

naturematters

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VITAL WORK APPEAL 2010

Nature Foundation SA

is very pleased to announce to its donors and supporters that it has jointly purchased Cygnet Park Sanctuary on the Cygnet River, Kangaroo Island. The Cygnet River runs through the property and is lined with mixed eucalypt woodland. Along the banks of the river, a number of threatened or rare plant species can be found.

PHOTO: ALEX NANKIVELL

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

David Moyle AM



Greetings all!

May has come and another federal budget has been delivered. The media rang me very early the next day seeking comment on the 'slashing' of environmental items in the budget. My caller explained that, while not covered in the extensive press coverage, there was,

deep in the budget papers a statement that the Caring for our Country provision was to be cut by about \$81m.

Cutting environment funding is always a worry since it is underfunded at the best of times even though it has major issues to address. This is where Nature Foundation SA plays a crucial role; coming in to fund vital nature conservation projects which otherwise would not be possible.

As it turned out, the budget cuts to programs were not as bad as it first seemed, with most of the savings to come from administrative changes rather than on-ground programs.

The Caring for Our Country (CFOC) program has been valuable for the Foundation, enabling us to attract 2:1 funding for major conservation purchases that meet strict conservation criteria. We are soon to announce two major conservation property acquisitions made possible by CFOC funding. We raised 1/3rd of the value of these high conservation value properties and CfoC put in the other 2/3.

To raise our share, we depended on the generosity of our donors and other supporters. We willingly contribute our time and expertise but we need your help to raise the funds.

You will see elsewhere in this newsletter that we have just jointly purchased a wonderful property on Kangaroo Island to maintain a remarkably successful habitat restoration program. It is this type of program that is going to be needed across many parts of the State if we are to prevent further species extinctions.

This is a great and visionary task and the Foundation is able to take these huge steps in habitat recovery with your help. We thank you for your ongoing support.

Best wishes to all,

David Moyle AM

PRESIDENT, NATURE FOUNDATION SA INC.

QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT BEQUESTS

The Foundation is often asked about how members can make Bequests to the Foundation.

Our vital work has been helped and supported magnificently by Bequests made to us by our past members. If any member wishes to know more about how to put a Bequest in place please contact Jenny and she can supply a list of names of our recognized highly qualified Legal Practitioners who can assist you.

Our soon to be appointed Community Liaison and Membership consultant can also help if you wish or you can join the **Nature Foundation SA Bequest Society** we announced last year at our AGM.

2010 KANGAROO ISLAND PLANTING FESTIVAL



The restoration of **40 hectares** with **80,000 plants** and **100 species** to help restore habitat for some of Kangaroo Island's rarest plant life

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
for planting activities

2nd – 4th of July 2010

For more information contact Heiri Klein
Department for Environment and Heritage
heinrich.klein@sa.gov.au 08 85532381

In 2004, the KI Threatened Plant Project managed by DEH/KI NRM with Cygnet Park Sanctuary commenced a broad scale restoration project to re-establish some of the island's most threatened plant species and communities.

During the 2007 through 2009 Planting Festivals, innovative restoration techniques were used to plant more than 80,000 seedlings and 60,000 tubestock comprising more than 100 species and including some nationally threatened plant species. Encouraged by the great results achieved in previous years, we are aiming to make the 2010 Planting Festival bigger and better than ever before.

Brief Itinerary: A group will leave from Adelaide Central Bus Station at 06.30 on each day, Friday the 2nd of July through Sunday the 4th of July. Coach transport to Cape Jervis for the ferry trip across to Penneshaw. Another coach transport to the Planting Festival site. Each day will be spent with organised planting; lunch and afternoon tea will be provided. A guided penguin tour before the ferry back to Cape Jervis and return coach to Adelaide (arriving at 22.15).

Subsidised Participant Price: \$89.00 (heavily subsidised: normal price would be \$200.00) includes— itinerary as above, a letter of commendation and information materials.

FOR BOOKINGS OR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Heiri Klein at the DEH: 08 8553 2381 or heinrich.klein@sa.gov.au

The booking page can be found on the eStore under 'Travel and Tours' of the UniLife website <http://unione.unilife.edu.au/>

(You will be asked to sign up first - this is free and only takes 2 minutes and would otherwise have to be done when proceeding to pay.)



