

# **BOLFA**

**2018**



**Adelaide's Ninja Warrior**

**Parading Softly Through the Blue Mountains**

**Whympering through the Blue Mountains**

**CCSA Membership Survey**

**Smith Rock**

**Red Rock to Reopen in 2113**

**Crag Care Report**



# Welcome to BOLFA 2018!

We have a boofer of a BOLFA for you this year. I hope you enjoy the journeys of discovery Demetrius Kalatzis takes in the Blue Mountains, multi-pitching and new routing. To help us wonder about what closed crag Red Rock near Whyalla would be like, Paul Badenoch guides us through it. Nick Ducker gives us the beta on Smith Rock, Oregon for further afield, and Emma Kent reports on our very own SA Ninja Warrior, Shaun McCarthy. All this and more for your reading pleasure!

About reading, I've been contacting the Public Libraries of SA, suggesting climbing and bouldering book and DVD titles for them to purchase. Watch this space by searching with 'rock climbing' on their One Card Network: [https://onecard.network/client/en\\_AU/sapubliclibraries](https://onecard.network/client/en_AU/sapubliclibraries) Feel free to approach your local library with suggestions too.

Rob Baker, author of the new Moonarie guidebook has this update: the guidebook is progressing well with a planned release date in early 2019. The new guidebook will be A5 size and full colour phototopos to make it easy find all the climbs that you want to do. It will cover the cliffs in the main Moonarie area, Death Valley including Moonlight Buttress and the Dark Side, Warren Gorge, Devil's Peak and Pt Bonney.

Advertising opportunities are available now. Please contact Rob Baker on [robmbaker1976@gmail.com](mailto:robmbaker1976@gmail.com) or 0439893486.

I'd like to express big thank yous to all our article and photo contributors, and to Mieka Webb for her fine work on the CCSA membership survey.

Rock on!

*Kylie Jarrett*  
BOLFA Editor



*Iconic kangaroo, Ikara Moonarie. Photo by Rob Brooks.*

*Cover photo: Ange Malysheva on Chinese Algebra, Arapiles. Photo by Nick Ducker.*

Rockclimbing is dangerous. It is your responsibility as a climber or boulderer to have received adequate training and to know and accept the risks involved



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# Adelaide's Ninja Warrior

Written by Emma Kent

The term ninja relates to someone with perceived superhuman abilities. Invisibility, shape shifting and flight are common aptitudes as well as impeccable control over their bodies.

While this is not an accurate depiction of ninjas, these are the things that come to mind today, which is akin to folklore's version of the ninja.

The Ninja Warrior television series format began in Japan called Sasuke.

Competitors of Sasuke are to use their 'ninja' abilities to complete a four-stage obstacle course.

Ninja's are tested on their agility, speed, balance and strength. Due to the popularity of the contest, an edited version (Ninja Warrior) has aired in 18 other countries.

Including the USA, UK, China, Sweden, Denmark, Singapore, and Malaysia and last year Australia got their very own taste of the action.

Local Adelaide climber Shaun McCarthy was selected as one of the lucky few to take part on the main stage for the inaugural event.

With Shaun's decade of serious climbing experience, bouldering into the double digits and his love of competition, he entered in his application.

Sometime later after he forgot about it, Ninja Warrior contacted him and asked him to do a video on himself and then they asked him to audition.

"The audition was pretty brutal, it was probably harder than what you do on the show," Shaun said.

"The physical audition was geared more towards cross fit people than climbers, it was a high interval circuit."

For 20 minutes non-stop, Shaun had to plank for five minutes, do five minutes of burpees and pull ups, five minute dead hangs and five minutes of shuttle runs.

After the audition, Shaun realized he couldn't just rely on his climbing background to succeed; he would need to hit the gym and do some conditioning.

"I needed a bit more cardio, a bit more dead hanging and weighted pull ups," he added.

Shaun also flew to a Ninja facility in Perth before the show to get to know the obstacles.



Mark and Dave, whom Shaun can now call his friends own Ninja Academy in Perth and also competed on the show.

The Ninja Academy had facilities that Shaun could train on that he couldn't do in Adelaide, like the warped wall.

Shaun was drawn to Ninja Warrior as it looked like a big kids playground and while watching the US version saying to himself, "I could do that."

"I wanted to test myself and see if I could get through the course."



Talking and watching the other competitors helped Shaun identify the gaps in his own training.

“I can only move on rock, some of these guys have such control over their body.”

“What I had over everyone though was grip strength. All the guys I know that are still pursuing Ninja Warrior are climbing.”

Shaun made it to the semi finals of the course after completing the full course in the heats.

His ninja campaign ended in the semi finals on an obstacle called the spinning log. The five-metre, relatively narrow log spins freely as soon as it was touched. Speed and balance were required to defeat the spinning log.

“I had no concern over any of the strength elements but I had a feeling balance would get me; and it did.”

Not surprising that Shaun didn’t find the heats particularly difficult given he wasn’t concerned about strength obstacles.

His grip strength from his climbing experience assisted him in excelling in a number of these areas.

Shaun brought back some of the training he learnt from Ninja Warrior to his climbing.

“I found that if you want to be a better climber and get to the next level, you need to do some of the less fun things like conditioning.”

“It really opened my eyes, seeing the other competitors from many disciplines.”

Despite climbing helping Shaun succeed in Ninja Warrior, he believes the crossover from Ninja training has been more beneficial than the crossover from climber to ninja.

Shaun recommends trying out for Ninja Warrior if anyone is thinking about it.

“You get to meet so many people from different disciplines, you’re not there to compete against each other; you are there to beat the course.”

“So everyone cheers for you. It doesn’t hurt your climbing doing some of that cross-over stuff, it’s more about overall body strength.”

If you want to follow some of Shaun’s training programs for both climbing and Ninja Warrior you can visit his site at [climbingmeta.com](http://climbingmeta.com).

After the next season airs on television in July, the third season application process will open.

Australia is waiting to crown a champion of Mount Midoriyama.



