

## BUSH FOREVER: WHO CARES?

Remarkable by their absence from the UBC's Bush Forever Conference on 7 December were officers from the Office of the EPA and all the government utilities such as Main Roads, Water Corporation, Landcorp, Department of Housing. These are the agencies that are dragging their feet in their respect for Bush Forever as a whole of government policy and implementation plan.

On the other hand, it was pleasing to see 35 officers from other government agencies: there were 8 local authorities represented, many DEC officers, 3 from the Department of Planning, 2 from the federal Environment Department (SEWPAC), Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority and others.

Bush Forever is a comprehensive package. After 12 years of work, it is only partially implemented, and we do not have an overview of progress to show which areas are properly managed for conservation and which are being whittled away or degraded by vandalism and neglect.

The government has not maintained the planned audit to show whether we have secured for conservation at least 10% of each of the 26 Heddl vegetation complexes. As at August 2012, there are 101 Bush Forever areas or part of areas (out of 287) with no conservation management agency assigned.

Seventy-nine areas are privately owned but only 5 of these are formally protected by conservation covenants. About 80% of areas are zoned Parks & Recreation which provides some protection, but why is this not 100%?

The MRS Text Amendment for Bush Forever that was advertised for comment in our last newsletter, reflects the government's lack of commitment to Bush Forever. It does not provide for protection or management of all Bush Forever areas. It simply recognises the 287 areas shown on the MRS map as Bush Forever areas which are areas of regionally significant bushland. Worse still, it proposes to *'streamline the development approvals processes'* for reserved lands in Bush Forever areas controlled by public authorities. So government agencies will be able to ignore the 'whole of government' Bush Forever policy and clear bushland in their Bush Forever sites. What message will this give to private land developers?

As a wealthy society, surely we can do much better than this.

**The State election is looming.** Each one of us will do well to remind our local candidates standing for State election in March that we value our urban bushland:

- We want to see a much greater commitment to protection underpinned by law so that clearing and development in a Bush Forever site is not permitted;

- We want much more funding and support to retain and manage our reserve network;

- We want the Metropolitan Region Improvement Tax rate *increased* so that sites are acquired and fenced;

- We insist major government proposals for destruction of Bush Forever sites must be rejected:

Roe 8 Highway extension through Beeliar Wetlands, the road through Anstey-Keane wetlands, and Pt Peron housing and canal development.

Perth's biodiverse Banksia woodlands and wetlands are like no other city in the world. Healthy parks means healthy people in a warming climate. Let's make it bush for ever, not bush for never.

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# Editorial

The WAPC dropped a bombshell with proposed amendment (MRS 1236/57) which allows the Barnett Government to **streamline the development approval process on land including Bush Forever Areas.**

The UBC believed that the intention of Bush Forever MRS Text Amendment 1236/57 was to provide statutory protection for Bush Forever Areas; to ensure land managers retain the conservation values of Bush Forever Areas; and to define and state the management purpose on the MRS map. Instead however, the amendment is directed towards providing developers with unhindered access to Bush Forever Areas. These measures if passed would weaken and potentially destroy many of the achievements of past Labor and Liberal governments when they firstly initiated Bushplan and then saw to fruition in December 2000 Bush Forever, a 'whole of government' plan to protect the most significant areas of natural bushland in the Perth metropolitan area.

Why is the Barnett government proposing to introduce legal measures which would seriously weaken the implementation of Bush Forever? That is the question we are asking. The answer seems to lie in pandering to land developers, rather than respecting and protecting Perth's priceless natural heritage and remarkable biodiversity

values. While these values are recognised nationally and internationally, they apparently are not recognised by the Western Australian Government. Since Bush Forever's endorsement by the Court Government, successive governments have implemented Bush Forever with the Planning as lead agency and with WAPC acquiring many Bush Forever Areas and beginning the process of protection and management. The process of implementation has a long way to go, but if the Government persists in proceeding with this amendment, it will seriously undermine the advances of the past 12 years as well as shake the confidence of the community which has applauded many of the advances which have been made.

The Court government obviously named this fine initiative Bush Forever, as they, and the community believed that the intention was for areas identified as regionally significant to be 'bush forever'. We should let Mr Barnett and his fellow Liberal Members know that the community greatly value Perth's bushland and will not sit idly by and let it be decimated. The Amendment should be withdrawn and amended to strengthen the protection of Bush Forever Areas. It should not be used as an avenue for land developers to access Bush Forever Areas without constraints.

## Graeme Rundle - Obituary

*By Joan Payne*

Over a 45-year period Graeme Rundle planned, advocated, negotiated and contrived to have Western Australia's unique biodiversity conserved. No one person has contributed more to the protection and good management of Western Australia's biodiversity, and it is impossible to do justice to his contribution.

