



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026 FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

Introduction

UBC is the Peak Body for bushland conservation groups: We are a community association of 90 member groups (each with their own local membership) and 100+ individual members – all of whom have a common interest in the conservation of our natural biodiversity, with a particular focus on urban bushlands, wetlands, coastal and riverine natural areas. UBC is wholly volunteer led and relies on membership fees, donations, grants, and volunteer hours to deliver on our advocacy role of being a public voice for what remains of our urban native vegetation.

2025 was another busy year and I am grateful for the extraordinary number of hours contributed by our UBC Committee and volunteers – a relatively small number of people.

We ran talks and walks for members; made submissions to environmental consultation processes; continued our membership of the EPA Stakeholder Reference Group; focused our advocacy around the creation of the Yule Brook Regional Park (YBRP); engaged with decision makers and senior public servants; consolidated our engagement with CCWA's Nature Program and 'nature' eNGOs; started updating (and nearly finished) our Strategic Plan and developed and implemented a purposeful social media strategy.

There is still much to be done in a world where wins are elusive but where most of us all have a patch where we can retreat and there, we can help make our natural world a better place.

2025 Highlights

Key project – Creating the Yule Brook Regional Park

Throughout 2025 UBC worked with the Beeliar Group of Concerned Scientists and others to raise awareness of the need for the creation of the Yule Brook Regional Park as the best way to protect the amazing biodiversity of the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands (GBSW) from the threats of encroaching development. A number of actions have focussed on GBSW including

- AGM presentation by Daniel Jan Martin.
- Meeting with the new Minister for Environment Matthew Swanbourn and the new Chair of the WA Planning Commission Emma Cole
- The Beeliar Group invited Minister Swinbourn to visit the Alison Baird Reserve within GBSW.
- Lodging submissions and appeals against developments proposed for areas adjacent to GBSW including most recently Wattle Grove South.
- Monitoring the implementation timelines for Ministerial Statements relevant to MKSEA developments adjacent to GBSW
- Making contact with DBCA staff newly allocated to conservation efforts in the GBSW.

This is a long-term project that will be reported regularly through our newsletters and social media.

Nature Alliance with CCWA

UBC continued our strong collaboration with CCWA and other environmental organisations during 2025. I am pleased to report that a Nature program has been deeply embedded in CCWA's operations. UBC contributed to the content of "[Back from the Brink A Protection Agenda for Nature](#)". We helped frame the key issues and provided case studies for the full report.

2025 was a year of advocacy with Federal and State elections with UBC working closely with CCWA Nature Program to encourage advocacy in advance of the State election.

We campaigned against aspects of the **State Development Bill** which passed through the WA Parliament by year end. Its purpose is to *provide a framework for the coordination, facilitation and promotion of development and activities of strategic or economic significance*. This Act can prevail over other Acts – including the Environmental Protection Act 1986 (EP Act) – and further diminishing EP Act powers.

Federally, we have seen changes to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) including the formation of a national EPA. Public consultation is in progress for two draft standards: matters of national environmental significance and offsets.

Major Submissions

During 2025 the UBC Submissions Working Group led by Marg Owen and James Mumme made more than 20 submissions. Read more on our [“Your Voice Needed Now”](#) page.

We spent much of the year commenting against development proposals including:

- **Jandakot Treeby DSP.** Impacting a significant area of native vegetation, mainly Banksia Woodlands, involving incursions into Bush Forever site 389; and impacting on a roosting site and foraging areas for Carnaby’s and Baudin’s black cockatoos.
- **Anketell Road Upgrade PER.** 92 ha of native vegetation – including 40 ha of the Tuart woodlands and forests TEC and 14 ha Banksia Woodlands TEC, and concurrent loss of 4 ha native vegetation from Bush Forever. This also included significant loss of foraging habitat for Carnaby’s and Forest Red-tail Black Cockatoo species
- **Appeal against the Wattle Grove South** report. UBC appealed the EPA’s recommendation on the grounds that the recommendations undermine known ecological linkages and wetland buffer zones as well as not including a clear, quantitative assessment of cumulative impacts from adjacent developments. **UBC Appeal partially upheld.**
- **Alcoa’s forest mining expansion.** Proposals by Alcoa to clear nearly 11,500 ha of the Northern Jarrah Forest (NJF) for bauxite mining which is the largest amount of forest clearing ever before the EPA. A record number of submissions were received.
- **Carabooda District Structure Plan:** The UBC congratulates the EPA and the WAPC on the work undertaken to create (by the EPA) and largely follow (by WAPC) the strategic advice for the Carabooda DSP. UBC commends the inclusion of much of the EPA’s recommendations into the DSP but believes that better protection of the environment could be achieved through securing a stronger north-south corridor with greater attention to connectivity and designing in more 'avoid'.
- **Northern Transmission Line to Neerabup Terminal:** Given that power transmission is so vital for the growth in Perth and for a just transition to green energy, and that we expect this proposal to be recommended with conditions, UBC’s submission focused on the quality and adequacy of offsets. We opined that it did not yet demonstrate compliance with the Western Australian Environmental Offsets Policy and requested amendments.

