

Friends of The Innamincka Reserves

NEWSLETTER Number 4, 2014



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Foreword

from the President

The Friends of The Innamincka Reserves volunteer group again welcomes new members. There has been quite an influx of new folk in 2014, who are all interested in the Innamincka region and Coongie Lakes NP.

They are:

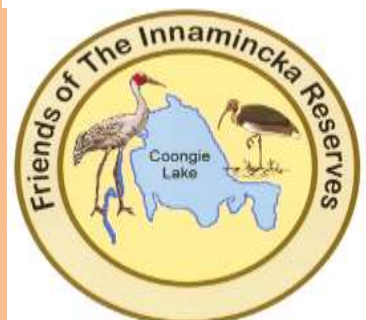
NSW:- Simon, Sarah, Lachlan, Emily and Luke Tan from Sydney, Jen and Len Kenna from Red Rock.

VIC:- Geoff and Karen Russell, Daphne Hards, Sonja Ross, Melbourne.

TAS:- Jess Fuller (former Graduate Ranger).

SA:- Ray and Jan Hutchinson, Murray Bridge. Barbara and Peter Bansemer, St Peters. Fae and Jim Trueman, Blackwood, Chris Roesler, Largs North. Martin Turner, Clapham.

I hope that they all get to enjoy this wonderful region and help to preserve this important ecological site.



QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The first meeting for the year was the Annual General Meeting held in February. All Office Bearers were re-elected unopposed. They are:- Kate Buckley, President, Mr Peter Olson, Vice President, TC, Secretary, Mr Malcolm McDonald, Treasurer, and Mr Peter Young, Minute Secretary. All Office Bearers were congratulated on being prepared to support the FOIR for another year in these important roles.

We really appreciated the effort that our Ranger, Erik Dahl, made to attend our first meeting this year. It was great to get first hand knowledge of what had happened in Innamincka throughout the summer months. Erik described the horrific dust storms and advised that FOIR have some repair work to do on their photographic display in the AIM building.

TC organised a Guest Speaker for our AGM, David Schmarr. David's excellent presentation was of interest to all present. He gave fascinating detail on the Native Fish species and the various threats to these precious creatures. As we had no method of David giving a power point presentation of his materials, he swiftly returned to his office and photocopied the pages for all present at the meeting. We are most grateful to David for going beyond the normal expectations of a Guest Speaker.

Peter Young announced that he would be stepping down from his business "Alltrac 4x4". Although the Young family were still happy for us to use this venue, we did not want to impinge on their kindness any further, so we set about finding a new venue. TC has links with the Plympton RSL, as do two other members of FOIR, so this is now the new venue for FOIR meetings. We extend our gratitude to Peter and Ann Young for the many years that they have given their business premises as a venue for our meetings, cost free. Thank You Peter and Ann. As well, we extend our "thanks" to TC for arranging the new venue.

The May meeting was well attended as people were eager to hear of the decisions made relating to the Coongie Lakes

Management Plan from Barry Hayden, Team Leader, Protected Area Management, DEWNR. We were most grateful for the time and patience that Barry has shown in explaining the finer details of this Plan to FOIR. We appreciate just how much of his own time has been spent working with us. FOIR were pleased to hear that many of our suggestions were adopted in the Coongie Lakes Management Plan. This gives us confidence to participate in such activities in the future, not just in our abilities as a group, but that DEWNR does not send out "draft" documents that are already a 'fait accompli'. Many Members of the FOIR gave input to the "draft" and special "thanks" goes to TC, Peter Olsen, Euan Moore and Jenny Rolland who spent days working on this document.

The August meeting was held just after the annual working bee. Attendance was down, but many people travel at this time of year and all that were unavailable sent their apologies. It was during the working bee that we heard the sad news that Gavin Aguis was no longer an employee of DEWNR. I had sent a letter on behalf of FOIR, to the appropriate authorities protesting at the loss of such a skilled person, to quote from my letter, "It would be the ultimate act of utter stupidity to lose the employ of Gavin Aguis", but to no avail. Whilst bemoaning the loss of such an important person and generally discussing our concerns about the Government, both Federal and State, further reducing funding for the environment, TC posed the question to Erik our Ranger, "just how dismal is the future for the environment?" Skilled at the 'double entendre', Erik simply presented us with the following sign.



