Paiwalla Update 2022 Issue #5 - February

Welcome once more to our newsletter. 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.

- ## Sun-shelter in the Carpark

The Pergola is finished: as reported in our last newsletter the slab for our shade structure in the carpark was in place, roofed and with some paving laid. It is now complete with more paving added and furnished with picnic table and seats. Many volunteer hours have been spent in recent months constructing this facility. We are still looking at options for a small water tank to supply Mosquito free water.

Nearly there.....

Our builder et al picnicing in finished the shelter.

- ## Pond level down - Carp out

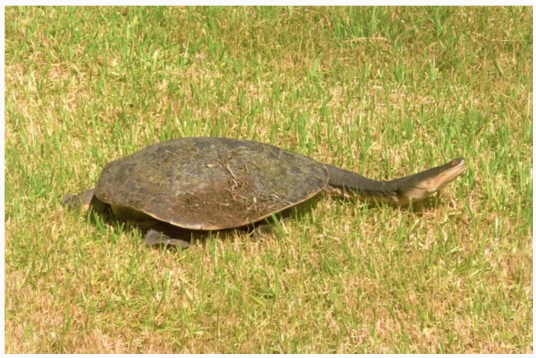
We are currently drawing down the water level in the wetland to eliminate carp. The inlet sluice was opened in October by a person or persons unknown enabling the carp to enter. The ponds needs to be completely dry for elimination. As the level has dropped the ever decreasing size of the ponds have become rather smelly! Expectations are that the wetland will be completely dry by the end of March. It will then be refilled with fresh water from the river.

The water level dropping - as at 3rd week of January.

The small pond completely dry.

- ## Turtle season

Paiwalla has become involved in the “1 Million Turtles program”
https://1millionturtles.com/
This program is a Citizen Science and Community Conservation project planned for all states of Australia. An app allows participants to record and submit turtle activities.
Our input will involve monitoring the laying season of Murray Short-necked Turtles (October/Nov), Eastern Long-necked Turtles (Jan/Feb) and Broad-shelled Turtles (March). As at January we have identified upward of 140 predated nests for the current season. This year is considered a learning year, expanding our knowledge and our records. We are constantly endeavouring to provide a more turtle friendly and predator free environment.



Top left: Short-necked Turtle laying eggs
Bottom left: newly hatched

Top right: Finished laying - exhausted!
Bottom right: a Long-necked Turtle.

- ## Campground Report - Busy over Xmas

Xmas time saw an increase in camping activity at our camp sites as more people learn of this special place.
With an increasing numbers of FoPs (Friends of Paiwalla), there has been a high demand for camping and some regular campers are booking months in advance. If the demand for bookings remains high we may have to look at limits to the duration of stays as preference is always given to our FoP's and Paiwalla unit holders.

We do appreciate a donation for your stay.
EFT following the instructions on our website 'Donate' tab. http://www.paiwalla.org.au/donate.html or with our Donation Box in the Carpark.

- ## Titbits - Follow us on Facebook

The Bee-eaters are back and the Fairy Martins are busy harvesting mud for nest building on the cliff face.

Sacred Kingfishers and Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo are often seen.

- ## Feral Control

We are still focusing on feral eradication at Paiwalla. Foxes are a priority at present, then rabbits and cats.
The thinking is that while foxes are being specifically targeted this is allowing the rabbit numbers to increase so together with cats and feral pigeons we need to address these in the near future.

- ## The Good News……..

Mexican Floating Waterlily and Willow Control

Thursday 20th of December saw the launch of our new boat, powered by an outboard engine, with spray tank, ladder and associated equipment on board, purchased as part of our control efforts in containing Mexican Floating Lily in Sunnyside Conservation Park and Willows generally throughout the wetland area. This project is being funded by the Dept. of Agriculture, Water and Environment Community Grants.
The equipment was put through its paces, worked well and received a seal of approval.

Our new boat at launch.

One small area of Waterlily

- **The Bad News……**

Unfortunately on the Friday or Saturday following the launch and testing of our new boat and equipment, Paiwalla was entered illegally and our sheds broken into. The boat and all the equipment, along with many other tool and equipment/items were stolen.
If you know/hear of any boat or quadbike available for sale or see any listed on ebay or other platforms, please contact us (details below). This may help the police to track down our equipment.
We need to replace a quantity of small tools **asap** – anything from hammers and screwdrivers to whipper-snippers, drills, chain saws and much more that are used on a weekly basis by volunteers.
Our spotting scope and tripod, used for bird monitoring is also missing. If you are able to help by donating any equipment or funds towards replacement we would be pleased to hear from you.
Our email address is given below or use our contact page on the website. http://www.paiwalla.org.au/contact-us.htm
OR
ring/text 0418 853 911 to discuss options
We will respond quickly.

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