

FRIENDS of the GREAT VICTORIA DESERT PARKS

Newsletter Number 47 December, 2016.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Jan Forrest OAM

This year three trips were conducted in the Great Victoria Desert.

Leaving from Ceduna on Monday 22nd August Geoff Rishworth (trip A) and team met up with Harald Ehmann and Rob Hobson in the MT lands where they set up their first camp near the Airport Road which heads north/south just east of the boundary of Mamungari CP. Page 2 - 8 details objectives and results from this expedition as well as an overview of the trip from Rob Hobson and botanical notes from Manfred Jusaitis.



The unfortunate breakdown of Peter and Sandy James vehicle meant valuable time was lost in getting the vehicle to Oak Valley where it was collected by a transport vehicle from Ceduna. Thanks to Geoff Rishworth for his support and work in undertaking this major task.

Harold is keen to continue this work during 2017 and has put forward a proposal for consideration by Friends members the MT Board and officers from AMLR.

Also on 21st August Lynton Huxley (trip B) led a trip also to the MT lands and the southern portion of Mamungari. See page 9 - 11 for Lynton's report and bird list plus information from field botanist David Keane. The objectives of this trip was to look closely at existing vegetation survey sites to update current plant and species data and undertake opportunistic plant and possible insect collections as well as bird, reptile and mammal observations. Regrettably the original detailed plant lists were not available only a general overview so it was not possible to full fill the botanical objectives as conceived however David Keane made some valuable observations has put forward some suggestions to develop this concept further during future trips. Very few invertebrates were collected for the Museum even though the *Senna* and other plants were flowering well.

The third smaller trip (Trip C) led by Peter Facy travelled around 2000 km photographing 73 existing vegetation survey sites and undertaking opportunistic plants surveys in and around exiting vegetation sites. The photo point project has continued for the last ten or so years and friends members re-photograph sites on a rotating basis. See page 12 - 14 for Fiona O'Connor's report on this trip and a photo record of four sites taken over time on page 15.

Work must now start at putting together a viable plan for 2017 which full fills our objectives and those of the traditional owners and AM NRM. I look forward to meeting with members shortly to work on future plans and in closing extend thanks to the Department of Environment for a volunteer grant which assisted members with fuel and other expenses.

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Top: dung beetle pushing a large dung ball, on track near Muckera WH and Below larva of psychid case moth. Photos: Lynton Huxley.

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Meetings: three meetings are held annually in Sports SA Industry Skills Centre on Military Rd at West Beach (across the road from the West Beach Caravan park)

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Field Trip Logistics: vacant

Our book: 'Field Guide to Shrubs and Trees of the Great Victoria Desert' may be obtained from Peter Facy see email address above.



FINDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS OF MARALINGA TJARUTJA FIELD WORK (TRIP A)

21 August to 7 September 2016.

Report and images by Harald Ehmann

PARTICIPANTS:

Geoff Rishworth (leader), Peter and Sandra James to 31.8.16), Rod Hobson, Ann and Manfred Jusaitis (from 29.8.16), Hellen Bryant and Harald Ehmann.



Most of the group with a Nyiri (*Moloch horridus*) at a Wyola Mallee site (two mature individuals in view).

Geoff Rishworth checking his camera, (then L to R) Ann Jusaitis checking her phone camera, with Hellen Bryant, Manfred Jusaitis and Rod Hobson looking on. Sandra and Peter James were travelling back to Adelaide at this time and Harald Ehmann is behind the camera.

Oak Valley Community engagement and thanks:

During the course of the field work there were three visits to Oak Valley which involved consultative and enabling discussions with Elders, Community members and Oak Valley staff. Unfortunately no Community members were able to join us in the field as they were involved in other significant business including funeral preparations and exploration clearances.

Near the end of the trip a show-and-tell of some of the plants, invertebrates and reptiles to the Oak Valley Aboriginal School was well-received by students and staff.

We particularly thank the Oak Valley Elders and Community members for your permission, generosity and guidance in accessing your wonderful Maralinga Tjarutja. We hope to work with you all again in the future and to further develop good relationships.



An inactive Malleefowl nest found during a Wyola Mallee transect drive at 52 J 0572105 X 6762008. This nest was also seen in 2015. On this occasion much more of its core

had been dug out. There were no tracks of Malleefowl seen in either year but egg shell fragments were seen in both years.

TRIP BASE CAMPS:

Camp 1.

23 to 28.8.2016. Along the Rhodinia Airport Track at 52 J 0597323 X 6792676. The northern edge of a swale with Sheoaks and Mulga adjoining a dune with mallees, a few Bullockbushes and other perennial shrubs. Long unburnt with old-growth Triodia throughout.

This was our more easterly camp in the area where trips in 2014 and 2015 had encountered Wipu Wara (Long-tailed Parrot). There had been relatively low rainfall over this eastern side in the months before. The grasses had very little fresh growth and only those growing in low-lying run-on areas associated with the tracks had set a small amount of seed. There were very few flowers on shrubs and no flowering gums were seen.



Typical view of vegetation condition in the areas around Camp 1. Note the generally poor growth of the grasses and the absence of any herbs.



Para (Marble Gum) juveniles. On the right a thriving one that was a seedling in 2014, and on the left a dead one from the same germination year which did not survive the relatively drier conditions since 2014. The sand surface is pock-marked with rain that fell during the previous day.

Camp 2.

28.8 to 7.9.2016. Along the major well-formed access road to Rhodinia drill well #2 which leaves the main north-south BMR road about 1 km south of the Rhodinia Airport at 52 J 0559005 X 6778806. The northern edge of a swale with mulga and other shrubs adjoining a dune with Para (Marble Gums), mallees, a few very old growth Sheoaks and other perennial shrubs. Long unburnt with old-growth Triodia throughout.

This was our more westerly camp within about 20 km of the second camp of 2014 (Wipu Wara Camp). This site was chosen because there were significant areas of recently burnt country nearby (burns in 2015 and 2016). There had been significantly more rainfall over this western side in the months before. The grasses had excellent fresh growth and flowering was abundant with some early seed set in some species where they were growing on exposed sites. There were abundant flowers on shrubs and some flowering gums were seen (but not Para). We had some rainfall at this camp with one gauging of 5mm on the day we arrived there and this translated into visible and obvious flowering and growth responses in the following days (see image of soil moisture below).