INNAMINCKA NEWS

Rainfall again has been extremely low and the town is basically in the grip of a drought. The water supply is being pumped from Policeman's Point, as the Cooper dries into pools.

The 'Skid-Shacks' suffered a water catastrophe when all staff were away on a training course. A Raven jumped onto the lever in the Chemical Emergency Shower and turned the water on. Staff returned to six inches of water through the shed and an empty tank!

Cattle are coming in to be near water and scarce food. Their tracks and dung are spread around the town in places where we usually never see them.



Dead beast at Burkes campsite (Photograph K Buckley)

Change is happening rapidly in Innamincka. Road-trains involved in the mining industry are everywhere. Constantly driving through the town and sending a pall of dust over everything. There is now a major 'highway' intersecting Dillion's Highway, used by DKM. Sand-dunes were simply cut through.



Bore Track 2012 (Photograph K Buckley)

The Bore Track, which FOIR surveyed last year, is no longer a 'track', but rather a road, two grader-blades wide. The road out to Coongie is like a highway except for the last few kilometres.

The geo-thermal exploration has ceased and so Innamincka remains dependent on generators for power. However, the Innamincka Hotel has invested in 450 solar panels with the plan to be self sufficient with power. They are also going to install a water treatment plant so that water in all rooms will be potable.



Solar Panels Innamincka Hotel. (Photograph K Buckley)

One does wonder how efficient the panels will be as they are constantly showered with dust by the passing trucks.

It was with regret that we learnt that Jill Scott, the licensee of the Innamincka Hotel for the last three years, is leaving the town. Jill and her husband Greg are returning to the coast. The FOIR have experienced the generosity and hospitality of Jill and enjoyed the superb quality of meals served at the Innamincka Hotel. We have been treated to a free boat-ride up the Cooper each year since the Scotts have been in Innamincka. Jill brought a 'touch of class' to this establishment. She and Greg will be sorely missed.

NAME CHANGES

In conjunction with the co-naming of various places in South Australia, Coongie Lakes will now be known as Malkumba-Coongie Lakes, and The Choke has become Yulkuparlur Walk.

WOMEN OF THE DESERT

What attracts women to spend, in some cases many years, in a desert place like Innamincka, where summer temperatures reach 50 °C, where water is always a scarce commodity, where hair-conditioner is not used because of the silt content of the creek water used for showering, where going to the hair-dresser or buying a new outfit takes weeks of planning and travel.

The four ladies most closely connected to the FOIR agreed to tell me a little about their love of Innamincka.

Joan Osborne, President of the Innamincka Progress Association, has lived permanently in Innamincka for over 25 years. Joan is an artist, and it was her “artist’s eye” that saw and continues to see the beauty of the Innamincka landscape, light and the changing sky. They are all inspirations for Joan’s talent. I have been the lucky recipient of some of Joan’s work and she truly is Innamincka’s “artist in residence”.

Bill Appo has been successfully managing the Trading Post for approximately 7 years. She came to Innamincka because he son was working there and has never left. Bill has found the peace of Innamincka and the genuine approach to life of the local people has made her feel that Innamincka is “home”.

Jill Scott, licensee of the Innamincka Hotel for the past three years has had a life-long fascination with the outback. Having always lived and holidayed on the coast, Jill was keen to experience life in the interior. She at first applied for a position in Birdsville, and was directed to Innamincka – a place she had never heard of!! Jill says that nothings compares to the beauty of a sunset at Innamincka, or a dip at dusk in the Cooper after a hot summer day!

Katheryn Litherland has spent her life in Queensland, much of it in Cunnamulla.

Katheryn was brought up with the knowledge of her kin and country, her Father was a Yandruwandha man. Katheryn at first visited the area whilst she worked in an advisory role with various exploration companies. The links to country tugged at her heart and Katheryn moved to Innamincka in 2013. She has since won a Ranger position with DEWNR at Innamincka and plans to stay for the foreseeable future. Katheryn’s strong feelings of country can be appreciated by all of us who love Innamincka.



