

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2012 TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **Tuesday 5th March 2013 at Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street West Perth, 6.30pm**

This report is for the Urban Bushland Council's calendar year January to December 2012 inclusive.

The Perth region is itself a world class biodiversity hotspot that lies within the south west global biodiversity hotspot for conservation priority. Our focus in 2012 was on recognition and protection of our rich Banksia woodlands and wetlands of the Swan Coastal Plain and its habitat for black cockatoos:

- The UBC and the Wildflower Society nominated the Banksia woodlands of the southern Swan Coastal Plain as a threatened ecological community under the EPBC Act. It is pleasing that this nomination has been accepted and will be assessed in the current round by December 2014.
- In conjunction with the Cockatoo Coalition, we helped lobby for a new Biodiversity Conservation Act for WA. Now we have pre-election commitments from both Labor and the Liberals that each would introduce new Biodiversity legislation as a priority if elected to government.
- **Bush Forever:** Implementation of Bush Forever was again on our agenda for action as the process has been curbed by the Barnett government. In the second half of the year, we ran a campaign on Bush Forever. Well aware that implementation was supposed to be completed by 2010 and that it was not, we engaged with government agencies to seek the status of implementation. What did the ongoing audit say? How many sites are protected and managed? How many are yet to be secured and managed? Why has funding for purchase and management of sites been reduced? Will you present a seminar to give the community a status report on Bush Forever?
With the remarkable lack of response to these questions after many meetings with government officers, we decided to produce a UBC Report Card on Bush Forever. To do this we ran a workshop with agency folk who have been involved in Bush Forever over the past 12 years, and then a public conference on 7 December to invite papers on various aspects of Bush Forever and to present our Report Card.

The UBC is preparing printed proceedings of the well attended conference. From our Report Card and from feedback by conference attendees, we have compiled a '*Call for Action on Bush Forever*'. Copies are available here this evening and from UBC website.

Engaging with Government

During the year we continued to lobby and engage decision makers by meeting with Ministers and their staff, Labor and Greens MPs and their staff, agency officers especially in DEC and DOP. With assistance from UBC members, we made many written submissions and appeals for planning amendments, clearing permits, environmental assessments and other proposals state and federal. We had two meetings with Environment Minister Bill Marmion, nil with Planning Minister John Day despite written requests, and 10 minutes with federal Environment Minister Tony Burke. Many thanks are due to all the members of groups who do this work for the UBC on top of their own submissions and work for their local groups. Our work is a collective effort in providing a voice for the bush.

Support to community groups

Our new website has greatly assisted contact with us. Enquiries about bushland and trees and community involvement come to us more now. We assist where we can and guide people to sources of information and advice from various authorities. We supported some high profile campaigns: Roe 8 extension, Underwood Ave bushland and adjacent Bedbrook Place bushland, Nowergup quarry, Stratton Bushland as well as many other issues as listed below.

UBC Council meetings and events

- 6 March: Ron Johnstone, Curator of Ornithology WA Museum: '*A Tail of Two Cockatoos, one red, one white*'.
- 24 April: Prof Pierre Horwitz: '*Wetland Worries but some good news as well*'.
- 5 June: Matt Williams DEC: '*Graceful Sun Moth Synemon gratiosa*'
- 13 August: Geoff Barrett DEC: '*Counting Cockies*' and Recovery plans for Black Cockatoos

- 30 September: Guided walk in Hawkevale Bushland in conjunction with Perth branch of Wildflower Society. Guides Bronwen and Greg Keighery.
- 16 October: Sandy Lloyd DAFWA on listing weeds under the new Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act. Special guest, visiting Professor Richard Mack, Washington University USA: *Sustained control of plant invaders requires our sustained public outreach'*

Submissions and campaigns

The table below is a summary of the issues and key events that involved our attention during 2011.