*Come out fighting (30) The Hole, Norton Summit*

# Parading Softly Through the Blue Mountains

Demetrius Kalatzis

The Soft Parade, Barry Jung's Labour of love, has been developed as a training ground for new or inexperienced climbers. It contains a multitude of short well protected sport climbs and a few trad lines too. Barry has heavily invested his time and resources to almost single-handedly develop the crag and can often be found there climbing with friends and sharing the stories behind the climbs. The grades range from about 8 to 23 with everything in between. My girlfriend is something of a reluctant climber and often gets frustrated in the Blueies as there are often limited low grade options at the crags we visit and the ones that do exist seem to have difficult demoralising starts. Since discovering the Soft Parade though, it's difficult to convince her to go anywhere else (assuming I've convinced her to climb at all).

It was one of those special days where she'd agreed to come out climbing and we headed to the Soft Parade for a fun day cragging. Last time we were there she'd indicated enthusiasm to learn how to clean sport climbs so I took my time explaining how to lead as I set the top rope up on S'easy (10). Mid-way through this, Barry appeared and we started to chat. He mentioned that he had a couple of climbs that no one had managed to open yet and all thoughts of tuition were promptly swept from my mind, to be replaced with delusions of the immortality associated with a name in a guide book.

Barry continued talking about the climbs and that he thought they were around grade 23 or 24. I, with an impeccable lack of subtlety, asked if he was happy to let anyone have a go. He looked at me for a bit, no doubt questioning if I'd be up to the task and then said, "Sure, if you want, have a go." I packed up the rope and followed him along the track before he could change his mind.

The two climbs were on a dirtyish slab and met half way up to finish on a common anchor. The left hand one was the easier of the two and involved a couple of mantles then a traverse where it joined the other route and continued through a couple more mantles

and to the anchor. The direct right hand line look looked a bit easier to me at the time. It became apparent my girlfriend did not share my delusions of grandeur but was willing enough to hold the chord as I started up the right hand line. Only to fall from the second bolt. Repeatedly.



*Figure 1: Finally through the crux.*

I was missing something here, I struggled to read the sequence and find any beta that would work. So I was very grateful to the patience of my belayer. I think at this stage Barry must have wondered why he'd let me, a guy he's met in passing once and only seen climb on a grade 10, get on his shiny new project.

I kept losing skin on some sharp pockets and my fingers were soon pretty raw. Eventually persistence paid off and with some ideas from below we found a sequence that worked. I managed the rest of the climb without too many issues; there were a few mantles that weren't straightforward and I had to clean a few holds, but thought if I could stick the start I'd be OK.

Sticking that start turned out to be an exercise in frustration. I was back to falling in the same place over and over again, sometimes even a move before where I'd previously been stuck! Eventually something clicked and once I was through there was no looking back. Barry graciously let me remove the project tag



and bask in my glory for a little while before asking if I wanted to try the other climb.

Mercifully the other climb was much easier for me and only took the one attempt. There is one mantle which I was just the right size to get through, as I've heard taller climbers can struggle with it.

Barry had tentatively named the climbs fast-forward (the left one) and rewind (the right one) and was keen to keep a link between their names. That said, he encouraged me to rename them and get the full first ascensionist experience.



*Figure 2: Approaching the mantle on The Quality of Mercy.*

The first climb I did is now known as A Pound of Flesh and the second one is The Quality of Mercy. They're destined to be classics so you should get on them next time you're in the Mountains! (I type with my tongue firmly planted in my cheek, but they are good fun and I'm keen to have more people try them). They have been given the grades of 22 and 20 respectively. Extra points to anyone who gets the connection between the two names.

There is an array of incredible climbing nearby, but these are fun, if potentially frustrating routes (that said, my brother managed to send the harder one with nowhere near the frustration I endured). I think the Soft Parade is a great area to bring beginners or just to get a feel for the rock in the Blues. You're hard

pushed to find a denser collection of accessible grades and I recommend it to anyone that fits that category. It has some excellent 17s and quite a few climbs that are not as straightforward as their grades suggest. In my mind these two offer an alternative for people looking to push themselves a little further at the Soft Parade, although there is a harder climb right next door.

To finish the day off of we climbed out on a new entry/exit that Barry had created called Home Run. He lead the way and we followed laden with our packs. My girlfriend still doesn't know how to clean sport climbs. Come to think of it she hasn't exhibited as much enthusiasm since this outing but I'm sure she will come round.

If you do feel inspired to visit the Soft Parade and try A Pound of Flesh and The Quality of Mercy, please feel free to let me know what you think!

demetrius.kalatzis@gmail.com



*Figure 3: Pam climbs out on Home Run.*

# Whympering through the Blue Mountains

Demetrius Kalatzis

I think I was at work when I got Jake's message; "Hey Jana and I are going to be in the Blueies for 10 days, you should come and have a climb." Between us we'd done a lot of single pitch climbing but thought it would be fun to try something new and get on one of the longer routes. I asked around for recommendations and got two suggestions: Whymper and Bunny Buckets Buttress. We settled on Whymper (19) because the approach looked easier (i.e. did not require a rappel).

Once the route was chosen the nerves started to kick in a bit and I began doing as much research as possible. I wanted a plan for climbing in a team of three, to determine what gear was needed and find the best anchor set up. By the time I arrived at the Sublime Point car park my nerves had almost disappeared and I was eager to climb. The plan was simply to walk to the bottom of the cliff, carrying as little as possible and climb back to the cars. We were going to bring two ropes and introduce as few changes to our usual climbing practices as possible. There were two backpacks for snacks, water and approach shoes leaving the leader free to focus on climbing. I debated taking my wires but given we had plenty of bolt plates opted to save weight and leave them in the car.

It turned out to be a longer approach than I had anticipated and had me questioning if I'd lead us

astray before we'd even got on the wall. Then just as I was contemplating turning back we stumbled upon the wire-of-death traverse. A little further along we came face to face with a big chalky W and were staring at the start holds. Looking at Jana's face I think she was starting to get nervous. We talked through

our plan again; we were going to climb with two ropes. The leader would place the gear and set the anchor. The middle would then be brought up as a second unclipping the first rope and clipping in the second rope. They would then clip into the anchor and bring up the third person on the second rope who would clean the gear. Not the fastest system, but as they were 35m pitches we didn't think we could manage on just one 60m rope.

