

Newsletter of the Urban Bushland Council WA Inc PO Box 326, West Perth WA 6872 Email: ubc@bushlandperth.org.au



What a wonderful sight, viewed from a high point north of Perry Lakes - a flock of about 200 birds flying with purpose to their roosting trees. Of this flock that roosts west of Perth, usually some roost around Hollywood Hospital and in a park and street near Karakatta Cemetery, while some roost in and around Perry Lakes. Perhaps on this occasion, the whole flock had come to the same site.

According to a report by ABC journalist Gian De Poloni, March 2022, this breeding season for Carnaby's Black cockatoos has been successful as 138 breeding attempts occurred compared with 41 in 2009. Many of these events were in artificial hollows and many of the artificial hollows were made by students at Shenton College. This tube making at Shenton College was initiated by one student, who wrote to mining companies requesting donations of suitable pipe.

In the ABC Report, DBCA Wildlife officer Rick Dawson, stated 'If we can't save Carnaby's we can't save anything'.

Carnaby's have had to adapt but the cost through clearing habitat has been a shocking one. We have all read of how the sky used to be black as the huge flocks flew overhead. Now around the city we may see a few hundred. Carnaby's are feeding and drinking in our yards and finding new foods to eat. House owners just north of Perry Lakes have done a great job in providing bird baths where birds can drink, and by planting cockatoo food.

If Carnaby's are doing the right thing by breeding they need food to sustain themselves from starvation. The '<u>Save the Black Cockatoos</u>' campaign, supported by the Urban Bushland Council, First Nation's Elders, leading WA scientists and other peak conservation groups, is working hard to give black cockatoos a chance of survival into the future. The campaign's <u>website</u> explains:

Western Australia's Southwest is home to three iconic species of black cockatoo, the Ngolark (Baudin's Black Cockatoo), the Ngolyenok (Carnaby's Black Cockatoo), and the Karak (Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo). All have fallen drastically in number and could be extinct with 20 years without strong action to protect their habitat.

The Ngolyenoks are reliant on a single pine plantation for half their food in the Boorloo (Perth). This plantation is currently being chopped down and has already been reduced from 23 000 hectares to just 6 000 hectares.

Surely the state government can act to find a way to save the last 6,000 hectares of pines. Pine harvesting was put on hold for one year when Minister Dawson was Minister for the Environment and pines were sourced from the south west. It is not alright to say that revegetation will happen. Carnaby's need food now.

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New movie about black cockatoos to be released in 2022. See page 12

EDITORIAL

Wetlands Need Protection Now

We are fortunate to live in a region of amazing biodiversity. The south west of Western Australia is home to one of the world's top 35 biodiversity hotspots. The wetlands are the source of much of this biodiversity and reserves such as the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands and the Anstey-Keane Dampland, for example, support hundreds of different plant and animal species, many of which are rare or endangered.

Our predecessors did not value this biodiversity or understand the vital role of wetlands in maintaining a healthy environment. They set about clearing, draining and filling the wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain and the Wheatbelt. The EPA estimated in 2007 that more than 80% of the original wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain have been destroyed in this way. The situation in the Wheatbelt is even more alarming with most of the original wetlands now saline due to overclearing. The EPA stated that in 2007 wetland loss was continuing at an average rate of 4 hectares per day.

In the nineties, at a time of heightened environmental awareness, the state government took some encouraging steps to protect the remaining wetlands. They introduced the Wetlands Conservation Policy for WA (1997), the Swan Coastal Plain Lakes Environmental Protection Policy (1992), they nominated 12 WA wetlands for listing under the Ramsar Convention (1990, 2000), established the Regional Parks system (1997) and they prepared a draft guideline for wetland buffer zones.

However there was a strong pushback against these measures by land developers and some farmers and progress stalled after 2000 and there have been few gains for wetland conservation since then. There have been no new Regional Parks established in the Perth and Peel Region since 1997, although some planning has been done for five new parks (Gnangara, Peel, Lower Serpentine, Yule Brook, Swan and Helena rivers). There have been no more Ramsar nominations since 2000, even though there are at least 20 more outstanding wetlands that should have been nominated by now. The 1997 Wetlands Conservation Policy for WA has not been updated, even though a draft update was presented to government in 2010. The draft Wetland Buffer Guidelines were released for public review in 2005, but were never finalised. The proposed Swan Coastal Plain Wetlands EPP was abandoned by government in 2005 after extensive public review and despite the strong public support. In 2015 the Environment Minister, Albert Jacob, repealed the 1992 Swan Coastal Plain Lakes EPP, leaving the remaining wetlands without statutory protection. The Barnett Government embarked on a strategic review of the conservation needs of the Perth and Peel Regions in 2016, but this has been abandoned by the McGowan Government.

The public is becoming frustrated at this inertia by the State Government and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. There were large public protests over the Barnett Government's attempts to push the Roe Highway through the Beeliar Regional Park in 2016. Protests also occurred over efforts by developers to destroy important wetlands in Bayswater and Kenwick.

With the bicentennial of European settlement in WA only seven years away there is an urgent need for us to achieve reconciliation with the Aboriginal people who were the custodians of these wetlands for over 40,000 years. Their careful management of the natural environment is in stark contrast to the destruction and land degradation caused by the European settlers. It is a challenge for our generation to rectify these wrongs while we still have the chance. We need to urgently remove the roadblocks that are impeding wetland conservation in WA. This means we need to do the following before 2029:

- Replace the outdated Wetlands Conservation Policy (1997) with a new plan to address contemporary issues.
- Complete and implement ecologically-based wetland buffer guidelines.
- Develop a statewide environmental protection policy for wetlands.
- Nominate the remaining eligible WA wetlands for Ramsar listing.
- Extend the Regional Parks system to include all of the properties recommended in the System Six Red Book (1984).
- Establish and fund an independent Wetlands Research Institute to carry out basic wetland research to provide the basis for conservation and management of wetlands.
- Establish partnership arrangements between government, industry, community groups and indigenous custodians to carry out ongoing research, education and management of wetlands.

