

PAIWALLA NEWS

September 2016



Paiwalla North Swamp and river (foreground right) with the full wetland pond (background left)

Recent photo: Heather Bean

Water in the Wetland

Last newsletter we stated that we had ...”to utilise this allocation before June 30th”...

This requirement was later amended and allowed us to fill the wetland while not being concerned about our allocation for 2017. While irrigators have been restricted in their allocation, we are able to utilise ours.

As a result we decided to fill the wetland slowly rather than rush to put 700 MI in the pond in 30 days before the 30th June.

By 15 July we had put in approximately 500 MI leaving approximately 20 cm of fill to go (20 cm over 60 ha = 120 MI). The rate of fill slowed as a head of water was created over the inlet and intake was as low as 5 MI/day. In addition the river level had been at 0.65-0.7 AHD but in July it increased to 0.8 AHD. This is apparently a temporary level until February when it will drop back to 0.65. At that stage we will be able (hopefully) to open the gate and let some “bottom water” out of the pond.

As Kate Mason, our Wetlands Management Officer from ‘Natural Resources SAMDB’ says “it is a juggling act ...”

By 28th August 626 MI of water had flowed through the meter. It is estimated that for every 25 mm of rain on the surface a further 15 MI is added. Just short of 150 mm of rain was recorded at Paiwalla from May to the end of August AND it's still raining..... There is no way measuring run-off from the highland.

The pond is now full to the brim.

As it happened:



Photos: Heather Bean



Wetland Restoration on the Lower Murray, South Australia

Paiwalla Wetland owned by Wetland Habitats Trust and managed by Paiwalla Pty Ltd
PO Box 5, Strathalbyn SA 5255 (08) 8536 2083 paiwallawetland@gmail.com
website: paiwalla.org.au



Brownie's Campsite

A couple of improvements for campers and picnickers at Brownie's Campsite.
A new fireplace has been built and a camp sink and drainer installed.
Thanks to Paul G and Peter F for the digging.



Trees at Paiwalla

Throughout the winter there has been increased activity in tree planting at Paiwalla.

This year we have sourced our tree selection from the Eastern Hills Community Centre in Murray Bridge.

Species were selected for suitability on the advice of Denzel Murfet and members. Some 250 - 300 seedlings were planted on three separate occasions.

We focused on two important aspects:

- planting smaller quantities at any given time to allow better soil preparation, improved planting methods and tree guard protection
- planting closer to where they could be easily watered for the first year

Approximately 50 trees were planted on the islands thanks to Annie O and Heather B

Canoe Trail Update

The Canoe Trail is not yet complete.

We are currently on hold with placing the signs on the posts as the river is at levels between 0.9 and 1.0 above AHD and the tops of the posts are just out of the water. We will have to wait until February, or when the river drops in level. The tops of the posts need to be painted.

See the Jobs List below

Electronic White Board JOBS LIST

Remove tree guards from unsuccessful plantings
This can be done on any visit or walk

Rocks around the shed
(Use tractor bucket to collect)

Erecting new fence (motorbike proof) at
Sunnyside Entrance

Pigeon, Cat and Fox eradication

Painting of Canoe Trail posts (when the river
level drops)

*If you can undertake or help with any of these jobs
please contact Steve on
8536 2083 or 0418 853 911 for details and
availability of required equipment/materials.*

Volunteer Hours

Paiwalla's annual report to NRM Community Volunteer Group has just been completed. This group asks for hours, number of events that we have and the number of participants.

Our record is the 'daily login sheet' we fill in every time we are at Paiwalla.

For 2015/16 we recorded 1097.5 hours of work on Paiwalla.

This figure does not include the hours of Administration and Accounting done off site. Maybe it should?

Visitors

Over the winter there have been a number of groups finding their way to Paiwalla. The Bordertown Field Naturalists visited in June and the Murray Bridge Walkers in July.

A few requests for day access and camping have been received. Also in July, Judith accompanied a group of interested retired 'Chalkies' on a casual stroll.

All have made donations for the privilege.

From Your Editors

Help needed

Contributions of articles and/or photos of interest for our newsletter are greatly appreciated.

Photo Opportunity

We are compiling a comprehensive file of photos of Paiwalla. We have many from earlier times but not a lot of recent records. This file would be available to illustrate the website and the newsletter and become an historic archive over the years. Scenery shots, activity shots, fauna and flora and in particular good bird shots as the webmaster would like to add photo ID to our online bird list.

Photos can be sent in high resolution to
paiwallawetland@gmail.com OR dyer.jm@gmail.com
If your photos are used acknowledgement will be given.

Projects and Funding



Application

We have applied for a Green Army project starting in July 2017. This project would provide people to assist with work programs for

both Paiwalla and Sunnyside.

The Green Army is an initiative of the Department of Environment and Energy.

www.environment.gov.au/land/green-army and is a hands-on, practical environmental action program that supports local environment and heritage conservation projects across Australia. Green Army participants are aged between 17 and 24 and gain practical training and experience while being paid to work in a local Environment.

Our application has not yet been approved, but if successful, will comprise approximately 30 hours work a week for 6 months and funding of \$10,000 for equipment and training.

Sunnyside Action Plan

We have been successful in arranging, with Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin, to develop an Action Plan for Sunnyside Conservation Park.

This plan will give Paiwalla the opportunity to provide some management for the park. In addition \$10,000 will be provided to undertake some of the activities we have identified that would be beneficial for the park. The Action Plan is still in 'draft' mode, but it is progressing.

OH&S Review

We have also been allocated a grant of \$1,000 from the 'NRM Community and Volunteer Support Grants Program' to undertake an Occupational, Health & Safety review for Paiwalla Wetland.

We contracted Sean Power and Associates to provide the report for us.

The report has been finalised and we are now looking at the requirements of the report in relation to Paiwalla.

Many of the identified risks are basic care and common-sense procedures that need to be changed, and there will be a few more printed signs around the sheds to ensure awareness of risks. We will be writing a few SOP's (Standard Operating Procedures) and implementing a system of accreditation for equipment operation. This is also necessary for our volunteer insurance provided by DEWNR.

Copies will be available on the members' page of the website.



Little Eagle (above) and a male Musk Duck (right) displaying for his mate .

Many thanks to member, Heather Bean, for submitting these two great photos.



Two new signs have been installed. This one in the Car Park and the other at the Sunnyside end of Paiwalla

