

*UBC acknowledges the Traditional Owners, the Noongar people, as the spiritual and cultural custodians of this land.  
Together we care for country.*



*Ubiquitous grass park - Urban Bushland Opportunity?*

## Liveable Neighbourhoods Need Biodiversity

We are all familiar with this image from countless parks across Perth; lonely trees surrounded by irrigated grass. New research by Dr Nicole Edwards and Dr Julian Bolleter (Australian Urban Design Research Centre, AUDRC) shows there may be an appetite for more wild spaces in the city.

In a talk to UBC in September 'Reconciling Urban Density and Nature in Suburban Cities', Dr Bolleter (Director, AUDRC) presented early results from the 'Natural Density Survey' in which around 1000 people were canvassed for their preferences in upgrading Perth's established urban parks. Participants were given these options (presented in visual form) to choose from:

1. Traditional park – (fringing trees, winding paths)
2. Formal garden – (geometric designs, water features)
3. Productive parks – (fruit and vegetable growing)
4. Wetlands – (seasonal wetland, boardwalks)
5. Bushland – (all native species, gravel paths).

Participants were also asked about other urban design elements. Surprisingly 63% of participants supported urban densification, citing reduced urban sprawl as the major benefit. There was highest support for densification around parks improved to bushland (81%) and wetland (79%) versions, with similar support for apartment living near such parks.

The researchers were asked whether enthusiastic UBC members could have skewed the data. They were confident about their dataset which covered a broad range of demographic categories. Overall the results suggest people may be less resistant to infill than expected, but that the kind of infill is crucial.

Buildings in the 3-4 story range appear to be preferred but these deliver lower returns to developers. Dr Bolleter explained that above this height, energy and water management became much more difficult. The sweet spot for construction of sustainable buildings may also be the one people prefer, when combined with biodiverse urban green space. Liveable medium density neighbourhoods with high quality green space are achievable and necessary to allow people places to live but also experience nature. Perth could have better outcomes than uncontrolled backyard infill where 40% of land space is wasted on driveways. Pursuing bush/wetland parks could greatly improve public tree canopy, when 60% of trees in Perth are vulnerable on private land.

The results showing people would like grassy parks converted to biodiverse bush/wetland parks is a different kind of evidence that the public do want urban bush. While organisations like UBC continually advocate for particular bush remnants under threat, rarely are ordinary people asked simply what they prefer in their urban environment. Asking Local Government Authorities (LGAs) for what a majority of people want, with evidence, could be an important new advocacy lever.

Dr Bolleter was asked what UBC can do to support better quality development. He suggested highlighting the intersection of public health and urban design but also lobbying LGAs about the wasted expenditure on grass parks. AUDRC research published this year has also shown [public support for densification and green space-oriented development](#) (density around parks). As this new work becomes more widely available it can be used to support preservation of urban bushland AND better quality development.



Threatened Species Day (Photo: Donna Chapman)

## Editorial

Here we are in the middle of Spring and Nature has shown great signs of resilience in Southwest WA. Friends groups have been conducting spring walks on their patches while watching carefully for new growth on trees, shrubs and understorey as we weed furiously.

At UBC, we are celebrating membership growth to more than 90 member groups plus an additional 110 individual supporter members. You can read more about our membership reach and the patches they care for on p. 10. We have stories of advocacy and activity from some of our groups later in this edition.

Our lead article is drawn from the great talk given by Dr Julian Bolleter in September on the topic of Natural Density where he showed there is community support for urban densification if grassy parks are converted to biodiverse bush/wetland parks. Using such practices we can have the preservation of urban bushland AND better quality development.

UBC has recently made a submission to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on their draft guidance for Cumulative Impact Assessment and Holistic Impact Assessment. Once this guide is finalised, we will have another tool for submission writing. We will be able to use our local knowledge about other developments in an area to challenge the assumptions made by proponents regarding environmental impact.

The WA Government recently announced the appointment of Darren Walsh as the new EPA Chair. We take this opportunity to thank Lee McIntosh, Deputy Chair for the excellent way that she has engaged with UBC in the past six months whilst she has been Acting Chair.

Our other recent major submission has been to the Swan River Trust with regards to the draft Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) River Protection Strategy (p. 3).

We were pleased to see that the draft plan recognises that the most significant threat to the health of the Swan Canning Rivers is clearing in the catchments leading to unfiltered run off. A point to remember for future submissions.

But we cannot ignore that October has been a tough month for WA's environment. The WA Government has brought through significant and regressive changes to the Environmental Protection Act as well as declaring that the WA EPA will no longer assess for greenhouse gases. This will be handed over to the Commonwealth's Safeguard Mechanism. We will have more to say in the next edition about these changes as well as the Conservation Council WA Alliance's work on a positive reform agenda for the protection of WA's environment.

Never has advocacy for our environment been a more pressing matter. Continue the good work that you are doing on your patch, in your community and with potential decision makers at all three levels of government.

UBC wishes all our supporters well as 2024 draws to a close. We hope to see you at CCWA's Annual Conference on 13 – 14 November and at the UBC AGM on Tuesday 4 March 2025.

<h3>Inside this issue</h3>	
River Protection Strategy .....	3
Nedlands Bushland Budget Restored.....	5
Informed Planning Decisions.....	6
Community Poetry .....	7
Exploring Our Membership .....	10
Group News .....	11
Events.....	15



Unexpected inundation in adjoining Swan Valley vineyard and orchard properties during yet another low rainfall (Photo: Jan Zeck)

## Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) River Protection Strategy

The State Government's draft **Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) River Protection Strategy** (RPS) was an encouraging reminder that there is an awareness that actions and consequences are interconnected across catchments. Highlighted also is that we often do not take advantage of such high-level strategies to hold decision makers to account in the protection and management of these far-reaching river systems.