I lead off carrying my bag with the security of ring bolts for the first pitch. Jake and Jana quickly followed me up and I relayed my newly acquired knowledge of quad anchors as I

explained the mess of cordlette I was getting them to clip into. Despite my instruction the other two weren't keen to set the next anchor so I kept the lead and started up the carrot protected second pitch. I don't have a lot of experience climbing on carrots so was a little nervous. Thankfully they all appeared near good stances and none of the brand new plates disappeared into the canopy below.

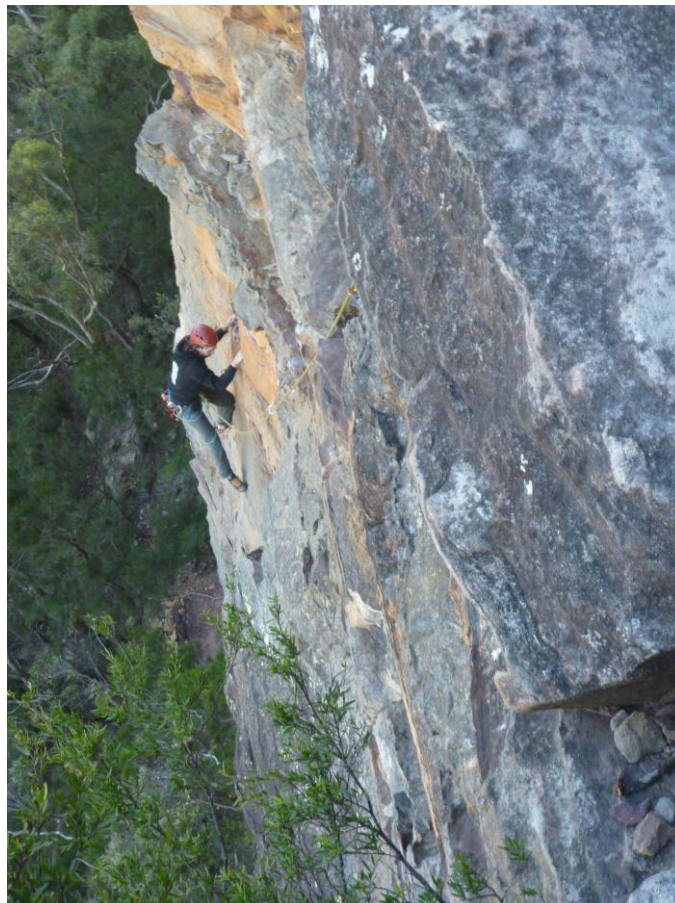


Figure 1: Jake midway through the first pitch.



Things were going pretty well – I'd reached the second belay ledge and brought the others up. We enjoyed some nice warm sunshine and grabbed a quick drink before consulting our pocket guides. The third pitch is supposed to be a bit tougher so I asked Jake if he would mind taking the backpack and started off. This pitch is awesome! A bit of an airy traverse out to the slightly overhung arête and up to a small ledge with three carrots for a semi hanging belay. I felt pretty confident and comfortable on the big ledges but that changed on the small ledge leaning back into a lot of open space. After double and triple checking the anchor I brought Jake up and we discussed if there was room for three. One option was for me to go to the next bolt and sit there whilst he brought Jana up. Looking up, I could see how to start the next pitch but couldn't see the first bolt, so we decided that three was company and brought Jana to our cozy little ledge.



Figure 2: Obligatory tourist shot, Jake with the Three Sisters.

Once Jana arrived I collected the gear and resumed my search for the elusive bolts. I couldn't see them but there was a tree on the next ledge that I thought I could sling if all else failed. The guide said up the arête past two bolts to the cave, skip the belay here, fix a long sling and continue to the next stance. I thought we were on the arête, so moving up made sense but still couldn't see these bolts. I set off aiming for the tree on the next ledge, and there was a bit of traversing to see if I could find these damn bolts but in the end I just went up. About half way to the next ledge, I started wishing I'd brought my nuts. The rock didn't look great quality but nothing had broken and there were a multitude of cracks which would have at least provided some psychological protection. Eventually I came to the ledge and looked up to see the two U-bolts of the cave belay. Only problem was I now had no protection between me and the last belay

on about a 6m runout, and was facing a mantle onto a flat edge. Not that difficult a move but there was no room for any error. I thought maybe there would be a better spot or I could see the bolts I'd missed if I traversed around the ledge nearer to the ring bolts. I still couldn't find the bolts but I did find some slightly better holds which allowed for a heel hook and rock over to gain the ledge. My mind needed a little convincing before it was willing to commit to this but once I'd talked it round those U bolts were clipped in lightning speed. Jake helpfully pointed out the two bolts I'd missed on his way past them. I'd just gone too far left, luckily on pretty easy ground.



Figure 3: Jana enjoying the sun on pitch 2.

There are some tough moves for the shorter climber especially if they want to avoid the loose microwave-sized blocks that line the exit traverse of the cave. This opens up some great climbing and to my mind is the crux pitch. As I set the anchor I began to feel pretty relieved; we were one pitch away from completing a Blueies classic! A little slower than other parties, but our relative inexperience had not caused any issues. As Jake approached the belay he kindly pointed out another carrot that I'd missed before getting to work and belaying Jana.

Before setting off on the final pitch we had a good long look at the wall and spotted most of the bolts. Taking my time and triple checking the guidebook, I managed to find a path to the top and set up a tree belay. Jake and Jana soon followed and we were packing up as the sun began its descent below the horizon.





Figure 4: Jana above the worryingly empty space on the third pitch.



Figure 5: All smiles as we reach the top before dark.



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### Background:

The Climbing Club South Australia distributed an online survey in early 2018 to explore how the CCSA can improve to remain relevant to both members and the general climbing community, and to investigate what the club can do to engage with potential future committee members.

Survey was shared via email, the CCSA Facebook page and in various other Facebook groups. Interested readers were given several weeks to reply.

