



PAIWALLA NEWS

August 2018



Photo: Eric Bloem

Welcome to our August 2018 issue of Paiwalla News. Much has happened in the months since our last issue with members and friends working hard at maintenance, new projects and fulfilling the requirements of Grants that have been received.

Winter Tree Planting

As part of our joint project with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) and together with two generous donations, specifically given for revegetation as reported in our last newsletter, we have successfully planted more than 500 trees. CVA provided the labour to plant and install guards.



With leadership from Heather B, seed and cuttings were collected locally last year and two nurseries engaged to propagate these for us.

Plantings were carried out in several areas ranging from North Paiwalla to the downstream boundary of Sunnyside. Due diligence will be needed to maintain and water the plants through their first summer. Thereafter it is hoped that they will harden and survive unaided.

Heather is already planning the seed collection for the next year's plantings.



Cameras

We received a Volunteers Small Grant from the SA MDB NRM board for the provision of night and motion cameras. Three cameras have been purchased and positioned at sites around the wetland.



They are powered by little solar panels, so are easy to spot - if you know what you are looking for!



The Thursday Mob

Thursday working days have become regular events for many of our members and friends. Numbers attending have varied from 4 to 13. Some come for a short time and others stay all day and some decide to stay the night! The kettle is boiling about 8:45 in the morning: at 9:00 there is a quick review of the quality of the cake/biscuits supplied for morning tea then the workers disperse to tasks, others go walking and most re-group later for lunch.

Casual, easy and things get done!

Fencing at Sunnyside

In the last edition we featured construction of the fence on the southern boundary of Sunnyside. The fence is now complete and painted. We have allowed for pedestrian access but have attempted to limit vehicular access. Again a combined effort from the Thursday Mob.

Progressive Projects

Paul's Pump Shed.

The old pump shed, on the north-western corner of the levy, has been saved from demolition and remodelled into a shelter come observation deck. Wasps have been removed, the floor replaced and access altered.



Bird Perches

As the pond is drying out it has provide an opportunity to repair broken bird perches and add more. Peter F. has been providing the timber from his woodlot and perches are progressively being mended/ replaced/installed.

Tractor

At last the hydraulic control on the tractor has been repaired. Workers now have an understanding of the control that allows operation of the front bucket and the rear hydraulics from the one lever. With the renovated 'carry-all' installed we are able to transport equipment safely and effectively around the wetland.



Donation Status



With the end of the financial year we are required to report to the Register of Environmental Organisations to retain our charitable status.

In the 2017/18 year we received \$8022 in donations, including \$1272 collected in the visitors' donation box situated in the carpark.

This past year Paiwalla has had great recognition for its activities.



The Mallee and Coorong NRM group awarded a Volunteer Certificate of Recognition 2017, for outstanding contribution to natural resources management in the Mallee and Coorong NRM Group district.

AND

Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin awarded Paiwala one of two Citizen Science Award issued in 2018.

Paiwalla was nominated for outstanding effort involved in coordinating the Waterbug Bioblitz with Conservation Volunteers Australia, hosting the Paiwalla citizen science birding training event, contributing to the Waterbug Bioblitz data workshop and your enthusiasm for the citizen science program in general.

Salt Water

This year while the water level of the pond was low it was decided to export some salt laden water from the Paiwalla large pond into Sunnyside where it can filter through the reeds to purify prior to re-entering the river.

Approval was sought from EPA. Kate Mason facilitated this on our behalf and has also set up a water quality monitoring station in Sunnyside.

Our pump, out on hire to SA Water, was returned for the pumping.

Pumping was to occur from the old sump in the south-eastern corner of the pond, but upon exposing the old structure, an excavator was needed to remove the silt that had accumulated over the years (probably 20 years' worth). A further 40-50 meters of drainage channel was dredged so that the water flow could be maintained to the sump.

After three weeks pumping, and before the rain came, we have pumped for 120-150 hours and estimate exporting 50-60 MI. We are still waiting on water analysis, to enable the salt load to be calculated.

Thanks to the two Steves for their 'out of hours' contribution in maintaining the pumping.



New Signs at Paiwalla

As part of the 'Connect with Paiwalla' project with CVA we have generated some new signs that show general information about Paiwalla. The major 'visual' of the sign is the mapping which shows Paiwalla North, Paiwalla and Sunnyside. Vincent L can generate any map asked for. Thanks Vincent



Thank you to Eric for his delightful photos of the three Nankeen Kestrel chicks. The parent birds nested in an old gum near the shed so observers had a close view as the chicks grew and fledged. The adult birds were kept extremely busy meeting the demands of their off-spring throughout the daylight hours.



Don't forget to follow us on Facebook. Heather B is trying to post photos each week of the findings at Paiwalla, and recent bird photos are really exceptional.