



Gluepot Reserve

Jan 2019

Tucker family reflections by Kate Tucker

Any experience that leaves an indelible mark on you needs much reflection.

Yes, we are happy to go home after seven weeks and see our beloved family, our dog, our home, to see mates and to see how the vegie garden has fared.

However, it will be very difficult to leave our Gluepot friends. The ones we have met and the ones we haven't, but whose labour and love for this place is evident all around us. The powerful thing about this place is the feeling of custodianship. It is so palpable, the 20 years of dedication to making Gluepot what it is today, from thousands of people. Since we arrived as Assistant Rangers we have felt a great sense of purpose and reward for being able to contribute our labour to continue this custodianship. Everyone who comes here as a volunteer leaves a stamp on the place, sometimes small and sometimes large and lasting. The fact that all contributions are welcomed makes Gluepot special.

We have lived together and shared many stories while cracking an extraordinary amount of walnuts, shared the sunrises and sunsets, shared the stove and all the delicious delicacies that it has produced, shared the dishes, shared cake, shared Bill's oranges and grapes and port, shared stories, shared bird sightings, bushwalks, wine, cleaning, track maintenance, tank moving, down-pipe repairing, toilet cleaning, controlled burning, pitfall line monitoring for reptiles, RAG team building projects, watching Star Wars and Harry Potter, mulching, vegie gardening, cleaning the bird hides, data entry and talking with so many wonderful visitors.



Max, Murray and Marty working on the new grader shed.



Max and Murray setting a canid pest ejector at one of 97 stations that are a part of Gluepot's fox control program.

Thank you from the Tucker family for welcoming us. Max 15, Martin 13, Kate & Murray are leaving Gluepot after seven weeks filled with an awe of the mallee country, a deeper love of the natural world and a sense that good and generous and skilled people have been all around us.

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Tucker family reflections cont'd



Max and Marty preparing a pizza in the volunteers' kitchen.

I have just finished reading a poetic little book called 'Birds Art Life Death. A field guide to the small and significant' by Kyo Maclear. Kyo explains at the end of the book that this is what she has learnt from birders. She calls it a simple secret.

'If you listen to birds, every day will have a song in it.'

We'll be back to hear the Gluepot bird song.....



Kate, third from the right, with the rest of the family sharing dinner with fellow Gluepot volunteers.

With our warmest wishes to all who love Gluepot, and to all who will come here,

Murray, Kate, Max and Martin Tucker

Long service recognition Gil Pilgrim & Stewart Slade

'Gillie' Pilgrim and 'Stewie' Slade are members of the legendary Gluepot 'RAG' (Rough-as-Guts) construction and maintenance team.

Together with team leader Bill Santos, they have been volunteering at Gluepot for over 15 years. Residing in the Riverland, the team has driven the 200km round trip, usually on Wednesdays, to undertake a wide range of construction and maintenance work on the Reserve.

Volunteers living and working at Gluepot recognize the efforts of these men, benefitting from the utilities and facilities that they create and maintain. From constructing sheds and buildings, installing water tanks and pipelines and other infrastructure, to repairing systems and equipment, to transporting a wide variety of hardware and supplies, to grading the tracks, or pumping out the long-drop toilets, these men have done it.

