



40 YEARS
1986 to 2026

ONKAPARINGA PARKWATCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF ONKAPARINGA PARK INC.

Note opinions and commentary in this newsletter are not necessarily the general opinion of the FOOP membership. Any complaints should in the first instance be directed to the author.

We acknowledge this land that we work on is the traditional lands for the Kaurna people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country.

January/February

Vol 39 No 1 & 2

2026

World Wetlands Day 2 February 2026



Wetlands and traditional knowledge: Celebrating cultural heritage



Onkaparinga Wetlands Pond 1

FRIENDS OF ONKAPARINGA PARK INC

PATRON: Dr B HARDY AO

Incorporating The ONKAPARINGA RIVER RP and ONKAPARINGA RIVER NP.

Proudly a member of THE FRIENDS OF PARKS & NATURE INC.,

President: Graham Thomas Vice-President: Michael Whitaker

Secretary: Jo Scheiffers 0429676433 Treasurer: Andrew McKinnon 0427826721

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

The Secretary, Friends of Onkaparinga Park Inc secretary@foop.com.au

Newsletter contributions to mackins@tpg.com.au .

for our community



Katrine Hildyard MP
Member for Reynell

Minister for Child Protection
Minister for Women and the Prevention of
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2026; FOOP will turn 40 this year. Stay tuned for some exciting news on how we might celebrate this milestone.

Finally the promised revised *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act* has passed both houses of federal government. This was achieved after the Labor government agreed to a compromise with the Greens. Personally I see one positive in the new arrangements and that is the establishment of a federal Environmental Protection Agency. Whilst it seems much of the decision making process for new developments will be determined by *Environmental Standards* [whatever they are?] the Minister will still have significant powers to override the decision makers. Time will tell if the decision making process will remain a political one rather than a science based approach.

Sadly the early days of summer saw the tragic death of 2 National Parks and Wildlife Service fire-fighters; 1 near Kimba in SA the other in NSW. Condolences to their families and colleagues.

ABC TV recently presented a report on how climate change has resulted in sea-level rises in the world heritage listed Kakadu National Park. Sadly the data shows that much of Kakadu has changed from a tropical floodplain/wetland to a tidal zone with saline water seriously affecting plants and animals unique to Kakadu. One wonders what this will mean for tourism etc.

Listening to ABC Radio recently I was drawn to a term used by a talk-back caller of "*climate whiplash*" when describing extreme changes in weather events particularly of late. This became even more stark when we had the monsoonal rains in northern Queensland concurrently with the Victorian bushfires. Both of these events are, and will continue to be, disastrous in emotional and economic terms. What I do find disturbing is the number of people still denying the science in their public positions on climate change. It probably boosts their political profiles.

As you read this your committee is looking at the draft ecological report on the northern section of the National Park which was funded by a grant from Green Adelaide. The objective of the report is to develop in conjunction with National Parks, a 10 year plan of weed control and revegetation [where needed], concentrating initially on the areas of highest value natural vegetation through to those lesser areas augmenting flora types guided by the scientific data in the report. More to follow.

Did you see the report by an eastern state's academic that the koala population in the Mount Lofty Ranges would starve if sterilisation wasn't performed. Not once did I see any mention that koalas were re-located here from Victoria and aren't natural here.

Graham Thomas

As we stand at the crossroads of economic development and ecological preservation, the choices we make today will determine the legacy we leave for future generations. It is time for a financial revolution that transcends traditional boundaries, paving the way for a greener, more sustainable tomorrow." — Shivanshu K. Srivastava





Australian Pelican { *Pelecanus conspicillatus* } 1.5m-1.9 ... wingspan of 2.5 m ... numbers of birds varies seasonally.



A common bird found over much of Australia, there would be very few people that don't immediately recognise the species, or stop to admire them. Seasonally huge flocks may gather after heavy rains that fill the Australian inland lakes and waterways, including the vital Coorong NP. Regions with Islands are favoured, that offer better security for raising young. How they know when lakes are full so far away is a mystery, and is anybody's guess. Mass nesting may occur under the right conditions, so long as the waters don't dry up too quickly, that sadly can result in deaths to many young birds.

Small gatherings are common in the Onkaparinga, and some may be found all year around, mostly along the Onka River course. Large numbers tend to congregate in the Onka Estuary when the ephemeral lakes fill with water. Good rains are necessary to fill the Onka lakes/Wetlands, and they tend to dry up quickly, this aspect does not lend itself to local Pelican breeding. Nonetheless the Onka lakes do attract a number of bird species, including Pelicans. Best time to visit the Wetland lakes is Winter/Spring once rains starts to fill them. and the walk along the River upstream from Perrys Bend often reveal many water birds, including at times many Pelicans { such as depicted in the photos} I have come across a number of dead Pelicans that died as the water dries up, possible cause Botulism from putrid water as the level recedes.



