

CARING FOR WILD PLACES, WILDLIFE & CULTURAL HERITAGE

Wildcare Inc. Annual Report 2016



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Front cover image: Photo credit, Greig Clarke. Leven River Gorge in flood near Loongana

Back cover image: Photo credit, Amber Travica. Priya Ferguson and Yasmin Black

"The girls were eager to spot some birds and very excited to be visiting the Tamar Island Wetlands so early in the morning. Breakfast in the Centre was such a novelty for them both"



ABOUT WILDCARE

With around 7,000 members, Wildcare is the largest and fastest growing community volunteer organisation dedicated to caring for the State's parks and reserves, flora, fauna and cultural heritage. Its slogan is 'caring for wild places, wildlife and cultural heritage'.

Wildcare provides management and support for volunteers working in natural and cultural heritage conservation and reserve management throughout Tasmania. It works in partnership with government agencies, notably the Parks and Wildlife Service, local government and private landholders and contributes over 500,000 hours of voluntary project work each year.

Wildcare is a community-based, not-for-profit volunteer organisation founded in 1997 and incorporated in 1998. It is also a registered environmental organisation and a registered deductible gift recipient and is entitled to receive tax deductible donations. It is managed by a Board of Management composed of elected and nominated members. The responsibility of the Board is to oversee Wildcare's strategic direction and allocate moneys under the Wildcare Gift Fund. More information on the year's activities of the Wildcare Gift Fund is provided elsewhere in this yearbook.

As an environmental organisation, Wildcare must have a Public Fund to receive donations. The Public Fund is called the Wildcare Gift Fund and was established in 2005. Its purpose is to raise funds through tax-deductible donations to support reserve management projects and nature conservation projects in Tasmania.

As well as attracting funds for the general purposes of the Wildcare Gift Fund, tax deductible donations can be made to a number of ancillary funds within it, called Natural Partner Funds. They provide an opportunity for donors to give to specific purposes associated with the environmental objectives of Wildcare. These Natural Partner Funds include the Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund, Wildcarbon Fund, Whale Rescue Fund, Injured and Orphaned Wildlife Fund and the World Heritage Wilderness Fund.

Wildcare actively seeks to provide opportunities and support for community engagement in its programs throughout the State. Activities are grouped into five main activity areas and are delivered either by local Branches or through special programs. The five activity areas are:

Community action in reserves – management of parks and reserves.

Heritage care – cultural heritage conservation such as excavation assistance, archival research and historic site management.

Nature care – nature conservation activities such as whale rescue, wildlife surveys and caring for injured or orphaned wildlife.

Wildcare office – support to members of Wildcare, including newsletter production, event management and processing of membership applications.

Special programs – large scale annual projects and programs undertaken in co-operation with partners in government. Special programs may require specialist skills and often call for extended commitments. They include the Caring for Islands Program and Campground Host Program.

WILDCARE BRANCHES

Wildcare is a membership organisation. Members can express interest in specific projects or focus their skills and interest in a particular reserve or location. Members can join in activities when and where it suits them. And there is plenty to choose from! An insight into the diversity and geographic spread of Wildcare's projects and activities can be gleaned from this impressive listing of more than 90 Branches around the State:

CARes Coal Mines / Lime Bay

CARes Narawntapu Reserves

CARes Southern Caves

Central North Wildlife Care and Rescue

Derwent Avenue Group for the Dave Burrows Walk

Dry Stone Wall Preservation Group

Friends of Bass Strait Islands

Friends of Coningham Nature Recreation Area

Friends of Deal Island

Friends of Freycinet

Friends of Lilloco Penguins

Friends of Maatsuyker Island

Friends of Maria Island

Friends of Maria Island Marine Protected Area

Friends of Melaleuca

Friends of Mt Field

Friends of Redbill Point Conservation Area

Friends of Snake Island

Friends of Tasman Island

Friends of the Franklin River

Friends of the Freshwater Lobster

Friends of the Orange-bellied Parrot

Friends of Thompson's Park Hut

Friends of Trevallyn Reserve

Friends of Yorktown Historic Site

Get Outside with Community

Get Outside with Community in Launceston

KarstWatch milaythina muka

Mole Creek Karst Care

Native Animal Rescue

Oil Spill Response Furneaux Islands -
seabird and other wildlife

Oil Spill Response King Island -
seabird and other wildlife

Oil Spill Response North - seabird and other wildlife

Oil Spill Response Northwest -
seabird and other wildlife

Oil Spill Response South - seabird and other wildlife

Rivers Wild Care

Wildcare Wildlife Emergency Response
and Recovery Unit



Tamar Island Wetlands Volunteers

Threatened Plants Tasmania

Wellington Park Bushcare

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Bruny Island

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Devonport

Whale Rescue First Response Team - East Coast

Whale Rescue First Response Team -
Eastern Shore

Whale Rescue First Response Team -
Flinders Island

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Freycinet

Whale Rescue First Response Team - King Island

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Launceston

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Marrawah

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Narawntapu

Whale Rescue First Response Team - South

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Stanley

Whale Rescue First Response Team - Strahan

Wildcare Coastal Custodians

Wildcare Cradle Mt - Lake St Clair

Wildcare Deslacs

Friends of Bruny Island Quarantine Station

Wildcare Friends of Fisher Island

Wildcare Friends of Pittwater Orielton Lagoon

Wildcare Friends of Tasmanian Whaleboats

Wildcare Friends of the Penguin Cradle Trail

Wildcare Friends of Woodvine

Wildcare Gordon's Hill NRA

Wildcare Lumeah Point

Wildcare Native Wildlife Rescue - Birralee

Wildcare Roaring Beach Wildlife Rescue

Wildcare SpLATs

Wildcare SPRATS

Wildcare Spring Bay

Wildcare Tinderbox Marine Reserve

Wildcare Veterinary Emergency Response
Team Tasmania

Wildcare Wildlife Rescue and Bush Babies

Wildcare Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation

Wildsc'ool Voluntary Educators

Friends of GIS

Get Outside with Community (South)

Wildcare Inc Office

Wildcare Friends of Bonorong

Wildcare Friends of Billy Brown Falls

Wildcare Friends of Cradle Valley Walking Tracks

Wildcare Friends of Narawntapu

Wildcare Friends of The Steppes Reserve

Friends of the Margaret Mitchell Garden

Friends of the Derwent and Channel Penguins

Heritage Care - Jericho Heritage Centre

Friends of Great Western Tiers

Friends of Doctors Rocks Penguins

Friends of Highfield

Friends of Clayton's House

Friends of the Raptor and Wildlife Refuge

Cradle Mountain Volunteers

CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

It has been a year of steady successes. Membership is now over 7000. This is phenomenal for a State population of just 500,000.

Some new Branches have formed, caring for small sites like Friends of the Margaret Mitchell Garden at Richmond and iconic places like Cradle Valley with the formation of the Cradle Mountain Volunteers Branch. Our existing Branches continue to do outstanding work.

Branch numbers fluctuate as new Branches form and others become inactive or close. Over 2016, Branch numbers settled around 90, spread across the State. They are involved in undertaking activities as varied as wilderness beach cleanups, native plant gardens, walker education, visitor centre services, wildlife care, schools education, feral animal eradication programs, weeding, wildlife monitoring, GPS mapping, island caretaking, site interpretation, walking track maintenance and much more.

Branches need members and leaders to continue to hold the status of a Wildcare Branch. So making sure your member record is accurately showing the Branches with which you are active and having Branch elections of office bearers is simple, but very important. Remember too, that Wildcare Inc Branches are made up of Wildcare Inc members, so keeping your personal membership current is also very important. Wildcare Inc only recognises those people who are valid and current Wildcare Inc members as members of the Branches.

We wish to thank all Wildcare Inc members for their efforts and support during 2016. Without your selfless and positive efforts, there would be so much less achieved for Tasmania's reserves, wildlife and heritage – Tasmania would be a lesser place without you.

The functions of the website are being used increasingly by Branch Presidents to contact and keep track of their members. Once again, current membership is important to ensure that the emails sent through the website by the Branch Presidents reach you. We wish to thank all Branch Presidents and other office bearers for their massive efforts during the year.

Wildcare Inc, mainly through its Branches, continues to attract a significant amount of project grant funding. This is new money into the system, straight onto the ground through practical conservation work. Add the \$5,000,000 of volunteer time and effort provided to projects each year and you start to see the impact of Wildcare Inc on caring for our special natural heritage, national parks, reserves management and cultural heritage.

Wildcare Inc contributed \$22,000 from its own funds to small projects undertaken by our Branches in 2016. These projects utilise a maximum of \$2000 per project, once again with the outcomes enhanced by the addition of volunteer time.

Through our Wildcare Gift Fund, we have supported a variety of nature conservation and reserve management projects, including research into a vaccination for the Devil Facial Tumour Disease, walking track maintenance and Orange-bellied Parrot summer monitoring. In 2016, \$129,000 was allocated to projects. This funding is only possible as a result of the generosity of many donors, large and small.



Andrew Smith
CO-CHAIR (APPOINTED)



Sally Salier
CO-CHAIR (ELECTED)

We are particularly pleased that Wildcare Inc continues to take no administrative fees from the money donated. All of your donation will be allocated to projects, making a real difference for the causes to which you donate.

There is more about Gift Fund projects and our donor partners, as well as new and existing members of the Gift Fund Committee, elsewhere in this Annual Report. We would like to thank particularly a couple of significant donors – Saffire Freycinet and Dick Smith – both of whom have a continuing relationship with Wildcare Inc, committing to making significant donations each year, underpinning our capacity to support valuable reserve management and wildlife conservation activities. We also wish to thank the members of the Wildcare Gift Fund Committee for their efforts of ensuring that donations are allocated in accordance with commitments made to donors and the objectives of Wildcare Inc.

The Wildcare Inc Board trialled a new way of operating this year, with fewer meetings, more out-of-session decisions, and a simplified strategic plan. All Board members have undertaken governance training and participated in a strategic planning workshop. They have also been actively attending Branch meetings and special events such as the National Park 100 year celebration events and the Sustainable Living Festival. We wish to thank Board members for their contributions, enthusiasm and positive approach during the year.

Whatever role each of us undertakes – member, active volunteer, Branch office bearer or Board member - we all do it because we love Tasmania's special places and special wildlife. We are willing to roll up our sleeves and get on with what needs to be done. An overriding principle of Wildcare Inc is to work cooperatively for real and practical outcomes - with fellow members, with government staff and departments and with donors and grant-givers. Our driving motivations of care, concern, love, personal responsibility and our desire to work cooperatively with others is what makes Wildcare Inc such a success.



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Andrew Smith

CO-CHAIR (APPOINTED)

Andrew is the founder of Wildcare Inc and is currently the Co-Chair (Appointed). He has been either Chairperson or Co-Chair since creating Wildcare in 1997.

As part of the partnership between government and Wildcare, Andrew holds the position of Co-Chair as a consequence of his position as Manager Community Programs, Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS). He has provided this partnership link between the agency and Wildcare since 1997.

In his professional role, Andrew manages Community Programs for PWS, coordinating and facilitating partnership programs, including volunteers and philanthropic programs, as well as managing the Interpretation & Education, Communications & Media and Community Engagement Units.

In his spare time, Andrew goes boating and fishing, potters in his garden, walks the dog and tries to keep track of two adult sons, Fergus and Callan, and their multitude of interests.



Sally Salier

CO-CHAIR (ELECTED)

Sally was employed as a library technician for many years before becoming a counsellor and therapist. During that time, she was the Australian co-ordinator for an international therapists' organisation, as well as holding national and State level positions in healthcare and sporting committees.

In later life, she became a weed officer, which led to volunteering for Wildcare for the last 10 years, including the role of Secretary with Friends of Freycinet. She also has been active in many other Wildcare Branches, including Mt Wellington, Coningham, Tasman Island, Deal Island, Maria Island, Sprats and Woodvine.

She joined the Board of Management of Wildcare in 2012 and was elected Co-Chair in 2013. Sally has been instrumental in developing Wildcare's new website. She keeps fit bushwalking and orienteering.



Suzanne Crowley

BOARD MEMBER AND SECRETARY
(SINCE 22 SEPTEMBER 2016)

Suzanne lives in Jackey's Marsh in northern Tasmania. She works as a project manager by day and as an artist whenever she can. Since moving to the Marsh, Suzanne has become involved in caring for the wildlife she shares the land with.

Suzanne has called Tasmania home for most of the past 25 years. She enjoys bushwalking, including memorable experiences in the south west, Maria Island, Bruny Island and Cradle Mountain. The Tarkine is on her bucket list! Suzanne finds her exploration trips great springboards for her landscape painting.