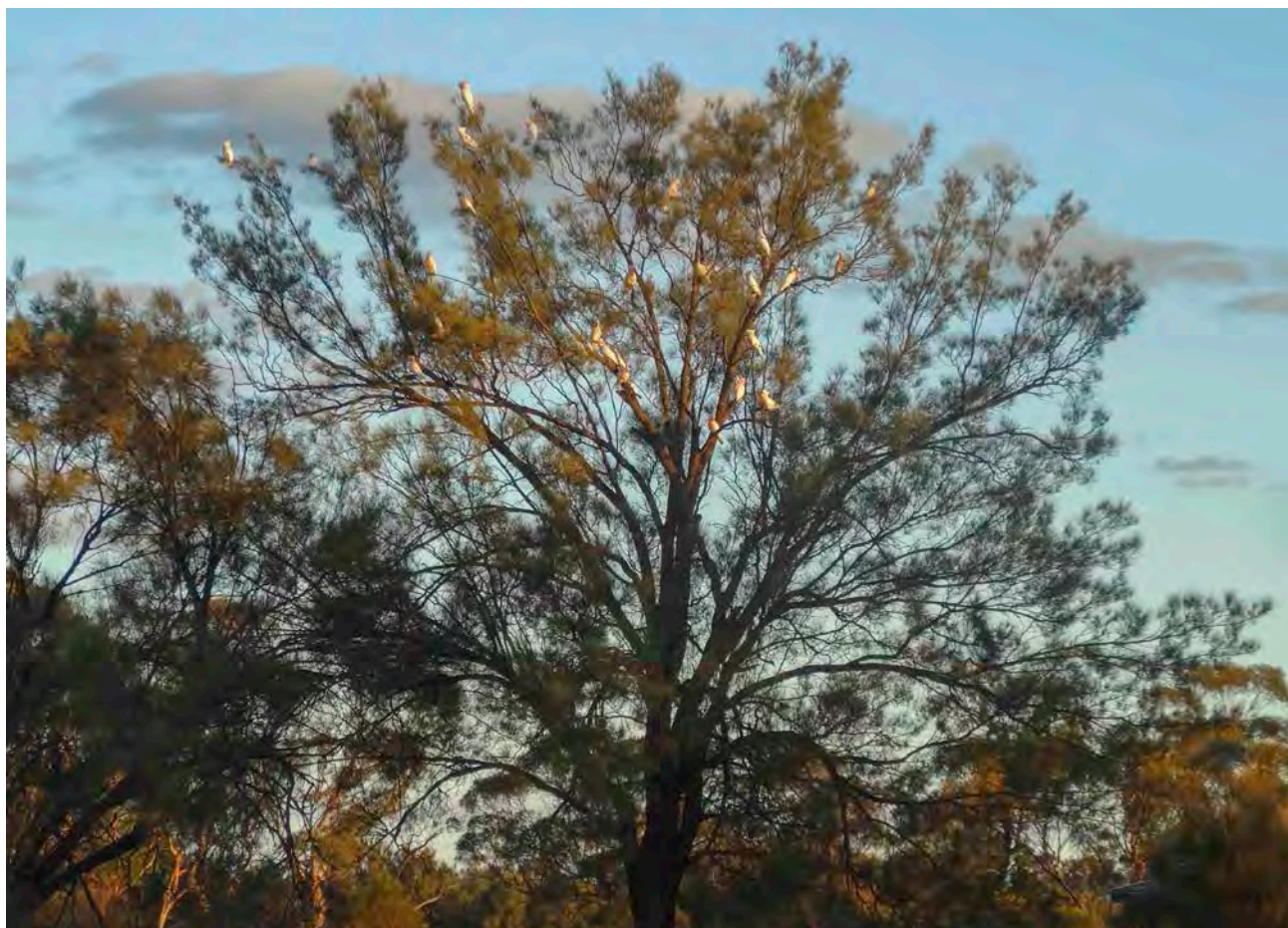
At the end-of-year BBQ and Xmas party held for volunteers in November, Gillie and Stewie were recognized for their work and dedication to Gluepot by having the newly constructed grader shed named in their honour.



At the function, Chairman Duncan MacKenzie presented the men with a plaque recognizing their work. This will be erected in front of the shed.....another one of their projects.



Southern Scrub-robin, regularly observed at Gluepot Reserve (Photographer: Graham Lee).



Late afternoon, a flock of Major Mitchell's Cockatoos in black-oak adjacent the Gluepot Visitor Centre.

Editor's thoughts

For most of the volunteer Rangers who live on the Reserve for one to three months, greeting and assisting visitors is one of the most satisfying tasks on a sizable list of duties.

Rangers get to meet a diverse range of people who come to Gluepot to experience the birds, other wildlife, and the beauty and peace that the Reserve offers. They may be overseas visitors who come for half a day to observe as many birds as they can in a few hours, to interstaters who come to camp for a week or more to get to know the Reserve and wildlife much more intimately.

Rangers get to share a variety of stories and experiences with the visitors.

.....a vehicle has just arrived at the Visitor Centre. I'm soon out of the house, and on my bike pedaling towards the new arrivals.

'G'day, boys', need any help', I say as I greet three men who were in the process of self-registering as campers. Introductions were made and soon we were all chatting about their plans.

Suddenly, one of them staggers and starts to fall, only being saved by grabbing the side of the desk.

'Don't worry about me, I fall over all the time', Bruce says, with a cheeky-smile on his face. 'I've got Parkinson's disease.....have had it for 20 years.'

I soon learn that Chris and Ian have brought their mate Bruce to camp at Gluepot for four days. Bruce has long wanted to visit Gluepot, and despite his advanced illness his friends are going to help and support him during their stay. And experience as much wildlife as they possibly can.



Helping a mate - Chris (left), Bruce & Ian (right).

