



HAMILTON FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

PO Box 591
Hamilton, Victoria 3300

Report on Weed Control Work at the Fulham Streamside Reserve in Sept.-Oct. 2017

We again concentrated on the area west of the entry track on the western quarter of Fulham SR (see map). This restriction has been needed because of a lack of volunteers to manage a larger area. In 2016 the wet winter and spring produced a massive germination of Cape Tulip and Sparaxis, the latter in places thought to have been cleared, and we had not been able to cover the area 300 m south of the Old Bridge Track and north to the Point, so we expected to find many weeds to deal with in 2017.

We visited the reserve on 7 occasions (10 Sept. to 17 Oct) and covered almost all of the area west from the entry track up to the river and down the creek that extends to the Old Bridge. It also included The Point and the area approaching the seasonal closure sign on the River Track (Area 7). We also covered a 20 m strip along most of the east side of the entry track (Area 9). Small areas that were not well covered were the southern SW tip of Area 10, most of the channel (Area 5), a small part in the northern centre of Area 1 and some of the southern part of the western fence (Area 4).

We treated *Moraea flaccida* Cape Tulip (CT), *Sparaxis bulbifera* Harlequin Flower (SB), *Asparagus asparagoides* Bridal Creeper (BC), *Gladiolus undulatum* Wild Gladiolus (WG) and small lots of *Disa bracteata* African Weed Orchid (AWO), *Oxalis purpurea* (OP) & *Rosa rubiginosa* Briar Rose (BR).

We employed three strategies:

1. Weed-wiping with a glyphosate-metsulfuron methyl solution (30 mL/L and 1 g/L) that included a wetter (Pulse, 5 mL/L) and vegetable dye (5 mL/L). This approach was used for all scattered plants of CT, SB, WG, AWO, BR & BC.
2. Spraying with metsulfuron methyl (1-2 g/10 L) solution with wetter (Pulse, 50 mL/10 L) and dye (50 mL/10 L). This approach was used for dense infestations of CT along the western fence and on the creek from Edgewood Rd to the old Little Bridge site, for dense infestations of SB on either side of Old Bridge Track and for remnants of OP in a patch that remained after treatment in 2016.
3. Spot-spraying with metsulfuron methyl (2 g/10 L) and glyphosate (200 mL/10 L) solution that included wetter (Pulse, 50 mL/10 L) and dye (50 mL/10 L). This was used for dense infestations of SB, WG & BC in Area 7 and for CT & SB on part of west fence (Area 4).

We spent 122 person-hours and applied 130 L of spray herbicide and 67.5 L of wipe-herbicide. On the basis of a count of plants wiped per L of herbicide used (average of 0.8 mL/plant) we estimate that we wiped around 84,000 CT and other weeds. The number sprayed probably exceeded that.

In summary, the problem with Cape Tulip and Sparaxis continues and it is hard to see an end to it. Statewide, too little attention is paid to the weed problem associated with climate change and there is a lack of staff to manage the reserves and the visitors who drive off-road and contribute to spreading weeds. Wild Gladiolus is also becoming a major threat and the influx of African Weed Orchid is probably impossible to control. While the landowner to the west is now very busy controlling Cape Tulip, that is not happening in the State Forest block in the NW area around the Glenelg River at Fulham. Seed will continue to infest the reserve until that source is removed.

Particulars of the volunteer work visits

Sunday 10 Sept. 2017 – from 10.30 am, 4 members of HFNC (RB, DL, PH & RZ) herbicide-wiped CT and some SB, BC and WG on parts of 3, 6, 7 & 8 in the northern part of the reserve (see map). The weather was fine, following a wet spell.

Work time = 26 hours; Herbicide wipe solution used = 10.5 L. There were no flowers present on CT or SB. A few small AWO were seen. WG were very evident.

Sunday 17 Sept. 2017 – from 9.15 am, RB worked on the area south from the Old Bridge Track to the large logs in the wet heath (Area 2), concentrating on SB in sections found in years past. The section covered last year was fairly free from SB & CT but parts of areas not treated then were heavily infested with both species.

Work time = 8 hours; Herbicide wipe solution used = 4.1 L.

