



Newsletter of the Urban Bushland Council WA Inc
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The Urban Bush Telegraph

WHY YOUR PATCH MATTERS?

A focus for the UBC’s current community engagement and support program is the concept of ‘*why your patch matters*’. A series of presentations and workshops on relevant topics and site visits have been arranged for the course of the year, including a tour of Alfred Cove in June.

Hosted by the Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group (SERAG), participants from all over the metropolitan area were guided on a walk through the section of Alfred Cove Bush Forever Site 331 from Haig Road to Stoneham Road. Along the way, Margaret Matassa outlined the principal threats and challenges impacting on the site, some of the group’s successes and hopes for the future there, and the natural values that make ‘the patch’ worth the dedication and hard work of SERAG’s volunteers.

The ‘Action’ part of the Swan River Reserves Action Group (SERAG) should be up in flashing lights. This is because what the group has achieved since its formation in 2010 is remarkable.

This area of the river is a Marine Park. Fishing is allowed in Marine Parks but it would be much better if it was prohibited as fish would get a chance to recover and birds would not get entangled in fishing lines. There is hardly any signage to tell people about the Marine Park and what is allowed and not allowed.

SERAG cares for three reserves on the Swan River: Milyu in Como, Alfred Cove foreshore, and Pelican Point in Crawley. All are A-class Nature Reserves.

Waders and waterbirds move between the three reserves daily, using their sandbanks, mud flats and beaches for feeding, nesting and resting. The few remaining areas of salt marsh, sedge banks and fringing forest that comprised the Swan River estuary’s original vegetation, are critically important.

The reserves are suffering under the pressures of incompatible urban activities and climate change.

Alfred Cove has National Trust classification as a ‘last remaining area of shoreline samphire and rush on the lower estuary’ and is one of three remaining mudflat feeding grounds in the Swan Estuary. The salt marsh is a federally listed Threatened Ecologi-



Photo by M Owen

White-faced heron, one of the many waterbirds observed during the guided walk, held on June 19, 2021 at Alfred Cove.

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Photo by M Owen

Margaret Matassa, SERAG Chairperson, shares with walk participants management issues along the Swan River foreshore at Alfred Cove

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EDITORIAL

Traveling from Perth by car today to visit the Creery Wetlands tells a significant story. Rather than speeding down on Ennis Avenue, it is preferable to meander along the old Mandurah Road through Baldivis.

For those growing up in the 1950s, this was the main route to the popular holiday destination - a particularly beautiful road bordered on the left by a rise covered by ancient majestic eucalypts, and on the right a fabulous lake system. Each time travelled on it, seeing whether there was any water and birdlife in the saline lakes was special; but equally enthralling was the stunning vision of expanses of the whitest white in their dryness.

Lakes Cooloongup and Walyunga are now managed as part of Rockingham Lakes Regional Park - a network of environmentally significant lands containing coastal, wetland and upland ecosystems. The area is significant for its geomorphic landforms. The distinct parallel sand



Photo by C O'Neill
Pampas grass infestation at Lake Cooloongup, Rockingham Regional Park.

ridges indicate the positions of former shorelines, providing a record of sea level changes over the past 7,000 years.

The wetlands formed in between the sand ridges are also significant because they form part of an evolutionary time sequence and support unique vegetation communities.

Lakes Cooloongup and Walyungup continue to be of spiritual significance for the Noongar people, as the place where the *Sea Waugal* laid her eggs; and apparently 'Walyungup', means 'place where Noongar talk', and Cooloongup means 'place of children'.

At the beginning of the trip today, the sight of some beautiful old Tuart, Marri and Jarrah trees is promising. But then glancing towards Lake Cooloongup, expanses of Pampas Grass shockingly disfigure the purity of view.