Katheryn Litherland 2014

(Photograph K Buckley)



Vale Helen Tolcher

Helen was another woman with a great affinity with the interior of Australia, and in particular, Innamincka. “Innamincka The Town with Two Lives”, is one of six books written by Helen about outback places. Whilst working on the Innamincka Cemetery during the working bee this year, it was with great regret that I heard of Helen’s death via a Researcher from Sydney. It seemed apt to learn this detail at that time and place. Both the Researcher and I had been wanting to talk with Helen about Innamincka, but unfortunately we waited too long.

GRANT MONIES

The FOIR were again successful in gaining a NRM Grant in 2014. The amount \$4,420 (GST exclusive) was granted to aid in the eradication of Buffel Grass. Because of the 'tyranny of distance' it was not possible to form a strike force to rush up to Innamincka when the Buffel started to shoot, the appropriate time to poison this weed. So a Contractor was hired to undertake weed extermination on the Innamincka Reserves on our behalf. I am glad to report that all monies from this Grant have been spent. The FOIR are grateful to the NRM Community Grants for providing this important funding.

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CONSERVATION

Arckaringa – The FOIR sent a letter to Great Artesian Basin Conservation Committee protesting about the proposed open cut mine to be developed by Altona, an 'off-shore' mining company. They plan to drain off the GAB waters in order to access the 'third grade' coal that sits beneath the GAB. Peter Davey, Secretary of GABCC acknowledged receipt of our letter and said that it would be discussed at their meeting in Canberra on 28th March. Some Members of FOIR also took the opportunity to send individual letters of protest against the decimation of the GAB.

Friends of Parks AGM was held on the 19th May and the dire state of funding for Parks and the environment generally, was stressed. It was distressing to hear that perhaps there will no longer be funding for NRM Grants. To quote the President, David Mitchell, "I am strongly of the view that we must continue to be a constructive, responsible and forthright independent advocate for the parks, reserves and heritage assets. DEWNR continues through a period of significant review and we need to do the same in order to stay relevant, and attractive to newcomers."

Coolibah Research - Nerissa Haby, Landscape Ecologist-Scientific Services, undertook research on Coolibah habitat

during our working bee. FOIR members, Rose and Vern Trelibs spent three days with Nerissa to assist with her work. We are grateful to Rose and Vern for their perseverance. They were long working days, one being twelve hours. Nerissa is now participating in a Coolibah germination project.

Bore Track – The Friends of Parks eNews Issue 19, April 2014, contained a condensed version of the FOIR "Bore Track North Report". This is a further acknowledgement of the importance, of the work that we do as volunteers.

Coongie Lakes NP – A disappointing lack of regard by tourists, of National Park requirements, "No Chain Saws", was evident at Coongie Lakes.



(Photograph K Buckley)

Human Conservation – Human conservation and preservation, is also very important. Tony Magor, (A/Manager Community Engagement and Public Lands, Natural Resources, SA Arid Lands) organised a Remote First Aid Course for the various 'Friends Groups' of the Arid Lands. Neville Stone, Peter Young and Kate Buckley attended from FOIR.

Neville has already put this knowledge to good use, though I need to remind him that he is not qualified to undertake delicate operations!

WORKING BEE

We had the largest working bee group in the history of FOIR. Of the 22 volunteers 13 of them were new members, some never having been to Innamincka. Our newest member, Martin Turner actually started work two days before the rest of the group got to Innamincka. Martin was sanding and painting boards in preparation for sign writing. Work officially began with fencing at Yulkuparlu Walk. All 22 hands plus DEWNR staff, Graduate Ranger, Aidan Laslett and volunteer Jason Litherland, made short work of this big job.



Positive start to the working bee. (Photograph J Hutchinson)



Jason, Martin and Erik doing the really hard work. (T Coleman)



Youth and wisdom combined, Aidan and Jim. (J Hutchinson)



Supervision is important (Photograph J Hutchinson)

The mornings were still quite fresh - 1° C



White-breasted Woodswallows (Photograph J Hutchinson) and not everybody wanted to be up at first light!



Katheryn and Jenny doing the hard work. (T Coleman)

On the second day some folk started the bird survey along the Coongie Road, noting birds, habitat and other detail at 10 kilometre spaced points. The rest of the volunteers continued fencing and road-works at Cullyamurra.



Takes a good woman to show them how to do it! (J Hutchinson)
 Important directional signs were made and installed for the Walkers Crossing road.