No	Site or issue	Submission or action on	Outcome
1	Kiara TAFE site (ongoing issue)	Ministry of Housing , City of Swan and Planning Minister support land swap with WAPC land used by Lockridge SHS (enables more housing, wetland rehabilitation and bushland retained)	Dept Housing has ceased work on subdivision, supports land swap for WAPC land at Lockridge SHS. WAPC advises that 'negotiations continuing' with Education Dept.
2	Endangered black cockatoos and Cockatoo Coalition	<p>*Ron Johnstone, Chris Phillips, Assoc Prof John Bailey were speakers at CCWA Environment Matters Seminar (2 Feb) <i>'Why are WA's rare and endangered cockatoos starving?'</i></p> <p>*Red-tailed Black Cockatoo status requires upgrading from 'vulnerable' at least to 'endangered' under EPBC Act.*In 15 months, 50,000ha habitat burnt in SW fires</p> <p>*UBC active associate of the Cockatoo Coalition which held a strategy workshop 18 February to plan action to save cockatoos from extinction</p> <p>*Coalition campaign drive for a new Biodiversity Act for WA (see below)</p> <p>*Support for amendments to Wildlife Conservation Act being worked on by Greens with community and academic input</p> <p>* SEWPAC black cockatoo draft referral guidelines, meeting to explain, UBC submission made. Offsets a problem.</p>	<p>Packed house 160 people - standing room only. Biggest attendance ever for Environment Matters.</p> <p>Indicates widespread community concern</p> <p>Inaction by State Government and Birdlife Aust (WA) to nominate upgrading.</p> <p><i>'On a Wing and a Prayer'</i> -film by Leighton de Berros shown on ABC TV 13 March 8.30 pm</p> <p>Amendment Act presented to Parliament by Giz Watson, Greens. Not debated and voted on before Parliament prorogued in December.</p> <p>Referral guidelines released by SEWPAC. Includes 'offsets'</p>
3	Artwork for children's activities	For UBC, artist Rob Fleming created a set of drawings of the 3 species of black cockatoos and their habitat as activity sheets for children	Launch by Hon Sally Talbot MLC at UBC Council meeting 6 March; available on website; encouraged use in primary schools. Display of Mt Lawley PS children's colouring-in shown at AGM.
4	Call for new Biodiversity Conservation Act for WA	<p>*Worked with Cockatoo Coalition to campaign for new Act. Helpful advice from John Bailey and others.</p> <p>*Cockatoo Coalition & UBC circulated a Petition to Legislative Council concerning WA's 600+ listed threatened species, protection through changes to legislation, policies, practices etc</p> <p>*27 Feb: UBC met with Mark McGowan Leader of Opposition, and Hon Sally Talbot, shadow Environment Minister calling for new Biodiversity Act as a matter of urgency, and support for Interim Amendment of Wildlife Conservation Act.</p> <p>Also boost for Bush Forever and recognition of Perth's Banksia woodlands, now under threat.</p>	<p>Hon Giz Watson tabled petition in parliament with 5454 signatures mid year. Further signatures presented later.</p> <p>Mark McGowan announced at the CCWA Conference that Labor if elected will immediately bring in a new Biodiversity Conservation Act as a top priority</p> <p>Premier Barnett, if re-elected, has made a commitment to a new Act also.</p>
5	Manning Rd, City of Canning	Loss of 168 mature food trees for black cockatoos along road contrary to City of	Advice ignored by Mayor and Councillors.