Graeme was always proactive with conservation. He thoroughly researched previous and current land use and status prior to taking action. He was an advocate for strategic planning long before governments began using (and occasionally applying) it. He was actively involved in virtually every area of conservation - forest management and protection, dieback prevention, water sustainability, coastal planning, salinity, wetlands, cultural heritage, urban bushland, regional parks, rangeland management, roadside conservation, and most significantly the adequacy and responsible management of Western Australia's reserve system.

Graeme was a founding member of the Conservation Council of WA in 1967. He played a critical role in generational change and rejuvenation of the Council in the mid 1970s. This placed the Council in a strong position to vigorously respond to the significant conservation issues of the time, which were forest protection and additions to the conservation estate.

Graeme was a Conservation Council delegate for a number of member bodies and held a variety of positions including Secretary and Treasurer. He was the conservation representative on a range of industry, government and non-government bodies over a 40-year period. These included

the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority and its successor, the Conservation Commission (18 years), the Port Kennedy Management Board (10 years), the Dieback Consultative Council (around 15 years), Pastoral Lands Board (7 years) and many other advisory and stakeholder groups. He received the Conservation Council's Bessie Rischbieth Award in 2006 for his outstanding service to conservation.

Graeme was a thorough campaigner who wrote hundreds of probing letters to politicians and bureaucrats and prepared detailed and meticulous submissions. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the reserve system throughout the State having visited most of the 1,000 plus reserves.

In 1978 Graeme founded the Western Australian National Parks and Reserves Association (WANPARA). He was the key driving force, initiating campaigns to improve both the adequacy and representativeness of protected areas and their management. Through WANPARA he successfully advocated for the protection of the Kennedy Range National Park, Stages 1 and 2. The part he played in the creation of the iconic Karijini National Park is not widely known, but he was instrumental in the establishment of this Park as we know it today.

Graeme's influence extended throughout the whole sphere of environmental issues. He was highly respected by those in both government and non-government organisations. His life was dedicated to conservation and those who worked with him and knew him will always be grateful for his amazing and unselfish contribution.

## Feedback Comments from UBC Conference

### Bush Forever Report Card

On December 7, 2012 the Urban Bushland Council hosted a one day conference to explore Bush Forever, the State Government commitment to its implementation, site management issues, and a final report card.

The overwhelming message from the participants was the need for statutory protection for Bush Forever sites. Many questioned the use of the term Bush Forever given the tenuous existence of many sites that were facing either outright destruction for development or fragmentation from infrastructure and death by a thousand cuts on the margins.

The other recurring theme was concern for lack of management and the subsequent degradation causing sites to be vulnerable to development.

On a positive note many attendees recognised the great work done by the community in managing many Bush Forever sites. There was also recognition of the original research and of programs such as Urban Nature and the Perth Biodiversity Project that were making very significant contributions to research and subsequent management of our bushland areas.

Looking ahead our group identified the need for greater funding for management of Bush Forever sites and many were keen to spread the message of our amazing bushland and wetlands to the wider public. This is after all how we will secure ongoing support for caring for our precious areas.

The general resolution put by the Urban Bushland Council at the end of the conference was **supported unanimously by those present:**

**'Given the rapid growth of Perth and encroachment of development around Bush Forever Sites with the resulting degradation from illegal activities and neglect, it is recommended that substantial resources be allocated to complete the implementation of Bush Forever, including acquisitions and management of sites, as an integral part of the provision of state infrastructure for Perth.'**

*Photo: Greg Keighery summarising the presentations at the UBC conference held at the Murdoch University.*



*Photo by M. Apthorpe*



# Caltrop declared a "pest plant" in the cities of Stirling and Joondalup

By Michael Norman

Caltrop (*Tribulus terrestris*), also known as "Puncture Vine", is a southern European plant that has become naturalised within Australia and other parts of the world. The term "caltrop" comes from a medieval device originally used by knights in battle and thrown into the path of oncoming horses to cripple them. Although not considered a weed of agricultural significance in Western Australia (and therefore not covered by the Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act) it does significantly threaten the amenity values of recreational areas and pedestrian and cycling paths in many municipalities, especially impacting on cyclists, walkers with dogs and children playing with bare feet. I have found it growing along the edges of paths and disturbed areas within bushland reserves, but in my experience it does not appear to be an aggressive bushland weed. Another weed of similar amenity impact is the winter growing "Doublegee" (*Emex australis*) which is a declared weed originating from South Africa but does not appear to be as nearly as widespread in the metropolitan area as Caltrop.

In South West of Western Australia, it is a summer growing annual plant with drought tolerance. It will germinate successively between mid December and late March. It grows rapidly, flowering (small yellow flowers) and then producing large numbers of spiny woody burrs that split up into sharp woody thorns. Wiry stems radiate on the ground to a metre or more from a central tap root. The thorns can remain dormant in the soil for many years and germinate when the conditions are right.