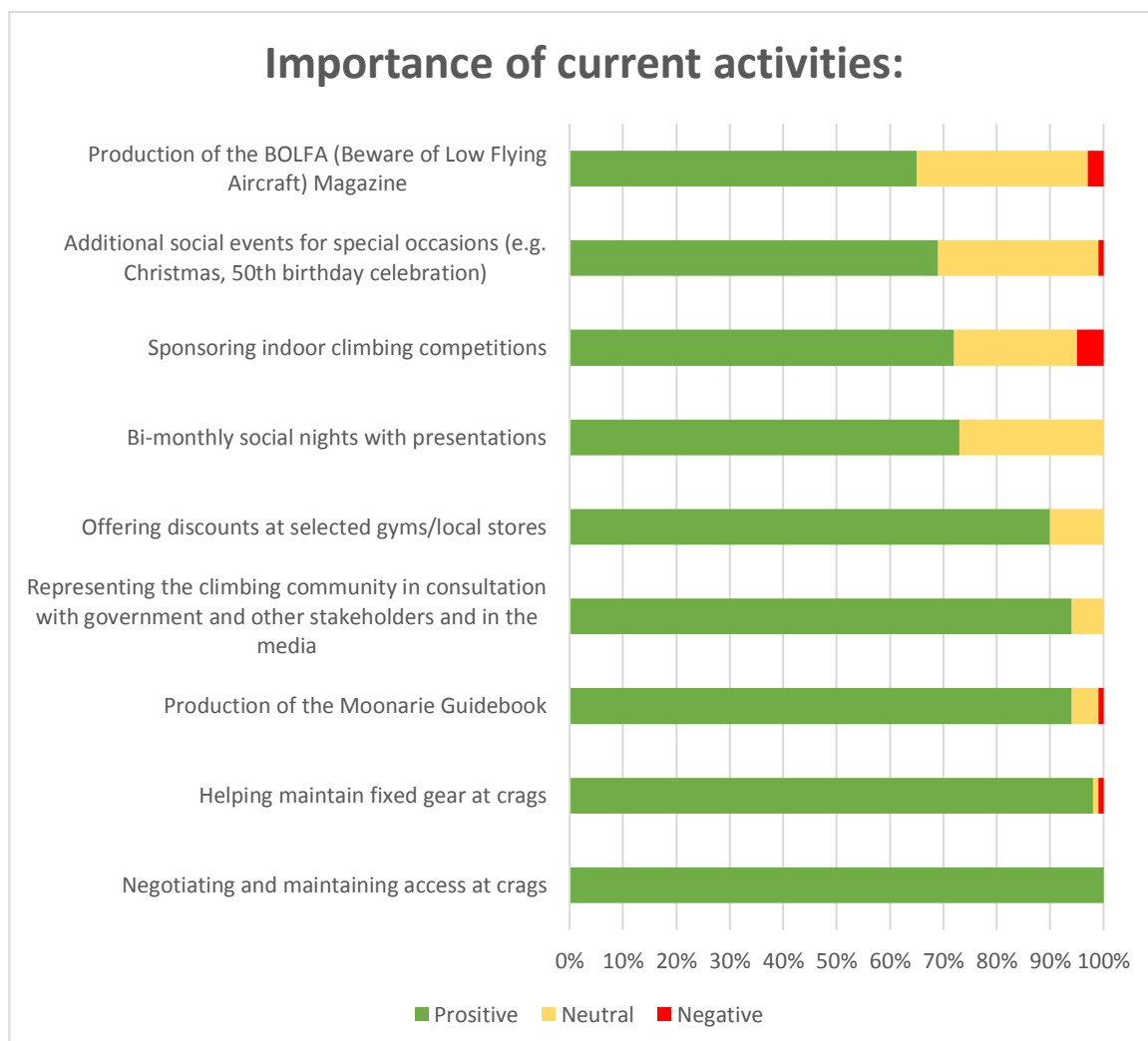
### Total Responses:

104 responses were received. 50 responses were from current financial members (from a total of 126 current financial members).

### Results

A selection of the results is included below. A more comprehensive summary report is available on the CCSA website.

The responders ranked the importance of current CCSA activities as follows:

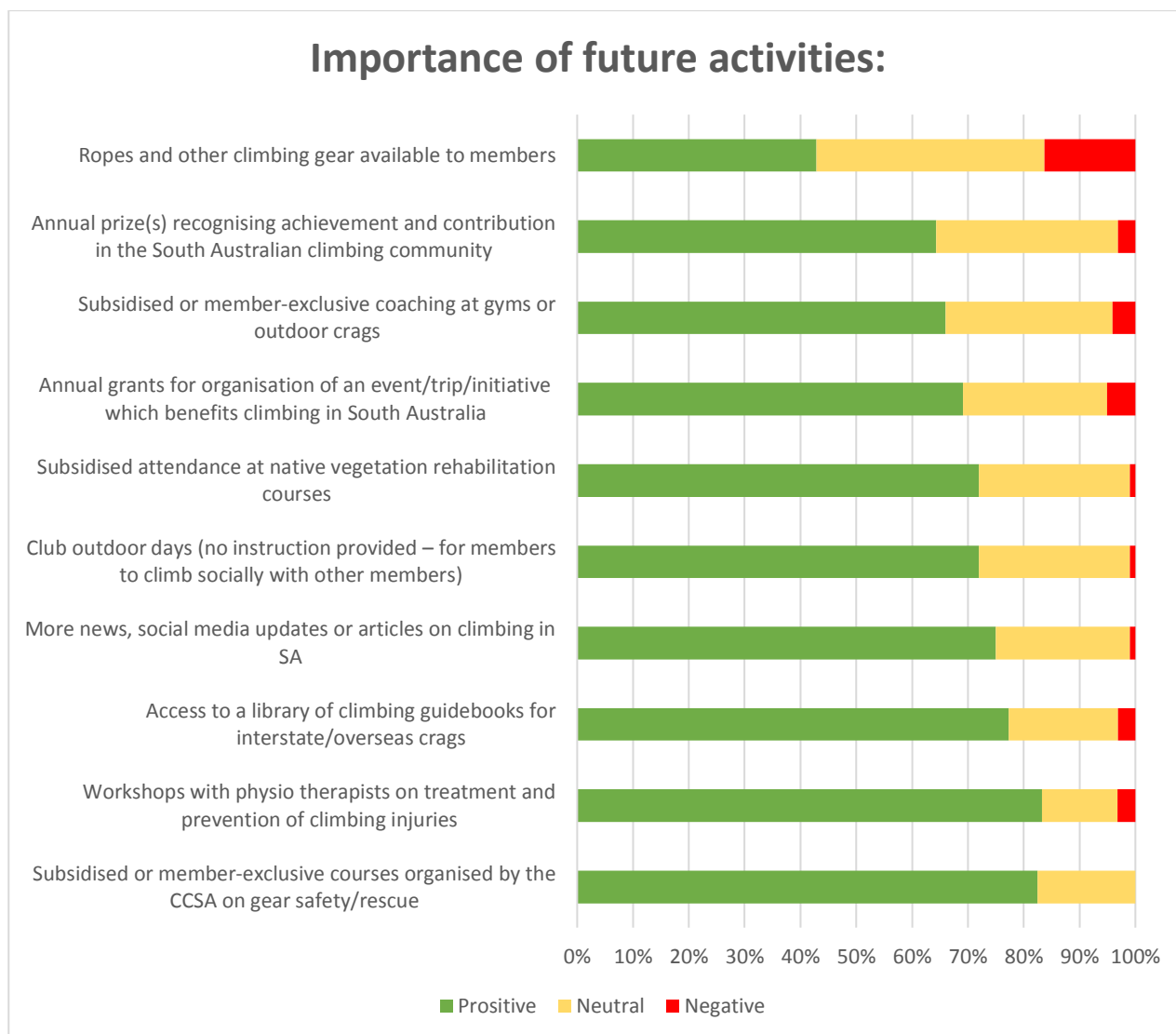




Maintaining access and fixed gear were identified as the two most important activities which the club currently undertakes. Similarly, a high level of importance was placed on representation of the climbing community.

Also of note is the importance placed on production of the Moonarie guidebook (thanks to Rob Baker for his ongoing work preparing this!)

It is useful to note that if the Club chooses to or needs to limit activities in the future, the ‘social’ activities were among the lowest scoring items, and these may be areas where the Club could continue reducing their involvement.



When considering other areas which the Club could become involved in future, the most popular option was organising courses (such as safety/rescue and injury prevention), as can be seen in the chart above. If the Club chose to pursue this, the instructors selected would have appropriate qualifications for the course being provided (e.g. SAREA-qualified instructors, physiotherapists).

### Summary:

The capacity for the CCSA committee to organise and undertake activities varies due to the voluntary nature of the committee members. This survey was successful in providing insight into the key activities that the Club undertakes (as perceived by members of the CCSA and the SA climbing community in general), and will help guide and justify prioritisation of future club activities.

### Comments:

Some of the responders left additional suggestions as part of the survey, and a handful have been included below (edited). If any members want to step up and help get the ball rolling on any of the suggestions, you’d be more than welcome!

- Working on regaining access to Buckaringa
- Half-day track maintenance at Moonarie
- Organisation of Club climbing days, weekend trips and overseas expeditions.
- Mentoring of youngers climbers and gym climbers by those of more experience
- Lobbying local and State governments for more funding for more/improved climbing facilities and climbing areas, particularly with climbing to feature in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.
- SA climbing festival, or a Adelaide Mountain Film/Art festival

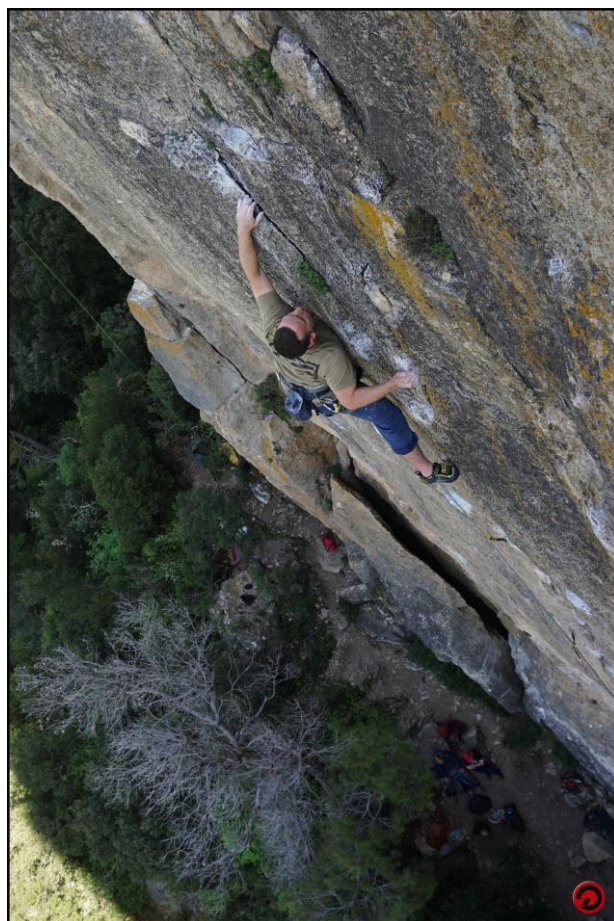
Finally, some responders also left feedback for the committee. As volunteers, it's rewarding to see that our efforts are appreciated, and also good to note where we could improve in future.

- *I think the club does a great job! to me the priority is maintaining access and anything else is a bonus.*
- *As a lower grade, non regular climber that has been a member in the club, I can see the benefits of what the club does/can do and what they offer. I really need to get out more....and renew my membership!*
- *Don't let the negative vibes get ya down. Work within your means and remember your volunteers doing more than most for the sport!*
- *The CCSA should play an important role in driving, working towards and building an inclusive climbing community.*



*An actual BOLFA moment bushwalking at Point Bonney, Ikara Wilpena Pound. Photo credit: Karl Bradney. Subject: his girlfriend Pilot: Peter Cassidy*

*Pulling hard on 7a+ in Siurana Spain with [Rockbusters.net](http://Rockbusters.net) Spanish climbing roadtrip 2018. Photo: Shaun Upton*





# Smith Rock

**Text and photos by Nick Ducker**

Driving through the high desert of Eastern Oregon in search of Smith Rock, you could be forgiven for thinking you'd have taken a wrong turn somewhere down the road. For miles all you see is scrubby underbrush and rolling hills. Dormant, snow-capped volcanos rim the panorama in almost every direction.

