

Friends of Mount Majura (FoMM) Newsletter April 2013

- * Thursdays Weed Hunt at The Fair – next hunt 4 April, 9.30am
- * Bird Walk – Sunday 7 April, 8.30am; note: daylight saving time ends night before
- * Weed Swap – Weekend 6/7 April; help
- * Little Woody Weeds Working Bee – Sunday 7 April, 1-3pm
- * Working Bee jointly with the Mt Ainslie Weeders – Sunday 17 April
- * Update and other News: Request to return land into nature reserve, FoMM ACT 2013/14 Budget submission, Cat containment, Meeting with Minister

Dear Friends

Welcome to the April 2013 edition of the FoMM newsletter. April is the time of the year to **watch out for endangered Swift Parrots**. In past years, we observed Swift Parrots from end of March to beginning of May foraging eucalyptus nectar and lerp around the Hackett reservoir and close-by paddocks. If you see Swift Parrots please report the date, time, locality and approximate number of birds to FoMM, admin@majura.org or 62477515. For more information including photos and a profile of the species click on <http://majura.org/2012/04/01/report-swift-parrot-sightings-on-mt-majura-01042012/>.

Thursdays Weed Hunt at The Fair – next hunt 4 April, 9.30am

In March we tackled herbaceous weeds around the Fair planting site and woody weeds in the vicinity of Clancy's track. There are plenty of more weeds to deal with, so if you can, please join in. We usually meet Thursdays, 9.30am at the nature park access close to Tay St / Ian Niclo St intersection, The Fair, North Watson - weather permitting. Please bring and wear sun protection, drinking water, long sleeve and pants and gloves. If you like to receive an email with details the day before please contact admin@majura.org. The next Weed Hunt will be on Thursday, 4th April and we will be continuing to cut and daub woody weeds along Clancy's track.

Bird Walk – Sunday 7 April, 8.30am; note that daylight savings time will end the night before

When: Sunday, 7th April, 8.30 am to 10.00 am; please note that daylight savings time will end the night before, so put your clocks back an hour.

Where: Nature park access close to the intersection Tay St / Ian Nicol St at The Fair in North Watson

Bring and wear: suitable clothing for the expected weather and appropriate shoes; binoculars if you have them and a gold coin for a species list.

Since a couple of weeks, flocks of birds pass through Canberra on their autumn migration. Peter Miller will lead the walk and we hope to spot some of the migrating birds. The walk will be at Mt Majura's north-west slope known for its diverse bird life particularly small woodland bird species that have disappeared from the reserve behind Hackett and Ainslie.

Weed Swap – Weekend 6/7 April, help

Some plants growing in gardens invade Mount Majura's endangered grassy woodlands. Most of these garden escapees are woody weeds and are spreading by seeds dispersed in bird droppings. They replace the local native plants and degrade wildlife habitat. In addition, berry producing ornamentals such as privet and English Ivy have tipped the balance of bird life in favour of omnivorous **Currawongs**, which eat fruits, invertebrates and prey on eggs and nestlings of other birds to feed their own offspring. The increase in Currawong numbers is partly to blame for the decline of small woodland birds.

Weed Swap is an opportunity to rid gardens of the worst environmental offenders in exchange for free native plants and advice on how to grow them. For more information, including photos of environmental weeds go to <http://majura.org/2007/11/03/weed-swap/>

Help needed: Please contact admin@majura.org if you can help to letter box drop the flyer shown at the bottom of the weed swap page.

Little Woody Weeds Working Bee – Sunday 7 April

Neighbours living in Mackenzie Street initiated a woody weed working bee in February and will hold a follow-up on Sunday, 7 April from 1 to 3pm. Join them if you have an hour or two; experienced weeders are particularly welcome. Meet at the park access between 85 and 89 Mackenzie Street close to Russell Street intersection. Wear body covering garden clothing and bring a tree lobster if you have one. We will be working around the drainage line south of 89 Mackenzie St.

Working Bee jointly with the Mt Ainslie Weeders – Sunday 21 April

When: Sunday, 21 April 2013 from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm

Where: Nature park entrance Kellaway Street / Phillip Avenue.

Bring and wear: Sun protection, sturdy boots, and body covering garden clothing.

We'll provide the tools and refreshments.

Novice weeders are encouraged to be early for an induction.

Once a year in autumn, FoMM joins forces with the Ainslie Weeders mob to work downhill of the saddle between Mt Ainslie and Mt Majura, an area, which we call the 'Common'. Our work has greatly improved the grassy woodland of the Common which was badly invaded with herbaceous and woody weeds. We now see some natural regeneration of native herbs and trees. There is still plenty to do. Spreading Asparagus is a concern and will be a target weed at this working bee. For more information, to find out about Asparagus and what environmentally minded gardeners can do to avoid the vegetable invading native bush go to <http://majura.org/2013/02/04/woody-weeds-working-party-21042013/>

Update and other News

FoMM wrote to Shane Rattenbury, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) requesting the return of land to Mt Majura nature reserve. The land was removed from nature reserve and placed into special purpose reserve, horse holding paddock, in 2002. In August 2008, following an intense campaign, Government promised the return. For more information go to

<http://majura.org/2013/03/11/bring-them-back-request-to-return-horse-paddocks-into-nature-reserve/>

FoMM 2013/14 ACT Budget submission is available at

http://majura.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/FoMM_Submission_ACT-20013-14_budget_28.02.13-2.pdf

FoMM wrote to Simon Corbell, Minister for the Environment and to Shane Rattenbury, Minister for TAMS in regard to enforcing the cat containment at The Fair; view the letter at

<http://majura.org/2013/03/04/cat-hunting-woodland-birds-in-the-reserve-at-the-fair-inquiry-cat-containmentthe-fair/>

Shane Rattenbury, Minister for TAMS will meet the coordinators of FoMM and the Mt Ainslie Weeders to discuss a number of issues including management of grazing in reserves and steps towards a more sustainable management of woody weeds.

See you on the mountain.

Warm regards,

Waltraud

1 April 2013