I cross paths with the three of them over the next few days. During these meetings, I get to learn a lot about

these characters. Chris, amongst many hobbies, collects tektites. and he had his collection with him..... but that's another story.

I learnt that Bruce had worked as an Assistant Ranger at the Melbourne Wildlife Sanctuary at La Trobe University. His services and passion for the environment are well-recognised and he has had a bushwalk, 'The Bruce Smith Grassland Trail' named in his honour.

Bruce went everywhere with his mates, regularly falling over, most often the fall anticipated by his mates who caught him before he hit the ground. Despite his disability, his good humour appeared ever present.

The three had some good wildlife experiences during their visit to Gluepot.

And Bruce had a good time. Thanks to two selfless men.....helping a mate.



Wild wishes,
Ian Williams

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Chairman's comments

A fitting end to another great 'Gluepot year' was the announcement at the October 2018 National Landcare Conference held in Brisbane, that Gluepot was the winner of the 'Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award' – there were nine finalists in this category.



A proud Chairman, after receiving the Landcare award

In addition, Gluepot was a finalist in the 'Premier's Climate Change Council 2018 SA Climate Leaders Award' in the 'Community' category. Gluepot is the winner of 45 major national and international awards since 1999.

Our volunteers continue to be the key to Gluepot's success, and are averaging 31,000 donated hours per year.

The Gluepot Management Committee continues to provide a high-level expertise across a wide range of environmental areas and we have added two new members to the team in 2018.

Justin Jay, a recently retired botanical specialist with DEWNR, has joined the Committee. He will be working with Chris Lill, Rebecca Boulton, Greg Johnston and John Glover on vegetation projects on the reserve. For some time now, Justin has been monitoring several of our vegetation exclosures that are set-up in and near burnt areas.

Karen Donkin, a retired professional librarian, has joined the Committee, and taken on the management of our ever-expanding reference library. She also manages the Birds SA Library. Along with husband John, a retired airline pilot, they are avid bird atlassers and have been undertaking surveys on Gluepot for several years. They often bring fellow librarians, Terry Randell, Stephen Barnett and Phillip Keane who are assisting with a major reorganization and cataloguing of the library.



Karen Donkin (centre, top row) with husband John (left), and fellow librarians Terry and Stephen, at work in the library.

Four new operators have been approved to conduct bird and photography tours on Gluepot – Craig Greer, Tim Field, Steve Potter and Carl Doubkin.

Our volunteer 'RAG' Construction Team continues to provide marvelous service to the Reserve. The team, with help from others including the Tucker family and the materials supplier, have built a large shed adjoining the Education Centre to house the grader and tractor. Recently they have also installed four additional and replacement water storage tanks.



New grader shed nearing completion, with new water storage tanks

Again, I would like to sincerely thank all the volunteers who contribute to our wonderful wildlife reserve.



Best wishes to everyone for 2019,
Duncan MacKenzie
Chairman

Volunteers at work



Gluepot's five bird-hides were painted in September.



Don Lill, planting seedlings around the library.



Tyre-dragging is used as an adjunct to grading the tracks.



Linda Lee undertaking walking trail maintenance



Transferring water from Old Gluepot tanks to a tanker, to transport to Froggy tank to supply the bird-hide trough.

Little Eagles on Gluepot Reserve by Ian Falkenberg

In September I spent four days bird-watching on Gluepot Reserve and observed a Little Eagle, *Hieraaetus morphnoides*, (nesting), Brown Falcon, *Falco berigora*, Australian Hobby, *F. longipennis*, Australian Kestrel, *F. cenchroides*, Brown Goshawk, *Accipiter fasciatus* and Collared Sparrowhawk, *A. cirrocephalus*.

Given the Little Eagle appeared to be incubating, the nest was not approached, and observations were made from the road.

The Little Eagle has reportedly nested on Gluepot Reserve for a number of years and in 2017 they produced one young (Tim Pascoe pers comm). In 2018, Tim Pascoe discovered the Little Eagles had built a new nest in the same black-oak tree as the previous year. The nest was checked in September and although the female was observed sitting on the nest, it is unclear if eggs were laid. The nest was checked in November and no sign of breeding behaviour or young were observed; however, the nest had been lined with fresh black-oak leaves earlier in the season. It appears the eagles had abandoned their breeding attempt.