Then you see it, a small blip of rocky imperfection in a contrastingly vast landscape. Excitement wells up as, minute after minute, that small imperfection starts to take form into jutting, dirt coloured spires of rock. Passing through the tiny town of Terrebonne, you hang a hurried turn off the highway, eye's flitting anxiously between the road and your destination, still growing larger by the second.



*John Forestell on Heinous Cling, Smith Rock*

Smith Rock cuts a striking profile in the landscape it inhabits. The parking lot, situated high above the basin of the Crooked River, lazily winding below, provides a panorama of some of the most iconic sport climbing America has to offer. A slight turn of the head to the left reveals the Smith Rock group, towering spires of volcanic tuff containing a myriad of moderate to test-piece trad and sport multi-pitch routes. Bringing our gaze slightly right of Asterisk pass and we find the Dihedrals, compact sand coloured walls with lines of chalk dancing up them. Standing between dead vertical and slightly less than, this relatively small chunk of rock holds most of Smith Rock's signature routes, including "Chain Reaction", made famous by the Clif Bar wrapper. Looking further right past "Shipwreck Rock" (I personally never really saw the ship in there) is the gargantuan "Picnic wall" (a misnomer if I've ever heard one). There's nothing about this wall that suggests climbing it will be anything like a picnic, quite the opposite in fact. Semi-mysterious, this wall is huge, hard and rarely climbed.

Finally, looking further down the valley, the river snakes away past more basalt and tuff cliffs to choose from if you ever get sick of flailing on your Dihedrals project.

Climbing at Smith Rock is an inherently social affair. Waking up in the dispersed camping site, you'll meander slowly towards your vehicle and the designated "kitchen" area of the campsite, complete

with toilets and a shower block (makes the \$5/night camping fee a bit easier to swallow). Here, you'll compare plans, beta and where each of you are falling off your project before slowly making the short trek down into the basin. Smith Rock State Park is a major tourist destination as well as a piece of American

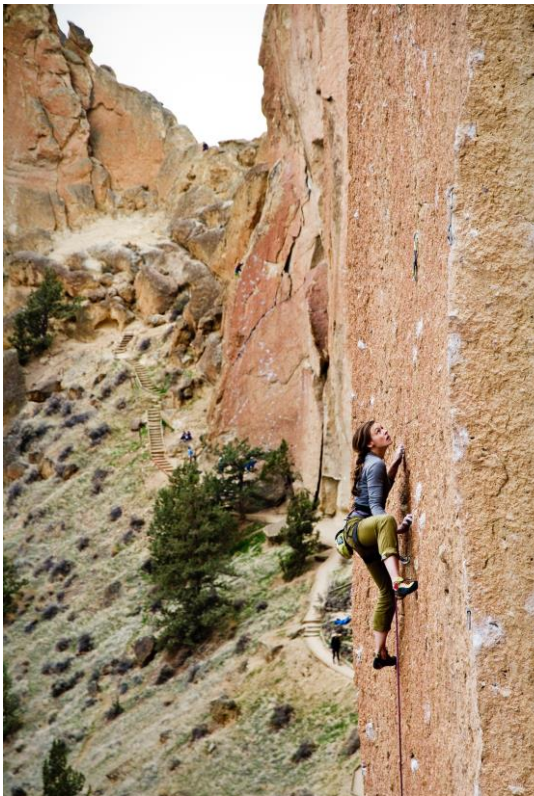
climbing history, so you'll share the trail en-route to the crag

with happy families and young couples snapping away photos. Upon arrival to the crag, the next order of business is usually trying to find a party of climbers willing to let you borrow their stick clips. Having historically been a bold (and often sketchy) trad destination before the advent of rap-bolting, the bolts ended up being sparse and spaced, with high first clips and just enough to keep you off the ground. After shredding your fingertips, falling off your proj again and sporadically yelling "Venga!" at strangers, you'll walk back out of the basin back to camp for showers, beers and stories before doing it all again the next day.

Those with strong fingers (and strong minds) will excel at Smith. Routes demand and awkward balance between power and technique, with small holds reigning supreme on mostly vertical climbing. But that doesn't mean you can't go jug hauling either! "9 gallon buckets" will have you laughing ecstatically all

the way to the top, wondering how holds could ever be so big. If you ever get bored of taking giant whippers on 35m sport routes, why not try taking some whippers on the bigger multipitch trad routes? The Smith Rock group provides a great venue with plenty of moderates and up to choose from. A scramble over the pass will get you to a whole bunch more, generally less crowded, climbing, as well as The Monkey Face. This tower of tuff presents a unique challenge to any who try to climb it. French-free-able bolt ladders, run-out aretes and a quick shuffle through the mouth of the monkey are all options in trying to conquer this unique formation.

*Michele Pratt on Watts Totts, Smith Rock*



*John Forestell on Heinous Cling, Smith Rock*

*Quentin Roberts on Chain Reaction, Smith Rock*



## **THE FACTS**

### **WHERE:**

Just outside Terrebonne, Oregon.  
3 hours South-east of Portland  
5 and a half hours South of Seattle  
20 minutes North of Bend

### **CAMPING:**

If it's not full, \$5 a night will get you into the dispersed campsite, right on the edge of Smith Rock Park. Another option is Skull Hollow, situated about 12km away from the park itself, which goes a \$10 per 6-person site. Sorry dirtbags! Alternatively, you could find an Air BnB in Bend (or maybe Terrebonne?) and make the 20 minute pilgrimage each day there and back.

### **GREATEST HITS:**

<i>5 Gallon Buckets – 5.8/14</i>	<i>Latest Rage – 5.12b/25</i>
<i>Moonshine Dihedral – 5.9/15</i>	<i>Chain Reaction – 5.12c/26</i>
<i>Karate Crack – 5.10a/16</i>	<i>Darkness at Noon – 5.13a/28</i>
<i>Nine Gallon Buckets – 5.10c/18</i>	<i>Scarface – 5.14a/32</i>
<i>Moons of Pluto – 5.10d/19</i>	
<i>Pure Palm – 5.11a/20</i>	
<i>Monkey Space – 5.11b/21</i>	
<i>Dreamin' – 5.12a/24</i>	



**WHEN:**

Being in the high desert, Smith Rock gets HOT in the summer. Best bet is to head out there during the boreal shoulder seasons (March – May, August – October). Too early and you'll freeze in the shade, too late and you'll cook!

