 17 *Olearia pimeloides* (Pimelea Daisy-bush)
- 77 *Allocasuarina luehmanni* (Buloke)
- 18 *Enchylaena tomentosa* (Ruby Saltbush)
- 8 *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle)
- 6 *Senecio quadridentatus* (Cottony Fireweed)
- 1 *Atriplex semibaccata* (Berry Saltbush)

The following were planted on 10 May 2022:

- 45 *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (Red Gums) around Red Gum Swamp
- 5 *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (Red Gums) south of Old Racecourse Swamp

The following were planted on 27 May 2022:

- 56 *Enchylaena tomentosa* (Ruby Saltbush) east of Old Racecourse Swamp
- 1 *Vittadinia muelleri* (New Holland Daisy) southeast of Old Racecourse Swamp
- 6 *Enchylaena tomentosa* (Ruby Saltbush) southeast of Diana's Track between gate and the Information Bay

The following were planted on 2 June 2022:

- 60 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringbark) at the south end of Moffatt's Track
- 49 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringbark) northwest of Red Gum Swamp
- 19 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringbark) between Nine Creeks Track and Bushby's Track
- 33 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringbark) at the south and north of Nine Creeks Track
- 15 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringbark) at the Quarry
- 20 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringbark) at the south of the Quarry (Camp Area)

The following were planted on 9 June 2022

- 61 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) southwest of Red Gum Swamp
- 33 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) north of Moffatt's Track
- 50 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) northeast of Callitris Swamp
- 30 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) in area of third sowing of 2013
- 50 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) west of the area of third sowing of 2013
- 15 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) on 2021 Site 16
- 50 *Eucalyptus arenacea* (Desert Stringybark) south and southwest of Callitris

The following were planted on 16 June 2022

- 20 *Acacia euthycarpa* (Wallowa) south of Old Racecourse Swamp

The following were planted on 22 June 2022

- 5 *Ajuga australis* (Austral Bugle) at Diana's Patch
- 3 *Acacia euthycarpa* (Wallowa) at Diana's Patch

The following were planted on 23 June 2022

- 3 *Allocasuarina luehmannii* (Buloke) at old windmill site

Veldt Grass on Willow Wattle Hill became a fire hazard. The *Acacia salicina* (Willow Wattle), that were planted in June 2020, were guarded and the fence removed to allow grazing of the Veldt Grass by kangaroos.

The ground for the Hindmarsh Landcare planting was ripped and sprayed for weeds ready for the July planting.



Lindsay Smith ripping in preparation for the July 2022 Hindmarsh Landcare planting

Fencing

- The fence removed from Willow Wattle Hill was re-erected on Site 1 of the Hindmarsh Landcare planting, planned for 2 July 2022, to stop kangaroos and emus from pulling up or grazing on the seedlings.
- Work has commenced on retying the ringlock on the front fence.
- The common fence with Lehmann's is being replaced. Trust for Nature has paid a share of the materials and the Lehmann family are erecting the fence. Work has commenced on this project.



Greg Bourke and Ian Flux driving in posts for Kangaroo proof fence

Flora Surveys

- In August 2021 surveys were carried out on Quadrats 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21 and 22 by Maree and Graham Goods, Wendy and Alan Bedggood, Mary Argall and Sue and Lindsay Smith.
- All 22 quadrats have now been surveyed twice.
- It is planned to survey 5 sites every year.
- There were some species recorded in the quadrats that were not recorded previously but no new species to the property were found. Some of this variation could be due to surveys being carried out at different times of the year. The original surveys were carried out in November.

New Plants



Mary Argall identified Rush-leaf Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra juncifolia*) on Eagle Track.

There are many areas on the reserve which are not visited often. An effort to walk some of these areas would likely result in more plants not yet recorded on Snape Reserve.

Fungi Workshop 2022



Workshop attendees at Snape Reserve on 23 June 2022. Leader Alison Pouliot 6th from right wearing a hat.

On 22 and 23 June 2022 Fungi Workshops, led by Alison Pouliot, were organised by Hindmarsh Landcare Network. The morning was spent discussing fungi based on a huge collection that Alison had brought with her. The group learned about the features of fungi and the habitat they grow in, necessary information in identifying fungi.

The afternoon was spent at Snape Reserve and the year being so wet to date there were large numbers of fungi found and examined.

The fungi of the Little Desert are not well known and many Australian fungi have not been named. On the 23rd June the group was joined by Tom May, a mycologist and curator of the National Herbarium of Victoria. He made a collection of fungi none of which he was able to identify. Perhaps a new species may be named in the future as a result of this collection.

Due to the lack of knowledge of the fungi of the Little Desert often it is only possible to describe the genus at this point in time.

New Fungi

- Fungi seen are reported to iNaturalist for identification often a group or genus is known but not the species.
- A new species identified was Robust Bracket (*Fomitiporia robusta*). A photo of this fungi is on the front page of this report.



Calocera sp.



Mycena clarkeana

- Other new fungi found on Snape Reserve in 2022 are: *Amanita xanthocephala*, *Calocera sp.*, *Cortarius sp.*, *Heterotextus peziziformis*, *Hygrophorus sp.*, *Lactarius eucalypti*, *Laccaria sp.*, *Limacella piterika*, *Panus fasciatus*, *Pisolithus sp.*, *Tricoloma sp.*

Tidy Towns Australia 2021

Snape Reserve was a finalist in the “Environment Awards” section of the Victorian Tidy Towns competition that was won by Pun Pun Waterholes at Hastings.

