



Friends of the Pinnacle AGM June 2026

Convenor's Report

This year, like most years, has been a busy one for fotpin. We've clocked up well over 760 hours of weed control, thanks to the efforts of our weeding teams led by Bob (and Gilbert) and Len, along with our solo weed sprayers. We also took part in a range of events where we set up display stalls aimed at raising awareness of The Pinnacle and the work we do. These events included school fetes, local markets and fairs, and the annual Joint ParkCare display at the Jamison Centre.

Our membership continues to grow, as does our list of contacts, and we see a steady rise in the number of visitors to our website and our pages on facebook and Instagram. We are also now seeing figures on the number of reserve visitors who scan the QR codes on our interpretive signs. The Kama Link sign near the 5-ways junction is particularly popular, consistently topping the list of scanned signs.

The reserve is looking particularly nice at the moment, thanks to some good rain in the last few months. After a very dry spring and a hot dry summer that suppressed a lot of the early exotic weeds and grasses, many of the native grasses have flourished in the better conditions. The predictions for the coming spring and summer sound pretty dire, with a strong El Niño on the way apparently. But we had bumper rain in March and again in May, and this month is tracking pretty well so far, so hopefully we'll have enough moisture in the ground to get us through the worst of what is to come.

William Hovell Drive Duplication Offset

As you may already know, the planned duplication of William Hovell Drive has resulted in the leased land west of the reserve and north of Kama Link paddock, which we broadly refer to as North Kama, being declared an environmental offset. The offset is needed to compensate for the loss of some stretches of box-gum woodland and some ecologically significant trees along the wider corridor for the duplicated road. One immediate impact of the new offset is that Luke and Cathy, who used to be the tenants in the homestead in North Kama, were forced to vacate the property and have now settled in a new home in Spence (I think). The management plan is unclear as to what will happen to the homestead, stating that it may be demolished "if required". In the meantime, there is some remediation work planned for a contaminated site on the property.

While the declaration of this offset does not have any immediate impact on us, this area will eventually become part of The Pinnacle NR. With this in mind, we have arranged to meet with the PCS officer tasked with coordinating with the Offsets team for this offset. We have already spent some time looking over this area (referred to in the documentation as Block 1616) and have started thinking about what we would like to see happen there. The priorities for the Offsets team will be maintaining and restoring existing areas of box-gum woodland and preserving habitat for endangered or threatened species such as the Swift Parrot and Superb Parrot. But we'd like to see some effort made to improve some of the other bits of relatively high-quality woodland and grassland in the proposed offset, so we'll be pushing to have those areas also be a focus for some of the restoration activities. For more information, you can find the William Hovell Drive duplication [here](#), and the management plan for the new offset is [here](#).

Kangaroo Cull

We recently learned that The Pinnacle will be one of the 15 reserves selected for this year's annual cull under the PCS Kangaroo Management Plan. This means that the reserve will be closed to the public from 6 pm to 6 am, Sunday to Thursday, starting on Tuesday June 9th and ending on Friday July 31st. So, during that period, the reserve will remain open during the day and will not be closed at all over the weekends from Friday morning to Sunday evening. Signs warning of the reserve closures have gone up around the reserve, and these have already attracted the attention of the cull protestors, who have been putting stickers over the relevant dates and times for the closures. In the interests of public safety, we have been removing the stickers whenever we come across them. They have also put up signs declaring that "500 kangaroos and hundreds of joeys will be killed at this reserve". While we don't have a target number for the cull at The Pinnacle (the total target number for all 15 reserves is 3,633), it is very unlikely to be that high, and we know from conversations with rangers that they do not

deliberately target joeys or females with young in the pouch, so these signs are largely untrue and clearly designed just to alarm people.

As volunteers who spend a lot of time on the reserve, we see the damage that kangaroo overpopulation does to the vegetation on the reserve and the way that overgrazing threatens all the other fauna that call the reserve home. So, as much as we may regret the manner in which kangaroo numbers are controlled, we very much understand and support the need to keep the local macropod population at sustainable levels.

Weeding and Biodiversity

As I mentioned in my introduction, we have had reasonably good rainfall over the last few months and the reserve really is looking lovely. The conditions this year have meant that some weeds have had a bumper season, including Patersons Curse and hoary mustard, while others have been less abundant than in previous years, such as St Johns Wort and verbascum. Even so, well over a third of our weeding effort was devoted to controlling St Johns Wort, which continues to be a stubborn thorn in our sides. I want to thank all our dedicated weeders for their extraordinary efforts, and also acknowledge the assistance of the PCS rangers and contractors for the time they have spent controlling weeds, and African Lovegrass in particular, around the edges of the reserve. We have also been encountering increasing numbers of new invasive weeds, such as Cobbler's Peg (*Bidens pilosa*), which is a major problem for our colleagues next door at Mt Painter, and Dwarf Mexican Marigold (*Schkuhria pinnata*), one of the many weeds introduced to the reserve by the revegetation contractors for the Molonglo pipeline a few years ago. Particular thanks to Warren and John Fitz Gerald for monitoring these new pests and keeping tabs on their spread.