One sad aspect of hungry Pelicans is the nasty habit of trying to steal fish or bait from fisher folk. This all too often results in the opportunist birds swallowing hooks, or/and becoming entangled. I have been personally called upon to capture and treat a number of the unfortunate birds. Unnervingly some of the hooks end up deep within the throat of the poor bird, and sometimes they are not able to be removed without further damage. About the only way to remove a deeply swallows hook is inserting an arm inside the beak, maybe up to your shoulder....not a nice experience for man or beast. Another perilous problem can be accidentally flying into unseen power lines and similar. Some of the injuries sustained from that mistake are extensive, broken beaks /necks and the like. { Pictures of such are too graphic to show in this article}. Looks like this Summer is going to have some scorcher temps. Leaving a container of fresh, cool water out for thirsty birds, and animals is helpful. If you do ,make sure the water container has a means to allow a bird escaping should it fall in, a simple stick/stone in the water is good.

FRIENDS OF ONKAPARINGA PARK INC. COMMITTEE 2026

	POSITION	
1	President	Graham Thomas
2	Vice-President	Michael Whitaker
3	Secretary	Jo Scheiffers
4	Treasurer & Public Officer*	Andy McKinnon
	Committee	
5		John Bekkers
6		Colin Pitman
7	Safety Officer	Ian Carr
8		Richard Spark
9		VACANT
10		VACANT



*Public Officer & Safety Officer appointed by the elected committee.



Clean up Australia day Sunday 1st March 2026 9:00 am onward

- Meet as usual at Perrys Bend car park, Noarlunga Downs to help clean up our river and recreation park of rubbish.
- Wear stout shoes, hat and gloves.
- Sausage sizzle provided at 12:00 pm approx



See you there .

Andy McKinnon 0427826721
Lesley McKinnon 0437219966



MICHAEL'S CROSSWORD NUMBER 49

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
	■		■		■		■		■		■	
8												
	■		■		■		■		■		■	
9					10	■	11					
	■		■	12					■		■	
13	14					■	15				16	
17			■	18					■	19		
20						■	21					
	■		■		■	22	■		■		■	
23												
	■		■		■		■		■		■	
24												

ACROSS

- 11. A way of showing you do not believe [13]
- 8. Blue-green algae [13]
- 9. A whale or a type of caviar [6]
- 11. To change the hardness using heat [6]
- 12. An alternative name [5]
- 13. Mediaeval verb meaning "oppose" [6]
- 15. A lazy way to say where I am [4,1,1]
- 17. Global Underwater Explorers [1,1,1]
- 18. I look when supposed to be blindfolded [1,4]
- 19. A non-visual way to measure distance [3]
- 20. Red salad vegetable [6]
- 21. Dept. of Environment, Water, Solar and Nuclear Energy [1,1,1,1,1,1]
- 23. A line on a ship to show correct loading [9,4]
- 24. Sailboat control [13]

DOWN

- 1. A story of the life of a swimming bird [4,9]
- 2. A 50c piece is an example of this shape [9,4]
- 3. The act of sorting a group of items [10,3]
- 4. Mr Laurel or a TV broadcast channel [4]
- 5. Someone who is 'full-on' [7,6]
- 6. A way cultivators walk around their plot [9,4]
- 7. Annual end to school session [6,7]
- 10. First letter of the Jewish alphabet [5]
- 11. Verb that expressed admiration [5]
- 14. Pandemic Unemployed Assistance [1,1,1]
- 16. First name of James Bond author [3]
- 22. An edible fruit [4]



Colin Cock Photo

Safety Report

Happy New Year to you all and welcome to a New Year of volunteering.

Remember we are all responsible for our safety and that of others, so work safely and be aware of your surroundings.

Earlier in January there was one report of a fall when a volunteer stepped on some large gumnuts and slid on to his side. Fortunately, no injuries were sustained.

Be reminded again of all these types of hazards and look where you are stepping.

I thought I would give you all a refresher and provide reminder of an action plan if anyone should be unfortunate enough to be bitten by a snake and I took the following advice from a respected organisation.

If you are bitten by a snake, you should treat it as a medical emergency and seek immediate medical attention:

- **Move away:** Move away from the snake and try to remember its colour and shape.
- **Immobilize:** Immobilize the bitten limb or area with a splint if possible.
- **Bandage:** Apply a broad, compressive bandage to the bite site and extend it to cover the entire limb. Wrap it firmly but not so tightly that it stops blood circulation.
- **Keep calm:** Reassure the person and advise them to remain calm and still. Movement can increase the circulation of venom.
- **Call for help:** Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance, even if you are out of phone reception. If you cannot call, go to the nearest emergency department.