As a person who often uses a bike for transport (as an alternative to car use) I have been watching out for caltrop infestations near paths for the last 10 years, removing small infestations myself and reporting larger infestations to Main Roads or the relevant local government authority. For example, I have found Caltrop growing at about 19 different locations on the northern principal shared path (PSP) between my home in Sorrento and the Perth CBD, and only after 5 to 8 years of consistent removal has Caltrop been eradicated from some of those locations. The thorn spines are extremely hard and sharp and can get



Photo by M Norman

*Caltrop vs road bike tyre*

through bike tyres (and even tyre liners). In my experience Caltrop is far more effective in puncturing bicycle tyres than broken glass. Unfortunately many of these plants have been seen around Perth adjacent to shared paths and roads used by cyclists, leading to bike tyre punctures (the cause of which many cyclists do not understand).

To effectively control, even eradicate, any weed species you must stop it reproducing! The best time to tackle caltrop is when they are still small (see photo with bottle) -

*(Continued on page 5)*



Photo by M Norman

*Caltrop infestation on private property in Gwelup.*



Photo by M Norman

*Caltrop seedling—best stage to physically pull them out.*

# Environment Minister approves Red Hill quarry increase into natural bush and ignores residents' concerns

By Hon Alison Xamon MLC, Greens MP for East Metro Region

The Environment Minister Bill Marmion has quietly approved the expansion of the Red Hill gravel quarry east of the Swan Valley, from its current 81 hectares to 118 hectares, contrary to the wishes of local residents, traditional owners, and recommendations of the EPA.

The approved expansion will extend west and north-west from the current pit into untouched natural bush on the Perth Scarp that borders an A-Class nature reserve.

The process that has been undertaken to get to this stage has been the subject of the most appalling process and has left all concerned with very little confidence in our environmental protection processes. Despite the EPA refusing this quarry extension in January 2011, and then refusing the appeal from quarry operator Hanson in September 2011, Minister Marmion upheld Hanson's appeal anyway in December 2011.

The Minister released Ministerial Statement 912 on October 9, 2012 which outlined the environmental conditions attached to the expansion leaving residents and Aboriginal elders despairing at the outcome.

Following the EPA's refusal to approve the expansion and Hanson's poor record of compliance with conditions, it is really astonishing that a company with such a record has been given environmental approval for such a large expansion.

Some of the previous issues with the quarry at this site include:

- Ministerial conditions were changed after they were found to be unenforceable. They were found to be unenforceable after complaints were made that the conditions were not being adhered to. Provisions regarding the visibility of the quarry were removed in 2004.

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*(Continued from page 4)*

just pull them up by grabbing it at the central root and just leave them there to desiccate (as there are no thorns at this stage). Once they get bigger and grow thorns, the central root must be pulled out then the whole plant rolled up and placed in a plastic bag, and as many thorns as possible picked up and bagged too (which I do by patting the ground with a block of foam). But once the plants get to full size, they become too large to bag, so timing of removal is critical. Infestations should be reported, so that the authority responsible physically removes them or sprays them with herbicide.

One of the ongoing issues with Caltrop has been the existence of large infestations on privately owned land, particularly vacant building blocks. The thorns are very easily transferred from there to the public domain, starting new infections on public land. Local authorities do not control weed infestations on private land. So in my role

[http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/News/mediaStmnts/Pages/1925\\_EPABulletin1152-RelocationofHerneHillQuarr.aspx](http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/News/mediaStmnts/Pages/1925_EPABulletin1152-RelocationofHerneHillQuarr.aspx)

The Ministerial Conditions now covering the environmental aspects of the quarry are now detailed in Statement 705, rather than in Statement 199.

- The expansion of the West Pit (currently the only pit) from a 20 ha quarry to a 40 ha quarry happened without an actual approval from the Department. Approval was granted after the event through a Section 45C application under the Environmental Protection Act S45C - change to the approved proposal that will not have a significantly greater or different environmental effect.

Particularly of concern has been the history of monitoring and enforcement, as this has been so clearly lacking throughout the history of the quarry, from both the planning and environmental regulators. Understandably then there is little confidence that current conditions will be enforced.

Repeated examples of the failure of Hanson to abide by conditions or gain the correct approvals don't even seem to earn a slap on the wrist.

In particular, the history of post-hoc approvals and failures to enforce conditions on this quarry is just one example of why Hills residents feel that nothing they do or say has any impact on the destruction of this natural environment.

Simply, approval for expansion of the Red Hill quarry should never have been granted. The Perth Hills are no longer the right place for quarries.

as a Councillor at the City of Joondalup, I moved that the City look at declaring Caltrop a "pest plant" so as to give it the power to order its removal from private land. I liaised with a City of Stirling Councillor for this large authority to do the same. The proposal to declare this local law went to public advertising and was strongly supported. So a pest plant local law, with Caltrop listed in the Schedule (of weed species), was adopted by both Councils and these local laws have now been gazetted. The Western Australian Local Government Association has since been surveying other local governments in Western Australia to see the degree to which caltrop is seen as a problem in their municipalities.

