



Paiwalla Update

Issue #6 - August 2022



Welcome once more to our occasional newsletter
with all the happenings at the pond.

Visit our website www.paiwalla.org.au for a comprehensive overview of our organisation. A special welcome to those who have joined our 'Friends of Paiwalla' since our last issue: our FoP group now numbers 35 members. We value your support. Please forward our newsletter to friends or family who may share our passion. Full details are on the 'Friends of Paiwalla' tab on the website.

- **Pond Refill**

It has been a couple of years since the wetland has been taken down to dry and this last time allowed us to repair many of the bird hurdles in the pond. Once done we commenced refill. The refill is done slowly to allow the vegetation in the water to grow away with the rising water level. The pond was dry in early March 2022 and it went from there to nearly 1 meter deep (0.86) in late June. The water inlets were then closed.

What is apparent is that the pond water is incredibly clear as the sediment in the river water is allowed to settle out in the "still" Pond environment. This flush with river water has greatly reduced the salinity of the water in the pond.

The bird species that really like the improved water quality are the swans, which are pairing and nesting, and return of the Musk Duck; although not at the same populations as last year.

- **Burglary**

As reported in our February edition our shed was broken into and thieves stole a great deal of our equipment.

The perpetrators (there were at least 2 persons) removed iron from the back of the shed which allowed them to open the doors from the inside. The intruders then started the quad bike, loaded our trailer with all our electrical equipment they could carry. While retreating they passed the yard area adjacent to the shed and discovered our new boat with all its equipment. All the stolen gear in the trailer was transferred to the boat, abandoning the trailer, and then made exit towards Lagoon Road cutting gate locks and fences (with our equipment).

We reported the burglary to the police. We have lost approximately \$25,000 worth of equipment

This has goaded us to review our security and insurance at Paiwalla.

We have had some generous donations to replace our equipment.

- **Our Stolen Boat**

The major stolen item was the new boat/trailer together with a spray tank and other equipment all of which were recently purchased with a grant to endeavour to eradicate the Mexican Water Lily, so rampant in Sunnyside, and to continue our quest to remove Willows. We had owned the boat for about 4 weeks and just completed fitting it out with suitable equipment. It had had its maiden voyage 2 days before being stolen.

That occurred on Feb 4th. On July 1 the police rang informing us that they had recovered the boat and requested that we pick it up from their storage.

The boat, trailer and motor were recovered but the spray tank, ladder and more minor equipment was not.

We will continue our program to eradicate the Lilies and Willows next season, when we have been able to replace all the necessary equipment, and the season is right for the attack.

- **Toilet renewal**

One grant that we received from the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, was to upgrade the carpark toilet roof and provide a water tank for the use of by the public. This work has been done primarily by Paul G with some assistance. We provided not 1 but 2 water tanks in the car park, placing one adjacent to our Shelter/Shade facility that Paul completed last year. This also has a hard roof that will collect the rain water.

- **Grant Application Successes**

This year we applied for two Murraylands and Riverland Grassroots Grants and were successful.

Our first application was for a portable defibrillator. The average age of our regular volunteers is around 60 and there is also a regular presence of the public at Paiwalla for various occasions. We thought it would be a good idea to have a defibrillator on call.

The board paid \$1400 and we have a co-contribution for the balance of \$1125. A very worthwhile addition to Paiwalla.

The second application was for a new salinity meter to record the weekly changes in water quality of the pond: our last meter was stolen. The meter can give us Salinity, pH, Turbidity and a couple of extra parameters that are not relevant to a wetland. We received the meter early July and following calibration

by the Landscape Board we have put it to use immediately.

- **More Grant Applications**

Applications are an annual job for the committee.

The first is an application to Gallagher Australia to fund a fence to keep foxes from invading our egg laying turtle areas. Last egg laying season we detected 184 predated turtle nests during the egg laying season October to March. This is far higher than we want to accept and as part of Paiwalla's contribution to the '1 Million Turtle Program' we would like to reduce the damage, and increase the survival rate. We have three turtle species present at Paiwalla and we envisage a fence that will provide an area that will completely exclude foxes.

We will be making other applications throughout the year and will keep you up to date on these in future newsletter.

- **Charity**

We are currently updating our Registration as a charity. Paiwalla has been a designated Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) for a number of years but this year changes have been made to the 'donation/gift' status meaning. For us this means we have to re-apply to be recognised as a charity, the application has been made and we await the outcome.

- **A New Inlet Structure**

Paiwalla is currently getting together a Front End Engineering Design for the construction of a new inlet structure. The structure will be bigger than the small inlet pipes we currently use, and will allow for a fish passage, carp screens and allow a greater volume of water to pass in and out of the wetland in a shorter time.

These structures are expensive and the Front End Design will form the basis of our next Grant application for building a new structure.

The process is being overseen by Vincent L and we are drawing on our contacts and associations to get the initial paperwork done to specification with the lowest possible cost.

- **2022 Art @ Paiwalla**

This is happening again this year Our third annual 'Art @ Paiwalla' weekend.

The dates are 24th and 25th September.

Paiwalla is a beautiful wetland on the River Murray and here for the third consecutive year we will develop a variety of artworks that are fun to do and reflect Paiwalla.

We also have a guest artist leading a session this year.

Together we will create visual records of what we see and hear by drawing sound, movement, contours, textures, objects and landscape. Then we will do plein air or outdoor painting using acrylic paints.

Bookings are limited and places are much sought after so go to our website, Visit our 'Events' tab on our website to download a detailed brochure

OR confirm a booking with Michelle Medhurst at michelle@fatgoosefruits.com.au or 0407 866 214 as places are limited.

- **Volunteer Required**

This will be the last edition of Paiwalla Update compiled by our present editor. We are looking for a volunteer from our wetland friends and supporters to compile our newsletter using the MailChimp app.

If you have experience with MailChimp or would like to give it a go and have a few hours every 4 months or so to give to the wetland we would like to talk with you.

Initial text is supplied by Secretary Steve. Photos used come from our Thursday workers, from our Facebook page, from our files or you may like to use ones you have taken yourself. Contact us on our email address below. We will be happy to hear from you.

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