**WHY:**

Smith Rock is a throwback to a golden age of American sport climbing. The areas are dense, the climbs are classic, bold and airy. almost every climb in The Dihedrals and surrounding area is a test-piece for the grade. Those climbing grade 23 and up will have plenty to cut their teeth on! There's also a bunch of 5-star moderate single and multipitch climbing throughout the basin.



*Closer to home  
(clockwise): Ange  
Malysheva on  
Debutantes and  
Centipedes, Arapiles;  
Kieran Diamond on  
Kachoong, Arapiles;  
photos by Nick  
Ducker.  
Nick Ducker on Eye of  
The Tiger, Grampians,  
photo by Ange  
Malysheva*


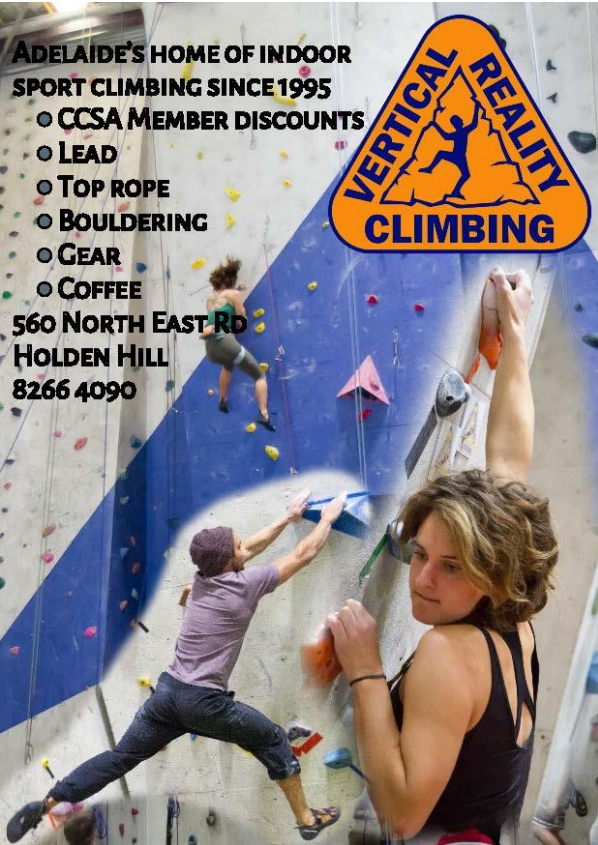





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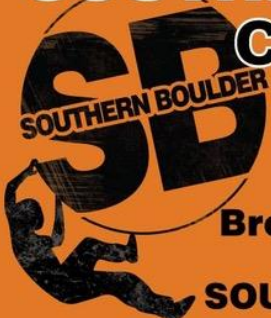
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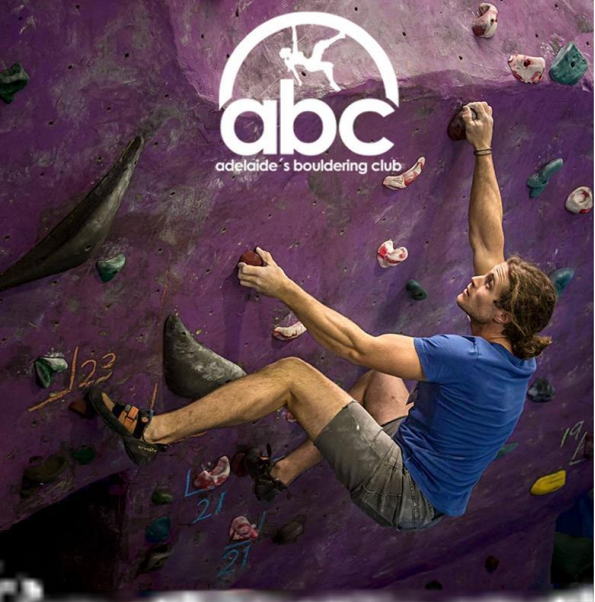


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# Red Rock to Reopen in 2113

Paul Badenoch

There's no harm in being optimistic, at least with the title. I'd been meaning to get to Red Rock for years since reading about it in Nick Neagle's *A Rock Climber's Guide to the Flinders Ranges* (1988). The problem was that Red Rock wasn't actually in the Flinders Ranges but on Roopena Station, 50km past Port Augusta towards Whyalla. That's a long detour when you're psyched for Moonarie.

Anyway, a visit to Red Rock became now-or-never in the autumn of 2013 when the Australian Army finalised agreements to expand the Cultana Training Area. Cultana was originally restricted to the coastal strip between Port Augusta and Whyalla, but now extends over a large section of north-east Eyre Peninsula as far west as Iron Knob. The leases of Roopena and neighbouring stations were acquired for 75 years with an option of a further 25 years.



*The approach to Red Rock from the north.*

I needed to contact Lachlan, the last of the Nicolson family to call Roopena home. I had trouble getting the correct number so I checked with Cameron Roy who had been to Red Rock not long before, possibly the first visit by a climber for years. It turned out Cameron was related to Lachlan, and my companion Vicki had gone to school with a bunch of Nicolson boys in Adelaide, so we were soon on our way.

Driving into the station, Vicki and I were struck with the stark beauty of the green scrub and red soil. The property had been de-stocked and I think there'd been rain recently. Lachlan wasn't home so we found the secret key to the paddock gate and carried on. Calling the first sight of the cliff transcendental might be stretching things a little but it's always fun checking out steep solid rock in the middle of nowhere. Most of the climbing on northern Eyre

Peninsula involves granite inselbergs, but Red Rock is a small sandstone escarpment.

