

The past year has seen a number of developments for GVLG, some new, others a continuation of activities from previous years.

Following on from the initial tree planting event at the Gooram Falls in 2014 pursuant to the Falls management plan commissioned by GVLG, the group has undertaken a rubbish clean-up in the falls area as part of Clean Up Australia day and, more recently, a second tree planting operation. The rubbish collection resulted in the removal of a significant quantity of litter from the area, most of which was just common, small-sized litter but which did include several larger-sized items as well. It is hoped that this effort will create a disincentive to future potential litterers. The tree planting event, held on 23rd of August, involved the planting of 150 plants in the upper Falls area, spread over an area east and south of the car park and running down to the bank of the Sevens Creek. The event was well attended with 14 volunteers turning up, an increase on numbers from last year and, encouragingly, including some new participants.

The group has hosted two speakers during the year. Neil Phillips provided a detailed and fascinating talk on the geology of the Strathbogie Ranges and Sam Strong, drawing on research for her PhD thesis, reflected on the various paradoxes she has identified in the ways bushfires are understood and contextualized in the post-fire period, both short and long-term. Both these talks were well attended and, in the case of Neil Phillips' talk, generated a considerable on-going effect by way of facilitating site visits to and analysis of the geological features of a number of properties in the district.

The bushfires which ravaged Creightons Creek and Gooram in December 2014 had the side effect of providing an excellent opportunity for ripping rabbit warrens and for conducting an extensive rabbit baiting programme. These projects were co-ordinated through and substantially funded by the Granite Creeks Project. As a result of the ripping works undertaken there was massive destruction of rabbit habitat in fire-affected areas, the efficiency of which was magnified by the simultaneous baiting programme. A further consequence of the programme however was a significant depletion of the financial resources of Granite Creeks, a situation that has, to some extent at least, been alleviated by a contribution of \$10,000 made to Granite Creeks by GVLG.

In all field activities GVLG has been mindful of the safety and well being of participants and an OH&S risk assessment has been a mandatory feature of planning for any task being undertaken by the group. Names

and details of all participants have been recorded, risk assessments made and hazards identified and explained. Happily, all our activities have been incident-free and while this may be due in part to good luck it also reflects the attention paid to OH&S issues in the course of activities and during the planning that precedes them, as well as in regular GVLG meetings.

Thanks are due to many people for the accomplishments of the group over the last year. In particular I would like to thank Bethany Devanny for her work as Facilitator, Michael and Rowena Stubbe for their their contributions (joint) Secretary and to Charlie Brydon for his efforts as Treasurer. In addition, we are all much indebted to Kerri Robson, both for her on-going commitment to keeping us abreast of events and opportunities in the landcare area as well as for her crucial role in co-ordinating the post-fire recovery effort in the district.

Robert Colvin

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