Suzanne joined the Wildcare Board of Management as Secretary in September 2016.



John Duggin

BOARD MEMBER

After retiring from a 30 year academic career in natural resources management and environmental science at the University of New England in Armidale NSW, John moved to the Tamar Valley in Tasmania.

Among other teaching and research activities, he developed long-standing interests in terrestrial ecosystem restoration and management and wetland ecology and management. He commenced volunteering for the Tamar Island Wetlands in November 2006 and was elected President in March 2008. He joined the Wildcare Board in April 2008 as a Presidents' representative.

His particular interests in serving on the Board are to be involved in encouraging and assessing internal grant applications. He also is keen to participate in developing efficient and effective Board governance.



Robert Dyson

**BOARD MEMBER AND TREASURER
(SINCE 18 AUGUST 2016)**

Robert Dyson joined the Board of Wildcare as Treasurer to be involved with a worthy community orientated organisation.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand and has a Diploma of Business (Accounting) from Swinburne University in Melbourne. He also holds the qualifications of a registered tax agent and a superannuation fund auditor. His personal life involves family and active interests in various sporting activities.

Robert has 23 years' experience in public accounting and 15 years in the commercial sector, mostly with FitzGerald-Harris Scarfe and Tote Tasmania. He has concern for the Tasmanian environment and sees the Treasurer's role as a way of contributing to Wildcare's continued success.



Rosemary Gales

BOARD MEMBER

Rosemary Gales is the Natural and Cultural Heritage (NCH) Division representative on the Wildcare Board. Rosemary studied zoology and wildlife conservation at universities in Western Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, followed by post-doctoral studies in Newfoundland and Tasmania. She has extensive experience with wildlife conservation biology and has worked in remote areas, including offshore and sub-antarctic islands.

Rosemary currently manages the Biodiversity Monitoring Section of NCH where she oversees biodiversity monitoring in Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area and beyond.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT CONTINUED



Dave Harris

BOARD MEMBER
(SINCE 19 MARCH 2016)

Dave is currently the President of the Friends of Freycinet Wildcare Branch. He and his wife, Christine, are also very active in the Friends of Coningham Nature Reserve Branch and have undertaken numerous working bees with the Maria Island, Woodvine and SPRATS Branches.

In addition, they have participated in events on Deal, Maatsuyker and Bruny Islands, as well as Lake St Clair and Cockle Creek – Hastings. The Orange-bellied Parrot recovery program also has attracted their support.

In his other working life, Dave was a Commonwealth public servant, working mainly in the education sector. He is a very active bushwalker, enjoys an extensive native garden and loves classical music and reading.



Stan Matuszek

BOARD MEMBER

Stan has in excess of 30 years' experience in land and reserve management, having commenced work with the Lands Department in 1980 and later Parks and Wildlife Service following amalgamation in 1987.

During this time, he has worked in the south, north and north-west of Tasmania, including the Bass Strait islands of King, Flinders, Deal and Three Hummock. He has overseen conservation, management and development works in parks and reserves throughout Tasmania. Stan has a particular interest in coastal area management and was heavily involved in the planning, development and construction of the Tamar Island Wetlands Centre.

The Parks and Wildlife Service shares a unique relationship with volunteer and Cares groups that deserves recognition and celebration. Maintaining and improving that relationship through strong strategic and communication links with our partner organisations is a key focus for Stan.



Kate Mooney

BOARD MEMBER
(SINCE 17 OCTOBER 2016)

Kate graduated from the University of Tasmania with a Bachelor of Laws with Honours.

She has been employed by a number of law firms, as well as past roles with the Department of Health and Human Services and Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania. After seven years as a Barrister with Burbury Chambers, Kate established her own legal practice.

She joined the Board of Management of Wildcare in 2016 as a legal adviser (appointed).



Ian Ross

BOARD MEMBER
(SINCE 19 MARCH 2016)

Ian grew up in Brisbane, studied architecture at QUT and is a Registered Building Designer in Tasmania. He was introduced to bushwalking in his teens.

He first visited Tasmania in 1971 to walk in to Lake Pedder before it was flooded, climb Frenchmans Cap and walk the Overland Track. He developed a passion for nature and landscape photography which has continued to the present day. Ian moved to Tasmania in 1994.

Ian has been actively involved with Friends of Tasman Island and Friends of Melaleuca in recent years, taking part in working bees and using his practical building skills.

Ian believes that volunteering creates social capital that enriches our community.



Erika Shankley

BOARD MEMBER (SINCE 20 APRIL 2016)

Erika is a bushwalker and sailor with an interest in remote areas, who also enjoys writing and photography. After a career in the Public Service, she ran a handcraft business, using Tasmanian native timbers.

A life member of the Cruising Yacht Club of Tasmania, Erika has served on a number of committees under the auspices of the Parks & Wildlife Service, including the former South West Advisory Committee and the Melaleuca - Port Davey Advisory Committee. She was also a Volunteer Caretaker and Weather Observer on Maatsuyker Island, Three Hummock Island and Sandy Cape on Fraser Island. She worked for two years as Manager and Weather Observer on Swan Island, a private island off Tasmania's north east coast.

Currently she is an active member of the Friends of Tasman Island and the Friends of Melaleuca Wildcare Branches and maintains an interest in the Friends of Maatsuyker Island, Friends of Deal Island and Friends of Bass Strait Islands. Erika was appointed to the Wildcare Board in April 2016.

In this changing world, Erika hopes to be able to find emerging opportunities to further enhance the natural values of Tasmania's wild areas.



Sally Simco

BOARD MEMBER (SINCE 27 APRIL 2016)

Sally is a keen bushwalker and kayaker. She and her husband, Michael, first took up a Wildcare volunteer position as Cape Bruny Lighthouse Caretakers and Observers in 2013. Since then, they have been involved in numerous Wildcare projects.

Sally is involved with the Ulverstone Coastcare group and the volunteer trackworker program at Cradle Mountain National Park. She is an inaugural member of the recently formed Wildcare Friends of Cradle Mountain.

Throughout her primary school teaching career, Sally placed emphasis on developing children's awareness of the natural world and promoted a responsible approach to caring for the environment.



Bob Tyson

BOARD MEMBER

Bob grew up in Launceston before moving to Hobart to do a life sciences degree. He worked for the Rural Fires Board, then with the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service. He held a number of positions during his 30 year career, including Fire Management Officer, Regional Manager Tasmanian Wilderness WHA, and a number of positions in senior management before retiring in 2003. He had a small business working as a consultant in natural area management from 2003 to 2007.

Bob and his wife, Penny, have been active Wildcare volunteers since 2003, involved in a number of Branches, including Friends of Deal Island, Tasman Island, Maria Island, Melaleuca, Threatened Plants, SPRATS, Coningham, Wellington Park and Orange-bellied Parrots.

Bob has been a member of the Board and the Gift Fund Committee for the last eight years.



CEO'S REPORT

In so many ways, it is a most interesting task compiling the Wildcare Yearbook. The year 2016 was no exception!

A Yearbook offers more than an Annual Report. It not only provides information to satisfy compliance requirements, but offers an opportunity to look in the rear vision mirror and reflect on and review many of the activities and projects of Wildcare Branches around the State. In doing so, a number of common elements shine through – the commitment, spirit, persistence, hard work and resilience of volunteers.

In 2016, these traits were very much under pressure as Mother Nature unleashed her power and tested volunteers' capacity to rise above setbacks. Adverse weather conditions hit the State big time during the middle of the year.

Wildcare's Board of Management started the year without a Treasurer and Secretary. Other positions on the Board were filled by elections at the AGM in March. An ongoing search, tapping into a wide range of networks, eventually led to the positions being filled by Robert Dyson and Suzanne Crowley respectfully, in the second half of the year.

Branch stories give insights. They also describe challenges, offer inspiration and fuel motivation. Thanks is extended to the 15 Branches that have shared their stories in this Yearbook. This is five times the number that participated in 2013.

A Yearbook also provides an opportunity to take stock and look forward. In this regard, a strategic planning workshop identified six key strategic directions for Wildcare over the next three years. These are fundraising, renewal and relevance, building strong relationships, making internal communications more effective, raising Wildcare's profile in the wider community and reviewing and refining Board practices.

Change is the one constant. And this applies to the environment in which Wildcare operates as well. The Tasmanian Government is calling for expressions of interest from private investors and tourism operators to develop sensitive and appropriate tourism experiences and associated infrastructure on Tasmanian parks, reserves and Crown land. It is likely that a number of these locations will be where Wildcare Branches have already established a presence, a record of significant achievement and performing valuable on-ground works.



Provided open and regular two-way communication is maintained, these changes herald exciting new opportunities for collaboration, partnerships and enhancement of the visitor experience. It is a time for Wildcare Branches to embrace change, maintain an open mind, express pride in what they have achieved, look for market niches to add value and explore ways of working together.

Wildcare is already fulfilling a valuable role in education. But there is scope for much more to be done.

Education is the key to ensuring a sustainable future for our natural areas, especially among the young. And what an exciting future lies ahead!

I would like to thank the Board for its support, my professional colleagues, Lindie Lupo and Carol Pacey, for their important work in things financial and Jodie Epper for her ongoing work with the Branches.

Your membership of Wildcare sends a clear signal that you want to live and work in a better Tasmania.

Wildcare is a leader in natural and cultural heritage conservation, but it is much more than that. Through its diverse projects and activities, Wildcare is also a builder of people in a number of different ways.

So it is fitting in this Annual Report to close by expressing appreciation for the difference that all involved in Wildcare continue to make in Tasmania's "people construction" industry!

Malcolm MacDonald

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*They said to build a better world I said I would, but how
The world is such a cold dark place and complicated now
For I am small and helpless
There is nothing I can do
They said 'oh yes there is
Just build a better you'.*



FACILITATOR'S REPORT

Wildcare's membership has increased this year and so has the number of Branches. The focus of my work has been to support Branch Presidents and members with greater participation in Wildcare activities. This is mostly done at a systems level, continually improving the organisation's procedures and systems.

This year has seen a flurry of new Branches begin and some old Branches close. It's been great working with the Executive Officers of each of these Branches, getting them sorted, including setting up of the Branch web pages and training the Presidents on Wildcare best practices in Branch management. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our webmaster, Phil Wyatt, who provides invaluable behind-the-scenes technical support. To those Branches who have closed, I say congratulations on a job well done. I look forward to your participation in another Wildcare Branch or activity in the future.

It was a great opportunity to meet with some of the Presidents at the annual Presidents' Forums this year. I mostly have email contact or, if I am lucky, occasional phone calls with Presidents. The Forums offered a wonderful opportunity to put names to faces and hear more about what Branches are doing around the State. It's been great to see the progress of Presidents. This is evident as more and more Branch stories appear on the Wildcare website. It's really interesting to read all the stories and be reminded about what amazing work is being done around Tasmania.

It's been a joy to put together the regular editions of Wildtimes. This year, we have significantly redesigned the newsletter – a more slimmed down version, but still jam-packed with Branch information. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteer designer, Dixie Makrogamvrakis, and our volunteer proofreader, Robert Famularo, for their time and expertise in producing the newsletter to such a professional standard.

I have enjoyed the year working with the volunteer Office Branch, both remotely and in the Wildcare Office on Tuesday afternoons - managing memberships, answering emails, managing the internal grants program and assisting with the distribution of Wildcare materials in field centres around the State. The office volunteers undertake these simple administration tasks with a smile on their faces and a can-do attitude. It's been a pleasure and I thank all of you. The Wildcare office is housed inside the Parks and Wildlife office in Hobart. I would like to thank the PWS staff who make us feel welcome and included in the building – it makes a difference to the office volunteers to have a great place to come and put in some hours every week.

Lastly, I would like to thank the two Chairs of Wildcare, Sally Salier and Andrew Smith, for their dedication and commitment to this amazing organisation – it's been great working with you.

Jodie Epper

FACILITATOR

SPECIAL FEATURE

4th Island Arks Symposium



Wildcare's role in the restoration and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of Tasmanian islands.

Excerpts from a presentation given by Sally Salier, Co-Chair (Elected) of Wildcare Inc., to the 4th Island Arks Symposium held on Norfolk Island in February, 2016.

Overview

About 80 people from around Australia (including several from Tasmania), New Zealand, Hawaii and Christmas Island attended the three day Symposium for Island Arks held on Norfolk Island in February, 2016.

Presentations covered a variety of island habitats, a diverse range of challenges, many success stories and some failures. They covered Islands as far apart as Christmas to Macquarie Island, from New Guinea to New Zealand and Hawaii, and many others in between. Studies included crabs, ants, turtles, birds, bats, plants, animals, the use of drones and even a dark sky, which covered the impact of artificial light on the environment.