It should be noted that once a local government authority has declared a pest plant local law, it is a much simpler process to add other weed species to the Schedule of weed species.



# Say No to Roe 8 Campaign update: EPA Review process for the Highway: where are we now? And some politics!

By Nandi Chinna

The environmental review of the Roe 8 extension (the plan for the highway through the wetlands) is ongoing. We are still at the stage where the EPA is seeking more information from the proponent, SouthMetroConnect (SMC =Main Roads WA + AECOM). There is no fixed timeline for this part of the process and there could be further consultation until the EPA is satisfied that the proponent has adequately addressed the issues raised during the public submission process.

In the meantime the Labor Party and the Greens want to remove the Roe 8 extension from the Perth planning scheme, the Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) to ensure that it will never be built. Hannah Beazley and Klara Andric (Labor candidates for Riverton and Jandakot respectively) have campaigned strongly on this in their prospective electorates. Mike Nahan (Liberal, Riverton) however has campaigned strongly on building Roe8 and this sentiment is being repeated throughout the Liberal Party and echoed by Joe Francis (Liberal, Jandakot) in spite of what he has said his actual beliefs are concerning the wetlands. The state election represents an important opportunity to let our politicians know how we feel about North and Bibra Lakes....where ever you are in Western Australia please take the time to tell your local politician that you love the wetlands and that you vote!!!! There are details about some great ways of helping us get this message out to people in the Jandakot electorate later in the newsletter.



Labor Candidate Klara Andric with the Save Beelihar Wetlands Group.

## Campaign Outreach

Campaigners have held stalls at various events and festivals over the pre-Christmas season including the Hulbert Street Sustainability Fiesta, the Festival of the Lakes, the Cockatoo Festival, the Blessing of the Canning River Sustainability and Ecofair. Many thanks to everybody who has signed petitions, staffed or helped set up the stalls. Anyone wishing to become involved in the campaign's outreach program please contact Kate Kelly on 0424497653.

## Opportunities to volunteer in the lead up to the State Election

We will be focussing our efforts within the Jandakot electorate in the lead up to the March State election. We really need some help from everybody with letting people know more about the special nature of the Bibra and North Lakes wetlands in February and early March. All volunteers will be trained, provided with t-shirts and campaign materials and given our undying gratitude!

If you have been wondering how you can assist the campaign and show you care, please consider spending an hour training and sign up for a 2 hour door knocking session. It's an easy one-off voluntary event and there are a variety of training and outreach times to suit everyone's schedules. Please contact Harri Davies to find out how to help.



Save Beelihar Wetlands supporters on the steps of the Parliament.

## Welcome Nandi Chinna: our new Campaign Coordinator

A great big welcome to long time campaigner, Nandi Chinna! Nandi replaces Kate Kelly in this important role. Kate is taking a back seat this year as work and study demand more time. Like our long serving past coordinator Felicity McGeorge, Kate is still very active in the campaign. All our best wishes to both Nandi, Kate and Felicity, and thanks to everyone involved in the campaign - we all know what's at stake.

## New stickers and campaign materials...

Will be available soon so stay tuned to find out how you can get your "I love the wetlands and I vote" sticker before the election

<http://www.swampwalking.com.au>



# Group News Group News Group News

## ALLEN PARK BUSHLAND GETS LOTTERYWEST GRANT

Friends of Allen Park Bushland Group is delighted to have been awarded a \$15 000 grant from Lotterywest. The aim of the project was to improve the visual appearance at two entrances to the bushland and to provide some interpretive signage along the paths. The project was also intended to actively engage the local school community as they historically have a connection with the bushland, having planted 1000's of trees over the years.

In an effort to reconnect children with their local bushland, Swanbourne Primary School was approached to see if they would be involved in the project should we get funding. They were invited to visit the bushland to be inspired to create ceramic murals representing biodiversity, which would be mounted onto limestone rubble walls. The school decided to go ahead anyway, as the objective would have great rewards for the school and wider community. Nature walks took place in Allen Park to inspire the students aided by guides from the Urban Bushland Council's City Bush Guides and some of our members.

Students did such a wonderful job designing and making their tiles, encouraged by very enthusiastic art specialists and helpers from the School's P&C. Work was undertaken to progress the building of the walls at the entrances to Allen Park before Christmas.



