

# Narpulungup News

August  
Number 3 2013

from the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park

[www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](http://www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au)

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## BUT FIRST....TWERTUP UPDATE

Twertup Track has been upgraded thanks to a *Caring for Our Country – Community Action Grant*. Track works between April and June included contractors installing three culvert pipes and six new spur drains under the supervision of rangers Grantly Morton and Geoff Young. This should markedly improve access to Twertup with fewer 'down days' because of a wet/muddy track which has caused so many delays in rebuilding the Field Studies Centre up until now. Consultant botanists Gil Craig, Ellen Hickman and Libby Sandiford carried out the required flora surveys as an in-kind donation to the project. 'Friends' are grateful to Grantly, who managed the project as part of his 'Certificate IV in Land Management'.

On 9th-10<sup>th</sup> June, ten volunteers slipped into Twertup while the track was dry for the tenth working bee. Unfortunately it rained a bit while we were there, but it didn't dampen our spirits, nor stop the work. Masonry blocks were laid to build up part of the footings to the correct height, then back-filled with soil to start levelling off the pad. Another bee should see the pad levelled and compacted, ready for a contract grano-worker. Quotes are currently being requested for the pouring and finishing of the slab.

*Contributed by Gil Craig.*



*Sheryn Prior is all smiles as she trowels off the concrete infill in the retaining blocks.*

*Photo Mark True*

Next issue:  
November 2013

## **MEMBERSHIPS, SUBSCRIPTIONS and NARPULUNGUP NEWS**

Since the AGM your committee has revised our membership list which has revealed most members now prefer to receive the e-mail version, some of whom may not have been sent the last edition. I apologise for this oversight. Through no fault of your own you may not have renewed your subscription. For this reason the renewal form is also included in this edition on page 5. We value your membership and are looking at ways of greater efficiency in maintaining it. The membership form can also be printed off the website [www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](http://www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au) *Editor*.

## **FRNP PARKS IMPROVEMENT NOTICE 26 JUNE 2013**

### **Construction Works at Point Ann**

Weather permitting, the Department of Parks and Wildlife through the Shire of Jerramungup, (the appointed contractor) will be commencing construction works at the Point Ann recreation site on Monday 1st July. The main scope of works will be to improve the gradient of the access track down to the picnic area and construct the base levels of the planned terrace picnic/interpretation area – all in preparation for the landscape contract (currently out to tender). The Shire will also undertake some work on the St Mary spur road to improve drainage and parking. The work is expected to take 1-2 weeks.

At this stage the plan is to keep the roads and site open to the public - as per usual under dry soil conditions. The Point Ann site will be partially closed with public access only permitted to the southern section of the new car park, the heritage trail and the southern whale platform. No access will be allowed to the construction site which extends to the current picnic areas, the walk path to the northern whale platform, and the boat ramp. The work on the St Mary campsite road should not stop visitors from using this site. Trucks will be carting gravel and limestone to the site (under strict environmental hygiene requirements) so please drive safely. DPaW apologise for any inconvenience however the works are critical for the continued redevelopment of the site (planned to be finished in the spring).

### **Cave Point**

The Department of Parks and Wildlife is pleased to announce that construction work on the Cave Point recreation site will commence in the next couple of weeks. The scope of works includes a cantilevered stainless steel lookout, 2 cubicle toilet, universal concrete paths and the trail head for the new coastal walk trail (Hakea trail). CPD Group were the successful respondent for this tender and the work is scheduled to finish in October. Prior to the commencement of works DPaW will close off the Cave Point spur road (south of the West Beach spur road) stopping public access to the construction site. The newly constructed West Beach site will be accessible as per current conditions.

### **Hamersley Inlet**

The tender for landscape works at the new campground and the re-developed day use area will soon be advertised on the Tenders WA website. As per the Project Notice 12-6-13, the recreation area and the western part of the Hamersley Inlet road, beyond the Dunes track will remain closed until the completion of the recreation sites and walk trail. *Contributed by Clodagh Irwin, Department of Parks and Wildlife.*