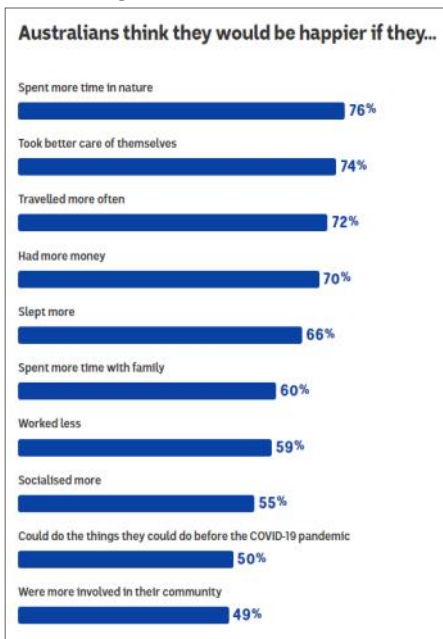
Photo by T Kane
And then there is the tambookie grass to deal with

How can this terrible scarring happen to such a special place?

Popular as a garden ornamental, up until the early 1990s it was believed that only female plants existed in Western Australia. However bisexual plants were discovered throughout the SW of the State, resulting in it becoming a very serious environmental weed – as its presence on Lake Cooloongup attests. It can now rapidly take over wetland and disturbed areas.

It seems that funding for the protection of this particular conservation site may be woefully inadequate.

Perhaps many would say this is nothing new - the problem widely replicated throughout the Region! It would be interesting to know what budget and resources are allocated to weed management and control for the Rockingham Lakes Regional Park, and determine why the Pampas problem has not been addressed.



Source: <https://australiatalks.abc.net.au>

From a purely commercial perspective - but one borne out by recent surveys of community attitudes such as 'Australia Talks' <https://australiatalks.abc.net.au/> - with care and proper investment in maintaining its natural and cultural heritage values, this section of Mandurah Road could become *the* 'tourist route' to Mandurah and thus promote the economic well-being of the populous.

People treasure and want to engage in nature! Its neglect is tantamount to 'killing the goose that lays the golden egg'. It is like destroying the natural habitat of quokkas on Rottnest Island or converting the bushland of Kings Park to roads and entertainments, and still expecting people to visit such places, valued and promoted for their natural beauty.

Once again the Urban Bushland Council calls for the proper protection of remaining natural areas and the adequate funding of DBCA.

We cannot expect the scientific and on-ground work desperately needed to conserve the natural beauty of our environment to be achieved despite years of steady insidious cutbacks and underfunding of the body principally entrusted by the community with its care.

UBC members and supporters are encouraged to visit their local State MP's and call for greatly increased recurrent funding for biodiversity conservation in this year's state budget. Take along a printed copy of the UBCs [Science and Conservation Jobs Stimulus](#).

WHY YOUR PATCH MATTERS?

(Continued from page 1)

cal Community and it is critically important to keep it intact.

A wide expanse of grassed area lies between the path near the river and the belt of trees close to the road. This has occurred because in the early 60s the river was dredged and the now-grassed area, that would have been wetland, filled. The site was used for a number of rubbish tips. In those years people did not appreciate the value of riparian vegetation for the health of the river. The fill over the tip-sites is a different soil from what was there originally. Because of this, SERAG, in its restoration efforts, has had to experiment with what will grow there.

Towards the road SERAG is working to provide understorey and new trees amongst the beautiful *Eucalyptus rudis* and other trees. Towards the river SERAG is protecting trees growing in the river's edge and enhancing the vegetation there.

The work on removing of the Kikuyu and Castor Oil plants from the Troy Park foreshore and planting native species was a great job. Large areas had 71% to 100% weed cover and 38% of native vegetation was impacted by grass invasion.



Photo by M Owen

SERAG volunteers explaining the values of the site to participants of the guided walk.

Winter rains had enlivened the melaleuca woodlands at Alfred Cove, and fallen branches among the understorey were festooned with fabulous fungi, in various shades of orange.

Fungi are part of our rich biodiversity and underpin the long-term health and resilience of bushland. They play many important roles in ecosystem functioning, including breaking down forest litter and debris to provide nutrients for plants.

It was an enjoyable informative afternoon for all - and the response of visitors to the site was extremely positive.

See the back page of this newsletter for the series of UBC events with opportunities to explore 'WHY YOUR PATCH MATTERS?' and what can be done to reduce threats to your patch.

What was said at the Fire and Biodiversity Forum?

The Fire and Biodiversity Forum was held at the Margaret River HEART Margaret River on 4-5 June 2021.

UBC sponsored the event and a number of us UBC folk attended this well-attended Forum. Selected notes and key points made during the two days are summarised here.