The total number of native flora and fauna species observed in the reserve has now risen to 1,110, up from 1,062 this time last year, and the number of native plant species is now 286 (an increase of 10 since last year).

Guided Walks Programs

We ran a total of 5 guided walks over the past year, including 3 bird walks, John Fitz Gerald's walk in the Forest to study its post-fire recovery, and a joint walk with the ACT Conservation Council as part of their "Branching Out" program. Planned walks for the coming spring include more bird walks, including a joint walk with Canberra Birds (formerly the Canberra Ornithologists Group), a wildflower walk and at least one more walk yet to be decided.

Last year we announced a Families' walk, but had to cancel the event due to a lack of interest. This year, we would like to revisit the idea of a walk aimed at families and children, and would love to hear suggestions from anyone who might be interested in such a walk.

Dam Renovation

Earlier this year, we began a discussion with the PCS rangers about finding ways to improve the condition of our dam. While the quality of the vegetation around the dam is actually quite good, there are other issues that we can address. In particular, there is long-standing sheet erosion happening on the western edge of the dam due to the steepness of the bank and the fact that this is an area commonly used by visitors to the dam. The rangers have already deposited some mid-sized logs and branches onto this slope and are, I believe, planning to position some more substantial logs along this slope once they have found a way to access the area with heavy machinery. Once the woody debris is in place, we will organise one or more planting events to get some ground cover vegetation and shrubs established in amongst the logs and branches. We will also use some of the woody debris to block off the footpath from the Valley Track to the western edge of the dam and encourage dam users to access the dam from the dam wall along the southern edge instead.

The outflow from the dam is also in need of attention to prevent the formation of an erosion gully at the southeast corner, but we are still in discussions over how best to address this issue.

Revegetation – Icon Water Tank Compound and Weetangera Paddock

The trees and shrubs we planted (and in some cases replanted) in the Icon water tanks compound have done well, despite the dry spring and some hot, dry spells during summer. The few plants that we lost have been replaced by the ever-reliable Mitchell Kelly and Cybele McNeil, and the remaining plants are now flourishing, particularly the eucalypts. We are optimistic that, in time, the trees and shrubs will break up the very inhospitable ground in the compound and pave the way for future plantings of native groundcover species. Regular spraying to keep the St Johns Wort and other weeds under control will help to make that easier.

We are still keeping an eye on the fenced plots further down the pipeline corridor, waiting for the right conditions to sow native grasses and forbs. If the current good rain continues through to spring, then we may well be in a position to proceed. Until then, John Fitz Gerald has been diligently jumping on the worst of the weeds that inevitably pop up.

Len Taylor's revegetation work in Weetangera paddock continues, with mixed success. Wattle plantings last spring suffered somewhat during the hot weather but the majority survived. Len and his team are to be congratulated for their persistence with their revegetation efforts. Over the years, they have tried both direct sowing and tubestock planting, including some tubestock raised from seed by Len at home. One of his notable successes has been Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans*), a native everlasting daisy with yellow and white flowers that is classified as endangered both locally and nationally. In some areas where it was planted 5 years ago, the numbers have now tripled, showing that it is well established and obviously thriving. A terrific outcome and all down to the untiring efforts of Len and his team.

Western Edge

One issue that has arisen recently that indirectly impacts on the reserve is the growing threat to the critically endangered ecosystems that make up the western edge of Canberra. This area runs up from Tharwa in the south up to the new suburb of Strathnairn out near the junction of the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee rivers. This is an area that includes large stretches of woodland and grassland that are home to many of the birds and other fauna that also call The Pinnacle home. The ongoing destruction of habitat around Canberra's fringes has seen many bird species that were once common either decline markedly or disappear completely. It is disappointing to think that more valuable habitat may now be threatened. You can find out more about the campaign to save the Western Edge by visiting the Conservation Council web page for this campaign [here](#).

Membership

Fotpin membership now stands at 113, and the total number of people on our email lists is now 377 (up from 363 last year).

Acknowledgements

Thanks this year to Hawker Primary School for allowing us to use their staff room for the meeting. Our usual venue at Weetangera Primary was unavailable this year due to construction work at the school, and we are delighted that the staff at Hawker Primary were willing to make their staff room available. And thanks also to everyone who brought along the delicious snacks for afternoon tea.

Cheers,

John Brannan