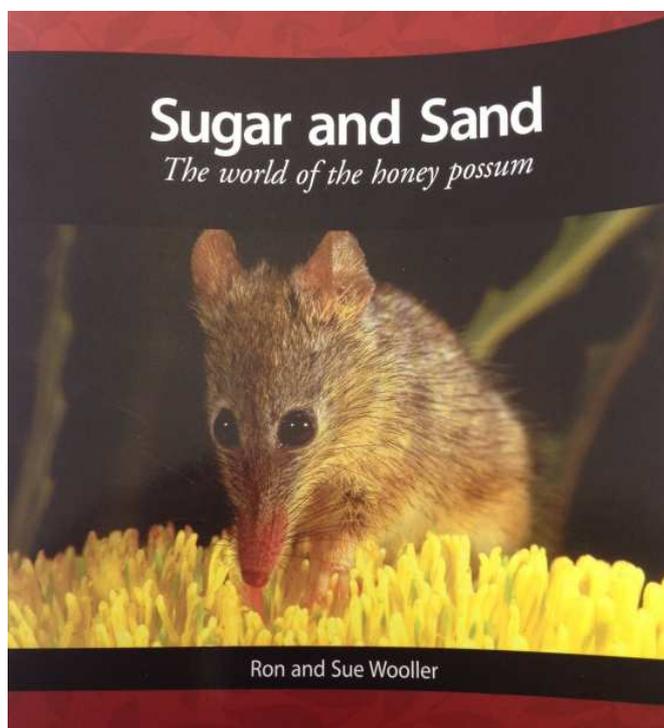
## **CONGRATULATIONS TO RON and SUE WOOLLER**

'Friends' congratulate Ron and Sue Wooller on the publication of their book 'Sugar and Sand – the world of the honey possum'. See book review below. We further congratulate Ron for receipt of the 2013 D. L. Serventy medal by Birdlife Australia for contributions to Australian ornithology. In addition to congratulations we offer our thanks to the authors for donating 50 copies of their book to 'Friends' to use for fund raising. A very generous donation indeed.

Ron came to Australia in 1976 to take up a position as lecturer and help establish Murdoch University. His research interests are divided into two streams; ecology of offshore nesting seabirds and studies of south west inland habitats including feeding ecology of honeyeaters and his extensive work on honey possums. This work involved the supervision of several honey possum PhD theses which were largely undertaken in FRNP in the vicinity of Quaalup where until recently Ron and Sue owned one of the enclave private property blocks. Ron retired in 2006 as Emeritus Professor after 30 years of teaching, supervision and research. Sue also has a Murdoch University association as an adjunct lecturer with research interests in bird and plant biology.

Ron and Sue have bought a Georgian house between Launceston and Devonport in Tasmania. We thank them for their interest in the Fitz., contributions to knowledge of its biology and support for 'Friends'. We wish them well for their new life in Tasmania.

### BOOK REVIEW by Alison Lullfitz



I've always had a soft spot for honey possums but after reading this delightful book by Ron and Sue Wooller, I am completely smitten! In 'Sugar and Sand' Ron and Sue share many insights, gained through several decades of studying honey possums and their environment. Their work has been heavily focused in the floristically rich (but nutrient poor) sandplain of the Fitzgerald River National Park.

'Sugar and Sand' covers the physiological adaptations of the honey possum that enable its high energy diet of nectar and pollen, its rapid reproductive strategy and short lifecycle, which are collectively summed up by Ron and Sue as 'life in the fast lane'. Also fascinating is the account of the species' close relationship and heavy reliance on particular members of the *Banksia* genus - although individuals have been captured further afield, it is the sandplain heaths of the south and west coasts that are the strongholds of the honey possum, and it is no coincidence that these areas are also home to the greatest diversity of *Banksia* species. Unlike eastern Australian heathlands where honey possums are absent, flowering plant

species providing food are present in every season in WA's south and west coast heathlands.

This book provides a fascinating and entertaining overview of this endearing mammal, (that is such an icon of the Fitz.) and its precariously balanced existence. Not only does it detail what is known of its biology and ecology, it also suggests further research needs and provides some serious food for thought about future challenges for the species such as climate change and plant disease.

'Sugar and Sand' was published by Swanbrae Press in 2013. It is available from WA Museum Bookshops in both Albany and Perth for \$22 RRP or from the 'Friends' website [www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au](http://www.fitzgeraldfriends.org.au)

### SOME SPRING ACTIVITIES FOR YOU

Although most of our time and energy for this year (and the foreseeable future) will be devoted to the Twertup reconstruction, 'Friends' members are involved in the following activities which you might like to consider.

