

LITTLE THINGS

By Marg Owen

Last year at our AGM we were fortunate to have a talk from David Pike. The talk was 'It's the Little Things that Count'. This year our speaker was Dr Ric How on 'The Stars Beneath our Feet.'

Both talks were inspiring from speakers who have a huge knowledge of bushland. One of our audience, obviously moved by David's talk, wondered how we could get our parliament to listen to the talk.

The following little things and slightly bigger things were photographed in Underwood Avenue Bushland and some of the stories were published in The Post, our local newspaper.



Photo by M Owen

Native bee sucking and blowing

A glint of blue caught my eye. On top of the Banksia flower in Underwood Avenue Bushland a small insect with a bluish abdomen was sitting. As I looked closer I thought it must be a native bee.

Its behaviour was rather unusual. It was sucking out a ball of liquid and then retracting it, over and over and over and over. I had never seen such behaviour before.

When I returned from the bush, I sent a photo to Dr Terry Houston of the WA Museum, asking what the insect was



Photo by M Owen

and what it was doing. Dr Houston has written about 20 papers on native bees. This was his reply.

*'The insect is indeed a bee, a female of the solitary species *Hylaeus alcyoneus* (Colletidae: Hylaeinae). This is a Banksia specialist and the bee is regurgitating nectar on the mouthparts to thicken it to honey by evaporation of excess water (at least, that's what this behaviour is understood to be). Most bees do it.'*

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Editorial

A MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT

The following is an abridged version of the submission made by the UBC to the Commonwealth Government on the document *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2020 Consultation Draft*.

The Urban Bushland Council has a very particular interest in the conservation and enhancement of Australia's natural biodiversity and therefore a very keen interest in any over-arching biodiversity conservation initiative emanating from the Commonwealth Government. The UBC's interests and activities are centred on the Perth metropolitan region and it must be understood that this area covers a massive swathe of the remarkable and unique bioregion known as the Swan Coastal Plain. This region contains many threatened or vulnerable indigenous flora and fauna species and communities and urban development is a direct threat to the maintenance and recovery of these species and communities. In working to conserve urban bushland the UBC is really about striving to protect an internationally significant bioregion from ecological desertification.

The Urban Bushland Council was greatly encouraged by the release of *The National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity (1996)* more than a decade ago, and generally took the view at the time that it represented the beginning of new era in the approach taken to the protection of the nation's biodiversity which would pervade every level of government. But despite the *Strategy's* success in identifying key issues, outlining worthwhile strategies, and establishing some important goals it has been, by and large, a failure because government has simply failed to bring its promise to fruition.

We were strong supporters of the *National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005* and frequently referred to the document in submissions on a wide variety of matters relating to the protection of biodiversity in urban bushland. It is regrettable that the Council often found government agencies claiming the objectives and targets in the document were not pertinent to their programmes, or to particular developments in question, or that they were merely "aspirational" in nature. This avoidance of responsibility has a corrosive effect on public confidence in environmental protection regimes and the solution is get serious about holding stakeholders to worthwhile commitments.

The new document *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2020* is a major disappointment. It does not acknowledge the urgency of the problems facing our biodiversity and it does not present any clear picture of what the Commonwealth proposes to do to ensure these problems are addressed effectively and in a timely manner. **Where are the clearly defined objectives linked with specific, quantifiable goals set out in a time line?** That is the least of what we would expect of a *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy* produced by a wealthy nation with an appalling record of causing species extinctions and bringing many more to the brink of such a fate. But the Council does not accept that a goal of merely preventing the extinction of various vulnerable species goes anywhere near far enough towards protecting the unique character and makeup of the Australia's natural environment. Ecosystem decline is a major problem in the Australian landscape and that is what really needs to be addressed.

The *2010-2020 Strategy* refers to 6 main threats to biodiversity and although they may not be listed in order of priority, we regard

"loss, fragmentation and degradation of habitat" as the most critical threat facing Australia's biodiversity as a whole. Native species can largely withstand floods and droughts, and, to a greater or lesser extent, the impact of invasive species. But habitat destruction, whether it is carried out on a large scale or by a thousand cuts, is the permanent expunction of functional ecosystems – the withdrawal of the basic life support required for the survival of native species.