Photo by L Shaw  
*One of the stonemasons in action building the limestone rubble wall at the entrance to Allen Park Bushland.*

There are plenty of people to thank for their contributions along the way: teachers, parents, particularly Kirsty Browne-Cooper, and all the students from Swanbourne Primary School. We had donors of cement and aggregate from CDi and Bunnings Claremont gave us a gift voucher. Peter Browne-Cooper and Peter Wilson (ex Swanbourne Hardware) provided the template material and neighbour Mike Kouwen donated space on his verge, power and water to the stonemasons. The Bridge Club and Swanbourne Associates Rugby Club gave access to

water. City of Nedlands Bushcare Officer Vicki Shannon coordinated site preparations.

The task is now for the murals to be mounted and interpretive signage to be designed. It is a very exciting project and the support we have received has been enormous.

*Lesley Shaw*

## Friends of Forrestdale

Anstey-Keane Dampland (Jandakot Regional Park, Bush Forever site 342)



Photo by B Fremlin

*Degradation and rubbish dumping on Lot 67, Skeet Road*

It is extremely regrettable to have to report that the environmental abuse at Anstey-Keane Dampland continues unabated. Offenders repeatedly cut fences and ram gates on Anstey Road to gain access to the reserve, to dump rubbish and to joy ride with trail bikes and four-wheel-drives. They also gain access to the reserve through Lot 67, Skeet Road, the unfenced, privately-owned block that is yet to be acquired by Government. Rubbish dumping in that area is appalling and goes unchecked.



Photo by B Fremlin

*The latest of many gates that have been damaged at Cnr Anstey & Keane Roads*

In order to solve these problems, the reserve is in urgent need of better care. Fencing, signage and regular ranger patrols will go a long way in achieving this. We call for these important measures to be implemented without delay.

*Bryony Fremlin*

## Baigup Wetland Interest Group

Baigup Wetland Interest Group is a community network of people who care about our wetlands and want to see



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them protected and preserved into the future as a valuable natural resource for wildlife, the health of the Swan River and for human recreation, wellbeing and education.

Baigup Reserve is a varied and complex site in terms of its history, current state and potential. Approximately 1 kilometre in length, 200 metres wide and about 15 hectares in total, it lies along the Swan River below Stone Street on the Maylands/Bayswater border. Access is from the Kelvin Street/Swan View Terrace junction in Maylands (limited street parking only) or from A.P. Hinds Reserve (enter from car park at the end of Milne Street). A joint use walkway/cycle path runs from the car park, under Garratt Road Bridge, and right through the reserve to Kelvin Street. The reserve is part of *Bush Forever* site No. 313, which includes both sides of the river from the east end of Maylands Peninsula to Garratt Road Bridge. It is also part of Precinct 9 (Ascot to Guilford) of the Swan Canning Riverpark. In terms of national and international importance, Baigup Reserve is registered in the *Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia* and is subject to protection under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

To receive bi-monthly email newsletters from *Baigup Wetland Interest Group* please email the coordinator, Penny Lee: [baigup@iinet.net.au](mailto:baigup@iinet.net.au)

## **Baigup Wetland Bird Walk**

Thursday 14 February 2013 7.30am

BirdLife Western Australia, in association with the Baigup Wetland Interest Group and the City of Bayswater, is holding a bird walk open to the general public as well as members. Meet at 7.30am at the Garratt Road end of the car park next to the rowing club in A.P. Hinds Reserve, (accessed from Milne Street, Bayswater). The walk will take about two hours, followed by a bird count over morning tea back at the car park. Bring binoculars if you have them, sun screen, hat, insect repellent (essential), chair or stool and your own morning tea. If you have other commitments and need to leave early, just let the walk leader know. The walkway through the reserve is wheelchair friendly but some of the walk will be over rough ground. RSVP to [baigup@iinet.net.au](mailto:baigup@iinet.net.au) if you'd like to attend so that we have an idea of likely numbers on the day.

*Penny Lee*

## **Foxes in Underwood Avenue Bushland**

Again at the end of the year 2012, foxes dug out the nesting chambers of the rainbow bee-eaters in Underwood Avenue Bushland, Bush Forever site 119.

Rainbow bee-eaters are subject to an international migratory bird agreement, Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA) signed in 1974 to conserve migratory birds.



*Photo by M.Owen*

Over many years foxes in Underwood Avenue Bushland have eaten the baby bee-eaters and up to now the University of WA will not act to work with other agencies to control the foxes. The bushland tracks are covered with fox tracks and it would seem that there are a greatly increased number of foxes living in the bushland.

The bush is not usually visited in the early evening or the early morning but on two occasions when visited at those times, the same fox has been sighted. On the first occasion at 5.30pm, the fox was seen jumping effortlessly over a 1.5m high gate. The fox was brown and the tip of the tail was white.

On the second occasion at 7.30am the same fox was standing on the top of a 2.5metre high feral proof wire fence. He jumped down and disappeared into the bush.

Abutting this feral proof fence and at right angles to it, is a lower fence and gate. The gate has a pine post supporting the gate, so it is easy for the fox to jump onto the post and onto the top of the feral proof fence.

