

Friends of Mount Majura (FoMM) May 2009 newsletter

- Autumn planting and rabbit wrap up - Sunday 17 May
- Public Lecture on rabbits – Thursday 28 May
- World Environment Day celebration with a Walk Talk and Tea – Sunday 7 June

Dear Friends

Fourteen dedicated volunteers made a big difference at our last woody weeds working bee for this season. We've removed a large amount of briar roses and hawthorns from an area at the northwest slope of Mount Majura. I'd like to thank everyone for a job very well done, especially our rangers Nina and Murray and members of the Watson Woodland Group who were working with us.

How can you see something that is not there? Well, on our rabbit assessment walk led by Dr. Brian Cooke we learnt among many other things that the absence of seedlings of native trees and shrubs can be a telling sign of rabbit presence. For instance, we would have expected to see a variety of native seedlings growing in the deeper soil of the drainage line that runs through the paddock adjacent to the water reservoir. A close inspection of the area however revealed a total absence of native plant recruitment and plenty of weeds such as unpalatable horehound. I hope that the current work to reduce rabbit numbers will reverse the decline of remnant vegetation.

At our May working bee we will be assisting native vegetation re-establishment at the drainage line by planting a wildlife corridor of local shrubs and I'd like to invite you to come along and help. Please be early for an introduction and morning tea and give as much time as you like. At lunch time, staff of Parks, Conservation and Lands will be talking about the rabbit control project currently carried out within north Canberra nature reserves and the Majura Scouts will run a Thank-You BBQ for volunteers who helped with rabbit mapping and with planting; please RSVP for catering purposes if you plan to attend / stay for the BBQ; for details see below.

Dr. Brian Cooke will give a public lecture on rabbits on the 28 May 2009. You can find more information on this talk by visiting our website at <http://majura.org/2009/04/25/rabbits-australia's-ecological-blind-spot/> There is also a map that shows the rabbit warren distribution on Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie, which clearly demonstrates the severity of the rabbit problem within our nature reserves.

It has become a kind of FoMM tradition to celebrate World Environment Day with a Walk, Talk and Tea on the mountain. This year, on Sunday, 7 June we will revisit the former sheep camp at the Mount Majura ridge and learn about the progress of this rehabilitation project. Please contact me if you can **help** with promotion, donating items for afternoon tea, taking care of activity sheets, writing a report, or taking photographs at the event.

Many thanks and warm regards
Waltraud

Autumn planting and rabbit wrap up - Sunday 17 May

When: Sunday, 17 May 2009, from 10.00 am; lunch time BBQ and rabbit info at 12.00 pm

Where: meet at the lower Hackett reservoir off Rivett and French Streets in Hackett

Bring & Wear: Sun protection, sturdy boots, garden gloves and a bucket

BBQ for catering purposes please RSVP: Stuart.Jeffress@act.gov.au

Rabbits: Australia's Ecological Blind Spot

Talk by Dr. Brian Cooke, Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre, University of Canberra

Thursday 28 May 2009, 7.30pm

ACT Sports House, 100 Maitland Street, Hackett

Celebrate World Environment Day 2009 with a Walk Talk & Tea on Mount Majura

When: Sunday 7 June 2008, 1.00 – 3.00 pm

Where: Meet at Mackenzie Street Nature Park entrance opposite Grayson Street, Hackett