

- Celebrating **40 years** of **conserving, restoring and protecting nature**
- Bushfire recovery through the **Wildlife Recovery Fund**
- **Revitalising Private Conservation** in South Australia Grants
- **Water for Nature** goes international
- Bring Back the Birds: **Para Woodlands Update**
- Introducing our team of **Rotational Managers**

AUTUMN

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2021

Engaging  
people in  
conservation

# NatureMatters

40 Years

## BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Success stories for  
habitat restoration

See P. 4 →



**Nature**  
Foundation

Warm greetings  
and Happy New  
Year to you all.



## From the Chair Jan Ferguson OAM

At Nature Foundation we are gearing up for another huge year of activities in 2021, not least of which is celebrating our 40th birthday! In October it will be 40 years since Dr Barbara Hardy AO, Warren Bonython, David Cleland and Dr Mark Bonnin formed the National Parks Foundation SA now Nature Foundation, with the principal aim of becoming a fundraising entity that would purchase and preserve significant native bushland and assist with the long-term conservation of the state's national parks.

A vitally important heritage has been handed to South Australia and its people by the efforts of our visionary founders and supporters in the private sector, personal donors, state and commonwealth governments of the day and environment department leaders. It is also testament to the outstanding efforts of all the members, donors, volunteers and supporters associated with Nature Foundation past and present for demonstrating your unwavering commitment to nature conservation and providing for South Australia's future generations.

We will host a gala dinner to celebrate this momentous occasion on Saturday 9 October 2021 at the Grange Golf Club and we do hope you can join us! Further details to follow soon but please reserve the date.

On 31 March 2021 Nature Foundation will launch its new brand, along with a new and improved website to better communicate our work to members, supporters, like-minded organisations, existing and potential partners, the media and the general public, locally through to internationally. Most importantly, the new website makes it easier for people to access information, conduct transactions online and become involved with our work for nature conservation in South Australia.

In February 2021 the Board held a two-day event with in-depth discussion, staff presentations and exploration of ideas to broaden thinking and understanding, and to consider global trends for biodiversity and the roles Nature Foundation may take to protect more landscape, species and ecosystems in its field of influence. The Board and staff will continue to work on the outcomes of this session throughout 2021 and will help shape coming work programs, priorities and budgets.

I look forward to reporting on these and other activities over the coming year and do hope you can join us at some of our events in this great year of celebrating 40 years dedicated to nature conservation!

### IN THE PAST 40 YEARS, NATURE FOUNDATION HAS:

**PROTECTED 1.15  
MILLION HECTARES**

**MANAGED 5000+  
SQUARE KILOMETRES  
IN NATURE RESERVES**

**DELIVERED 14,000  
MEGALITRES OF WATER  
TO RESTORE WETLANDS  
AND FLOODPLAINS**

**AWARDED 418  
RESEARCH GRANTS TO  
NATURE SCIENTISTS**

**ENABLED 211 YOUNG ABORIGINAL  
PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN  
THE KIDS ON COUNTRY  
PROGRAM**

# This year **Nature Foundation** celebrates its **40<sup>th</sup> birthday** and what an incredible year it is shaping up to be!

The sheer breadth of Nature Foundation's work is evident in the following recent highlights:

- The Revitalising Private Conservation in South Australia program has just awarded round one small grants. Funded by the South Australian Government – 201 applications seeking up to \$10k from the \$450k available were received, and 70 awarded. The total amount sought was \$1.34m. The Heritage Agreement Alliance met twice to guide the program, with the main aim of securing the recommended \$87m over 10 years to follow the 2-year, \$3m pilot, which ends June 2022. The protection of native vegetation in South Australia stands out nationally, with 1600 landholders now privately protecting more than 1.5million ha of diverse and critical habitats. New applications are now flowing in.
- Carbon offsets at Hiltaba Nature Reserve is a high priority project for not only Nature Foundation but also as a pilot for the pastoral zone. The next steps are Healthy Country Planning and potential development of Indigenous Land Use Agreements with traditional owners. Once approved, it will lead to greater capacity for conservation management and habitat restoration on Hiltaba. We are also investigating a carbon project on Witchelina Nature Reserve.
- The Water For Nature program is again saving wetlands and endangered species, and is on track for the 2020-21 watering program. It was successful in securing two Landscape Board Grassroots Grants for community engagement through the Getting Curious with Water For Nature citizen science project. The second grant will fund research into nocturnal basking behaviour of freshwater turtles on the River Murray in SA, and contribute to a worldwide research project led by Mike Bull medal recipient, Dr Eric Nordberg, from James Cook University.
- The South Gap endangered Plain's mouse project commenced in partnership with OZ Minerals and local pastoralists, addressing an EPBC offset for OZ minerals, over an area of 6,000 - 8,000 ha.