The southern flank of the dune at Camp 2. Note the long-unburnt vegetation including Triodia rings, old-growth Sandhill Mulga and flowering *Senna* sp. The fallen long-dead Para tree trunk and upper limbs have been extensively denuded by termites and other insects, and showed no evidence of burning: the blackness was due to rainfall the previous evening.



Two Para seedlings, the left one with large opposite seedling leaves that have developed course hairs (particularly on the edges, these deter insect herbivory), the right one is of about the same size in area as the pointing finger-nail. The large smooth leaves in the top right are of a seedling Desert Poplar and the curled hairy leaves on the left are of a young *Sida* sp.

FINDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS (some additional points are made in image captions):

Wipu Wara.

No Wipu Wara were seen in 2016 despite thorough searches in many suitable areas with potential nesting hollows and potential feeding sites. Some Scarlet-chested Parrots were seen particularly from the second (higher

rainfall) camp. It is possible that we were there too early this year for Wipu Wara as temperatures throughout this trip were much cooler than in the previous two years. Another possibility is that in 2016 Wipu Wara were nesting in areas we did not visit.

Itjari-itjari (Marsupial Mole)

We dug three trenches near Camp 1 and one trench near Camp 2 and found the characteristic traces of mole tunnels in three of the trenches. The trench with no-shows was in the harder soil of the swale at Camp 1 adjacent to a She-oak tree. The trenches with the best shows were associated with well-shaded deep leaf litter and mallee (Camp 1, see image below) and with partly shaded decomposing fallen tree trunk and limb wood (Camp 2, see image below). The infill of some of the mole tunnels in the Camp 2 trench yielded about 30 Itjari-itjari scats (see image below) which will be analysed to provide diet information.



The trench near Camp 1 that had the most substantial shows of tunnelling by Itjari-itjari. Note the deep leaf litter blanketing (where it is not covered by dug-out sand), and the nearby mallee and shrubs. This trench also yielded some small black millipedes that had ventured into the trench and were not found anywhere else.



The characteristic show of two cross sectioned Itjari-itjari tunnels exposed in a trench wall. As the animal progresses it back-fills the tunnel it has formed. This infill is less compact than

the general soil matrix and preferentially falls out as the exposed vertically cut sand surface dries (esp. over 1 to 4 days), leaving an outline of the circumference of the tunnel. These two tunnels are several to many months old (rather than days or years), the left one is possibly several months older than the right due to the presence of very fine hair roots in the infill. The four larger rootlets are in the soil matrix and not in either infills.



A single scat of an Itjari-itjari as it had fallen with tunnel infill to the base of the dug trench wall. The infill was carefully

tickled out of the tunnel with the black-gloved index finger (gloved finger-tip for scale). Analysis involves carefully dispersing the scat in 70% methylated spirits and water solution laced with detergent and then microscope finding

of identifiable fragments from prey items such as heads of termites, mandibles of beetles and their larvae, legs and feet of mole crickets, and teeth of burrowing slider skinks.

We also found evidence of predation of what was most likely a small Itjari-itjari by a young Red Fox (see images below).



The digging of a young Red Fox for what was probably an Itjari-itjari. Note the hind feet prints indicating it sat back to eat its catch from the dug hole. Foxes have acute hearing and regularly dig out burrowing animals that they can hear below the surface. The prey animal was small (see below) and had tunnelled obliquely upwards against the zone of heavily compacted sand under the graded (but not formed) Rhodinia Airport Track. Photographed early afternoon, the predation had occurred during the previous 18 or less hours. Temperatures from near 0 at night to 15 at 2 pm, with light rainfall the previous day.



The bottom of the 230 mm deep hole dug by the young Red Fox showing the prey animal's tunnel from which the prey was extracted. The tunnel's diameter was 18 to 20 mm and it had loose backfill towards the right and beyond the visible deep cavity. A few small dried leaves or leaf fragments have blown into the bottom.

Wyola Mallee

Following the 2016 work this species is now known at 29 occurrences. These are perhaps better thought of as track intercepts, because some of them probably represent detections of elongated stands along swales that are crossed at intervals of 3 to 10 km by parallel N-S seismic exploration access tracks. We found one very long unburnt stand (see image below), monitored recovery of basal epicormic growth, and of seedlings following recent burns (see image below for 2015 burn at the type locality).



Large, very old and very long unburnt Wyola Mallees beyond the equally old She-oak. Such long unburnt Wyola Mallee sites have no juvenile trees or seedlings, but the old trees can develop substantial basal epicormic regrowth which was the case at this site, so-much-so that the large erect trunks were all of that origin and the earlier trunks were dead and fallen in from years of termite activities.



Wyola Mallee seedlings monitoring site set up in 2015 and being read and recorded again in 2016. This site is within the original Wyola Mallee site (type locality) which was partially burnt in early 2015 and is approximately 1 km east of the Cross Roads. The seedling survival from last year to this was moderate, with some inevitable and expected losses. A few seedlings had proceeded to the juvenile stage, but none of them were as exceptionally vigorous as some of the juveniles at the locality but outside the monitoring quadrats.

We found one occurrence where there were plants that showed a gradation of leaf form (gradational hybrids?) between true Wyola Mallee and another species (see image below).



Each of these small branches with leaves came from a different low mallee, all of which were growing within a 10 metre radius. They showed a gradation of leaf form (gradational hybrids?) between true Wyola Mallee (on the left) with distinctly juvenile foliage, through decreasing indications of juvenile gum leaf characteristics and increasing indications of adult gum leaf characteristics, to what is clearly adult-leaved and a species other than Wyola Mallee.



The downward soakage after 14 hours of 5 mm of rain the previous late afternoon. The depth of penetration was 70 to 80 mm. Rainfalls of this amount are relatively common (though unpredictable) in desert areas and the extent of penetration correlates well with the abundance of ephemeral growth species that can use this short-lived abundance of water.

Reptiles of note

The reptiles of note that we saw included two species of Comb-eared Skinks or *Ctenotus* (*Ctenotus dux* and *C. quatuordecimlineatus*), the Silveryeye Skink (*Proablepharus reginae*, Camp 2), Nyiri (*Moloch horridus*, several widespread sightings), Desert Pygmy Monitor (*Varanus eremius*, at a Wyola Mallee site), Mulga Pygmy Monitor (*Varanus gilleni*, near the Cross Road), Desert Banded Snake (*Simoselaps bertholdii*, Camp 2), and a Mulga Snake (*Pseudechis australis*, at Oak Valley Airport).