TOP: CYGNET RIVER. CYGNET PARK SANCTUARY
 BOTTOM: CYGNET PARK SANCTUARY NURSERY

PHOTO: DAVE TAYLOR

CYGNET PARK SANCTUARY

a model of ecological recovery

DAVID MOYLE AM

Nature Foundation SA is very pleased to announce to its donors and supporters that it has jointly purchased Cygnet Park Sanctuary on the Cygnet River, Kangaroo Island. The property of about 300 ha is approximately 3 km west of Kingscote Airport. The property was purchased jointly with widely respected scientists David and Penny Paton and American philanthropist Jack May. The purchase was also assisted and supported by the SA Department of Environment and Heritage through its Chief Executive, Allan Holmes.

The Cygnet River runs through the property and is lined with a mixed eucalypt woodland of Red Gum, SA Blue Gum and Sugar Gum. Manna Gum stands occur on the ephemeral floodplain of the River. Along the banks of the river, several threatened or rare plant species can be found. These include the Kangaroo Island Pomaderris (*Pomaderris halmaturina* spp *halmaturina*), the Small-flowered Daisy-bush (*Olearia microdiscis*) and the Heath Spyridium (*Spyridium eriocephalum* var *glabrisepalum*).

The really exciting thing about Cygnet Park Sanctuary is that it is the site of a major experimental bushland restoration program run by ecologist, David Taylor. David has done a remarkable job in devising new and successful techniques to reconstruct previously cleared and farmed landscapes. He is attracting wide acclaim



GLOSSY BLACK-COCKATOOS
 PHOTO: ELEANOR SOBEY

for his innovative ideas on how to prepare the soil for planting and sowing.

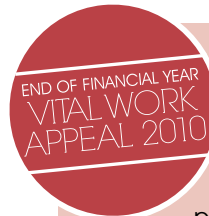
Since 2004, more than 100,000 native plant seedlings have been grown on site, at the nursery specially set up on the property. Seed has been collected locally, germinated and grown in tubes for planting out on the property. This program, which forms the core part of Kangaroo Island's Nationally Threatened Plant Project is continuing under David's supervision.

At one stage the future of the project became a little uncertain. However, by buying into the property, the Foundation, along with the Patons, have assured that the project can run its full term.

A serendipitous by-product of our involvement with Cygnet Park is that it is home to at least one breeding pair of

Glossy Black-Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathamii halmaturinus*). The Foundation has, for many years, been a major supporter of research into this nationally threatened species. That these spectacular, large but rare birds are breeding on the property is further reason for the Foundation to be excited about its part ownership of the Cygnet Park property.

If you would like to assist with this important program, join David at the Kangaroo Island Planting Festival at Cygnet River over the period 2nd to 4th of July. He hopes to have 150 volunteers a day to plant 80,000 seedlings on 40 ha. See page 2 for more information and booking.



The Nature Foundation seeks your support to continue all the work that we do in saving threatened species, protecting our precious natural environment and supporting revegetation projects.

Much of our work is unglamorous but gives vital behind-the-scenes support to those in the field who are working so hard to Save, Protect and Restore our precious natural environment.

Please give generously and remember that all donations over \$2.00 to Nature Foundation SA are fully tax-deductible.

YOUR VITAL DOLLARS AT WORK

DR. CHARLIE HUENEERS, SARDI-AQUATIC SCIENCES



Assessing the impacts of berleying through four-dimensional modelling of the swimming behaviour of white sharks (*Carcharodon carcharias*)

The VRAP system (three receiver buoys and solar-powered shore station) was deployed in November when we tried to also tag white sharks (*Carcharodon carcharias*). Unfortunately, there hadn't been many sharks around in Nov-Feb and we were not able to tag any sharks during the deployment trip. However, I have since then returned to the Neptune Islands a couple of times and successfully tagged two white sharks. The first one was

tagged in December and provided us with a great track of the shark swimming through our study site. The second shark was tagged in January and we have yet to go to the Island to upload the data. The first shark only stayed around the Neptune Islands for one day explaining the relatively short track. In the future, we will focus our effort on sharks known to remain around the Islands for longer. Imagine what a 30-day track will look like.