**Hello to you all.**

In the past 40 years Nature Foundation has gone from strength to strength, adapting to opportunities, innovating and forming wonderful partnerships to evolve into the organisation it is today.

## From the CEO Hugo Hopton



### **Pastoral Bill**

The biologically diverse and arid 40 million ha of rangelands represents 40% of South Australia. Together with a wide range of other conservation organisations, Nature Foundation has been strongly involved in the working groups addressing concerning elements in the Pastoral Bill, which is proposed to replace the current *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation*

*Act 1989*. Those concerns include precluding conservation as a land use unless a minor part of a lease, removal of stocking limits, weakening of regulatory controls, and a potential lessening of Aboriginal rights. Through the process a great deal of common aspiration for the Rangelands and common ground has been identified across the conservation sector, scientists, community and with graziers and their representative organisation.

**Good rains at Witchelina Nature Reserve** have brought respite from two extremely dry years that caused great loss of vegetation and wildlife. Hiltaba continues to be blessed with regular but small rainfalls and is in great shape.

It seems a long time since the 2020 summer of bushfires. Again, thank you all for your amazing generosity and support as we sought to support those working on wildlife and bushfire recovery. In a recent e-news we shared some of the wonderful stories coming in about the effect of the resultant Wildlife Recovery Funds granted.

I look forward to updating you all further throughout the year and hope to see you in person at one of our events – come along to help us celebrate 40 years of great work for nature! Nature Foundation is a wonderful organisation to be involved with, whether it be as part of the Board, committees or staff, or as a partner, member, supporter, donor bequestor or volunteer. Thank you, as always, for all of your amazing support!



# Donna and Mostyn from Kenton Valley looking at **Natural regeneration** at their property **after the Cudlee Creek fire**

*Donna and Mostyn from Kenton Valley at their property at Cudlee Creek after the fires*

Just over 12 months on from the devastating summer bushfires of 2019–20, our Wildlife Recovery Fund grant recipients are reporting some great outcomes from their recovery projects for habitat restoration.

We were delighted to share these stories in a recent e-news so that you can see how the funds you generously donated are being deployed – please refer to that publication for the full listing.

The Wildlife Recovery Fund was established through a partnership between Nature Foundation and the National Parks and Wildlife Service South Australia and is funded through the generosity of the community.

Our thoughts are also with all the people in the community who were impacted by the recent fires in South Australia including Cherry Gardens, Tilley Swamp in the Limestone Coast, Kangaroo Island perilously close to the critically endangered and remaining KI Dunnart populations, and within the Mount Lofty Ranges. The Wildlife Recovery Fund is an opportunity for us all to help restore critical habitat for native species following large scale bushfires.

**You can help save our unique biodiversity and landscapes by donating at [naturefoundation.org.au](https://naturefoundation.org.au)**

## Protecting natural regeneration at Kenton Valley

Donna and Danny’s property at Kenton Valley in the Adelaide Hills was devastated in the Cudlee Creek Fire in December 2019. Their response through 2020 was to get busy protecting natural regeneration, observing plant species growing where they weren’t before and fencing with a wide girth to protect them from livestock. Weed control has also been a focus, particularly blackberries along with gorse and South African weed orchid control. They have planted seeds and are growing tubestock ready for planting in autumn. Donna and Danny have been delighted to see birdlife come back to the area, including Yellow-tailed black cockatoos.

“We are also very excited that the first structure, a workshop and storage shed, is going up since the fire (we lost our outbuildings), which will help us more efficiently undertake habitat restoration works. Thank you to donors and sponsors, your support has given us more than we can describe, and will leave a lasting legacy for future generations. In many ways this Wildlife Recovery project has helped us heal, as we have focused on new life and the rebound and resilience of nature.”



*Students learning how to set a cat trap as part of a year 11 ecological camp with KI LFW within the NWCA*

# Critical work for **threatened species** on Kangaroo Island

Heidi and the team at Kangaroo Island Land for Wildlife manage ten properties in the north west of Kangaroo Island.

Together with a group of like-minded landholders, they manage 4200 hectares of conservation area known as the North West Conservation Alliance, the most important unburnt conservation bushland remaining on the western end of the island.