In addition to the foxes, the bushland is not being managed for weeds, which are proliferating and degrading the bushland. There is no evidence of any on-ground management of the bushland by the University of Western Australia. Trees fallen across tracks are left for months.

In a letter (3 January 2013) to the new vice-chancellor of the University, Professor Paul Johnson, the Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland have called on the University to actively manage the bushland by tackling the fox and weed problems as a priority.

*Marg Owen*



# Group News Group News Group News

## Peel Preservation Group

Dr Katinka Ruthrof, the State Centre of Excellence for Climate Change, Woodland and Forest Health Biological Sciences and Biotechnology, Murdoch University addressed the Peel Preservation Group's 2012 AGM.

Katinka opened by remarking that Tuart trees are at risk because they grow where everyone wants to live! Only approximately 30% of the trees remain of pre-European settlement estimates.

When including existing mature trees into urban landscape it is crucial to consider that the roots of each individual tree will extend to at least the area of the canopy, perhaps further. Left in isolation, in a paved or similar area, they may die. She quoted a wise farmer who said trees often 'die of loneliness' and agrees that they survive best in groups with a generous understory area to maintain the symbiotic relationships of flora, fauna and fungi they need.

Some of the threats to the Tuarts are clearing, altered fire frequency, pests (particularly on stressed trees) and the decreasing rainfall we are experiencing. Figures from the Water Corporation confirm that water, in dams and stream flow is reduced, with 2010 being the driest year on record.

Figures for Yalgorup National Park reveal that in some sites, there was a 90% mortality in tuart trees since the decline began in the late 1990's. Murdoch University has been conducting research in the Tuart Forests since 2003.

Causes of such tree declines can be grouped under two headings:

- **ABIOTIC FACTORS** including reduced rainfall, changes of hydrology including increased salinity, changes to depth of freshwater lens, reduced fire frequency, increase in understory, increased competition for moisture and nutrients;
- **BIOTIC FACTORS** including pests – some beetles attack stressed trees; disease – another 'dieback' species has been discovered *Phytophthora multivora* which has been associated with declining tuart trees.

Restoration of degraded woodlands can have two aspects ie regeneration for self-sustainment and increasing the success or revegetation. Interventions include reducing or dealing with threatening processes, reversal of ecosystem degradation and reintroduction of local species and fauna. Management of threats would include control of clearing or fragmentation, and maintaining managed fire regimes. Reversal of ecosystem degradation should take into account whether moisture, nutrients and competition has been altered. Then we can consider reintroducing flora, fauna and fungi. Also, perhaps mimicking natural recruitment requirements of each species can help us increase the success of revegetation. For example, in Tuart, some natural germination can be as many as 27 trees per square meter in cohorts.

Revegetation requirements do vary but Eucalypts mostly 'mass seed' after fire. The seed can be 'harvested' by ants to become ant food! The seed can survive for six months in the soil. The research has confirmed that creation of ash beds (burning logs etc) will improve early establishment. Trials prove that early (by early June at the latest) planting is most successful, prior ripping of the soil is beneficial and additional nutrient (fertilizer pellets) improve growth.

Another area of ongoing research is comparing the use of the traditional 'soft' plastic bags as opposed to rigid ventilated bags with respect of summer temperature. Recent research has suggested that inside soft plastic bag is ten degrees hotter than outside. We could be cooking our seedlings on very hot days!

The health of all our forests has implications for our fauna. There is need to ensure security of larger areas and connection of smaller areas of forest. We must be smarter with our restoration as we cannot afford to lose precious seed or plants. To do this, community involvement is the best tool.

*Shirley Joiner*

**SERCUL** won the Bush, Land and Waterways Award at the 2012 WA Environment Awards on Friday 9th November. Maintaining and improving the health of the Canning River and other waterways has earned the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) this recognition.

Chief Executive, Julie Robert, said the award recognised the association's work in improving more than 30 waterways, wetlands, lakes, drainage basins and bushland reserves during the past nine years.

SERCUL, the not-for-profit community group, based on the banks of the Canning River in Beckenham, would like to say a huge thank you to our volunteers, partners and funders whose valuable contribution helped us to win this award.

*Ana Terrazas*

## DAY 1325 Lake Nowergup/Carabooda Valley Update

The campaigners amongst you would know that politicians are taking a little more interest in environmental issues as they chase votes in the run up to the State Election on March 9<sup>th</sup>. For our group this has meant a much anticipated visit from the Premier, Colin Barnett in November.

We always start our tours from the Ocean View Tavern on Wanneroo Road which offers spectacular views over the Lake Nowergup valley, Neerabup National Park and the booming urban sprawl that is happening along our north metropolitan coastal area.