		Canning Engineering and Environmental staff advice. On-site protests	Several people arrested
6	Bedbrook Place Greenway 19 between 2 Bush Forever sites, City of Nedlands	'Biodiversity ecolink' 10m wide proposed by Nedlands Council for Clinipath development adjacent to Underwood Ave bushland Nedlands Council does not have a Local Biodiversity Strategy in place which should include recognition and protection of this ecological linkage UBC letter to Minister Marmion to request the government purchase O'Neill's 2 Lots (now for sale) in Bedbrook Place to maintain the ecological linkage. Other lots in the linkage under threat including hospital bushland on the east side. City of Nedlands will not progress the protection of the linkage because 'councillors will not support it.'	Sent to State Assessment Tribunal (SAT). SAT returned it to City of Nedlands, Clinipath withdrew their proposal, taken over by George O'Neil; Nedlands Council backflip to a 4.5m linkage. Despite site offered for sale, government has not supported UBC request to purchase the site.
7	Banksia Woodlands of the southern Swan Coastal Plain	UBC + Wildflower Society in March 2013 jointly nominated the Banksia woodlands as a TEC under the EPBC Act. Entity Media produced a 7 minute video ' <i>Our Banksia Woodlands</i> ' for UBC website and wide distribution	Nomination accepted. To be assessed in next round to be completed by December 2014. <i>Our Banksia Woodlands</i> launched by Hon Sally Talbot 16 October at UBC Council meeting.
8	Site just south of lake Nowergup	Dunstan Lime Kilns proposal to burn limestone. UBC + Sabine Winton attended Appeals Convenor to appeal against EPA 'not assessed'.	Appeal dismissed but DEC not issuing any new licences until applicants gain Local Govt approval. Dunstan Lime Kilns now applying for quarrying which is allowed under current zoning.
9	Lot 5483 Park Lane, Ian Robbins Park, Alexander Heights	<i>Save the Trees in Our Park</i> action group strong local campaign opposing development proposal on Council land to clear remnant of 37 Banksia trees and 15 Eucalypt trees: community asset, cockatoo feeding habitat, and in ecological linkage Koondoola - Errina Rd Bush Forever sites. UBC submission to City of Wanneroo	City of Wanneroo ignored local community desire to retain vegetation.
10	Shenton College bushland, Selby St	School extensions proposed possibly in bushland remnant on north side of school. Liaison with Friends of Shenton Bushland, Friends of Underwood Ave, UBC. Letters sent.	UBC meeting Principal and architect 19 March. Building to go on grassed area?
11	Underwood Avenue Bushland	*UBC asked City of Nedlands for signs along Underwood Ave to warn motorists of black cockatoos and need to slow traffic. *Jarrah and grass trees cleared in UWA reconfiguration of animal pens. Reported to Native Vegetation Protection Branch, DEC. * UBC by letter requested meeting with new Vice Chancellor Prof Paul Johnson. *Carnaby's regularly use Underwood bush for foraging, perching, resting. SEWPAC advised of evidence of this with photos and observations by Margaret Owen.	Signs erected but no words or reduced speed from 70km/hr NVP Branch contacted UWA Prof Johnson refused to meet with UBC. Underwood is classed by DEC as critical habitat as is within 1km of major night roost site on corner Underwood and Brockway/Brookdale Rds.
12	Housing proposal and canal development in Pt Peron Bush Forever site and Mangles Bay	*Strong local campaigns by 'Hands off Pt Peron (HOPP) and Protect Pt Peron (PPP) against proposal by Landcorp for housing and canal development. Threatens Lake Richmond thrombolites, sea water intrusion, includes Bush Forever clearing, and threatens Mangles Bay communities. *UBC submission to EPA on PER. Proposal by Landcorp is totally unacceptable.	EPA conducting formal EIA as PER. EPA has not yet assessed. Press conference by CCWA, HOPP, PPP, UBC 5 April gained coverage on ABC TV and ABC radio. UBC (Mary Gray) got ~5sec on TV ' <i>this proposal for housing at Pt Peron is akin to</i>

		* UBC + Wildflower Society + Vic Semeniuk met Mark McGowan, Sally Talbot seeking their position	<i>putting houses in the middle of Kings Park'</i> Labor would reject the proposal if EPA said environmentally unacceptable. Not sure otherwise.
13	Funding for continuation of Perth Urban Bushland Fungi project	State NRM funding limited to \$50,000 is inadequate to employ scientists and project coordinator. Also DEC has not employed a Mycologist at the Herbarium nor provided any financial support to the project. WA Naturalists' Club has supported the project for 8 years, and could not provide further funds in 2012 year.	After 8 years, this highly productive citizen science project has stopped as there are no government Mycologists and funds to support the project, and NRM funding is inadequate. No federal funding under Caring for Country available for basic fungi surveys
14	Gateway Project, Perth Airport	UBC submission on Main Roads proposal for clearing of 112ha for new road extension into Airport and in Tonkin Highway reserve.	
15	National Wildlife Corridors proposal, including legislation	UBC submission to SEWPAC, recommending ecological linkages in Bush Forever be included	No outcome as yet.
16	Midland Garden Club	UBC invited to give a talk to the Garden Club - on plants in our local Banksia woodlands.	Amazing ignorance of the ~30 Club members of their/our local bushland plants
17	EnviroFest Whiteman Park, 6 May	UBC stall. Children engaged easily with colouring-in sheets on black cockatoos.	Public engagement with children and parents
18	Fire in Koondoola Bushland	Arson reported on radio as deliberately lit with 15 ignition points. FESA wanted to cut down burnt trees, City of Wanneroo said 'no' and took over post-fire management.	2 trees cut down adjacent to track, all revegetation near wetland was burnt
19	Wungong catchment 12 year trial on thinning trees by Water Corporation	Money stopped for WA Museum surveys of cockatoos despite Ministerial conditions from EIA.	Runoff has dropped by 50% after 20% decline in rainfall. Water table has dropped so low that little if any inflows to Dam
20	Cnr South St and Ladner St O'Connor	20 x mature Marri trees cut down for car park.	
21	Fire and Biodiversity Conference, June 2012	Presented by DEC. Evidence presented did not in UBC's opinion support concept of prescribed burning on Swan Coastal Plain	UBC has retained its position of not supporting prescribed burning on the Swan Coastal Plain.
22	Lot 9 Brighton	Clearing permit granted for 40ha clearing by Satterleys. Another 21 ha proposed for clearing. UBC submission on Controlled Action under EPBC Act.	?
23	Bushland adjacent to Bush Forever and FESA fire station	Probably TEC, clearing at variance with 6 clearing principles. UBC submission	Submission ignored
24	Roe-8 Highway extension	Through Beeliar Regional Park. PER, ongoing issue. Big government commitment to PER process and public awareness: \$20 million spent so far.	PER not yet assessed by EPA. No funding in state budget for building Roe 8. No federal government assistance identified.
25	~16ha Stratton bushland adjacent to Talbot Rd Bush Forever site 306	Proposal by Dept of Housing referred by UBC to EPA for formal EIA as quick 'no', has 2 x critically endangered (by State) TEC: 20C and 3A, and perhaps a third. Also Carnaby's habitat and Red-tail habitat. DEC Threatened Species and Communities Unit has done flora surveys, plots installed, advised EPA to call the housing proposal in. Friends of Stratton Bushland formed, UBC representatives visited site 3 June.	Site was originally proposed for Bush Forever, but excluded as housing already planned. Approval lapsed and Dept Housing seeking approval again. UBC met with Tony De Barro, Richard Elliot DOH senior officers who did not appreciate the conservation significance of the site.