The *2010-2020 Strategy* contains a plethora of motherhood statements and refers to any number of "actions" that might be undertaken in various jurisdictions in its "Priority for Change" format but it does not propose that the Commonwealth should assume any responsibility for ensuring goals are attained and does not even specify or quantify essential targets that must be met if genuine progress is to be achieved within an appropriate time frame.

In the "Priority for Change" format we do not even see a "priority" dedicated to halting land clearing i.e., habitat destruction. This practice may have ceased on the enormous and unconscionable scale that has occurred for agricultural purposes in the past but it continues to contribute to ecological degradation of the Swan Coastal Plain, for example, and the further imperilment of endangered species such as Carnaby's Cockatoo - which is left with less and less Banksia Woodland in which to feed every year. In the disgustingly hypocritical fashion of the day 20 percent of an area may be set aside while the rest is developed and this is advertised as a conservation victory. The fact that 80 percent of a habitat area has been lost is somehow compensated for by the erection of a sign saying 20 percent has been protected. This logic of the environmental brochure may have currency with the public relations industry but it is not going to save our endangered species and it will not save Australia from the ignominy of contributing further to global extinctions.

The Urban Bushland Council, like most other community environmental groups, does not just want to see threatened species brought back from the brink, we want to see common native species remaining common and remaining part of our everyday experience. This will not be achieved while wishy-washy, insubstantial and unbinding documents like *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2020* fail to take the lead in driving the changes needed to get governments at every level to wake up to their responsibilities to protect our local, regional, and national biodiversity. The community already contributes substantially to the task of protecting Australia's biodiversity – what it needs is more legislation to prevent this work being undone by destructive and inappropriate development and more effort on the part of government to generate answers as to how some of the vexing problems we face – such as invasive species and fire – can be more effectively addressed.

CONCLUSION

It is our strong view that *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2020* is inadequate in its present form and needs revision. It must set out worthwhile targets and goals and appropriate time frames. It should be more prescriptive in identifying the responsibilities of the various jurisdictions and should require them to produce measurable outcomes in terms of improving the protection of biodiversity. The jurisdictions must be dissuaded from permitting or sanctioning actions that they know are leading to the degradation of local or regional biodiversity. The Commonwealth should use the provision or withholding of funds for more general purposes as an incentive or disincentive where appropriate for jurisdictions to enhance their cooperation with the Commonwealth in striving towards the larger national goal of safeguarding Australia's biodiversity.

BUSHLAND WEEDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**UBC has
a Garden Week
display
- No garden gnomes
at our stall**

This year the UBC had a presence at Garden Week with two tables of bushland weeds, generally those which have escaped from gardens or from dumped soil and prunings and established themselves.

On other stalls some nurseries were selling these very weeds. Some of these were types of lavender, Dietes and Fountain Grass (pictured below).



At my local nursery I had pointed out to a staff member that Fountain Grass is a terrible bushland weed and she replied "Yes, but it is not prohibited. We don't sell Lantana."

Our display attracted great interest and we were very lucky that we had a prominent position near the entrance and within the Wildflower Society's area. The UBC executive members who attended the weed tables had "Western Weeds" as a very handy reference. I even managed to identify a lady's weed from the description and in consultation with the aforementioned Bible.



The number of people who said that they had used Roundup or other herbicides on their garden weeds quite surprised me.

Gomphocarpus fruticosus (Swan Plant or Narrowleaf Cottonbush) interested everyone. It has a large inflated seed pod, covered in soft spines and the pods are attached with an S-shaped stalk. When the pods are picked and placed in a bowl of water they sail around the water like swans. Wanderer butterflies are attracted to this bush, as I was told.

A lot of people were surprised to find that eastern States wattles (Cootamundra Wattle *Acacia baileyana*, Flinders Range Wattle *A. iteaphylla*, Sydney Golden Wattle *A. longifolia* and Queensland Silver Wattle *A. podalyriifolia*) that are promoted and readily available in nurseries have established themselves as bushland weeds and bushland groups are spending many volunteer hours removing them.