This area is now critical for species including the endangered KI dunnart, KI echidna, Green carpenter bee, Southern brown bandicoot, Heath goanna, Bassian thrush, Southern emu-wren and the Western whipbird.

The organisation has been using funds granted from the Wildlife Recovery Fund to monitor and help save the species that survived the fire.

To date, the team have monitored wildlife at 69 camera survey sites across the north west using 150 cameras. Species spotted have included Bandicoots and Pygmy possums. A suite of priority species have been detected on the cameras, including the Endangered KI dunnart.

In addition to the camera surveys, a second round of pitfall trapping will be undertaken in autumn. The Wildlife Recovery Fund will allow for good quality analysis of species numbers and provide important post-fire data.

**They have also been undertaking**



intensive feral cat control activities with 80 cage traps set 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The funding means staff can keep checking the traps daily. Fifteen cats have been trapped since the funding was received, and 44 cats have been trapped since the fire. WRF funding has also supported the management of five Felixer traps that are currently being used in the field.

Heidi reports that the team are very grateful for the support from the Wildlife Recovery Fund and haven't stopped working since the funding was received:

“We have delayed our holidays to make the most of the money while it is there. We are tired but want to ensure the threatened species that are taking refuge in the most important and largest unburnt bushland on the west end of the island are protected from threats. We are very lucky to receive funding through the Wildlife Recovery Fund – it has been combined with support received from other sources to deliver comprehensive fire recovery research and work”.

**Please refer to our e-news sent in February for reports from all of our Wildlife Recovery Fund grant recipients!**





# Revitalising Private Conservation in South Australia Grants

*Ned Stan and Lizzie Schofield  
24ha\_beef farm\_Paris Creek*

We are delighted to announce the 70 successful recipients for the 2020-21 Revitalising Private Conservation in South Australia Grants, round 1.

**You can see the full list of Round 1 - Revitalising Private Conservation in SA Grant recipients and read about their projects on the website [www.revitalisingconservationsa.org.au](http://www.revitalisingconservationsa.org.au) All funded works will be carried out on current or aspiring Heritage Agreement sites, across South Australia.**

The Revitalising Private Conservation in South Australia Program is a multi-million-dollar initiative of the South Australian Government, funded by the Department for Environment and Water.

The program is an exciting collaboration between the non-government primary industries and conservation sectors. The program aims to expand the number, extent and quality of protected areas of native vegetation on private land in South Australia.

The program is delivered by Nature Foundation in partnership with Livestock SA, Conservation SA, Trees For Life, and Nature Conservation Society of South Australia.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page (Revitalising Private Conservation South Australia), where we'll keep you updated on progress of projects.

The Linking Landscape grant round was launched by Minster Speirs on 6 March and closes on 19 April 2021. This will be followed by another grant round in early May. Please spread the word about this wonderful program to current and aspiring Heritage Agreement Owners!

## LINKING LANDSCAPES GRANT ROUND - NOW OPEN!

We are looking for innovative, collaborative and multi-property outcomes in this grant opportunity. Co-ordinated action, in partnership with others. With a focus on climate adaptation outcomes, value for money and linking vegetation.

Current and prospective Heritage Agreement landholders can learn more at [www.revitalisingconservationsa.org.au](http://www.revitalisingconservationsa.org.au)



# Our next **research grants** round will **open soon**, stay tuned!



2020 research grant recipient Kendall Whittaker undertaking Pygmy Bluetongue lab work 2. Photo supplied Kendall Whittaker

The next Nature Foundation research grants round opens soon, please watch our website for details. Our Grants Program funds research that contributes to the conservation of South Australia's biodiversity and habitats, while supporting university students and other researchers in their work and careers.

Since 2003 Nature Foundation has awarded 403 grants in the field of biological sciences to recipients at universities and other research institutions. These grants – totalling over \$1.6 million dollars – have been made possible through donations and bequests from our generous supporters. Research that aligns with our Science Strategy and focuses on our nature reserves and programs (e.g. Water For Nature) will be prioritised for funding. Please visit [www.naturefoundation.org.au](http://www.naturefoundation.org.au) for details.

