



Friends
of Black Hill
& Morialta

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Montacute Valley Project Site

This project was run in conjunction with the Australian Retired Persons Association up to 2014. The group works in a number of locations in Black Hill Conservation Park along Montacute road from the Orchard track to where the Yurrebilla trail passes through the park.

2019 Project Report

This year at the Quarry Track site, the team focused on Rhamnus, scabious, fennel and African orchid.

Access is difficult due to the steeply sloping valley walls.

The Orchard Track site continues to support a beautiful stand of native raspberry.

This year the team worked on nightshade, olive and broom and Dessert Ash.

Aunt Eliza (a garden escapee weed) grows on the steep slopes of the valley. It is hoped funds for contractors to work on the Aunt Eliza in 2020 will be available through watercourse funding via our District Officer.



Desert Ash treated in 2019.

2018 Project Report

There are two areas where work is being undertaken:

1. Quarry Track
2. Orchard Track

Quarry Track

Most woody weeds that are accessible to volunteers have been removed. There continues to be problems with weeds on slopes that require special techniques for access such as abseiling.

This year, work included St Johns Wort, Salsify, Euphorbia, Twiggy Mulien, Blackberry, Nasturtium, Rhamnus and Kikuya.

Orchard Track

The native raspberry, *Rubus parvifolius*, (rated as rare in the Mount Lofty Ranges) is showing its appreciation for the work done in the main valley. Woody weeds and blackberry have been worked on by volunteers, Green Army and contractors making space for the native raspberry.



Native Raspberry (rare in the Mount Lofty

Ranges), filling the valley.

2017 Project Report

75 shrubs were planted on 26/6/2016 including *Acacia ligulata*, *A. pycnantha*, *A. paradoxa*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, and *Hakea carinata*. Most of these have survived except the *Hakea* which were too immature at time of planting. Plants were located in 4 areas.

Much time has been spent in weeding around these plants during the past 12 months and, in August, where seedlings had died off, 15 tree guards were removed and returned to the store. Since October 2016 we could not access the Montacute Valley site since the Gorge Road had been washed away. Therefore, between November 2016 and February 2017, we worked at Fourth Creek. Working along the creek bank, we removed Tangier pea, Fumitory, Blackberry, Montpelier broom and removed seed heads. On one occasion we found *Sigesbeckia orientalis*. Later canary grass, plantago, thistles and broad leaf weeds were removed and broom and Boneseed were treated.

Returning to Montacute Valley in March 2017, the culvert at gate 17 had not been replaced, so work was carried out up the creek to the waterfall and on the orchard track. In June fallen trees were removed from the track. Main weeds treated were blackberry, *Rhamnus*, black nightshade and

plantago. Olives, Hypericum and dog rose were removed along the claybank. Gate 17 was re-opened in July and we weeded around planted shrubs, removing Mallow, Euphorbia, thistles, Salvation Jane and Kikuyu. Finally, the last branch on the Acacia iteophylla, previously treated over 2 years, was cut & swabbed. Between August and October, time was spent controlling three corner garlic and vinca. Blackberry, rose and Valerian were removed from the scree slope and two clumps of Watsonia were swabbed. Volunteers numbered from 2 to 6 and contributed 86 hours at the Montacute Valley site and 56 hours at Fourth Creek.

Reg

2014 Project Report

In 1989 a small group of ARPA bushwalkers were allocated a site in the Black Hill Conservation Park to practice bush care and restoration work on this degraded area.

Preliminary work in the Orchard Gully was removal of head-high blackberries, olives, Rhamnus, roses, Montpellier Broom and remnant fruit trees.

Along Fifth Creek the main work was the cutting of large willow trees (with hand saw), Broom, Tagasaste and African Daisy. We also removed man-made rubbish in the form of car bodies and even hydroponic 'pot' crops.

The quarry was the next area tackled. This site had been used as a garden waste dump so the initial work was the removal of all sorts of exotics from Asters, Brassicas and on through the alphabet to Mallow and even Zinnias.

In the early years seeds were collected from native plants on site. These were grown and the seedling planted after the first winter rains. Over the years about 4000 trees were grown and planted. Planting days were popular and well supported by bushwalkers. A small dedicated team met regularly each month to care for the plantings and continue weed removal.