A typical Little Eagle nest with young.
(Photo - not on Gluepot Reserve)

So what was the reason for the breeding failure of the Little Eagle in 2018? With most raptors there is a strong relationship between food and productivity. Little is known about the diet of the Little Eagle in mallee vegetation communities; however, given the low numbers of rabbits on Gluepot Reserve, the diet is likely to comprise reptiles (e.g. bearded dragons, sand goannas etc), birds and invertebrates. In other studies where rabbits occur in very low numbers, the Little Eagle has been shown to prey-switch to birds, reptiles and invertebrates. If food resources for raptors are low, then raptors may not breed. Alternatively, they may commence breeding but there may not be enough food

to raise young let alone sustain both adults. These conditions are symptomatic of the current drought gripping parts of South Australia. When good seasonal conditions return with the resulting increase in prey populations, the Little Eagles and other raptors will no doubt be stimulated into breeding again.



An uncommon sighting – a Little Eagle drinking; at Grasswren bird-hide, the image captured by a wildlife camera trap.
(Tim Pascoe)

On a broader scale there is concern about the Little Eagle's conservation status in South Australia and south-eastern Australia generally, and the species has appeared to have significantly declined in the past decade or so. A review of the status of the Little Eagle (National Parks and Wildlife Act (1972) recently has recommended the species be elevated to Vulnerable. Relatively little is known about the Little Eagle, and further research is required to gain a better understanding of the habitat requirements and biology of this species.

The main threats to the Little Eagles appears to be loss of habitat due to:

- Encroachment of urban development on Little Eagle habitats
- Human activity around nesting sites, which may deter Little Eagles from settling in suitable habitat.
- Difficulty in protecting areas that are large enough to meet the birds' needs, given they often forage several kilometres from nest trees.
- Claims the Little Eagle may be threatened by competition from the larger Wedge-Tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*,
- Secondary poisoning such as from eating poisoned rabbits (e.g. 1080 and Pindone).

Environmental Education Courses & Kid's Campout in 2019

Eight interesting courses, plus a Kid's Campout are programmed during March to November in 2019.

The two-day courses are conducted at Gluepot Reserve in the Education Centre (pictured below).

The cost of each two-day course is \$99.

The Kid's nature-study camp-out is free, with participants camping at Babbler campsite.



Although accommodation is available at Waikerie, it is 64km away (just over one-hour travel), so we suggest that course participants camp at the Reserve. Camping information can be found on [page 18](#).

Course Title	2019 Dates	Facilitator
Getting to Know Reptiles	9-10 March	Dr Mark Hutchinson
An Introduction to Macro Photography	23-24 March	Mark Newton
Painting Nature	7-8 September	Wendy Jennings
An Introduction to Scientific Botanical Illustration	14-15 September	Bronwyn Bean
An Introduction to Birds & Birdwatching	21-22 September	John Gitsham
An Introduction to Bird Banding	28-29 September	Luke Ireland
Cathemeral Kids Camp-out (booked out)	5-7 Oct	Dr Rebecca Boulton
An Introduction to Nature Photography	19-20 October	Mark Newton
A Beginner's Guide to Mallee Vegetation at Gluepot	2-3 November	Chris Lill

For further information:

Visit the Gluepot Reserve website, www.gluepot.org. Bookings can be made from this site. Or, for a hard copy of the course brochure and registration please contact:

Danielle Packer Email: daniellepacker@live.com.au Mobile: 0417 853 373

2018 Kids' camp-out report by Dr Rebecca Boulton

Following on from our successful camp-out during 2017, the kid's camp-out again kicked-off at the start of Labour weekend and the South Australian school holidays, 2018. We had 13 families, including 21 children (aged 4-12) and 23 adults attend the various activities over the three days. Although the evenings were a little chillier than we experienced last year, our excellent volunteers still managed to rustle up many animals for the kids to enjoy. Dennis Matthews, anticipating the cooler evening for the bat workshop collected a number of bats the previous

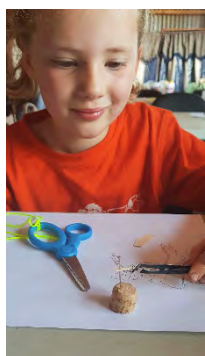
evening, and released them while the kids listened to their calls on Anabats.



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Kids' camp-out reportcont'd

We were lucky enough to again have the SA Herpetology Group and Field Naturalists' Society, led by Peter Matejcic, to check pitfall lines and Elliott's traps for a range of mallee critters. The night walk around the Babbler Campground didn't disappoint, with many impressive glowing green/blue scorpions, bats and geckos. This year the children were shown how to use mist nets by a bird banding group, led by Chris Scholz. We were very thankful for the number of Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters at Whistler Tank who were congregating at the trough and a few sparsely flowering mallees, allowing Chris and his team to show the children how to catch and band the birds.