## Water for Nature goes international



Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* at Murbpook Lagoon by Natalie Stalenberg

We are proud to be sharing our knowledge on wetland restoration and management internationally. We were recently approached by the United Nations to join its free online web portal '[Water Action Hub](#)'. The Hub connects over 900 organisations and 1,300 projects and receives over 20,000 views monthly. Our Water For Nature program has been delivering water to thirsty wetlands and floodplains since 2008. We rely on the passion and enthusiasm of local landholders and volunteers as well as donors like you, who care for our River Murray and the many threatened species that rely upon it. We are thankful for our partners the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, Murraylands and Riverland Landscapes Board, Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association, Berri Barmera Landcare, Riverland West Landcare, Central Irrigation Trust and Renmark Irrigation Trust. Looking after the Murray-Darling Basin is such an important job and it is great to see the work that our many partners do recognised at a global level.

naturefoundation.org.au



# Bring Back the Birds: **Para Woodlands Update**

Red-browed Finch  
by Dragos Moise

## PARA WOODLANDS 100-YEAR MASTERPLAN

Nature Foundation has just released an Expression of Interest seeking a consultant or organisation who can work with communities to create a transformative and achievable 100-year masterplan for conservation outcomes at Para Woodlands Nature Reserve, in the context of the wider landscape, including, the growing urban centre of Gawler, changing rural land use and conservation areas such as Para Wirra Conservation Park. The masterplan will focus on the key themes of conservation, community engagement, and recreational land use. The successful tenderer will facilitate consultation with key stakeholders, develop discussion papers and provide options to the current steering committee for a pathway forward. For the full briefing papers please visit [www.naturefoundation.org.au](http://www.naturefoundation.org.au) or email [mark.ashley@naturefoundation.org.au](mailto:mark.ashley@naturefoundation.org.au)

**Para Woodlands is a 500-hectare property co-owned by Nature Foundation and the Department for Environment and Water, for habitat restoration. The main purpose of the project is to restore the property to a functioning grassy woodland and provide habitat for local fauna, with a particular focus on declining woodland birds.**

Last year's COVID-19 crisis impacted the project delivery in several ways, however restoration work on the property continued to achieve important outcomes, through a range of activities such as revegetation, assisted natural regeneration, threat abatement and using grazing as restoration tool.

In line with SA Health recommendations to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the annual planting event was cancelled, with planting undertaken by contractors and project staff instead. Over the winter, over 900 trees, shrubs and forbs of 11 species were planted on the former farming land, to reconstruct the original vegetation, including the EPBC Critically Endangered Peppermint Box (*Eucalyptus odorata*) grassy woodland. In addition to tubestock planting, site preparation works were undertaken for the upcoming (autumn 2021) broadacre direct

seeding of native grasses and forbs, part of the continuous efforts to re-instate the native understorey groundcover. To date, Para Woodlands supports over 20 hectares of native grasses that have been established through direct seeding. Primarily, these are being managed through sheep grazing to give the native grasses a competitive edge over the weeds.

Bushcare-type weed control in areas where understorey plants such as iron-grasses, lilies, daisies and orchids persist is continuing to encourage natural regeneration.

Targeted weed control has been undertaken throughout the property, with a focus on areas of greater ecological value, such as the South Para River corridor and grassy woodland remnants in Barossa Block. In other areas, priority was given to Declared and Alert Weeds such as wild artichoke, silver-leaf nightshade and winter cherry.

In October 2020, Nature Foundation organised a tour of the restoration works for Vision for Nature supporters. The attendees learned about the journey to restore former farming land into valuable habitat for native wildlife, about the project achievements, and the challenges along the way. Very positive feedback was received.

Four new bird species were recorded at Para Woodlands in the last year, of which three (Square-tailed Kite, Whistling Kite and Hooded Robin) have conservation rating in SA and/or in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR) region. In addition, Brown Treecreepers, Endangered in the AMLR, were seen for the first time foraging in old (2007) revegetation areas in September 2020. The AMLR Endangered Diamond Firetails are now resident in Para Woodlands with flocks of up to 8 birds seen at a time. The species was recorded using the site as early as 2015, and were building nests in the old reveg in 2018. A young bird was observed in June 2020, proof that Diamond Firetails are breeding on site. Red-browed Finches, Near Threatened in AMLR and a relatively new record for Para Woodlands, were first observed breeding in Para Woodlands last year, with three nests found by the South Para River. This is the living proof that the main objective of the Para Woodlands Restoration Project, to provide habitat for the threatened woodland birds, is being achieved.

**Dragos Moise, Para Woodlands Restoration Ecologist**



One outcome of our fantastic Member Tour to Witchelina Nature Reserve last year was funding raised for environmental projects. We are happy to report that the new weed sprayer unit was a triumph in its first run for Buffel Grass spraying in Mirra Creek at Witchelina! One of our Rotational Managers, Phil Cole coordinates our Buffel Grass control program. Buffel grass is a very significant environmental pest plant in the arid lands. It spreads quickly, and smothers native vegetation, and in being highly flammable, results in nearly complete loss of native habitat over time. Our goal is firstly to contain Buffel grass to its current 1,000 ha on Witchelina, and then eradication. Phil is pictured left with Andrew Johnson PSM, member of Nature Foundation's Nature Conservation Committee.

