

### Gilson College at Organ Pipes National Park

After hearing of the success of the application for funding, by Ian Taylor and FOOPs, it seemed like it would not be possible to begin any significant work by us. The clearing work moved along very well but feral goats and a dry winter did not auger well for our contribution in 2014.

By mid July it was confirmed that we could go ahead with some planting and after some initial difficulties, the weather would you believe, the first group of students planted the first trees and shrubs on August 20. For the next ten days seven different groups of students (around 150 different students in all) planted almost one thousand trees and shrubs.



It is hoped that this introduction to the park will encourage these students to build a connection to this place and they will want to visit this place in future years but will take an active interest in its future.

As well as the planting we have further contributed to this initiative by visiting on the 29th of October with a small group of Year 9 students who worked on 'Gilson Hill' initially going through and checking each plant, removing those which had died, and ensuring the plant guards were all in place. After this they began digging out the box thorn bush roots that had begun to regenerate after the clearing.

On the 12th and 26th of November, other groups of students began the sticky task of removing some of the Prickly Pears that are so prevalent in the park.



We are looking forward to continuing our involvement with the Park in 2015 and beyond. There is much to do, but as someone wise once said "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." We trust our faltering first step is the harbinger of a productive and effective partnership with FOOPs and the Organ Pipes National Park.

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