Key recommendations and conclusions:

- ◇ Abandon the target of prescribed burning 200,000 ha per year of DBCA managed south west forests and bushlands as this target has no scientific basis, is contrary to indigenous practices, and destroys biodiversity.
- ◇ Fire is the second most threatening process in the south west for threatened species.
- ◇ Focus slow, cool, patchy prescribed burns in winter in understorey only in areas around infrastructure. Indigenous burning does not burn the tree canopy.
- ◇ Never burn in spring, early summer or autumn.
- ◇ Abandon aerial ignition of prescribed burns.
- ◇ Retain long unburnt areas, as they are best for biodiversity protection and wildfire mitigation, and are critical for many plant and animal species.
- ◇ After 12 years of no fire, flammability of undergrowth declines.
- ◇ Abandon the target of prescribed burning areas every 6 - 10 years. This frequency impacts on the known breeding cycles of forest dependent animals and plants.
- ◇ Provide much increased capacity for rapid detection and at source suppression of ignitions before they become wildfires.
- ◇ Ensure critical habitats are protected from fire. For example peat lands, wetlands, and granite outcrops must *never* be burnt.
- ◇ Protect long unburnt habitats with no prescribed burning. *E.g.* for Numbats and Honey Possums.
- ◇ Long unburnt areas are needed for Honey Possums.

What was said at the Fire and Biodiversity Forum? Points made by some of the speakers:

Elder Lynette Knapp said that Noongar Elders have ~75,000 years connection to Merningar Country. She explained that hot burns result in dense regrowth, whereas slow, cool burns result in more open country. Noongar 'precision burning' is needed - with where, when and how to burn in understorey only. She said 'Don't burn trees', and granite outcrops and swamps must never be burnt.

Professor Kingsley Dixon spoke to '*Managing fire in the age of extinction*'. He explained how the prescribed burning program has shifted over the years to much much more burning. Now fire is up to ten times the natural frequencies, and is now the second most threatening process in the south west for threatened species.

It is most disturbing that in the Wandoo Conservation Area (which has a sparse understorey), 50,000ha is planned to be prescribe burned this year 2021.

Long unburnt habitat is critical for many plant and animal species. Fire sensitive plants include many Banksia species which need at least 20 year fire free intervals. Now burns are too frequent for high risk species. Burns in autumn and spring nesting times are threats for Baudins' and Forest Red-tail Black Cockatoos. There is a very high impact from burns for 289 species in the Wheatbelt.

Prescribed burns have more impacts than wildfires.

Burns repeated within the recovery time for many individual species will lead to a major extinction impact.

He concluded that mapping of burns from imagery must be used for management of landscapes.

Carmen Lawrence: *Collegial address: Evidence and Practice.* She called for: 'In light of the fate of the killed Num-bats, the policy and practice of PB need an urgent review'. The impacts of PB on human health are not included in the current policy. She emphasised that a thorough independent review of PB is needed, with evidence based on quality research. She gave a list of questions to be asked.

At the two day PB Conference held in 2019, it was explained that there are greater adverse human health impacts from PB than from bushfires.

David Knowles (Spineless Wonders environmental consultant): '*Springtime burning practices and the potential for ecological outcomes*'. He gave the list of species diversity in each category of macro-invertebrate land fauna of which:
Insects comprise 79.64%; Mammals comprise 0.32%;
Birds comprise 0.8%; Reptiles comprise 0.8%;
Molluscs comprise 0.46%.
Macro-invertebrates are leaf decomposers. PBs in large areas in spring kill massive numbers and there is a lack of refugia for them to escape to and then recover from.

Anna Hopkins: '*Soil fungal responses to disturbance in South-Western Australia.*' Approximately ¼ of global biodiversity lives in soil: fungi, bacteria, small invertebrates. Disturbances to ecosystem functioning are drought, heat waves, fire, loss of digging mammals. Mycorrhizal fungi are important for lots of plants as they help them get nutrients. Lots of impacts are not understood as they are hard to study but are critically important. In the 2018 heat wave, there were deaths in parts of the Jarrah forest, especially around granite outcrops leading to less growth. There was change to the fungal community and some pathogens increased.