Wetlands are vital for the health of our environment and ultimately for public health and the health of our economy and society. We must take urgent action to conserve what is left of our wetland heritage. This is a challenge for all of us, community, industry and government. We have a last chance now to complete this task before most our remaining wetlands are lost or degraded by urban development, climate change and infrastructure. We have procrastinated for too long, now is the time for action.

Go to <u>page 12</u> to read more on the benefits of wetland buffers.

Urban Bushland Council HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDS



Mary Gray (right), the longest serving UBC President/Chair and Dr Beth Schultz AO (centre) were recognised for their significant and prolonged contribution to UBC and its objects at the 2022 UBC Annual General Meeting, held on 1st March. Christine Richardson (left), the new UBC Chair with the inaugural life members Beth and Mary. Read more on page 11.

Advocate for Your Bushland this Federal Election 2022



Canberra seems a long way away. The mysteries of decision-making by federal Government can seem baffling. Most of us would be hard-pressed to name more than a handful of our 189 federal representatives, yet everyday 27 people represent Western Australia in the Australian Parliament in Canberra. The decisions they make on a daily basis affect our lives and the urban bushland we treasure.

So, we've decided to give our members and supporters a hand in the lead up to the federal election on May 21 to find out more about the candidates vying for your vote. Our hope is that the successful candidates make a commitment to make decisions leading to greater protection and conservation of urban bushland and wetlands.

We've written to members and supporters with a suggested list of key questions for their candidates and a guide to finding them. We're also offering a coaching session for people who want to learn more skills in advocating for urban bushland with political candidates.

Once we have responses from candidates, we will share them with members and supporters so we can all be even better informed as we vote.

Key questions to ask your federal election candidates are:

1. Do you know who your local bushland friends' groups are and what they do? Will you visit local urban bushland? (Offer a tour if you're keen!)

2. Will you advocate for and support stronger national laws to stop extinctions and protect the environment?

3. How will you support a federally enforced ban on destroying habitat of threatened species, like the Blackcockatoos?

4. What will you do to address climate change?

What we want to achieve:

Federal Parliamentarians can make changes to Australia's laws and regulations which will strengthen environmental protection. The federal Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) should be made an independent body with powers of enforcement and compliance. Instead of streamlining approvals, Government should establish a system that delivers real protection of habitat and biodiversity. The extinction crisis is partly the result of poor environmental management. Federal Parliamentarians should act urgently to reform our system.

Some of our threatened and endangered species and ecosystems are at risk of being cleared. Federal Parliamentarians can make laws to stop clearing of habitat of threatened species while we regenerate and replant green canopy for animals and climate action. For example, Underwood Bushland, Tuart and Banksia woodlands should not be cleared.

Federal Parliament makes all kinds of decisions which impact the environment. They need to commit to action to reduce emissions to net zero.

Federal Members need to know what's in their electorate and use their position to support the volunteers and conservationists who care for urban bushland and wetlands.

Interested in learning more skills in talking with political candidates?

Join us on zoom Thursday, April 28th at 7:30 pm

To obtain the Zoom details, please email to <u>ubc@bushlandperth.org.au</u>

VISIT TO POINT PERON

By Margaret Owen

James Mumme AOM (pictured right), our guide at the Point Peron walk in early April should have been a teacher, as he was so good. Hang on, he was a teacher. He must have been one of the great teachers around.

On our arrival, the Friends of Pt Peron were already at work watering the plants they had planted earlier... and they have planted thousands. Visitors from the Urban Bushland Council and others on the walk had the opportunity to plant some Tuarts and an added bonus was that the holes had already been dug. All we had to do was scoop out some of the sand that had fallen into the holes. I was engaged in this scooping, when there was a squeak and what to my wondering eyes appeared was a fat and big-eyed frog I'd disturbed. He was about 20 cms down in the sand. I gathered him up and quickly showed him around. He appeared to have been in a sandy tunnel and he was broad, about the size of my palm, and had very big eyes. Could he have been a Moaning Frog or possibly a Banjo Frog? The book 'Reptiles and Frogs in the Bush: Southwestern Australia' by Brian Bush and others, states "During the warm, dry months it [Western Banjo Frog or Pobblebonk] hides in a burrow to await the winter rains. When these commence, it is 'all systems go' as males call from the dense vegetation near permanent water with an explosive single 'bonk."

With our tuarts planted we then listened to James tell us the story of the campaign for Pt Peron protection from proposed canal and marina proposals. With a bit of luck the Pt Peron area will become an A-class Reserve...but there's the rub... the park is to be divided into 12 parts with a big road (Defence) going through the middle of the park.

Many thousands of years ago the area was Tuart forest and at the Point, some of the Tuart tree trunks have fossilised. The older Tuart trees on our walk are really beautiful. Under their mighty boughs it does feel like nature bathing.

Of course, weeds are a problem and a new weed European Buckthorn, *<u>Rhamnus alaternus</u>, is a major threat. It suckers and produces seed after 2 years. The roots have a hockey stick kink and if the plant is pulled and the root breaks at the bend, the plant will grow from the surviving bit of root. James explained that under one native plant he counted 79 Buckthorn seedlings. And the weed grows to a couple of metres high. The group is getting brilliant support from Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to tackle the Buckthorn infestation.