We also observed a male Brown Falcon flying to his mate with a fresh caught Dragon (either *Ctenophorus fordi* or *C. isolepis*) at about 8am one relatively cool morning, and on another occasion a Brown Falcon dismembering a fresh-caught Rabbit kitten.

The female Nyiri (*Moloch horridus*) that was the subject of the photography in the first (group) picture. Besides the obvious defensive function, the spines also serve both as condensing points for dew in cool humid conditions as well as points for convective heat loss during hot times and high heat loads.



In conclusion

Despite the disappointment of not seeing Wipu Wara we did make many significant findings and experienced firsthand the awesome diversity and amazing life strategies of the plants and animals we encountered.

Thanks again to the Maralinga Tjarutja Elders and Community members. Thanks also to Jan Forrest for taking care of the essential pre-and post- trip administrative work.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the time we were able to spend in this part of Maralinga Tjarutja.

With good wishes, Harald.

WHAT I DID ON MY HOLIDAYS (TRIP A)

Rod Hobson (photos Geoff Rishworth)

Early on the 20th August I departed Ceduna on what was to be one of the more memorable enterprises of my natural history career. This had been in the offing since Harald Ehmann casually mentioned that he was heading up into the Great Victoria Desert "later this year" to do some fauna and flora work on the local Aboriginal land. This conversation took place in the rainforest of Fraser Island early this year where Harald and Helen had joined me there to look for the endangered Fraser Island Sand skink *Coggeria naufragus*. I was immediately interested in Harald's throw-away line, as the Great Victoria Desert had been a place that I've wanted to visit for a very long time. I was particularly excited when Harald actually invited me along on his proposed trip. It was this set of circumstances that found me, as a recently joined member of The Friends of the Great Victoria Desert, early on this morning following Harald out of Ceduna for my first day in the Great Victoria Desert. After a day mostly passed in driving we eventually set camp on the Oak Valley Road in Maralinga Tjarutja Administration's land not far from this road's junction with the road into Maralinga. We arrived here fairly late so records for our campsite were scant but we did observe the following: Oak Valley Road, Maralinga, Maralinga Tjarutja Administration at GDA94 – 52J E742730 x N6660967; +/- 250 metres:

- Crested Bellbird
- Brown Falcon
- Grey-headed Honeyeater
- Narrow-leaved Red Mallee *Eucalyptus leptophylla*
- Pimpin Mallee *Eucalyptus pimpiniana*
- Bush Tomato *Solanum quadriloculatum* (flowering)

On our second day into our trip we headed for the Oak Valley Community where Harald spent a good part of the day engaged in various matters concerning our upcoming work before we headed for our campsite at an area known locally as The Crossroads. Near to our here we stopped awhile and Harald showed us the type locality of the rare and restricted Wyola Mallee *Eucalyptus wyolensis* that was growing in company of another eucalypt viz. Beadell's Mallee *Eucalyptus canescens beadelli*. In this area (GDA94 – 52J E618596 x N6754227; +/- 250 metres) I found large numbers of dead, bleached shells of the native land snail *Sinumelon tarcoolanum*, the Tarcoola Dwarf Melon Snail. Grey-headed Honeyeater and Mallee Ringneck (race *zonarius*) were common in this area, as well.

On the next midmorning we were joined by fellow FGVP members Peter and Sandra James and Geoff Rishworth and we headed off in convoy to our next campsite along Airport Road at GDA94 – 52J E5972994 x N6792678 where we set up for the next six days.



Left to right: Geoff Rishworth, Peter and Sandy James, Helen Bryant Rob Hobson and Harald Ehmann.

After setting up camp we spent this afternoon in Marble Gum *Eucalyptus gongylocarpa* country inspecting stands of these trees looking for nesting Princess Parrot but to no avail, however we were able to gather data on post fire recruitment of these gums at sites visited. This latter was also an important aspect of our work during this visit. Tawny Frogmouth and Australian Owlet-nightjar were heard calling around our camp this night.



The morning of the 23rd of August after a freezing night produced our first sighting of Camel; a lone individual on the track near our camp. Of much more interest, however, was our find of the first of several Thorny Devils *Moloch horridus* for the trip. A lone adult female of this curious creature was found under a small shrub in our camp after breakfast. This morning we ventured out again

for the day searching for Princess Parrot but again without any luck, however we did continue with our Marbled Gum survey and monitoring operations. At one of these sites (GDA94-52J E582716 x N6788312; +/- 250 metres) we recorded a small family of the beautiful Splendid Fairy-wren and also a single of the Black-collared Dragon *Ctenophorus clayi*. The dragon lizards were certainly the highlights of my day.

After the passing of another freezing night the day of the 24th was virtually a repeat of yesterday even to our not finding any Princess Parrots. Today we travelled as far as one of the TFGVDP's old sites – Tjakura Camp on the Volkers Hill-Cook Track where Scarlet-chested Parrot had been sighted on a previous trip but no such luck today. As regards fauna sightings today proved quite unremarkable but we did visit a lot of Marble Gum sites!

On our next day, the 25th August Geoff and I spent driving tracks in the vicinity of our camp looking for Princess Parrot until midday but only saw Mallee Ringnecks and Mulga Parrot. After lunch everyone spent the afternoon around camp and I dug out two scorpions from their burrows in the sand dunes behind camp. These were the large Desert Scorpion *Urodacus yaschenkoi*. Harald spent today digging a survey trench to look for indications of Marsupial Mole *Notoryctes typhlops* in the area. Close inspection of the trench walls showed clear signs of past and recent Marsupial Mole activity. A second Thorny Devil found in camp and the small skink, the Inland Snake-eyed Skink *Cryptoblepharus australis* also observed here today.

The morning of the 26th found Geoff and I out on the eternal quest for The Parrot driving tracks up until midday. On our return drive we were rewarded for our efforts not with the target animal but another parrot just about as good. At GDA94 – 52J E613418 x N6797543; +/- 20 metres I saw a Neophema parrot fly up off a chenopod field to alight in a nearby tree. On glassing the bird I was elated to confirm my first ever Scarlet-chested Parrot; a beautiful adult male in his splendid livery. The twitcher in you never really dies when you see a bird like this for the first time. Eventually the bird flew off as I got too close but,

interestingly, was shortly joined by five more of the species that I was unaware of to this moment! This day eventually proved quite productive as, aside to this parrot, we also found Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Australian Hobby and Red-backed Kingfisher among other more common species. The dazzling little butterfly Satin Azure *Ogyris amaryllis meridionalis* recorded ovipositing on mistletoe at camp this morning and Pale Knob-tailed Gecko *Nephurus laevis* and Beaded Gecko *Lucasium damaeum* head-torched on the dunes behind camp tonight.

