

Highbury Aqueduct Reserve

WHATS HAPPENED THIS YEAR

2018/19 has been a big year for the project with works currently being undertaken to open up 100% of the reserve for public use. Some of the works include trail building, installation of signs and seats, large scale weed eradication and tree risk works. Behind the scenes a new works agreement has been put forward to the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) to continue the current agreement for Department for Environment and Water (DEW) to manage the reserve on their behalf over the next 3 years.

An open day will be organised in the near future once all the reserve is open for public access so keep an eye on the website for further details. <https://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/land/restoring-public-land/highbury-aqueduct-reserve>

TRAILS

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) have been fundamental in both securing funding and implementing trail works within the reserve. CVA were successful in being awarded a Community Recreation and Sport Facility Grant which has enabled the final section of shared use trail to be constructed in block 1 (between Boundy Rd and Gallery Rd). Trail construction and all associated works are expected to be completed by September and when completed 100% of the reserve will be opened for public use. Several new sections of linkage trail funded through the Fund my Neighbourhood Grant have been constructed to link in with Linear Park however works still need to be completed on these over the next few months to ensure public safety, so please refrain from using these until works is complete.

Trail markers have now been installed at key intersections along the trail which highlight the main Aqueduct trail and linkages throughout the reserve. Trailhead signs that contain a brief summary of the history and wildlife including a map of the reserve and trails are currently being manufactured and are expected to be installed in July.

FIRE MITIGATION

Fire mitigation is undertaken throughout the reserve on a yearly basis with works starting towards the end of spring. This year crews started Brush cutting the A Zones (reserve boundary) in October with a follow up cut occurring in December. You may have noticed that over the last couple of years we have left cutting several patches of native grasses until December, this is to allow the seed to mature and drop off naturally and also enables the ability to collect the seed to plant in other section of the reserve.

PEST PLANT MANAGEMENT

Several large scale projects have occurred both in and around the reserve this year with a focus on waterways. If you have walked along the trail in block 4 (Mulberry Drive to Linear Park) or you live on Aqueduct Way you will notice that a significant amount of work has occurred in this gully. The works include the removal of both blackberry and erundo from the creek line and the removal of the many weedy tree species including ash, olive and some pine trees. This will be followed up with targeted spraying over the next 12 months to allow revegetation works to occur in July 2020. Further weed control has been undertaken along the River Torrens towards the Torrens River Weir. These projects form part of the River Torrens Recovery Project which has been delivering works to improve water quality, biodiversity and ecosystem health along the urban sections of the River Torrens and are a collaboration with Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges, SA Water, DPTI and 8 Councils including Tea Tree Gully and Campbelltown.

Weed control has also occurred along several other waterways running through the reserve and throughout the large native grass area in block 2 (between Historic Drive and Boundy Rd) which was planted with Wallaby grass in 2013. This patch of Wallaby grass will be harvested in the future to help rehabilitate other areas within the reserve.

GET INVOLVED

BUSH FOR LIFE SITE

Located off Valley View Drive, Bush for Life (BFL) site at the Highbury Aqueduct was formed in 2013. It currently has 4 active Adopt-a-Site volunteer bush carers who give their own time to look after the 2 hectare site. 73 indigenous plant species are found on site and the site carers, supported by a host of many other volunteers that attend working bees, work hard at removing various invasive weeds from the high-quality remnant bush. Bush for Life always aims to accommodate new volunteers who are keen to help protect the wonderful remnant bushland, and will be holding a **'Come-and-Try' Bushcare** activity at Highbury Aqueduct on **Thursday 11th July, 2019**. If you think this is something you would be interested in, please contact the BFL Volunteer Coordinator on bfl@treesforlife.org.au or 08 8406 0500. More general information about the Bush for Life program can be found on the Trees for Life website <https://treesforlife.org.au/bush-for-life>

PIONEER COURT COMMUNITY GARDEN

The community garden includes more than 300 fruit trees, truffle plantation, pumpkin patch, and sensory garden, and is a wonderful place to meet likeminded gardeners. The committee organize fund raising events that include, soup days, pizza making and cooking days, barbecues and a family Christmas event. Some of the food sourced from the garden goes towards helping organisations such as woman's shelters and local community. The garden welcomes community groups and visitors to come and see what's happening and to be part of this successful garden. Facilities within the garden include a garden shed, portable toilets including a portable disabled toilet, marquee and of course happy likeminded gardeners. Get involved and if you would like to learn more about the site feel free to come down on a Friday morning and catch up with the members, or speak with Mario Minuzzo, President Pioneer Court Community Garden Inc. on 0411 604 326.

FRIENDS OF HIGHBURY AQUEDUCT RESERVE

If you are interested in helping out as a volunteer, starting an active friends group for the reserve or have any queries, comments or concerns about the reserve please contact Gawler Natural Resource office on 8115 4600 and ask to speak to either Tom Lord, Field Officer or Dave Fraser Project Manager.