

Friends of Deal Island Committee Meeting on Zoom 13 January 2026

Apologies: Cathie Plowman, David Butler, Gabrielle Balon, Jo Widdowson

Attendees: Stuart and Georgie Dudgeon, Cassie Strain, Tamara Terwal, Jane Davis, Mike Comfort

Autumn Working Bee

As per email correspondence, the PWS 2026 calendar for Deal Island has included: re-roofing of the Superintendent's Cottage (Museum) in March and Parks and Wildlife Service planning month for February. Discussion concluded with the decision not to have an autumn working bee as the timing was poor for weeding (as the weeds would have already seeded). The option for a smaller Working Bee in April concentrating in the rehabilitation zone of East Cove: planting; ensuring stabilisation of the hessian barriers etc; was deemed as probably not being a cost-effective plan noting the current limited funding level.

Recent phone discussion by Stuart with Dominique Couzins, PWS: regarding whether the Caretakers could assist with seaspurge: Dominique stated that the current Caretakers don't have the weed-recognition skills, but that she would like maps of the seaspurge infestation areas and some plant identification photos to assist future Caretakers in some of these tasks.

Discussion regarding the spread of ragwort, the slowness of the biological controls of the ragwort including whether we, and the Caretakers, should do more weeding of ragwort. Stuart mentioned that historically other hard-working, larger groups including Penny Tyson, who instigated the current weed plan, were also unable to control the spread. Stuart proposed that one of the members could further look at research on ragwort control such as, once plants are somewhat weakened by the biological control methods would spot spraying be a viable option.

A member of the Spring 2025 Working Bee, Kaely Kreger has expressed an interest in assisting with GIS plan for tracking of weeds on Deal Island in the future (in supplementation to John Marsden Smedley's work).

Actions:

Stuart to ask Dominique / her PWS replacement as to whether the following was possible:

- Ask the next Caretakers to plant the seedlings in the East Cove rehabilitation zone
- Before the Spring Working Bee, ask the spring Caretakers to collect small branches with seed pods of Allocasuarinas. So that the Spring Working Bee can place them in the East Cove rehabilitation zone to help with seeding and bank stabilisation.
- Tamara volunteered to look at further research on ragwort control methods
- Re grant applications:
 - subsequent to this meeting Jane has sent a message to Tasmanian Landcare asking as to whether FoDI are eligible to apply for their grants and the grant dates..
 - Wildcare Grant applications are requested twice yearly, the next one being:

- Monday 2nd March 2026 – Round 1 of 2026 grants open
- Thursday 2nd April 2026 (midnight)– Applications close
- Friday 1st May 2026 – Grant announcements

February Weekend Meeting at Bicheno: 7, 8 February

Plan to prioritise:

1. Ragwort weeding plan as an extension to Penny Tyson's 2015 Weed Plan
2. Review the 2018 FoDI / PWS Partnership Agreement plan and in readiness for liaison with the new PWS representative. Planning to include items already proposed in our email chain such:
 - as using PWS flights to fly in potting mix, rehabilitation stabilisation equipment etc to make the most of the 'empty' planes
 - Aim for Caretakers to be more involved in weeding
 - Any potential updated Ragwort weed plan
3. Funding Applications: start planning