At first glance we think of just the highly visible 'Swan and Canning Rivers'. However, this RPS reminds us to think about movement of water through the catchment including all waterways and wetlands. Think of those near you or are part of your patch, including:

- Rivers such as Mandoon/Helena, Southern, Wungong.
- Brooks including Bayswater, Bennett, Bickley, Claise, Churchman, Crystal, Ellen, Henley, Jane, Susannah, Woolooloo, Yule.
- Creeks such as Bannister, Blackadder, Bull.
- Main Drains including South Belmont, Mills Street, Wharf Street.
- Wetlands/Damplands such as Anstey-Keane, Baigup, Beeliar, Brixton Street, Galup/Monger, Lightning, Munday, Star, Yellagonga.

The draft provides excellent summaries of threats and their impacts including climate change (flash flooding, extreme weather events, increased temperature), clearing, fire, population growth, water abstraction, human disturbance and resourcing. It contains excellent infographics suitable for broader awareness and education. It makes a strong connection between 'healthy river system' and 'healthy people'.

### Concerns highlighted in the UBC submission included:

- The key focus is on SYMPTONS not CAUSES (eg the causes are clearing in the catchment, misalignment of planning policies/procedures, environmental impact assessment allowing for development, and lack of resources for the protection and conservation management of the river system).
- The status of the RPS needs to be asserted. Policies and management plans that impact on the River System must be aligned (eg public open space management by LGAs).

- The over focus on 'use of the foreshores for lifestyle'. Adequate and sustained resources are key to improving the ecological health of the RPS (the priority) – on which all the other values rely including 'lifestyle'.

### Impact of clearing and hard-stand on water movement in one catchment area

Significant tree canopy has been lost in the City of Swan (2011 34% - 2020 12%). Development approvals &/or building have resulted in removal of canopy and the 'covering up' of ground that would have been able to absorb rainfall. Impervious roads direct run-off to sumps and houses cover most of the lot with more hard-stand (concrete, paving, fake lawn) instead of garden. Impacts seen in the suburb of Brabham and surrounding Swan Valley include water sumps that cannot cope plus severe flooding – even with reduced rainfall as the developments and associated hard-stand direct 'their' rainfall off-site – to someone else's property. This also results in bushland &/or wetlands receiving too much surface water – thus drowning some habitats and waterlogging the soils.

### Making this high-level strategy work for your patch

The draft RPS provides a terrific framework ([pages 16-19](#)) that we can adapt to better understand and communicate the threats and associated impacts on our patch:

- Locate your patch or concern in the catchment or sub-catchment.
- Mark on a map your nearby waterways and wetlands.
- Scan for development or management proposals in your sub-catchment and consider how these might affect the ecological health of your patch.
- Focus on causes. Use the threats and impacts listed and determine which are relevant.
- Add in threats and impacts not included.
- Craft your letter, submission, Facebook post, council deputation, questions based on your assessment. Keep it short and sharp. Remind your target audience why it is important.

Colma Keating and Sue Conlan, *UBC*

# The Story of Our Hero Tree

“I am a 400-year-old jarrah tree, standing tall in the heart of the Churchlands bushland. For centuries, my roots have run deep into the earth, and my branches have reached toward the sky, providing shelter, food, clean air and life to the creatures that call this place home. I’ve stood here long before cities and roads were ever imagined, a silent witness to the passage of time, watching generations of wildlife thrive on and around me.

I’m more than just a tree. Over seventy different species find shelter and food among my leaves, each playing its part in keeping this delicate ecosystem alive. My hollows are homes, carved by time, where the birds find refuge and raise their young. The birds I know as Karak, and Ngolyenok gather with their families and are nourished by the food I provide. They and the myriad other birds that nest in my branches have sung the same songs for hundreds of years. I have been touched by the hands of the Whadjuk Noongar people, who used my bark to craft their canoes, shelters, tools and shields. I am also part of something much larger, a crucial link in a chain that stretches across this bushland from Herdsman Lake to Bold Park connecting forests, wetlands, and wildlife.

But now, after centuries of standing strong, my existence is under threat. A plan to build a road through this bushland would destroy me and so much of what this land represents. I am told by some the road is needed for traffic, but I’m also told that all the studies show there is no need. This road would cut through a precious wildlife corridor, one of the few remaining links between ecosystems, threatening not just me but every plant and animal that depends on this land.

I am not alone in this fight. Botanists and conservationists, people who recognise my worth, have assessed this land. They’ve seen my age, my resilience, and the life I support. They know how rare it is to find a tree like me on the Swan Coastal Plain, and they’ve spoken out to save me. People from the local community who walk these paths and cherish what I provide are rallying together to protect me and all around me, none of which once gone can be replaced.

For the people fighting to save me and the land I live on, we are not just wood, leaves and plants we are history, culture, and life. If I fall, so much more falls with me — hundreds of years of growth, countless species, and an irreplaceable connection to the past that should be retained for the future.

I have weathered storms, droughts, and fires, but now I face my greatest challenge. I cannot speak, but those who love this bushland are speaking for me. They are standing up, raising their voices, and telling those in power that some things are too precious to be lost.

I am a 400-year-old jarrah tree, and my time may be running out but with the strength and unity of those who care for me, perhaps I will continue to stand for centuries to come.”