Ray keeping his eye on their work. (Photograph J Hutchinson)



Discussion on the finished product. (Photograph J Hutchinson)



Erik makes the final adjustment! (Photograph J Hutchinson)

Both groups then combined at Kudriemitchie and worked on the important task of repairing the fencing around Coongie Lakes, in the hope of keeping the cattle out of this beautiful National Park.



Barbed-wire put in place Coongie (Photograph J Rolland)



Jan's farm experience made this easy work. (R Hutchinson)



For others the task took a little longer (J Hutchinson)

The decimation to Coongie Lakes, caused by the cattle is clearly evident. Even though it seems that the region is now in drought conditions, it is a matter of priority that cattle be kept out of this IBA. (Important Bird Area)

Hoove prints and tracks cut up the lake-side surface.

(Photograph K Buckley)



Jan sweeps while Jim keeps watch!

(R Hutchinson)

All buildings were cleared of their years' supply of dust and grit. The local folk have again expressed their appreciation of the work and commitment of the FOIR.

Each year the FOIR assist with the preparation of the Racecourse in readiness for the Annual Innamincka Race meeting.
The lack of the correct key, did not stop Terrie, Barb and others from getting in to clean up the Kitchen.

I am constantly amazed by the variety of skills exhibited by the our volunteers.

A direction sign was needed to the Kudriemitchie Cattle Yards. With no template and no previous sign to work from, Daphne Hards prepared this magnificent piece of art work, worthy of being hung in any gallery.



The Kitchen.

(Photograph T Coleman)



Daphne working on her masterpiece. (Photograph T Coleman)



Terrie has cleaned this stove for the past 3 years. (T Coleman)

But the dust was almost overpowering!

Erik and Jason were suitably impressed with Daphne's art-work. They have guaranteed not to scratch the sign when placing it in position.

Fencing continued at Policemans for some of the volunteers during the second week.



Ray and Eric confer (Photograph J Hutchinson)

All volunteers were fencing experts at the end of the working bee.



Vern & TC waiting their turn. (Photograph T Coleman)



Technique decided! (Photograph J Hutchinson)



Many hands..... (Photograph J Hutchinson)



Barb and Pete looking ahead. (Photograph J Hutchinson)



The Maestro at work (Photograph J Rolland)

A great deal of work was completed at Policemans. An impossible task if left to the two remaining DEWNR staff at Innamincka, since the abolition of the "Work Crew"!

It is not all work and no play during the working bee - we do take time to socialize and enjoy sharing our various experiences.

The Innamincka Hotel was frequented by all for at least three delicious evening meals.



Evening boat ride (Photograph J Hutchinson)

We were treated again, by Jill and Greg, to a peaceful glide along the Cooper on dusk.



Jason, Katheryn and Erik (Photograph T Coleman)

For the DEWNR staff at Innamincka the day does not finish when the work stops. They generously give their private time ensuring that we enjoy our evenings. Erik, Katheryn, and Aidan, camped with us at Kudriemitchie, along with Jason the volunteer.

We all enjoyed the friendly approach of Graduate Ranger, Aidan Laslett. He treated us with respect and easily communicated with our group of more senior folk. He showed a genuine interest in the stories that we had to tell.



Camp at Burkes

(Photograph T Coleman)

Erik conducting a choral rendition around the camp-fire!!

Once again I have been impressed with the variety of skills that the Friends bring to the working bee, their dedication and commitment to undertake any tasks set and their generosity in travelling to this remote location. Sonja Ross deserves a special mention for being prepared to hire a 4x4 in order to get to Innamincka. "Thank You" Sonja.

As always there was a good deal of preparation to ensure that the working bee runs smoothly. A special "thank you" to Malcolm and Marie McDonald, TC and Terrie Coleman for their work in this area, and to Erik Dahl. Apart from the many emails back and forth setting the "Working Bee Plan", Erik also prepared items, tools and sites before we arrived. Much of it in his personal time.

It was really heartening to receive "Best Wishes" for the working-bee from so many people who were unable to attend for various reasons. Your wishes were really appreciated, and we hope to see you in Innamincka soon.

The "Three Year Plan" has been completed and will be a useful guide to the 2015-16 working bees.

**THANK YOU ALL FOR
YOUR TIME AND
GENEROSITY.**

HISTORY

How did Burke die?

