

Friends of Woodford Reserve

*Words by Friends of Woodford Reserve Inc.
Secretary, Rosemary Lyne*

This is a story of a successful collaboration between South Gippsland Shire Council, local residents and Landcare. It all began in early 2022. By the end of the same year, in Woodford Reserve Korumburra, thousands of indigenous plants had been planted. The area is enhanced by ongoing weeding and rubbish removal by volunteers.

Through the support of Council, local residents and the Korumburra Landcare group, an incorporated Friends group has now been set up, with a letter of Understanding signed in February 2023 with South Gippsland Shire Council.

It began with three residents, new to the area and not previously known to each other, expressing an interest to the local Landcare group and the South Gippsland Shire Council in setting up a Friend's group to help with the upkeep and enhancement of the beautiful reserve on their doorstep. Woodford Reserve is hidden away at the end of Woodford Place, Korumburra. It encompasses the headwaters of Foster Creek and is planted out with indigenous plants in the headwaters and along the creek's banks.

The Friends group formation did not happen overnight. It evolved. To begin with, South Gippsland Shire Council's Open Space Supervisor, Kevin Thorne, had heard from these three keen residents and put them in touch with each other. The precursor to the incorporated Friends group was formed. Residents Lillian, Tony and Rosemary met and worked with Kevin and, later, Jo Stubbs, Open Space Assets & Projects Officer, to establish their vision and goals for the reserve and how

the group might work with Council. A big part of this was the express intent of the Friends group to work with Council, establishing plans and practices that worked for both parties.

In the meantime, the group successfully negotiated with Council to become registered volunteers, enabling them to work on the reserve until the Friends group could be officially formed and incorporated. The volunteer arrangement ceased at the end of 2022 when the Friends group was set up and integrated. So, as a result, by the end of 2022 in the reserve:

A large planting day was organised by Landcare in collaboration with South Gippsland Shire Council. This initiative was sparked by a suggestion to Landcare by Lillian from the Friends group.

Friends group volunteers provided infill planting and mulch spreading along one of the footpaths on the reserve, using plants donated by the Wonthaggi Seedbank and Nursery.

Most of the northern bank of Foster Creek in the reserve was prepared for planting by Council (spraying and bulk woodchip spreading). Most of the area has been planted out by Friends volunteers with plants purchased by Council. Approximately 600 plants are in the ground, with approx. 500 more, having been potted up and ready for the next planting season.

South Gippsland Shire Council and The Friends of Woodford Reserve Inc. is now formed, and all parties look forward to a continuing positive and productive working relationship that benefits the local natural environment and community.

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Some of the plants provided for Footpath and Foster Creek northern bank plant outs are below. All are indigenous to the local area and provide shelter and/or a food source for local wildlife.

Themeda triandra (Kangaroo Grass)

Allocasuarina littoralis (Black Sheoak)

Kunzea ericoides (Burgan)

Lomandra longiflora (Mat Rush)

Eucalyptus spp. Blue Gum, Narrow-leaf

Peppermint *Diplarrena moroea* (Butterfly Flag)

Banksia marginata (Silver Banksia)

Leptospermum lanigerum (Wooly Tea-tree)

Coprosma quadrifida (Prickly Currant Bush)

Acacia verticillata (Prickly Moses)

Pomaderris sp.

Olearia sp.

Carex appressa

Juncus sp.

Correa reflexa

Goodenia ovata