In recent years we have had well attended planting days but we no longer have a physically active group to maintain the plantings. Now our strategy has changed so the very small group of bushwalkers encourage natural regeneration on all sites by keeping down the weeds. The emphasis now is the removal of introduced weeds along the tracks and trails. We continue to encourage natural regeneration and assist by monitoring the sites for invasive weeds. A big achievement in the last 4 years was the elimination of a highly invasive Pampas Lily of the Valley. The Herbarium thanks us for our efforts to halt the spread of this 'nasty' along Fifth Creek.

Bushwalkers who have supported the Black Hill team have also benefited by taking time to enjoy the birds and butterflies, learn some bush care skills and even discover their alpine climbing expertise on our very demanding site.

After 25 years the remnant bushwalker Black Hill team (Bryan and Cath) have decided it is time to retire.

Bush care is not a finite project so the management of the area will revert to The Friends of Black Hill and bushwalker Reg Clark will keep an eye on the site, and I'm sure he will welcome any other walkers who wish to join him in caring for the bush.

As this is a 25th Anniversary year we propose to have an informal get together at Maryvale/Montacute Rd, corner of Black Hill National Park on Monday 27th October at midday for anyone who has been involved with this ARPA group. Those who are able might like to inspect the site and see the changes that have occurred since they were active members of this group.

2013 Project Report

Annual Report October 2012 to October 2013

This is essentially the annual report provided by co-ordinator Cath Denes to ARPA, with minor modifications.

Attendance at working bees has ranged from 4 to 7 members, achieving a total of about 176 person hours of work. Local resident, Reg Clark has rendered invaluable service, monitoring our site and doing follow-up weed control of Bridal Creeper, Blackberry, Salpichroa and Hypericum.

Work in Orchard Gully has targeted Blackberry, rose, rhamnus, prunus, nightshade and olives. Watsonia has been successfully sprayed.

To the west, in the quarry area, work was aimed at Blackberry, Rhamnus, mint, fleabane, rice millet, scabiosa and plantain. The NRM board has sprayed Vinca (periwinkle).

In the middle quarry area, Rice Millet, Scabiosa, Euphorbia, Salsify and Verbasum were weeded and earlier plantings nurtured. Further east, inroads were made into mallow, brassica, fennel, artichoke, Rice Millet and Yucca. Some earlier plantings are flourishing.

We feel privileged to be working in a scenic area of bushland which needs protecting, and thanks again to the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta for continuing support.

The group has not applied for or received financial assistance during the year.

Joint project co-ordinator,
Bryan

2012 Project Report

Membership has risen to nine, thankfully reducing our average age!

Attendance ranged between 2 and seven, providing an average 14 hours per first Monday of the month. Members attended short courses at Norton Summit and Campbelltown.

Most effort was along the Yurrebilla Trail near Fifth Creek and the quarries, with occasional visits to Orchard Trail.

Expertise is provided by Cath (co-coordinator) and Reg; the group was visited by Melanie (NRM Board) who supplemented our equipment. The following details are from Cath's report to ARPA:

Chief targets near Orchard Gully were Watsonia, Blackberry, Bridal Creeper and Nightshade. Near the quarries last year's plantings have been tended and Scabiosa, Hyperica, Conyza and thistles were removed from native bush. Intensive work near the quarry gate has encouraged growth of Persicaria and Typha. It is hoped to have vinca sprayed with assistance from the NRM Board. Reg has collected specimens for the State Herbarium. The group is grateful for continuing assistance from the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta, including supply of herbicide.

Bryan
Joint project coordinator

2011 Project Report

Total membership is still seven, and work continues mostly in the quarry area, Fifth Creek, on the first Monday of the month. Attendance has varied between 2 and 6, working between 7 and 21 person hours per month.

Cath Deans (joint coordinator) and Reg Clark provides valuable guidance on plant recognition and one member appreciated a morning's field instruction on weed management organised by the NRM Board at Lobethal. What follows is derived from Cath's annual report to ARPA. Fifty four seedlings *Allocasuarina verticillata*, *Allocasuarina muelleriana* and *Hargenbergia* were planted in an area previously cleared of *Euphorbia peplus*, Salisfy and Rice Millet. Some work was done in Orchard Gully in removing *Rhamnus*, Olive and Briar and swabbing and spraying has been effective in controlling Blackberry near the waterfall. Glyphosate spraying has also been used on *Hypericum* and *Lippia* in the main quarry area, but Bridal Creeper appears to be on the increase.

With thanks for the continuing support from the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta.

