

Banrock e-co news



AUTUMN 06

What's happening at Banrock

Autumn is always a magnificent time at Banrock – and the past month has been nothing short of amazing.

Musk Ducks (*Biziura lobata*), the Australian Shelduck (*Tadorna tadornoides*), Pelicans (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) and Black Swans (*Cygnus atratus*) spend their days feeding on the lagoon.

Sightings of a pair of young Black Swan Cygnets on the lagoon and a juvenile White-bellied Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) circling above have made wanders along the boardwalk a wonderful experience.

Down amongst the sand dunes, the Rainbow Bee-eaters (*Merops ornatus*) were enjoying the last of the summer weather, but have now headed north in their annual winter migration to northern Australia, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Eastern Indonesia.

Earlier observations are for a wet winter and a good spring – new nests are being built by the White Winged Choughs (*Corcorax melanorhamphos*), the Regent Parrots (*Polytelis anthopeplus*) have returned earlier than expected to their nests in the Red Gums along the river banks, and the Mallee Ringnecks (*Barnardius barnardi*) are already exhibiting mating behaviour.

There's never a dull moment among the wildlife at Banrock!

Red Gum rescue

The State Government must be applauded for its ambitious Red Gum Rescue initiative – with Banrock playing centre stage to its benefits recently.

Two massive diesel pumps commenced pumping water from the River Murray into the dry and stressed red gum forests on our floodplain in late March.

This is just reward for our role in helping bring the plight of these trees to the attention of government – both State and Federal – four years ago.

A major initiative of the SA Government, Red Gum Rescue is providing a much needed drink to stressed red gums along the entire length of the river.

A decade has past since the Murray experienced its last major flood, so this initiative will help retain pockets of healthy trees until the next major flood boosts their ability to regenerate.



Our floodplain before Red Gum Rescue



Our floodplain after Red Gum Rescue

Commonwealth Games comes to Banrock

Banrock Station had a role to play – albeit a minor one – in the Commonwealth Games baton relay that wound its way around the country in the build up to last month's successful event.

As the photograph shows, the Baton found its way to Banrock en route to Melbourne – to the excitement of all the staff and people who visited us that day.



Banrock Station Team with the Games Relay Baton

New Ranger joins the team

Banrock Station has a new Ranger Ecologist – Ruth Coates.

Ruth has hit the ground running since starting in early March, overseeing a host of programs on the property, including our Threatened Species Recovery Program and Ramsar Wetland Management Plan.

Ruth completed a Bachelor of Science at Sydney University in 2002 with double majors in Biology and Marine Science, and has worked on research programs with both the New South Wales and Queensland departments of primary industries.

Her passion for the recovery of small endangered native mammals led her to volunteer at the Arid Recovery Program at Roxby Downs – twice, studying the ecology of burrowing bettongs, eastern bilbies, greater stick-nest rats and western barred bandicoots.

Ruth grew up in Cowra, NSW, where her family has strong interests in the wine industry. Welcome Ruth!



Ruth Coates, Banrock Station Ranger Ecologist



What's new at Banrock Station

The change of seasons culminated in the release of two new Cellar Door Only products for the 2005 vintage - the Reserve Verdelho, with its fragrant pineapple and lemon aromas and fresh citrus flavours, and the Reserve Viognier - a wine rich with apricot and orange blossom aromas, that combine with tropical fruit and marmalade flavours.



Produced in very limited quantity, the wines are only available for tasting when you visit Banrock Station.

To compliment these wines, a Rocket, Pear and Parmesan Salad again highlights our commitment to local produce specialising in native ingredients. The salad is lightly drizzled with Walkabout Sticky Wattleseed Balsamic Dressing. Delicious!

Extra environmental flows for River Murray

The mighty River Murray is set to receive some much-needed extra environmental flows in a \$1 million agreement between the State Government and Banrock Station.

Work is well underway already to remove old irrigation pumps from our wetland, and construct new pumping facilities on the banks of the Murray.

This exciting, jointly-funded project will save about 650 megalitres of water a year, which will be able to be used for environmental purposes.

The initiative will also improve water quality for the vineyard, as well as in the wetland - thanks to a drying phase that will commence in December this year.

The first complete drying of the wetland - which will last for almost six months - will eradicate the pest fish European Carp.

New pumps will be commissioned in August 2006.

Famous UK artist visits

Seeing is believing! And never have truer words been used to describe the artworks of famous UK artist John Dyer.

The Artist-in-Residence at the Eden Project, in Cornwall in the United Kingdom, John has just spent a week at Banrock painting the many diverse and unique landscapes of the property.

John is a highly sought-after artist, commissioned to paint his unique "plantscapes" throughout the world.

At Banrock, his colourful and detailed style captured the wildlife and plant life against the natural backdrops of the wetlands, floodplains, mallee woodlands, vineyards, river and the mighty cliffs.

His visit follows Banrock's amazing sponsorship of the Eden Project's Good Garden program last year.

The Eden Project is the amazing vision of Tim Smit, who inspired the support of the UK Millennium Program to help fund the creation of massive glass domes covering a disused china-clay mine pit in Cornwall, now housing rainforest landscapes and other Mediterranean landscapes that attract 1.5 million visitors every year.

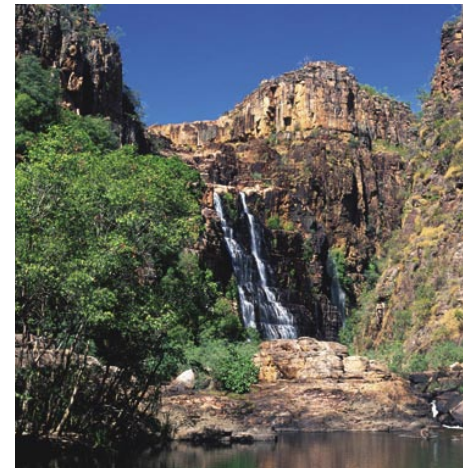
An exhibition of John's latest work, the Banrock Station Exhibition by John Dyer, will be held at the Eden Project in June this year to coincide with Tony Sharley's visit to the UK.



John Dyer with one of his "plantscapes"

Win a trip to Kakadu

Kakadu National Park is one of the most naturally beautiful parts on the planet, and richly deserves its place on the World Heritage List.



Win a trip to Kakadu on us



Banrock Station Wines is giving its consumers the chance to win a "trip of a lifetime" to the famed region in northern Australia.

One lucky person will win a trip for four - including all flights, accommodation and meals - to Kakadu National Park, valued at AUD\$15,000.

A further two lucky consumers will win trips to visit our own Banrock Station - including flights, accommodation and hire car.

Entry details are on marked bottles of Banrock Station wines at most retail outlets. Entries close 30 June, so what are you waiting for?!

Cheers, and good luck

Tony Sharley
Tony Sharley