Plantings get watered every three weeks with most of the water coming from the group members' homes and DBCA (via IBC bulk containers). In contrast to the success of these plantings, the Friends conducted a direct seeding trial that failed completely. Why this project was a complete failure is not known. Now the plan is to plant seedlings in the same area.

Then we were at Lake Richmond, or Naragebup and although it is less than 1 km from the coast, having separat-



ed from the ocean at Cockburn Sound within the last 4,000 years, the water is fresh. The fresh water was used by Noongar people and also by settlers of the Swan River Colony. And of course the Lake is famous for its thrombolites, the ancestors of which are up to 3.5 billion years old. As James explained the thrombolites aren't good at showing off as you can't see them easily in the lake.

UBC and Friends of Point Peron have recently approached Hon. Minister Saffioti to purchase the blocks on the NW corner of Lake Richmond as an important buffer. Whilst protecting the lake and thrombolites, the old caravan park could become a demonstration site for ecological restoration accessible to local councils, developers and community groups.

Flying over the lake was a White-bellied Sea Eagle and then a big brown bird of prey that might have been a Whistling Kite. Both species flew down close to the water's surface.

We finished the walk at the Naragebup Environment Centre with tea, coffee, Welsh cakes, sandwiches, fruit and goodies. This was a great walk with a knowledgeable leader, finishing at the important, informative, welcoming Centre.

I hope that our frog is doing alright...and also our newly planted Tuart trees.

YES, WATERING DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By Dave Bright

I was a revegetation practitioner for over twenty years firstly at Whiteman Park and then at the City of Cockburn. I am now an environmental consultant, and, over the years, I have often been asked why I recommend certain practices for revegetation programmes, and especially my reasons for recommending a particular watering regime.

In 1991, when I first started revegetation work, I couldn't find any documented research into the best ways to 'manage' greenstock and especially how to maximise survival rates. I became very concerned about the extremely high losses I was experiencing which were as much as 95% in some years. It seemed to me that so much money and effort was being wasted in purchasing plants and then paying to have them planted, only to watch the majority die over the next few months or so!

I started counting the plants that had survived at the end of each month (for the first 12 months after planting), and recorded that data against local rainfall figures, and I did that over many years. I noticed that when there were periods of intermittent rain, provided there was at least one 5mm rainfall-day per fortnight over the cooler months, then greenstock survival seemed to increase! In my analysis of this data, I first started by categorising rainfall periods into 'adequate', those having one or more 5mm rain-days together, and 'significant', those having one or more 15-20mm rain-days plus (usually) additional rainy days together so I could more easily visualise those periods of lower rainfall. (*Refer to Figures 3&4, page 7*)

I determined that 5mm of rainfall was equivalent to approximately 5 liters of water per plant, so I started hand watering with a 10 liters bucket, dividing each bucket between 2 plants, and I did that every time I watered. My survival rates soared!

I also used my rainfall chart to try and predict when would be the ideal time to plant that would take into account soil moisture as a result of preceding rains, and adequate ongoing rain that would keep the plants alive with either no or minimal watering. This was then used to produce an annual planting and watering schedule. *(Refer to Figure 3)*

It should be noted that there are three years during this period (2003, 2006, and 2010) when there were lengthy dry spells during May/ June and, without additional watering, it is probable that this would have resulted in significant losses in those years!

I also considered weekly evaporation rates and found that, when these were low, I could get good survival, if it didn't rain, if I watered every second week. However, when evaporation rates increased to greater than about 45mm per week (usually Dec through to Feb), I found I needed to increase watering to weekly. (*Refer to Figure 1*)

For planning and for budget purposes, I found on average that 17 watering events were required during the first year. NO plants were watered in the second year!



Figure 1: Evaporation rate records (2004-2005)

I also did a literature search on the effect of soil temperatures on plant growth. Whilst there was no available data for natives, there was extensive literature regarding vegetable and cut flower cultivation, and the indication was that root growth (for many vegetables and cut flowers) slowed or even stopped at soil temperatures below 14-15°C. That led me to deduce that soil temperatures and hence planting time (and to perhaps a lesser extent, planting depth) would play a critical role in greenstock survival. (*Refer to Figure 2*)

I also deduced that planting in mid-late May would give the best results as warm soil temperatures plus a reasonable soil moisture level (from the early rains) would give the plants a chance to establish their roots before low winter soil temps slowed root growth down! On the other hand, LATE planting (i.e. July/Aug) would, I suspected, give poor results as the plants would not have time to establish their roots sufficiently before very high temperatures, often over a few weeks in summer, would result in significant losses.

N.B. Soil temperatures drop with increasing rain but if there is a dryish winter, the soil temps won't drop quite as much.



Figure 2: Soil temperature records (2013-2015)

I have noticed that weather patterns have changed somewhat since I did a lot of this research and it appears that, more often than not, autumn rains start earlier, are heavier and more intermittent.

Again, similarly to the preceding 10-yr period, there are two years (2015 and 2017) when follow-up watering soon after planting would have been vital for ensuring good survival of greenstock. (Refer to Figure 4)

Winter rains also seem to now finish later, are also often more intermittent but with lengthy dry spells during Sep-Oct.

Nevertheless, I believe taking a reasoned approach to my original findings will give good results. So here are my recommendations:

- Plant as early as possible in autumn. Monitor daily rainfall from early May and plant once there is some soil moisture at planting depth (i.e., 50-100mm below surface).
- When planting, water plants in EVEN IF IT IS RAINING to settle plants and remove any air pockets around the roots.
- Water again during the next month or so WHENEVER there is a 10–14-day period without at least ONE day of 5mm rain.
- When the rains stop, or there is no 5mm rain-day for 10-14 days, start a programme of fortnightly 5li-per-plant watering. Watering can be temporarily suspended if any 5mm rain-days occur.
- When the temperatures start to rise and there are periods of windy days (i.e., increasing evaporation), increase watering to WEEKLY.
- Drop back to fortnightly watering as the temperatures start to fall.