The twin reel electric windup 550 litre unit is a pleasure to use and means we can now do double the work – triple when we have a major working bee and can have both the new and old equipment working.

Thank you to everyone who joined us on the Witchelina Member Tour – you all contributed to this important conservation work! We have another Member Tour coming up in September, to Hiltaba Nature Reserve: watch out for details.



## New spray unit for Witchelina

## Fence posts – an untapped resource?

Re-purposing some of the many hardwood fence posts on Nature Foundation's reserves could be a new conservation initiative....

### The resource

Both Hiltaba and Witchelina have disused fence lines supported by mulga and mallee fence posts, cut and erected during the days of pastoral operations.

Most are, at the very least, decades old. The external surfaces are weathered and raw, but cutting across or along a post reveals a dense, deep red timber of real beauty. The holes for threading the fencing wire were mostly drilled by hand, and evoke a history of hard, repetitive labour by station hands, often in remote country and in harsh conditions.

The posts are currently in common use as firewood, both in homesteads and for campers and groups. But they represent a valuable resource, and Nature Foundation is investigating alternative uses of at least part of the supply, more consistent with its conservation objectives.

### The potential

The precise number of posts still standing is difficult to determine, but is likely to be in the thousands. Some, of course, are in hard-to-access locations, and only a proportion are suitable for re-purposing.

But the greatest interest of those that are readily available lies in their potential as repurposed historical objects – ie the whole post, complete with holes, bits of rusting wire and the underlying 'story' – not just its constituent material. Recognising the cultural/historical dimensions of posts, they may be useful in:

- architecture (eg as cladding)
- landscape features in schools and other spaces
- urban design (eg in nature-based playgrounds)
- furniture, lighting.

### Some limitations

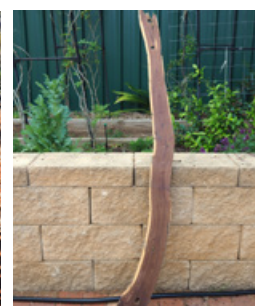
Despite their extensive use on the reserves, hardwood posts are a finite resource. Only posts from along fence lines will be recycled, and the lines themselves (minus wire), will remain visible to observers by leaving posts in the ground at regular intervals. Posts forming 'walls' near gates or drafting races at former yards, for example, will be left as relics of pastoral architecture.

### An offer to Nature Foundation members

Nature Foundation members have an opportunity to purchase small quantities of posts for use in your own gardens or woodworking projects! For details and prices contact

### Lange Powell

[powellan@internode.on.net](mailto:powellan@internode.on.net)



# Introducing our team of **Rotational Managers**

Maria Reed

Many visitors to Witchelina and Hiltaba Nature Reserves report their wonderful experiences meeting and touring with our Rotational Managers and enjoying their vast knowledge and stories. They are often astonished to discover that both nature reserves are managed 365 days every year by a dedicated and passionate group of Rotational Managers, who bring to their role a diverse range of professional skills and backgrounds. One of our Rotational Managers, Maria Reed, recently reflected on the history and background of the team.

Chris Reed, from Burra and the Property General Manager became involved with Nature Foundation as a Board member after completing his term as Presiding Member of the Arid Lands Board when former President Bob Lott approached him to help run Witchelina. Chris had been on the Burra Council and chaired the Eastern District and Rangelands Soil Boards. Chris came up with the idea of a Rotational Managers program to manage Witchelina and Hiltaba Nature Reserves and set about looking for the right people.

Barry and Maureen Wright were close to home as they also resided in Burra and when Barry mentioned that he had worked and had a gold lease on Witchelina in the 1970s, he and Maureen were an obvious choice. They are both heavily involved in the Burra Community; Maureen chaired the Burra National Trust for 20 years and was awarded an OAM for this work. Barry still chairs the Burra Art Gallery Board. They owned a wool store and antique and second-hand shop 'Sara's' for a number of years.

Vic Breeding was well known to Chris and I as we lived on neighbouring properties. Chris knew Vic's knowledge and skills would be invaluable. Vic managed Braemar Station for the McBride family,

and he and his wife Anne (deceased) were integral to the first Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) negotiated in SA on Braemar Station. Penny Shipley, Vic's partner, owned and ran the Burra Post Office before they both retired.