The 2025 list of submissions is appended to this report. We have been finding ChatGPT helpful with analysis of the endless amount of environmental documentation. One outcome of our interest in development proposals in the City of Swan has been the increasing connection between environmental groups and individuals in Swan.

Advocacy & Campaigning

Engaging with decision makers

We met with Matthew Swinbourn, MLC, Minister for the Environment and took the opportunity to advocate for the formation of the Yule Brook Regional Park as well as expressing our concern on the findings of the recent [Auditor General's Report](#) on Threatened Ecological Communities. We followed up protesting his decision to not uplist Baudin's Black Cockatoo as critically endangered.

UBC continued to meet regularly with the Chair of the EPA to voice issues of concern for the protection of our urban natural environment and participated in the EPA’s Stakeholder Reference Group and related consultations.

UBC also met with the new Chair of the WAPC Emma Cole in March and introduce UBC and our key priorities around Bush Forever and future urban development.

Support for local campaigns

During 2025 committee members supported advocacy campaigns for many members. We asked our network to aid campaigns run by the Friends of Erindale Road Bushland, Friends of Moore River Estuary, Melon Hill Bushland Group, the Friends of Trigg Beach and the Swan Communities Environmental Alliance.

Memberships

As of 31 December 2025, *UBC Membership* was 90 Member Groups and 104 supporters. Thank you to everyone who supports UBC, your presence makes our organisation and our advocacy stronger.

Grants

In 2025, UBC held 3 active grants including acting as sponsor on 2 grants for unincorporated Member Groups, with grant income of \$33,688. 1 grant was finalised during the year. New grants received were from Department of Social Services (volunteer grant), Department of Business (Stronger Communities program) and WA Election commitment via DBCA.

Committee operations

We filled all Committee positions in 2025. New to the Committee (and much younger than the rest of us) were Oscar Jones (committee member) and April Small (Deputy Secretary). We have enjoyed and benefited from their Gen Z. perspectives.

The 2025 Committee was: Christine Richardson (Chairperson), Heidi Hardisty (Deputy Chairperson), Philip Thomas (Treasurer), Elizabeth Eaton (Acting Secretary), Sue Conlan. Oscar Jones, James Mumme, Marg Owen (Committee) plus subsidiary offices Colma Keating (Memberships Officer) and April Small (Deputy Secretary).

We continued with our Committee / Subcommittee **operating structure** with the following **subcommittees** operating during 2025 (i) Submissions, (ii) Advocacy and (iii) Member Engagement. We recognise the contributions by Robyn Colledge, Chris Allbeury, Lucy Pezzali, Vicki Caulfield, Danielle Brady, Colma Keating.

A highlight has been the development and implementation of UBC's social media strategy through the wonderful work of Oscar Jones and student volunteers.

Strategic Planning

In August UBC started the process of updating our Strategic Plan by asking members to comment on future focus and direction we should take via a short online survey. We then followed this with a facilitated workshop in October to reflect on feedback received, and to create a draft strategy. Following much discussion a draft strategy has been developed and will be presented for feedback at the 2026 AGM.

Our People

The Friends of Inglewood Triangle were awarded the Active Citizenship Award by the City of Stirling at their January 2025 celebrations.

Conservation Matters

Bush Forever Update

UBC continues to advocate for Bush Forever including for the purchase of sites still outstanding and for the transfer of Bush Forever areas from the care of the WA Planning Commission (WAPC) to either the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) or the appropriate Local Government Authority (LGA). The bush benefits from this continuing program based on its currently listed priorities. We understand that a review is being planned. We hope to hear more at the next round table, scheduled for March. Handing over BF sites under WAPC ownership to an accepting organization (usually DBCA or an LGA) is under the usual pressure of appropriate funding and within inter-agency negotiations.

OAG report: Conservation of threatened ecological communities in WA

The Office of the Auditor General released a [report](#) that very clearly states that better planning and resourcing is needed to protect WA's threatened ecological communities. The audit assessed if the

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions is effectively managing threatened ecological communities (TECs) and concluded that it **is not**.

