

*Snape Reserve
Committee of Management*



Nardoo Swamp, September 2022

Annual Report 2022 - 2023



Silky Desert Mouse

Snape Reserve Committee of Management

Annual Report

Weeds

Ian Flux continues his outstanding effort to manage weeds on the reserve with the help of other volunteers. Weed control makes up around 40% of volunteer time on the reserve.

Ian made and donated a spray bar for the Kiote. This makes spraying preparation for revegetation easier.

Ian's report follows:

Extreme wet weather from September to October 2022 resulted in a very good soil moisture profile and a subsequent explosion of weed numbers on the Reserve. A great deal of effort was then required to keep weed numbers in check over the full year. Me, Sue, and Lindsay Smith weeded several times a week and Greg Bourke and Terry Lynch contributed most weeks. A new member to the Thursday working crew, Joanne Hayes, contributed on several days. Weed work carried out during the year was as follows.

- Much of spring and summer was spent controlling the widespread infestation of Malta thistles whose numbers were most prolific since the purchase of the property in 2003. However, it is pleasing Wimmera Woodruff Swamp, once a very bad area for the weed, was much improved due to many years of control work. A very large weed pile several metres in diameter and a metre high consisting mainly of Malta thistles was burnt in late April.
- There were larger numbers of Saffron thistles than usual. Bad infestation areas were east of Callitris Swamp and the west side of Benjamin's track on the hillside above Wimmera Woodruff Swamp.
- Winged slender thistle were in larger than usual numbers and removed by hoeing.
- Stemless thistle numbers were fewer than usual due to past control work.
- Amsinkia numbers were very high. Much time was spent controlling this weed at Black Box Swamp. Plants in this area were spot sprayed several times and much hoeing took place. In many other areas where Amsinkia has been in the past hoeing the weed took place.
- Considerable numbers of Bridal creeper have been removed or spot sprayed.
- Large numbers of poppies were sprayed and hoed at Callitris Swamp and hoed on Willow Wattle Hill.
- Many Wild Sage weeds have been painted with Glyphosate with their numbers gradually decreasing.
- Some Horehound and Evening Primrose have been hoed but their numbers are greatly reduced.
- Not in large numbers, but more Gazanias were found and removed than in the past over a widespread area.

- A large area of Hexham Scent was sprayed at Old Racecourse Swamp, and some was mowed hopefully before seed set. The plants were numerous and of very large size and hopefully the weed work done will greatly reduce its potential spread.
- Four South African weed orchids were found on the Reserve by Adam Blake. No further weeds have been found since that discovery.
- Marshmallow weed was regularly hoed at the new patch in early summer, but numbers were far fewer as summer progressed. Many Marshmallow were discovered late on the hillside at the south of Old Racecourse Swamp and had unfortunately seeded. It is pleasing little Marshmallow was found around the eastern edge of Old Racecourse Swamp.
- There were some bad patches of African pepper cress, and these were hoed, and the plants were put on the weed pile for burning.
- Stinkwort were in larger numbers than usual. Unfortunately, many plants were found after seeding.
- Black nightshade numbers were much greater this year and these were sprayed with herbicide or hoed.
- Patterson's curse and Wild Sage were treated on Old Racecourse Road.
- Much time and effort were spent in controlling Heliotrope over the summer. 1,120 litres of herbicide spray mix were used in spot spraying this weed. Improvements from previous years shown by smaller numbers of this weed are evident in some areas such as Callitris Swamp and the hill to the south of Wimmera Woodruff Swamp, but many areas were still badly infested.
- Spot spraying was carried out at 475 sites in preparation for the planting of Black Box trees at Wimmera Woodruff Swamp. At no cost to the Trust a spray bar was manufactured by me to fit on the front of the Kioti utility vehicle to enable this to happen. The spraying took a full day.
- Rip lines for the June/July planting just north-east of Brian's Shed and at Callitris Swamp were sprayed with herbicide. Left over spray from this job was used on Veldt grass around Brian's Shed.



South African Weed Orchid

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

Rabbits

Two young rabbits were seen in the west of the reserve. One warren was blocked, and no rabbits or warrens have been seen since.

Foxes

Fox numbers still appear to be low. Foxes use the reserve as a protected area, and they move onto the farmland to hunt.

Bees

Bacillus thuringiensis was added to the bird drinker in 2022, killing many feral bees without harming the birds. Over the Summer of 2022 – 2023 there were no bees around the drinker.

Extra Storage Shed

- A low-level storage shed was erected in August 2022.
- Timber was purchased but cladding was second hand fencing donated by Ian Flux.
- The iron was painted to blend in with the surroundings.