It was very impressive to see how much work is being done on so many islands and, on the other hand, rather depressing to learn about how many extinct, threatened and endangered species there are in these fragile ecosystems.

What is Wildcare Inc?

Around the world, you will find little groups of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers willing to support their favourite patch of ground. They are often very small groups, working in isolation. They deal with all the attendant challenges such as fundraising, membership, access and support from managing agencies.

So what is Wildcare Incorporated? It is a not-for-profit volunteer organisation of around 7,000 members, managed by a board of directors. There are around 90 Branches around Tasmania, Australia's island State. Each Branch has its own President, Secretary and Treasurer, who are authorised to act on behalf of the organisation. They are not separately incorporated, but form part of one large entity.

The Board assists its Branches in many ways. For example, we have just one bank account, thus relieving each Branch from paying bank and audit fees. Combining all funds into one large amount can attract higher interest and boost our general funds.



Insurance is another major support for people working outside a national park. For example, members working with threatened plants, animal rescue and rehabilitation etc are covered.

We have a website with a separate page for each Branch where they can download photos, reports and newsletters for all to see and be inspired. There is also a calendar of events where Branches can advertise their working bees and volunteers can register for events. It is also possible to put out a call for any specialist help that may be required for a particular project. This could be, for example, for someone with a chemical certificate, remote area first aid certificate or plumbing skills. It is also possible for Branches to utilise a central mapping system.

But probably the most important support is funding. Wildcare is able to offer grants for small projects up to \$2000, which can assist with the purchase of tools, equipment, training, building materials or transport. There is also a facility for larger grants from the Wildcare Gift Fund and assistance is offered in applying for external grants as well.

So how does Wildcare obtain its funding? Here we have to thank the Parks and Wildlife Service, which offers a discount to anyone wishing to join Wildcare when purchasing their annual Parks Pass. The discount is \$25 off the cost of an Annual Pass. Membership costs \$25 so, in effect, the same amount is paid, but \$25 goes into Wildcare's coffers.

It is in Parks' best interest to do this, as the amount of volunteer work done on its behalf is remarkable. When compiling these statistics, I was amazed to see that eight island Branches alone have raised and spent \$1,045,000 on various projects and worked around 800,000 hours. At the suggested rate of \$30 per hour, that equates to around \$24 million!

Wildcare also raises funds through donations, sponsorship and bequests. The Branches themselves also contribute greatly through their own fundraising efforts.

The Wildcare model is the envy of many environmental conservation groups and sparked much interest at the Symposium.

Eight island Branches

I asked Friends of Deal, Bass Strait, Maria, Freycinet (Schouten), Fisher, Snake, Tasman and Maatsuyker Islands for some rough statistics. And I was so impressed with what these Branches have achieved.

They vary in size from 97 square kilometres to 0.9 hectares. And they vary in distance from the mainland of Tasmania from 170 kilometres to 200 metres and vary in latitude from 43°S to 39°S. Each has its own particular unique qualities and its own unique challenges. Access is often difficult and expensive, varying from chartered helicopter or boat, to ferry or kayak.

The Snake Island kayakers' costs are minimal. In contrast, to get to Maatsuyker Island can be between \$10,000 to \$15,000 each trip by helicopter. For 10 volunteers to get to Tasman Island, it costs in the vicinity of \$6,000. To get to Deal Island, eight volunteers must first travel to Launceston, fly to Flinders Island and spend the night there at their own expense. They then travel by chartered boat for four hours to reach the Kent Group. So each working bee costs around \$8,000 in transport alone for eight people.

Bass Strait Islands averages around \$450 per person to get there. It costs between \$200-\$400 return for the Fisher Island group, paid for by the volunteers themselves.

Maria Island volunteers can be ferried across the Mercury Passage for \$35 per person. The Schouten Island people are taken in a Parks boat, so do not need to pay anything, other than approximately \$50 per car in petrol costs to get to Coles Bay, which they pay themselves.

What has been achieved?

Let's have a closer look at what has been achieved, and what further projects are in the pipeline.

Friends of Bass Strait Islands care for a group of 13 islands in the Furneaux group. They are roughly 50 kilometres off the coast of Tasmania and have been operating for 13 years. Their focus has been on removal of boxthorn, which has been achieved on all but two of the islands (excluding Flinders Island).

Deal Island, approximately 1700 hectares, is a long way from anywhere - 80 kilometres from Wilson's Promontory in Victoria, 80 kilometres north of Flinders Island and roughly 170 kilometres from the Tasmanian mainland. Among other things, they have made significant reductions in several weed species, repaired the 1846 Superintendent's house, created a small museum and recently introduced the ragwort flea beetle. They are hoping to raise substantial funds to restore the lighthouse.

Fisher Island is just off Flinders Island, with a size of 0.9 hectares. At roughly 60 kilometres from Tasmania, the Branch is predominantly involved in monitoring the short tailed shearwater, as well as eradicating the house mouse population.

Maria Island is 97 square kilometres and 16 kilometres from the mainland. It has had a checkered history of convict settlement, farming and a cement industry, leaving a huge weed legacy. The broom weeding team has been operating now for 10 years and primary removal has been achieved. Spanish heath and Sea spurge are also monitored. Other pasture weeds are kept at bay by a second volunteer group, and there are periodic projects on heritage buildings at Darlington as well.

Maatsuyker Island is 186 hectares and 10 kilometres off the south coast. This Branch has been running for 10 years and has successfully raised over \$20,000 through fundraising activities and \$200,000 in grant funds. Work includes weed management, building maintenance, creating a historic objects catalogue and shearwater monitoring. Maatsuyker has the most important burrow nesting site in southern Tasmania and the largest unharvested short tailed shearwater colony in Tasmania.

Schouten Island, some 2,800 hectares, is the jewel in the crown of Freycinet National Park, with a history of convicts, coal mining and agriculture. After 16 years of gorse removal, only follow-up is needed on an annual basis now. In more recent years, blue periwinkle has become a problem but the Branch has managed to reduce it greatly and keep it contained.

Snake Island sits just 200 metres off Bruny Island. The Branch has been visiting this 4.5 hectare island for 20 years, dealing with Spanish heath.

Tasman Island is about 120 hectares. Although only about 300 metres from the mainland, it is quite difficult to access. The Branch has been operating for 10 years and spent over \$200,000 in achieving an impressive range of conservation and maintenance work. The initial aim of halting further deterioration of buildings, infrastructure and landscape has been achieved.

Although we have around 7,000 members, the number of actual "hands on" volunteers is difficult to calculate, particularly as many of them work in more than one place.



At a conservative estimation, there have been around 200-250 volunteers working with our eight island Branches over the years. And remember that outstanding statistic: \$1,045,000 raised and \$24,000,000 in value of work done. This statistic caused a spontaneous outburst of applause, so well done everybody, what an achievement!

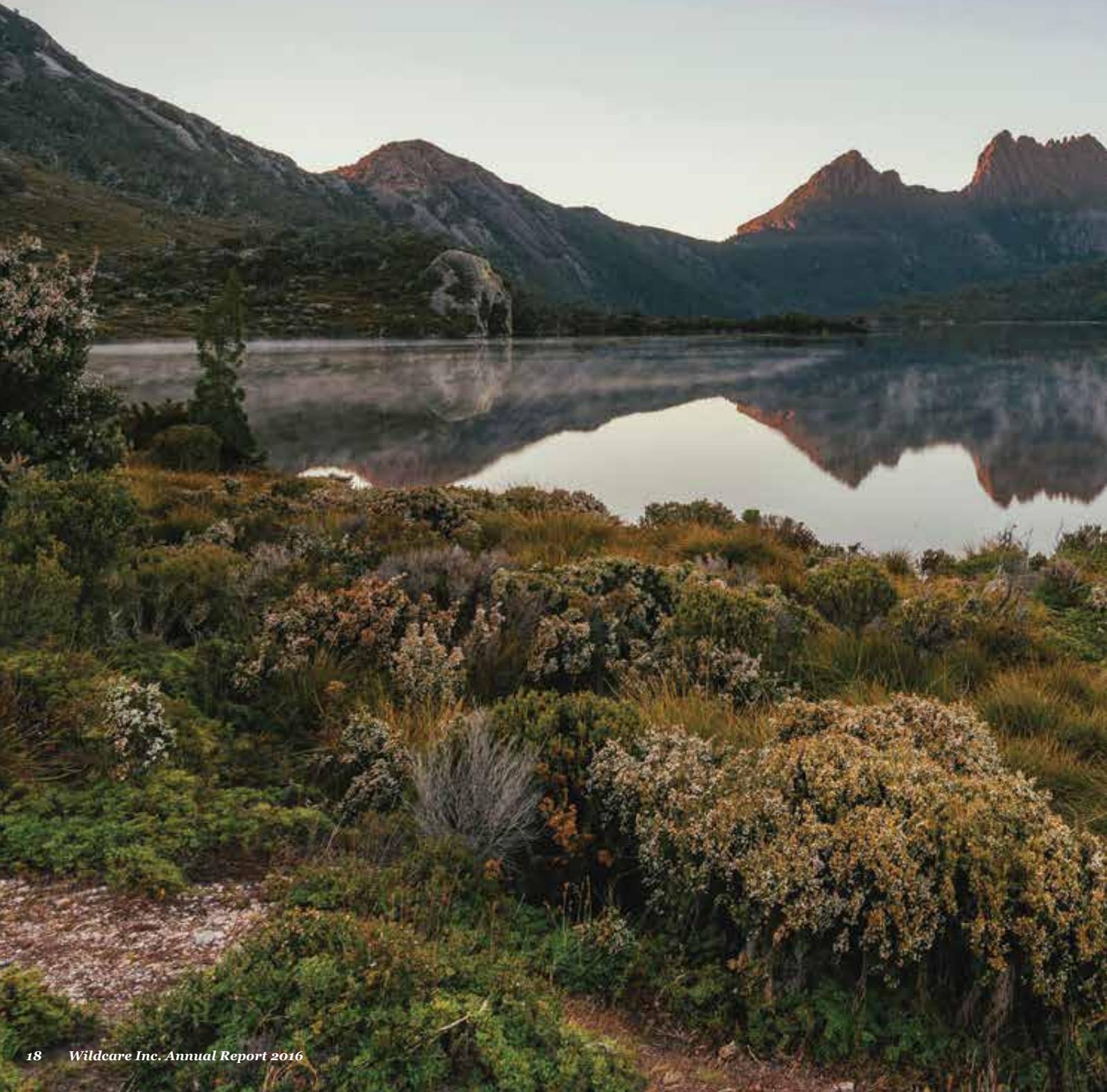
I believe these figures are a major underestimation, especially as volunteers frequently fail to count the thousands of hours spent driving to and from events, attending meetings, drafting grant applications and writing reports.

At the end of my presentation, I realised just how fortunate we are to have Wildcare in Tasmania!



EVERY BRANCH

has a story...



CRADLE MOUNTAIN VOLUNTEERS

By President, Mieke Vermeulen

In early October, 16 keen people met to form a new Wildcare Branch: the Wildcare Cradle Mountain Volunteers. The tasks we will undertake will be varied and suit a broad range of skills and interests. They include walking trackwork, weed control, conservation works on historic buildings, fauna monitoring, revegetation, interpretation provision and assisting with signage and general asset maintenance. Track pruning has a major emphasis; the aim is to keep the tracks looking good and as safe as is reasonably possible. Pruning is a bit like housework; an endless task! Volunteering in the Visitor Centre is also much appreciated by the counter staff as they often get swamped with enquiries in the busy times.

Our first Branch working bee was held in late November and involved pruning the Hounslow Heath Circuit track, assisting Taylor, the Graduate Ranger, with a wombat survey and placing snow poles along the Dove Canyon Track. Ten people participated over the weekend and it was a great success.

We're looking forward to attracting new members and helping to enhance the experience for visitors to the Park, while protecting its values.



Jan Hayhurst, Hounslow Heath

FRIENDS OF CONINGHAM NATURE RECREATION AREA

*“The Good, the Bad and the Ugly”
by Jean Taylor and John Hamilton*

The Good

Well, we really have to start with the best. The wonderful team of volunteers who turn up month after month and often willingly attend extra working bees. They spray, they cut and paste, they hand pull, they trim vegetation from tracks, they advise and over the years they have become our friends.

Then there are those amazing underpaid, under appreciated overachievers - the PWS staff from Huonville led by the fantastic Jen Mudge. Always on hand to help with training, on-ground works and assistance with projects we would not be able to organise ourselves. Jen, together with teacher Tracey and a little assistance from The Friends, run the Snug Primary Wildsc'ool, often roping in willing PWS colleagues to supply expert tuition when required. We believe that education is the future to ensure a sustainable future for our natural areas.