We are very grateful for a community grant from the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board that enabled us to purchase Gluepot Reserve t-shirts for all the kids. This year we customised the bright orange t-shirts, adding a bat and ant to complement our workshops.

The camp-out was a huge success, in part to the generosity of the expert ecologists who volunteered their time to share their passion for Australia's unique wildlife. A special thank you to Annette Vincent, Dennis Matthews, Peter Matejcic and his team and Chris Scholz and his banding team for volunteering their time for the 2018 kid's camp-out!

For me, one of the special things about the camp-out is the way the children interact and socialise together. I didn't see my children for the whole three days, as they disappeared with their new-found friends or they were off having guitar lessons. We once again had an amazing time, thanks to all the participants, an amazing group of enthusiastic and inquisitive young naturalists.



The camp-out has been so successful and popular the 2019 campout booked out within weeks of the course dates being released!



Campout comments:

Thanks again for organising such a fantastic event and lining up all those specialists who set aside their valuable time to teach our kids! Ella and Rohan, like yours were very tired but look back on those few days with what will be lasting, fond memories. They've been wearing their t-shirts everywhere, too. *Ali Turner*

Thanks SO MUCH for planning, running and the time your family put into the camp-out. We had a GREAT time and look forward to doing it again as well as looking into other programs associated with Gluepot.

Although we live in the Riverland and appreciate the flora and fauna, we've never had experiences like we did on the camp-out; it was such a privilege to have professionals with us to explain details regarding the life we observed and answer questions that came to mind. It was also wonderful to see not only our children create friendships with one another and share experiences over the weekend, but also witness the positive interactions had by all children present. *The Plaquet family*

Our kids loved the camp-out! We did too. Kobe our eldest, lives and breathes scientific facts – he was in his element. This was such a positive experience for him. He now has a photo of a blue scorpion (caught under UV torch light) that he wants printed for his bedroom wall. Matilda socialised non-stop for three days.

Thanks for all your hard work and to the other volunteers who do an amazing job. Gluepot is a truly remarkable place and conservation achievement. *Arron, Mel and kids.*

2018 Environmental Education Courses

During 2018, nine environmental education courses and a kids' camp-out were conducted at Gluepot. The pictures below highlight some of the action.



Mark Hutchinson, from SA Museum, conducting the 'Getting to know reptile's course.



Participants of the reptile course, before heading out to look for reptiles.



Terry Reardon conducting the 'Bats of Gluepot' course.



Participants of the bat course, simulating the bat logo.



Wendy Jennings, artist and facilitator of the 'Painting nature' course, demonstrating technique to a participant.



John Gitsham teaching participants bird ID techniques, during the 'Introduction to birds and bird watching' course.



Chris Lill, at the front of the class, showing how to identify a particular plant species, during 'A beginner's guide to mallee vegetation at Gluepot' course.



Craig Oliver conducting the 'GPS & GIS workshop', in Gluepot's Library & Science Centre



Tawny Frogmouth (Tim Pascoe).



Inland Velvet Gecko.



Shy Heathwren (Graham Lee).



Australian Pipit.



Wolf Spider (Family: Lycosidae).



Barred Snake-lizard (a.k.a Marble-faced Delma).

Day visits to Gluepot

Gluepot welcomes all visitors. Whilst it is ideal to spend three or more days camping in the Reserve, day visits are possible, not only for individuals but also for community groups or associations. From the main highway, a 50km trip on dirt road is necessary, but the road is suitable for most 2WD vehicles, including buses. Accommodation is available at Waikerie, for people wanting to make a visit to the Riverland that includes Gluepot. Picnic tables and toilets are available for day trip visits. Spring and autumn are the best times of the year to visit Gluepot; summer-time can be very hot, so planning visits in accord with weather conditions is essential.

The Taylorville Christadelphian Christian Community conducted a day visit to Gluepot in October last year. About 50 members travelled to Gluepot in their own vehicles, and after a picnic lunch, service, and talk by the Gluepot Ranger, Richard Stone, spent the afternoon undertaking various activities around the Reserve, including taking walks on the walking trails and visiting the bird-hides.



Reserve Chairman, Duncan MacKenzie, far left, discussing Gluepot's facilities with Renmark Men's Probus Club members.

To the right, members learning about Gluepot's solar-generated power system that provides over 95% of power for the Reserve. The orange structure is a diesel generator that is used to provide back-up power.

