Friends of Garden Island Creek Landcare celebrates second year

For a Landcare group marking only two years since forming, 2022 was a year of great growth and accomplishment for the Friends of Garden Island Creek (FoGIC).

At the beginning of 2022 FoGIC successfully applied for a federal grant that financed a study of the beach erosion at Garden Island Sands. The area has been identified as one of the beaches most severely affected by erosion in Tasmania, a problem made starkly clear by the line of stranded tree stumps left on the beach as the foreshore reserve has been eaten away over the years.

Locals have been without adequate beach access for over 2 years since the previous access (a concrete boat ramp) was undermined by erosion and removed by Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service due to safety concerns. This left a drop of approximately one metre from the end of the beach road to the level of the sand, a jump not easily navigable for many in the community. Thanks to a grant through the Federal Government’s *Preparing Australian Communities Program*, coastal erosion consultants were engaged to study the erosion and develop a management plan for Garden Island Sands that will inform possible future beach access options.

Over the course of the year, FoGIC also hosted well-attended workshops covering a variety of landcare themes. In June, Landcare Tasmania’s water monitoring workshop was run in Garden Island Creek to up-skill community members interested in forming a water watch group. Next was a Tasmanian devil den day, at which participants learned how to promote devil habitat on our properties. We wrapped up the year with a series of two Caring for Country workshops, made possible through a grant from Bendigo Community Bank Huon Valley. A cultural burning workshop was held in October, at which a group of locals had the opportunity to learn from experienced indigenous fire practitioners Jason Andrew Smith and Danny Gardner of Patrula Nayri. In December, we were treated to a foreshore walk with Trish Hodge of nita education, who explained traditional uses of many local coastal plants for tucker, medicine, jewellery making and more.

FoGIC looks forward to another year ahead of actions to look after and improve our local area. Our next community gathering will be to release the findings of the study into the beach erosion and to discuss the recommendations of the management plan. This will be held on Saturday 28th January 2023 at a public meeting held at 11am at the turning circle at Garden Island Sands. All locals and interested folks are warmly invited to attend and hear firsthand from the coastal erosion consultants, and to discuss possible next steps.

Friends of Garden Island Creek