Kevin and Shirley Fahey were passing through Burra and called in for a coffee. Kevin had been Principal of Burra Community School years before and when Chris mentioned what he was planning to do with the Rotational Manager program, Kevin was keen to be part of it. He had also been the first Principal of Roxby School and a partner in an opal mine in Andamooka in his spare time.

Greg Bannon and Janet Thomas met Chris through Bob Lott – Greg assisted Bob with his Quandong plantation in Quorn. Greg worked for the company contracted by the WA Government to develop the Esperance region for farming and managed their merino stud, producing rams for the company's flock of 80,000–90,000 commercial ewes. He was also responsible for the company's land care program, rehabilitating degraded land, tree planting and farm forestry projects. Janet worked for Esperance Community Health, assisting in the establishment of the Mental Health Unit with just one mental health professional

and Janet as PA. By the time she left, the unit had a dedicated building with seven staff and visiting professionals. After they moved to Quorn, Janet worked for the Council as General Inspector and set up the Council's animal management policy.

John Schulze had already been to Witchelina numerous times as part of the then Sporting Shooters Association. As well as removing goats, cats and foxes he had spent time retrieving tanks, cleaning up the workshop and rejuvenating the tired generators that were the only form of power on the reserves in the early days before solar. John and Mary run their own engineering workshop and as a sideline have an almond plantation.

John Ovenden, Fred and Petra van Heiden and Peter and Val Collins came to our attention by attending Nature Foundation working bees! John has his own electrical business, Atlas Electrical, and Fred and Petra ran their own building business, Tradesman's Home Additions, so we now have an electrician and retired builder on the team. Petra had previously worked for Hardy Wines. Peter Collins was an ETSA linesman who then worked in the Human Resource area of ETSA. He also volunteers for Tour Down Under, World Solar Challenge, Army Barracks Museum



and the Royal Adelaide Show. He and Val were also Camp Hosts for National Parks. The combined skills of John, Fred and Petra, and Peter and Val have contributed to valued improvements on both nature reserves.

Phil Cole had a background in River Murray management, having worked for PIRSA and DWLBC, and before retirement, the Murray Darling Basin Authority. He initially joined the Water for Nature Committee, and from there he became involved in the nature reserves through the working bees.

Lange and Inara Powell were introduced by Susie Herzberg OAM. Lange came from a career in human services, including (like several other RMs) frequent engagement with Aboriginal communities. His last job was as a Director of SA Prisons. He was the ideal person to write a plan for the Board to commence nature-based tourism on the properties. Inara managed several Child and Family Service centres, two juvenile detention facilities, and a refugee program.

Chris approached Brenton Arnold who had been on the Arid Lands Board with him, and prior to retirement was Regional Manager for Department for Environment in Port Augusta. Brenton was also instrumental in setting up Paney Station in the Gawler Ranges. Nanette Arnold worked as a lecturer in Business Studies at TAFE.

Peter Forward had worked for SA Water as Principal Engineer for Salt Interception, living in Berri for 20 years and working on the River Murray since 1981. In 2012 he joined the Water for Nature Committee and soon became involved with scientific surveys and working bees on both nature reserves. He retired in March 2017 and along with Bronwyn Forward, a retired GP, they are another great asset as Rotational Managers.

We first met Marina Louter and Scott Kinlock at Witchelina Nature Reserve when Marina did her PhD on the Thick-billed grasswren over a three-year period. She has since been employed by EBS Ecology. Marina and Scott do fill in rotations when Scott is home from his stints as a Gas Hub specialist in the north west of WA.

All of the Rotational Managers have been involved in the nature reserves for seven to ten years, which is a great testament to their commitment to Nature Foundation. The organisation and beautiful nature reserves simply could not do without them.

Alex Nankivell, our Science and Knowledge Program Manager, had been working at Witchelina on a regular basis before the Rotational Managers started and his knowledge and guidance has been invaluable to the team.

*L to R: Rotational Managers Peter Forward, Phil Cole, Brenton and Nanette Arnold, Inara and Lange Powell, Shirley Fahey, Peter Collins, Maria Reed, John Ovenden, Bronwyn Forward, Dave and Marjory Goodenough, Chris Reed, Greg Bannon, CEO Hugo Hopton, Kevin Fahey, Chair Jan Ferguson OAM, Val Collins, Janet Thomas, Petra and Fred van der Heiden, Maureen Wright OAM. Not pictured: Barry Wright, Marina Louter and Scott Kinlock*



Thank you so much to Future2 for their amazing support of our Kids on Country program!