I was also told that one school has the Tasmanian Blue Gum as a logo for the school. Several people expressed their powerlessness against inappropriate plantings by local governments and more than one said "I've learnt something today."

It is such a tragedy to see weeds proliferating in the bushland when there is no management. So thank you to all bushland managers and friends who are tackling their bushlands so that our native plants can have a chance.



Photos above: UBC stall at Garden Week 2009, Perry Lakes with a display of weeds commonly found in urban bushland.

All photos on this page by Marg Owen

BUSHLAND WEEDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

CALYSTEGIA ?SILVATICA (CONVOLVULACEAE) IN BROADWATER NATURE RESERVE; A TARGET FOR ERADICATION

Extract from notes prepared by Greg and Bronwen Keighery, February 2009

During surveys of the Swan Coastal Plain Reserves in the Busselton area for Swan Bioplan a sterile vine was found around wetlands in Broadwater Nature Reserve. When flowering material of this vine was collected (voucher GJ & BJ Keighery 890, PERTH) it was clear that this plant did not correspond to any currently listed member of the genus *Calystegia* recorded for Western Australia (Figure 1).

Calystegia in Western Australia

Five species of *Calystegia* are recorded in Australia, including a naturalised weed, *Calystegia silvatica*. Western Australia has two recorded native species of *Calystegia* - *C. soldanella* and *C. sepium*. *C. soldanella* is a rarely recorded plant of coastal foredunes at Margaret River and Walpole. *C. sepium* is even more poorly known. There are no specimens of *C. sepium* in PERTH and there are only 4 old collections in the Melbourne Herbarium from the Warren and Southern Jarrah Forest Bioregions.

Identity of the Broadwater Calystegia

Based on checks of a set of keys and floras the population at Broadwater falls into the *Calystegia sepium* –*sylvatica* complex. This is a sub-cosmopolitan species group centred on the Northern Hemisphere. Three species have been described in the complex - *C. sepium*, *C. silvatica* and *C. pulchra* (?horticultural derivative). Nine subspecies have been described in *C. sepium* and at least four described in *C. silvatica*.

The collections from Broadwater are completely glabrous despite having the large pink flowers normally characteristic of *C. pulchra* (Figure 1) and are therefore excluded from that species.

Another distinguishing feature of the flowers is the overlapping inflated (saccate) bracteoles which cover the base of the flower and hide the sepals. This is a key character in all recent keys and floras in the Northern Hemisphere (eg: Stace, CA and Hilli Thompson, 1997) used to separate *C. silvatica* from *C. sepium* but the large pink flowers are atypical of *C. silvatica*. Ogden (1979) in his detailed study of *Calystegia* populations in New Zealand provisionally allocated plants with this character set (pink flowers, overlapping saccate bracteoles with a deep sinus) as hybrids between *Calystegia sepium* and *C. silvatica* (several named, partially fertile hybrids are known). However, the Broad-

water population is highly seed fertile, suggesting it may be a horticultural selection of *Calystegia silvatica* rather than a hybrid.

This species is certainly a weed. It does not fit current limits of the native Australian *Calystegia* collections allocated to *C. sepium* or the characteristics of the native species – both are small flowered, white in colour with non inflated and non overlapping bracteoles.

The New Zealand material of the common form of *C. sepium* (Webb *et al.*, 1988) has small often pink flowers with short peduncles, non inflated and non overlapping bracteoles. This is considered as a native un-named subspecies, perhaps closely related to *C. sepium* subsp. *americana*. The other form is similar to the Australian collections and is considered introduced! Similar issues may be present in Australia.

On current evidence the population at Broadwater is a naturalised alien, closest to *Calystegia silvatica*.

Management of Calystegia

This weed is probably a very recent introduction into the Broadwater Nature Reserve from nearby gardens either as dumped refuse or seed. As can be seen in the accompanying photo (Figure 2) it is highly aggressive, smothering vegetation and spreading rapidly.