Visitors

- Shannon Argall and three students from Murtoa Secondary College visited the reserve on 21 September 2021. Lindsay Smith took them on a tour and Peter Harradine (Forest Fire Management Vic.) and Damien Skurrie (Parks Vic.) spoke with the students. Shannon provided a summary of points the students will focus on in their exams.
- BirdLife members were in Dimboola from 3-9 October as a group of friends. They paid \$20 / head to visit Snape Reserve over the week. Lindsay Smith took the group on a tour of the reserve on 7 October 2021. The group donated \$160 that day.

Walking Access

In the early part of the financial year there were no walking visitors due to Covid-19 restrictions. Visitors have come from Antwerp, Ballarat, Bellbrae, Bendigo, Brighton, Creswick, Crossley, Croydon, Danhsville, Dimboola, Dunkeld, Gisborne, Grovedale, Hamilton, Horsham, Junortoun, Kerang, Kew, Koriot, Lima East, Melbourne, Mt. Franklin, Napoleons, Ocean Grove, Point Lonsdale, Quorn, Raglan, Red Hill, Romsey, Shepparton, Tasmania, Toolangi, Torquay,

Warracknabeal, Warrnambool, Wheelers Hill, Wilonga and Woking U.K. Donations from these visitors total \$402.50

Leon Ryan



Leon Ryan clearing old fence posts

- Leon Ryan was forced to retire as a volunteer at Snape Reserve due to health concerns. He started volunteering at Snape Reserve in August 2009 and had to stop in November 2021 owing to loss of ability to walk any great distance.
- Leon was part of the “Thursday Work Crew” for over 11 years and 3 months. In this time he would have completed over 3,000 hours of volunteer work. His skills on the tractor, in carrying out fencing and weed control were excellent. He was brought up on a farm and spent the last 35 years of his work life on a sheep stud at Marnoo. Leon will leave a big hole in the work crew at the reserve.
- Leon also contributed to the equipment at Snape Reserve by donating the following:
 - A drag chain valued at \$150 used to move fallen branches from the 22 km of tracks at the reserve
 - A safety light valued at \$100 that we attach to the roll bar on the tractor when it is taken for a service
 - A full set of sockets and bars valued at \$150

Voluntary Hours

The hours worked up to and including 2013 were valued at \$20 / Hour. The hours since 2013 have been valued at \$25 / hour.

Year	Hours worked	Value
2003	2938	\$ 58,760
2004	1526	\$ 30,520
2005	2172	\$ 43,436
2006	2644	\$ 52,879
2007	2753	\$ 55,062
2008	3691	\$ 73,825
2009	2351	\$ 47,018
2010	2655	\$ 53,102
2011	2686	\$ 53,727
2012	2995	\$ 59,895
2013	4132	\$ 82,642
2014	2044	\$ 51,111
2015	4336	\$ 108,406
2016	2518	\$ 62,948
Jan – Jun 2017	1070	\$ 26,754
2017-18	3196	\$ 79,906
2018-19	2179	\$ 54,464
2019-20	2228	\$ 55,700
2020-21	2279	\$ 56,973
2021-2022	2346	\$ 58,651
Total	52739	\$1,165,779

Chairman's Thanks

Thanks to all the committee members who have contributed to the running of Snape Reserve.

We have lost our active volunteer, Leon Ryan. Our effort in 2022 – 2023 needs to be the recruitment of new volunteers.



Lindsay Smith
Chairman

APPENDIX 1. Control status of some problem weeds on Snape Reserve in 2021/22

Weed	Status	Comments
Amsinkia	Progress has been made but is still widespread on the property in cleared areas and often found under trees where it has been spread by birds.	Black Box Swamp is still an area of concern as are patches near the dam. This is an exceedingly difficult weed to control and will never be eradicated.
Bindii	Less found but the .75 ha acquired in 2019 is still bad spot for this weed.	About 30 plants were found in a patch near the rain gauge.
Bridal creeper	Occasional plants still being found & removed or sprayed.	Not a major problem weed but more plants than usual were removed this year.
Evening primrose	Found in grassed areas on the northeast of the Reserve.	Only a few plants are being found and removed.
Grasses eg. Veldt grass.	Veldt grass and other introduced grass species are widespread major weeds. Difficult to control because of the scale of the problem.	Considerable control work done this year near the front gate, at Willow Wattle Hill and around Brian's Shed. Some sprayed in the planned July 2 revegetation areas.
Heliotrope	Still a bad weed problem. Worst areas include the hill to the south of Old Racecourse Swamp, Callitris Swamp, hill to the south of Wimmera Woodruff Swamp, and patches around this swamp.	Many days of hard work were spent clearing this weed.
Horehound	Was very widespread.	Some germination following good rains in May.
Marshmallow	Widespread weed in grasslands with a few bad patches.	Large numbers at the New Patch and along Lehman's fence line.
Melons wild and paddy	Once widespread & common in grasslands.	Few plants found this year.
Paterson's Curse	Fewer plants are being found.	Needs constant vigilance as it can spread quickly.
Saffron thistle	Scattered patches.	Fewer plants being found.
Winged Slender thistles	Found mainly under Yellow gums in the west of the property.	Needs annual checks for presence.
Skeleton weed	Widespread. Can be controlled at rosette stage.	No major control work yet. Grazing by kangaroos is keeping this weed from setting seed.
Stemless thistle	Was widespread in grasslands particularly in the western half of Snape.	This thistle has been reduced in numbers to an occasional find but could quickly become problematical if vigilance is not maintained.
Malta thistle	Gradually reducing numbers.	Bad areas are the western end of Callitris Swamp and Black Box Swamp.
Wild garlic	Widespread in planting areas 1 & 2. Very difficult to treat without killing non-target species. Will take a massive effort to control this weed.	Little control work has been done on this weed but for some reason its numbers are fewer.
Wild sage	Gradually getting under control.	Numbers are reducing but will take many years of work to gain effective control.