There is limited knowledge of impacts and changes to mycelium from fire. A few fungi only fruit after fire, and some only fruit in long unburnt areas. Lots of fungi are killed by fire, especially in severe fires. Impacts on long term changes if there is more than one disturbance - such as wildfire and drought - are not known. She said we need more Mycologists!

A/Professor Philip Zylstra: '*Cooperating with Country*'.

Prescribed Burning is based on the wrong assumption that twice the fire fuel load results in twice the fire risk rate of spread. He explained that 'correlation does not equal causation'. Fuel load is not what drives flammability. Self-thinning of understorey shrubs occurs with no fire. Stems/ ha thin out over time. Fire shrub biomass declines after 20 years of no fire.

We cannot say all wildfires are high severity. And we cannot say all PB are low severity.

Emer. Professor Don Bradshaw: '*The impact of prescribed burning in southwest WA: A Honey Possum's perspective*'.

Before European colonisation, Jarrah forests were affected by major fires every 81 years. Post Europeans, this reduced to every 17 years, and for woodlands, every 6-8 years.

In 1961 there were big Dwellingup wildfires, despite these areas having been prescribe burned. In 1987, CALM started prescribe burns 'to protect and promote biodiversity.' Now the target is to prescribe burn 200,000 ha each year.

After the Yarloop wildfire, the fuel age of less than 6 years is to be burned in 45,000 ha with:

one third < 4 year old fuel age to be burned
one third 4 – 7 year old fuel age to be burned
one third > 4 year old fuel age to be burned.

Honey Possums live on nectar and pollen of flowers in only three families of flora: Proteacea, Myrtacea, Fabaceae.

There were CALM fires in a National Park in 1993 and in 1999. In 1993, half the population of Honey Possums was killed. Then in 1999, the other half was killed. 17 years later, only ~75 % of the population recovered.

There is a need for a fire interval of at least 25.6 years for the population to recover.

Honey Possums prefer *Banksia ilicifolia*. In research plots in the burnt area, there were 70 live *B. ilicifolia* trees and 103 dead trees. In the unburnt area, there were 86 live trees, and 18 dead trees.

Long unburnt areas are needed for Honey Possums. Three *Banksia* species need a long time (up to 30 years) to regenerate after fire, and one species needs 200 years.

Does prescribed burning (PB) reduce impacts of wildfires?

After fire there is a build-up of flammable vegetation for up to 10 years. After this time, the undergrowth flammability declines. Where there is long term no burns, there is little undergrowth in 50 – 60 years. Thus **long unburnt is best.**

Trees need to be much older than 20 years. Long term impacts of burning every 6 years will result in loss of quokkas, possums, Tamar wallabies and more.

Bradshaw's recommendations are:

1. Abandon the 200,000 ha PB target as it has no scientific basis.
2. Focus cool winter PB in areas around infrastructure only.
3. Provide for more rapid suppression of wildfires.
4. Ensure critical habitats are protected from fire.
5. Protect long unburnt habitats.

WHY YOUR PATCH MATTERS?

Why Erindale Bushland Matters

By Sonya Elek

The bushland bound by Erindale Road, Reid Highway and Lennox Place hasn't been designated as a 'Bush Forever' site. It doesn't contain any rivers or wetlands. And it doesn't cover a large area by any standards. But it still has an important role to play in many ways.

Erindale Bushland forms part of the Swan Coastal Plain and is part of the South Western Australian Floristic Region. This region is one of only two recognised global biodiversity hotspots in Australia, and one of the world's five Mediterranean Climate Ecosystems. A large portion of the Erindale Bushland site consists of Banksia Woodland - a Threatened Ecological Community. This once common ecological community was listed as endangered in 2016, since about 60% of it has been lost due to a combination of factors including land clearing, dieback diseases, fire, and climate change. Most of the remaining areas are small and spread across Perth and other nearby coastal areas. Protecting each of these seemingly insignificant sites is vital to the overall survival of this unique ecological community.