Above: Ian Barry and Terry Lynch erecting frame for the shed

Beside: Finished shed

Cultural Survey

A report of the survey of aboriginal use of the Snape Reserve area, carried out in 2022 by Barengi Gadjin, has been received.

The Black Box and Red Gum trees that had bark removed, along with two camp sites, are still to be registered with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

Aboriginal Artefacts

Archaeologist Abby Cooper catalogued the artefacts held by the Snape Reserve Committee of Management and provided a report. She has registered the items with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. The registration number is VAHR 7225-0356.

Cultural Burns

- The burn planned for Winter 2022 did not go ahead due to the wet conditions.
- A burn planned for May 2023 also did not happen. It is hoped this will go ahead before the end of winter.

Flora Survey

- On 20 October 2022 Quadrats 1, 9, 11, 15, 17 and 18 were surveyed by Maree and Graham Goods, Wendy and Alan Bedggood, Mary Argall and Sue Smith.
- On Quadrat 18 a tree previously identified as *Eucalyptus leptophylla* (Slender-leaf Mallee) was found to be wrongly identified. It still has not been correctly identified.

Fencing

- The enclosure southeast of Old Racecourse Swamp was removed on 7 July 2022. The materials were used on Willow Wattle Hill to enclose some of the Willow Wattles (*Acacia salicina*).
- The last enclosure on Black Box Swamp was removed and the materials used as part of the 2023 revegetation enclosures.
- The enclosure on the old Willow Wattles (*Acacia salicina*) was reduced in size and the materials used as part of the 2023 revegetation enclosures.
- Areas between the rain gauge and Old Racecourse Swamp and another on Bushby's Track were fenced ready for revegetation in June. Fencing materials were purchased with a grant from Aurizon. 2.4 m posts were purchased and enough 900mm ring lock wire to enclose the area. A second row of second-hand ring lock was added above this to give enough height to keep out kangaroos and emus. The second-hand ring lock was donated by the McRae family.



Above: Adam Blake and Terry Lynch installing 2.4m posts to protect the planting area near the rain gauge.



Left: Greg Bourke, Ian Flux and Lindsay Smith attaching wire to the fence on Bushby's Track.

Revegetation

Hindmarsh Landcare Network planted the following species on Snape Reserve on 2 July 2022.

Species	Scientific Name	Site 1	Site 2	Total
Yellow Gum	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i>	20	20	40
Gold-dust Wattle	<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	40	80	120
Grey Mulga	<i>Acacia brachybotrya</i>	40	80	120
Wallowa	<i>Acacia euthycarpa</i>	80	120	200
Hairy-pod Wattle	<i>Acacia gladulacarpa</i>	20	20	40
Mallee Wattle	<i>Acacia montana</i>	80	120	200
Golden Wattle	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	40	80	120
Broom Baekea	<i>Hysterobaekea behrii</i>	20	20	40
Sweet Bursaria	<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	40	40	80
Tall Hopbush	<i>Dodonea viscosa</i> var. <i>viscosa</i>	40	80	120
Desert Hakea	<i>Hakea muelleriana</i>	40	40	80
Weeping Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i>	40	40	80
Black-anther Flax-Lily	<i>Dianella brevifolia</i>	25	25	50
Knobby Clubbrush	<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>		40	40
Supple Speargrass	<i>Austrostipa mollis</i>	80	80	160
TOTAL		605	885	1,490

Site 1 on Bushby's Track had been fenced to keep emus and kangaroos away from the plants. Site 2 on Ba Ring Track was not thought to have as many emus and kangaroos. However, damage to the plants and guards happened very quickly and this area was also fenced within a fortnight of the planting.



Age no barrier: two of the planters on 2 July 2023

On 8 June 2023 committee members planted and guarded 25 *Eucalyptus largiflorens* (Black Box) at the south end of Wimmera Woodruff Swamp. A further 25 *Eucalyptus largiflorens* (Black Box) were planted in the Rain Gauge fenced area. Plants were purchased with a grant from Aurizon.

On 15 June 2023 the rain gauge fenced area was planted by committee members. Plants were purchased with the grant from Aurizon.

On 17 June 2023 a planting day was held. Three committee members and six volunteers planted the Wimmera Woodruff Swamp with 450 *Eucalyptus largiflorens* (Black Box) purchased with a grant from Aurizon. On the same day plants grown by Lindsay Smith were planted in the fenced area south of Bushby's Track.

A full list of plants by area is found in Appendix 2.



Planting in the rain gauge fenced area on 15 June 2023.

Above: Greg Bourke and Ian Flux.