Joint Project Coordinator
Bryan Forbes

2010 Project Report

The regular workforce of five has risen to seven, meeting as usual on the first Monday of the month and concentrating on general weeding in the western quarry area, Fifth Creek. Attendance varies between three and seven, working 10 - 20 person hours per month. Glyphosate spraying has been

largely on a batch of *Salpichroa* with spectacular success. As outlined by Cath Deans in her annual report to ARPA, the group pursues three main aims:

- Careful hand weeding of St Johns Wort, Scabious, Salvation Jane and Euphorbia near vehicle tracks;
- Removal of woody weeds, rice millet, Bridal Creeper, African Daisy and Nightshade in more accessible areas near the quarries and the Orchard Trail (eastern end of the work area); and
- Intensive weeding with judicious spraying to make the quarry entrance to the Yurrebilla Trail as close to real bush as possible (but there are problems with Vinca, Ivy and Cape Ivy).

Several members attended "Trees for Life" courses and NRM Board gatherings and we are grateful for the continuing support of the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta Inc. The coordinators enjoyed an NRM workshop on hazard identification and Montacute.

Joint Project Coordinator
Bryan Forbes.

2009 Project Report

Morning working bees on the first Monday of the month continue to be concentrated in the western quarry area, Fifth Creek, with attendances between two and seven ARPA members. The peak number occurred on a special effort to remove an unusual weed: *Salpichroa organifolia*, which has an amazingly extensive root system.

Because of the dry conditions and a small work force, there has been little planting and instead an emphasis on weeding in the quarry area, protecting *Leptospermum lanigerum* and Native Geranium. There has been minor glyphosate spraying of Kikuyu and Bridal Creeper, but major spraying is dependant on grants from the NRM board: the ARPA group is also Our Patch, Fifth Creek. We continue to appreciate the support of the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta.



Salpichroa organifolia

Co-Conveners Cath Deans and Bryan Forbes

2008 Project Report

Black Hill Conservation Group Annual Report July 2007 to July 2008

Once again we had a difficult year with a long, hot and dry season. Our very small work force was only able to work consistently on the quarry site although we still monitor the Orchard Gully and Bracken Slope and spend a little time keeping down woody weeds on these sites.

We have had some success with a small creek area near the quarry entrance where, by carefully removing annual and perennial weeds, we encourage the natural regeneration of native plants.

There is now a considerable buffer zone between the native "bush" and the revegetated quarry. We inspect this area frequently to look for feral invaders and remove them. Over the last 2 to 3 years infestation of Scabious and Hypericum perforator have occurred in the vicinity of the vehicle tracks. The Scabious affected area is now fairly well controlled by diligent weeding but the Hypericum infestation has become a bigger problem.

On our advertised planting day we had appalling weather, sleet rain and hail, five regular workers and three invited non-members turned up and planted 70 seedlings before retiring, soaked through and frozen. A fortnight later, in much better conditions, seven regular planters and two invited non-members put in the remaining 200 seedlings. We thank the Friends of Black Hill for making tools available for our planting days.

The species planted this year were-*Dodonaea viscosa*, *Leptospermum lamigerum*, *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Acacia pycnantha*, *Allocasuarina verticillata*, *Acacia paradoxa*, *Bursaria spinosa* and *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*.

Work time allocation (in person hours)

Weeding, site preparation and maintenance 145

Plant propagation 20

Planting 45

During the year we conducted a site visit to show ARPA members (mostly bush walkers) the nature of the work and development of the area. Those who attended learnt something about the history of this ARPA group which started 18 years ago,

Martin Krieg, project officer for the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resource Management Board, arranged a grant of \$4,100 which was used for purchase of 250 bamboo stakes, paint for marking stakes, Jeffries propagation soil and 35 tube stock seedlings. The remainder of the grant has been used by Kieren Brewer (contractor) for work on the site.

Co-Conveners Cath Deans and Bryan Forbes

2005 Project Report

As usual, planting day, the first Monday in June, attracted the most volunteers (11), who put in 250 local species including Acacia, Allocasuarina, Banksia, Dodonaea, Leptospermum and others. Following rain helped make this a success. On the eleven other months, volunteers numbered between two and eight and continued weed eradication in the quarry area near Fifth Creek and near the Orchard Trail. They also carried out further minor planting.

Of a 2004 grant of \$1665 from the Water Management Boards, \$1280 has been spent on Watsonia and Fennel control by Better Bushland and South Australian Indigenous Flora. A further \$136.94 has been spent on minor items such as the cost of seedling cultivation by Cath, green gloves and

swabbing bottles, leaving a balance of \$248.06 as at October 7, 2005.