From the Friends inception, and continuing to the present, we have received grants and financial management assistance from our parent organisation, Wildcare. Its dedicated team, both paid and volunteer, ensures that the many small 'care' groups such as ours can function with maximum efficiency. In addition, Landcare Tasmania and NRM South continue to be great supporters, providing grants to assist us to hire weeding contractors and lobbying to ensure both State and Federal Governments continue to provide some funding. In 2016, we have been most fortunate to have the help of the Green Army, enthusiastic young people mentored by very committed supervisors. We know weeding is not the most exciting job in the world, but they pitch in and work hard.

Last, but definitely not least, the reason we do it. The habitat of this peri urban reserve is vital to a number of species, from the rare and threatened, to the common. It is a delight to hear swift parrots screeching manically as they swoop from blue gum to blue gum, to come across Tasmanian Devil scats along the tracks, to find the holes drilled by bettongs, to startle Bennett's wallabies as they graze, to hear the many small forest birds singing and see wedge tailed and sea eagles soar over the hills. The odd encounter with tiger snakes is maybe not quite so delightful, but never the less they are also part of the suite of animals and plants that live here.

Good too, is the sight of people using the reserve for recreation and enjoyment. Families and friends walking and bike riding, dog walkers and their (on lead) pooches, orienteers, birdwatchers and orchid hunters. As long as they use the reserve respectfully, we are happy.

The Bad

The small amount of littering, the dog poo on the tracks, the unsanctioned tracks through the bush, particularly when they go through patches of Spanish heath. Dogs, no matter how cute, rampaging through the bush off-lead on the trail of some poor terrified bird or small animal. The fact that we are computer illiterate and cannot manage social media, even our blog has stopped talking to us. The fact that we are all getting older, are now unable to reach some of our weeding sites and we seem unable to attract new volunteers.

The Ugly

The worst ugliness, of course, is the widespread occurrence of Spanish heath in the reserve. We have achieved some successes and believe that we now have control of this weed in much of the area south of the main access road. However, there are many areas where it is rampant and we know that, unless more funds are invested in research, it is unlikely that innovative methods of eradication will emerge.

Finally, there are those who do not respect and appreciate the wonder of this special place. For instance, the neighbours who dump rubbish or store their belongings in the firebreaks or who make unofficial entrances from their blocks into the reserve. And a special bugbear are the trail bike riders who create havoc by doing wheelies in the newly emerging grassy areas, dump their drink bottles, cans and cigarette butts and push over small trees and bushes.

Well, as you can see, the positives outweigh the negatives. We continue to rise to the challenge and we look forward to another year of working with our friends in this wonderful reserve. Why not join us?



Above: Mammal measuring
 Top: Learning about photo points
 Opposite: Friends and PWS working together

FRIENDS OF BRUNY ISLAND QUARANTINE STATION

By President, Kathy Duncombe



In August 2014, the Friends of Bruny Island Quarantine Station (FOBIQS) held an Oberhausen Day to commemorate the arrest of German nationals at the beginning of WW1 who were later interred at the Quarantine Station.

German WW1 Diary

In 2016, two years later, Kathy was contacted by the granddaughter of 4th Officer Fritz Stegherr who wrote diaries during his internment for the whole of WW1.

After many emails, photos and information were exchanged, the granddaughter, Roswitha Muller, sent out the diary written in old German to the FOBIQS to use for research. It has been a very exciting discovery.

An extract is shared with Wildcare members as our contribution to the 2016 Wildcare Yearbook.

Fritz starts his story at 4 o'clock on 5 August 1914 when the crew of the Oberhausen heard about war being declared. At the time, they were at Port Huon loading railway sleepers for Durban in South Africa. He describes the twelve marines who came to arrest them looking scared, all nice boys, who were heartily glad that no resistance was made. Later, the two officers were eating with the captain in his cabin and 'ate little but drank more'. The next morning, they steamed to Hobart and anchored in the middle of the Derwent off the Domain.

On Saturday, 10 October, the Cartela took the crew and their luggage ashore where they were handed over to the Sixth Military District and taken by train to Claremont. He describes the camp in great detail and the Camp Commander showing them their dwelling place.

Officers were four to a tent, other crew members were eight to a tent.

They were given bread and jam but, by evening, had mutton, bread and potatoes made available to them. They constructed a stove and hung pots suspended on a fork to cook.

He often refers to humorous events that happened whilst they were in camp. They constructed their own beds from boards, weathered fence as a base and later their mattresses arrived from the ship. Also from the ship were deck and folding chairs, rope and tools, so they soon had a table and cupboards. They fished and hunted for rabbits. After three weeks in camp, the officers and machinists were allowed out on parole if they wished. Some (including Fritz) found a small villa close to Hobart. He describes Hobart and its surrounds in detail as it was in 1914. He and his mates appear to be in Goulburn Street with a vegetable garden and chickens.

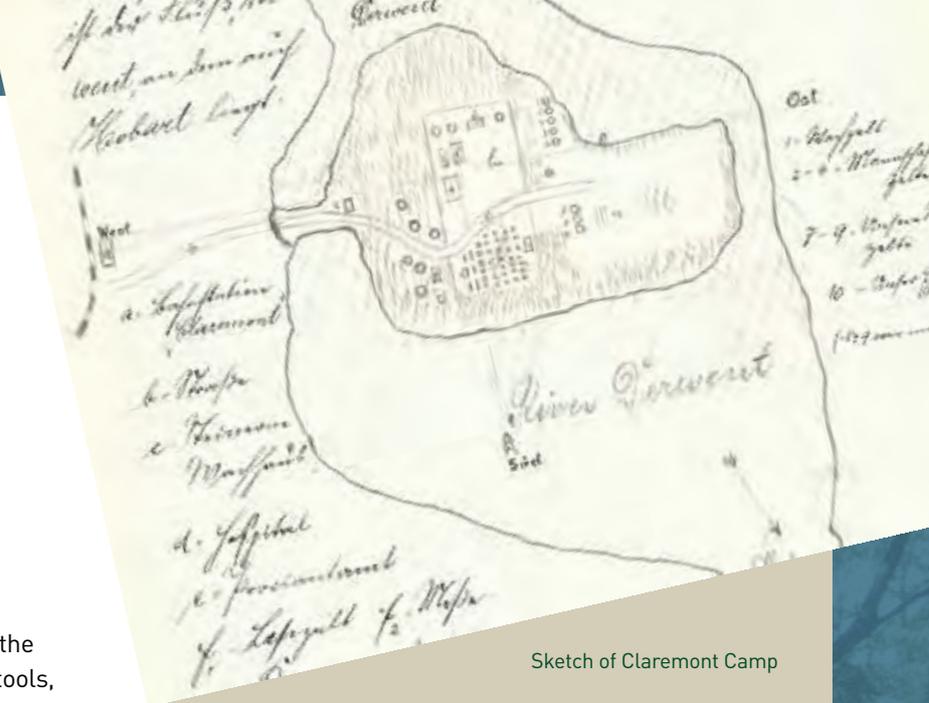
They made frequent trips to Sandy Bay to swim, dive and sun bathe and made many friends. They went to New Norfolk and Browns River (Kingston Beach) and at times almost forgot there was a war on. His knowledge of Australian history is reflected in his writings of the treatment of the native Aboriginals, the convicts and Port Arthur. He was amazed that men and women bathed on the same beach at Bellerive!

Sketch of Claremont Camp

They were only in camp a few days before being taken by train to Hobart where they once again boarded the Cartela, this time bound for Bruny Island Quarantine Station.

Captain Watchorn, a polite and amiable man, often took some of the internees with him to local farms and the post office at Barnes Bay.

They even attended evenings at the cricket hall (once behind the CWA Hall), Miss Denne (Emmeline) being daughter of the postmistress and organiser of the evening. They do not seem to have objected to work, as it was the remedy for boredom and in fact made fun out of pinching each other's wood for the stoves etc. Fritz received one pound a day for his work. Motor boats arrived daily with slaughtered lambs and two or three times weekly brought vegetables and other odds and ends.



Sketch of Claremont Camp

In May, he states 'a few days ago the people had ceased to work'. The reward promised, sounding as small as it may be for this work, had not arrived. This fits with Ray Searle's letter to his mother in July "the German and Austrian prisoners revolted. They pelted the guard inside and refused to go to work. The telephone was laid on to the Captain's house so he rang up Claremont. That was the reason why we were sent post haste to the Island. When we neared Bruny, we were ordered to load and fix bayonets. We landed and drove the Germans down to the beach. They were pretty troublesome, but we managed to arrest six of them and drove the rest of them inside. The six we arrested, we took to Hobart gaol."

They caught eel, salted and smoked it. Due to its size, it was a little tough but was still regarded as a delicacy. Fritz certainly had his ideas of how the war could be won and what was happening overseas.

There are still another 161 pages to be translated. We look forward to extracting and sharing their secrets and what this era of history meant for the Bruny Island Quarantine Station.





FRIENDS OF DEAL ISLAND

By President, Bob Tyson



We had our usual two working bees this year, each with eight volunteers and each of two weeks' duration. Thanks to the Australian Government, Tasmanian Landcare, Wildcare Board of Management and Friends of Deal Island members for funding the working bees.

Heritage Restoration

Repairs to the ceiling of the Superintendent's Cottage (which houses the Kent Group Museum) were done by Mark Woodley, a master Tasmanian heritage plasterer.

Mark was impressed that the building was possibly unique in Tasmania. Very few changes had been made over its 168 years such as the installation of plumbing or electrical fittings. It remains truly a fine example of an intact historic Georgian structure.

Mark applied a temporary repair to the lighthouse using lime plaster to prevent further water incursion through a hole in the render coating.

A section of the lighthouse whim was cleared of scrub and small trees. The platform between these rail lines had been paved with clay bricks and stones. The two Deal Island whims, in operation from 1871 to the 1930s, are thought to be unique in Australia, having only been horse-operated and not ever motorised.

Kent Group Small Museum

The interpretation banners in the museum which had been damaged by fungal growth were replaced. Two further displays describing the wrecks of the SS Bulli and the White Squall were also installed. A brooch was discovered in the upper floor of the Museum and has been repatriated to Hobart for provenance research before it is included in the museum collection. Shirley Baker is to be commended for her untiring work on the museum.

Weeding Program

The weeding program on Deal Island has been under way for more than 10 years. The weeds prioritised in the Kent Group Management Plan (2005) have been our main targets (sea spurge, arum lily, horehound, mullein, slender thistle and ragwort).

All of the listed weeds are now under control, except for ragwort. Despite our efforts, it has continued to spread through the Island's tussock grasslands. Ragwort flea beetles were introduced to the Island in January, 2016 as biological control agents.

The November working bee followed a wetter than usual winter and we found the weeds had benefitted from the wet weather. Thistles were much larger than usual, and their flowers were well developed. There were far fewer than previous years though, and no mature seed was observed.

Revegetation at East Cove

We have made slow but steady progress planting out she-oaks collected as seedlings on the island.

At the November working bee, we put 20 new coir logs in place to help hold loose sandy areas and to protect the revegetation.

The coir logs were purchased from South Australia, trucked to Gippsland and transported to Deal by fishing boat prior to the working bee.