Michael Smith, local Chapter Chair, Future2 Foundation, presented Patrick Mentzel, Nature Foundation's Philanthropy Coordinator, with a cheque for \$10,000 to allow ten young Aboriginal people to attend a life-changing 5-day Kids on Country ecology camp at either Witchelina or Hiltaba Nature Reserve in 2021!

Our Kids on Country program is preparing for another busy year with the online program in full swing, on-country camps scheduled at Witchelina and Hiltaba Nature Reserves and the launch of our new website! If you would like to support the Kids on Country program please contact Caroline Nefiodovas on 8340 2880 or visit [www.naturefoundation.org.au](http://www.naturefoundation.org.au)

*Michael Smith, local Chapter Chair, Future2 Foundation, with Patrick Mentzel, Nature Foundation's Philanthropy Coordinator*



## \$10,000 for Kids on Country



# Summer rabbits Act now!

By Wayne Meyer and Peter Day of Rabbit Free Australia

Early to mid-summer can result in more sightings of rabbits, especially young ones born since breeding that was stimulated by spring rainfall. It might also signal resurgent rabbit populations as too much faith is placed on biological controls and insufficient attention is given to traditional control methods – and summer and early Autumn is a great time for them.

Uncontrolled rabbits are one of Australia's most significant causes of vegetation loss, habitat extinction and species loss.

The RHDV1-K5 virus is an approved bio-control, meaning it can be released in local programs, but it doesn't kill young rabbits – it actually provides them with life-long immunity. So now is not the time for a planned K5 release. Instead, attention to warren destruction or baiting programs is a better option over the summer months, with K5 used to mop up in late summer or autumn when the rabbits are older and the virus more effective.

RHDV2 is another virus present in many areas, and it does kill young rabbits. Work is underway through the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) to have it registered as a biological control for rabbits, so it too may be released in a planned way, providing another option for the late spring – early summer period.

A recent article from CISS covers summer rabbit management – and includes a great video from the ABC; '160 years of battling the bunny'.

Foundation for Rabbit-Free Australia is the only not-for-profit charity to focus on rabbit control in Australia. It is active in promoting on-going research into biological controls and the need for planning and coordination so groups of neighbouring property managers can implement timely, multi-pronged control programs.

For more information:

- [Rabbit-Free Australia website](http://Rabbit-Free Australia website)
- [Summer rabbits advice from CISS](#)
- ['160 years of battling the bunny' video from the ABC](#)
- [Record of rabbits and reporting rabbit disease https://www.feralscan.org.au/rabbitscan/](https://www.feralscan.org.au/rabbitscan/)



# Bushbank SA: Growing South Australia's protected area network

Under the BushbankSA program, conservation land is purchased, a covenant is applied and the land is re-sold to owners with the means and commitment to manage them for nature conservation.

Trevor and Nancy recently purchased a Bushbank property in Blanchetown to support habitat for the Hairy-nosed wombat as well as other animal and bird species. We are pleased to share their story.

**Trevor:** Born and raised in South Australia, I spent my working life mainly in East Gippsland working in local government, the voluntary sector (a number of roles in welfare) and State Government Department of Health. Whilst in Victoria I was very involved in environment issues – Anti Nuclear, local environment group, preserving historic buildings etc, and maintaining a small property in the hills behind Bairnsdale. More recently, following my retirement, I trained as a 'River Fellow' with the Australian Conservation Foundation with the goal of conserving the Murray River environment. I returned two years ago to live in SA.

Imagine a future where ecosystems are protected and species decline has been halted...

*Trevor and Nancy Bushbank  
SA property owners*



**Nancy:** I developed a love of birds, animals and nature from a very young age, growing up in a Wisconsin northwoods cabin surrounded by bears, wolves, deer, bobcats and cougar, as well as the occasional moose and many smaller critters. After completing graduate studies in clinical psychology at University of Wisconsin, I took a position at University of Melbourne and during weekend bushwalks fell in love with the Australian bush. I have been active in many environmental groups including Mammal Survey Group of Victoria, Landcare, Birds Australia, Birds SA, Friends of the Gippsland Lakes, Friends of Bats and Habitat, Environment East Gippsland, Bat Conservation International, Australasian Bat Society.

Together we have been actively involved for many years in the SA Regent Parrot Recovery program and as Rangers at AWC's Buckaringa Sanctuary in the Flinders Ranges and Birds Australia's Gluepot Reserve. Further afield, we have spent time eradicating African boxthorn on Roydon Island, Tasmania; and working with the RSPB on Oronsay Island, Hebrides, Scotland. Since moving to Goolwa, we have become involved in Goolwa Coastcare, Cittaslow Community Garden, Bush for Life, SouthCoast Environment Centre and Cittaslow Environment group.