The findings showed that it is not clear if the condition of TECs across WA is improving or declining. Much better planning and resources are needed to protect WA's TECs. The Department has listed 65 TECs, but it is not yet giving full effect to those protections under the Biodiversity Conservation Act, leaving some TECs more vulnerable than others - with legal but not practical protection. DBCA does not have a statewide strategic plan in place to monitor and manage TECs; hence it does not have clear goals defined and cannot determine what level of resourcing and funding is needed. It is worth noting that TECs on government owned or managed land that is not within DBCA's portfolio are not required to protect TECs.

Furthermore, there are 390 ecological communities that are at risk and a priority for listing as a TEC. Delaying the nomination of a PEC essentially delays the potential legislative protections that come with TEC status. With the current level of resourcing, it would take DBCA more than one hundred years to complete the assessments of these PECs.

UBC has been encouraging the State Government to follow the recommendations of the report.

Advocacy

Key advocacy actions have been listed in highlights.

Meetings with Decision Makers

During 2025 UBC Committee have met with the Minister for Environment Matthew Swinbourn; the Chair of the EPA Darren Walsh; the Chair of the WAPC Emma Cole

UBC has continued its membership of the EPA Stakeholder Reference Group which meets 4 times per year.

Save the black cockatoos – Perth Surf Park

UBC became aware that the RAC was investing in the Perth Surf Park and re-kindled its campaign to protect the banksia woodlands on that site by encouraging the community to contact RAC and ask that they do not invest in this project. This was largely on social media and culminated in an action outside RAC offices on 24 September.

Member Engagement

New Members

UBC welcomed 2 new *member groups* during 2025. These groups were invited to introduce their group / their patch at meetings throughout the year. We welcomed:

- Swan Communities Environmental Association
- Jane Brook Catchment Group

We also welcomed 26 supporter members in 2025.

Meetings, Talks, Walks and Workshops 2025

2025 was a busy year of talks, walks and workshops. Our talks were an opportunity to bring together the membership of UBC and to welcome new groups. The sessions hosted by UBC are shown in the table below. Further information is available from our events page.

DATE	TYPE	SPEAKER / HOST	TOPIC
18 February	Online	Elizabeth Eaton, Katherine Neaves, Colma Keating	Advocating for urban biodiversity "from bushlands to ballots"
4 March	AGM	Daniel Jan Martin	Creating the Yule Brook Regional Park
13 April	Walk	Friends of Manning Park Ridge	Walk Manning Park Ridge- Critically endangered Honey Myrtle Shrubland
22 May	Talk	Dr Joe Fontaine	Heat and drought impacts on our bushlands

DATE	TYPE	SPEAKER / HOST	TOPIC
1 June	Walk	Rob Bradbury (Friends of The Vines)	Protecting The Vines Bushlands, urban fringe impacts, ground water drawdown
26 June	Talk	Peta Kelsey	The Facts about Prescribed Burning
31 July	Talk	Sandy Boulter Daniel Kingston Sara Saberi	Get ready for local government elections Draw up a questionnaire on value of local bushland to candidates.
17 August	Walk	David Pike (WSWA)	Walk in Craigie cat, fox, dog fenced bush.
24 September	Talk	Francesca Flynn, Walter McGuire	Introducing BoorYul-Bah-Bilya, rehabilitating the Helena River.

Grants and Projects

Volunteer Grant (federal government)

UBC received a Volunteer Grant (via Federal seat of Perth MP's office) for \$4,363 to cover costs such as insurance and internet coverage.

Sponsor for Friends groups

UBC sponsored the following projects for unincorporated member groups in 2025:

- Friends of Coolbinia Bushland: Small scale election commitment \$11,000
- Friends of Karak Cooby: City of Cockburn cultural grant \$5,000 (completed in 2025)
- Friends of Inglewood Triangle: Stronger Communities 9 (signage) \$18,325

Strategic and Operational matters

Succession planning

Succession planning and governance continued to be a focus for 2025 with effort put into implementing the subcommittee structure. We remain committed to a continuous process that plans for people to move on from committee roles. This also means close attention to knowledge retention for the organisation and ensuring there is knowledge transfer from one person to the next. As people leave the committee, we encourage them to keep up roles within a subcommittee or other volunteer support. Never lost!