Both *Calystegia silvatica* and the closely related *Calystegia sepium* are attractive plants with showy flowers. However, because of its quick growth and clinging vines, it can overwhelm and pull down cultivated plants including shrubs and small trees. Its aggressive self-seeding (seeds can remain viable as long as 30 years) and the success of its creeping roots (they can be as long as 3-4 m) cause it to be a persistent weed and have led to its classification as a noxious weed (Wikipedia). The suggested method of eradicating *Calystegia sepium* is vigilant hand weeding.

Recommendation

Since the species is currently confined to the wetland around Swamp Hen Lane and is highly visible during summer when water levels are low it would be an ideal target for eradication before it spreads through the Bussellton wetlands.



Figure 1: Flowers of *Calystegia ?silvatica* at Broadwater Nature Reserve



Figure 2: Rampant smothering vines of *Calystegia ?silvatica* at Broadwater Nature Reserve

ROE 8 NOT A SOLUTION

Once again the government is pushing ahead with plans to build the Roe Highway extension through the highly significant Beelihar Wetlands (i.e. Roe 8). There are many reasons to oppose this 6-lane highway, which Main Roads plans to sink directly between North and Bibra Lakes. As some of the few remaining wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain, the lakes are part of the Beelihar Wetlands chain. Among other things, these wetlands are a biodiversity hotspot, provide habitat for wildlife, and have indigenous, spiritual, and recreational value. Clearly, building a highway in the middle of this wetland chain will have detrimental effects on all of these values. Add to this a history of political and public opposition to Roe 8 and poor ratings in a multi-criteria analysis and triple bottom line analysis, it is surprising that the road has not been removed from the Metropolitan Regional Scheme (MRS) years ago.

In part, this is because some people, including the current government, are willing to accept all of these negative implications to alleviate traffic problems on the Leach Highway. Supporters of Roe 8 contend that it is the best solution to rid residents along Leach Highway of the noise, congestion, traffic safety issues, and water quality problems. The problem is that building Roe 8 is not only environmentally, socially, and economically irresponsible, it is not the appropriate solution.

The premise may seem reasonable enough: build a road to redirect traffic from Leach Highway. However, Roe 8 is a \$200 million road to nowhere. Whilst it has been proposed since 1955, its ultimate link – the Fremantle Eastern Bypass – has been discarded. Roe 8 will now only go to Stock Road. Worse yet, Roe 8 has been billed as a solution to address the main cause of Leach Highway's woes – truck traffic headed to Fremantle Port. With the new port at James Point, this means Roe 8 is essentially obsolete. It is also likely to cause traffic problems elsewhere, such as on South Street.

Addressing traffic problems in one place by destroying wetlands in another is not a solution, and it is not the way decisions should be made in 2009. It is not sustainable planning.

For residents living along Leach Highway, it is important that we do not ignore the problems they face. However, this issue is too often falsely presented as one with two simple choices (i.e. build Roe 8 and damage wetlands or maintain the status quo). This is most likely because the real solution is not so simply stated, as it requires more than just a single road from point A to point B.

The solution will require a comprehensive plan to address traffic in the southern suburbs. This includes completing the rest of the actions in the '6 Point Plan' established by the Freight Network Congress. Namely, putting more freight on rail, establishing the new port, making better use of our roads, and improving existing roads. Traffic congestion during peak hours can also be improved through increased public transport infrastructure.

The solution is not as simple as a new road, and it is not a singular one. However, it comes with a much smaller footprint and at a much lower cost to the Beelihar Wetlands and the people and animals who use them.

Sarah Clement

Friends of Coolbinia Bushland were busy preparing for the coming planting season by stabilising an eroding embankment. With assistance from qualified chainsaw operators and a group of enthusiastic volunteers, including several children, fibre

matting and branches from dead material from other parts of the Reserve were used. This will improve the chances for survival of new plants that will be planted in couple of weeks in an effort to rehabilitate a degraded section of the Reserve.



Friends of Coolbinia Bushland stabilizing an eroding embankment.

