

# NARPULUNGUP NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF FITZGERALD RIVER NATIONAL PARK

JUNE 2022, VOLUME 2



Photo: Libby Sandiford

## FROM THE AGM

*by Sheryn Prior*

A lively bunch of Fitzgerald Friends met at Point Ann on Sat 12th March 2022 to hear from guest speaker Katy Evans and attend the AGM. It was a great turnout, with Friends gathering from many parts of the region, with common reports about the travel in (bumpy) and different accounts of the impending weather.

Eager ears gathered around Katy Evans on the centre stage BBQ as rain poured off the shelter roof and lightning crashed around the bay. She started the story at the beginning, demonstrating the geological theories believed to shape the Fitz landscape we see today. At a break, daring individuals went to examine the rocks on the point and all returned a bit wetter than they started. Hopefully those who were up front can share



the knowledge they gained in the future!

AGM formalities commenced early, Committee members were returned and a general call out was made seeking members interested to lead events for Friends in the coming year. DBCA's Vanessa Lipianin, Senior Operations Manager, gave the Ranger's Report and noted works completed, challenges of staff continuity and gravel roads, and the value of expertise within the Friends group.

While it didn't seem likely and most headed home, those who stayed on were treated with glorious sunshine and turquoise waters in the afternoon.

## 2022 COMMITTEE

The following members were elected to the Friends of Fitzgerald River National Park Committee for 2022:

**President:** Gil Craig

**Vice president:** vacant

**Secretary:** Delys Harland

**Treasurer:** Sheryn Prior

**Twertup Representative:** vacant

**Narpulungup News Editor:** Vicky Bilney

**Committee Members:** Kate Brown, Jennifer Dunn, Allison Lulfitz, Liz Utting

Please contact us on [admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](mailto:admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au) if you are able to fill one of the vacant positions.

We would like to thank Anne Gadsby for her many years of dedication to the Friends. Anne, your input and experience will be sorely missed!

## RANGERS ON THE MOVE

*by Gil Craig and Vanessa Lipianin*

It is with regret that we say farewell to park Rangers Josh Woods (Gairdner) and Rachel Nye-Chart (Hopetoun). Both have remained with DBCA with Josh moving to Denham and Rachel to Exmouth where she has taken a marine ranger position.

Our new rangers have started in late May. Alex Mitchell will be the Gairdner Ranger, and Eloise Morath will start in Hopetoun. Alex has been working in Gippsland, Victoria as a project fire fighter and studied Environmental Science at Melbourne University. Eloise has been working in central Australia as a Ranger at Ormiston Gorge in the West MacDonnell Ranges and has a background in bush regeneration in Sydney.

There remains one Ranger vacancy at Hopetoun which will hopefully be filled soon. We look forward to welcoming all the new staff to the park.

## ROYAL HAKEA SCHOLARSHIP

Friends are supporting research student Tasmin Lancaster's Hounours proposal *The implications of key constraining factors on the early life stages and population persistence of Royal Hakea* with their Royal Hakea scholarship. Tasmin visited Fitzgerald River National Park in April, and will make a written version of her proposal available to us.

## JOIN THE DOTS

*TEDxKinjarling: Join the Dots - Inclusive Landcare Practices with Shandell Cummings and Alison Lulfitz*

If you have missed Albany's TEDxKinjarling event in January, the YouTube link below is a powerful must-see for anyone interested in shared-approach conservation. The talk features landscapes, plants and First Nation history of the Fitzgerald River National Park as well as the broader south coast.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU\\_CnWRyeKk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU_CnWRyeKk)

## ELEMENTAL – PAINTINGS INSPIRED BY THE FITZGERALD RIVER NATIONAL PARK

Fremantle artist Bridget Seaton seeks to portray the Australian bush in its imperfect beauty and has a particular reverence for trees. When bushwalking and camping she paints in her sketchbook, committing places deep into memory. On return to the studio she embarks on larger pieces of work, drawing on her memories of places visited. The work in her recent exhibition ELEMENTAL is inspired by The Fitzgerald River National Park, the Peak Charles National Park and the bumper wildflower season we had in 2021.

The Fitzgerald River National Park holds a special place in her heart and despite only having lived in WA for 12 years, Bridget has visited the park at least 6 times, noting its ever-changing landscapes, noticing the fluctuating water levels in the inlets, the plant life

after dry years and wet years and how the park responds after fire. [...] The exhibition was open from the 17 – 29 May and can still be viewed online on Bridget’s website [www.bridgetseaton.com](http://www.bridgetseaton.com) and <https://bridgetseaton.com/section/511334-ELEMENTAL-EXHIBITION.html>



**The Good Year** (acrylic on board, framed in whitewashed wood, 60 x 120 cm) is one of Bridget’s paintings inspired by Fitzgerald River National Park.  
60x120cm



## THE LITTLE WHITE WHALE PROJECT

Two years ago, Courtney Ellett took a photo of a white Southern Right Whale (Mammang) calf from her father David Ellett’s plane. When Courtney’s mother Lisa-Maree put the photo on Facebook, it was spotted by land-based whale-researchers Katy Fannei and Max Fabry who were unable to find whales – and the rest is history.

The Little White Whale Project has since been established as a not for profit organisation facilitating research of the Southern Right Whale population that visits the south coast of Western Australia by supporting the researchers with flights, 4WD transport, accommodation, and raising funds.

