

Friends of Black Mountain (FoBM) 2015

This year our ParkCare activities included weeding work parties, displays, brochures, guided walks, and vegetation monitoring (Vegwatch). These activities contribute to FoBM's aims for conservation and promotion of Black Mountain's biodiversity.

Our weeding work parties are on the first Saturday of each month, with a focus on weeding the perimeter of BMNR and then spiralling up the mountain.

More than 30 members of FoBM and Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) were wonderful weeders who volunteered 385 hours overall and removed more than 4,500 woody weeds in the last 12 months in Black Mountain Nature Reserve (BMNR), as well as near shared fences in ANBG on a couple of occasions.

Several of our members have invaluable knowledge of weeds and local native plants. Dr Rosemary Purdie provided important advice and guidance for the weeding program and wrote reports.



Photo Jean Geue

Wonderful Weeders removing feral natives from elsewhere

Molonglo Catchment Group (MCG) received an Environment Grant for work on Black Mountain, Mount Majura and Mt Ainslie Weeders. For Black Mountain it included erosion management, weeding

that was not possible for volunteers to do, and several of our members helped with vegetation survey training and practical sessions.



Photo Jean Geue

Evaluating a new metal bridge on Forest Loop Walk

PCS replaced two elderly wooden bridges on the Forest Loop Walk. Also, FoBM had made several representations over the years about the repairs needed on the Summit Walk. This year resources were found for repairs to be done. These were featured in an article in the *Canberra Times* by Tim the Yowie Man

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/canberra-life/tim-the-yowie-man-black-mountain-summit-trail-opens-up-horizons-for-canberrans-20150619-gho3l7>



Photo: ACT Government

Mick Gentleman, Minister for Planning, officially opened the exhibition "*Black Mountain Nature Reserve: a Special Place*" 10 April 2015.

FoBM was awarded a Heritage Grant in collaboration with the MCG for the

exhibition of "*Black Mountain Nature Reserve: a Special Place*" in the Telstra Tower. It has received very positive feedback not only for the official opening but during its initial display from April to December this year.

The exhibition highlighted BMNR's high natural and cultural value; with its unique geology and soils, more than 650 species of plants, including a high proportion of the rare plants in the ACT. It also has examples from *Ngunnawal Plant Use: a traditional Aboriginal plant use guide for the ACT Region* published by the ACT Government. We were grateful for the specialist advice we received from several people, particularly Morgyn Phillips, Dr Rosemary Purdie, and Con Boekel.

FoBM was hugely thankful to Field Naturalists Association Canberra (FNAC), Parks and Conservation Service (PCS), and individuals who contributed to the brochure about the BMNR. It is very popular at the Visitor Information Centre on Northbourne Avenue and the ANBG.

FoBM was one of the Parkcare groups at the display in Jamison Plaza, coordinated by Jean Geue, where visitors enjoyed the display and the quizzes, picked up free leaflets and bought publications.

More than 200 people came on our ever-popular "walks & talks" to learn more about conservation of our flora and fauna during the last year.



Photo Jean Geue

Seeing Pryor's Notable Snow Gums

These included 3 Heritage Walks & Talks in April on the themes of: *The changing landscape since ancient times* which was conducted with Dr Karen Williams, Dr Fiona Dyer, Wally and Tyrone Bell who spoke from Ngunawal perspective, and the MCG; *Cypress, Cherry and Gum trees* by Michael Doherty; and *Pryor's Notable Snow Gums* by Jean Geue. We received very positive feedback on these walks. We also found that such walks & talks were the first time that more than half of the participants had been to a Heritage Festival event.

The *Eucalyptus Walk* and the *Wattle Walk*, led by Michael Doherty highlighted their botanic characteristics, and how these trees and shrubs coped with drought and fire. The *Ant walk* was very popular as people learnt more about ants and the plants they like, including ants that live only in trees.

The 44th annual *Spring Wildflower Ramble* continued the tradition established by Dr Nancy Burbidge and George Chippendale. A warm thank you to the leaders who took more than 100 participants in 4 separate groups in 4 different directions; Dr Rosemary Purdie, Dr Michael Mulvaney, Dave Albrecht and Jean Geue. Participants said they were amazed by the intricate beauty of the wildflowers they had seen in BMNR. The walk was featured by Ian Warden in his *Gang-gang* column, and by the *Chronicle*. It was also in the *Canberra Weekly*.



Photo Jean Geue

Learning new things about wildflowers

FOBM is continuing to develop brochures about Black Mountain. These assist

visitors to learn more about and appreciate conservation of the natural beauty evident alongside formed trails and some established walk paths.



Recording vegetation

Photo LJB

FoBM has been involved not only in vegetation surveys, but also in the Gang-gang breeding survey conducted by Canberra Ornithologists Group. We were delighted to observe Gang-gangs feeding young in nests on Black Mountain.

The year FoBM coordinated responses by members to some important policy issues affecting BMNR.

For example, FoBM was one of the ParkCare groups concerned about the vision statement for, and a survey about, recreation; particularly in relation to the priority needed for conservation of flora and fauna in BMNR and other reserves.

Thank you to everyone in FoBM, MCG, PCS, FNAC, ANBG and Friends of ANBG, Australian Native Plants Society, Heritage Unit, and other organisations for the part they played in making this an enjoyable year for FoBM. Enquiries about any FoBM activities are welcome.

Linda Beveridge

Convenor, Friends of Black Mountain
http://www.molonglocatchment.com.au/friends_of_black_mountain.htm
friendsofblackmountain@gmail.com