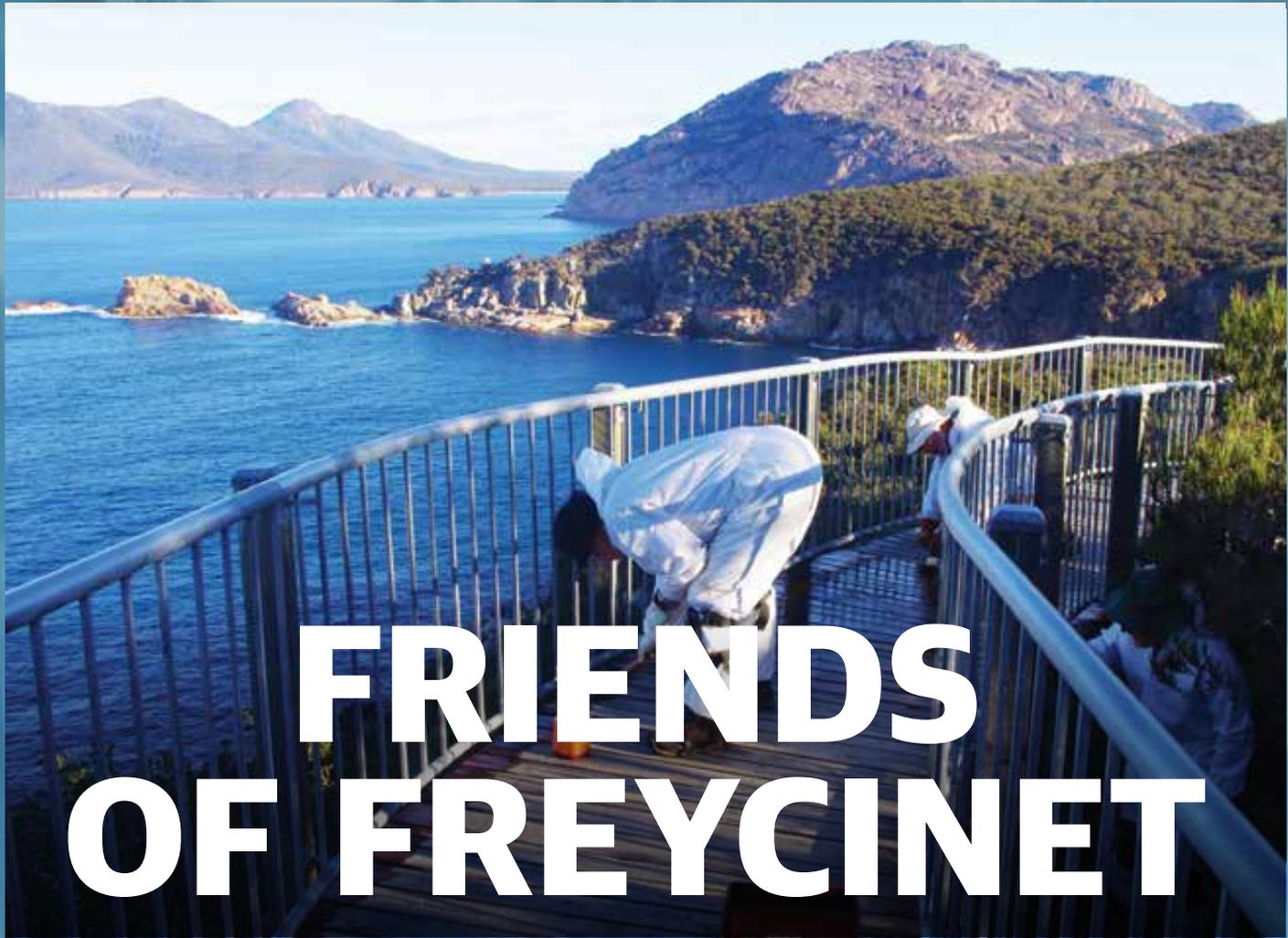
Above: Mark repairing side of lighthouse. Photo, Shirley Baker
Opposite: Thistle bagging. Photo, Bob Tyson.
Insert: Horehound weeding. Photo, Phil Waterhouse
Below: Coir logs in transport on Deal Island

News of our Leaky Lighthouse

The lighthouse has had little maintenance since the Australian Government handed it over to the State in 1998 and it now seems to be deteriorating more rapidly. Volunteer caretakers and some earlier working bees have done some minor work and kept the tower clean. The main problem is due to water entering the tower – mainly through the light room – and then percolating down through the entire structure. The door out to the balcony is very rusty and threatening to fall apart.

In an effort to raise awareness about the condition of the lighthouse, we have given talks and had displays at the Maritime Museum, at the inaugural Tasmanian Lighthouse Conference and will have one at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival.





FRIENDS OF FREYCINET

By President, Dave Harris

During 2016, Freycinet National Park, together with Mt. Field National Park, celebrated the Centenary of their proclamations as Tasmania's first National Parks in 1916. The Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS), in conjunction with community groups and other stakeholders, hosted many celebratory events in the Parks and in other venues around the State during the year. The two Wildcare Friends Branches were of course heavily involved in assisting with these events and raising the profile of Wildcare generally and of the work Branch members contribute.

The traditional owners of the land at Freycinet are the Tooronomairremener people, part of the Oyster Bay Tribe with a history going back 35,000 years. European history dates from 1642 when Abel Tasman named Schouten Island, one of the first landmarks to be named in Tasmania.

Freycinet is a place most Tasmanians hold dear because of the wonderful holidays they have spent there, enjoying the bushwalking, beautiful beaches, wildlife and the rugged red granite mountains.





Left: Renovating Cooks beach Hut

Opposite top: Oiling Cape Tourville Boardwalk

Opposite bottom: Renovating the cottage at Schouten Island

These same reasons are why ever increasing visitor numbers are posing a challenge for PWS in the management of the Park. Freycinet National Park is the most visited National Park in Tasmania by far with 272,000 visitors in the 12 months to March 2016.

Our Branch was formed to assist PWS with a range of Parks management tasks, not only in the Park but also in the associated Reserves and the nearby Douglas Apsley National Park. We have a hardworking and dedicated group of volunteers, nearly all of whom, at their own expense, travel long distances from the major population areas of Hobart, Launceston and the north-west coast. For the first time in 2016, we were successful in gaining a grant from the Federal Department of Social Services to partly assist with travel costs. We are grateful for this.

During 2016, the Branch held three large multi-day events in addition to our involvement with the Centenary celebrations plus some one-off day work by our local members. All this entailed 1293 hours of hard work, a very significant contribution indeed.

Always a highlight are our trips to Schouten Island. Work to eradicate gorse has been in place now for approximately 20 years and we have reached a stage where we have to search for it amongst the native vegetation. Active follow-up is necessary to deplete the seed bank and ensure no new infestations take off. The other major problem was a large area of very lush Blue Periwinkle that was spreading rapidly. We have sprayed the patch several times with a mixture of chemicals that has been very effective.

Due to the possibility of the plant developing resistance to this mix, we changed chemicals last time so it will be interesting to see how this has worked when we return in 2017. We also tried covering some open patches with black plastic and some old carpet that had been left on the Island by naughty campers. This solarisation method worked a treat, and the natives are coming back. There are some other weeds that need attention as well, and we have found one isolated Apple of Soddam plant. Who put that there?

We have a long section of coastal reserve in our bailiwick and the dreaded Sea Spurge has been found on all the beaches from Falmouth to Bicheno, plus Friendly Beaches, Muirs Beach at Coles Bay and on Schouten Island. All of these beaches are walked each year and all sea spurge plants mapped and removed. These weeds travel on the water and have infested all of the southern coastline of mainland Australia, as well as Bass Strait Islands and much of the coastline of Tasmania. It is pleasing to note that more groups are tackling this huge problem.

But it is not all weeding. Like many other Branches we oil, we paint, we repair, we build, we pick up rubbish, we monitor and we clear tracks. I have not found any one crying yet but we certainly laugh, we sweat, we bleed, we care and we have a great time!

We have developed a very strong relationship with the PWS team at Freycinet. The Northern Region of PWS does not have a Volunteer Facilitator but Ranger Fiona Everts organises us "vollies" and does a great job keeping us happy and content in our work. Her list of jobs never seems to get any smaller. Thanks for that Fee!

Photo credit Marina Campbell
Brian Burford and Mark Sheriff on
the dome of the Maatsuyker Island
lighthouse with Mick McNamara on
the balcony.



FRIENDS OF MAATSUYKER ISLAND

By President, Marina Campbell

This has been an outstanding year for the Friends of Maatsuyker Island (FOMI) Wildcare.

This achievement is the result of many years of research, planning and dreaming, brought together during the year by the combined PWS-FOMI Lighthouse Working Group.

The respectful relationship between FOMI and PWS, combined with skills, knowledge, ingenuity and a determination to achieve our shared goal, ensured we were able to stay on track despite challenges that arose along the way.

The lighthouse restoration and painting works attracted positive media coverage locally and nationally. The Mercury ran a very positive story on the achievement of FOMI volunteers partnering with PWS. The Weekend Australian promoted the works with a fabulous front page photograph of Brian Burford and Mark Sheriff putting the repaired weather vane in place on top of the lighthouse dome.



FRIENDS OF MARIA ISLAND

By President, Anne Booth

Maria Island lies off the east coast of Tasmania and was proclaimed a National Park in 1972. It has a wide range of habitats, supporting a rich variety of animals and birds and World Heritage listed convict buildings.

For many years, a dedicated group of volunteers had worked on various projects on the Island, including renovation work on heritage buildings.

In 2005, the Head Ranger surveyed the overall extent of Broom and Spanish Heath. Subsequently, he initiated a systematic

eradication program for the Broom. In 2007, the Wildcare Branch, Friends of Maria Island, was established, and we received our first grant application to engage contractors. The first grant also included funding for control of the remote, isolated patch of Spanish Heath in the south of the island. Volunteers were transported by boat to camp at Haunted Bay and, over two extended expeditions, effectively cleared the site. Outstanding support from Parks was instrumental in the success of this venture.

Ongoing projects

Seven working bees were held in 2016; normally four days in the field and focused on introduced weeds.

We have reached a goal on our major project, Montpellier broom, which for many years had seemed aspirational rather than realistic.

Exotic Cumbungi

Over the years, our Branch has observed the progressive colonisation and choking of the reservoir by exotic Cumbungi. It took the initiative and enthusiasm of Roz Thurn and Colleen Combs to make any real progress.

Montpellier Broom

We have been working on the broom for 11 years. Two years ago, primary control was achieved on all 200 known sites of Broom infestation. Over four working bees this year, steady progress has been made in controlling regrowth.

Sea Spurge

Annual late summer and spring checks of Reidle Beach found just a few small plants and seedlings scattered along the beach. In this dynamic environment, violent storms regularly change the topography of the dunes, burying some plants, exposing viable old rootstock and scattering old seed.

Spanish Heath

There appear to be only two infestations of this weed on the island and both are at isolated sites on the 'southern island'.

Spanish heath at Robey's Creek is scattered over three hectares and has been cleared annually since 2009. There is a progressively smaller amount of regrowth; cleared in September 2016 by volunteers. This trip was a pleasant experience, working in the open forest, observing the first noticeable regeneration of native plants in the area and seeing the occasional orchid.

Blue periwinkle

Around Darlington, five isolated patches of Vinca Major have been weeded on a regular basis for a number of years. Finally, the whole area now appears to be free of this weed.

Mignonette

One area of our focus is an 'isolated' infestation at French's Farm shearing shed. We began clearing in 2007 and have followed up around 18 times. With regular monitoring, we should eliminate this weed.

Return Point and Coastal Weeding

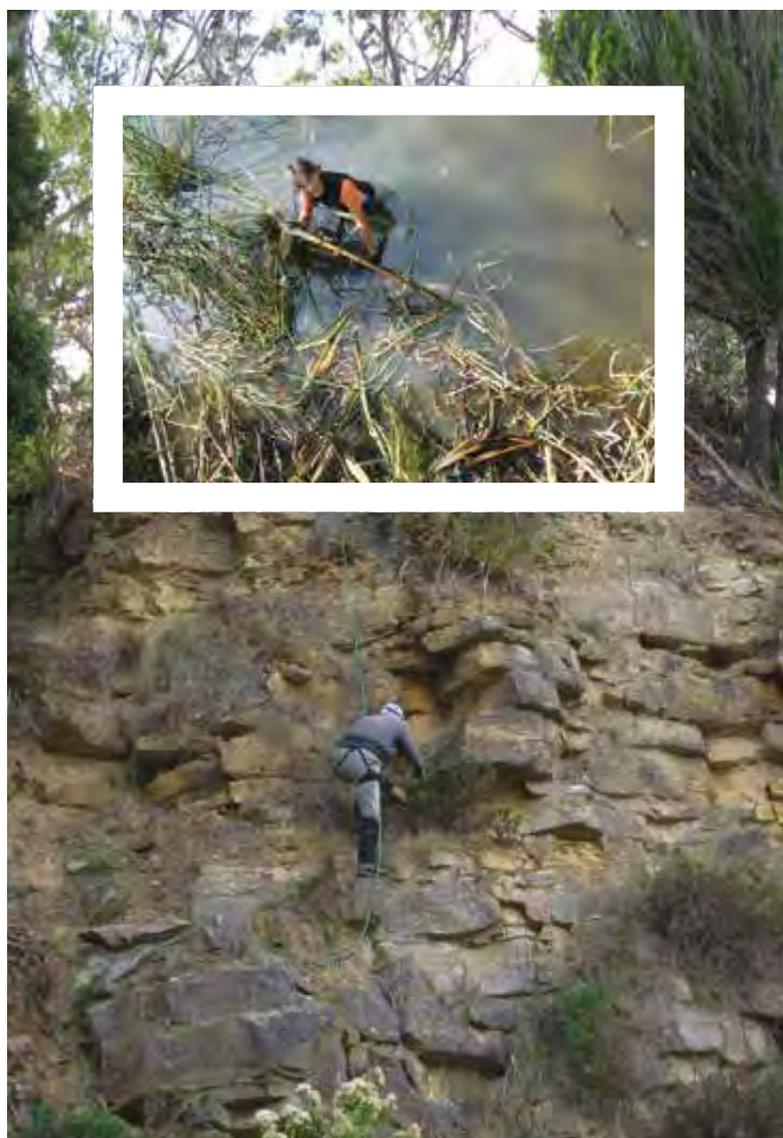
David Reynolds has continued this project working on Horehound, Thistles, Mullein and Mignonette on the pasture areas. Rubbish is also collected from the coastal beaches.

