

Upper River Torrens Landcare Group Inc. NEWS



UPPER RIVER TORRENS
LANDCARE GROUP

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Aboriginal Elder Guest Speaker at AGM

The Upper River Torrens Landcare Group AGM was held on Sunday 18th November at Gumeracha. Aboriginal Elder Ivan-Tiwu Copley conducted a welcome to country ceremony, and spoke of the significance of landcare to the aboriginal peoples of our country. The formalities of the AGM were followed by delicious BBQ and friendly conversation.

President Robin Harding and incoming Secretary Kim Thompson will be ably supported by incoming Treasurer Matt Sharp and the committee of Stephen Anderson, Carol Lewis and rejoining committee member Julieanne Troup, and welcome to new member Ellen Krahnert. Our thanks go to retiring committee members Graeme Donaldson, David Troup and Tiffany Harding for their service to the group.

President's Report at AGM

For those who were unable to attend the AGM, the following is the President's Report as presented at the AGM:

It is with pleasure that I present the 2017 -18 Annual Report for the URTLG. It is now just over one year since the dissolution of the "Upper Torrens Land Management Project" and the reinvigorated "Upper River Torrens Landcare Group" recommenced. Our purpose is a similar theme, promoting and encouraging community Landcare through information sharing, practical demonstrations and implementation of on ground works. This year I believe our members and volunteers have achieved this goal.

Some examples of our achievements are:

- The URTLG Committee deciding to allocate \$10,000 towards on ground works assistance for the financial year 2017/18. This was via a competitive application process where members were asked to submit an "Expression of Interest" As a result the committee has recently approved in principle two on ground projects.
- Two property working bees in Mount Torrens and Gumeracha respectively and several working bees at Cromer and Porters Scrub Conservation Parks.

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President's Report (cont.)

- Development and implementation of a new logo, member gate signs and bumper stickers.
- Development of a newsletter, further reconstruction of URTLGL website and reprint of 5000 spiny rush data sheets.
- Continuation of the bat project that aims to increase awareness in local schools of conservation and biodiversity issues concerning native microbats. Bat expert Chris Grant presented an education session to the students at the *Domino Servite College* at Mt Torrens. Six bat boxes were constructed and placed around the school by URTLGL volunteers. In addition several motion cameras have been purchased by the group to monitor bat movements within set locations including the Mt Pleasant Primary School.
- Raising awareness of the group by preparing display material at the Mt Pleasant Show.
- Educational bus tour /field day for Adelaide University Earth Sciences students to the Upper Torrens Catchment area.
- Considerable time dedicated to refining our documentation process, policy development of meeting procedures and role descriptions of committee members
- Significantly increasing our membership number by running a membership recruitment program
- Establishment of a nominal membership fee structure for families, singles and youth. With membership to fall due 30 June each year.

I wish to thank our committee members who met on five occasions throughout the year to achieve these goals. It has been great working alongside a wide range of committed members over the last year. Graham Donaldson, our outgoing Secretary for all the preparatory work for our meetings. Special thanks to David Troup our Treasurer for coordinating the financial side of our group over the last year and also developing the URTLGL website. Carolyn Lewis for taking the initiative and managing the bat project. Matt Sharp for his input on a huge range of issues. Tiffany Harding for the excellent role she played as communication officer developing a new logo and formatting an interesting and informative newsletter. Kim Thompson for managing our Facebook account and whose tireless enthusiasm helped spread the Landcare ethic throughout the community and often helped me "kick things up a notch"! A special vote of thanks goes to Stephen Anderson for his maintaining the Landcare program over the past decade and enabling my transition to the role of presidency to go smoothly. Thanks also go to Julianne Troup who worked alongside Stephen on a subcommittee reviewing our Landcare project

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STOP PRESS

The URTLG are thrilled to announce that past President and life member Bob Myers has been awarded an Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division at the recent Australia Day awards for his 'service to conservation and the environment'. Bob is an expert in native grasses, and combines technical knowledge with practical application, and is both passionate and dedicated to the conservation of native grasses. Bob is always very helpful if you have grass questions, so make sure to grab him for a chat.

President's Report (cont.)

