



Friends of Wangkuntilla-Aldinga Conservation Park

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NEWSLETTER

August 2026

Coming meetings

Thursday 13 August

"Eyre Bird Observatory - Part 2"

Beátree Hawk

Life at Eyre Bird Observatory included weekly shore bird counts on Kanidal Beach, Beátree will show us photos of not only shore birds but many other interesting creatures, and how the beach changes through the seasons.

Working at EBO and the many jobs. The fishermen, interesting guests including groups, the many picnics, the delight of the children visiting, weather observatory for BOM, the spectacular weather we witnessed. Many reptiles, plants and the ever changing dunes. RFDS visits. A visit to Cocklebidy cave and the speleologists.

Thursday 10 September

"The Washpool Catchment: past, present and future"

Chas Martin

The Washpool was incorporated into the Aldinga Conservation Park last year, more than 50 years after the proposal to preserve the unique wetland was first put forward. Chas believes that the survival of the wetland itself is due to the fact that the Washpool's catchment, though modified, is still relatively intact, and that protecting the catchment should be a priority for the future. Chas is a local resident who has been active in efforts to preserve the wetlands since the mid 1980s.

Our meetings are held in the St Ann's Church Hall, Aldinga at 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month (February to November).

All welcome!

First working bee held at the Washpool

The morning of Sunday 19 July was cool but sunny, perfect conditions for our first working bee!



Thanks to thia and John who had placed flyers in letterboxes around the Silver Sands neighbourhood, an enthusiastic group of local people came out to help clear weeds from around some of the plantings from previous years.

All agreed it had been a rewarding experience and are looking forward to the next working bee to be held on Sunday 16 August. Please contact Tom on 0420 533 440 if you are interested in attending.

Dates for your diary

Sunday 4 October

from 10:30 am to 12:00 noon

Nature Festival walk in Wangkuntilla-Aldinga CP



Thursday 22 October

FoWACP visit to Scott Creek Conservation Park

Please note these dates now, full details will be provided in the October newsletter.

Col. Light's 1836 map showing 'Deception Bay' and the Washpool

In September 1836 Colonel Light was sailing in the *Rapid* northwards from Cape Jervis along the eastern shore of Gulf St Vincent, searching for a site for the capital city of the new colony of South Australia. On the 23rd he reached what is now Aldinga Bay. In his diary, Light wrote:

the whole country, as we tacked along, presenting a most beautiful appearance ... we came to an anchor and went on shore. Felt some disappointment at the appearance of the land, as it looked so luxuriant from the ship; we could find no fresh water, a lake of some extent on the high ground above the beach proved, on reaching it, to be salt ...

The lake he is referring to is the Washpool. It is shown on his map of the coast, and an annotation by Light reads:

Salt Lake. A beautiful looking country from the ship but on landing we found the soil very inferior to the rest but I am told about 3 miles from the shore the soil is excellent.

The valley shown on Light's map south of the salt lake is Cactus Canyon. The Myponga River is shown further to the south, and the watercourse north of the Washpool is probably Willunga Creek.

Disappointed to find the lake was salt, Light named the spot Deception Bay but it was hardly ever known by that name. Teichelmann and Schurmann, the two Lutheran missionaries who studied the language of the 'Adelaide tribe' in the late 1830s, recorded the name as Ngalingga, but most Europeans were tone-deaf to the initial *ng* sound at the beginning of Aboriginal words, and the place became known to early settlers as Auldingga, Aldinghi, Aldingi or Aldingha. A number of meanings have been assigned to that name over the years, including 'plenty of trees and water', 'hunting place', 'good place for meat' and 'battle or burial ground'. The Kurna locative suffix *-ngga* denotes 'in, on or at the place of', but the meaning of the Kurna term *ngalti* is unknown.



Thanks to Tom Gara for this article.

News from the Park

- Our contractors have finished their work on treating bridal creeper and woody weeds in the park for this year, extending their coverage in a northerly direction from Boomerang Track. They have also treated freesias around the Dover Street entrance.
- Working bee crews have been carrying out maintenance in the 3 bee enclosures. Work has included weeding and infill planting of small flowering species.

Committee news

- John recently represented FoWACP at a meeting with Mayor Moira Were to review the algal bloom issues.
- In July we hosted 50 students from Urrbrae Agricultural High School. Thanks to Neville, John, Aidan, Julie and Tom for providing a valuable experience for these young people.
- We have applied for \$20,000 through a Green Adelaide Grassroots Grant to treat bridal creeper and woody weeds in 2027.



Working Bees Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am

Working bees will continue on Tuesday mornings throughout the coming months, weather permitting.

If you are available to help, please contact John on 0488 552 797 to find where the group will be working, or ask to be included in our weekly SMS notification list.

Visit our website at www.fowacp.org.au