Forest ecology habitat concerns

Due to the increasing demand for firewood on the island, particularly over the winter months (penitentiary accommodation and campsite), Parks decided to fell a number of standing dead trees to meet an estimated requirement of 80 tonnes per annum. Dead trees are an essential part of the forest ecology. In the case of Maria Island, they are a recognised stronghold of the endangered swift parrot and forty spotted pardalote. The loss of potential nesting sites in tree hollows could be critical and is being closely monitored.

Thank you

We appreciate funding from Wildcare to cover ferry fares to the island and thank Parks for transport to the distant weed sites and for general assistance. Many thanks is also extended to Alison Hugo of NRM North who has given us a much needed replacement set of tool belts.



Opposite: Lower Skipping Ridge
Above: Broom playing hard to get
Insert: Cumbungi from reservoir

FRIENDS OF MOUNT FIELD

*By President, Peter Franklin and
Secretary, Adrian Blackman*

One of the motivations behind the work of the Friends of Mount Field is to make bushwalking in the park a more pleasant experience. Most of our volunteers enjoy bushwalking and so we get a direct benefit which is quite an encouragement to do the work. Working there allows more time to look about and soak up the beauty of the place than when passing through on a walk.

The year ended on a high with success in gaining a substantial grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund to repair the badly damaged Windy Moor. This is something that has been on our wish list for years and is one spot that Head Ranger, Brendan Moodie, has wanted to have done since he arrived at the park.

At the beginning of 2016, we received funds from the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife to fix a notoriously wet location on the Mount Field East track. This made a huge difference and there has been lots of appreciation from walkers.

Still on grant funds, this time for hut repair and maintenance at Lake Belcher and K Col, has had the Branch racing to get the work done before the scheduled completion date.

Time, of course, was spent on routine track maintenance, some work necessitated by damage from the winds of winter. One of the delights of the year was adding in a rustic seat by the shore of the lovely Beatties Tarn. It is now just a short 10 minute walk off the track to Lake Nicholls, along a really good track that we reopened during 2015.



Above: Adrian above the rock for track
 Insert: Collecting rocks Greg holding the sign upright Beatties Tarn
 Below: Two styles of tree guard planting in Junee Caves Reserve



Something of a new experience this year was working with the students from Westerway Primary School in tree planting. It is part of the Wilds'Cool program and is working well. Another area of planting, this time with an NRM South grant, was to plant out a degraded area beside the carpark and new track to Junee Cave. This made a huge difference and there has been much appreciation from walkers.

All this has come about because of the fabulous crew of volunteers that make up the Friends of Mount Field. Not only that, but we have obtained funds totalling over \$100,000 for the park and in 2016 contributed 842 hours of work worth \$26,000. Since inception, the Friends of Mount Field have given 6593 hours valued at \$195,000.

Mount Field also celebrated 100 years of becoming a national park during 2016. The standout was the huge crowd that attended the Fagus Festival over two superb days in April.



FRIENDS OF THE PENGUIN CRADLE TRAIL

By President, Greig Clarke

This year has proved challenging, with several weather events leaving their mark. The Penguin Cradle Trail (PCT) has been affected, along with many farming, business and private properties. Summer 2015 - 2016 started well with fine, warm conditions allowing us to work on the track. We had a scare on the Black Bluff Range late summer with bushfires reported west of Black Bluff. The thought of our recent new marker poles across the range being turned to ash was not comforting; but the fire did not spread, much to our relief.

However, we were not so fortunate over the winter period and the June flood took its toll on the track. The Leven River catchment was one area to receive over 200 mm in a day and the rapid rise and velocity of the water destroyed fences, bridges and major river bank erosion occurred. The continued heavy rain throughout winter meant the rocky ground was becoming unstable. Trees had their root structure sitting in mud so, when the strong winds hit, trees fell and landslips occurred.

The beautiful Leven Canyon section from Gunns Plains to Loongana was badly affected and, although we have not fully assessed the extent of the damage, it is substantial. The Leven River in places is much wider than it used to be as the banks have been washed away, along with sections of the track. The Lobster Creek Tramway section from Dial Road to Purtons Flats lost some of the bank and was two metres under water during the flood. The PCT is not closed, but we have placed notices on the track and our Wildcare website page indicates the areas affected, with comments.

The Patricia Dukes Foundation kindly provided some funding for trackwork, but working bees have been delayed due to the risk of falling trees and unstable ground. Our schedule unfortunately is well off target. Our aim now is to assess the work required and, with assistance from experienced track contractors and local labour, clear the PCT. This may also require re-routing the track in places.

Now for some good news! We have had meetings with the Mayor, key staff at the Central Coast Council and PWS to discuss the PCT and Dial Range. Support is very encouraging. The Green Army has been very active in the Dial Range with trackwork and signage. The north west coast is becoming a popular area for visitors. With appropriate marketing of the many attractions, including day walks in the Dial Range and the longer and more difficult PCT walk, it is hoped an increase in both local people and visitors to explore the beauty of the area will occur. Our aim is to overcome the current track erosion problem, produce a brochure and map on the PCT (edition 1 - as there will be a revised edition when the track is repaired) and examine ways to obtain greater community involvement and increase numbers in our Wildcare Branch to take the PCT into the future.



Above: The bank was a couple of metres wider here and the track has been washed away
 Opposite page: Lobster Creek Tramway section near the Dial Range at Penguin
 Top: Leven Canyon; Les is standing where the bank and track used to be. Bottom: Another tree!



FRIENDS OF THE STEPPES RESERVE

By President, Ian Hayes

The Steppes Reserve is located on the Lake Highway in Tasmania's central highlands, about 35 kilometres north-west of Bothwell. This State Reserve of 48 hectares not only protects historic buildings, but also helps to ensure that stories about a way of life, now largely gone, are not lost.

Our small but highly dedicated Branch was formed by like-minded individuals who share a passion for the Steppes Historic Site. It was borne out of several organisations that had spent a considerable amount of effort in bringing the reserve and its infrastructure up to a manageable standard. These organisations - PWS, Bothwell Historical Society and the Mountain Huts Preservation Society - offered a manageable legacy for a small group to continue maintaining and improving the site. Visitor numbers are monitored through our visitor book located in a purpose-built interpretation shelter and we are delighted with the steady and increasing flow of visitors.

Our achievements in 2016 include:

- The successful removal of a large self-sown pine tree, that had grown over a row of Banksias which were planted in 1975-76 in a tribute to Madge Wilson's service to others.
- Collecting additional historic photographs for public display in the homestead on special occasions.
- Organising and facilitating group visits such as the Tasmanian Historical Research Association and The Spring Bay Landscape Artists.
- Initiating with Dr Sally Bryant (Tasmanian Land Conservancy) for two UTAS students to conduct a bird survey in the reserve, which will be compared to a study by Ada Fletcher in the 1920s.

Our highlight for the year, however, would be the restoration of the split timber picket fence surrounding the garden, adjacent to the original house and facing the Lake Highway. Vegetation had all but consumed one section of fence, with panels collapsed and in a sad state. We took the approach of renewing the entire east-facing section using new materials, salvaging what materials we could to enable restoration of the other three sections. Traditional techniques and materials were used and members were proud of the finished result.

In addition to our efforts, PWS employed stonemasons to repair several chimneys and a fireplace within the reserve.



Opposite: Post office fire place repaired
Top: Echidna. Middle: Restoration of picket fence around garden.
Below: Wombat Moor



FRIENDS OF TASMAN ISLAND

By Erika Shankley

Another year has passed with Wildcare Branch, Friends of Tasman Island (FoTI), celebrating the 110th anniversary of Tasman Island lighthouse, first lit in 1906. It was also the 10th year of our collaboration with the Rotary Club of the Tasman Peninsula and the 10th and final year for the production of our Lighthouses of Tasmania calendar.

As usual, FoTI volunteers have shown themselves to be a dedicated and resilient group with work continuing both on and off the island.

Volunteers continued conservation work on the three heritage-listed keepers' quarters at our 24th working bee, in April, 2016. Introduced weeds were also marked by GPS to make monitoring and removal easier. The working bee culminated with the arrival of 110 visitors on Rotary's annual fundraising trip.

Thanks to The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), they were able to tour the lighthouse and the new information guide, prepared by FoTI in collaboration with Rotary, led visitors on a tour of Tasman's historic keepers' quarters and other points of interest. It was also thanks to Rotary, that FoTI was able to utilise vacant helicopter seats (free-of-charge) to depart for Safety Cove at the end of the working bee.

Work has also continued closer to home with a three-person team, headed by FoTI's works co-ordinator, Chris Creese, constructing packing cases for the second Order Cape Sorell lens, on permanent loan from AMSA.



HELICOPTER RESOURCES



Opposite: Photo, Chris Creese – 174 Helicopter Resources Squirrel helicopter below Tasman Island Lighthouse

Left: Mieka Tabart, FoTI volunteer Col Rowe 1st prize 2016 NRM South photo competition. Insert: Mieka Tabart, 1st Prize NRM South 2016 Photo Competition

Below: Photo, PWS Tasman Landing undergoing stabilisation by a team from PWS

The production of the 2016 Lighthouses of Tasmania calendar kept some of the group busy this year. While its popularity was still high, it was decided that this issue would be our last. Thanks to our sponsors, Cascade Brewery, Australian Maritime Systems and Wildcare Inc., the calendar has been a major fundraiser. We are now looking for other sources of revenue.

Of course, all this work on Tasman could not happen without our volunteers and a new agreement entered into with our partners, the Parks & Wildlife Service.

Tasman's landing stage, perched 25 metres above sea level, was badly damaged during storms in early June. In addition, the historic crane, dismantled in 1927, and laying on the bank adjacent to the landing for nearly 90 years, had been washed away. Thanks to the persistence of PWS Ranger, Eric Tierney, what is left of this historic landing has been stabilised. It is also hoped that insurance money will go a long way towards resurrecting this historic feature of life on Tasman Island.



Carol Jackson, who grew up on lightstations at Tasman Island, Eddystone Point and Low Head, has once again been elected President. Secretary, Kerryn Jenner, was also re-elected. Long-term Treasurer, Dee Webb, stepped down, handing over to former Tasman Island light keeper, Mike Jenner. Thanks Dee for your tireless work.

It is pleasing to note that two FoTI members, Erika Shankley and Ian Ross, have recently been elected to the Wildcare Board of Management. Another FoTI member, Mieka Tabart, won the NRM South Photo Competition with her black and white images of volunteer Colin Rowe.

A number of other people have also contributed to our efforts. Thanks must go to retiring PWS General Manager, Peter Mooney and Senior Ranger Stuart Dudgeon, who recently transferred to Fire Management, as well as Eric Tierney, Stuart's replacement. PWS Heritage Officer, Peter Rigozzi, has been a great help with heritage issues, while Volunteer Co-ordinator, Pip Gowen, keeps an eye on our island and off-island activities. Thank you also to Wildcare's volunteer extraordinaire, Phil (the Geek) Wyatt, who is always on hand to solve website problems and bookkeeper, Carol Pacey, who makes sure our hard-earned funds find their way into our Wildcare account. And thank you to AMSA, Wildcare, the Rotary Club of the Tasman Peninsula, as well as FoTI's volunteers and supporters, for your ongoing support. It is very much appreciated.

Catch up with our activities through our Facebook page where there is a wealth of information, photos and stories of Tasman past and present at www.facebook.com/FriendsofTasmanIsland. Other items of interest can be found on the Wildcare web site www.wildcarea.org.au/branches/friends-of-tasman-island/

TAMAR ISLAND WETLANDS VOLUNTEERS



By President, John Duggin

Breakfast with the Birds at Tamar Island Wetlands

As part of the 100 year celebrations for the establishment of national parks in Tasmania, the Tamar Island Wetlands Volunteers, along with Parks and Wildlife Service staff, hosted a Breakfast with the Birds event on Saturday 27 August 2016 at the Wetlands Centre. This was one of many activities organised by the Service throughout the State for that celebration. Community members were invited to register for the breakfast function to see, learn and appreciate the many water birds commonly seen at the wetlands. A second guided tour was also scheduled later that morning to highlight the general features and importance of the wetlands to another group of participants.