The 27th August proved as disappointing as all days prior in our search for Princess Parrot but a few interesting species were added to our trip list during our daily peregrinations that included Nankeen Kestrel, White-winged Triller, Wedge-tailed Eagle and Chestnut Quail-thrush. I filled in the parrot-less day collecting some grasshoppers that vindicated my lumping Rentz et al's tome A Guide to Australian Grasshoppers and Locusts on the trip. Species recorded were:

- Bark-mimicking Grasshopper *Coryphistes ruficollis* (central race)
- Blue-legged Hairy Grasshopper *Tapesta carneipes*
- Striped Ungee-gungee *Desertaria fasciata*
- The Parazelum *Parazelum rubripes*
- Large False Gumleaf Grasshopper *Goiaeaidea* sp.
- Black Grasshopper *Rusurplia tristis*

Today, the 28th August, was mostly devoted to our moving camp to Oil Bore Road at GDA94 – 52J E559012 x N6778860 where we arrived at the same time as the rain; immaculate timing. On a plus side to setting up camp in the rain we were regaled throughout by the melancholic piping of a lone Pallid Cuckoo on its exposed perch atop a nearby dead tree; our sentinel for our stay. Other fauna of interest for today included Geoff's find of the very colourful little snake *Simoselaps bertoldi* (Jan's Banded Snake) under a log



while he was clearing his campsite this afternoon. During similar operations Harald also found the reduced limbed little skink, the Eastern Two-toed Slider *Leista labialis*.

Today we also saw our first macropods. Along Airport Road a small mob of Western Grey Kangaroo *Macropus fuliginosus* crossed in front of us and ditto for shortly

after another Scarlet-chested Parrot. Our repose tonight was disturbed by a disgruntled bull Camel circling our tents gurgling, blubbing and dribbling as is their wont.

The bird list (not comprehensive) for our Airport Road campsite at GDA94 – 52J E5972994 x N6792678; +/- 100 metres; 22nd-28th August is:

- Galah
- Tawny Frogmouth
- Australian Owlet-nightjar
- Crested bellbird
- Willie Wagtail
- Grey Butcherbird
- Weebill
- Grey-headed Honeyeater
- Brown Falcon
- Mallee Ringneck
- Wedge-tailed Eagle

Our first morning in our new camp, the morning of the 29th August spent around camp where my walk revealed a few birds the most interesting of which was a small flock of Slender-billed Thornbills in a mixed feeding flock of small passerines. Also, around camp this morning I saw two species of butterfly viz. Lesser Wanderer *Danaus petilia* and Meadow Argus *Junonia villida* as well as the large dragonfly Australian Emperor *Anax papuensis*. The fruiting body of the curious fungus *Podaxis pistillaris* seen growing on the roadside by our camp today, as well.

Today we were joined by FGVD members Manfred and Anne Jusaitis.



Anne and Manfred Jusaitis, Rob Hobson, Helen Bryant, Harald Ehmann and Geoff Rishworth.

Activities for the 30th and 31st August were very much dictated by the unfortunate breakdown of Peter and Sandra's vehicle and Geoff's subsequent and very commendable effort of towing the disabled vehicle into Oak Valley airstrip for its eventual transhipping to Adelaide. Take a bow Geoff, a marathon effort successfully concluded. It was sad to see Sandy and Pete's early departure, as they are great travelling companions and their stoicism under adversity was truly admirable. During these operations we did see a few animals of interest including Mulga Snake *Pseudechis australis* near the Oak Valley air strip on the second day, see Geoff Rishworth photo below.



On both days Dwarf Bearded Dragon *Pogona minor* was quite common on the road especially in the vicinity of Oak Valley. Large numbers of Mulga Parrots also seen over these two days.

The first day of spring belied its reputation dawning as cold

and wet, miserable, which persisted the day long. We spent the day looking for Princess Parrot. No luck and "you should have been here last year" was starting to ring hollow in the ear.

Geoff and I spent the morning of 02nd September digging a Marsupial Mole trench on the sand dune just by camp. Although the trench walls showed signs of mole activity none was too recent. After lunch we all set off on our never-ending quest for the feathered phantom but only found more lizards including the great little goanna, the Pygmy Desert Monitor *Varanus eremius*, another Thorny Devil and many Central Military Dragons *Ctenophorus isolepis*. More Satin Azures seen today and, around camp new records for Butler's Snake-eyed Skink *Morethia butleri* and the Fourteen-lined *Ctenotus Ctenotus quattuordecimlineatus*.

Some good additional species records got for today, the 03rd September with the dawn heralded in by a Dingo howling near camp. While sitting over breakfast I was visited briefly by a male Scarlet-chested Parrot; doesn't get much better than that. The rest of today we spent around camp with a very productive afternoon/evening gathering records for Mallee Military Dragon *Ctenophorus fordi*, Brook's Wedge-snouted Ctenotus *Ctenotus brooksi*, Fourteen-lined Ctenotus and Spinifex Snake-eyed skink *Problepharus reginae*, this last being generally regarded as a rare beast according to my available literature at the time. Also, this afternoon we found our only frog for the trip, a single Sudell's Frog *Neobatrachus sudellae*.

The 04th September we spent a long day driving some very remote and obscure tracks with a focus on plotting additional subpopulations of Wyola Mallee; a successful enterprise as the day panned out. Throughout our travails a line from Banjo Patterson's A Bush Christening kept resounding in my head; the one that goes, "On a road never cross'd 'cept by folk that are lost." Anyway, another pair of Scarlet-chested Parrots were sighted today at GDA94 – 52J E592231 x N6786705: +/- 50 metres and, on the dune behind camp this afternoon we added Burton's Snake-lizard *Lialis burtonis* and Marble-faced Delma *Delma australis* to the trip list.

The day of the 05th passed on general camp duties, plant-pressing, vehicle repairs and maintenance except for a search of the dunes by camp this afternoon that revealed another two lizards for our trip, the Narrow-lined Ctenotus *Ctenotus dux* and the tiny Western Two-toed Slider *Lerista bipes* plus a second record of the rare Spinifex Snake-eyed Skink; this time a breeding adult male showing off his very rich reddish-yellow facial and neck pattern. Two Pale Knob-tailed Gecko recorded on the sand dune near camp tonight.