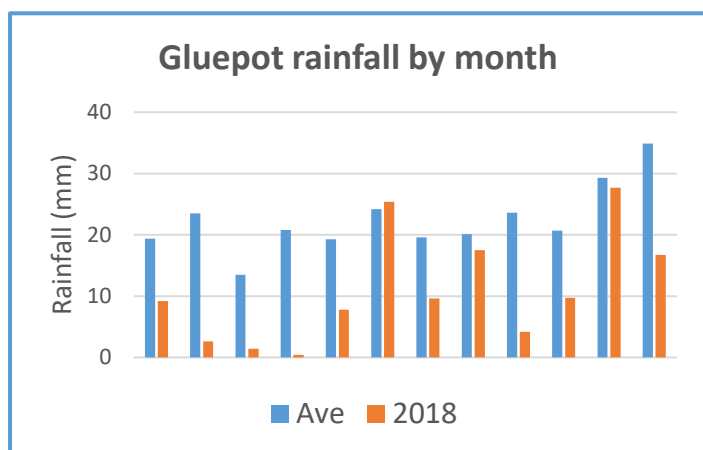
On November 8th, the Renmark Men's Probus Club made a day visit to Gluepot. Arriving mid-morning in their own cars, fifteen members were given a tour of the homestead area by the Reserve Chairman, Duncan MacKenzie. They then enjoyed a BBQ lunch before departing mid-afternoon.



Rainfall at Gluepot

.... or should we say lack of it! Like many locations in south-eastern Australia, Gluepot is experiencing drier than normal conditions. But we are luckier than others.....there has been some rain.

From 1999 to the end of 2018, Gluepot has an average rainfall of 269mm per annum. December is normally the wettest month, with an average of 35mm. The rainfall for 2018 was 132mm, or 49% of average rainfall.



The two dams near the homestead are dry. These normally supply water for several toilets, the irrigation system for native seedlings, and a small veggie garden.

Fortunately the homestead is well-served with rainwater tanks providing a total capacity of approximately 330 kilolitres. At the end of December, the potable water supply was just above 60% capacity.

(rainfall data obtained from BOM website & chart plotted in Excel)

Annual Xmas BBQ

Over 40 Gluepot volunteers, family members and supporters attended the traditional end of year BBQ and Xmas party held at the Education Centre in November 2018.



Gluepot history: The Michael Hyde Visitor Centre

The Michael Hyde Visitor Centre is a focus for visitors arriving at Gluepot, providing self-registration facilities, a wealth of information about the Reserve and its wildlife, and a product sales outlet for clothing, books and other merchandise.

It was named after the well-respected and much-valued volunteer, Michael Hyde, a botanist who created

descriptions and understanding of much of the vegetation on the Reserve. He was also a member of the Management Committee. Michael succumbed to leukaemia in June 2003.

It's always interesting to reflect on the Reserve's history - below is an excerpt from the Gluepot newsletter of March 2006.

Michael Hyde Visitor Centre

The Michael Hyde Visitor Centre was officially opened in November 2003 and has since been recognized, as setting a new Australian standard for visitor centres of this type. The building was funded by two \$55,000 grants from the SA Tourism Commission and a \$1,000 grant from Country Arts SA.



The Centre was designed by environmental architect (and Birds Australia member) David Rudder and the internal designs and graphics were by Janine Mackintosh, a professional graphic designer. Internal furniture was built by Murray Harris and Ian Campbell, both Riverland craftsmen.

Riverland environmental artist Garry Duncan designed and painted the mural that adorns the internal walls and Riverland glass artist Adrian Webb, produced the five magnificent glass interior panels and the glass finch design on the exterior of the building.

All of these wonderful people donated their professional skills to the Reserve.



The official opening of the Michael Hyde Visitor Centre. Left: Reserve Chairman, Duncan MacKenzie; centre: Kean Hyde (Michael's eldest son) cuts the opening tape and right: Bill Spurr, CEO of the SA Tourism Commission



A section of the Garry Duncan mural in the Visitor Centre



Beautiful glass panel, made by Adrian Webb, greets visitors entering the Visitor Centre.

Ranger interview

The guest Rangers for this newsletter are Shirley & Tim Pascoe.

Shirley and Tim, who live at Berri in the Riverland, are long-time volunteers at Gluepot and have an intimate knowledge of the Reserve.



The editor recently spent time with Shirley and Tim to find out more about their experiences on Gluepot.

How did you first hear about Gluepot Reserve and when did you commence volunteering as Rangers?