Understanding the residence time and movement patterns of whaler sharks (*Carcharhinus spp.*) along the Adelaide metropolitan beaches

Since November, our team have been fishing for whaler sharks several times. However, they have been found to be more scarce than anticipated. For example, our work with commercial fishers has shown that in some situations, they would set 400 hooks for over 12 hours and only catch 9 sharks. Since we need the sharks to be in the best healthy conditions possible, we only work with 60-80 hooks which set for a maximum of 3-4 hours. Following many hours of fishing, we successfully internally tagged 7 whaler (5 bronze and 2 dusky) sharks. We will continue our fishing effort until all 20 acoustic tagged are internally implanted.

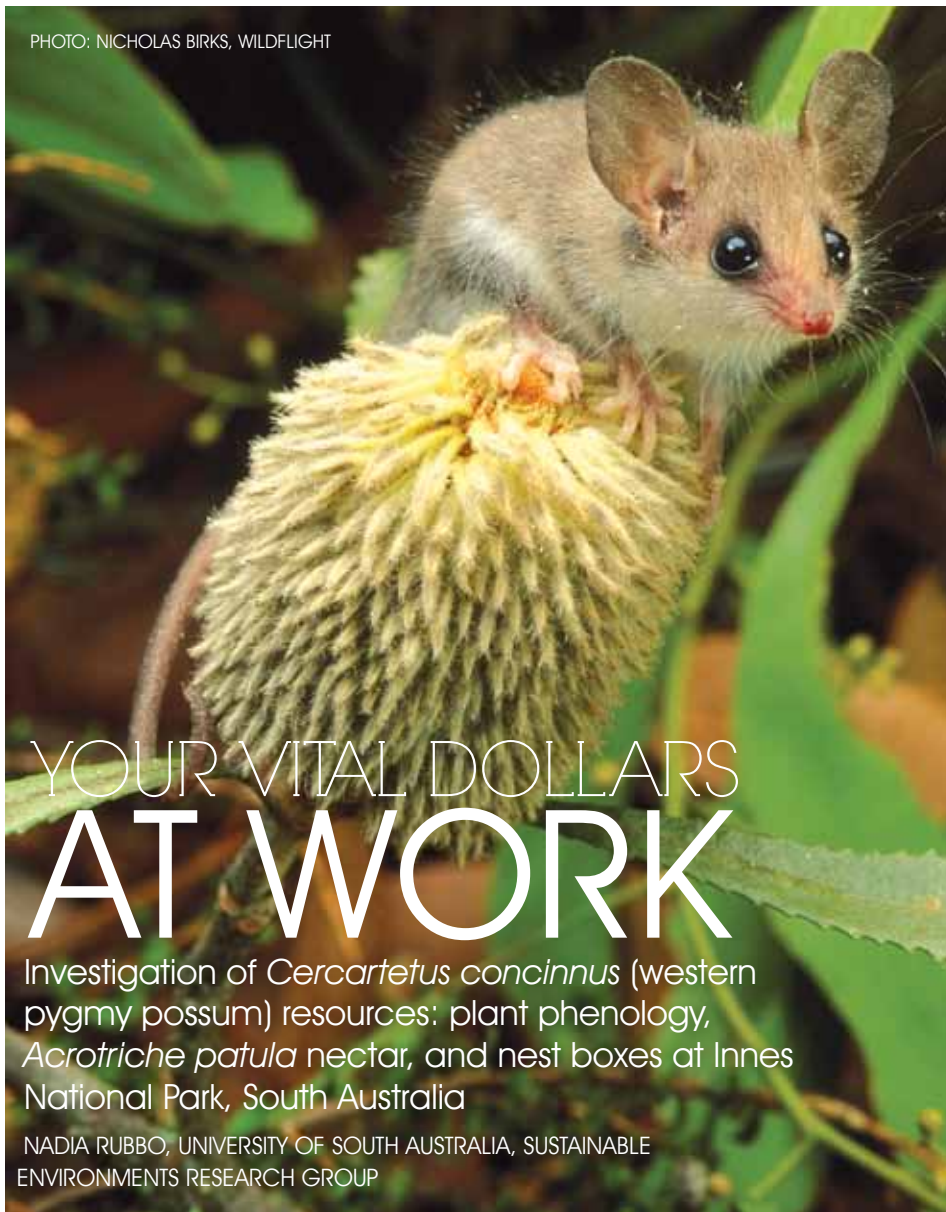
TOP: THE FIRST WHITE SHARK TAGGED AT NORTH NEPTUNE ISLAND WITH AN CONTINUOUS ACOUSTIC TAG.

