

Friends of Mount Majura (FoMM) August 2008 newsletter

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Dear Friends

We had a fantastic turn out at **National Tree Day**. I'm particularly pleased that many young families came along and enjoyed the planting of 380 trees and shrubs at the old Ainslie tip site. Thank you to all who helped making the event a big success and a pleasant experience. Please find below Ann's report and extended thank you.

The recent rain is very welcome and on our **next working bee** we will do our bit to ensure the young seedlings planted on the 27 July will have a good start in the growing season. 2008 is the 'Year of the Frog' and I'm delighted that Dr Beth Mantle, the new ACT Frog Watch coordinator, will share her knowledge with us on **frogs and frog habitats** - just in time for the start of this years' Frog Watch season. A gentle walk led by local expert on plant ecology Dr Michael Doherty will be your opportunity to learn or refresh your knowledge about the **trees of Mount Majura**. Please find the details of the August events below. More information is available on our website at www.majura.org.

Finally I'd like to share excellent news with you in regard to the **south eastern Majura horse paddock**. In a letter which I received today Mr Hamish McNulty, the Conservator for Flora and Fauna, informed me that he will propose to change the current land use from 'special purpose reserve' (horse grazing) into 'nature reserve'. FoMM was seeking this change for nearly 5 years and recently has intensified lobbying the government for the protection of this high conservation area with a 'nature reserve' cover.

Warm regards from your happy FoMM co-ordinator

Waltraud

05. August 2008

Working Bee: Mulch a Seedling

When: Sunday 17 August from 1.00 to 3.00pm

Where: Old Ainslie tip site off Philip Av Kellaway St nature park entrance

Bring gloves, buckets, and a shovel if you have one

Come and help spreading two truck loads of mulch. This will suppress weeds and give the young seedlings planted on National Tree Day a head start in the warmer season.

Talk: Slippery Friends in our Backyards. About Frogs and Frog Habitats

by Dr Beth Mantle, ACT Frogwatch Coordinator

When: Thursday 21 August 2008, 7.30 – 9.00pm

Where: Blue Gum School Friends' Lounge, Hackett shops

Find out about the frogs of the ACT region. What makes them special? How can we help to protect them? Learn how to attract frogs to your own backyard.

Based on the very popular resource, "Creating Frog Friendly Habitats", Beth will take you through all you need to know to start turning your backyard into a beautiful suburban haven for many of our most common frog species. The talk will help you get to know some of the frogs of the ACT region, what they need to survive and thrive, and the ins and outs of encouraging them to your patch.

Walk: Trees of Mount Majura

Guided by local expert Dr Michael Doherty

When: Sunday 31 August, 1.00 – 3.00pm

Where: Nature Park entrance Mackenzie / Grayson Streets, Hackett

On this gentle walk through various types -of woodland you will discover the range of trees growing on Mount Majura. You will learn to distinguish between Scribbly gum and Brittle gum and other eucalypts and find out how trees have adapted to environmental conditions such as soils, fire and drought. Tree guides will be available for a gold coin donation.

Great Community Spirit at National Tree Day, Sunday July 27

Friends of Mt Majura (FoMM) and the Mt Ainslie Weeders are delighted with the success of the tree planting on National Tree Day held at the old Ainslie tip site. Despite the cold bleak weather, more than 120 enthusiastic

volunteers - many in the under 10 category - participated but three disappointed dogs were tethered to an old fence and unable to join the fun. Because of this impressive turn out, the planting of 220 trees and 160 shrubs was completed after 2.5 hours in the early afternoon, just as the temperature began to drop and volunteers were able to scuttle home to their warm houses.

By 11.30am there was much activity with planters scattered over the site already involved and armed with tools and buckets. Tea and coffee was available throughout the event for anyone who needed their inner temperature raised.

FoMM coordinator Waltraud Pix demonstrated the process of planting seedlings to the novices using water crystals, weed pads and tree guards. As always a lot can be learnt from her experience, knowledge and enthusiasm in giving young trees the best possible chance in these dry times. She was ably assisted by Andrew Barr, MLA, who had bucket, mattock and gloves at the ready. Also happily involved were 15 cubs and their leaders from the Lake Ginninderra Baringa Pack, whose contribution can go towards the attainment of the World Conservation Badge or the Landcare Badge.

Mononglo candidates, Mike Hettinger for Labor and Shane Rattenbury for the Greens came along and showed their support for this event by getting involved in the planting. Logistic and hands on support came from the North District rangers Grant Woodbridge, Bernadette Brown and Maree Gilbert, the Community Programs Officer Samantha Ning and from Russel Watkinson, Director of Parks, Conservation and Lands.

Greening Australia and FoMM propagated the seedlings from locally collected seeds. There would be some very sore backs amongst the retirees of North Canberra if it wasn't for the cadets from ADFA, who dug over 400 planting holes. Digging the holes turned into a competition for these strapping lads and volunteers were amused by the large trenches in which they were planting tiny seedlings.

Molonglo Catchment Group provided financial support for this event and with it, food was bought for a lunchtime barbeque including delicious vegetarian kebabs from Satis in Watson. The Majura Mountain Scouts cooked and served at the barbeque. The cold weather produced ferocious appetites and a few hungry planters had to settle for lunch when they got home. A big thank you to all!

Ann Junor