In 2006, Tim commenced as a volunteer paddock manager for the neighbouring Australian Landscape Trust's Calperum and Taylorville Station wildlife reserves. It was then that we heard about Gluepot and decided to visit and check it out.

We camped on Gluepot several times in 2008 and fell in love with the place. I (Tim) have always been keenly interested in birds and soon we started undertaking bird atlassing.

After being involved for a couple of years I was invited on to the Management Committee.

I was still working up until 2012, then immediately I retired we put our name down to be Rangers on Gluepot. Our first stint was for three months, in January, February and March 2013. Those months on Gluepot rate as some of our most memorable experiences in the mallee.

How do you describe Gluepot to your friends or anyone else who asks about the Reserve?

We have always described coming out here as therapy and that's what we tell others. We tell them how everything achieved at Gluepot has been undertaken by volunteers. Without hesitation, we advise everyone to visit and see for themselves how spending time at Gluepot is such a positive experience.

What is the attraction that keeps you returning to Gluepot for such a length of service?

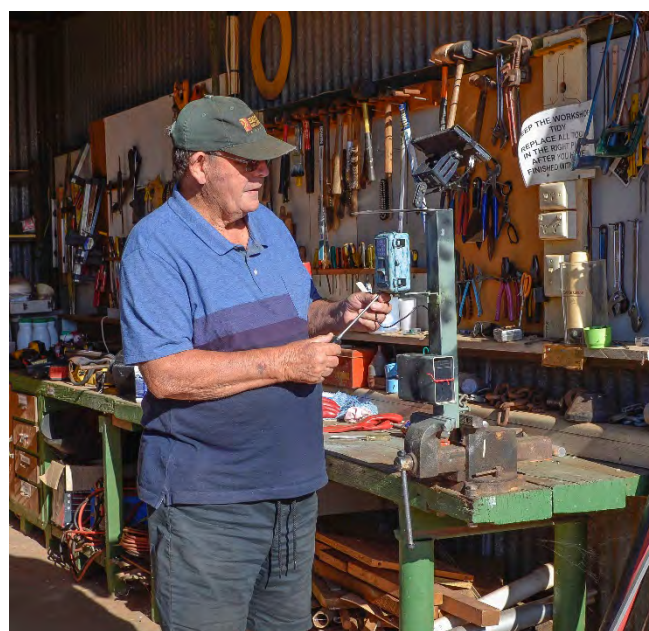
We think it's mainly the people you meet. To be involved with so many like-minded people who have the similar thoughts and beliefs is such a buzz. Meeting the visitors and giving them as much information about Gluepot as you can; they are always grateful for assistance. Likewise, researchers who come from other parts of the country and even from overseas.

We learn and enjoy so much from the encounters with everyone who visits - the other volunteers, the day visitors and campers, and the researchers.

Then there is the wildlife - the birds, mammals, reptiles and plants - that you cannot help but be amazed about.

Can you describe for the readers several activities that give you both the most satisfaction whilst at Gluepot?

I (Tim) am a passionate bird-watcher and have a particular interest in malleefowl, especially monitoring the mounds using wildlife camera traps. I also utilize a drone to locate malleefowl mounds.



Tim, in the workshop, preparing a wildlife camera trap.

I am fascinated by the way malleefowl construct their mounds and tend to them throughout the whole season.

Since we have been putting the wildlife camera traps on the mounds, I have learnt so much about them - how they both dig the mound out in April and when one is down in the mound the other one stays on the rim. I believe this is for their safety.

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Ranger interview cont'd

They then fill the mound with leaf-litter in May and June and wait upon rain in July to wet the litter before covering it with sand; at times they will prepare 2 mounds not far apart before selecting which one they will use.



Tim setting up wildlife camera traps at an active malleefowl mound, with assistance from a Ranger.

We have an image of a mulga snake on the mound and the malleefowl throwing sand over it to scare it away. We have seen young malleefowl pop out of the mound when the parents have been there, and it scares the parents because they do know what it is. It is wonderful to see how the adults greet each other first thing in the morning.



Image from a wildlife camera trap - a malleefowl pair with a newly laid egg,

My other passion is utilising the wildlife camera traps on the bird-hides and tracks around the Reserve. We have accumulated thousands of pictures of birds drinking at the water troughs on the five bird-hides located around the Reserve. The images have given us so much knowledge about the animals and birds on Gluepot.

Besides the malleefowl, do you have any favourite animals or plants that you especially look forward to seeing when you are Rangers?

Birds certainly are our favourites, wrens being at the top of my (Tim's) list. Also we love the apostlebirds, how they

chatter away and are so confiding and live as a family unit, always helping each other. Major Mitchell's are right up there, when you see a flock of them fly over - the colours are wonderful.