BOTTOM LEFT: CO-INVESTIGATORS PAUL ROGERS AND CHARLIE HUENEERS ABOUT TO RELEASE A NEWLY TAGGED JUVENILE BRONZE WHALER FOLLOWING A NIGHT OF FISHING.

BOTTOM CENTRE: CHARLIE HUENEERS ABOUT TO INSERT ACOUSTIC TRANSMITTER INSIDE A BRONZE WHALER COELOMIC CAVITY.

BOTTOM RIGHT: CHARLIE HUENEERS TAGGING A WHITE SHARK WITH A CONTINUOUS ACOUSTIC TAG.

PHOTO: NICHOLAS BIRKS, WILDFLIGHT



YOUR VITAL DOLLARS AT WORK

Investigation of *Cercartetus concinnus* (western pygmy possum) resources: plant phenology, *Acrotriche patula* nectar, and nest boxes at Innes National Park, South Australia

NADIA RUBBO, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS RESEARCH GROUP

The main aim of my Honours project was to find out more about the breeding success of one of the last small mammals remaining on the Yorke Peninsula—the western pygmy possum (*Cercartetus concinnus*). Captures of western pygmy possums have not yielded many female possums with pouch young, so I installed nest boxes to try and capture this part of the population. I also wanted to examine the phenology of western pygmy possum food plants at Innes National Park and nectar energy production by a significant food plant.

During the four trapping sessions I undertook at Innes National Park, I caught fewer

possums than were caught in previous years, although one female with pouch young was captured in September. Nest boxes were not used by pygmy possums within one year of installation. The low capture rate may be due to the low availability of floral food resources. Fewer eucalypt species flowered during 2008 than 2007. *Acrotriche patula* (shiny ground berry), a food species of the possum, was the only species to flower for a longer period and with greater intensity in 2008 than in 2007 and was chosen for nectar studies. I examined the nectar volume, sugar composition, and energetic value of its flowers. I also examined the efficiency of microcapillary tubes in nectar collection. Sucrose was more

abundant per flower than were fructose and glucose. The nectar of one *A. patula* flower provided an average of 0.01 kJ; therefore, approximately 2,860 flowers need to be consumed by a possum to provide it with enough energy for one day. For one *A. patula* flower, microcapillary tubes miss an average of 61.4% of the sugar. Hence, microcapillary tube efficiency should always be checked prior to conducting nectar research.

The most exciting thing about this work is finding out that the western pygmy possums are still present in Innes National Park, and persisting through tough conditions, including the drought and the lack of food resources.

PHOTO: ASHLEY WALKER



PHOTO: TOPA PETIT



PHOTO: ASHLEY WALKER



ABOVE: WESTERN PYGMY POSSUM

BOTTOM RIGHT: A FEMALE WESTERN PYGMY POSSUM (*CERCARTETUS CONCINNUS*) WITH TWO VISIBLE POUCH YOUNG.

ABOVE RIGHT: NADIA HOLDING A WESTERN PYGMY POSSUM (*CERCARTETUS CONCINNUS*) AS IT IS GENERALLY FOUND WHEN CAPTURED, IN TORPOR.

MIDDLE RIGHT: NADIA COLLECTING NECTAR WITH A MICROCAPILLARY TUBE FROM AN *ACROTRICHE PATULA* FLOWER.



TOP RIGHT: A COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUM WITH HER YOUNG CAUGHT OUT IN THE DAYTIME.
TOP LEFT: RAINBOW LORIKEETS INCLUDE THIS NEST BOX IN THEIR SURVEY OF AVAILABLE SITES.
BOTTOM: AN URBAN BIRD NEST BOX.

PHOTOS: KAREN COLLINS

A PLACE FOR OUR NATIVE FAUNA IN SUBURBAN TREES
 BRIAN MEASDAY

More suburban tree care operators are now incorporating into their procedures the special needs of our native fauna.