Photo by Jo Bowyer

PERTH URBAN BUSHLAND FUNGI 2009 EVENTS

Fungi Walks

Sunday 14 June 10 am - 12 noon

PARUNA SANCTUARY, AVON VALLEY

To book your place go to fungi@iinet.net.au or call 9334 0500

Sunday 21 June 10 am - 12 noon

ELLIS BROOK VALLEY

To book your place go to fungi@iinet.net.au or call 9334 0500

Sunday 12 July 10 am - 4 pm

JOHN FORREST NATIONAL PARK

To book your place go to Roberta.circosta@emrc.org.au or call 9424 2222

Sunday 9 August 10 am - 12 noon

MUNDARING

To book your place go to info@mundaringartscentre.com or call 9295 3994

Workshops

Saturday 27 June & Sunday 28 June 10 am - 4 pm

LUDLOW TUART FOREST

To book your place go to fungi@iinet.net.au or call 9334 0500

Friends of Dianella Bushland have organized themed nature walks over the next few weeks. On Sunday, **12 July** they will be searching for fungi and on Sunday, **13 September**, searching for orchids will be a goal. The guided walks start at 8.30 am at the Reserve carpark, entrance from Dianella Drive, Gay St and then Channel 7 Private Road.

Walks take about one hour and follow compacted limestone track that are suitable for prams and pushers. Anyone requiring further information should contact Jan on 9344 2872 or email to webrite@crystal.com.au

Friends of Hollywood Reserve

After that beautiful rain, there should be plenty of work on the next working bee which will be **Sunday, June 14th** at the usual time of 9 am with morning tea at 10.30. Hopefully, if the rain keeps up we can start our planting programme. This year we will continue to plant in the southern end of the Reserve, which

Group News Group News Group News

makes it easier for us to water as there are three watering points.

After the big storm, while walking in the cemetery, we noticed all the paper and plastic bags blowing in the wind straight into the Reserve. For those who do not want to plant or weed, there will be plenty of rubbish to pick up. A walk around the Reserve showed that we did not suffer during the big blow, a few branches came down, but apart from the far northern end, no big trees were affected.

Once again, we appeal to dog walkers to pick up after their dogs, there seems to be more and more dog poo along all the paths. Friends, make a point of carrying bags to hand out to dog owners.

Fungi will be showing shortly, keep a look out and contact Kay Rae if you find any very interesting ones. Kay is compiling a list of fungi found in the Hollywood Reserve. Donations from our friends and friends of friends are always welcome. Kay Rae is usually at all meetings and happy to receive donations, no matter how small. If you know someone who enjoys the park, try and persuade them to help us with a small donation. The money from donations is usually spent on plants and means we can buy few more advanced species.

We hope the nearby school will continue to assist us with planting and that will be towards the end of June, usually a Friday and volunteers to assist are very welcome.

We look forward to seeing everyone for the start of a busy planting season on Sunday 14th June.

Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare Group

has a busy 2009 planting season starting in June. This Coastcare community group will be infill planting with a passion acquired from the salt sea air and a job needing to be done. Work will be taking place in various project regeneration sites, developed in collaboration with City of Stirling, targeting the mostly narrow coastal reserve between North Beach and Watermans Bay.

Experienced planters are in demand and we will be happy to introduce some newcomers to the 'joy of it all'!

To check which site work is occurring at phone Shel on 0488190651 or Rae 0419191710 or

Email: stirlingcoastcare@hotmail.com for details.

Works Coordinator: Walter Kolb

Alternatively, drive along West Coast Drive and look for the large Coastcare banners and people planting wearing hazard vests with Coastcare logo on back.

Parking is available at one of three beach carparks over approximately 1.5 - 2 km.

- (1) North Beach Carpark (closest cross street Castle Street),
- (2) RecFishWest carpark (closest cross street Elvira Street) and Watermans Beach
- (3) Carpark (closest cross street Margaret Street)

Normal work times are every Tuesday and Thursday mornings (8 to 10am) but during the planting season (June-July), volunteers can join in on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 7.30 am. Whenever you can come as while planting is under way we will work through to lunch time. Work may continue through to mid afternoon, so if you would like to stay on, BYO lunch.