Banksia Woodlands support many plant and animal species, including some which are listed as threatened. Carnaby's Black Cockatoo is an endangered species whose survival is intricately linked to the health of the Banksia Woodlands. Carnaby's is one of three species of Black Cockatoo found in WA, all of which are classified as threatened. In a similar trend to the Banksia Woodlands, over the past 50 years their numbers are believed to have dropped by approximately 50%. Erindale Bushland consists of at least 17 potential breeding trees for these birds, as well as more than 8 hectares of 'moderate to good quality' foraging habitat. Since it takes over 100 years for seedlings to mature and form suitable nesting hollows, we can't simply plant more trees to compensate for those that we destroy in the process of clearing land for development.

Banksia Woodlands also support their local human populations. They provide vital shade which decreases the Urban Heat Island Effect, lowering local temperatures by up to 8 degrees Celsius on hot, sunny days. This means less air conditioner use and electricity demand. In addition, they

also filter and maintain aquifers, a main source of drinking water for Perth residents. As with all established trees, Banksia Woodlands increase water retention. This minimises flooding and soil erosion and also reduces the amount of fertilisers and other contaminants that wash into our waterways, which positively impacts stormwater quality. The trees of Banksia Woodlands also absorb pollutants such as nitrogen oxide, ammonia, and sulfur, as well as filtering the fine particulate matter produced by diesel engines.

The above issues are not only important locally, but they are also significant issues on a global scale. Scientists have identified nine 'Planetary Boundaries' – nine critical thresholds for Earth's ecosystems. They are: climate change, land conversion, biodiversity loss, fertiliser use, ocean acidification, freshwater withdrawals, ozone layer depletion, chemical pollution, and air pollution. Alarmingly, we have already pushed beyond safe levels for the first four of these boundaries, and we are edging towards the limit for the others. As described above, Banksia Woodlands have an important role to play in at least five of the nine Planetary Boundaries: land conversion, biodiversity loss, fertiliser use, freshwater withdrawals, and air pollution. In addition, they play a vital role in carbon sequestration, and therefore impact what is perhaps the most critical of the Planetary Boundaries: climate change.

As you can see, Erindale Bushland plays a vital role in the health of our local and even global ecosystems. As part of the Banksia Woodland Threatened Ecological Community, it supports threatened plant and animal species, as well as helping to maintain the local environment for the benefit of its human residents. But more than that, our 'patch', like every other patch, is one of a dwindling number of healthy natural environments that needs to be maintained and protected for current and future generations. We need to do everything we can to prevent Banksia Trees, Black Cockatoos, and all other threatened species from becoming distant memories, while we still can.

Our patch is Underwood Avenue Bushland, Bush Forever site 119.

By Margaret Owen

For over 20 years now, the Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland has been working to protect the bushland. The threat was the University of Western Australia's proposed commercial housing development.

Over all these years, management of the bushland had been neglected other than the firebreaks being maintained each year. Weeds proliferated.

The Friends and the community had done five weeding sessions in 2020 before access was prohibited.

After so many years of neglect and inaction, suddenly there was alarming action. Two companies – Greening Australia and SportsFit - that had been long time tenants in buildings adjacent to the bushland - moved out. Bushland tracks were mown, track edges were sprayed, a two-day



Photo by M Owen

flora survey was conducted and the whole of Lot 4 on which the bushland part exists was surveyed. Pegs, stakes and ribbons followed the fence lines.

Upon enquiry to UWA about the surveying, we were told it was for the Bushfire Management Plan. Not really believable though.

Over this period, The Friends were expecting the University's Ten-Year Master Plan to be released, which could have, or maybe not, information about Underwood Bushland's future.

Last year we had requested a meeting with the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Amit Chakma, and he agreed to meet in March 2021. The Vice-Chancellor told us that he has a responsibility to fulfil the 1904's reasons that the land was endowed. He suggested a bushland compromise of some sort but we could not agree to that. After all, the compromises had already been made. He also said that some properties that were considered to be non-core assets to the University, would be sold. In any event, the Vice-chancellor committed to keeping us informed.

When the Master Plan was released on 24 May 2021, we found that to fund 'rejuvenation, activation and strategic new build construction', the University has considered the divestment of various non-core assets.

Over all this time Market-led Proposals over Underwood and the wider area were being proposed by various developers. 'Market-led Proposals' were introduced by the Labor Government in 2020 'to provide a path for businesses to present unique proposals to government.' We read that 'projects must have a substantial element of public value'.