**For this whale-watching season, they are urgently looking for billeted accommodation for the researchers for two to four days a week in the Bremer Bay region, ideally for three to six weeks at a time.** If you would like to know more about the project and the fascinating story behind it, or are able to help out, please visit their website [www.littlewhitewhaleproject.org](http://www.littlewhitewhaleproject.org) or ring Lisa-Maree on 0409 001 313.

# NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK – FRIENDS' EVENT

*Sat 13 - Sun 14 August 2022*

National Science Week is Australia's annual celebration of science and technology. This year the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park are holding the following activities to encourage an interest in science pursuits. Both members and the general public are welcome to attend, and we encourage younger people to come along and be fascinated by this exceptional national park.

## Program

### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August at Point Ann:

**10 am – morning tea (BYO)**, meet at Point Ann picnic/BBQ area

**11 am – Point Ann whale watching.** Cetacean researcher Dr Kate Sprogis will talk about whales and dolphins as they migrate along the South Coast. *Bring binoculars.*

**1 pm – Discover Hooded Plovers.** Join local bird enthusiast Anne Gadsby as she searches the known hiding places for these vulnerable shore birds. Meet at Point Ann picnic/BBQ area.

### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August at Twertup:

**7.30 pm – Owl hunt.** Vanessa Lipianin, FRNP Senior Operations Officer and owl enthusiast will guide a search for these nocturnal predators near the Twertup Field Studies Centre. *Bring walking shoes and torch.*

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August at Twertup:

**8.30 am – Botanical Walk.** Join local botanist Dr Gillian Craig on a 4km walk starting at the Twertup Field Studies Centre. *Bring walking shoes, hat, and water.*



*Photo: Nathan McQuoid*



*Photo: goric.org*



*Photo: birdsinbackyards*

**Note:** Access to Twertup is via 10km 4WD track from Quiss Rd/Pabelup Drive which is closed during wet soil conditions. Point Ann may also be closed in wet weather. These events will be held from the Quaalup Homestead Wilderness Retreat if there are road closures. Please check [www.fitzgeraldcoast.com.au/explore/road-closures.aspx](http://www.fitzgeraldcoast.com.au/explore/road-closures.aspx) and the Friends' website [www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](http://www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au) for updates.

**This is a BYO everything event.** Overnight shared accommodation is available at the Twertup Field Studies Centre (max 16 beds) or BYO swag/tent (limited to 30 people total) – bookings essential. Please RSVP to [admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](mailto:admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au) to book Saturday night at Twertup. If the event is moved due to wet weather, overnight accommodation must be booked directly with the Quaalup Homestead Wilderness Retreat on 9837 4124.



*Photo: Gil Craig*

# DOLPHINS, WHALES, AND DR KATE

*About cetacean researcher Dr Kate Sprogis*

Dr Kate Sprogis has recently moved to the Albany Campus of the University of Western Australia to continue her research on the behaviour of cetaceans. She started her research in these large marine mammals over 13 years ago while doing her PhD studies at the Cetacean Research Unit at Murdoch University. Her studies focused on the Bunbury population of the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops aduncus*), looking at whether there were differences in the ranging patterns, abundance and movements of female and male dolphins.

Since finishing her PhD, Kate obtained a prestigious European Union Postdoctoral Fellowship and worked at Aarhus University in Denmark. Kate's postdoctoral research was on mother-calf pairs of humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) in Exmouth Gulf, WA.

Last year, Kate measured potential impacts of tourist vessels that are used for whale-watching on southern right whales off South Australia. The noise levels of various boats have been measured and Kate and her colleagues have recommended guidelines for the distance and noise levels vessels should keep so that they minimise interfering with the whales.

Join Kate and the Friends at Point Ann on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August to learn more about the behaviour and current research on whales and dolphins. Kate will be one of the international team of experts that will be researching the migration patterns of southern right whales (*Eubalaena australis*) as the whales move from our WA south coast

during the breeding season into the Southern Ocean feeding grounds. This satellite tagging research is in collaboration with the University of Western Australia, Macquarie University, the Australian Antarctic Division and Auckland University. The Australian component will combine forces with the New Zealand satellite tagging efforts where you can follow the whales tagged in 2020 and 2021 on the Tohora voyages website ([www.tohoravoyages.ac.nz](http://www.tohoravoyages.ac.nz)).

For more information see: website [www.research-repository.uwa.edu.au/en/persons/kate-sprogis](http://www.research-repository.uwa.edu.au/en/persons/kate-sprogis), and Instagram [@KateSprogis](https://www.instagram.com/KateSprogis).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> August: Science Week – Friends’ Event.** See inside this issue for program and activities.

**3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September: Members’ Days and Spring Clean at Twertup.** Many hands make light work, so we look forward to seeing you at Twertup on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September, or even better, on both days. Accommodation is available at Twertup if you would like to stay over night. Please book ahead by contacting [admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](mailto:admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au)

Our beautiful banksia **tea towels** designed by artist Julie Outram are available by contacting [admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](mailto:admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au)

- \$20 each
- now available in organic cotton
- wholesale discount applies for orders of 20 and over



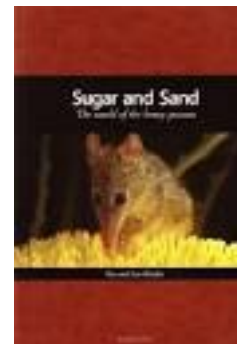
The lovely book

### **Sugar and Sand: The World of the Honey Possum**

by Ron and Sue Wooller

is also available through [admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](mailto:admin@fitzgeraldfriends.org.au)

- for \$15 each



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