As you have spent a lot of time at Gluepot over the years, there must have been a few things go wrong or that have tested your personal resources on occasions?

We had just taken over from the previous Rangers in 2013. We needed to pump water from a dam into the Homestead Tank that supplies water to the toilets, and is also used to irrigate young plants around the homestead and the vegetable garden. It came time to wander down to Quinn's dam and start up the water pump.

We had been warned by the previous Rangers that they had given up on trying to use the pump. Well, I thought no problems here, I have worked with pumps before.

After several attempts to bleed the air out of the system we had it running and pumping water up to the tank. So, back to the homestead for a cuppa. It had been pumping for about an hour and I mentioned to Shirl that I should go down and check to see if it's still going okay.

Of course, it was not pumping, so after another dozen times of priming it was going again. We left it running for another hour, then went down to check again, and sure enough it was not working.

This went on for most of the day. Incredibly frustrating! We renamed the pump the BEAST, and had thoughts of pushing the whole thing down into the dam.

Any humorous stories or encounters that either of you can recall?

One day when I (Tim) was checking cameras positioned along the electrified fence, I came across a large branch across the fence. I returned to the homestead to get some equipment to remove it, and to let the Ranger know of the problem.

Both of us went out to remove the branch. Upon arriving at the location, the Ranger, whom I shall not name, decided to get over the fence to tackle it from the other side. As he was getting over the fence, 3000 volts zapped him between the legs. You can guess the location!

Well, whilst he was screaming out a few choice words, I was standing there holding my sides because I was laughing so hard.

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Ranger interview cont'd

Have you had any particularly memorable experiences or encounters with the visitors who stay and camp on the Reserve?

Yes, quite a few, but one experience stays with us. We had an elderly English couple visit us in 2015 with a small camper van.

It was very hot, but they decided to walk the several kilometres to Whistler bird-hide.

After a couple of hours, the chap came back and asked us if he could drive down to pick up his wife, who had developed heat-stroke and could not walk any further.

We went down and picked her up and invited them into the homestead. We then suggested she have a shower to cool down, which she willingly did. Then we then sat down with them in the lounge and had a great chat and a cuppa.

He was a keen photographer and we told him possible locations for some of the birds that he wanted to photograph. He ended up getting some nice shots.

When they left they wrote us a lovely note saying how much they appreciated our hospitality. That is what being a Ranger is all about. It gives you a nice feeling to help our visitors.



Shirley & Tim enjoying a pizza dinner with fellow volunteers in the volunteers' kitchen.

Anything else that you would like to add about the Reserve where you have spent so much time?

We cannot thank Gluepot enough for allowing us to work with the wildlife cameras and drone that we use for malleefowl mound research and other work. We are grateful to be a part of this wonderful organization.



Tim uses a drone to locate malleefowl nests amongst mallee trees and spinifex. Can you spot the active malleefowl nest?

Camping at Gluepot

Gluepot Reserve has 3 public campgrounds:

- Babbler
- Bellbird
- Sitella

A camping fee of \$10 per night per vehicle applies.

Visitor campgrounds have two toilets, except the more popular Babbler campsite that has three.

Each also has a small rainwater tank. The water is not assured to be safe for drinking, or the tanks may be empty, so campers should bring their own drinking water with them.

Camp-fires are not permitted on the Reserve.

The Reserve is open to day-visitors and campers on most days of the year, only being closed on:

- catastrophic and extreme fire rating days,
- after heavy rainfall, making the tracks unsafe to travel on (usually >20mm in a day), or
- occasionally if feral animal control work is being undertaken.

To check if the Reserve is open, call the Rangers on (08) 88928600.



Gluepot Reserve is a Reserve of Birdlife Australia.

ABN: 75 149 124 774

Email: gluepot@gluepot.org

Telephone: (08) 8892 8600

Website: www.gluepot.org

On Facebook

Postal address: PO Box 345, Waikerie, SA 5330

Gluepot is a not-for-profit conservation reserve, managed and operated entirely by volunteers.

It is funded through donations and bequests from its supporters, and by grants for capital works and projects.

If you wish to support the Reserve by being a donor or providing a bequest, please contact the Chairman:

Duncan MacKenzie

Phone: (08) 8332 1204

Email: dmackenzie@iname.com

'Gluepot' newsletter is produced as an e-newsletter, and is not available as a printed version.

Contributions, comment, and feedback may be forwarded to the editor, Ian Williams

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