There are three stages in this 'Market-led Proposal' process. To have some input into the process the Friends wrote to the Department of Finance under which the Market-led Proposal sits, requesting that we be given the opportunity to contribute information to committees considering the assessment and evaluation of proposals

around Shenton Park. In his reply the officer stated that such proposals are confidential but if the proposal was invited to move to Stage 2, a summary of the proposal would be publicly disclosed.

As time went on it seemed that a developer was proposing the reduction of the waste water treatment plant odour buffer and the re-development of Graylands Hospital in Brockway Road in Shenton Park for housing. Associated with this, the issue of the redevelopment of Christchurch School's playing fields for housing became public knowledge. It seemed there were two market-led proposals that were intertwined.

In searching for some information, the on-line Business News 29 April 2021, had the following:

'Hesperia Property has submitted a proposal to repurpose the Graylands Hospital site for future urban infill development in the State Government's Market-led Proposal process.' To access more of the article the reader had to subscribe at cost, so we left it at that. Were we to assume that the confidential period had passed?

The Friends have made three approaches to the Mindaroo Foundation to buy the bushland but this was not considered part of Mindaroo's program. We have made many approaches to the state government to buy the bushland for protection as an A Class Reserve for the protection of nature....and for the community.

It was probably 15 years ago that we were told 'This issue has to run its course.' And just a few weeks ago a government officer said, referring to the Market-led Proposals, 'This has to run its course.'

This is but one story in the metropolis of Perth and also all over the state.

We have wondrous diversity. With clearing continuing, climate change threatening, the city and suburbs heating and green highways fragmented, it is not too much to say that life hangs in the balance.



Photo by M Owen

Tawny Frogmouth

How our comprehension about nature has changed over 150 years. John Gould (1804-1881) described the nesting behaviour of Tawny Frogmouths:

"In every instance one of the birds was sitting on the eggs and the other perched on a neighbouring bough, both invariable asleep. That the male participates in the duty of incubation I ascertained by having shot a bird on the nest, which on dissection proved to be a male."

◇ What's new? ◇ What's new? ◇ What's new? ◇

Dieback Information Group Conference 2021

26-27 August

UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration: Phytophthora Dieback and Protecting Biodiversity

Venue: Bendat Parent & Community Centre, 36 Dodd St, Wembley

To register go to [trybooking](#)

How can you help owls and other birds of prey?

Go to

[BirdLife Australia - Rat Poison — Act for Birds](#)



Carnaby's at Subiaco

Story and photos by Marg Owen

When travelling west along Hay Street near Rokeby Road around 4.30pm one afternoon, I noticed a thick carpet of dropped Liquidambar fruits and leaves on the footpath. Looking up, there to my wondering eyes was a tree full of Carnaby's Cockatoos voraciously eating.

Seeing a flock of Carnaby's is very exciting so I hastily parked and walked back to see the spectacle. The low hanging fruit (the easiest to access) was at the top and the cockatoos were working their way down the tree. Some were only about three metres from the ground.

People walking by stopped to admire, wonder and take photos.

Then with the confidence of being able to fly, a further smaller flock wheeled into the same tree as if they owned the place. It was a beautiful sight.

This was their stop before returning to suburbs to the west for a drink of water, a last feed and their place to roost for the night.

Why are these cockatoos feeding in such a very busy and potentially dangerous place? Could it be that they are hungry because so much of their native habitat has been cleared?



A Successful Partnership

By Robyn Murphy

In March 2018, the Friends of Trigg Beach became aware that the State Government had purchased a vacant block of land at Trigg Point. A privately owned beach house that occupied the site had been demolished and the block had been cleared.

We were determined that this land should be restored and revegetated given its proximity to the shoreline, and not suffer the same fate as a similar vacant block to the south which the City of Stirling had made into a car park.

We contacted the Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage which had acquired the land, and arranged an on-site meeting with their officers, our group and representatives from the Friends of Trigg Bushland, the Wildflower Society of WA, and Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare.

It was with great relief that the Department representatives assured us that a decision had been made to restore and revegetate the land, returning it as close as possible to its natural state. We were all keen to see this happen as soon as possible.