In the CSIRO published book entitled “The Aboriginal Story of Burke and Wills - Forgotten Narratives”. One of the chapters, written by Darrell Lewis details the account of a report by a squatter in the “Australian Town and Country Journal”, April 1875. The squatter visited the Innamincka homestead at this time and met an old Aboriginal woman who said that she had been there when Burke died. She claimed to have helped cover Burke’s body with bushes after his death. Quote: “She also affirmed that Burke had not died from starvation, but had been shot by ‘nother one white fellow’. She claimed that she actually saw a white fellow who answers in every way to the description of King, come behind Burke when he was stooping at the fire roasting a duck, and shoot him in the side.” This chapter goes on to explain why this could well be the true facts relating to Burke’s death. It makes very interesting reading.

“Raising the Dead!”

Our interest in the Cemetery received wonderful support from Tony Magor in the form of organising a ‘ground penetrating radar survey’ in 2013. Tony supplied us with the GPS readings and measurements of the thirty unmarked and unidentified graves.



Before (Cemetery 2013)

(Photograph K Buckley)

FOIR set about marking these grave sites with special thanks going to Euan Moore for interpreting the data, Geoff and Karen Russell and Jenny Rolland for assisting with this and carting stones.



Geoff & Euan being very particular with measurements.

Kate and Katheryn Litherland, with some help from Len and Jen Kenna were professional stone carriers. We marked these thirty graves in two days.



After (Cemetery 2014)

(Photograph K Buckley)

Jen made a very appropriate sign, “*Please Shut the Gate*”, after we spent some hours clearing the cemetery of cattle dung.



Jen hard at work

(Photograph T Coleman)

This cemetery really has “Australia wide” interest from a wide range of people for a variety of reasons. I am very keen to get an historical interpretative sign made and positioned at the cemetery.



Innamincka Cemetery August 2014 (Photograph J Rolland)

Hitchhikers -1980s style

Anybody who has been to the Trading Post in Innamincka will have noticed the Sparrows, usually no more than eight to ten, that hang around the door-way looking for any scraps. Being a bird-watcher it has fascinated me that I have never seen any Sparrows at any of the camp sites or further out from the Town.

I have been told that these little birds arrived in Innamincka in 1985. It was during the year when the film, "Burke & Wills" was being made. To authenticate the movie, horses and camels were brought to Innamincka. No local feed was available for these animals, so it had to be transhipped from Hawker. Heavy rain had closed the Strzelecki Track, so the semi-trailers laden with hay and fodder had to wait in Hawker until the roads were re-opened. Well, this warm, dry and safe environment was welcomed by the Sparrows. They moved in amongst the hay bales. When the trucks drove off towards Innamincka, some of the Sparrows stayed on board, and this is how the little hitchhikers arrived in Innamincka.

Australian Inland Mission Building

The iconic Inland Mission building could be said to be the 'hub' of Innamincka. It attracts all folk who visit or pass through Innamincka. It is a place to be preserved for future generations. The FOIR take particular pride in cleaning and maintaining this building. It was suggested by Janet Brook that FOIR dedicate a section of the AIM building to displaying our working bee achievements. This is has now been achieved.



John Revitt using his excellent carpentry skills (T Coleman)



FOIR display completed by TC and John Revitt (T Coleman)

Original Innamincka Station



Mr & Mrs Henry Colless (Photograph K Buckley)

Innamincka is always a place of surprises. Whilst working at the Cemetery we had a visit from Adrian Mitchell of Sydney. Adrian is writing the history of the Colless Family, the first family on Innamincka Station. Adrian was interested in the list of "deaths in Innamincka" that I had collated which included the death of a Colless girl, 3 hours old. Adrian had been out to Burkes looking for evidence of the original homestead structure. Some of the members of FOIR are aware of the vicinity of the original Innamincka Homestead. I believe that it is something we should research further, identify the positioning of the old homestead and investigate the possibility of some signage to mark where it stood.

Any photographs, evidence or recollections that you have of this site would be much appreciated.

BIRD SURVEY



"Birds-eye view" (Photograph J Rolland)
Katheryn and Jan using the scope at
Coongie Lakes



Coongie Lakes (Photograph J Hutchinson)
'Fast food' has arrived at Coongie Lakes.
The Ravens were taking the mussels out
of the beaks of the Brolgas



Little Corellas (Photograph J Hutchinson)
Real estate is always at a premium in
Innamincka.