Of course the Tavern is also adjacent to the bushland that is the subject of WA Limestone's proposed limestone quarry

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and concrete batching plant. The beer garden would enjoy spectacular views over the proposed open cut pit and batching plant.

The reaction we get is always the same and Mr Barnett's was no different. Putting an industrial land use in the heart of the Lake Nowergup valley just doesn't make sense. And it's at the "common sense" level that we are trying to mount our arguments with the politicians.

We all know what the current State Government's attitude towards the environment is. Having a compelling environmental argument seems to make no difference. If Dinosaur footprints, Aboriginal Heritage and whale nurseries can be so simply disregarded in the approval processes for the James Price Point Gas Hub in the Kimberley, then the sad reality is



*Sabine Winton, Lake Nowergup Valley Community Group explains to the Premier Colin Barnett and to Paul Miles, MLA Wanneroo the Group's vision for a Regional Open Space including Lake Nowergup*

that this piece of urban bushland stands little chance of being valued or protected.

We keep the pressure up regardless, and hope that the Government can see the potential of the area and support our vision of connecting Neerabup National Park and Lake Nowergup to the urban sprawl. There is an opportunity to provide the northern suburbs with a regional open space at very little cost. It is an extraordinary opportunity. It is 1000 metres to walk from the urban areas to the Lake's edge.

We were busy in November and December with stalls at the Wanneroo Show and Brighton Community Fair. It was really encouraging to see the number of people who recognised our campaign and came up to our display. With only 60 odd days until the State Election our current focus is on building community awareness and applying political pressure.

These efforts are against the backdrop of the fundamental areas of our campaign that have got us to this point. The Environmental Approvals required include a Clearing Permit. WA Limestone applied in April, 2011. The DEC has still not made a decision on that original application for a clearing permit.

Federal EPBC Act approval is also required. WA Limestone is in the process of responding to the public comments received as part of the process of its proposal being deemed a Controlled Action. They haven't done so yet.



*Photo by S Winton  
Lake Nowergup Valley Community Group display promoting the high conservation value wetland at the Brighton community fair.*

Two key planning approvals are also required including the approval of the WAPC. This approval, which was granted in October, 2010, has lapsed. WA Limestone will have to reapply to the WAPC.

The City of Wanneroo also granted planning approval in February, 2011 and so this approval will lapse too. They will have to reapply. We will be expecting the City of Wanneroo to fully and properly apply all of its laws and policies to any further application.

At the same time we will be campaigning against Lime Industries proposal for a limestone quarry and ancillary mining driver training facilities on the site adjacent to our main battle. That proposal is due to come before the City of Wanneroo Council for consideration in February or March.

So, 2013 is shaping up as a critical point in our long campaign. Premier Barnett, during his visit said, "It's clearly a very beautiful lake – I understand why people are raising their concerns."

Our immediate focus now is on our Public Rally to be held at the Ocean View Tavern on Sunday February 17<sup>th</sup> from 10am. Our last rally, over two years ago made an impact. This rally, 2 weeks before the upcoming State Election, will hopefully deliver us a result. Please join us to make it happen.

*Sabine Winton*

## **Remnant Trees and Vegetation Under Threat**

The City of Joondalup is considering the re-zoning and sale of a 9400m<sup>2</sup> bushland block at the South end of Kingsley Park in Kingsley. The block retains its original major vegetation with about 112 Jarrah, 27 Banksia, 16 She-Oak, 15 Jacksonia, and at least 150 grass trees.

Since the original development of the Kingsley suburb 30 years ago, LOT971 has been regarded by residents as part of Kingsley Park. The Kingsley and Greenwood Residents Association Inc is advocating for LOT971 to be retained and remain effectively part of Kingsley Park, rather than be developed.

To find out more visit the Facebook page set up for the Campaign to Retain LOT971: <http://www.facebook.com/savekingsley>

*Dave Blackburn*



## Three goshawks in Underwood Avenue Bushland

Years ago in Warwick Bushland I was swooped by a goshawk whose talons touched my hat. This wonderful bird then chased me out of the bushland as I ran from tree to tree, until right out to the road.

Just before Christmas, a loud insistent yip yip yip yip yip was heard in Underwood Avenue Bushland. The calls were from a Brown Goshawk who was holding a small branch of green tuart leaves in her talon. The leaves would have been used to line her nest. The partner of this bird flew into the same tree and both were calling excitedly. Then, amazingly, another goshawk appeared. This was an immature bird probably from a previous year's nesting.

The female took off from her perch and flew towards me. Her kip kip kip became louder as she approached and she flew just over my head and landed in a tree close by. Unlike magpies who swoop from behind, this female swooped from the front. She made a few more passes a few metres over my head and the immature bird also swooped. I respected their wishes and departed.