When planting, create a basin around each plant that is LOWER than the surrounding soil and LARGE ENOUGH to accommodate 5 liters of water (see picture left). Having it lower than the surrounding soil ensures that it will capture rain and direct that water towards the rootball. Maintain that basin for the first season.

DO NOT BUILD A RING AROUND THE PLANT THAT IS HIGHER THAN THE SURROUNDING SOIL!

Footnote: Because of established practice of planting time on the Swan Coastal Plain being late June through July, revegetation nurseries have typically organised their propagation programmes to cater to this timetable. As a result it can be difficult to obtain plants of a suitable size for planting in mid-May. To allow for this change in timing of planting, we as the customers, will need to start ordering our plants earlier (i.e., in August, or early September at the latest) and start insisting that we want our plants ready earlier.

May	- Ju	ine	Pert	h Da	aily	Raiı	nfall	200	2 - 2	2011	May	/ - Ju	une	Pert	h Da	uily I	Rain	fall	201	2 - 2	2021
Date	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Date	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
May 1	0	0	0	38.8	0	10.4	0	0	0	8.6	May 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	1.0	0	0	12.2 0.8	0	0.8	0	0	0	0	2	0	10.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	o	0	3	6.4 11.2	5.0 0	0	0	2.2 0	0	2.6 0	0 2.0	0.6	0
5	3.3	0	0	0	2.1	0.8	0	0	0	0	5	10.4	ŏ	1.6	õ	ŏ	7.8	ŏ	0.2	13.6	46.2
6 7	0	0	3.8	0	0.5	3.0	1.0 3.2	0	0	0	6	10.4	0	0	0	1.6	0.2	3.2	7.2	9.2	4.2
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	3.4 4.6	0 43.6	1.8 47.2	0	18.0 1.2	0	0.4	0	3.0 5.8	1.2
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14	2.0	0.8	0	0	0	1.0	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	4.6	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	12.0	14.5	36.5	6.6	0	0	0	0	0	15	0.6	0	0	0	0	3.0	0	0	0	0
16 17	0	13.2	3.5	4.3	3.5 0	0	0	0	0	0.8	16	0.2	0	0	4.0	2.2	7.6	0	0.2	0	0
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19	0	0	0	0	0	1.0	2.6	0.2	0	0	19	0	0.0	1.4	0	3.0 0	1.0	0	0	0	0
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21	0	5.0	0.5	0	0	4.0	0.4	11.8	16.8	0	21	0	1.0	12.8	0	36.4	17.2	0	0.4	0	0
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28	0	0	0	0	0	3.4	0	0	0	0	27 28	0	0 9.4	0.4 9.0	0	0.4	0	4.2	0	1.6 3.4	0
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12	0	0	0.3	18.3	0	0	3.2	0	0	0	12	16.6	0	0	0.4	2.0	0	1.6	17.6	20.6	0.2
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16	0	0	9.7	30.2	0	0	28.0	0	17.0	8.8	15	9.6 3.0	0	50.6 3.4	0	0.2 0	0	0	8.8 0	0.2	5.2 1.2
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20	0.2	0	0	0	6.3	0	0	6.4	1.2	3.0	19	8.4 8.8	0	14.8	23.4 15.8	0 8.6	0	2.4 4.0	0	0.6	0 24.8
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25	1.0	20.5	0.7	0.7	0	6.8	1.4	14.0	4.2	57.0	24	0	6.0	2.6	0	0	0	0	2.6	1.8	0
25	2.5	21.3	0	0.7	4.3	0.0	0	7.6	0	0	25	0	9.6	0	0	9.6	0	0	0.2	0	0
27	0	14.5	9.5	0	2.0	0.7	0.2	2.4	0	0.2	26	0	4.4	0	0	4.4	0	0	1.0	0	0
28	16.3	20.0	0.3	0	16.3	16.3	25.8	9.6	0	14.2	27	9.0	0	0	0	0	0	14.8	20.6	3.8	0
29	9.7	15.2	2.0	8.3	0	1.0	8.8	11.2	o	26.8	28	1.2	0	0	0	0.4	0	13.6	10.0	6.0	7.0
30	0	2.8	0.2	0.5	0.7	6.2	1.8	17.6	0	2.2	29	0.2	0	0	0	17.8	0	0	0	38.2	16.2
		= Adequate rain event									<u>30 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0.4 1.0 0.4</u>										
		= Significant rain event											= Ade	quate ra	ain eve	nt					
		= Planting possible but follow-up watering probably required											= Sign	ificant	rain ev	ent					
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Figure 3: Perth daily rainfall records for May and June 2002-2011

Figure 4: Perth daily rainfall records for May and June 2012-2021

Friends of Paganoni Swamp – Camera Trapping By Leonie Stubbs

We've had the cameras out doing their work over the past few months and they have certainly provided us with some pretty exciting photographs. One of the most exciting was to see a Western Brush Wallaby (Macropus irma) which hasn't been sighted by our group in the reserve for about ten years. We also had photos of a delightful boobook owl, a mischievous Phascogale, our large emu as well as, of course, many, many kangaroos.