The penultimate day of our desert stay, the 06th September spent moving camp back to The Cross Roads for an early start home tomorrow also to be closer to the Oak Valley community where Harald gave a talk to the children at the community's school. Some interesting natural history observations today included one of Manfred's observation of a Brown Falcon eating a Rabbit kitten near camp early this morning. When we were at The Crossroads Harald caught and released a specimen of the Pygmy Mulga Monitor *Varanus gilleni* that was our first record of this goanna for our trip. On our drive into Oak Valley today we found a female Thorny Devil and two female Dwarf Bearded Dragons all excavating egg chambers in the soft sandy rills left by the grader along the road edges. A Western Blue-tongue *Tiliqua occipitalis* also seen on the road near Oak

Valley today. Australasian Pipit, little Eagle, Cockatiel and White-backed Swallow added to our list today.

The bird list for our Oil Bore Road camp site at GDA94 – 52J E559012 x N6778860; +/- 500 metres; 28th August-06th September 2016:

- Slender-billed Thornbill
- Crested Bellbird
- Pallid Cuckoo
- Willie Wagtail
- Budgerigar
- Inland Thornbill
- White-winged Triller
- Zebra Finch
- Nankeen Kestrel Brown Falcon (nesting) - see photo below.
- Australian Owlet-nightjar
- Pied Honeyeater
- Mulga Parrot
- White-fronted Honeyeater
- Grey Shrike-thrush
- Pied Butcherbird
- Mallee Ringneck
- Mistletoebird
- Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
- Scarlet-chested Parrot
- Red-capped Robin
- Jacky Winter
- Grey-headed Honeyeater
- Galah
- White-rumped Miner
- Tree Martin
- Grey Butcherbird
- Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo
- Weebill



- Tawny Frogmouth
- Variegated Fairy-wren

Our last day in the Great Victoria Desert, the 07th September; all gone too fast. Our last task before heading to our various homes was to resurvey Harald's and Manfred's Wyola Mallee monitoring site near The Cross Roads, the same site as my first introduction to the Great Victoria Desert a fortnight ago. Nothing too much to report for this morning except for quite a number of the fungus *Podaxis pistillaris* found in this area (GDA94 – 52J E618385 x N6754266; +/- 50 metres). About midmorning we dispersed to our respective destinations Harald and Helen down to the Head of the Bight via Cook to go whale-watching and Manfred and Anne to Adelaide and me on the long trek back to Toowoomba in south-east Queensland. It was worth it though, lots of new and interesting animals and plants and some great new friends.

Thanks you lot. We'll have to do it again one day. Pity about The Parrot.

BOTANICAL NOTES on GVD Trip (Trip A)

Aug-Sept 2016

Manfred Jusaitis

Our group camped along the Bore Head Track, directly between the Nurrari Lakes and the lower Serpentine Lakes.

Most of our time was spent exploring tracks in this area, looking for Wyola Mallee and collecting plant specimens opportunistically, particularly in areas that had been recently burnt.

The known range of Wyola Mallee was extended significantly with several large sightings in between the original Crossroads population and the Rig Road population (Fig. 1), suggesting that the population extends contiguously throughout the intervening region.



Fig 1. New sightings of Wyola Mallee. This group of trees were particularly old and had not seen fire for many years (with Geoff Rishworth)

Two photopoints at the Crossroads were assessed (Fig. 2). Of the Wyola Mallee seedlings that had emerged following the Dec 2014 bushfire, 58% were still surviving this year and had reached an average height of 185 mm (Fig. 3).

Plant collections are currently being prepared for lodgement into the State Herbarium.



Above: Fig 2. Monitoring Wyola Mallee photopoint (with Rod Hobson and Harold Ehmann)

Left: Fig 3. Wyola Mallee seedling 2 yr after bushfire.

REPORT ON FIELD TRIP B - 21 August to 6 September 2016**Lynton Huxley****TRIP TRAVEL SUMMARY:**

Our group of 15 members in 8 vehicles travelled west from Ceduna along the Eyre Highway to Nullarbor Road House, then north-west via Cook to the Aboriginal Business Road junction west of Oak Valley. From that junction we travelled west on the Aboriginal Business Road to Tjuntjuntjara in Western Australia where the group chose alternative return routes.

It is estimated that we each travelled around 2,200 km from Ceduna to Ceduna, plus travel to and from our respective homes

OBJECTIVES:

The activities for our group on this trip included: visiting existing survey photo point sites along the Business Road (west of the Oak Valley Community) towards the WA border, progressing into the southern part of Mamungari Conservation Park to update plant and species data; undertaking opportunistic plant and insect collections as well as bird, reptile and mammal observations; digging 'mole holes' to ascertain evidence of these animals occurring in the area.

PARTICIPANTS

Flora and Des Bain, Terie and Trevor Coleman, Jan Forrest, David Keane, Jan and Ray Hutchinson, Karen and Lynton Huxley, Dianne and Paul Koch, Phil Prust and Erica and Dave Tomkins.

The above mentioned members mixed and worked well together during our two week trip. The two roast dinners were most enjoyable as was the excellent quiz night hosted by David Keane.

TRIP COMMENT

Our group met at the Ceduna Foreshore Hotel for the traditional dinner and trip briefing on Sunday evening and it was here that we received an update on the non-attendance of Johan, whose Prado engine had expired at Port Wakefield! Fortunately, besides a few punctured tyres, no other difficulties were encountered and the members of this group had no health problems or sustained any reportable injuries.

The weather this time was milder than some previous years and made for pleasant camping conditions. The country we traversed along the Business Road (west and north) was much drier than we expected resulting in less insect and bird activity. Having said that there were some areas densely carpeted with Sturt Desert Pea and other flowering plants which resulted in many camera memory cards getting a solid workout!

Our bird survey provided a total of 51 species (but sadly lacked observations of the iconic Princess and Scarlet-chested Parrots). See separate list.

Our trip biologist David Keane identified some interesting plants and was eager to develop strategies for future trips. See separate report.

The occurrence of the pastureland weed 'Ward's weed' *Carrichtera annua* (L.) Asch. in Mamungari is of concern.