A plant list was prepared and the Department said it would work with the City of Stirling to ensure that all plantings were of local provenance. A plant list was sent to each of our groups for comment and the planting was to commence following the first winter rains. Common coastal species such as *Acacia cyclops*, *Scaevola crassifolia*, *Rhagodia bacata*, *Olearia axillaris* and *Spyridium globulosum* were on the plant list.

Group News Group News Group News



New plantings, June 2018



October 2019, after the first winter rains



October 2020

The sandy block was prepared, weeds removed and hundreds of seedlings were planted, with varying survival rates through the hot summer of 2018/19. Replacement and new plantings have occurred over the last two years, and the stakes and plastic protection has been removed, revealing a high degree of success in the harsh coastal conditions.

Our group has continued to monitor the site and to liaise with the Department regarding the progress of the plantings and the elimination of emergent weeds. There is no water on site so the aim is for the plants to become established without dependence on reticulation. A recent visit has confirmed that this has been a successful strategy and the restoration of coastal vegetation and habitat on this site is continuing apace.



May 2021

Friends of Hollywood Bushland

By Trish Hewson

At the beginning of July, we had a very successful day working with the Hollywood Primary School and planted most of the planned seedlings. The children seem to enjoy it, enthusiasm knows no bounds, and we did not lose any children. Our thanks to everyone who helped out. Margaret Owen saw our Frogmouth residents and sent us this lovely photo of them. They sure know how to hide in plain sight.

Sunday, 11th July, is our normal Working Bee and we still have a few more plants to get in. Hopefully the rain will hold off.

Meet at the Boronia Avenue entrance at 9 am and our normal morning tea is at 10.30 am.



Photo by M Owen

An upgrade of fauna underpasses in Neerabup National Park

By Renata Zelinova

Some readers might recall an article in the Autumn 2020 issue of this newsletter describing the disappointment of the Quinns Rocks Environmental Group (QREG) volunteers with the status of fauna underpasses in Neerabup National Park after the completion of Mitchell Freeway extension and building of Neerabup Road through the National Park. The article included the same photo as shown here to the right, demonstrating the lack of any shelter for fauna within the underpasses. Installation of fauna underpasses 'furniture' was part of the approved fauna management plan for the roadworks but not delivered at completion.

Earlier this year the Group welcomed an email from Main Roads with a short video, showing the installation of rocks and concrete pipes along one side of the underpass (see photo below). As the photo shows, graffiti on the walls of the underpasses is increasing which indicates frequent presence of humans. During a visit in March, QREG volunteers removed large number of spray cans and other rubbish, many hidden in the concrete pipes.

Due to isolation, it is difficult to maintain more frequent monitoring of these underpasses but we remain positive that with perseverance the novelty of the huge canvass provided by the underpasses walls will wear off and nature will reclaim this space for the intended purposes - to support the movement of emus, kangaroos, wallabies and many other animals.

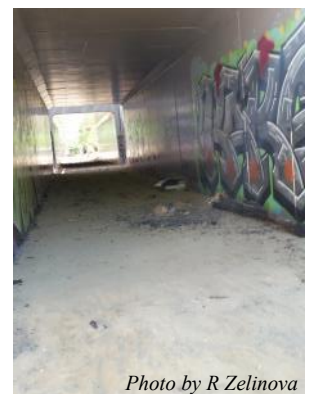


Photo by R Zelinova



Neerabup Road Underpasses - Fauna Furniture Installation Gambara (5 Jan 2021)

Image courtesy to video by Gambara

BUSH FOREVER UPDATE

On April 21, UBC representatives met with staff from DBCA, DPLH and WALGA for another round-table-discussion on Bush Forever implementation.

The meeting was initiated by the UBC following advice from the Premier of Western Australia that the Bush Forever audit, which had been placed on hold pending the Strategic Assessment for the Perth and Peel, will be undertaken in 2021. The aim of the audit is to 'clarify the progress of the Bush Forever program to date and provide guidance on its future management' (Letter dated 20 November 2020).

As in November 2020, over \$159 million has been spent purchasing Bush Forever lands. The WAPC continues acquiring privately-owned Bush Forever lands as a priority. According to the latest advice from the WAPC, the State recently transferred to it from the Department of Communities Bush Forever Site 295 in Banksia Grove, a 43 hectares site. Capital works at Anstey Keane wetlands include installation of fencing which is now awaiting approval by DWER, followed by clean-up of the site which has been subject to on-going illegal rubbish dumping. In the meantime, weed management has commenced.

