NRE TAS VOLUNTEER NEWS
February 2022

In this issue:

- Exciting name change for DPIPWE
- Keeping volunteers and visitors safe
- Volunteers in Action:
  - Cradle Mountain
  - Launceston Walking Club
  - Fishcare
  - Friends of Randalls Bay
- New volunteering opportunities:
  - Tasmanian Devils
  - Bi-annual Bird Count
- Better Impact Volunteer Management System

Happy New Year!

Welcome to the first edition of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) volunteering newsletter for 2022.

You may have noticed that we are no longer called DPIPWE, the Department has undergone a name change in line with the new strategic direction for the Department. Find out more about our new name and strategic plan on our website; https://nre.tas.gov.au/about-the-department/department-identity.

Keeping volunteers and visitors safe

Hopefully you have had a peaceful and enjoyable festive period. As you would all appreciate, this time of year is often the busiest time across our wonderful sites. With the opening of borders on 15 December, we have seen an increase in visitors to our sites.

With increased visitor numbers comes a need to ensure we are keeping our volunteers and community safe. For this reason, NRE Tas has mandated vaccinations for volunteers who are engaging with volunteering activities with the Department. A big thank you to all our volunteers who have updated their status on the Better Impact system. Your help with this is gratefully appreciated. Working together, we can ensure we are providing a safe environment for our volunteering programs and activities to continue.

To find out more and see how you can update your vaccination status, please visit the COVID-19 section of the NRE Tas volunteer website; https//nre.tas.gov.au/about-the-department/volunteering/volunteer-information-COVID-19.

Volunteers in action

Across all our sites, volunteers are doing an amazing job for example in helping keeping tracks and recreational areas safe and clean. COVID-19 continues to challenge volunteering programs. We have worked with volunteers to adapt activities and event schedules in response to the risk assessment of COVID-19. We really appreciate volunteers adopting the necessary practices and remaining dedicated to our program. This month we're featuring the great work of volunteers at Cradle Mountain, the Launceston Walking Club, Fishcare and the Friends of Randalls Bay.

Cradle Mountain

At Cradle Mountain, volunteers are at the visitor centre every weekend over summer, talking to visitors about walks, relaying the leave no trace principles, handing out bus passes and in quieter times, collecting litter around Dove Lake. This has really alleviated the need for visitors to enter the building if they already have parks pass.

NRE TAS VOLUNTEER NEWS
February 2022

Volunteers in action

Launceston Walking Club

On 2 October 2021, the Launceston Walking Club assisted Greater Western Tiers Field Centre (GWT FC) staff on their volunteer working bee. A group of 14 keen volunteers went for a hike from Liffey Falls carpark straight up the Liffey Bluff track on the central plateau.

The group used small hand saws and heavy duty garden sheers to cut back overgrowth along the track. They greatly improved the track; making it clearer and easier to hike. Under guidance from Parks and Wildlife Services (PWS) employees they improved track alignments where need due to large tree falls etc. PWS staff provided the chainsaw and undertook removal of numerous fallen trees. The group also installed 23 aluminium marker posts with arrows supplied by PWS to improve directional guidance.

The new relationship with Launceston Walking Club is amazing, and the amount of work the group can achieve in one day is far beyond want GWT FC can do over months or even years! The group have rostered in regular quarterly working bees, which started with tracks around Liffey area and will progress to tracks in Meander CA on 29th January 2022.

NRE TAS VOLUNTEER NEWS
February 2022

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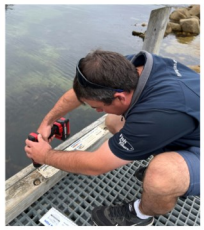
Fishcare

Unfortunately, Fishcare's summer fishing clinic program is a casualty of COVID-19 as it was assessed as high risk due to the closeness of working with fishers during the highly practical hands-on activities. In place of the clinics, patrols, community liaison, and infrastructure audits are being conducted state-wide by Fisheries Awareness Coordinators. As they do this they are replacing and updating signage and fish measuring rulers at boat ramps, jetties and wharves and speaking to recreational anglers to ensure they are fishing in a COVID-19 safe manner.



The infrastructure audits involve assessing and identifying shore-based infrastructure, such as wharves, fishing platforms and natural structures being used for fishing or those with potential to be upgraded or developed to improve recreational fishing opportunities. The conversations with fishers and volunteer input is an important part of this process.

On the fishing front, the Fish Aggregating Device's (FAD's) have been installed along the East Coast including St Helens, Coles Bay and Foxy's Reef (Tasman Peninsula). The artificial device uses a buoy and chain which attracts small fish due to the shadow in the water and algal growth on the structure. The larger fish prey upon these smaller pelagics. Schools of fish can often be found near, or some distance from, the FAD both at the surface or at depth. Please encourage recreational fishers to take full advantage of these aggregating devices and have a fish for species such as kingfish, tuna and other small pelagics.

We're going to be holding an online Instagram competition will soon, to encourage women to share their photos of fishing in Tasmania using a designated hashtag for International Women's Day.