It is pleasing to see that the protection and care of our native fauna is now rating more highly within many suburban tree care operations. In 2004-05, Mitcham Council's tree policy was changed to incorporate the necessity for staff to take into account the needs and safety of our native fauna when tree-related activities are undertaken. Human safety has been and remains, of course, the prime consideration, but now fauna safety must also be a major factor to be considered.

A number of suburban councils have purchased fauna nest boxes over recent years:

- Mitcham:** Parrot, possum and bat
- Unley:** Parrot, possum and bat; they also recently approached James Smith at FauNature (www.faunature.com.au) about doing a monitoring program for their existing boxes – to help them appreciate their success and plan for some new ones they will look to introduce next year.

- West Torrens:** Ran two educational nest box programs for four schools, which included parrot, possum and bat boxes.
- Burnside:** Have recently started a possum box program.
- Holdfast Bay:** Had one small project to help a pair of boobook owls, but are looking to introduce a more comprehensive nest box program.

Both the DTEI and Treenet Inc are currently involved in the redevelopment of the central traffic island along Greenhill Road. The trees in this area have been devastated by climate change-induced drought and extreme heat conditions over the past few years. Thanks to the forward thinking and environmental awareness of its director and founder, David Lawry, Treenet arranged for James Smith of FauNature to carry out a fauna survey of the central traffic island area to ensure the protection of resident native fauna during the project duration. A physical survey was undertaken by James Smith on the 26th of October 2009. Vertebrate species were observed in 30 percent of the viable trees. All native species observed using the Elms along

Greenhill Road are protected by law and include:

- Rainbow Lorikeets** – 3 active nests
- Adelaide Rosellas** – 1 active nest
- Noisy Minors** – 12 individuals recorded in trees
- Brushtail Possums** – 3 individuals recorded.

James Smith recommended that because the greater wildlife use for this area will be from late winter to early summer (the breeding period) that this time be avoided for major pruning or removal works. He also reported that removal of the elms is

likely to have a limited impact on the existing native fauna using the area IF undertaken at the right time of the year. Timing will be the key factor re the saving of fauna in the area in question.



It is obvious that if the majority of organisations responsible for the planting and care of our street trees could follow, for instance, the example set by Treenet Inc, the alarming decline

in many of our native fauna species could be, at least, reduced and perhaps even reversed. Professional help is available for those who care enough to utilise it.

If you would like further information, please contact David Lawry OAM via the Treenet website at www.treenet.org.

DAMIEN PEARCE

AN EXTRAORDINARY SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

TREVOR NAISMITH DIRECTOR, REGIONAL OPERATIONS, DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE



DAMIEN PEARCE
PHOTO: JOHN GAVIN

Damien Pearce was a young South Australian who made a remarkable contribution to nature conservation in our State.

Initially a graduate in Natural Resource Management, Damien worked in Western Australia managing a research program on feral goats and later returned to SA as the Project Manager of Operation Bounceback, an ecological recovery program based in the Flinders Ranges which the Nature Foundation has proudly supported for many years. In 2007, Damien moved into a position with the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation to lead the

implementation of the River Murray Forest Project. Through Damien's efforts almost 3,000 hectares of revegetation plantings have been contracted and the first Forest Property Agreements in SA were developed and signed by the Premier, registering the plantings on the land and allocating carbon rights. In August 2009, Damien accepted a role as the Operational Manager within the Coorong Lower Lakes Murray Mouth Project. In his typical fashion, Damien applied himself to this project and took up leadership of one of the most difficult aspects – improving the health of the Coorong – whereupon he oversaw the feasibility and viability of the salinity reduction project.

Damien was universally respected by his peers across many government departments and in the broader community, and was well known for his practical, no nonsense approach together with a determination to get things done and make a difference. A dry sense of humour and an earthy and laconic approach were the Damien Pearce trademarks which endeared him to his workmates and landholders across regional South Australia.

Damien's untimely death on the 13th April 2010, at just 36 years of age, is a tragedy that has shocked his many friends and colleagues within government and across the Natural Resource Management fraternity of South Australia. His work and commitment will be perpetuated and sustained through the Damien Pearce Memorial Fund, a tangible way to remember this extraordinary young South Australian. For those who wish to make a donation, please contact the NFSA office or download a donation form from the Help Nature/Donate page of the NFSA website.