People that booked for the first tour began arriving at the Centre early in the winter's morning for a 7.30 am start. We were joined by about 45 visitors, along with 10 volunteers, both to assist the tour and prepare and host the breakfast function. The tour lasted about one hour and ended up at the third bridge, with tour members informally making their way back to the Centre in smaller groups. Unfortunately, the bird life was rather thin on the ground as tides were high, but group leaders were able to explain the life histories and preferred habitats for those species observed that morning. Commentary also extended to "if you were here on a good day, these are some of the birds we may have seen and, on particularly special occasions, these are uncommon ones you may have been lucky enough to see".



Opposite: Photo credit, Amber Travica. Guided tour participants leave the Centre on their journey to Tamar Island and the edge of the Tamar River to learn about natural history, ecology and past land uses

Above: Community members and volunteers head out along the boardwalk at the Tamar Island Wetlands to view, identify and learn about the birds they had seen

Left: Rugged up and ready to learn

Middle and bottom: Photo credit, Amber Travica. Breakfast is prepared and a warm welcome awaits the return of the birdwatchers

Most were keen to gain further understanding and chat with volunteers about their experience and learn when it would be a good time to revisit the wetlands for a more extensive viewing, particularly to see other regular inhabitants and infrequent sightings of birds such as the Lewin's Rail, Australian Spotted Crake and the Spotless Crake.

On returning to the Wetlands Centre, our visitors were invited to participate in breakfast prepared by the volunteers. Hot porridge (incidentally prepared by one volunteer with fine Scottish heritage) seemed to be the favourite starter for most, followed by fruit salad, hot croissants, home-made jams and hot drinks, as well as nibbles from the well-presented cheese and fruit platters.

Later that morning the second tour group gathered at 10.30 am to walk out to the Island and both see and learn about the ecology, natural history and past land uses of the wetlands. About 25 people, mostly comprising families and children, took off for their excursion with volunteers leading the way. This tour lasted about one and a half hours going right to the edge of the main channel of the Tamar River and then traversing over the top of the Island.

All in all, the many participants appreciated the morning's activities at the wetlands. They left with a greater understanding of the importance of maintaining a diverse and extensive conservation reserve system throughout the State, especially the role and function of wetlands in the wider landscape.



THREATENED PLANTS TASMANIA

By President, Inger Visby

Threatened Plants Tasmania (Wildcare) (TPT) was established in 2008, with a list of aims to enhance the chances of survival of Tasmania's threatened plants. TPT has been able to pursue these aims consistently ever since. The key to this has been the enthusiasm and commitment of our volunteers, the generosity of botanists and others with expertise and the unwavering support from the senior botanist at the Threatened Species Unit, Dr Richard Schahinger. From this base, we have been able to enter into strong partnerships with the NRM network in Tasmania and the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens (RTBG) that further our aims. Along with supporting our field activities, the resources these partnerships bring are being used to develop TPT's expertise in plant identification and data management skills through training courses, tailored for our volunteers. As time goes on, this further increases the value of our surveying, mapping and monitoring activities and will contribute to a long term understanding of threatened species.

It's hard to pick stand-out examples of what TPT has achieved this year because every field trip has been rewarding in one way or another. You can read about them in our six monthly newsletter on our website, www.tpt.org.au under Resources and Links. In terms of finding very rare plants, we have again

had some exciting finds this season. One was locating a population of the short lived aquatic plant, *Ruppia tuberosa*, at the Lauderdale saltmarsh in southern Tasmania. While this plant is currently listed as Rare under the TSP Act (Tas), it has only been recorded three times in Tasmania, the last in 1977 when it was sighted by Winifred Curtis. Typically, this find will now be in the mix to be followed up with further TPT activities which will contribute to a better understanding of this species and its management.

Ruppia habitat

Over the past eight years, TPT has established monitoring sites for specific species and a significant data bank is being built up for these sites. Threatened orchid species are a common subject for monitoring. Over that time, factors such as seasonal conditions, response to burns, grazing impact and fencing - caging impact have been recorded. Results and findings are emerging that will add to our understanding of these species. The team recounting transects for the *Caledonia saggicola* and *Prasophyllum mildense* this year found they were busier than ever, with more flowering plants recorded this year than in any season to date.

This contrasts starkly with last year's dry season when the numbers were extremely low and it was a quick job. In the case of the *Prasophyllum mildense*, 13 plants were recorded on this site in 2015 compared to 347 this year. As the 2016 field season progresses, this pattern seems to be repeating across the State for a number of species.

TPT's partnership with the RTBG for the Tasmania orchid conservation and research program supports aims to improve the conservation status of Tasmania's threatened orchids. This program was established in 2013 and is supervised by Dr Nigel Swarts and Dr Magali Wright. TPT has been able to attract funding which has contributed to the equipment and seed collection costs. Volunteers from TPT and from Friends of the RTBG have been intimately involved in the orchid propagation part of this work, both in the laboratory and in the nursery. The germination outcomes for threatened orchid species are increasing each year as improvements are continually made in methodology, pest management and the materials used. Species that are successfully being propagated include *Prasophyllum olidium*, *Prasophyllum incorrectum*, *Caladenia anthraxina* and *Caladenia saggicola*. The volunteers in this team have developed highly specialised skills and are very happy to see a little leaf when it finally emerges!

Tasmania has many listed threatened plants, so TPT has plenty of work ahead of it to help prevent their extinction. There are new species to be found and others to be re-found. One of the limiting factors for our group is that most of the fieldwork needs to be undertaken in Spring and Summer when the plants are flowering and there are only so many weekends in those months. Also, the field trip season takes a significant effort on the part of TPT committee members and others, who are all volunteers and working to maximum capacity over this time.

But we all love it, and always welcome volunteers, whatever skill level – the main requirement is that you like peering at plants!



Ruppia tuberosa 15 October 2016 (Geoff Carle)

WELLINGTON PARK BUSHCARE

By President, Peter Franklin



Top: Group at lunch Jeremy, Ted, Greg B, Peter, Alison, John and Greg K below the Collins Cap summit January 2016

Insert: The area now free of Erica and Gorse, with Astrid and Greg at Kalang November 2016

The work undertaken during 2016 by the Wellington Park Bushcare Branch was slanted to the weeds side, but we still managed to get a significant amount of track work done. For the first time since the Branch began operating, the weather intervened for three months in a row, causing cancellation of planned events. At one stage, it looked like it might happen again the next month.

Nevertheless, nearly all our weed sites are looking reasonably well under control and we can leave after each visit feeling that it was not a losing battle; and that is a great result.

After a three year hiatus, we managed to complete the clearing of the Collins Cap walking track. In 2012, work started on clearing back the thick vegetation that had encroached over the track so much that it required pushing through to progress along to the last 800 metres or so to get to the summit. A second day was spent there in November of that year but, before we could finish the job, a serious bushfire devastated the area. The fire burnt right up to the part cleared and, in several places, went beyond. It stopped at the very spot that our work finished and did not burn any of the uncleared section.

For one reason or another, we did not manage to get back there until early 2016, but it was an ideal day for working. Atmospheric mist was hanging about, but unlike a report from the other side of the range near Cathedral Rock, there was no drizzle and at times a diffused sun made an appearance.

Work started on another track, this time the one to Mount Connection. It had very thick Bauera encroaching and we used a hedge trimmer to speed the task which allowed others to concentrate on the woodier bushes with loppers. This track will be one of our main areas of focus during 2017 as there is quite a length that needs work. Usually the track work is done alongside PWS staff and we enjoy working with them.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE WILDCARE OFFICE

By Mike Bowden



Mike Bowden and Phil Wyatt
in the Wildcare nerve centre

Some of the Branch volunteers have been participating in Wildcare activities since 2002 - both in the field and in the Wildcare Office. One particular office volunteer reckons he's well and truly overdue for long service leave!

The three main tasks that the Office Branch undertakes are technical web support, membership processing and answering queries from the general public and the Wildcare membership.

Voluntary technical web support occurs on a daily basis behind the scenes, working with the web developers and ensuring the best possible service for our members.

The majority of our membership processing is electronic - which is great. Memberships are generated in two different ways; either directly online via our website or through the PWS system when people buy their annual Parks pass. A computer generated list of those who ticked the Wildcare option on the Parks pass form is received via email from PWS at 8.00 am every day, seven days a week.

This covers both Wildcare membership renewals and new members. The list usually has about 20 members on it and takes around an hour every day to process on our membership database. This number will increase over the holiday season and remain fairly steady until after Easter.

Office volunteers also answer and reply to all office emails from both the general public and our members, past and present. The majority of queries received relate mostly to our website, membership payments, membership numbers and changes of postal and email addresses. This task currently averages about 20 minutes each day.

Although the bulk of the office work is now done online at home, the actual Wildcare Office is a great social place to work as it offers an enjoyable social environment where you can choose to have morning or afternoon tea with PWS staff and other Wildcare workers. You also get direct access to talk to the Parks entry staff when a query arises.

The dedicated volunteers work in harmonious collaboration (without need of a team leader!).



WILDCARE

Gift Fund Committee

In 2005, Wildcare Inc became a Registered Environmental Organisation. A requirement of that status is to have a Public Fund that allows people to donate to the organisation. Wildcare Inc and its Wildcare Gift Fund were registered as a Deductible Gift Recipient, also in 2005. This means that donors to the Wildcare Gift Fund can claim donations as tax deductions. The purpose of the Gift Fund is to collect donations to support reserve management and nature conservation.

All donations made to Wildcare Inc, including to its Branches, are deposited into the Wildcare Gift Fund. To allow donors to target their giving, the Gift Fund has a number of sub-funds. These funds have defined purposes, within the charter and purpose of the wider purpose of the Gift Fund.

At present, these themed funds include:

- Wildcare Tasmanian World Heritage Wilderness Fund
- Wildcare Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund
- Wildcare Saffire Devil Fund
- Wildcare Lightstations Fund
- Wildcare Save the Orange-bellied Parrot Fund
- Wildcare Whale Rescue Fund
- Wildcare Bonorong Wildlife Fund
- Wildcare Injured and Orphaned Wildlife Fund
- Wildcare Raptor Rehabilitation and Research Fund
- Wildcare WildCarbon Fund

Details of each of these sub-funds, and our Fund partners, can be found on the Wildcare website (click on 'Donate'). The Gift Fund is supported by the Gift Fund Committee. Members of the Gift Fund are appointed by the Wildcare Board of Management. For 2016, the members have been Jamie Bayly-Stark (Chair), Bob Tyson, Nick Mooney, Will Forsyth, Rosemary Gales and Leslie Frost.



Jamie Bayly-Stark

CHAIRPERSON

Jamie Bayly-Stark had a long career in the public service, including 23 years in the Parks and Wildlife Service and its successor organisations. He started out as a wildlife biologist and has dabbled in fire ecology, conservation planning, interpretation, historic heritage and many other aspects of conservation.

Jamie has maintained his passion for the natural environment and spends a lot of his free time exploring Tasmania's amazing coastline.



Bob Tyson

MEMBER

Bob Tyson grew up in Launceston before moving to Hobart to do a life sciences degree. He worked for the Rural Fires Board, then with the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service. He held a number of positions during his 30 year career.

Bob is involved in a number of Wildcare Branches, including Friends of Deal Island, Tasman Island, Maria Island, SPRATS, Coningham, Wellington Park and Orange-bellied Parrots.



Will Forsyth

MEMBER

Will Forsyth has been a Wildcare member for 19 years and an Overland Track Warden for 15 years. He was Co-Chair (Elected) of Wildcare for eight years. He has participated in working bees on Deal, Tasman and Maatsuyker Islands, as well as Melaleuca in the south-west.

Will says with passion that he has loved every minute of these years and found the various activities and projects he has been involved in to be most rewarding.



Nick Mooney

MEMBER

Nick Mooney is one of Tasmania's most respected wildlife biologists. Now retired, Nick had a long career beginning with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the 1970s and finishing with the Nature Conservation Branch of DPIPW.

He is a renowned specialist in wildlife, such as birds of prey, Tasmanian Devils and the Thylacine, but also has a long history with a wide range of other species.



Rosemary Gales

MEMBER

Rosemary Gales is the Natural and Cultural Heritage (NCH) Division representative on the Wildcare Board. Rosemary studied zoology and wildlife conservation at universities in Western Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, followed by post-doctoral studies in Newfoundland and Tasmania. She has extensive experience with wildlife conservation biology.