Lee Katavatis, *Save Churchlands Bushland*



Hero Jarrah Tree Churchlands



Boo-book sheltering from hot weather (Photo: Neville Hills)

## Nedlands Bushland Budget Restored

Nedlands is a collection of leafy suburbs and has numerous bushland areas, coastal reserve, and river foreshore areas which are enjoyed by the entire community. This makes it a lovely, and very popular place to live.

We know now that green spaces, and in particular tree canopy and natural areas with high levels of biodiversity, are essential for both the planet and for people. They cool our cities, clean our air, lower our energy demands, increase the value of surrounding homes, mitigate climate change and improve the mental and physical wellbeing of our people. As one example of what is now a large body of science, a recent study has confirmed that green spaces with high biodiversity have more mental health benefits than those with low biodiversity. They are an essential part of the infrastructure of a city.

These important local community assets are cared for by the City of Nedlands and the volunteer groups of Shenton Bushland, Hollywood Reserve, Friends of Mt Claremont Playing Fields, Swanbourne Coastal Alliance, and Melon Hill Bushland Group.

The Nedlands 2024 Budget was passed on the evening of 19 August. Unusually, the Budget was passed on the same night it was presented. The recording available on the City of Nedlands website is of a rather chaotic meeting with 6 councillors declaring that, due to the late distribution of the latest budget, they had not given due consideration to the agenda papers. The Budget that was eventually passed on that same night contained a much lower rate rise (3.6% rather than the recommended and advertised 9.5%) and was immediately followed by extensive publicity on socials.

It took some while for details of this Budget to emerge. However, it eventually became apparent that the Environmental Conservation Budget had been cut by around 47%. There was no discussion with any of the Nedlands bushland groups in the lead up to the Budget, and the magnitude of the cut to Environmental Conservation was a complete surprise.

After several months of discussion, we had a very positive meeting with the Mayor of Nedlands on 14 October. We provided Mayor Argyle with a copy of the UBC's letter of support, and discussed the concerns raised in this letter. Mayor Argyle emphasised her commitment to the environment and to the City of Nedlands having the best bushland in Perth.

We are thrilled to announce that following on from this meeting, the City of Nedlands has voted unanimously to restore the Environmental Conservation Budget to its 2023/2024 level to allow maintenance of the natural areas. This will preserve biodiversity, mitigate bushfire risk, increase our climate resilience and ensure that 30 years of hard work is not wasted.

We are very grateful for the environmental and climate leadership shown by the City of Nedlands, and to the Urban Bushland Council for their support.

A full recording of the City of Nedlands Agenda Meeting of 22 October can be found on the Nedlands [Website](#). The Bushcare Maintenance Item is 21.2 – scroll to 1.19.10 of the recording.

Eliza Clapin, *Friends of Melon Hill Bushland*



Seeing for themselves – community representatives met with City of Swan staff and councillors on a recent series of visits to sites along a proposed road extension. (Photo: Marg Owen)

## Informed Planning Decisions – A Community Role

**Read how one community group have mobilised support to challenge development plans in Brabham, a suburb between the western edge of the Swan Valley and Whiteman Park, close to Bush Forever 200 (Old Caversham Air Base) and 304 (Whiteman Park).**

When City of Swan councillors voted 9/5 in August to send the Brabham Stage 3 Local Structure Plan (LSP) back to the developer for a rethink, the extended community who had fought hard to raise awareness of flaws in the plan, breathed a small, yet guarded sigh of relief.

These parcels of land form part of Brabham, a complex and staged development across multiple lots, all part of the urban rollout now happening between the western edge of the Swan Valley and Whiteman Park.

The majority of councillors wanted instead for that land to be used to re-establish an important, lost regional ecological linkage (REL32), to provide safe transfer of flora and fauna between Bush Forever Sites 200 (Old Caversham Air Base) and 304 (Whiteman Park). A train line, a four-lane road, proposed housing and a planned, raised road extension severs the link.

Optimism was boosted in September when Council voted not to support proposed Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment, 1421, that would see land sold decades ago to be part of Whiteman Park, rezoned from ‘Parks and Recreation’ to ‘Urban.’

Community action had been triggered by the release for public comment for the Stage 3 LSP. Locals had identified impacts beyond the LSP footprint, including to the Swan Valley, to critically endangered Carnaby’s Black Cockatoos and other species, and to Banksia woodlands. Only 4.35ha of the 25.9 ha of Banksia woodland (18.91ha ‘good’ to ‘very good’) identified on the 99ha site was to be retained.

Fifty residents, including community group representatives and four local councillors, had attended a meeting in May, where City planners described the LSP that included 43ha of residential lots, primary and secondary schools, a commercial centre and public open space.

When the floor was thrown open for comment, concerns were expressed about loss of tree canopy, impact of rising groundwater within and beyond the site and in particular on Banksia spp., and the assumption that the southern extension of Henley Brook Avenue was inherent in the plan. The proposed route rips down the middle of Bush Forever Site 200, skims a high pressure, above-ground gas metering station before crossing land zoned Priority Agriculture under the Swan Valley Planning Act 2021, and travels through the drop-off, pick-up zone for a primary school with 400 pupils.

One of our community engagement tactics is ‘The Tour’. For years, The Tour has been hosted by locals to give those interested an opportunity to view for themselves these planning challenges around the edge of the Swan Valley. Recent participants included Sue Conlan and Marg Owen from UBC, wetland ecologist Dr Gun Dolva, bushcare supporters, botanists, planners, community groups and councillors.