We believe that the work we do at Paganoni Swamp Reserve in reducing weeds and feral animals, restoring degraded habitat and reducing the impacts of disease increases the opportunities for our fauna and flora to flourish. Of course none of this would be possible without grants funding which has been made available through a variety of sources. For example, the Federal Government's Living Landscapes Program protecting Threatened Ecological Communities* provides funds for feral animal control, weed control and restoration works: our SALP grant** for weed control; the State NRM Community Stewardship grant*** for the construction of "green bridges" i.e. limestone over existing tracks to reduce the spread of dieback; and the City of Rockingham for weed control on the adjacent road verge to limit the spread of major weed species into the Reserve. We are extremely grateful for the funding we have received to protect this significant conservation reserve.

However none of this works if there are no volunteers investing their time in weeding, completing surveys, planting and generally enjoying the bushland. It's a combined effort between the community, funding bodies and the managers of our nature reserves, such as local

MELON HILL BUSHLAND GROUP By Lesley Shaw

The Friends of Allen Park Bushland Group Inc in Swanbourne have changed their name. We are still the same group of people (and committee) but have elected to change our name to Melon Hill Bushland Group Inc. This has come about because the umbrella group, Friends of Allen Park (FOAP) has often been confused with the bushland group because of similarities in names. FOAP is an informal community group that formed in 1993 following a court injunction that overturned an over 55's development proposal on an area of bushland in Allen Park. This was an awakening for the community; the bushland didn't have a voice or the recognition it deserved. In 1996, the first management plan rolled out and the Friends of Allen Park Bushland Group was formed to play an important role in conserving and connecting bushland remnants in the Allen Park region, working together with the City of Nedlands conservation officers.

Because of our focus on conserving and enhancing the bushland, we sometimes hold different positions on issues from the Friends of Allen Park group and this has caused understandable confusion in the community, the media, the councillors and some official bodies. Friends

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and state governments. The resilience of our bushland to impacts such as climate change and burning regimes depends on how well these organisations all work together and are prepared to listen to one another and take serious heed of any concerns raised. More resources are well and truly required in relation to providing sufficient resources to manage our bushland. We wouldn't expect our hospitals or schools to be run primarily by volunteers yet this is the case for many of our conservation reserves. Our natural environment deserves better.

* This project is supported by Perth NRM, through funding provided from the Australian Governments National Landcare Program. **This project is supported by the Perth NRM Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP)

***This project is supported by funding from the WA Government's State NRM Program



West Melon Hill, Swanbourne

of Allen Park continues to advocate for our community in Swanbourne canvassing and representing opinion among residents of the Allen Park area on a wide range of issues.

So to clarify our purpose and separate identity we have formally changed our name to the Melon Hill Bushland Group Inc.

Why did we choose the name Melon Hill Bushland Group?

Those who frequent the Swanbourne area may have walked through the bushland behind Swanbourne Beach, over the crest of a large dune that locals fondly call Melon

Hill. As one of our cherished members, and writer Peter Bibby quotes so eloquently, "This hill is beautiful. It is the jewel in the crown of Allen Park.the great view from here is the uninterrupted sweep from such an elevated position down to the glory of the Indian Ocean to the west and a very clear Rottnest Island". This dune stands around 40m above sea level and also affords views to the City, and beyond.

In researching the area, it was found that the hill was named around 1927, much earlier than imagined. We as custodians now aim to have the hill named more formally.

The process of change

We found the process of renaming the group relatively easy. As long as there's a majority vote adopting the name change, the Associations WA require a copy



Descent into the seaward corridor of Allen Park, Swanbourne

of the minutes as evidence of that, and they also require the original Certificate of Incorporation. It takes about 3-4 weeks for the paperwork to come through. Following that is the change of name through the bank, insurance, ATO etc, and letting everyone know. Our new logo isn't quite off the press, but close!

Valuable small remnant Banksia woodland in Duncraig is looked after by volunteers By Robyn Murphy

A new Friends group has formed to protect the small remnant banksia woodland next to the Duncraig Library on the corner of Marmion Ave and Warwick Road in Duncraig.

The Friends of Duncraig Library Bushland entered into a Partnership Agreement with the City of Joondalup in May 2021 and has worked with the Natural Areas Team to put together an Annual Work Plan with the aim of keeping this small (0.3ha) remnant bush area in good condition.

Although currently zoned for civic and community use, one of objectives of the Friends group is to have it re-zoned for conservation so that it is protected for future generations. Another priority was to have the



Fencing of the remnant bushland was a priority.



Friends of Duncraig Library Bushland volunteers after hand weeding, August 2021.

area fenced to minimise damage caused by people using it as a short cut and other incursions. The fence was built in August 2021 and its construction provides protection for the bushland and raises public awareness of its importance. The Friends group is working with the City of Joondalup on the design of signs for the four boundary fences.

This remnant Banksia woodland is in very good condition with Tuart trees and three species of banksia which provides foraging habitat for Carnaby's Black Cockatoo and other nectar loving birds. There are also sheoaks, acacia, onesided bottlebrush, Hakea, Grevillea, Hovea, and many other flowering species. Beautiful grass trees, a number over 100 years old are plentiful and provide habitat for reptiles and birds.

Quenda have been seen in the bushland and there is evidence of their diggings. These small marsupials are adapting to the urban environment and have been recorded in the nearby Star Swamp Bushland and in nearby suburban back yards.

It is important that we protect even the smallest of natural bushland areas in our suburbs to provide a safe habitat for our wonderful and unique native animals and birds.

Contact Friends of Duncraig Library Bushland <u>friendsduncraiglibrarybushland@gmail.com</u> or via Facebook





The Seedling Bank – Helping to Restore Lake Claremont *By Heidi Hardisty*

The Friends of Lake Claremont (FOLC) will be celebrating National Tree Day on June 12th this year with a grant provided by Planet Ark's The Seedling Bank. The funding will be used to purchase 1150 native seedlings (50 trees, 300 shrubs and 700 groundcover) for planting in bushland surrounding Lake Claremont, a Conservation Category Wetland and Bush Forever Site. The restoration project is one of the largest in an Australian urban setting and has been running for over two decades.

