



## Friends of Wireless Hill Newsletter Spring 2015

The Friends meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at the Capital Radio Room, Wireless Hill Park at 7.00pm.

Weeding/planting activities are at 8.30am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday.

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

We had a successful Planting Day on 17 May when over 250 native seedlings were put into 5 sites. The weather was mostly kind to us. This has been followed up by several heavy rainstorms so the plants appear to be healthy despite low average rain in July and August. In addition, science students from Applecross Senior High School have planted many seedlings, including trees.

### FUTURE EVENTS

During the spring, the plants are beginning to flower throughout the bushland. There promises to be an impressive display by 13 September, when we will have our annual Wild Flower Walk. Already there are many visitors in the Park and several private tours are being arranged. Many cameras are in evidence.



Donkey orchids at Wireless Hill (Photo by Margaret Matthews)

### SIGNAGE

Several signs have been put up in the park to help visitors. The 60 wild flower photos on the walk have been up for a couple of years and their magnificent quality is a fantastic guide to identifications. Recently, signs on the Aboriginal Heritage Trail and at the beginning of the wild flower walk give information on wider aspects of the reserve.



Catspaws in bloom



A clump of spider orchids (Photos by Margaret Matthews)

**We look forward to seeing you on Sunday 13 September for the Annual Wild Flower Walk**

## PLANTING BY LOCAL SCHOOLS

Between 2 and 8 June 2015 all eight Year 9 Science classes from Applecross Senior High School (30 active 14 year olds) visited Wireless Hill Park and planted 1,065 seedlings grown by the students in the school nursery. Species planted included Dieback Resistant Jarrah from seed provided by Alcoa's Marrinup Nursery; also Kangaroo Paws, Grass Trees, Prickly Moses, Dwarf Sheoak, Slender Banksia, Marri and Hairy Yellow Pea from seed provided by the City of Melville in line with their policy to grow seedlings from local provenance seed. This helps to maintain the unique features of plant species indigenous to the area.

This is the first time we have grown Grass Trees from seed and we are very pleased with the results. Adding Grass Trees and Hairy Yellow Pea to the species mix this year helps increase the biodiversity of our revegetation program at Wireless Hill. A highly diverse ecosystem can more easily cope with effects of climate change. We want the students to experience doing something positive for their community, which will make a difference to their quality of life in the future. Wireless Hill Park is a wonderful piece of bush land in the middle of our increasingly built up environment. We hope that by working to improve the park, students will come to understand the value of having it in our midst.

I dug holes for the seedlings with a petrol-driven posthole digger generously sponsored by Kennards Hire in Myaree. This makes it easy for the students to plant seedlings and enable many more seedlings to be planted in the time available. The looser soil provides easier access for rain and allows the roots to grow quickly into the cooler, damp subsoil. This technique should give higher survival rates through the critical first summer when the only water is from summer thunder storms.

Mr Paul Leech, Principal of Applecross SHS, said "By planting seedlings in our local area the students gain practical knowledge and skills about conservation, and also a greater understanding and appreciation of the environment. This activity enables the students to engage with nature, get their hands dirty and reflect on caring for Wireless Hill and the environment in general".

We hope that introducing students to the bush will kindle an interest in returning there in a quiet moment, perhaps to look for a seedling they planted.

**Bruce Ivers, School Sustainability Consultant**



Bruce Ivers using the post hole digger



Six seedlings each and ready to go

**Volunteers are always welcome at our meetings and work days**

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