In the *Sunday Times* on September 22, journalist John Flint wrote that proposed local government planning reforms could mean unelected council chief executives and their staff will perform the role of preparing reports for Development Assessment Panels, without interference from “meddling” councillors and the “pesky” public. Now, community reaction to the council vote on the Brabham LSP and MRS Amendment 1421 is guarded. We realise that it might all be undone by the tick of a pen, should proposed local government planning reforms go ahead.

Cheryl Rogers (B.Sc – Botany, Zoology, U.W.A)



Roe 8 Protest 12th January 2017 (Photo: N. Miles / Freddie)

## Poetry at the Heart of the Community

A transformative workshop bringing together art, poetry, and environmental action to galvanise the community for stewardship and change was held at Walliabup (Bibra Lake) in October by Lakshmi Kanchi, WA Poets and The Wetlands Centre. *Poetry at the Heart of the Community* aimed to show how art can drive meaningful action and foster deep connections resulting in new poetry composition. Eight years ago the final battle for Roe 8 started in the last months of the year and continued over summer to its cessation after a state election in 2017. Today [Rehabilitating Roe 8](#) carries on a large-scale, community-led restoration project as a result of community action. These contributions from the workshop recognise the important role of artists and writers in the final outcome.

### Listening

A magpie chortles and sings—  
Its story unfolds in waves.  
The memory of ages  
pierces me to stillness.

Lilies bloom along lakes  
before shriveling in summer.

A chain of generations  
is forged in egg or womb.

Mud sloshes in triplets born  
on methane odours. Quendas  
shuffle their noses into soil,  
while electric mycelia  
conduct a language to roots.

Ants' antennas click,  
exchanging messages  
above the deep aquifer.

Colin Young

### Fencing

*Rulers charter new straight-lined courses of environmental destruction for the Roe 8 extension; fence whisperers plot green lights, too. Clandestine affinity groups spring up, dodge and parry. Complete strangers mobilise, organise. Creativity thrives, civil disobedience burgeons. Wetland tricksters throw spanners in the works. Brazen silver-haired women warriors in beanies sneak about under moonlight, an irreverent nun taunts police to confess their wetland dreams, the CWA (concerned women anarchists) drop scones, not bombs! a dog-chained scholar proclaims from Crime and Punishment and 1984, a jilted (shrill, racist!) politician ambushes Emperor Barnettus' press conference chasing her upper house dowry, meanwhile a band of disoriented haiku poet decoys thwart fencing on Progress Road, while elsewhere a wrongfully-accused, linen-suited dodgy Anthropologist stirs the pot on stolen/sacred ground. This fabulous, diverse rabble know they belong to communities greater than themselves. Pissed off black cockatoos demand their offsets, graceful sun-moths (Synemon gratiosa) exquisite mottled feathery wings, inconspicuous, not yet endangered, but perilously threatened, potentially a significant force from their reeded sanctuaries, near Hope Road. Alas, they could not arrest Terminator bulldozers on their own. But together we did.*

Sally Knowles (with acknowledgment to Liana Christensen)

### Prescribed Burning Fact Sheets

The South-West Forests Defence Foundation has published 'Prescribed Burning Fact Sheets' August 2024. It details the scientific research which shows that current prescribed burning practices in the south west regions does not give effective protection from wildfires, is hazardous to human health and is causing irreversible loss of biodiversity and to our iconic species such as numbats. Available from: [southwestforestsdefence.org](https://southwestforestsdefence.org)



*Carnaby's Cockatoo (Photo: John Blakey)*

## Keep the Carnaby's Flying/Ngoolarks Forever - Update

The Keep Carnaby's Flying/Ngoolarks Forever (KCF) 2-year project has come to an official close, but a "living project" has been left in place to help conserve the birds. Professor Kris Warren of the School of Veterinary Medicine for Murdoch University and key coordinator hopes "...that this project's collaborations among local governments, NGOs and Friends of Bushland groups will continue beyond the project's lifetime, with ongoing revegetation and rewilding activities to provide new Carnaby's cockatoo food and habitat every year."

Conservation Action Plans (CAP) have been created for the 8 participating LGAs. The City of Melville, City of Cockburn, City of Wanneroo and Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale participated in the first year; the City of Swan, Town of Cambridge, City of Mandurah, and City of Kwinana in the second. CAPs identify areas of cultural significance, roosting sites and priority areas to mitigate threats, conduct revegetation and install watering stations, using tracking data from rehabilitated birds. Murdoch University will continue to seek grant funds to develop CAPs for other councils. Revegetation projects over the 8 LGAs occurred on 38 planting sites with 35 planting events. A total of 344 mature trees, 129 Macadamias and 44,038 tubestock were planted.

A permanent [website](#) has been established and will continue to be developed. It includes practical tips that everyone can do to help conserve black cockatoos, plus educational resources for primary and high school students that fit into the school curriculum.

A total of 11 cockitroughs were installed which are an important source of safe drinking water for the black cockatoos. The locations were carefully chosen with the help of SERCUL and Birdlife Australia. This has inspired many other councils in Perth to install water stations.

The School of Veterinary Medicine (MU) have been key partners in the program. They used data of injured Carnabies admitted to the Perth Zoo in the past 5 years to identify the key threatening processes in LGAs, other than land clearing. These include vehicle strike, cockatoo hindlimb paralysis syndrome (CHiPS), and rising attacks from ravens. This year they noticed that the weights are much lower on many Ngoolarks admitted, suggesting the birds may be suffering from food shortages due to last year's summer drought.