Right: Terry Lynch



Left: Hieu Huynh planting on Wimmera Woodruff Swamp on 17 June 2023. Hieu travelled from Melbourne to be involved in the planting.

New Plants

- The following were identified in the Flora Survey: *Atrhopodium strictum* (Chocolate Lily), *Convolvulus angustissimus* (Australian Bindweed), *Crassula colorata* (Dense Crassula), *Hibbertia crinata* (Hairy Guinea-flower) and *Wurmbea latifolia subsp. vanessa* (Broadleaf Early Nancy) and have been added to the plant list. Also added were the following weeds *Catapodium rigidus* (Fern Grass), *Schismus barbatus* (Arabian Grass) and *Rostraria cristata* (Annual Cat's-tail).
- Ian Flux found *Centipeda crateriformis subsp. compactus* (Compact Sneezeweed) near Wimmera Woodruff Swamp. This is a nationally endangered species.
- Mary Argall identified two *Eucalyptus wimmerensis* (Wimmera Mallee-box), a rare plant, near Ba Ring Track. There has only been one of this species identified on the reserve previously.

New Birds

- The BirdLife Camping group identified 3 new birds on their visit in July 2022. They were the Variegated Fairy-wren, the Brown Songlark and the Olive-backed Oriole.
- The number of birds recorded on Snape Reserve since 2003 is now 179.

Website

- The website address was changed to snapereserve.au.
- It was updated to allow viewing on different screen sizes.

Brochure

The brochure has been re-designed. Funds will be needed to have it printed.

Signs

- Greg Bourke has had a sign made "Enjoy your visit to Kreitch Balug Country. The sign is in the Information Bay.



- All Track Signs on Snape Reserve are to be replaced. Lou Catania of Dimboola is making signs. Materials are being purchased with a grant from Horsham Sports and Community Club. Lou is donating his time and 30 galvanized star posts for the signs. This project will be completed over the next financial year.

- The following new track names are being added to the reserve track names: Gauwirr Track (Emu Track), Yellow Gum Track, Gurrkali Track (Rosella Track) and Gurra Track (Grey Kangaroo Track) and Melaleuca Track
- The Snape Reserve Map has been upgraded to show the new track names.

Open Day

- An Open Day that was due to be held on 23 October 2022 was not held due to the weather and the condition of Old Racecourse Road.
- A planning meeting to discuss how to attract new volunteers to work on the reserve was held on 30 April 2023.
- Subsequently an Open Day was held on 21 May 2023. The day was organised and publicised in Dimboola by Mary Argall and Sharyn Cook. Sharyn's daughter Pru Cook made signs that were put up in local shops and the event was listed on the "Dimboola Out and About" Facebook Page.
- Six committee members and 14 visitors attended the Open Day. Some people went on walks and others were taken on conducted tours by motor vehicle.
- A number of people were identified as possible future volunteers.



Left: Sharyn Cook, Mary Argall, Alicia Merriam and David Brunton.



Right: Orina Bennewitz, Lindsay Smith, Ian Flux and Mary Argall

Walking Access

The wet weather last year and the resulting damage to Old Racecourse Road kept visitor numbers lower than previously.

Visitors have come from Adelaide, Allendale, Ballarat, Benalla, Blackwood (SA), Canberra, Cheltenham, Clifton Springs, Croydon, Dimboola, Durham (UK), Echuca, Euroa, Fairhaven, Geelong, Germany, Hampton, Hamilton, Heathmont, Heidelberg, Hobart, Kolora, Landsborough, Marion, Melbourne, Mildura, Mirboo North, Moonambel, Nagambie, Ocean Grove, Sydney, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Townsville, West Australia and Wollongong.

Donations from walking access visitors in 2022 – 2023 totalled \$647.90

Visitors

- Horsham BirdLife Group visited on 3 July 2022.
- Horsham Trinity College visited on 27 July 2022.
- The BirdLife Camping Group visited on 4 October 2022.
- Templestowe College visited on 31 May 2023.

Right: Adam Blake addressing the Templestowe College students



Monitoring Cameras



Cobba Harrison and Lindsay Smith at the camera site in the northeast



Camera site at the dam

- On 6 June 2023 two thermal cameras owned by Wimmera Catchment Management Authority were installed on the reserve. They are powered by solar panels and the images can be viewed in real time on phones using satellites.
- Students in local schools will have access to the monitoring cameras using mobile phones.