I have since visited the goshawk family almost daily, as they are most spectacular birds. On one occasion I sat on the ground and watched the male, and he sat on a tuart branch and watched me. We watched each other peacefully for over an hour. He amused himself by listening to the sounds of the bushland and the sounds of the suburbs. He also spent time preening his feathers. The beautiful feathers on goshawks chests and below the chest are very soft and blow in the wind. When the birds stand on one foot they tuck the other foot into the soft feathers and the whole foot and leg disappears.

As I left I am sure I heard through the sounds of the bushland, a gentle voice saying 'Merry Christmas to all



Photo by M Owen

and to all creatures, peace and goodwill'.

The fact that we have goshawks breeding in bushland only few kilometres from the city is remarkable.

Post script.

Since the end of December 2012, the adult pair of goshawks have become much more secretive. Perhaps this is because the nesting is proceeding. The juvenile however is still about and is usually found.

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

### Applications now open for 2013-2014 Community Landcare Grants

The Community Landcare Grants - the small grants component of the Sustainable Agriculture stream of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative.

Grants of between \$5000 and \$50 000 are available to:

- help build a skilled and capable Landcare community
- encourage community participation and engagement in Landcare
- share information and learnings in sustainable agricultural techniques
- reduce the spread of pest species, and
- encourage the adoption of improved sustainable land management practices.

Local community groups and professional farming systems groups involved in sustainable agriculture are encouraged to apply.

**Applications close 20 March 2013.**

### Shorebird 2020 Count - Peel Region Sunday, 10 February

Volunteers are being sought to participate in the Shorebird 2020 Count for the Peel region. In 2012, the Peel count covered 26,000ha and involved over 67 volunteers.

Along with people who can ID the birds, scribes, counters and people to assist in carrying gear or just want to come along to join a group and have fun are being sought.

If you are interested in attending, please email Thelma Crook at [Thelma.Crook@mandurah.wa.gov.au](mailto:Thelma.Crook@mandurah.wa.gov.au) and provide; your name; contact details (including mobile) and the details of previous involvement in bird counting if

### 2013 Great Cockie Count - Call for Volunteers Sunday 7 April

If you'd like to take part this year, please fill out the registration form on our new website [www.birdlife.org.au/carnabys/great-cocky-count](http://www.birdlife.org.au/carnabys/great-cocky-count) to make sure I have your current contact details and that you're covered by insurance during the event.

# 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 \$45 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

### Individuals:

Supporter membership is only \$35 per year (GST included). Supporters can attend meetings and receive copies of the "Urban Bush Telegraph"

Groups and supporters are reminded that annual membership fees include one printed copy of the *Urban Bush Telegraph* (currently published quarterly). Additional printed copies can be ordered at a cost of \$5.00 per copy per annum.

Send your name, address and cheque or postal order to: Treasurer, Urban Bushland Council WA Inc, PO Box 326, West Perth WA 6872

## Urban Bushland Council Activities

### Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 5 March 2013

Guest speaker: Assoc Prof John Bailey

**'Do They Care Enough?'**

Meet at the Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street, West Perth, at 6.00pm for drinks and nibbles and for 6.30 pm start

Tuesday 7 May 2013

Guest speaker: Prof Glenn Albrecht PhD

**'Are We Losing Our Endemic Sense of Place?'**

Venue: Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street, West Perth

Time: 6.00pm drinks and nibbles for 6.30 pm start

For information on speakers and topics visit [www.bushlandperth.org.au](http://www.bushlandperth.org.au)

### UBC PUBLICATIONS

*Perth's Banksia Woodlands - Precious and Under Threat*  
Proceedings of a symposium (2011)

Available from the UBC for \$20 plus \$3 postage.

*Endangered Black Cockatoos in Western Australia*

proceedings of a symposium about their biology, status, threats and efforts to restore their habitat and populations.

Available from the UBC for \$20 plus \$3 postage.

*Wetlands to Wastelands? - proceedings of a seminar about the future of bushland at Perth Airport (2004)* Available at UBC's website

<http://www.bushlandperth.org.au/html/infosheets.htm>

*Burning Issues*—proceedings of a workshop about fire management in urban bushland. (2002) Available from the UBC free.

*Building Partnerships between Community Groups and Local Government for Our Bushland*—proceedings of a seminar (2000)

Available from the UBC free.

*Managing our Bushland* - proceedings of a conference about the protection and management of urban bushland (1998)

Out of print; available in libraries.

*Burning our Bushland* - proceedings of a conference about fire and urban bushland (1995) Out of print; available in libraries.

### NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Compiled by: Renata Zelinova

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO: [ubc@bushlandperth.org.au](mailto:ubc@bushlandperth.org.au)

Copy deadline - 15 March 2013

### PERTH'S BUSHLAND BIRTHDAY & PERPETUAL

#### CALENDAR

\$15 plus \$2 postage

Available by mail order from the UBC office.

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Urban Bushland Council WA Inc



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