They have determined that long-term rehabilitation of birds, involving building up the bird's fitness and social bonding skills, greatly aids their success when released back into the wild. Another key finding showed that black cockatoos are using more food sources on the Swan Coastal Plain than identified by consultants. This means that some important foraging habitat is being cleared instead of identified and conserved.

The KCF project was funded by Lotterywest and contributions from the LGAs. UBC and others will continue to advocate for the conservation of black cockatoos and their remaining habitat.

Heidi Hardisty, *UBC*.





Haas Grass (Photos: Lydia Fenu)

## Weeds: Haas Grass

Haas grass (*Tribolium uniolae*) is suspected of being introduced to Perth as a fodder crop between the 1950s-70s. Previously regarded as naturalised, recent research shows that this grass has the potential to be a serious threat to bushland in South Western Australia. Originating from South Africa, this grass is clumping, rhizomatous, and about 0.5m high. In its natural habitat, it seeds prolifically and thrives in disturbed areas such as roadsides. This grass is a threat due to it forming into clumps which displaces native understorey species. It also increases fire intensity which can put our ecosystems in danger.

### What to do if you find this grass

Report to MyWeedWatcher via the [MyPestGuide](#) app and eradicate where possible.

### Control methods

#### Physical Controls

- Using a tool such as a bread knife, cut around the base of the plant. Pull the plant out being careful not to spread seed. Bag the plant immediately and dispose of it appropriately.

#### Chemical Controls

- 1% Glyphosate with an adjuvant such as Brushwet or Pulse
- 1-1.5% Fusilade Forte with an adjuvant such as Brushwet or Pulse. Use 1.5% if the plant is older or stressed.

### References

- [\(2008\) Bushland Weeds Haas Grass \*Tribolium uniolae\*. Perth, WA: Department of Environment and Conservation.](#)
- [Bettink, K. \(2009\) Haas grass \*Tribolium uniolae\* Draft strategic plan for the Swan NRM Region, Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions.](#)

Lydia Fenu, UBC

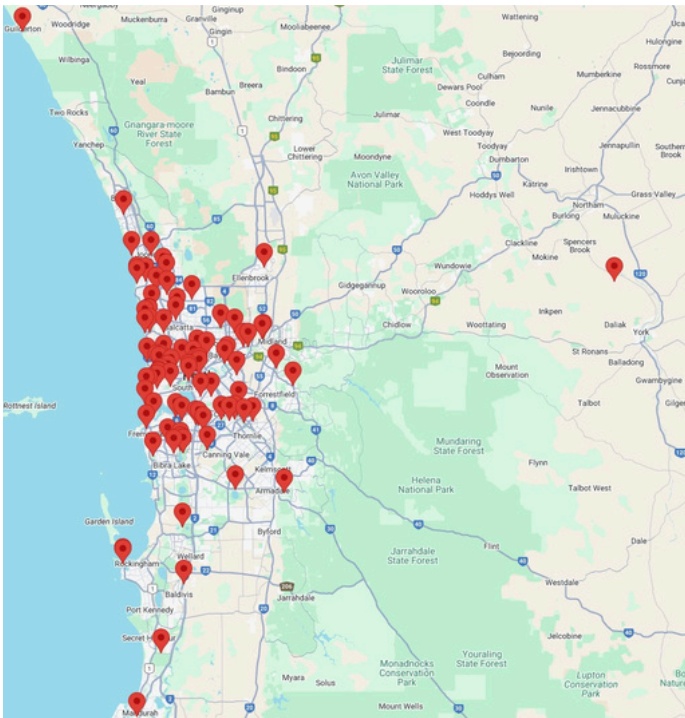


# Exploring Our Membership

Currently UBC membership includes ninety-one (91) groups and 110 individual supporters (many of whom are active in one or more of the member groups).

Did you know that our website has a section dedicated to [groups](#) where UBC welcomes member groups to make the most of their very own webpage? This informative and interesting section designed and managed by long-time volunteers John Baas and Chris Allbeury OAM reflects the diversity of our groups. It includes a mix of locations maps, photographs, histories, links to websites, social media, references and contact details – it is your space to make the most useful for your group, patch &/or issues. It also welcomes others when searching for a group near them or with a focus they are looking for.

**Tip:** Value add to YOUR WEBPAGE on UBC's website  
Great idea to regularly check your webpage to ensure basic contacts are updated and to make it work even better for you – including informing your local community of what you are doing, drawing in new members, showcasing your patch/issue. Some groups use it as a platform to advertise events, others link it directly to their Facebook, thus providing automatic, updated information.



## Location of UBC member groups

Please send updates, text &/or photos to [ubc@bushlandperth.org.au](mailto:ubc@bushlandperth.org.au) with subject header: 'For our UBC webpage + your group name'.

In addition to 47 'Friends of Groups' we have the company of members who use the following to describe themselves: Action, Alliance, Association, Branch, Bushcarers, Catchment, Centre, Cobbers, Club, City, Coastcare, Community, Conservation, Corridor, Environment, Forum, Hands off, House, Interest, Landcare, Preservation, Ratepayers, Residents, Restoration, Save &/or Society.

## Geographic spread

- 9 - statewide (WA Tree Canopy Advocates)
- 3 - regional (Friends of Moore River Estuary)
- 3 - east / escarpment (Nature Reserves Preservation Group).
- 45 - north of river (Quinns Rocks Environmental Group)
- 30 - south of river (Friends of Brixton Street Wetlands)
- 1 = straddling the River (Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group).