The new plantings will help increase the biodiversity and habitat for the local wildlife including insects, reptiles, and birds. These plantings will also improve the area's function as an important ecological corridor between inland bushlands, the Swan River and the Indian Ocean. Shrubs will also help to provide cover for quendas that have been recently re-introduced to the area, a testament to the success of the revegetation project. The number of birds and bird species have been increasing since the work started. There are now over 100 species of birds that live at or visit Lake Claremont. Some species of birds have returned, like the Variegated Fairy-wrens.

Since 1996, National Tree Day has seen Australian com-

How to Write an Effective Letter to the Editor – Tips from the Friends of Erindale Road Bushland *By Sonya Elek*

In December 2020, I read David Attenborough's book, 'A Life on Our Planet'. I was shocked to learn that we only have a relatively short time (about 10 years) to make some drastic changes in order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. I felt I had been deceived by mainstream media, since they rarely featured any stories on climate change and other urgent environmental issues. I had been lulled into a false sense of security.

I was desperate to bring attention to these issues; to share what I had learned and motivate others to take action. I have never participated in a protest, and I am not on social media, so I didn't feel like they were appropriate options for me. I have always enjoyed writing and usually buy the weekend papers, so I felt that writing letters to the editor would be the best avenue for me to speak out. Over the past 12 months or so, I have had thirteen letters to the editor published, mostly in the Sunday Times and Saturday's West Australian. If you are considering writing a letter to the editor, here are my tips for getting your letter published:

- Be succinct keep your letter to 180 words or less. Don't use two words where one will suffice; avoid repeating yourself.
- Make it relevant. Newspapers love it when you write



munities plant almost 26 million trees. The Seedling Bank, launched in 2019, awards financial grants to schools and community groups to purchase native seedlings, helping to restore the unique Australian landscape. The Seedling Bank supports projects both big and small throughout the year.

If you would like to volunteer for this planting project, please register on the National Tree Day website soon as places are limited: <u>https://treeday.planetark.org/</u><u>site/10026174</u>.

If you can't make that day, FOLC will be hosting another massive planting session on Sunday 10th July in collaboration with the Town of Claremont. Approx. 1800 native seedling will be planted in Mckenzie Bushland – not far from the wetland- creating wildlife habitat and improving the local wildlife corridor. Registration will be open for the event on FOLC's website and Facebook by mid-May.

in response to one of their articles. Alternatively, reply to someone else's letter. Or you could write about an upcoming important event, for example, Clean Up Australia Day or Plastic Free July.

- Make it timely. If you are responding to an article or letter, email your response the same day the original letter/article was published. The exception is letters to papers such as The Sunday Times, which are only published weekly. This gives you more time to form your response.
- Improve your chances of getting your letter published by writing to the West Australian early on a Friday – Saturday's paper has two full pages of letters.
- Make sure you catch the reader's attention in the first couple of lines.
- Get to the point quickly and stay focused; don't add any extra information you don't need to cover every angle.
- If you want to use facts and figures, keep them to a bare minimum; avoid providing too many statistics.
- Stick to one topic. (I found this tricky initially there was so much I wanted to say!)
- Add something new don't just restate someone else's opinion.
- Don't get personal and don't be too negative; avoid whining/preaching.
- Use humour or wit if possible. Sarcasm is a form of wit just make sure it won't be misunderstood!

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- Make your last sentence memorable and use it to give weight to your letter.
- Edit, proofread, put it aside for an hour, then edit again.
- Make sure you follow the paper's protocol for writing letters: send it to the correct email address, provide all the contact details they require.

I believe it's vital that we all speak out about important issues. Politicians apparently read letters to the editor as a way of finding out what matters to the public - what you say can make a real difference. It's also very exciting and rewarding to see your own words in print!



HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Recipients of the Inaugural Life Membership presented on 1 March 2022

Dr Beth Schultz AO has been at the forefront of community volunteer action in Western Australia for over 47 years. Beth's involvement in the environment movement came through defence of WA's Karri forests against wood chipping. In 1975, she became the first Secretary of the activist 'Campaign to Save Native Forests' and soon afterwards, the Co -convenor of the more science-based South-West Forests Defence Foundation.

Beth was also very active in establishing the Environmental Defenders Office in WA and has been active in the Conservation Council, where Beth has filled many roles, including a three-year term as President.

Whilst the term 'Beth Schultz' is synonymous with 'south-west forests' – running parallel, has been her active involvement in, and support of urban bushland protection and its far, far better management.

Nurturing and mentoring younger activists has been a hallmark of Beth's approach. She has also supported many local bushland and wetland groups (even when their patch is nowhere near where she lives) through personal membership and participation at their AGMs and other events, providing much needed support and respected guidance.

Beth has led the way for investment in private bushland areas such as the inaugural joint purchasers of Lake Mealup (just south of Pinjarra) and the associated formation of the Lake Mealup Preservation Society and the joint purchase and management for conservation of a private bush block, deep in her and Phill's beloved south-west forests.

Beth has never had a paid position within the environment movement, but she has spent much of her time over the past 47 years working in a voluntary capacity on environmental issues. She says her and Phill's three children 'just had to put up with it', but all are now environmental and social activists.

In 2007 Beth was awarded Officer of the Order of Australia for services to conservation and the environment, particularly through the protection of the south-west old growth forests. In 2014 she was awarded the Conservation Council's Bessie Rischbieth Award for her commitment over many years to the protection of the environment.