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	2,938	\$ 58,760
2004	1,526	\$ 30,520
2005	2,172	\$ 43,436
2006	2,644	\$ 52,879
2007	2,753	\$ 55,062
2008	3,691	\$ 73,825
2009	2,351	\$ 47,018
2010	2,655	\$ 53,102
2011	2,686	\$ 53,727
2012	2,995	\$ 59,895
2013	4,132	\$ 82,642
2014	2,044	\$ 51,111
2015	4,336	\$ 108,406
2016	2,518	\$ 62,948
Jan – Jun 2017	1,070	\$ 26,754
2017-18	3,196	\$ 79,906
2018-19	2,179	\$ 54,464
2019-20	2,228	\$ 55,700
2020-21	2,279	\$ 56,973
2021-22	2,346	\$ 58,651
2022-23	3,315	\$ 82,885
Total	56,074	\$1,249,141

New Committee Members

The following committee members have been welcomed over the last twelve months: Sharyn Cook, Coral Schmidt and Darrell James.

Chairman's Thanks

Thanks to all the committee members who have contributed to the running of Snape Reserve.
Special thanks to the Thursday work crew.



Lindsay Smith
Chairman

APPENDIX 1. Control status of some problem weeds on Snape Reserve in 2022/23

Weed	Status	Comments
Amsinkia	Some 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 needed spot spraying on two occasions with a very large infestation present. Patches near the dam also were bad. This is an exceedingly difficult weed to control and will never be eradicated.
Bindii	None found this year.	A wonderful achievement. The result of years of control work.
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	Present in grassed areas at Callitris Swamp.	Once in thousands now 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.	Some sprayed around Brian's Shed. Some sprayed in this year's planned revegetation areas.
Heliotrope	Still a bad weed problem.	Many weeks of hard work were spent clearing this weed. Worst areas include the hill to the south of Old Racecourse Swamp, along Tippet's fence line and patches in Wimmera Woodruff Swamp area.
Horehound	Was very widespread.	Some germination following good rains in spring.
Marshmallow	Widespread weed in grasslands with a few bad patches.	Large numbers at the New Patch and the hill to the south of Old Racecourse Swamp.
Melons wild and paddy	Once widespread & common in grasslands.	A few plants found this year.
Paterson's Curse	Fewer plants are being found on the property.	Needs constant vigilance as it can spread quickly. The eastern end of Old Racecourse Road had many plants and needs further work to stop its spread.
Saffron thistle	Scattered patches.	More plants found this year. Callitris Swamp and the hill south of Wimmera Woodruff Swamp were bad areas for this weed.
Winged Slender thistles	Found mainly under Yellow gums in the west of the property.	Many more found this year and a lot had set seed.
Skeleton weed	Widespread. Can be controlled at rosette stage.	No major control work yet. Grazing by kangaroos is keeping this weed from setting seed. Could become a problem in Kangaroo enclosure areas.
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.
Stinkwort	More plants found this year.	Wimmera Woodruff Swamp and a site just north of Brian's Shed are sites of concern. Many plants had seeded this year before being found.
Malta thistle	Worst numbers since weed work started.	Bad areas are the eastern and western end of Callitris Swamp and Black Box Swamp, and windrows in yellow gum areas and south of the dam.
Wild garlic	Was widespread in the east of the property.	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.

APPENDIX 2. Plants by area planted in June 2023.

Rain Guage Fenced Area		
<i>Acacia montana</i>	Mallee Wattle	102
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	20
<i>Allocasuarina leuhmanii</i>	Buloke	50
<i>Allocasuarina muellerana</i>	Slaty She-oak	80
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Bursaria	16
<i>Brachyscome ciliaris</i>	Variable Daisy	8
<i>Eucalyptus largiflorens</i>	Black Box	25
<i>Eucalyptus Leucoxylon</i>	Yellow Gum	14
<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i>	Weeping Pittosporum	8
<i>Sennicio quadridentatus</i>	Cotton Fireweed	20
		343

Bushby's Track Fenced area		
<i>Acacia montana</i>	Mallee Wattle	148
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	20
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Bursaria	12
<i>Brachyscome ciliaris</i>	Variable Daisy	8
<i>Eucalyptus arenacea</i>	Stringybark	16
<i>Eucalyptus Leucoxylon</i>	Yellow Gum	
<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i>	Weeping Pittosporum	8
<i>Sennicio quadridentatus</i>	Cotton Fireweed	20
		232

Wimmera Woodruff Swamp Area (Plants guarded individually)		
<i>Eucalyptus largiflorens</i>	Black Box	475

South of Old Racecourse Swamp (Plants guarded individually)		
<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i>	Weeping Pittosporum	8

New Land East of Old Racecourse Swamp (Plants guarded individually)		
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Bursaria	12
<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i>	Weeping Pittosporum	8