## Natural areas

76 groups are attached to a patch, including 2 that don't have access (eg Friends of Erindale Bushland). These natural areas are across:

- 35 - bushland (Friends of The Vines Bushlands)
- 16 - wetland (Friends of Paganoni Swamp)
- 13 - river / estuary (Mt Henry Peninsula Conservation Group)
- 12 - coast (Friends of North Ocean Reef - Iluka Foreshore).

57 include a Bush Forever site (Friends of Ken Hurst Park).

## Focus

- 91 - active group management and member support (Friends of Samson Park)
- 74 - active hands-on bushcare and advocacy for their patch (Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor)
- 6 - flora/vegetation (Wildflower Society of WA and Armadale, Murdoch and Northern Suburbs Branches)
- 6 - campaign/action (Hands off Point Peron)
- 2 - eco/environment centre (Environment House)
- 2 - fauna/habitat (Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise)
- 2 - specifically research/science (Wetlands Research Association)
- 1 - catchment/support for local groups (South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare)

One of our groups even has restricted access to their 'patch' for hands-on bushcare, thus advocacy is bulk of their effort (Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland). Another is a flora, fauna and habitat and natural history group (WA Naturalists' Club).

Colma Keating, UBC



Another big day by Friends active in Bushland Restoration Project (Photo: C. Olney)

## New UBC Members: Friends of Kings Park

For more than 30 years the Friends of Kings Park (FoKP) has been supporting the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority by recruiting volunteers and providing funding for scientific research projects through its Gift Fund.

The FoKP has about 1,400 members including 260 active volunteers, each of whom pay a membership fee of about \$60 a year. Benefits include our quarterly magazine *For People & Plants*, special member events, discounts at Aspects of Kings Park and the opportunity to join one of our 16 volunteer groups.

Volunteer groups include botanic garden and bushland carers, Fixing Friends, Horticultural Advisory Service, Growing Friends and our newest group the Bushland Restoration Project.

The project aims to restore 2.2 hectares of prime Kings Park bushland near the Forrest Roundabout. Since 2022 about 20 regular volunteers have planted more than 1,000 native seedlings and removed mountains of weeds. As a result, bushland monitoring data indicates that the project has improved its condition rating from Degraded to Good.

Our biggest volunteer group is Growing Friends with about 60 volunteers, many of whom meet twice a week to propagate plants for our four native plant sales each year. The Growing Friends provides a major income stream for FoKP. More than 8,000 plants were sold at our two-day plant sale in September, clearing \$65,000. The Friends Gift Fund has tax deductible status and supports Kings Park Science projects such as seed banking, kangaroo paw and orchid research.

Chris Olney, *Friends of Kings Park*

How do you read  
the Urban Bush  
Telegraph?

We need your feedback  
to produce the most  
useful publication for  
you. Please answer one  
question for us.

Do you read articles in  
full or just skim over  
them?

Answer here



Bush NOT Boardwalk group at Trigg Beach (Photo: Mike Masiello)

## New Group: Bush NOT Boardwalk at Trigg Beach

A new local resident group has formed to support the Friends of Trigg Beach's campaign to stop an environmentally damaging boardwalk through the South Trigg Beach Class A Reserve, Bush Forever Area 308, between Scarborough and Trigg Beach.

Bush NOT Boardwalk's aims to protect the 13.37 ha Quindalup dune reserve and to remove one of the City of Stirling's excuses for a boardwalk by working with Main Roads to resolve some of the concerns around safety on the existing dual use path along West Coast Highway. The group is collecting signatures on a petition to the City and is engaging with Councillors to convince them that spending \$500,000 of ratepayers money on a "feasibility study" of an unnecessary and environmentally damaging boardwalk is irresponsible and wasteful.

The City of Stirling is the land manager on behalf of the WA Government and has a responsibility under State Planning Policy 2.6 to protect it, not destroy it. The City is considering a Coastal Ward Councillor's proposal to build a 3-4 metre wide, 1 km long boardwalk through this narrow strip of vegetated and currently fenced sand dunes. Similar proposals have been rejected twice on environmental grounds in 2005 and 2012.

Last year, the City of Stirling adopted a [Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning Report](#) (CHRMAP) which identified "Avoidance" as the recommended approach to the risk of coastal erosion at South Trigg Beach.

The report recommends "Avoiding further permanent development on land which has been identified as prone to erosion over the next hundred years" and "Planning for the eventual managed retreat of existing assets in the foreshore reserve as risk becomes intolerable." (CHRMAP MU5 Trigg Beach South p.52).

A boardwalk through this highly protected, highly erosion prone Quindalup dune system would be reprehensible and irresponsible. Not only does the reserve have Class A status (the only coastal reserve in the City of Stirling to have this high level of protection), it is part of Bush Forever Area 308 (which includes the Trigg Bushland Reserve from the coast to tuart and marri woodland at Karrinyup), it also contains a Threatened Ecological Community of Rottnest Island Pines, some of which are over 100 years old.

It is time for the WA Government to step in to protect this important remnant coastal dune system from the City of Stirling, and to listen to the groundswell of concern that is emerging in the local community who care about this remnant coastal reserve and want to protect it for future generations.

Robyn Murphy, *Friends of Trigg Beach*

*Please like our Facebook page or get in touch by email*





## Friends of Jirdarup Bushland

December 2024 marks 25 years since our group was formed by the late Gwynth Schlipalius. We will be remembering her at our celebration on 1 December 2024. Please join us.