Beth's greatest problem today is the unsorted paper archives which dominate her house; what she calls "the mess". She says: "I'd love to tidy it up, but there's always something more important to do. I keep hoping there is someone I can leave my library of documents to when I die."

In an interview with Jane Elix in 2011 for the '<u>Encyclopedia of</u> <u>Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia</u>' Beth said "She hasn't consciously had any role models, but that she, surprisingly, finds Princess Diana an inspiration – She became her own woman, she got what she wanted. Her campaigning against landmines – she used her position to do good". Mary Gray has been active with the UBC even before UBC was born!

She was at that pivotal meeting called by Rachel Siewert and Conservation Council WA in November 1992, where people from 40 urban bushcare groups came together concerned about destruction of our urban bushland. Some of you were there too. Four months later, 85 individuals met in Kings Park to formally launch the Urban Bushland Council of WA.

29 years later, 1,000s of individuals, 100s of groups and 100s of partnerships have contributed to raising awareness and improving the conservation security and management of WA's amazing urban bushlands and wetlands.

Mary has been extremely active with the UBC and 'as the UB-C'. She has been elected president or vice president (now Chair) for 23 years. Staggeringly, she has been on the Committee for all but one of our 29 years!

Mary's environmental science background, persistence and achievement at a high level have greatly contributed to the UBC being a strong 'Voice for the Bush'.

Mary's committed contribution is most definitely over and above what might be reasonably expected. She has been tenacious in her advocacy for the protection of our bushlands and wetlands, and for species relying on those habitats.

A major focus of Mary's has been to have Bush Forever, a world class plan for a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system in the Perth metropolitan region both fully implemented and adequately funded.

Other gems initiated by, or with major involvement from Mary have been:

- Nominations and listings as Threatened Ecological Communities for Banksia Woodlands and Tuart Woodlands and Forests
- At least 8 major workshops and conferences over the last 29 years
- City Bush Guides program(2009 and 2010)
- WA Local Government Association's Perth Biodiversity Project (initiated in 2001-2002)
- Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project (initiated in 2006).

And then there are the innumerable submissions, appeals, site visits, rallies, advisory groups, steering groups, petitions, member group AGMs and events, submission writing workshops, phone calls, letter to ministers, letters to the editor, more letters to ministers, briefings, presentations etc.....

Finally, during this time, whilst we have had one Mary Gray as a 'Voice for the Bush', we have had 14 State Ministers for the Environment!

Thank you Mary - we know you have sacrificed much.

WETLAND BUFFERS - A CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT By Heidi Hardisty

Wetland buffers are essential to wetland conservation but are under an enormous amount of pressure due to competing land uses. At the annual Wetland Conference held at The Wetlands Centre, Bibra Lake in early February this year, Dr Michael Coote (Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions) highlighted the essential functions of wetland buffers and why they need to be better managed.

Wetland buffers are spatial separations between wetlands and adjacent areas. Historically, wetlands were surrounded by transition zones to the dryland ecosystems and consisted of a wide variety of plants dependent on the location and the associated soils. However, development or inappropriate land use is often extended too close to these wetlands.

Wetland buffers play a crucial role in mitigating negative impacts on wetlands, provide protection of nesting, foraging and roosting habitat of reptiles, birds and mammals such as quendas. Buffers are essential for maintaining and improving water quality, providing protection from nutrient-rich run-off and other pollutants such as fertilizers, heavy metals, and pesticides.

Buffers are essential for maintaining healthy wetland habitat by suppressing weed invasion and inappropriate access resulting in trampling, disturbance, light pollution, noise, rubbish dumping and predation by feral animals.

Buffers are very beneficial to communities. They help reduce or eliminate the impact of nuisance insects, like mosquitoes and midges, odours and the impacts of flooding. They provide sporting, cultural, spiritual or amenity benefits, improving physical and mental health and well-being. They provide opportunities for education and scientific research. And they can be an important carbon sink helping to mitigate climate change.

Despite their importance, wetlands and their buffers are under threat. It is estimated that over 80% of the wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain have been filled in or severely degraded - yet continue to be cleared at the rate of two football ovals per day. Because the associated ecological linkages and buffers are also being whittled away, connectivity with other wetlands, bushlands and natural spaces is being severely limited.

Dr Coote emphasised the need for an Integrated Landscape Management Approach in the decision-making process to view wetland buffers in conjunction with other considerations that can affect wetlands, landscapes and their human usages. A better scientific understanding of wetlands is crucial to reduce uncertainty and guide policy and decision making.

Yet, subsequent governments have failed to finalise and adopt clear guidelines and a plan to assist in establishing adequate wetland buffers and improve wetland protection and management in WA. The Wetlands Conservation Society and the Urban Bushland Council continue to advocate for the improvement and implementation of this policy.

Black Cockatoo Crisis - A New Documentary Coming Soon

When film maker, journalist and environmental activist Jane Hammond was filming '<u>Cry of the Forest</u>', she started learning about the black cockatoos.

The idea following the Cry of the Forest was to shoot a short film on black cockatoos. As Jane became captivated by the birds, aspirations for the film grew, and as renowned people became involved in the film, the time for its release became extended. With luck the film will possibly, hope-fully, be released in July 2022 and will help with halting the path to extinction of these birds. The film will also compliment the 'Save the Black Cockatoos.' campaign.

In an interview on RTR with host Jeff Bullen, Jane said the film will highlight the hope as it is not too late to turn things around, but we really need to act now. Cockatoos have lost and continue to lose feeding, drinking and breeding habitat.