26	Trigg Dunes City of Stirling	Boardwalk proposed, strongly opposed by local group 'Stop the Boardwalk' as will damage coastal bushland landscape and flora. UBC submission.	Petition to City of Stirling opposing boardwalk.
27	Perth and Peel Strategic Assessment under EPBC Act	Information session organised by UBC on 13 June: State and federal officers present with community folk. Assessment process being led by Dept Premier & Cabinet (Simon Taylor)- said: ' <i>Our remit is to protect biodiversity</i> '	*~8000ha Banksia woodlands under threat of development. *UBC not invited to be on Stakeholder Reference group, while all developer interests are included. *UBC nervous about this process and likely outcomes for Banksia woodlands
28	UBC 2012 Campaign on Bush Forever plan 2000 UBC's Bush Forever report Card	<u>UBC decided to focus on Bush Forever for the second half of 2012 and pre-election.</u> *Series of steps, meetings, events. Special strategy meeting to plan this held 24 July -facilitated by Margo O'Byrne. *UBC held many meetings with agencies and officers about status of Bush Forever and need for an audit. eg Meetings: 19 July with Chairman WAPC + WAPC and DOP officers; 25 July DEC Swan Region and Urban Nature; 30 August Minister Day's policy officers. *UBC formed a Bush Forever Campaign group who met regularly from end of August onwards * Bush Forever Workshop held 14 Sept with officers involved in implementation over the years to present. * Bush Forever Report Card Conference held 7 December at Murdoch University	Progress against each of the Policy Objectives, Policy Measures and Actions compiled at and after the UBC workshop 14 Sept. with help of officers. UBC's Bush Forever Report Card presented at Conference 7 December, ~120 people attended, well supported by DEC, Wildflower Society, NAMS. Printed proceedings to be published by UBC. Community call for statutory protection for Bush Forever Areas, greatly increased resources for DEC management of sites to retain values, and public education and awareness.
29	Henderson Centre, Star Swamp Reserve Spring Display	Organised by Friends of Star Swamp and Northern Suburbs branch Wildflower Society, held 7-9 Sept incl. Lots of primary school classes visited. UBC display and representatives interacting with public and children.	Cockatoo colouring sheets popular Excellent initiative to engage with the local community
30	MRS rezoning from P&R to Industrial, Wattle Grove	Is Bush Forever, part cleared, part is Conservation Category Wetland (CCW). UBC does not support industrial development and dewatering or fill in wetland areas	
31	Lot 9 Marmion Ave Brighton: Satterleys	Urban and residential development referral to SEWPAC (2011/6137) under EPBC Act. UBC submission	Controlled Action under EPBC Act for Carnaby's, and Graceful Sun Moth
32	MRS 1227/57 Southern River Rd & Garden St realignment, Gosnells	EPA recommended the zoning be changed to Parks & Recreation reservation for the section of BF site 464. UBC supported this.	Separate MRS Amendment required. ?progress
33	19 trees at Woodbridge, Dept of Education	UBC submission against the clearing	Clearing permit granted
34	Large tree removal in Wembley Sports Park	The Town of Cambridge landscaping strategy identified 288 trees to be cleared including 6 significant Tuarts (one 1050mm in diameter), ~60 Carnaby's food trees. UBC appeal to the Appeals Convenor re granting of a clearing permit. Strong community opposition, practical modifications suggested. Site is ~1km from major Carnaby's night roost site, thus is critical habitat.	In the Clearing Permit Decision Report, 149 trees, non indigenous to WA 'not considered native vegetation under the EP Act therefore not assessed'. 183 trees cleared including the tuarts. Alternative integrated plan with most trees retained was ignored