[Details are on our website.](#)

We continue to drive a high energy agenda in community education and working alongside the Town of Victoria Park (ToVP) with our landcare activities. In doing so, we are always mindful of the cultural importance and heritage of the bushland for the Whadjuk Noongar people.

Publication of *Birds of Jirdarup: Your garden can help them thrive* in September was a major achievement. Go to our website to [get your copy](#) in time for Christmas.

Incorporation of Djerap stories is part of our commitment to continue to include Noongar Kaatjiin in our events and resources. Thanks to the Wettenhall Environment Trust and Hannah Beazley MLA for sponsoring this project.

After almost three years and more than 2000 hours of hand weeding, we are seeing a real difference. Native plants are stronger and more prolific in areas of consistent weeding. Our current State NRM grant is coming to an end and we are delighted to have been offered a new grant for 2025 and 2026—this grant allows us to engage additional weeders and extend our knowledge of weeds and native grasses.

Although there is not much to see at this stage, [restoration of the Kent Street Sandpit](#) has commenced over winter with seeding trials by Curtin University. The goal is a well-established, thriving and biodiverse community that resembles the Banksia woodland of Kensington Bushland by 2043.

A review of the 2018 Kensington Bushland Management Plan has commenced. This will definitely be a primary focus over the coming 12 months as it incorporates the whole Jirdarup Bushland Precinct.

Organisationally, there have been many changes. After some eight years as chair of our group, Klaus Backheuer has decided to step down and Helen Carter has taken on this role. We are now a registered charity and an incorporated body with [our first Annual Report](#) published.

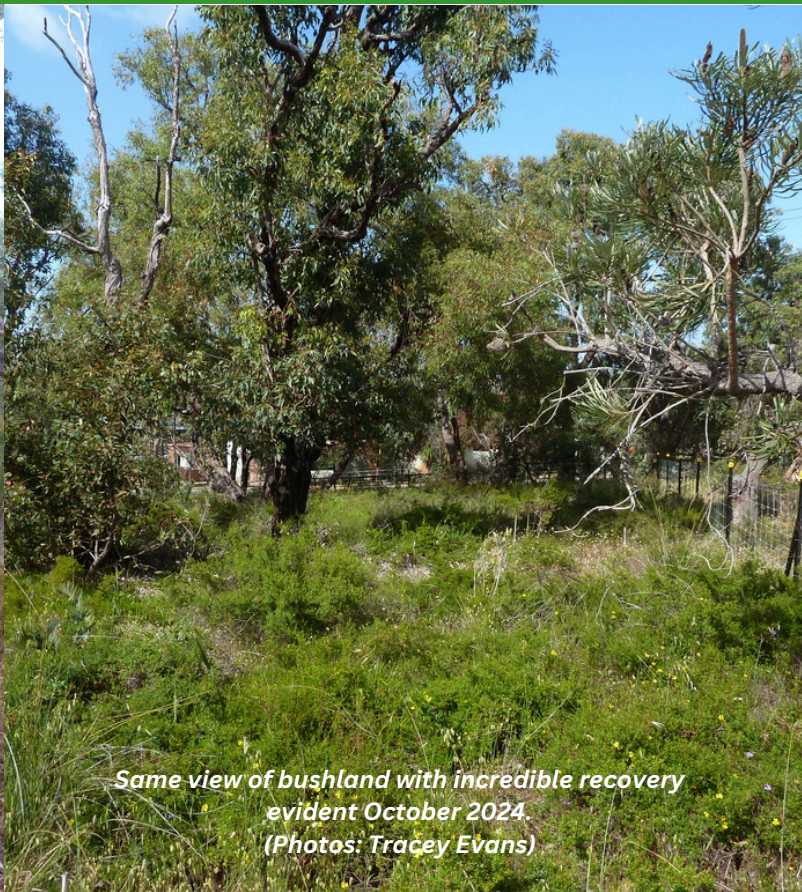
Contact us at [admin@friendsofjirdarupbushland.org.au](mailto:admin@friendsofjirdarupbushland.org.au) for further information or join us at a Sunday [Walks with Friends](#).

Lesley van Schoubroeck, *Friends of Jirdarup Bushland Inc.*





View of *H. hypericoides*, looking west, at height of summer during Feb 2024, at Coolbinia bushland



Same view of bushland with incredible recovery evident October 2024.  
(Photos: Tracey Evans)

## Coolbinia Bushland: a lesson in resilience

Situated only 6km from Perth City, Coolbinia Bushland is a good example of urban Jarrah Banksia woodland in the northern Perth metropolitan area. The understorey is dominated with *Hibbertia hypericoides*, a very common and significant bushland shrub endemic to the SW of WA. *H. hypericoides* has also been difficult to propagate from seed for nurseries, usually derived from cuttings. It would be dreadful to lose such a dominant and important shrub in the local ecosystem.

The lack of rain combined with the relentless heat of the long summer was taking its toll. The Hibbertia was changing colour before our eyes, turning the leaves a tan brown instead of the vivid green as the shrub commences to shut down and protect itself from the rays and burning. It's a normal process and happens every summer, but this was a scorching summer. Record heatwaves and temperatures with a total lack of rain were dire. Reports have come in from all over the south-west of WA of the death of swathes of bush including trees and lower storey species.

We watered the reveg seedlings every weekend, sometimes twice a week. It has been awful to watch many of the established groundcovers and shrubs disappear, like *Lomandra* sp, *Scaevola repens*. It also made us wonder, how were the orchids and other bulbous perennials going to bear up?