THE FATHER OF THE QUANDONG

— Brian Powell AM
BOB LOTT & KAREN COLLINS



FRUIT ON THE QUANDONG TREE
PHOTO: CSIRO COPYRIGHT



BRIAN POWELL

South Australia lost an influential supporter of the environment when Brian Powell AM passed away on Anzac day at the age of 84. Widely known as the "Father of The Quandong", Brian

was the first person to plant a quandong orchard in South Australia at Endillloe outside Quorn. As he experimented to domesticate the fruit, CSIRO worked with him developing ways to successfully germinate the plants. Brian developed the world's best known cultivars. He went on to bring the quandong and its potential to world-wide notice of the public as well as to scientists, businesses and politicians.

Brian was actively involved in projects for revegetation and preservation of native plants in South Australia working with Greening Australia to help station owners green their properties. He identified and saved from destruction the last remaining known stands of a number of critically endangered Australian native plant species such as the Devil's Peak Mallee at Quorn and he was one of those instrumental in the founding and development of the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens at Port Augusta. He also introduced and supported the development of scores of stunning Australian native plants as garden varieties. Brian worked with Reg Sprigg in his exploration of the Flinders Ranges where he identified 30 colonies of rock wallabies.

NATURE FOUNDATION SA EVENTS CALENDAR 2010



K1 WINERY WINE TASTING & LUNCH

Wednesday, September 8th

All inclusive of coach from Hindmarsh at 10.00am and returning at 4.00pm

Join Fiona & Geoff Hardy for wine tasting and lunch at their beautiful winery in Kuitpo Forest and, after lunch, a personalised tour of the winery with Geoff Hardy.

TOTAL COST (including transport from Hindmarsh, wine tasting and lunch) – \$79.00



NATURE FOUNDATION SA— ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, October 20th @ 5:30pm

Holden Street Theatre - AGM followed by a presentation by Dr Greg Johnston on the decline of pelican populations in SA and worldwide.

COST: No charge



NATURE FOUNDATION ANNUAL DINNER AT THE ADELAIDE ZOO WITH THE PANDAS

Friday, November 5th

6.00pm Twilight Tour
7.00pm Dinner

COST: \$89.00 includes Twilight Tour, pre-dinner drinks, canapés, gourmet meal and entertainment.

Guest speaker Dr David Schultz - Senior Veterinarian of the Zoo.



UPDATE: WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE AND EASTERN OSPREY APPEAL

DAVID HANSMAN

Our Autumn Appeal was for the White-bellied Sea-

Eagle and the Eastern Osprey, both of which are endangered in South

Australia. The White-bellied Sea-Eagle, a magnificent raptor, has a potentially wide distribution along the South Australian coast and inland along the River Murray. However, its range is shrinking. Although it survives along some sections of coast, its main strongholds are Kangaroo Island and smaller offshore islands.

Birds SA initiated a study to survey occupied territories along the coast of SA, which has been supported by federal

funds and carried out by Terry Dennis. Our Autumn Appeal raised funds to enable Terry to survey both Kangaroo Island and other islands.

It is a pleasure for Nature Foundation SA to be able to acknowledge the help of officers of Birds SA, in particular Mr Rodney Attwood.

POSITION VACANT

COMMUNITY LIAISON & MEMBERSHIP CONSULTANT 2 DAYS PER WEEK

The prime role of the Community Liaison Consultant is to nurture and strengthen the relationships that the Foundation already has with its members, donors, those who have promised Bequests and friends to give them a greater sense of ownership of, involvement in, and support for the Foundation's activities.

To ensure good records are kept of all conversations and correspondence with Foundation supporters and that all appropriate follow-up actions are taken.

The consultant will be expected to work from the Foundation's offices located at The Manse, 32 Holden Street, Hindmarsh. However, it is expected that the majority of time involved will be in making home visits to our more senior supporters.

An hourly rate is negotiable. It is anticipated that the commitment will be of the order of 2 days per week for a total of 15 hours per week.

Essential requirements: understanding of environmental issues and conservation in SA, competent computer skills, including Word, Excel, Microsoft Outlook and a reliable vehicle and mobile phone.

Enquiries & Applications may be submitted to:

Jenny Paterson
Nature Foundation SA Inc.
PO Box 448
HINDMARSH SA 5007
Tel: 8340 2880
Email: jenny.paterson@nfsa.org.au



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