35	Lot 1 Gay St Dianella, Channel 9 bushland & Channel 7 bushland in Bush Forever	Lot 1 still not acquired by WAPC. This is essential as is the connecting bushland for kangaroos to cross between Cottonwood Cres and Channel 9 bushland (5.5ha now owned by WAPC, is additional site proposed to be added to BF)	Ian Britza MLA (Lib) and Minister Marmion visited the site with Friends of Dianella bushland. No news on Lot 1 Gay St. Satterleys negotiating with City of Stirling to clear part of their Bush Forever area. - is unacceptable
36	Environmental Roadside weed list	Weed list compiled by Roadside Conservation Committee August 2012, endorsed by Environment Minister Marmion. All need to be declared as 'Pest Plants' and/or be listed as environmental weeds under the new WA Biosecurity and Agricultural Management (BAM) Act	UBC Council meeting on weeds held 16 October
37	Festival of Lakes, Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre	Held 13 October. UBC stall	
38	Natural Resource Management - Perth region (Perth NRM)	NRM seminar: UBC gave brief talk identifying need for region focus on declining groundwater levels and strategic control of highly invasive weeds eg Geraldton Carnation weed NRM Forum Dec: UBC attended. Groups identified key issues for focus 2013 onward.	Perth NRM planning major projects on basis of issues from forum
39	War games in coastal dunes, City of Joondalup	Environmental harm: dune plants dug up, trenches and pits dug. UBC reported this to EPA Pollution Control Unit (Ken Raine) as local police and City of Joondalup did not respond to community complaints. Joondalup to replant.	Need to check response next season and whether any further damage.
40	Pt Peron Area and Mangles Bay Marina	Proposal by Landcorp for housing in Bush Forever site and canal development + marina UBC submission to EPA	EPA yet to report
41	Senate enquiry into Threatened species	UBC submission calling for stronger federal laws and action, as well as new WA state legislation to protect threatened species and communities (TEC)	Senate report yet to come
42	Gnangara Mound overdrawn	Press article in West Australian by Daniel Mercer with photo of UBC President at wetland. Water Corp licence is 20GL above sustainable limit.	Falling groundwater levels and lack of controls on abstraction are major concerns for bushland health
43	Harrisdale Swamp Bush Forever site	UBC attended initial meeting of ~30 local people and assisted formation of Friends of Harrisdale Swamp. Members sent letters to Minister for Planning calling for urgent acquisition by WAPC of last Lots so that the whole Bush Forever Area can be securely fenced and managed. Current vandalism, rubbish dumping, 4WD damage unacceptable and must be stopped.	Friends of Harrisdale Swamp established and started on-ground weed and rubbish removal on DEC controlled section.
44	Anstey-Keane Damplands - Bush Forever	UBC letters and contact with local MP Tony Simpson and Minister for Planning calling for: (1) urgent finalisation of acquisition of unfenced Lots; (2) also secure heavy duty gates etc to stop vandals entering along Water Corp drain access and other entry points; (3) increased DEC management to retain values	Slow progress - gates yet to be installed by Water Corporation; WAPC yet to acquire last private Lots
45	Red Hill Hanson's quarry, Gidgeganup	UBC submission opposed quarry extension into significant site. EPA assessed as environmentally unacceptable and could not be made acceptable	Environment Minister over-ruled EPA advice and approved quarry with conditions. Totally unacceptable outcome.