

Friends of Black Mountain (FoBM)

FoBM's activities contributed to the aims for conservation and promotion of Black Mountain's biodiversity.

FoBM weeding work parties are on the first Saturday of each month. Even though wet weather cancelled three this year, we are gradually spiralling up the mountain. About 30 wonderful weeders volunteered 385 hours and removed more than 4,360 woody weeds.



Photo Jean Geue

Wonderful weeder cutting and dabbing

We also had help from Molonglo Catchment Group (MCG), the Green Army, and Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) for the weeds that were just too woody for our volunteers with hand-saws!

We had very positive feedback on the exhibition "*Black Mountain Nature Reserve: a Special Place*" at the Visitor Centre, Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) early in 2016, along with guided walks in the Reserve.

We are building on the positive feedback for that exhibition that was developed in 2014/15 with help of a Heritage Grant. A project in the coming year is for interpretative information about plants near our Woodland Track area.

FoBM participated in the display at Jamison Plaza. Visitors enjoyed the display, the quizzes, free leaflets, and bought publications. As a result several

people came to our events and became members of FoBM.

Articles about Black Mountain flora by Dr Rosemary Purdie were published. We thank ANPS and PCS for the additional off-prints, and for sufficient copies of our brochures, which are very popular.

Approximately 200 people came on our ever-popular "walks & talks" during the last year. Attendance was enhanced by publicity on radio, PCS's Explore, by Conservation Council, and in various newspapers.

FoBM's Heritage Festival talks and walks were well attended. Special thanks to Rosemary Purdie and Geoffrey Dabb for superb talks about the plants and birds on Black Mountain respectively; and to the guides of heritage walks. This year again, more than half of the participants responded that these walks & talks were the first time they had been to a Heritage Festival event.



Photo Jean Geue

Learning new things about wildflowers

The 45th annual *Spring Wildflower Ramble* continued the tradition established by Dr Nancy Burbidge and George Chippendale. Our warm thanks to the several organisations that are involved in this walk, and to the guides who took more than 80 ramblers in 5 separate groups in different directions. Ramblers said they were delighted by the range and the intricate beauty of the wildflowers pointed out by the guides.

Black Mountain Nature Reserve was declared in July 1970. The official

opening of the Summit Walk in 2000 was also in July. This Summit Walk was a cooperative project between the ACT Government and the Australian National Botanic Gardens. The anniversary walk in July was led by guides from FoBM and the Friends ANBG. However, we may need to remind walkers about 'winter woollies' next year!

We are now planning a Black Mountain forum in 2018 and then 50th anniversary celebrations of the Reserve in 2020.

Like other ParkCare groups, FoBM was busy in October and November, with guided spring walks, vegetation surveys, Frogwatch, and BirdBlitz.



Photo LJB

Vegwatch Site BM-NE-A 3 Nov 2016

Vegetation was lush this year after having the 2nd wettest September on record. Frogs croaked near deeper dams and ponds.

Many birds seemed to pose for the camera. For example, Gang-gangs mated and were in nesting hollows, Galahs were seen lining hollows with

eucalypt shoots and twigs, and a Grey Currawong flew to a big beautiful nest.



Photo LJB

Dollar birds "posing" for the camera.

FoBM contributed to the draft Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan, including an updated profile for Black Mountain Nature Reserve, and list of more than 650 plants observed on Black Mountain. We look forward to seeing the revised draft of the management plan in the near future.

Thank you to everyone in FoBM, MCG, PCS, FNAC, ANBG and Friends of ANBG, ANPS, NPA, Heritage Unit, and other organisations for the part they played in making this a very enjoyable year for FoBM. Especially we warmly thank our valuable botanic advisers, and the guides of our walks; Dr Rosemary Purdie, Isobel Crawford, Michael Doherty, Dr Michael Mulvaney, Jean Geue, Brigitta Wimmer, and Matthew Plaistowe. Enquiries about any FoBM activities are welcome.

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