#### Ravensthorpe Wildflower Show nature walk

This year there will be a loop walk from and back to Ethel Daw lookout on Mt Desmond. The walk will be relatively easy as most of it is on either road, track or the railway heritage trail and it is only 5-6 km in length. There will be opportunities to examine and photograph wildflowers, watch and listen to birds and generally enjoy this splendid patch of bush. For those who wish to we can visit the Mt Chester manganese adit which is interesting in its own right and often home to possums and cave bats. The walk will be led by local zoologist Andy Chapman. We will get back to where we started between 2.30-3.00 PM.

Date, time and place to meet? Sunday 15 September at 10.00 for 10.30 AM start; meeting at the lookout that is signposted from Elverdton Road which originates 10 km from Ravensthorpe on Hopetoun Road.

What to wear and bring? Dress according to weather on the day. Wear ankle supporting footwear and as bees may be present bring antihistamines or epi-pen if allergic to their sting. Bring your own lunch in a daypack as well as something to drink on the way. A cup of tea will be

provided when we stop for lunch. Bring a torch if you wish to enter the adit.

Please register your intention to walk by phoning Ravensthorpe Visitor Centre on 98381277 or ring Andy Chapman on 98381149 for further information. Be dieback aware and ensure your footwear and vehicle are free from soil or mud before driving or walking into the Ravensthorpe Range.

### **Ravensthorpe and environs Tag Along FWD Tours**

Ravensthorpe Progress Association is offering three of these popular tours over Tuesday 10th, Thursday 12th and Friday 13th September during the Wildflower Show festival of events. Route details will be available early in September. The Friday 13th tour will cover Ravensthorpe Range and Jerdacuttup River. All tours will leave the Ravensthorpe caravan parking area opposite BP Roadhouse at 10.00 AM. A dieback washdown facility will be available at no cost from 9.00 AM. Cost of tours is \$20 per adult and \$3 for children with a picnic/barbecue lunch out bush provided. Tours will take 4-5 hours. For further details or to book ring or visit Ravensthorpe Visitor Centre on 98381277. The Centre is half way up the Ravensthorpe hill on the left heading into town from Esperance.

### **'FRIENDS' FACEBOOK PAGE**

For those of you who enjoy social media on the internet, 'Friends' now have a Facebook page. Search for Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-the-Fitzgerald-River-National-Park/606674662693271>). Upcoming events, photos of activities and points of interest will be posted from time to time.

*Thanks to Geraldine Janicke for contributing this and organising our Facebook. Editor*

### **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

We welcome the following new members, thank them for their support and trust that their membership is both enduring and satisfying: Julia Fry,

Bill & Jane Thompson, Chris & Georgina Steytler.

### **PHOTO GALLERY - THE TWERTUP RE-CONSTRUCTION**



*Twertup Field Studies Centre progress over the years. From top to bottom 2007, 2008 & 2012. It will take a while but we will get the job done.*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to renew my membership/ join****the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park.**

- Family \$30 (inc GST)    Individual \$20 (inc GST)    Concession \$12 (inc GST)  
 Yes, I would like to receive my copy of *Narpulungup News* by email.

**I would like to make a donation for the restoration of Twertup.****Here is my gift for**

- \$40    \$80    \$120    \$160    \$\_\_\_\_\_ (my choice)

**I would like to make an in-kind contribution to the rebuilding of Twertup.**

- Please let me know when there are working bees (all hands welcome).  
 I have a special skill, eg builder, brick layer, stonemason, painter, carpenter,  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 I have equipment or materials, eg cement, scaffolding, \_\_\_\_\_

I am paying by  cheque/ money order (*payable to Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park Inc*)

- EFT

Account Name: Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park

BSB: 306056   Account No: 0046027

Please advise Treasurer by email: [vekleber@yahoo.de](mailto:vekleber@yahoo.de)

- Please tick if a receipt is required.

Post to:

The Treasurer

Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park

PO Box 13

Ongerup WA 6336

**PHOTO GALLERY continued from page 4...**



*Jane Thompson was all smiles at the June 2013 working bee. Photos Mark True/Sheryn Prior.*

**CONDOLENCES**

'Friends' extend their sympathies to members Geoff Young and Jenny Taylor on the passing of Geoff's father recently.



*Rob Wright looks pretty happy too....*



*The light rain was inconvenient but it brought out a fine sense of colour amongst the workers.*

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