This weed was found to occur in small numbers along the southern business road that runs through the park and is thought to have been brought in by graders working on the road as was not observed far off the road. Once into WA the weed became more and more widespread. More work is required to ascertain if the weed is more widespread in South Australia or is confined to a small patch in Mamungari. This may form part of our proposed survey work in the future. If it has not spread widely it may be possible to manually remove it from the park.



Five sets of three 'mole holes' were dug with a positive result at one site on 'Rig Road' just north of the business road. 29°24'57.9"S 129°32'05.0"E.



Our members on this trip greatly appreciated the opportunity to undertake our surveys and travel through that portion of the Great Victoria Desert with the support and blessing of the traditional owners. In particular having access to travel along the Aboriginal Business Road and to refuel at Tjuntjuntjara Community made the commute easier on both the vehicles and the occupants.



Photos: Wards weed and mole holes Jan Forrest, checking out *E. wyolensis* L.Huxley.

LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED IN THE GREAT VICTORIA DESERT (TRIP B)

Lynton Huxley and team

Wedge-tailed Eagle	Singing Honeyeater
Spotted Harrier	Grey-fronted Honeyeater
Australian Bustard	Weebill
Little Buttonquail	Chestnut-rumped Thornbill
Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Pallid Cuckoo	Southern Whiteface
Red-backed Kingfisher	White-browed Babbler
Nankeen Kestrel	Chiming Wedgebill
Australian Hobby	Chestnut Quail-thrush
Brown Falcon	Black-faced Woodswallow
Peregrine Falcon	Grey Butcherbird
Cockatiel	Pied Butcherbird
Galah	Black-faced Cuckooshrike
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo	White-winged Triller
Mulga Parrot	Crested Bellbird
Australian Ringneck	Rufous Whistler
Budgerigar	Grey Shrikethrush
White-browed Treecreeper	Willie Wagtail
Variegated Fairywren	Grey Fantail
Splendid Fairywren	Little Crow
Superb Fairywren	Australian Raven
Pied Honeyeater	Hooded Robin
Crimson Chat	Jacky Winter
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	Red-capped Robin
Yellow-throated Miner	Zebra Finch
White-fronted Honeyeater	TOTAL 51 SPECIES



Little Buttonquail
and Supurb
Fairywren.
Photos: Lynton
Huxley



Other trip B photos: top left *Ctenophorus inermis*, right *Ctenotus schomburgkii*. Photos: L.Huxley;
Above: *Tiliqua rugosa* Photos: Jan Forrest (on the nullarbor plain),
middle right *Nephurus laevis* Photo: Lynton Huxley.

Far right Trip B participants left to right: Terie and Trevor Coleman, Paul and Dianne Koch, Jan Forrest, David Keane, Jan Hutchinson, Lynton and Karen Huxley, Ray Hutchinson (in front) Erica and Dave Tomkins, Phil Prust, Des and Flora Bain. Photo Geoff Rishworth.



GREAT VICTORIA DESERT: REVIEW OF FLORA SURVEY PLOTS (Trip B)

David Keane, Field Botanist

Introduction

This report is based on site visits to review existing survey plots, undertaken by the Friends of the Great Victoria Desert group, during the last week of September and the first week of October 2016. The objective was to observe current plot sites to ascertain their condition since the last inspections some ten years ago. The plots are located north of the Nullarbor Region (N) and in the southern portion of the North-western (NW) Region of South Australia. Unfortunately the original survey plot data, including the full plant list, was not available in time for the trip so a detailed analysis and direct comparison of flora status over time was not possible. The site visits also included a bird survey by the ornithologists and an array of helpers.

General comments

Most of the plots were in senescence, that is; 'with no or little change to the flora or habitat; a climax community which has reached a relatively stable condition in which it is unable to reproduce itself indefinitely under existing conditions; a mature plant community'. Some plots to the west had been disturbed by a recent fire and showed promise of a greater diversity and renewal of understorey species.

Site highlights

Plot numbers with data	Comments on site observations and species of interest. All sites designated as mature desert woodland or mature desert open woodland.
MU00701	Plants observed <i>Geijera linearifolia</i> "Sheep bush", <i>Chrysocephalum eremaum</i> (syn. <i>Helichrysum ambiguum</i>) "Everlasting daisies"
MU0011	<i>Sclerolaena parviflora</i> , <i>Scaevola spinescens</i> were scattered throughout, <i>Chrysocephalum</i> sp. (tomentose stems), <i>Poa</i> sp. <i>Olearia muelleri</i> few bushes
TJU0010	<i>Eremophila latrobei</i>
TJU0017	<i>Eremophila glabra</i>
TJU0012	<i>Eucalyptus vkesensis/yumbarrana</i> like <i>wyolensis</i> which is much rarer,
TJU0015	Evidence of fresh kangaroo tracks
TJU007	<i>Daucus glochidiatus</i> "native carrot" in a protected damp area
MU0601A	Plants observed <i>Euphorbia drummondii</i> "Caustic weed or flat spurge", <i>Brachyscome ciliaris</i> (variation unknown, no fruits). <i>Convolvulus remotus</i> , <i>Condonocarpus cotinifolius</i> "Desert poplar"

All other plots

No detailed information was taken as the plots represented a uniformity of mature desert open woodland with little diversity of species. Many species were identified on site and were not collected.

Other interesting plants found on the trip

Due to plentiful rains the desert was blooming with carpets of many coloured flowers including daisies, blue and rarer pink pincushions, Sturt peas and many desert eremophilas ("hairy mufflers" by the helpers). The rare *Eremophila hillii* was also found, named after my botany teacher, the late and wonderful Ron Hill. One of the most interesting plants, not often seen or collected, was the small ground daisy, pictured below:



The "Ground-head daisy" botanically named *Chthonocephalus pseudevax* is a stemless annual with its daisy head flat on the ground, measuring only the size of a five to a twenty cent piece. This would be pollinated by small ground insects. Locally common but rarely noticed.

Recommendations

The existing plots displayed a similarity of flora and characteristics which is not representative of the variety in the area. To capture data on a greater diversity of species and variety of plant communities it is recommended that some of the existing plots be excluded from regular surveys in the future and new plots added. This could target the threatened plant species occurring in the area, allowing the capture of meaningful data on their status over time. It is important

to locate any threatened species in the area for monitoring. It could also target the recently burned areas to monitor emergence of species diversity in the wake of fire.

References

Plants of the Outback South Australia by Frank Kutsche and Brendan Lay; *Plants of Inland Australia* by Philip Moore, *Flora of South Australia* by JP Jessop and HR Toelken, *State Herbarium Regional printouts*, *Native Eucalyptus of South Australia* by Dean Nicolle and *Plants of Western New South Wales* by GM Cunningham et al.