Monitor: Monitor the person's breathing and heart rate. If they collapse or stop breathing, give cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Here are some things you should avoid:

- Applying a tourniquet
- Trying to suck the venom out
- Applying ice
- Cutting the wound
- Washing or cleaning the wound
- Giving alcohol, food, or stimulants
- Taking pain-relieving medicine, such as aspirin, ibuprofen, or naproxen sodium
- Approaching and/or confronting the snake

Ian Carr - Safety Officer

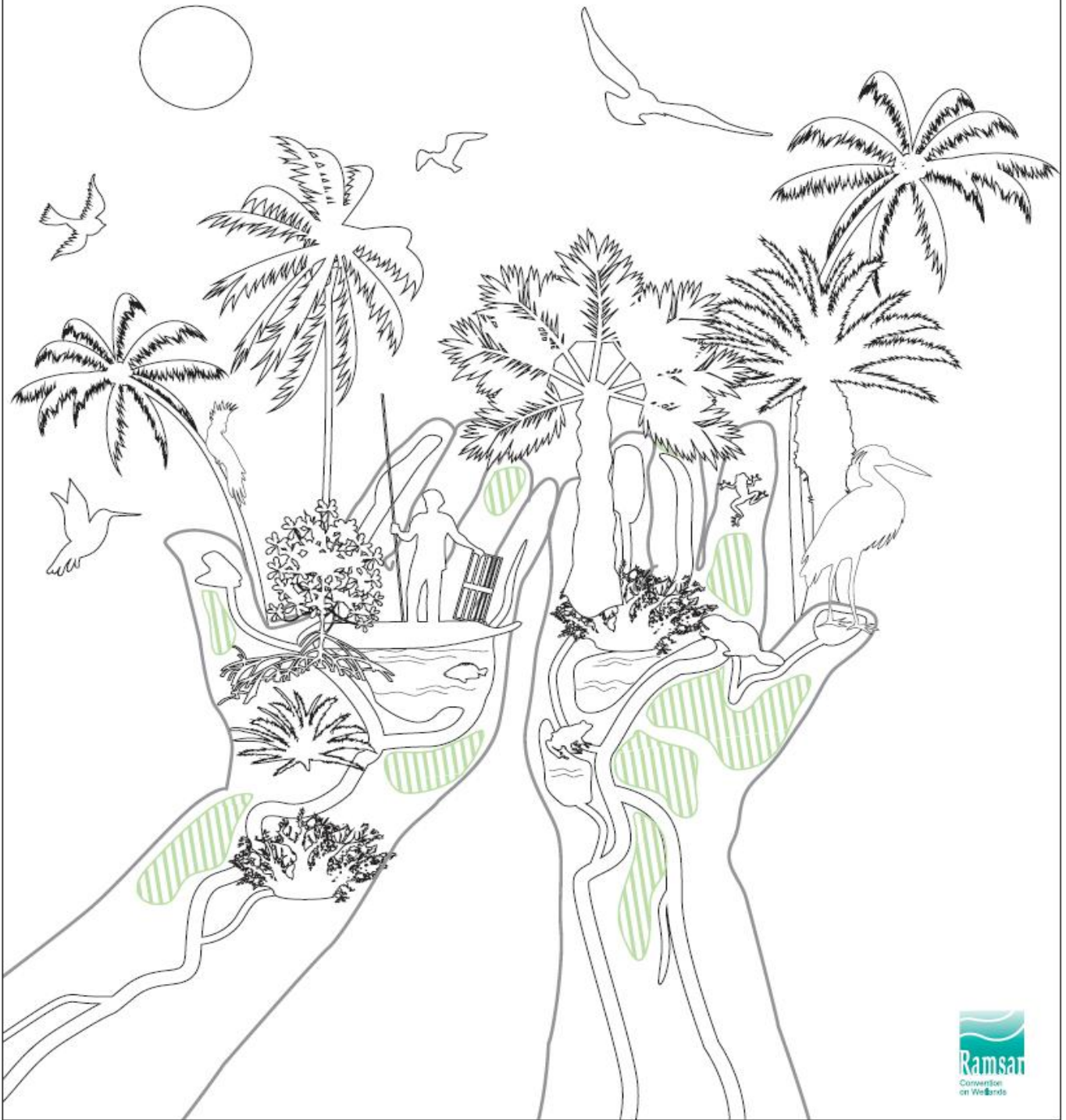


MICHAEL'S SOLUTION CROSSWORD 48

W	E	D	N	E	S	D	A	Y	M	I	D	D	A	Y
R	E	I	B	R	O	X	I	R						
N	O	N	C	O	N	T	R	I	B	U	T	O	R	Y
A	D	H	U	E	O	P	S	I	A	I				
P	Y	L	O	N	S	A	B	E	N	I	G	N		
N	O	I	A	M	P	G	E	E						
C	A	T	C	H	U	S	I	N	G	B	A	R	B	S
O	M	M	E	S	T	G	T	F	A	H				
T	I	G	E	R	S	E	R	U	E	L	L	E		
C	E	T	E	R	A	S	E	A	E	L				
C	A	T	H	E	T	E	R	I	S	A	T	I	O	N
L	O	T	E	U	U	O								
S	L	E	D	G	E	H	A	M	M	E	R	I	N	G
Y	S	E	I	S	E	V	E	S						