Proposal guidelines and criteria. Between the two of them they developed a number of documents that the URTLG Committee can now use to determine which future "On Ground Work" projects will be supported and/or funded.

Well as you are all well aware the political landscape in Australian can change rapidly and we continually need to adapt our thinking. One of the recent changes is the repeal of the Natural Resource Management Act and its replacement with the Landscape SA Act. One of the positives of this change is the proposed establishment of a Grassroots Grants program, a \$2 million statewide annual fund for volunteer, community and not-for-profit groups to access such as Landcare (us). I feel that if we are to be successful in this grant process, we will no doubt be focusing our attention on several of their top priorities such as water management, soil quality, pest plant and animal compliance and protection of the natural resource management system.

So once again, sincere thanks to all the volunteers for your Landcare support and look forward to achieving some more positive outcomes for the sustainability of our environment here in the Upper Torrens Catchment.

Robin Harding
URLTG President

Governance Training Completed

President Robin Harding and Treasurer Matt Sharp recently attended Governance and Effectiveness Training for Landcare Groups, Committees and Boards. The course aimed to assist participants to better understand roles, responsibilities and requirements, and also to improve strategic thinking, organisational leadership and working relationships. The URTLG is an incorporated body and must meet the legal requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (19..) SA, commonly referred to as 'the Act'. Although the club has its own constitution, when in doubt, the requirements of 'the Act' override the club constitution. The URTLG committee strive to conduct the club in a professional and correct manner and meet all their legal requirements, including the formalities of meetings, documentation, etc.

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Upcoming Events

- **March 16th 2019, Mt Pleasant Show**
- come and see us at the Natural Resources Hub marquee for all the latest news and projects. If you would like to help on the stand, please contact Robin on urtlg.president@iinet.net.au
And see www.landcaresa.asn.au for further information on the following events:
- **February 5th 2019, 'Microbats, Vineyards and Wine', McLaren Vale**
- Join well-renowned "Bat Man" Terry Reardon for a walk and talk on microbats, find out what species are around the McLaren Vale area, and what we are doing to learn more about them and their role in grape production.
- **February 7th 2019 'Feed Budgeting Afternoon', Hindmarsh Valley Hall.**
- Feed budgeting in the feed gap period is always tricky - there are so many variables. To provide some tips on how to make the task easier.
- **February 19th to April 2 'Bush Regeneration Workshops', Aldgate/Mt Barker** - Conducted by Trees for Life.
- **February 5th to 19th 'Minimising Pest Impact' Workshop**
- Join Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin for a free breakfast and a workshop to find out about best practice pest management techniques and fox bait distribution days. The workshops, which commence at 7.00 am and finish at 11.00am will discuss pest and predator management techniques, bait types available and equipment for hire with plenty of time for questions.

Horses and Native Grass Field Tour

An eager busload of landcarers and horse owners joined NRM District Officer Kim Thompson on December's Horses and Native Grass Field Tour in December 2018. Native grass experts Bob Myers and Andrew Fairney from Seeding Natives, and land management advisor Andy Cole completed the technical support team. First stop was April's property at One Tree Hill. The former olive grove had seen extensive preparation work before sowing with 'Gallop' horse mix (www.nativeseeds.com.au), with hours of dedicated work by April apparent. Most successful had been the wallaby grass (*Rytidosperma* spp.) which had gained a foothold.

Next stop was Janine's property at Kersbrook. After the devastation of the Sampson Flat fires, the silver lining turned out to be the superb pre-sowing weed removal the fire had provided. Janine's paddock of natives grass was well over knee high, with an excellent stand showing good establishment of wheat grass (*Elymus scaber*) and weeping grass (*Microlaena stipoides*) in addition to wallaby and windmill grass (*Chloris truncate*). Exotic wild oats was limited to small sections.

Final stop was Tina and Phil's property at Birdwood. Sown as a single species kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*) ultimately for hay production, the establishment had been patchy with competition from exotic rye grass. The trip was educational and enjoyed by all, and thanks go to those landholders who welcomed participants to their properties.

See all the horse data
and case studies at:
www.torrenslandcare.org

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