FOIR BIRD LIST 2014 INNAMINCKA RESERVES

Common	Name
<i>Duck</i>	Hard-head Pacific Black Musk Australian Wood Duck Grey Teal
<i>Cormorant</i>	Little Black
<i>Ibis</i>	Australian White
<i>Plover</i>	Red-capped Australian Pelican
<i>Tern</i>	Caspian
<i>Heron</i>	White-faced White-necked
<i>Spoonbill</i>	Yellow-billed
<i>Dotterel</i>	Red-kneed Black-fronted
<i>Grebe</i>	Australasian Darter Eurasian Coot Masked Lapwing
<i>Pigeon</i>	Crested
<i>Dove</i>	Peaceful
<i>Corella</i>	Little, (Over a thousand in one flock)
<i>Parrots</i>	Red-rumped Budgerigar Cockatiel
<i>Cuckoo</i>	Black-eared
<i>Owl</i>	Barn Barking
<i>Nightjar</i>	Australian Owlet
<i>Woodswallow</i>	Masked White-breasted Black-faced White-browed
<i>Swallow</i>	White-backed
<i>Triller</i>	White-winged
<i>CuckooShrike</i>	Back-faced
<i>Finch</i>	Zebra
<i>Martin</i>	Tree Fairy
<i>Wedgebill</i>	Chirruping

	Brolga Mistletoe Bird		Magpie Lark Australian Magpie Australian Pipit House Sparrow Grey Shrike-thrush Restless Flycatcher
<i>Fairywren</i>	White-winged Variegated		
<i>Pardalote</i>	<i>Red-browed</i>		
<i>Honeyeater</i>	White-plumed Spiny-cheeked	<i>Raven</i>	Australian Little
	Singing	<i>Crow</i>	Black
<i>Miner</i>	Yellow-throated	<i>Kite</i>	Whistling
<i>Kingfisher</i>	Red-backed Sacred		
<i>Treecreeper</i>	Brown	<i>Eagle</i>	Wedgetail Little
<i>Quail-thrush</i>	Cinnamon	<i>Falcon</i>	Brown Nankeen Kestrel Black-breasted Buzzard
	Galah Emu Jacky Winter Willie Wagtail		



FOIR BIRD LIST 2014 COONGIE LAKES and KUDRIEMITCHIE

Common	Name		
<i>Duck</i>	Hard-head Pacific Black Australian Wood-duck Grey Teal Pink Eared Musk Freckled Australian Shelduck Blue-billed		Australian Owlet Nightjar
<i>Cormorant</i>	Little Pied Little Black Pied	<i>Honeyeater</i>	White-plumed Spiny-cheeked
<i>Tern</i>	Caspian	<i>Miner</i>	Yellow-throated
	Brolga Australian Pelican Black Swan Masked Lapwing	<i>Wedgebill</i>	Chirruping
<i>Godwit</i>	Black-tailed	<i>Cuckoo</i>	Horsfield's Bronze
<i>Heron</i>	White necked	<i>Woodswallow</i>	Black-faced
<i>Spoonbill</i>	Royal	<i>Swallow</i>	White-backed
<i>Grebe</i>	Hoary-headed	<i>Fairywren</i>	Variegated White-winged
<i>Coot</i>	Eurasian	<i>Triller</i>	White-winged
	Red-necked Avocet Black-fronted Red-capped	<i>Martin</i>	Tree Fairy
<i>Dotterel</i>		<i>Pardalote</i>	Red-browed
<i>Plover</i>			Weebill Galah Magpie Lark Willie Wagtail Jacky Winter Australian Magpie Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike Mistletoebird Australian Reed Warbler
<i>Pigeon</i>	Crested	<i>Quail Thrush</i>	Cinnamon Zebra
<i>Dove</i>	Diamond Peaceful	<i>Finch</i>	
	Little Red-rumped	<i>Goshawk</i>	Brown-
<i>Corella</i>		<i>Raven</i>	Australian Little Crow
<i>Parrots</i>		<i>Kite</i>	Whistling Black
<i>Treecreeper</i>	Brown	<i>Falcon</i>	Peregrine Grey Brown
<i>Chat</i>	Orange	<i>Kestrel</i>	Nankeen
		<i>Eagle</i>	Wedgetail
		<i>Buzzard</i>	<i>Black Breasted</i>

Report and graph prepared by Euan Moore.