The UBC wishes to acknowledge the staff at DBCA for hosting the round-table-discussion in April and will welcome the opportunity to read the audit report.



Photo by M Owen

7 Ways to protect WA's most valuable natural asset

In April, the Wilderness Society released a report into the status of native vegetation and biodiversity in Western Australia, identifying opportunities and solutions for improvement.

This report includes an overview of the issues, reasons behind the continuing decline and gaps in the National and State's frameworks that are supposed to protect the country's internationally recognised natural assets. The full report can be read via the following link [Final_WANativeVegReport.pdf \(wilderness.org.au\)](#); listed here are the key recommendations:

1. Expand our conservation estate, with Perth, Swan Coastal Plain and the south west regions highlighted
2. Invest in useful and accurate data - adopt a long-term and sustainable \$10 million annual monitoring program
3. Secure a net gain goal - adopt a whole-of-government reform towards net gain of WA's native vegetation
4. Rethink fire management - review rapid response and prescribed burns
5. Expand land restoration - increase funding of the land restoration program to \$100 million
6. Embed community rights - enshrine basic universal community rights in legislation
7. Adopt enhanced national standards - boost government accountability, compliance and enforcement.

The Department of Water and Environment released for public consultation guidelines about the new clearing referrals process to be introduced when proposed amendments to the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* take effect in the second half of this year.

The draft [Guide: Native vegetation referrals](#) provides an overview of the key factors the Department will consider when assessing a proposed clearing referral and determining if a clearing permit is or is not required.

Submissions should be emailed to betterregulatorypractice@dwer.wa.gov.au by Friday, 30 July 2021.



2021 EVENTS

Visit <https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/events/> to RSVP

Date/Time	Event	Topic	Venue
July 25th Sunday 9am-1pm (incl. lunch)	Workshop 1	W1: Why your patch matters Key to understanding attributes, land management, threats, support and resources. Facilitated by Colma Keating with expert assistance from Mary Gray, Diana Corbyn, Renata Zelina and Rosemary Glass	Conference Room City West Lotteries House 2 Delhi St , West Perth
July 28th Wednesday 6pm for 6.30pm start	General Meeting	PANEL DISCUSSION: Influencing your local MP MC Lynn MacLaren with experienced campaigners from UBC Member Groups Hearing experiences; what are key pointers/speaking points; Template for participants; Bush Forever list for State electorates	Conference Room City West Lotteries House 2 Delhi St , West Perth
August 22nd Sunday 1-3pm	Walk	Treasures of Warwick Bushland Treasures, challenges and achievements with the Friends of Warwick Bushland.	Bowling Club car park, Lloyde Drive, Warwick
August 25th Wednesday 6pm for 6.30pm start	General Meeting	Influencing your Local Government Cr Sara Saberi: Roles of Councillors and LGAs, how best to work with them. Heidi Hardisty: How to approach conversation and what to say	Thomasi Room Bendat Community Centre 36 Dodd Street, Wembely
August 28th Saturday 12-3.30pm (lunch @12)	Workshop 2	W2: Working with Local Government decision makers and land managers Legislation, regulations, building relationships with your Councillors and staff. Facilitated by Colma Keating with expert assistance from Sandy Boulter and Cottesloe Coastcare	Bendat Community Centre 36 Dodd Street, Wembely
September 12th Sunday 9-11am	Walk	River Foreshore and Living Stream at Nurdi Park Challenges, threats, achievements and collaborations with Canning River Residents Environment Protection Association	Nurdi Park, Riverton & Rossmoyne/Shelley
September 18th Saturday 9am-1pm (incl. lunch)	Workshop 3	W3: Laws & your patch Understanding State legislation; Environmental Protection Act, Clearing Regulations, Planning and Development Act Facilitated by Colma Keating, assistance TBC	Henderson Environmental Centre End of Groat Street, North Beach



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

Office:

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Web site: www.bushlandperth.org.au



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NEWSLETTER ITEMS

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO:
ubc@bushlandperth.org.au
Copy deadline - 23 October 2021