Then the rain came during May, heralding a terrific amount of rain for the winter season. Incredibly we have witnessed a remarkable recovery of the bushland, from those dire brown hues to resplendent shades of green, the Hibbertia has made a fantastic recovery. It was a beautiful wildflower season with a plethora of cowslip orchids never looking so healthy.

There were less Donkey orchids (*Diuris corymbosa*) and Milkmaids (*Burchardia congesta*) than previous years, however annuals such as Golden Long-heads (*Podotheca gnaphalioides*), Native Parsnip (*Trachymene pilosa*) and compact needlegrass (*Austrostipa compressa*) have returned once more and continue to thrive. Small patches of *Lomandra* species are regrowing and the *Scaevola repens* has flowered.

The areas of the bushland with established trees have fared the best, providing the best protection with cooling temperatures and moisture retention. There are several exposed areas that have direct sun all day and have been revegetated extensively with tree seedlings including *Eucalyptus marginata* (Jarrah), *Banksia menziesii* and *B. attenuata*.

We have been lucky and it has been a tremendous recovery.

Tracey Evans, *Friends of Coolbinia Bushland*

## UBC Annual General Meeting

**6:00 pm Tuesday 4 March City West Lotteries House**  
Light refreshments from 6 pm, meeting starts at 6:30 pm.

**Save the Date** and get ready to learn more about the Positive Reform Agenda for WA's Environment - this will be the environment movement's key document for progressing change with the next government.

## Conservation Council WA Conference: Nature First

**Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 of November**  
**The Wetlands Centre, Cockburn**

This year's theme, Nature First, focuses on addressing critical environmental challenges such as climate change, ecosystem collapse, waterway protection, restoration and the nature laws and planning approach we need to deliver the energy transition. Putting nature first entails prioritising the conservation and protection of natural habitats and biodiversity in all aspects of decision-making, particularly in project planning and execution.

Register for the Conference [here](#)

## UBC PAST QUARTER EVENTS

### Craigie Bushland Walk

Dr Anna Hopkins of Edith Cowan University, Geoff Barrett of Department of Biodiversity Conservation & Attractions (DBCA), and the City of Joondalup's environmental officers visited the 42ha predator-proof fenced Craigie Bushland with UBC members in October. In 2013 43 quenda were introduced to the bushland from Ellen Brook Nature Reserve and Twin Swamps Nature Reserve. The successful translocation resulted in around 100 quenda living and breeding, the population is stable and not inbred. Dr Anna Hopkins told the group that quenda monitoring has been undertaken since 2000. These long nosed, ecological engineers are doing a great job turning over the soil. The quality of soil from inside and outside the fence is compared and as the soil inside is turned over, water is able to penetrate the ground, assisting plants to be healthy. Outside the fence there are more weeds than inside. There is little browning off evident after the long hot summer.

### Northern Honeymyrtle Shrubland Excursion

UBC members, the Friends of North Ocean Reef and Illuka Foreshore (FoNORIF) and officers from the City of Wanneroo, the City of Joondalup and DBCA visited Bush Forever 325 at Illuka Foreshore (City of Joondalup) and Shire View Hill, Bush Forever 29 (City of Wanneroo). Don Poynton, Bronwen and Greg Keighery, Cate Taus and Sue Conlan pointed out floristic features, including local differences in *Melaleuca* and *Grevillea* species. FoNORIF members are active bushcarers at the Illuka site but Shire View Hill is closed to the public and untouched except for bushfires. [Honeymyrtle shrubland on limestone ridges of the Swan Coastal Plain Bioregion](#) have been listed as Critically Endangered by the Federal Government.

## Volunteers and Your Specialist Skills Needed

Do you have a few hours per month to be a UBC volunteer? Flexible hours, working with like-minded people passionate about conservation. Several roles in communicating conservation messages to our network.

- Newsletter editor for the Urban Bush Telegraph – looking for experience with Canva or similar; skilled in writing for a lay audience and happy to wrangle items from contributors
- Facebook admin – an extra admin to share the load. Experienced with Facebook
- Instagram admin – to kickstart our Insta presence. Experienced with Instagram



*Honeymyrtle suite at Shire View Hill (Photo: D. Brady)*

# Contact UBC



City West Lotteries House,  
2 Delhi Street West Perth 6005



[www.bushlandperth.org.au](http://www.bushlandperth.org.au)



9420 7207



UrbanBushlandCouncil



[ubc@bushlandperth.org.au](mailto:ubc@bushlandperth.org.au)



@UrbanBushlandWA

## Join Up or Renew Membership

### Groups

Membership with voting rights is available to groups committed to the protection of urban bushland for \$60 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

### Individuals

Supporter membership is only \$50 per year (GST included). Supporters can attend meetings and receive electronic copies of the “Urban Bush Telegraph”.

To join as a new member please visit our **website members area**.

Alternatively send your name, contacts and cheque to: Treasurer, UBC WA Inc, City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi West Perth WA 6005.

### Renewals

You will have received a New Year’s Day email with details of how to renew your membership. Thank you for your ongoing support.

## Contribute to Your Newsletter

We need your new content for the Urban Bush Telegraph. Send us your feature article of less than 600 words or Group News item of interest to the broader UBC audience (around 400 words) along with your original photos to:

[ubc@bushlandperth.org.au](mailto:ubc@bushlandperth.org.au)

Copy deadline for the Summer 25 issue – **30th December 2024**