Friends of Randalls Bay

FORB
Friends of Randalls Bay
PO Box 83 Cygnet Tasmania 7112
Ph: 0419 839157
Facebook: FORB
ABN: 43493469589

Friends of Randall's Bay Coastcare is a group of 100 or so locals and volunteers who come together at working bees drawn from Dover to Verona Sands areas. Supporters of FORB maintain the locality on the Huon River near its confluence with the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Set up in 1997, FORB has regular working bees for weeding, planting, walking track and beach access maintenance.

In 2003, Echo Sugarloaf State Reserve was created and following fundraising and grant applications by FORB, a walking track was created with support from the reserve managers; Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service. In 2021 the walking track loop was completed. It is now praised as one of Tasmania's finest short walking tracks.

Recently, interpretive signs were installed by FORB volunteers. These signs were designed by supporters of our group and installed by volunteers. Pictured are photos of members installing these signs, in particular the panorama sign at the Summit of the Echo Sugarloaf walk.

NRE TAS VOLUNTEER NEWS
February 2022

Volunteers in action

Friends of Randalls Bay continued

Volunteers of FORB enjoy social outings and fundraising activities and after each working bee we gather together to celebrate our efforts. This photo was taken prior to the present COVID-19 restrictions!

In 2018, FORB members and supporters purchased the 24 hectare Quarry Reserve. Volunteers continue to weed, remove rubbish and plant and develop this conservation area. Our aim in 2022 is to develop additional walking tracks, forming a loop in and around the reserve.

Our volunteer group always welcomes new members!

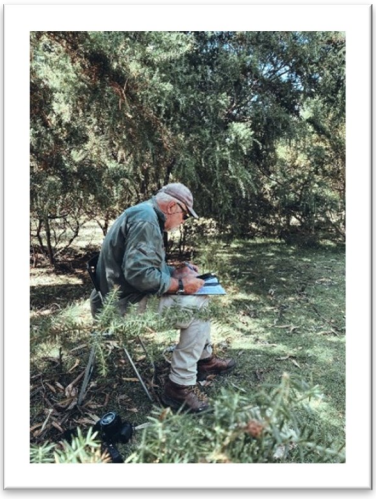
Volunteering opportunities

Save the Tasmanian Devil Program 2022

NRE Tas is seeking Expressions of Interest from volunteers who would like to join a small team of people trapping Tasmanian Devils to assess the health and status of devil populations across Tasmania.

There are multiple trips being planned to a variety of locations across the State, including the following:

Location date	Dates	EOI closing
Wukalina/Mt. William	15 – 24 February	7 February
Buckland	1 – 10 March	14 February
Stony Head	22 – 31 March	7 March
Narawntapu National Park	5 – 14 April	21 March
Bronte Park	24 May – 2 June	9 May
Granville Harbour	31 May – 9 June	16 May
Buckland	12 – 21 July	27 June
Woolnorth	19 – 29 July	4 July



This popular volunteer activity provides an opportunity for volunteers to get up close and personal with one of Tasmania's most iconic wildlife species, while spending 10 days in a stunning remote area of Tasmania that many never get to see. Volunteering will allow you to work alongside our biologists in the field and learn more about the Tasmanian Devil and the Department's monitoring program.

More information and instructions on applying are available on the volunteering section of the NRE Tas website; https://nre.tas.gov.au/about-the-department/volunteering.

NRE TAS VOLUNTEER NEWS
February 2022

Volunteering opportunities

Bi-annual bird count

Volunteer Expressions of Interest are currently being called for the Bi-annual Bird Count Program at Moulting Lagoon Game Reserve. Do you enjoy bird watching and being in the great outdoors? Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) are currently seeking Expressions of Interest from volunteers who would like to join the ever popular Moulting Lagoon bird count planned for 15 February 2022.

Come and join the bird count team for an enjoyable day out and to learn more about the Reserve and bird species.

PWS are seeking 7 volunteers to join the field trip.

Volunteer activities include:

- Volunteer as part of a small team at Moulting Lagoon Game Reserve.
- Identify and record bird sightings.
- Attend a safety briefing at the start of the count and attend to routine 'check-ins' throughout the day.
- Assist the PWS to provide information to the general public (if required).

More information and instructions on applying are available on the volunteering section of the NRE Tas website; https://nre.tas.gov.au/about-the-department/volunteering.

Better Impact Volunteer Management Systems

NRE Tas has now moved completely to the Better Impact Volunteer Management System. With an ever changing external environment, it is now, more than ever, important that we can connect with volunteers regularly to ensure we are providing up to date information and instructions. We appreciate that this might feel like an additional process, but the benefits of being able to connect with our volunteers easily ensures that we can continue to run our programs and work closely with all of you. We can all feel more connected to one another.

Key contacts	Area	Email
Amber Travica	PWS Northern Region	ambalika.travica@parks.tas.gov.au.
Jenna Huisman	PWS North West Region	jenna.huisman@parks.tas.gov.au.
Kat Cullen	PWS Southern Region	katrina.cullen@parks.tas.gov.au.
India Thompson	Fishcare	india.thompson@nre.tas.gov.au.
Sandra Kellett	Environment, Heritage and Land	sandra.kellet@nre.tas.gov.au.
Esther Beecroft	Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens	esther.beecroft@rtbg.tas.gov.au.

If you have any questions, queries or comments about volunteering for NRE Tas or you'd like to contribute to our next NRE TAS Volunteer News please contact us via this email: Volunteering@nre.tas.gov.au.

HAPPY VOLUNTEERING!