FRIENDS OF THE GVD PHOTO PLOT FIELD TRIP – 18 to 24 September 2016 (trip C)

Peter Facy planned and led this trip, the main aim being to photograph seventy-seven photographic plots in the western and northern parts of the GVD – no small task! We also compared satellite images of fire scars on a map of the area with what we saw on the ground, noting GPS coordinates and the extent of regeneration occurring. While we did not undertake formal vegetation surveys, we identified and photographed over 80 different species of plants, and noted the extent of Wards weed (*Carrichtera annua*) infestation along roadsides. In addition, the two bird experts on our trip listed the 25 birds they had sighted.



Our party comprised seven members – from left to right: Peter Facy, Brian McKay, Gill McKay, Bill Dowling, Fiona and Kevin O'Connor and Neil Matthews, – in four vehicles.

Our route took us to Irish Well campsite on our first night, via Penong, Colona, Ooldea and the Lake Dey-Dey Road – all easy driving. A highlight en route was visiting the new outdoor windmill museum at Penong – well worth a visit for anyone heading west! On the second day we continued along the Lake Dey-Dey Road to a campsite at the intersection with the Cook Road, with a detour to Oak Valley to refuel and touch base with local people about our plans. From this point, our journey took us west on the Business Rd nearly to the WA border, south on the BMR 6 Rd, then north on the BMR 6 Rd to the old oil rig site, east along the northern BMR 4 road, camping along the way, then eventually south again to the intersection of the Cook and Lake Dey-Dey Roads. The old mining roads are still in good condition, allowing us to make excellent progress except on the northern BMR 4 Rd, which is narrow, very overgrown in some parts and with patches of soft sand. Without maintenance, we believed that travel on the northern BMR 4 road may be very difficult within a few years.

Between Ooldea and the Maralinga turnoff we drove through the first fire scar – a 1980 fire – a sparsely vegetated area of grasses, salt bush and senna, leading to debate about whether this was the result of the 1980 fire or other causes, such as grazing some years ago.

We visited photographic plots on every leg of the journey, comparing the photos from past visits to each photographic plot with current vegetation and taking a new photograph for this linear study of the area. This is a fascinating process, with some sets of photographs recording change at specific points over twenty or so years.

See page 11 for a record of four sites with photographs taken during different years.

We began with five 'Maralinga' photographic plots (MAR 004 to 008) on the Lake Dey-Dey Rd. Here the landscape has clearly benefitted from recent rainfall and is looking healthier with more diverse vegetation than elsewhere on our field trip, with lots of *Eucalyptus pimpliniana*, bush tomatoes (*Solanum*), eremophilas, mulla mulla (*Ptilotus*), spinifex, sennas and our only grevillea in flower on the entire trip (*Grevillea juncifolia*). Patches of the lovely paper foxtail (*Ptilotus gaudichaudii*) with their starbursts of yellow tipped with bright pink were highlights of these plots.



Eucalyptus pimpliniana and *Ptilotus gaudichaudii*
Photos: Fiona O'Connor.

The road south east of the Oak Valley turnoff is northern limit for a 2011 fire scar which stretches as far as the Cook Road – about 100km in all. While there is still evidence of the fire in some blackened tree trunks, the vegetation in this part of the GVD has good cover, with larger eucalypts (various mallees), and lots of spinifex, blue bush (*Maireana sedifolia*), and various acacias and senna bushes in flower.

On the second day we photographed 15 plots, being unable to reach the last plot on the road to West St due to the track being very overgrown and in future will no longer be able to travel on this road. A highlight being the two 'Wyolensis' plots that feature the lovely, scraggly *Eucalyptus wyolensis* mallee, unfortunately not in flower, and on the same road, several closely related *Eucalyptus vokensis* specimens. Both species occur in small areas of the GVD only, with the official conservation status *E. wyolensis* rated as 'rare' and *E. vokensis* as 'near threatened'. We diverted down the Cook Road to two photographic plots, one featuring a number of desert heath myrtles (*Aluta maisonneuvei*) in full flower and covered with bees, and several patches of blue pincushion (*Brunonia australis*) which grows naturally across Australia, but only in a very small area of the GVD.



Eucalyptus wyolensis and *E. vokensis*
Photos: F.O'Connor

The landscape became drier and less lush as we travelled towards the WA border taking in a further eleven photographic plots, with large areas of spinifex, black oak (*Casuarina pauper*), some patches of paper daises and the ever present hop bushes (*Dodonea sp*) with their distinctive bright red fruit, blue bushes (*Maireana sedifolia*), sennas and mulla mulla.

The BMR 6 road north past the Rodinia air strip and old oil rig passes through a large scar from a 2014 fire. This land was marked with many burnt trees and bare red sand, but also considerable regrowth, including marble gums (*Eucalyptus gongylocarpa*) resprouting from limbs as well as lignotubers at the base of the trees, and widespread seedlings. These augur well for the future of the species and their birds - the Princess or longtailed parrot. Other plants enjoying regrowth after the fire here and on the eastern leg of our trip were the aptly named fire bush (*Keraudrenia sp*) which covered the roadsides with pale mauve flowers, desert poplars (*Codonocarpus continifolius* – much loved by camels), yellow goodenia, a range of paper daises, grevillea seedlings and the horse mulga (*Acacia ramulosa*). In some areas this fussy vegetation grew in the centre of the track, threatening to obliterate it.

On the fourth and fifth days of photographing plots, out of respect for the local indigenous people, the party split so that photographs could be taken in areas that are open to men only. The first group of these plots was on the old Voakes Hill Road and the second group north of the Oak Valley community on the Dey-Dey Rd the following day, this road was also very overgrown and we will no longer travel this road in the future. We were fortunate to have the assistance of two men from Oak Valley, Roger and Aaron, to help locate the photo plots north of Oak Valley. A further 25 plots were photographed on those two days.

On the last day – cold and wet at times – we drove from Ooldea out to Immarna, the siding on the East-West railway before Ooldea, to complete our last three



Marble gum resprouting after fire and seedlings.
Photos: F.O'Connor

photographic plots. This is the site where a Friends of the GVD group camped in 2013, in 40-degree heat. Quite different this time!! The first two plots were at the campsite, which was again dotted with the bright pink scented emu bush (*Eremophila alternifolia*). The third, 20 km along a mining track behind the dune we camped beside in 2013, is in an area that had been burnt out earlier that year. Three years on we found considerable regrowth, with eucalypts resprouting from the base and smaller plants such as mulla mulla, daisies, twin leaf (*Zygophyllum* sp), various salt bushes and large areas of halgania providing ground cover. However, it will be many years before the natural cycle of regeneration of the vegetation after fire is complete.

