



Wildcare Friends of Melaleuca

President's Annual Report, 12 Oct 2023

I am pleased to present this summary of FoM's achievements during the year. We currently have a membership of 223 (Wildcare webpage). Thanks to the wonderful, active membership of willing volunteers with diverse and useful skills and lots of enthusiasm, plus a lot of interested supporters working together to care for this place that we all love.

FoM and Wildcare

Thanks to Wildcare team and Board for their ongoing support. They are always happy to assist, discuss issues and answer questions. The Wildcare website is a great way to see what other branches are doing as well as an opportunity for us to publish our stories.

This year Wildcare welcomed a new CEO, Jill Maxwell, and we are looking forward to meeting her. Thanks to Sharon Smith, the past CEO for her dedication and enthusiasm.

Wildcare holds regular Zoom chats with members and with branch leaders, which are informative and also offer an opportunity to meet 'virtually' with leaders and members of other Wildcare branches around the State.

FoM and PWS

FoM recognizes the work and dedication of Parks staff in the Melaleuca area. Steve Locke, Ranger at Huonville Field Centre, is our chief contact and hands-on person at working bees.

Emmalene Maher has taken over as the new Regional Volunteer Coordinator, South.

Meetings

Our meetings over the past year were all held at the DSS with a meal before the meeting and a presentation after the formal part of the evening. Last October we held our AGM, when the current committee was elected. At the March working bee, various planning discussions for next years work took place.

Presentations:

October 2022: Brilliant photos by Peter Marmion.

June, 2023: Mt Beattie track and working bee and Sounds of the Southwest event

August, 2023: Tony gave a PPT presentation about the huts of Cox Bight.

Fundraiser – Sounds of the Southwest:

Sounds of the Southwest, our music events at Moonah Arts Centre were an amazing success. This was a lovely way to share the SW with people as well as being a fundraiser for FoM. Peter Marmion and Tony Fenton put in a lot of work organizing the show, ticketing and liaising with

performers and the venue. Thanks to the fabulous artists who got up on stage – Tony Fenton and Steve Crump with the Piano story; Greg Wells and the Blackwater Band backed by Peter Marmion and Jimmy Emms’ images; John Coleman and his beautiful guitar; and Mick Lawrence’s visual presentation for Nigel Westlake’s Spirit of the Wild music. The show was booked out, so we ran a repeat in August. This was booked out as well in spite of a clash with FoMI’s AGM. The story of the presentation is on our news page:

<https://wildcaretas.org.au/wildcare-news/sounds-of-the-southwest/>

Working bee

FoM’s 15th working bee was held between 14-21 March 2023 and was a great success.

Freight via fishing boat *Jean Nichols* arrived in October, organized by Ranger Steve Locke. Other goods were brought in aboard *Georges Bay* and *Poinduk*. Thanks to volunteers who assisted with packing and loading the materials.

We had 17 volunteers this year including 4 new recruits. As well as our routine tasks (draining, weeding, brushcutting), we achieved a number of major jobs during the week, chiefly the Mt Beattie track remediation; house roof remediation at Kings; painting the ceiling at Willsons, underfloor stumping at Claytons and remediation at the two bushwalkers huts (thanks to builder Richard Tatnell).

Thanks to Steve Locke, for collaboration and guidance during the week as well as pre-planning sessions and the necessary RAAs. All volunteers worked hard and put in a combined 824 hours on site with enthusiasm and camaraderie, thanks to all! A big thank you to Barbara for making her home available for volunteers, and to Bob Cleary and Chas Wessing for freight and transport.

Mt Beattie Track remediation: This special project was made possible by funding from Wildcare’s Tasmanian Nature Conservation grant towards airfares, materials, freight, helicopter time and clean-up. Last year various constraints prevented the project’s completion in 2022. This year we were able to finalise the grant as Wildcare kindly carried over the funding. This work was successfully driven by Ranger Steve Locke with Any Condous and Dan Rowe plus 4 FoM volunteers.

Museum catalogue

Rona, with assistance from Ann Wessing and Greg Hodge, entered museum object descriptions into FoM’s e-Hive account.. This is a collection management system data base designed for small museums. It is a good way of keeping records, and allows the entries to be viewed digitally off-site.

Mining Heritage Interpretation

In October 2019 we submitted a proposal to PWS, and August 2021 an Interpretation Plan. Our application to Arts Tasmania was approved by PWS subject to RAAs. We have \$10.662 grant funding in hand from Arts Tasmania’s Cultural Heritage Program and 7 days expertise from the Roving Curator Program which Arts Tasmania kindly carried over to the current financial year. The preliminary RAA was prepared by FoM with Steve Lock, then the detailed RAA submitted by FoM. It is now back with Steve Lock for processing.

Marine biosecurity project

The risk of invasive marine pests in the Port Davey waterway, exacerbated by the increased number of boating visitors is of high concern. European Green Crabs and Pacific Oysters have been logged in Bathurst Channel. On 17 October 2022 FoM sent a letter to Jason Jacobi outlining biosecurity concerns for Port Davey. FoM is assisting to get the message across to boat owners. We published an article, 'Port Davey – a waterway at risk' in Marine and Safety Tasmania's summer 2022 issue of *Boatwise* magazine. Plans are underway to produce a pamphlet to distribute to yachting groups.

Funding

The donation boxes continue to provide some revenue
Cards sell quite well in the museum over summer and there is a slow trickle of sales through the Wildcare online shop. Thanks Erika for looking after the latter.

Otherwise funding comes from grants, sponsorship, donations and in-kind support. A generous private donation was received and of course our events raised funds.

Reporting

Thanks to Erika Shankley for the group's Facebook page.

FoM's FILES page on the Wildcare website offers a site where more formal files can be placed and viewed. Our minutes and reports go here, including working bee reports, museum policy and heritage conservation management plans.

Wildcare's website News page is a great forum for FoM's stories. We have posted seven articles on that site during the year.

We appreciate Wildcare's support in awarding us a grant from the Nature Conservation Fund for the Mt Beattie work, and for Wildcare's behind-the-scenes office and bookkeeping work. Many thanks to Sharon for her dedicated work over the years and Kim's ongoing cheerful help. We also thank Alex, Linda and board members.

Thanks to PWS staff, especially Steve Locke for collaboration and support. And thanks to committee members and other volunteers who kept FoM active during the year, and especially to Rob Banfield for organising the Claytons projects, Peter Marmion and Helen Statham for secretarial work, Tony for his long-standing treasury duties and entertaining presentations and of course to those trusty volunteers who gave their all at the working bee.

Janet Fenton,

President, Friends of Melaleuca, Wildcare Tasmania, 12 October 2023