The routes were easy to find, helped by large painted letters dating from the late 1960s. At that time Gordon Oates, Peter McGee and various YMCA boys from Whyalla put up several climbs to grade 15, maybe free or maybe not. Letters were placed at the start of many other lines but it is thought that most were bookmarks for a future attempt. Red Rock gained notoriety with the visit of Colin Reece in 1976

(in the middle of summer!), establishing *Victorian's Crack* (17) and *Ghastly Rabbitfoot* (18). The next year Ajax Greene climbed a very strong 17, *The Big A*, and Colin succeeded on the gymnastic *Cretin* (20). Grades jumped to 22 with Colin's *Stratagem* in 1983 then to 23 with Dave Brayshaw's excellent *Charlie Goes Surfing*. Even Kim Carrigan dropped by to

establish a couple of tough 23s

and the thin and sporty *Twilight Sailing* (24). The final contribution to the golden age of Red Rock was Dave Wagland's *Birdsville* (20A1) in 1988. It's steep, it's bolted, and unless the army has classified the information, it's yet to go free.

We spent the weekend ticking as many climbs as possible, top roping or leading +/- inspection. These were Saturday afternoon's successes, with comments from my notes: *TT* (10), pleasant climbing on good rock; *G* (11), a bit desperate through the flora; *ERC* (12), good until the exit roof on flaky rock; *M* (15), one of a number of 15s harder than *Victorian's Crack*; *The Big A* (17), 17? Wow. Starts with a V1 highball, a pad would be handy; and *The Big A Last Goodbye Variant* (17), finish up the wall R of the thin diagonal. We headed to Whyalla for the night and were happy to discover the Westland Hotel Motel has excellent croissants among other fare.

Sunday was another fine and cool day. Our climbs were: *Tiny Titties* (7), a touch too mossy for a solo; *Large Titties* (10), no guts so had a look at the pro first; *Red Faces* (11), straightforward; *TR* (12), tricky enough, has a thank-god cam pocket; *Steve's Jam Crack* (12), good climbing, keeps you honest; *Poltroon* (14), desperate mantel. Would be sane with a #5 BD cam but marginal on a 4; *Kerosene Crack* (15), good moves; *Victorian's Crack* (17), cruisy and classy, best wires ever; *S* (18), really good climbing with a tricky finish; and *F* (18), steep climbing up scoops, fun deadpoint crux off crimps.

We packed up and dropped the key back at the house. Lachlan had some joy in his life - the Crows had just won and we gave him a nice bottle of red, but he was struggling with a broken fibula and very sad to be leaving Roopena. Lachlan said the family had worked the property for over a century. He was proud of their pioneering work on saltbush-fed sheep and their environmental management. He was unsure about the future. The army must have a suitable training area but, unfortunately for the Nicolsons, it now includes Roopena. Heading home from the house and Red Rock at sunset, knowing we would not be back, was moving.

A couple of weeks after our trip a strong team comprising Garth, Liz, Jo, Big Jase and Mike Garrett made a final visit by civilian climbers. The highlights were repeats of Mark Barnett's *Indigenous* (17) and Colin's *Stratagem*, although they believed the latter to be a new route at the time. Mike also managed to toprope the impressive and poorly protected North Wall at grade 23.

So Red Rock has several worthwhile projects waiting for climbers when the army's lease expires. If you've found this issue of BOLFA lining the bottom of your great-grandparents' old bird cage, go for it.



*Victorian's Crack. Photo by Vicki Kavanagh*



*Garth Wimbush on Stratagem. Photo by Liz Milner*



# Crag Care report

**Liz Milner, Crag Care Coordinator**

Crag Care was 4 in May 2018 when we had a record turnout of 22 participants. Way to go team! We celebrated 4 years of amazing work put in by so many climbers and the difference now smacks you around the face as you walk into the area from Norton Summit Road and now even more so as you descend down to Far Crag to climb.



There was a lot of consolidation of work happening in 2017/18, follow up work through areas where olive and broom had been removed, follow up work on blackberries, cameras at Far Crag to check the wildlife and try to determine how quickly we could move on the blackberry. In November we were very fortunate to get a visit from local Herpetology expert Peter Matejci and honours student Adam to give us advice about how to proceed. We were ecstatic to learn the blackberry we removed last year had not only made access easier for climbers but it had opened up Cunningham Skink habitat in the rock crevices at the base of the cliffs. For those of you who don't know the Cunningham Skinks live in amongst the rocks at Far Crag, they are a state level endangered species and considered regionally vulnerable. Far Crag is one of the best known populations of these animals and we have been mindful of them and the impact of blackberry removal whenever working down there.

Their advice was further blackberry removal should not detrimentally impact the species, in fact as long as we do not do too much too quickly it should open up new habitat for them, providing good spots to shelter in over winter and make the tracks a lot friendlier for

climbers! Win win! So our Volunteer Support Officer, Steph Cole allocated funds for further treatment of blackberry in this site, and at the Crag Care day in March climbers came along and pushed back the blackberry boundary. I am hoping by now most climbers will have seen the amazing results but for anyone who hasn't (or can't!) get down there here are some before and after photos of the area.

Once again I am so pleased to be able to report such positive news and I would like to thank all of those who came along and helped out in 2017/18. So much work has gone into the past 4 years of Crag Care to be able to get to this spot. We will keep with the program of pushing olives, broom, blackberry and everything else which invades our crag from the top down so we can eliminate these things entirely and spend much more time doing what we truly love. Getting out for a climb!



*Above left: 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary May 2018; above: Cunningham skinks at Far Crag.*



*Left: Far Crag before Looking east January 2018; above: Far Crag working bee Looking east March 2018*

## DEW: Attention All Climbers

The Senior Ranger at Morialta asked the Club to distribute the following message, prompted by a thread on the CCSA Facebook page concerning a rattly block at Far Crag. Note that the policy applies to all gazetted crags (Morialta, Onkaparinga, Waitpinga and Moonarie):

*The Department for Environment and Water has recently been made aware of a post on this blog raising concerns regarding a section of rock on a climb (Roadshow) at Far Crag at the rock climbing area in Morialta Conservation Park.*

*DEW wishes to take this opportunity to remind climbers the stability of the rock surfaces at any DEW rock climbing site is not guaranteed, and DEW does not actively manage the rock faces. Climbers undertake the activity at their own risk and are responsible for their own safety. We encourage the climbing community to continue to share information on matters such as this.*

*Please contact the Senior Ranger, Dave Heard, on 08 8336 0901 if further information is required.*



*Mori love. Photo: Kylie Jarrett*



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