Throughout the trip Neil and Gill kept an eye on the birdlife, pointing sightings out to the rest of us when we were around. They listed 25 birds:

- Australian ringneck
- White-winged triller
- Grey-fronted honeyeater
- Pallid cuckoo
- Willy wagtail
- Budgerigar
- Spiney-cheeked honeyeater
- Crested bellbird (heard)
- Galah
- Cockatiel
- Jacky winter
- Red-backed kingfisher
- Hobby
- Little crow
- Black-faced cuckoo shrike
- Tree martin
- Grey shrike thrush
- Black-faced woodswallow
- Dusky woodswallow
- Australian bustard
- Australian pipit
- Redthroat
- White-browed babbler
- Singing honeyeater
- Murray magpie

This was a memorable trip for all: a large amount of data collected (but sadly no Princess (longtailed) parrots) sighted, terrific organization, excellent company, lots of laughs, not too many flat tires, brilliant campfire cooking, and, of course, lots of stories which will remain 'on the trip'! Thanks must go to Peter Facy for his immaculate planning and his efficient and caring leadership of the group.

Fiona OConnor



Landscape towards WA border. Photo: Fiona OConnor



All three trips reported one of the best displays of Sturt Desert Peas this year, see left.

Below left: Golden Orb Weaver spider.
Photos Geoff Rishworth

Below right: a second species of "Ground-head daisy" featured in David Keane's report:
Photo: Jan Forrest



VEGETATION SITES - COMPARISON OVER TIME



MAM001 above 2011 and right 2016



MAM003 above 2014 and right 2016



TJU013 above 2008 and right 2014



WYO004 above 2011 and right 2016



Butterfly Conservation South Australia Inc.

presents

a PUBLIC TALKS PROGRAM

on the first Tuesday of the month March to
November at 6.15pm for a prompt 6.30pm start.

At the Clarence Park Community Centre
72-74 East Avenue, Black Forest.
Bus route W91/W90: stop 10.
Noarlunga Train service: Clarence Park Station.
Glenelg Tram: Forestville stop 4, 9min walk south.

Entry by donation (minimum of \$2).

Bring supper to share, tea/coffee will be supplied.

Meetings should conclude by 8.30pm.

At the start of each meeting a ten minute
presentation on a 'Butterfly of the Month'
will be given by a BCSA committee member.

Photo Robert H Fisher: Common Brown *Heteronympha merope*

2027 will mark the sixth consecutive year that Butterfly Conservation SA will conduct a Public Talks Program in the Clarence Park Community Centre on the first Tuesday of the month March to November. An interesting program is being developed by the committee and they are sure everyone will find something of interest. Hope to see you at one of our talks. Contact: Secretary, Jan Forrest 08 82978230 for more information.

PUBLIC TALKS PROGRAM 2017

7th March: *the Nature of SA* together we're finding a new way forward for nature conservation in South Australia' talk by DEWNR representative to be advised.

4th April: *Bush Foods* talk by Neville Bonney an author of several books on this fascinating subject.

2nd May: *Parasitisation of Moths and Butterflies* Erinn Fagan-Jeffries will talk about her most interesting research project.

6th June: *Pollination*. Many different insect groups and some animals (not just bees) have a major role in pollinating plants. Mike Gemmel from the SAMuseum Discovery Centre will explore ways each of these groups perform this very important task.

4th July: *Acacias*. Martin O'Leary from the State Herbarium has spent a lifetime researching this numerous and important Australian plant group.

1st August: 6.30pm BCSA AGM **7.00pm Public Talk Changes in native animal behaviour in our region.** Dr David Paton will explore the changes taking place in our community.

5th September: *Spring is here*. ABC Gardening Australia presenter Sophie Thomson will charm the audience with her bright personality and gardening knowledge. **NOTE different venue** - to be held at: **St Peter Claver Hall, Stuart Road, Dulwich.**

3rd October: *'Protection of native grasslands in Council reserves'* Liam Crook. Grasses are critical to the survival of many native species. Liam will provide an insight on how local councils are conserving grasses in their reserves.

7th November: *'Wildlife of Greater Adelaide'* James Smith from Faunature is the author of this comprehensive book. He will talk about some of the more interesting Adelaide animal species he discovered while working on this book.

In the case of an advertised speaker not being available, a speaker of similar interest will replace that advertised.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE

DIARY DATES

MEETINGS

NEXT MEETING: Our next meeting will be at **7:30 pm on Friday 10th February**. As this will be the AGM members are asked to consider standing for office. Meetings are held at the Sports SA Industry Skills Centre on Military Rd at West Beach (across the road from the West Beach Caravan park). All members and prospective members are welcome. The agenda will be available before the meeting in the member's area of the website <http://www.communitywebs.org/fgvd/>

2017 MEETING DATES: Further meetings during 2017 will be **9th June and 10th Nov**. Check out the website for full details.

2017 FIELD TRIP: President Jan Forrest invites members to a meeting of all interested members on **Monday 30th January at 7.30pm at 30 Churchill Avenue, CLARENCE PARK** to discuss not only the 2017 field trip but the future direction of field work in the desert areas. We need to identify interests and expertise of members. Including who has an interest in extending our knowledge of the plant communities either by undertaking surveys and opportunistic survey work. What opportunities exist to become more involved in locating and conserving endangered plant species? Is there conservation work or maintenance projects or other 'hands on' work needed? And how can we best use our expertise in bird watching and photography? Following our initial discussions we need to seek advice from traditional owners MT Lands Council and staff from the Department of Environment and the AM NRM Board.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jan Forrest OAM	President	president@fgvd.org.au
Fiona OConnor	Vice President	
Bill Dowling	Secretary	secretary@fgvd.org.au
Peter Facy	Treasurer	treasurer@fgvd.org.au
vacant	Logistics officer	

WEB LINKS

DEH information on Mamungari Conservation Park:
<http://www.parks.sa.gov.au/mamungari/index.htm>
Friends of Great Victoria Desert:
<http://www.communitywebs.org/fgvd/>