In 2021, Jane won the Brian Beaton Award, the best thing that can happen to an environmental film. The Brian Beaton Award honours the memory of a well-respected Western Australian documentary maker, Brian Beaton, by awarding a grant each year to filmmakers who have a current social impact project that needs further support. At the award ceremony, Jane said the prize would 'help get the important story of black cockatoos to the big screen and move audiences to action.' 'We need public pressure and political will to protect these iconic birds.' (*Article by Sean Slatter December 3, 2021, if.com.au*)

A previous Premier referred to Carnaby's cockatoos as 'socalled endangered cockatoos'. Have we seen since then a revaluing of our landscape and genuine action that will protect species? Are the last 6,000 hectares of Gnangara pines going to continue to be cleared to nothingness? <image>

Urgent Community Action required

to save the Sea to River Vlamingh Parklands ecological corridor endorsed in 1998 by State Government.

Go to this <u>consultation page</u> by the **29th April** All West Australians can say **NO** to the rezoning to Urban because it is needed for:

- our foreshore reserve, a buffer for coastal erosion,
- public amenity and enjoyment,
- protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage,
- a small break in suburbia,
- preserving our connection to land and sea,
- the long-term survival of our local wildlife: our iconic small birds, reptiles and mammals
- The 8000sqm around the heritage listed Cable Station at South Cottesloe and Mosman Beach is the only link for wildlife from the coast to the Swan River through Buckland Hill then eastward to the Perth Hills.



Forest Management Plan 2024-2033 pre-draft survey is open till 1 May 2022.

In September 2021, Premier McGowan announced that south-west native forests will be protected from logging from 2024, and the Forest Management Plan 2024-33 will preserve at least an additional 400,000 hectares of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests. Is this as good as it sounds?

Some areas that raise questions include:

- Under the FMP 2014-2023, 848,780 hectares of forest are available for logging. What is going to happen to the other 448,780 hectares?
- Logging of native forests will be banned from the end of 2023 except for "limited forest management activities that improve forest health and clearing for approved mining operations."
- The pre-draft survey says, there will be 'ecological thinning' to improve forest health. The proposed thinning is logging, and there is nothing 'ecological' about it. Logging of any sort uses machinery, and machinery causes soil compaction. Soil compaction has serious adverse impacts on the growth and health of forest vegetation - not just the trees - and lasts at least 50 years. Thinning may remove the very trees that would in future produce the hollows some 26 forest fauna species such as owls and cockatoos need for nesting and breeding.
- Thinning is followed by burning which releases large amounts of CO2 and reduces the rate of carbon capture because the bigger the tree, the more carbon it captures and stores.
- The loss of forest for mining operations, including Alcoa's, must come to an end as quickly as possible because bauxite miners no longer have a social licence to destroy the only jarrah forest in the world.

Please do the survey and get as many like-minded people as possible to do it too.

Celebrating Community Driven Conservation

Thursday 19 May 10am-2pm at WA Museum Boola Bardip

Presented by Perth NRM

This event is part of the International Week for Biodiversity, will include a presentation of findings from the Community Capacity Assessment 2021 and a photo exhibition that portrays the work of environmental volunteers. To find out how to contribute photos or to register for this free event, use the following link. Registrations now open

WA State NRM and Coastal Conference 2022

BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH INNOVATION

20-22 September

At the Mandurah Boardwalk Theatre

For full details on inclusions and pricing, go to https://www.nrmandcoastalconference.org.au/regi strations-now-open/



2022 EVENTS Visit https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/events/ to RSVP



Wednesday 4th May 2022



2 Delhi St, West Perth WA 6005, Australia

In the Company of Cockies -Black-Cockatoos in Urban Landscapes

The Urban Bushland Council invites you to an evening all about black-cockatoos, presented by BirdLife's Merryn Pryor.

Learn about the ecology of black-cockatoos in urban landscapes, the importance of urban bushland and what you can do to help these threatened birds.





WALK THE ROE 8/ROE 9 CORRIDOR

Sunday 15 May 9.30-11.00am



The Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor (CCWC) is pleased to invite members of the Urban Bushland Council to join us for a guided walk in the corridor bushland from Bibra Lake to the coast.

CCWC was formed in 2014 to champion a vision for a linear wildlife park on the Roe 8/9 lands that stretch from the iconic Bibra Lake wetlands in the east to the beautiful beach lands in the west at South Fremantle.

We will look at natural and re-vegetation areas and will talk later about the connectivity issues and other challenges. One of the interesting plants we will see is the Western Woody Pear (*Xylomelum occidentale*) – [Noongar name Danja/Dambung] - pictured here.

We can only take 30 people on the walk. **Please register on our website.** We will email you the meeting place in Coolbellup once you have registered. Wear suitable covered shoes and bring your own water bottle. Email <u>ubc@bushlandperth.org.au</u> for further information.



SUPPORT THE URBAN BUSHLAND COUNCIL - JOIN OR RENEW YOUR 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 copies of the "Urban Bush Telegraph"

The annual membership fees include an electronic copy of the Urban Bush Telegraph (currently published quarterly). Printed copies can be ordered at a cost of \$15.00 per annum for four editions.

Join or renew on-line (<u>https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/membership/</u>) or send your name, address and cheque to: Treasurer, Urban Bushland Council WA Inc, PO Box 326, West Perth WA 6872

Office:

URBAN BUSHLAND COUNCIL WA Inc Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street West Perth WA 6008 Postal address: PO Box 326 West Perth WA 6872 Ph 9420 7207 E-mail: ubc@bushlandperth.org.au Web site: www.bushlandperth.org.au



Urban Bushland Council WA Inc

http//twitter.com/#!/UrbanBushlandWA

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO: ubc@bushlandperth.org.au Copy deadline - 15 July 2022

THE URBAN BUSH TELEGRAPH