Test your colouring in skills with this poster for World Wetlands Day on 2nd February 2026. There will be prizes for the best and most colourful entries. Forward entries to Andy McKinnon.

WETLANDS



**WETLANDS: SACRED. LIFE-SUSTAINING.
A TIMELESS LEGACY. OURS TO PROTECT.**

ONE WITH WETLANDS.

**World
Wetlands Day**
2 February 2026



**Wetlands and traditional knowledge:
Celebrating cultural heritage**

FOOP Subscriptions Form



Subscriptions are due on the 1st November of each year.

(Financial year 1st November to 31st October)

New members who join after 1st September are covered for the year following.

Please accept my/our new/renewal subscription.

Name(s):.....

Address:.....

Telephone No.....Mob No.....

Email address.....

Please indicate if you would like to receive notices by email Yes No

Please indicate if you would like to receive newsletter by email Yes No

Please indicate if you would still like to receive newsletter by post Yes No

I am paying (please indicate the one you are paying)

Family Membership \$15.00

Single Membership \$10.00

Donation \$..... (NB., Not tax deductible)

Then detach this form and forward with payment to:

The Treasurer, Mr A McKinnon, 27 Kym Street, Port Noarlunga South 5167

Payment can also be made to the Treasurer at general meetings held the first Tuesday of the month.
(except January) Payment also by **electronic transfer**, details below.

EFT Details:

Account Title: Friends of Onkaparinga Park Inc.

BSB Number: 805-007A/C Number: 00707387 (Credit Union SA)

Reference: Last name, first name, "subs".

Send email to mackins63@gmail.com to confirm payment.

If you are a **new member** please forward contact details as above.

Andy McKinnon
Treasurer
Friends of Onkaparinga Park Inc.

If you are already a member and have a friend who may be interested you could pass this on.

Subs for the new financial year 2025/26 are now due. Payment methods above.



FEBRUARY 2026 FOOP WORKING B PROGRAM.

Note Working B's in the park will be cancelled when there is a Total Fire ban in the MT Lofty Region
All Working B's start at 9:00 am & finish at 11.30am unless otherwise stated.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 World Wetlands Day	3 Gate 12 Perry's Bend River Road Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au <u>General Meeting 7.30pm</u> <u>Old Noarlunga Hall</u>	4	5 WB Location Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au Evening Walk 5pm Willunga Rose Garden Aldinga Road, Willunga Tony 0405243101	6	7 Gate 16 Hardy's Scrub Chapel Hill Road Jo 0429676433
8	9	10 Gate 9 Piggott Range Road <i>Watering Can Please</i> Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au	11	12 WB Location Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au Evening Walk 5pm Seaford Meadows Scout Hall, Railway Road. Andy 0427826721	13	14 Gate 16A Hardy's Scrub Cnr Blewitt Springs & Franceschinis Roads Jo 0429676433
15	16	17 Gate 12 Beehives Piggott Range Road Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au	18	19 WB Location Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au Evening Walk 5pm Tennis Court Park Spriggs Road Onkaparinga Hills Edith 8382 1120	20	21 Gate 17 Hardy's Scrub Whitings Road Jo 0429676433
22	23	24 Gate 12 Beehives Piggott Range Road Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au	25	26 WB Location Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au Evening Walk 5pm Kyeema CP Woodgate Hill Road Kuitpo Tony 0405243101	27	28 Gate 17 Hardy's Scrub Whitings Road Jo 0429676433
1 Clean Up Day Perry's Bend 9am Andy 0427826721	2	3 Gate 10 Punchbowl Piggott Range Road <i>Watering Can Please</i> Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au <u>No General Meeting</u>	4	5 WB Location Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au Evening Walk 5pm Ironbarks Picnic Area Stagecoach Lane, Access from Wicks Road Andy 0427826721	6	7 No working bee
8	9 Public Holiday	10 Gate 7A The Knoll Piggott Range Road Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au	11	12 WB Location Graham 0417802112 vk5gct@adam.com.au Evening Walk 5pm Rotary Park Beach Road Witton Bluff Trail Tony 0405243101	13	14 Gate 17 Hardy's Scrub Whitings Road Jo 0429676433