We love Mallee country are deeply concerned about biodiversity loss associated with overpopulation, overconsumption and the lack of government action to address climate change. We plan to do systematic transects of our block to identify used and current wombat dens and deploy fauna cameras. We are keen campers, walkers and birders and look forward to enjoying quiet time on the land.

## BUSHLAND FOR SALE

Have you dreamt of owning your own natural wonderland? Our Blanchetown Bushland Estate provides a unique opportunity to purchase a 900 ha block of mallee woodland just minutes from the River Murray and alive with native flora and fauna. We have three allotments remaining.

For more information [visit our website](#) or contact Natalie Stalenberg on 08 8340 2880, or email: [natalie.stalenberg@nfsa.org.au](mailto:natalie.stalenberg@nfsa.org.au)

# Welcome **new** **staff members**

Nature Foundation warmly welcomes to the team Liam Crook, Clare Fuller, Jane Cooper and Rosemary Argue to the team in the Prospect office.

## LIAM CROOK

### Offsets Program Coordinator

Liam is a technical specialist with over 10 years' experience working on ecological and organisational and citywide decarbonisation projects. He comes to Nature Foundation from the City of Adelaide, where he worked in a range of roles related to carbon neutrality, sustainability and biodiversity, and connecting people, schools and volunteers to revegetation. He has a Bachelor of Applied Science (Hons) in Grassland Ecology and a Graduate Certificate in Environmental Policy and Management.



## CLAIRE FULLER

### Program Manager Revitalising Private Conservation in SA

Claire has worked in the natural resources management industry for more than a decade, and prior to that for the Soil Conservation Board. Her expertise is specifically in collaborative stakeholder engagement, on environmental dilemmas and projects. Claire is deeply passionate about co-design and working with and for the community. Having completed the Governors Leadership Foundation program in 2019, Claire learnt lifelong skills in adaptive leadership, compassion, and deepened her understanding of social systems. Working in the NGO sector is a first for Claire and she's excited by the opportunity.



## JANE COOPER

### Executive Assistant to the CEO, and Board support

Jane has previously worked in roles as diverse as human resources, executive assistant, media relations, at Ninti One and as division manager for Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure – and quite incidentally probably had oversight of the former Hindmarsh office lease! Jane brings a deep expertise in the EA role and systems, and humility and gentle humour that will help our organisation continue to improve and grow. She is also, and quite rightly so, a passionate Crows supporter.



## ROSEMARY ARGUE

### Communications Officer

Rosemary has over 15 years' experience as a communications professional with qualifications in professional writing, public relations, education and science. She has also run her own dance school, been a high school science teacher, is passionate about nature conservation and excited to bring her skills and experience to our work at Nature Foundation.



# How can you help?

## VOLUNTEERS

We are currently seeking a retired plumber who would be happy to do volunteer work on our remote nature reserves. We are also looking for a people to provide executive support to some of our committees or working groups.

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For more information visit our website at [naturefoundation.org.au/conservation/bushbank-sa](http://naturefoundation.org.au/conservation/bushbank-sa) or contact Natalie Stalenberg on 08 8340 2880, or email: [natalie.stalenberg@naturefoundation.org.au](mailto:natalie.stalenberg@naturefoundation.org.au)

## ITEMS NEEDED – CAN YOU HELP?

If you are able to donate, fund or loan any of the following items, or provide the funds to acquire them, please phone 08 8340 2880 or email [info@naturefoundation.org.au](mailto:info@naturefoundation.org.au)

- HD TV for Witchelina
- Free standing wood heater for Bookkeepers Cottage Witchelina
- Weber Q or Baby Q for Bookkeepers Cottage
- Portable gas heater used on bottled gas, to fit in space 650mm H x 600mm W x 500mm D
- Water entitlements to assist our Water For Nature Program
- Land for nature conservation
- 1 weather station for Hiltaba and 5 for Witchelina to enable us to match changes in vegetation health with rain, temperature and other measures..
- Acoustic monitoring devices for bats and birds
- 40 channel UHF radios for nature reserve vehicles.






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Nature Foundation Ltd  
Level 2 Payinthe 128 Prospect Road  
PO Box 34, Prospect SA 5082  
Phone: (08) 8340 2880  
Email: [info@naturefoundation.org.au](mailto:info@naturefoundation.org.au)  
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