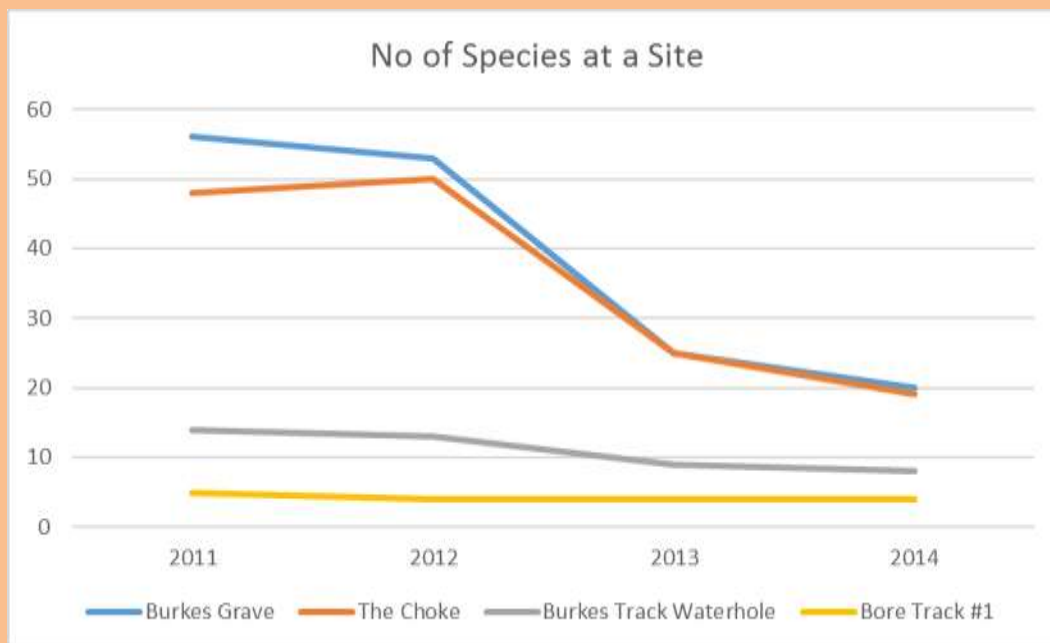
Bird Surveys at Innamincka.

The following graph shows the change in number of species present at four sites where we have done regular surveys since 2011.

The sites labelled Burke's Grave and The Choke are both wetland sites centred on the major permanent waterholes on Cooper Creek to the east of Innamincka township. Surveys at these sites included both waterbirds and woodland birds using the River Red Gum and Coolibah trees along the river.

The Burke's Track Waterhole site is a small ephemeral wetland approximately 1km from the river. This site includes scattered small Coolibah trees but is largely open grasslands. The site contained significant water in 2011 and a small pool in 2012. It has been completely dry since.

The Bore Track #1 site is at the northern end of the Bore Track. It is sited in a swale between the long north-south running dunes. The site is grassland with a small copse of Bloodwoods and some scattered Mulga.



The graph clearly shows the decline in birds as we move from the boom years of 2010 – 2012 to the more usual dry periods. Those areas that are naturally dry have consistently shown lower species diversity but have also been more stable over the years.

Bird counts at Burke's Grave

The graph shows actual counts of selected species at the permanent waterhole at Burke's Grave across the four years of surveys. The four species shown represent different categories of bird within the environment.

Australian Pelicans are water dependent, feeding primarily on fish and other medium sized aquatic vertebrates although they will take other birds such as coots and ducklings.

I am very saddened by the current condition and use of the Nappamerrie Road.

companies to ask for their support in protecting the environment in any way?



Nappamerrie Road 2014 (Photograph K Buckley)

It is now unrecognisable due to heavy vehicular traffic, in particular trucks. Not satisfied with destroying the top of the road, truck drivers have now taken to driving to the left of the white guide posts, cutting a totally new track and further wrecking the environment.



Nappamerrie Road 2011 (Photograph K Buckley)

Farewell until next time folks.
Kate Buckley



Nappamerrie Road 2014 (Photograph K Buckley)

I wonder can we send these photographs to the various mining and trucking