

Scouts and Friends Join Forces for the Kangaroo Valley Rock-wallabies

The rugged cliff lines of the Kangaroo Valley River provide a stunning representation of Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby habitat complete with nibbled rock orchids, shady figs and blossoming blueberry ash.

With only three surviving 'colonies' of endangered Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies remaining in the Kangaroo Valley area it is crucial to protect their homes from invasion by introduced species.

While foxes and feral cats pose the greatest threat by hunting the vulnerable joeys of our acrobatic little icons, weeds can fragment and degrade their rocky habitat.

On the morning of 4th November a dozen dedicated members of the Friends of the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby teamed up with the ever-enthusiastic Kangaroo Valley Scouts to hunt for weeds between the Kangaroo River and the escarpment.

The day provided an excellent opportunity for the Friends to strengthened connections with the new generation of environmental defenders as well as conservation-conscious local landholders.

Everyone learnt something about weeds, weeding techniques and Rock-wallabies. Everyone had fun! The skilled Scouts spoiled the Friends with a delicious picnic and entertaining comedy skits.

After lunch we toured the glorious Rock-wallaby world along the top of the escarpment where the Scouts learned how to check the National Parks and Wildlife Service Rock-wallaby and Predator spy cameras.

Anyone can join the Friends and get involved in saving the Kangaroo Valley Rock-wallabies, the southern-most survivors in NSW.

(Photos by M Norton)

Please provide an EMAIL address so the Friends can continue sending you the quarterly newsletter and occasional important notifications. Thank you!



AGM Update

Thank you to all those who attended our 22nd Annual General Meeting on November 24. It was productive, collaborative, interesting ... and even a good laugh.

Many thanks to our guest speaker Bob Brewster from Rewilding Australia for running us through the Eastern Quoll reintroduction and associated fox control project at Boodoree. We shall watch with great interest as release activity kicks off in March 2018.

Huge thanks to the two committee members who've now stepped down: John Rowntree who has done such stalwart work over two decades, mostly as vice president and committee member; and to Rosemary Johnson who has been such a key player in the last 4 years in developing briefs, processes, and critical documents and resources such as the new website - a great legacy. We wish John some extra spare time in life for family matters, and that Rosie's business continues to blossom.

Congratulations and welcome to the new committee: Chris Pryor (president) Melinda (secretary), Jann (V-P), Michael (treasurer), Juliet, Lisa, Di, Belinda and Bob.



National Parks and Wildlife Service 50th Birthday Celebrations

Emma and Terry are pictured here at the Friends stall at Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre. Chris, Jann, Christy and Juliet also helped out, spreading the word about the plight of the Rock-wallabies and raising funds.



Wollongong Makers Market at the Innovation Campus was a prosperous event for the Friends on December 2. Juliet, Jann and Alison were busy selling T-shirts and Adoptions in the morning while Belinda and Chris covered the stormy pack-up.



Educating the Kids

The Friends new simulation game has been a huge hit at the Wingecarribee Schools Environment Day (150 students), the Small Schools Cultural Day (200 students), National Parks and Wildlife Service 50th Birthday Celebrations at Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre (30 kids) and the Wollongong Makers Market at the Innovation Centre. The 30-40 minute activity begins with a photo-card led story of the Rock-wallabies and their threats. This info is followed by a fun and active predator-prey tag game *dressed up* with reversible Rock-wallaby-Predator masks, habitat and even Friends and NPWS rangers to save our species.

KANGAROO VALLEY ROCK-WALLABY COLONY UPDATE

Well finally something to celebrate at the Creek colony: Nibbler is carrying Dumbledore's offspring. These two were spending a bit of time together before Dumbledore's passed away. We suspect he wore himself out servicing the females before he had settled in sufficiently. He had lost weight when his unpredated body was discovered during routine radio tracking in September. We also lost Franky that month who was carrying his offspring. She disappeared without a trace. After a two years hiatus in joey production at the Creek colony it is tempting to lock Nibbler up in the onsite enclosure until the joey reaches maturity. Dear old Nibs has not managed to rear one of her several joeys past 9 months and this sole-surviving colony original is running out of years. Let's hope Nibs has finally got the hang of mothering or this joey is smarter than its siblings and stays well hidden while Nibs is out foraging.

Jenolan Tyson's fertility remains in doubt with none of the other Creek females yet 'showing' ... although Rosie, Fiona and Pinot have been frequently crossing paths with Tyson. If you would like to throw your support behind this struggling colony Jewel has just been put up for *Adoption* on the [Friends website](#). Fortunately another male is on the horizon with a retired breeding male from Waterfall Springs due for release later this month. 'Warrigal' may be old, however he is a proven breeder and formally of the Kangaroo River colony. Hopefully he can adjust to his wild roots.

An imbalance in sex-ratios remains a problem at the Mountain colony. Irene (also newly available for adoption) has significant pressure on her as the only female in this male dominated colony. Her joey is permanently out of the pouch now at 9 month of age. Unfortunately, the translocation of females into this site still doesn't appear to be on the NSW Governments SoS Recovery team's agenda.

There are joeys galore at the River colony, with at least 7 pouch young emerging. Four of our best mums are available for symbolic adoption to help their joeys survive predation - Flower, Wirra, Princess Pia and Bangarra. Seeing Brigalow has retired as alpha male galant Gingernut has made himself available for adoption. Up the east end of the colony Barellan appears to have taken the reigns with his two younger brothers vyng for second place. Hopefully these mature boys wont disappear from our radar chasing the non-existent neighbouring colony females of their dreams.