Tuesday 26 Sept. 2017 – from 9.15 am, RB wiped CT, WG & SB in the mid-section of Area 3 (between the Old Bridge Tk and the second creek off the Glenelg River) and PH sprayed a section between the west fence (Area 4) and the rail line where CT were dense. The neighbour on the west side (Geoff Pieta) was also busy spraying his CT with metsulfuron methyl.

Work time = 15 hr; Herbicide wipe solution used = 7.75 L;

Spray herbicide (1 g metsulfuron methyl/10L) = 30 L applied near the west fence.

Saturday 30 Sept. 2017 – from 9.45 am RB, DL & PH worked on The Point (Area 6), the western section of Area 3 between the 2 creeks, dense infestations of SB on both sides of the central part of the Old Bridge Tk (Areas 2 & 3) and CT on another section of the western fence-rail line (Area 4).

Work time = 22 hr; Herbicide wipe solution used = 10.8 L;

Spray herbicide (2 g metsulfuron methyl/10L) = 30 L on CT on the western fence and 10 L on SB on the Old Bridge Tk area;

Campers drove 2 motor cycles repeatedly across the wet heath area; 4WDs drove on wet tracks and one drove off the Old Bridge Tk for 200 m into the wet heath. A camper on the river cut down 2 fairly large (20-30 cm diam.) live River Red Gums near the river bend, cut them into blocks and loaded a trailer and utility with them. Police at Cavendish were notified next day and PV were informed.

Wednesday 04 Oct. 2017 – from 10.30 am RB, DL & PH worked on CT on the western fence (Area 4); the section towards the seasonal closure chain on River Rd (Area 7) and the NW part of Area 2 (CT & SB). The SB were flowering and revealing their presence. White-tipped Bamboo stakes were used to mark the position of most clumps of SB. Dense patches were sprayed.

Work time = 22 hr; Herbicide wipe solution used = 14 L;

Spray herbicide (2 g metsulfuron methyl/10L) = 10 L on SB & WG off Old Bridge Tk (Area 2-3).

Spot-spray herbicide (2 g metsulfuron methyl/10L + 200 mL glyphosate/10L) = 10 L on CT, SB & WG near the River Rd closure section.

Tuesday 10 Oct. 2017 – from 9.30 am PH & RB worked on sections near the Old Bridge (Area 3), and extending south in the wetter heath half of Area 2 (from the N-S line of old logs to the rail line)

Work time = 15 hr; Herbicide wipe solution used = 13 L;

Spray herbicide (2 g metsulfuron methyl/10L) = 10 L on SB on the Old Bridge Tk area;

Spot-spray herbicide (2 g metsulfuron methyl/10L plus 200 mL glyphosate/10L) = 10 L on CT & SB near the west fence in Area 4.

Tuesday 17 Oct. 2017 – from 9.30 am PH & RB worked on CT and some SB along the creek in Area 1, 10 and southern half of 9 (a 20 m strip on the eastern edge of the entry track). Remnants of OP not killed last year 40 m W of the entry track at 0.5 km were sprayed with metsulfuron methyl herbicide. CT along the creek from Edgewood Rd to an old bridge site and along the western fence area to a point about level with the eastward run of Edgewood Rd were also sprayed with that herbicide.

Work time = 16 hr; Herbicide wipe solution used = 7.5 L;

Spray herbicide (2 g metsulfuron methyl/10L) = 20 L on CT & SB on Area 10.

Flora & Fauna

38 species of birds were noted but no thorough search was made.

A tiger snake was photographed on the railway embankment, the first sighted by us in this reserve and campers reported seeing a platypus in the river.

Orchids first seen in flower:

10 Sept. 2017 – *Diuris pardina*, *Pterostylis nutans*, *P.nana*, *Glossodia major*

4 Oct. 2017 – *Caladenia tentaculata*, *C. carnea*, *Thelymitra antennifera*, *T. pauciflora*, *T. rubra*,

17 Oct. 2017 – *Thelymitra ixiooides*, *Chalochilis robertsonii* (Purplish Beard-orchid),

Fulham Streamside Reserve – western quarter map 0