The Group has enjoyed the support of the NPWS and the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta and has enjoyed the guidance and support of Kate, Out Patch Project Officer.

Members attended an enjoyable and informative Out Patch Volunteer day at West Beach in May and through the assistance of Our Patch, three members received instruction on plant recognition at a Bush for Life course in September, 2005.

Cath and Bryan, Project Coordinators.

2004 Project Report

This Group continues its working bees on the first Monday of the month from 8:30 am to 12 noon. Attendances varied between 4 and 7 ARPA members, except on the planting day in June, when 13 people helped to plant 260 seedlings. These comprised local species of Allocasuarina, Banksia, Dodonaea, Eucalypts, Hakea, Hardenbergia and Leptospermum. Subsequent rain favoured these - compensation for earlier losses in dry conditions after the 2003 plantings.



Hardenbergia violacea

Most work was done in the quarry area near Fifth Creek, clearing around plants and pulling or cutting and swabbing of Blackberry, Olive, Rhamnus and Dog Rose. Planting of Banksia and weeding was also done near the Orchard Trail further east.

A grant of \$1665 was received from the Torrens Catchment Water Management Board in May 2004 and arrangements are in place to use this mainly for professional eradication of Watsonia, Fennel and Kikuyu.

Cath and Bryan, Project Coordinators.

2003 Project Report

Co-ordinators of the project are Cath, who collects seed and provides seedlings for the annual planting, and Bryan who acts as local contact with the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta.

This group continues weeding and planting in the old Montacute quarries on Fifth Creek and to the east near the Orchard Trail. Members normally work on the first Monday of the month between 8:30 and noon: attendance averages between four and eight people. The main planting in the quarry area in June, when seventeen volunteers planted 400 local Leptospermum, Hakea, Hardenbergia, Dodonaea and Allocasuarina species.

The group is supported with advice, tools and materials from the Friends and NPWS. It continues under the umbrella of 'Out Patch', with assistance from Tricia and a financial grant, now finally spent mainly for spraying weeds.

Periodically the group pulls rubbish out of Fifth Creek and piles it at the side of Montacute Road for collection by Campbelltown Council.

Bryan
Project Co-ordinator.

2001 Project Report

Work has continued mainly in the old quarry area, but weeding has also been carried out on an earlier planted steep bracken slope and clay bank east of the orchard trail.

South of the clay bank (Orchard Track area, northwest of the water tank) olives, roses, fruit trees and other unwanted species have been removed near the track. There has been some spot spraying of blackberry and selective spraying eg: Kikuyu around quarry plantings.

About 170 seedlings were planted during the well attended working bee in the quarry area and clay bank. Species included:

- Allocasuarina sp.
- Eucalyptus viminalis
- Dodonaea viscosa,
- Hardenbergia violacea and
- Acacia pycnantha.

Good rain has made this a great success.

Working bees continue to be held on the first Monday of the months. Attendance perhaps averaging five and working between 8.30am and noon.



Acacia pycnantha

Keith - Project Coordinator

2000 Project Report

This year we have concentrated mainly on the quarry floor, with spot maintenance in the orchard and 5th creek areas. Six to seven members faithfully attend our working bees held on the 1st Monday each month. As always, weed control is the major item with predominant species being attacked such as broom, pine, ash, olive, Watsonia & fennel.

Approximately 180 trees and shrubs were planted in May, these being mainly *Eucalyptus viminalis*, & *Allocasuarina* species with *Dodonea viscosa*, *Hardenbergia violacea* and *Acacia pyrenantha*. All plantings are given on-going care as required and some of our early plantings are now very visible from the road and are looking great.

Keith Plush - Project Coordinator.

1997 Project Report

The original work site is now in a mainly maintenance situation, enabling working further afield. The planting programme (approx 130 plants this year) has almost reached saturation. Work is now being concentrated on 5th creek between the tank and the quarry entrance.

Most willows and other exotic deciduous trees have been removed, and Broom and Tree lucerne are largely controlled. A large stand of *Rhamnus* adjacent the quarry is being attacked, and a *Watsonia* spray programme is under way. Much work remains to be done on Bamboo.

Mains concerns are vandalism and dumping rubbish in the creek.

Keith
Project Coordinator

15 January 2020
2019 Project Report added.