Rosemary currently manages the Biodiversity Monitoring Section of NCH. She oversees biodiversity monitoring in Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area and beyond. Rosemary joined the Gift Fund Committee in 2016.



Leslie Frost

MEMBER

Leslie Frost has worked in conservation and environmental management roles since moving to Tasmania from the USA in 1982. She worked for the Parks and Wildlife Service as a summer ranger at Cradle Mountain and then as the interpretation officer for Tasmania's Wilderness WHA, while doing a Masters in Environmental Studies at the University of Tasmania.

After 20 years with Parks, she became an environmental policy adviser and then the Environmental Manager of the Australian Antarctic Division for 10 years. Leslie is Past President of the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and serves on the Management Committee of the Environmental Defenders' Office. Leslie joined the Wildcare Gift Fund Committee in 2016.



In 2016, the nature of project applications considered by the Committee was quite diverse.

Each year, Dick Smith makes a donation of \$100,000 to the Gift Fund to support Frenchmans Cap track maintenance as part of his \$1 million pledge over 10 years. The Parks and Wildlife Service submits a costed works program to Wildcare Inc. for the coming year. The Committee assesses the works program, reviews previous work undertaken and, when satisfied with the project plan, approves the funding. There is an agreement from the Parks and Wildlife Service to provide \$50,000 annually to Frenchmans Cap track maintenance, so the Dick Smith – Wildcare partnership adds to the capacity to manage this iconic track.

The Wildcare Raptor Rehabilitation and Research Fund supports the care, rehabilitation and conservation of Tasmania's birds of prey. A project titled 'Project Rain' provided \$3,500 to establish a water supply system for the Centre at Kettering.

A further sum of \$20,000 from The Patricia Dukes Foundation was received and an application invited to progress work on track marking and signage, as well as publication of a brochure, for the Penguin Cradle Trail.

An immunological approach to protect Tasmanian Devils against devil facial tumour disease (DFTD) entered its second year of funding. The Menzies Institute for Medical Research at the University of Tasmania, under the professional guidance of Chief Investigator, Professor Gregory Woods, has researched the Devil's immune response and a vaccine against DFTD for the past 10 years, with encouraging results.

The project funded is aimed at refining the immunisation procedure that stimulates the Devil's immune system to recognise and kill DFTD tumour cells. The ultimate goal is a vaccine that can be delivered as a single injection. Saffire Freycinet,

our Fund partners, donated \$25,000 (an annual commitment) towards this project and their guests contributed a further \$7,893.

Devils released into the wild at Narawntapu and Stoney Head have been monitored. All Devils recaptured have been healthy and have adapted well to their new environment. Though the biggest challenge has been road kill, Professor Woods reports that "it is wonderful to see Devil numbers increasing in these areas, which would not have been possible without support for the vaccination program".

Application of \$6,140 under a bequest from Barry Hebbard will be a valuable investment in the conservation of both Little Penguins and Short-tailed Shearwaters at Lilloo Conservation Area in north-west Tasmania. Wildcare invited Friends of the Lilloo Penguins Branch to submit an application which will enable the latest developments in electronic technology to be used with the purchase of several security and wildlife monitoring cameras and a burrowscope.

If you or someone you know wants to donate to reserve management and nature conservation, please direct them to the donation page on the Wildcare website. There are no administration fees taken from donations. All of their donation will go to where it is supposed to go. If the donor is a large one, or would like to develop an ongoing partnership with Wildcare Inc., they should contact the Wildcare CEO, Malcolm MacDonald, CEO@wildcarea.org.au or Co-Chair Andrew Smith, acochair@wildcarea.org.au to discuss the opportunities. We are very grateful for all donors, large and small.

We would like to thank our Natural Partners for the Gift Fund. These people have joined with Wildcare to create the themed subfunds and promote giving to the Gift Fund. They also are significant donors in their own right - Saffire Freycinet, Bruny Island Safaris, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys and Bonorong Wildlife Park.

WILDCARE BEQUESTS

a lasting legacy...



Tasmania's wild places, wildlife and cultural heritage give us our inspiration.

Wildcare Inc is a community volunteer organisation dedicated to caring for Tasmania's parks and reserves, native plants and animals and cultural heritage. We are out there, on the ground, getting our hands dirty. Making a difference. But we cannot do it alone.

Making a bequest is one way you can ensure this care continues. A bequest to the Wildcare Gift Fund will have a lasting effect on the future management and conservation of reserves and wildlife. Your will-maker would be able to help you organise a contribution from your estate. Your bequest will be a great affirmation of life.

You can be assured that, as a result of your generosity, Tasmania's wild places and wildlife will continue to be cared for with passion and commitment.

Tasmania's wild places, wildlife and cultural heritage give us our inspiration. You can help ensure they inspire generations to come.





FINANCIAL REPORT

For the year ended 31 December 2016

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PROFIT & LOSS

January 2016 to December 2016

	This Year \$	Last Year \$
INCOME		
Fundraising	18,903	32,545
Interest - bank	3,286	5,095
Merchandise Sales	562	29
Member Subscriptions	165,930	151,188
Projects - Grants	61,960	250,836
Projects - Other Income	23,002	50,056
Sponsorship	7,250	7,500
Late payment fee income	100	100
Total INCOME	280,994	497,350
Total Cost Of Sales	-	-
Gross Profit	280,994	497,350
EXPENSES		
Accounting & Audit Costs	1,246	1,229
Advertising & Promotions	1,857	-
AGM Costs	1,675	-
Bank Charges	1,355	856
Credit Card Charges	445	389
Bad Debt Write off	-	345
BOM Costs	5,758	7,242
Bookkeeper expenses	25,355	25,439
Chief Executive Officer	50,000	50,000
Chief Executive Officer expens	10,604	8,656
Facilitator Fee	31,600	31,252
Project Expenses		
Projects - Catering	2,079	114
Projects - Contractor Works	-	4,466
Projects - General	3,605	8,563
Projects - Salary	16,874	16,800
Projects - Tools and Materials	117,549	139,425
Projects - Transport	66,859	71,329
Projects - Training	3,960	4,635
Projects - Volunteer Allowance	8,147	7,557
Projects - Wilds'cool	3,318	1,729
Total Project Expenses	222,391	254,617
Insurance	5,761	6,257
Postage	-	32
Printing & Stationery	1,500	1,418
Prize Giving	5,500	-
Subscription and Memberships	218	555
Website Expenses	5,565	5,187
WILDTIMES Newsletter	10,571	18,584
Total EXPENSES	381,401	412,058
Operating Profit	(\$100,407)	85,293
Total Other Income	-	-
Total Other Expenses	-	-
Net Profit/(Loss)	(\$100,407)	85,293

BALANCE SHEET

December 2016

	This Year \$	Last Year \$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Wildcare Inc		
Westpac (Dep brg in)	205,498	79,564
Wildcare Cash Reserve	223,656	320,481
Accrued Income	23,936	-
Prepayments	2,242	4,228
Accounts Receivable	12,978	8,463
Total Current Assets	468,311	412,735
Total ASSETS	468,311	412,735
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	23,141	15,079
GST		
GST Collected	4,422	13,877
GST Paid	(11,758)	(11,827)
Total GST	(7,337)	2,051
Income In Advance	11,545	-
Loan - Wildcare Gift Fund	198,216	52,454
Total LIABILITIES	225,566	69,583
NET ASSETS	242,745	343,152
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit)	343,152	257,859
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(100,407)	85,293
Total MEMBERS' FUNDS	242,745	343,152

Wildcare Gift Fund

PROFIT & LOSS

ABN 80 986 531 989

January 2016 to December 2016

	This Year	Last Year
	\$	\$
INCOME		
Bank Interest	4,990	5,580
Donations	274,944	184,097
Total INCOME	279,934	189,677
Total Cost of Sales	-	-
Gross Profit	279,934	189,677
EXPENSES		
Bank Fees	5	-
Frenchmans Cap works	83,476	83,221
Grants to Approved Projects	44,902	74,672
Total EXPENSES	128,383	157,893
Operating Profit	151,551	31,784
Total Other Income	-	-
Total Other Expenses	-	-
Net Profit/(Loss)	151,551	31,784

BALANCE SHEET

December 2016

	This Year \$	Last Year \$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Westpac 447372	1,503	705
Westpac Term deposit 497687	226,376	221,385
Total Current Assets	227,879	222,090
Loan Wildcare	198,216	52,454
Total ASSETS	426,095	274,544
LIABILITIES	-	-
NET ASSETS	426,095	274,544
EQUITY		
Retained Funds	274,544	242,760
Current Year Surplus/Deficit	151,551	31,784
Total EQUITY	426,095	274,544

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2016

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the reporting requirements of the *Association Incorporation Act 1964 Tasmania*. The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act Tasmania* and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 1031	Materiality
AASB 110	Events Occurring After Balance Sheet Date

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standard Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuation of non-current assets.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with a special purpose framework in order to meet the needs of the associations members. As such, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

OFFICERS' ASSERTION STATEMENT

For the year ended 31 December 2016

The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee, the attached financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Wildcare Inc., as at 31 December 2016 and its performance for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016;
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Wildcare Inc., will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:


.....
President


.....
Treasurer

Dated at Hobart this 16th day of March 2017

Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of Wildcare Inc.

Qualified Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Wildcare Inc. (the Entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2016, the statement comprehensive income, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the declaration by those charged with governance.

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at 31 December 2016 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with *Associations Incorporation Act (Tas) 1964*.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

Cash is a significant source of revenue for Wildcare Inc. The Wildcare Inc. has determined that it is impracticable to establish control over the collection of cash prior to entry into its financial records. Accordingly, as the evidence available to us regarding cash revenue from this source was limited, our audit procedures with respect to cash had to be restricted to the amounts recorded in the financial records. We therefore are unable to express an opinion on whether the recorded cash of Wildcare Inc. is complete.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standard Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Wildcare Inc. to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (Tas) 1964*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

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Sydney + Melbourne + Brisbane
Perth + Adelaide + Hobart + Auckland

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Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial report in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act (Tas) 1964*, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



Michael J Burnett B.Com. FCA
Registered Company Auditor
Partner, Accru⁺ Hobart
Lvl 1, 18 Ross Avenue
ROSNY PARK TAS 7018

16.3.17
Date

WILDCARE BOARD DETAILS

As at 31 December 2016

Andrew Smith – Co-Chair (Appointed)	106 Lewisham Scenic Drive Lewisham TAS 7173	0419 361 876
Sally Saller – Co-Chair (Elected) and Public Officer	5/70 Village Drive Kingston TAS 7050	0438 897 533
John Duggin	1876 West Tamar Highway Rosevears TAS 7277	(03) 6394 3644
Rosemary Gales	259 Howden Road Howden TAS 7054	0409 002 418
Sheryl Hamilton (Ceased 19 March 2016)	97 Summerleas Road Fern Tree TAS 7054	0448 174 298
Mark Holdsworth (Ceased 29 January 2016)	360 Forest Hill Road Sandford TAS 7020	0419 120 298
Peter Marmion (Ceased 29 January 2016)	174 Lanes Road Glen Huon TAS 7109	0418 281 156
Stan Matuszek	80 Seccombe Street Perth TAS 7300	0418 131 418
Shane Pinner (Ceased 29 January 2016)	39 Sorell Street Devonport TAS 7310	0467 648 989
Robert Tyson	546 Huon Road South Hobart TAS 7004	0428 248 808
Sarah Wilson (Ceased 29 July 2016)	37 Feltham Street North Hobart TAS 7000	0428 102 712
Alice Youyin Yu (Ceased 24 January 2016)	22 Ewing Avenue Kingston Beach TAS 7050	0422 101 829
Karen Ziegler (Ceased 7 February 2016)	85 Clarks Road Lower Longley TAS 7109	0417 552 136
Erika Shankley (From 20 April 2016)	Unit 2 – 6 Lentara Avenue Mount Nelson TAS 7007	(03) 62233510
Kate Mooney (From 17 October 2016)	2 Torrens Street Richmond TAS 7025	0418 532 189
Suzanne Crowley (From 22 September 2016)	380 Sugarloaf Road Jackeys Marsh TAS 7304	0421 013 169
David Harris (From 19 March 2016)	5 Lynden Road Bonnet Hill TAS 7053	0429 800 990
Ian Ross (From 19 March 2016)	9 Tamar View Drive Riverside TAS 7250	0408 271 407
Sally Simco (From 27 April 2016)	264 West Gawler Road Gawler TAS 7315	0438 220 069
Robert Dyson (From 18 August 2016)	2 Milford Lane Bellerive TAS 7018	0477 038 390

16/3/17



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