Changes to Rules made at the 2025 AGM

The 2025 AGM made changes to UBC Rules to meet ATO requirements or to streamline operations:

- Removed all references to Gift Fund and replace with the need for segregated donation accounting. There is no regulatory need for a separate formal gift fund. The need is an accounting requirement for segregated donation funds.
- Removed all references to the need for Financial Audit. UBC is classified as a small charity by ACNC (annual revenue <\$500,000) and the need for Audit is not a regulatory requirement. An audit may still be requested by the management committee at any time.
- Removed requirement for new member groups to be approved by a meeting of Member Groups at a General Meeting. Delays in approving new memberships would be eliminated and the risk of inappropriate admission is considered very small. New members would be expected to introduce themselves to the UBC membership at the next available opportunity.
- Removed the minimum meeting number requirement. Meetings would be held as and when needed and may include more flexible formats.
- Other small administrative changes

Financial Summary

The 2025 finances will be lodged separately with the ACNC as required.

Subcommittees

During 2025 the UBC Committee continued to do more of its operational work via working groups.

Submissions Working Group (SWG)

Submissions and / or appeals are a key avenue for UBC to influence proposed developments as well as government policies/plans that will impact on bushland/wetlands. The Submissions team was led by Marg Owen and James Mumme with assistance from others. The table of submissions is at the end of the report.

Advocacy Subcommittee (ASC)

The Advocacy Working Group continued in 2025 with Heidi Hardisty as convenor and with Christine Richardson, Elizabeth Eaton, Oscar Jones and Lucy Pezzali as members. Increasingly it is clear that planning processes are the dominant force in decisions about bush protection.

Member Engagement Subcommittee

This subcommittee met periodically during 2025 to deliver the usual full program of talks and walks as well as monthly newsletters, more frequent social media posts and intermittent blog posts. We are grateful to Oscar Jones for the development of a comprehensive social media strategy and for sourcing volunteers to deliver that work.

Acknowledging contributions to UBC operations

Committee Thank You

A very special thank you to our dedicated and energetic UBC Committee members Heidi Hardisty, Philip Thomas, Elizabeth Eaton, Marg Owen, Sue Conlan, Oscar Jones, James Mumme, Colma Keating and April Small. We've had robust discussions, but all the while centred around a passion for the protection of urban bushland and wetlands.

Other volunteers and supporters

There are many others who assist and whose contributions help make UBC strong. Thank you to Chris Allbeury, Robyn Colledge, Vicki Caulfield, Lucy Pezzali, Colma Keating for all your help in many ways. Thank you all.

Submissions Lodged 2025

In addition to the listed submissions, UBC engaged in many separate consultation processes in 2025. We also supported member group campaigns by giving deputations at local council meetings or attending appeals with member groups.

Submitted	Project Title	Agency
21 Dec 2025	Submission re: Northern Terminal to Neerabup Terminal 330kV Transmission Line.	EPA
17 Dec 2025	Submission re: Erindale Road Bushland ERD.	EPA
12 Dec 2025	Submission re: Draft National Recovery Plan for Melaleuca sp. Wanneroo.	DCEEW
9 Sep 2025	Residential Apartments (Social and Affordable Housing), Redcliffe	DPLH
27 Aug 2025	Submission re: South Trigg proposed Board Walk.	City of Stirling
Aug 2025	Appeal: Against MRS Amendment 1388/57 – Wattle Grove South – EPA Report 1788.	Appeals Convenor
17 Aug 2025	Submission re: Anketell Road Upgrade (Leath Road to Kwinana Freeway).	EPA
14 Aug 2025	Submission re Jandakot-Treeby District Structure Plan.	WAPC
14 Aug 2025	Submission re ALCOA's Bauxite Mining on the Darling Range 2023 – 2027 and Pinjarra Alumina Refinery Revised Proposal – PER.	EPA

Submitted	Project Title	Agency
15 June 2025	MRS Amendment 1411 North Ellenbrook East	WAPC
2 June 2025	MRS 1435 Bullsbrook Part lot 5892 Maralla Road	DPLH
17 May 2025	Rottnest Workers Accommodation – 7 day comment	EPA
12 April 2025	Bindi Bindi Toodyay Road Reserve and Tenth Road reserve Bejoording CPS 1013-1	DWER
14 April	Clearing Permit 10956 - widening the share path from Ocean Reef to Burns Beach	DWER
12 April 2025	Perth Airport draft MDP: Site 4 Tarlton Crescent	Perth Airport
4 April	Interview: Appeal Tonkin Highway Grade Separated Interchanges (Hale Road and Welshpool Road)	Appeals Convenor
25 March 2025	Breckler Park, Dianella – 3 X 3 Basketball Court proposal	City of Stirling
28 March 2025	Henley Brook Avenue (HBA), City of Swan, clearing permit appeal	Appeals Convenor
19 Feb 2025	Submission re Perth Airport draft MDP: Site 4 Tarlton Crescent.	Perth Airport

Christine Richardson 1 March 2026 (Version 3).