If this sounds too long to fit into your week's schedule come any time available, even 1 hour is great support!

Sundays Community activity continues - June 14, July 12, August 9 - Planting

Morning tea is provided. If staying on, bring your own lunch, thermos and also a foldout chair. Occupational Health and Safety process operates on site.

Please bring wet weather gear as unless extreme weather we will be working on. Wear long sleeves for arms and covered legs with sturdy footwear. Gloves are provided but we advise your own may be more comfortable. Equipment is provided however again your own is often more comfortable to work with.

Rae Kolb

Waterbird Conservation Group is preparing for another busy planting season. First activity will be held on Saturday **18 July** at the Canning River Regional Park. Meet at 8 am at the Ferndale Crescent, Ferndale. For more information call Helen on 9457 1872.

The second planting day will be held on Sunday **26 July** at Folly Pool, Baldivis. Meet at 8 am on Folly Road, that is east off Kwinana Freeway at Mundijong Road, right at St Albans Road, continue along until it becomes Folly Road. Continue along Folly Road to the gate on the right, approximately 100 metres before freeway. For more information contact Ruth on 9339 5501.

For both activities bring gloves, hat, personal water and wear suitable clothes.

Friends of the Cockburn Wetlands, a group of interested people who support the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre in rehabilitation of wetlands and bushland of the Beeliar Region.

The Friends Group conducts bird surveys three times a year, assist in planting activities, provides assistance at the annual 'World Wetlands Day' Conference hosted by the Centre.

However, the proposed Roe Highway Stage 8 is of great concern to the Friends Group that is currently working with others to stop the building of this highway.

To find out more about the Group contact Pat on 9339 1582.

Carnaby's Cockatoos *by Marg Owen*

Dr Paddy Berry and I collaborate on our cockatoo roosting counts at two sites in the western suburbs. Paddy counts near Hollywood Hospital, and has done so nearly every night for 27 years. I count at the corner of Underwood Avenue and Brockway Road a few times a week. This year combined numbers have been up to 500 birds. On one particular night there was an absence of about 80 birds and Paddy had seen a group flying north from Cambridge Street and away from their usual roosting sites just before roosting time. To try to find out if any of the local community had seen the missing group roosting, I wrote a letter to our local newspaper, the Post, asking that question.

The Post comes out on Friday and by the end of the weekend I had had thirtyfive phone calls about cockatoos. More calls followed during the week and some after that. Callers spoke of cockatoos from Yanchep to Woodman Point.

Most of the callers wanted to tell me about experiences they had had or were having with cockatoos around or in their yards, on their way to work, or where they work or play sport. There were several reports of roosting places. Obviously people are very interested in and passionate about the cockatoos. Quite a few callers commented as well on the need to keep places such as Underwood Avenue Bushland to maintain food supplies and as a refuge for cockatoos.

One caller, Dr Lindsay Stewart, lives in a cul de sac opposite Bold Park and has bushland next door to his house. He had a wonderful story and photographs about the cockatoos which visit his garden to use his fountain to drink. But he also had a photograph and told me about a dugite at his back door attempting to swallow a bob-tail.

The Post journalist contacted Dr Stewart and printed both of his stories. The following stories are abridged from the Post articles by Linda Callaghan, of April 4, 2009.



Lindsay copies the cocky's call

Former emergency ward doctor Lindsay Stewart told Margaret Owen he had learnt to mimic one of the calls of the Carnaby's black cockatoo.

"As the sun set just now, about 50 came and took turns at the fountain. They all left, going south-west into the wind, at about 6pm. I'm pleased to say that they aren't nervous about me. I have learnt to whistle their most common call which seems to mean 'I'm here, where are you' and I can open the back sliding glass door about 20 feet from the fountain and talk/whistle to them without worrying them. They are well and truly aware of my presence, and 'alert' but not alarmed."



Life and death struggle between a dugite and a bobtail.

Dr Stewart told of the life and death struggle between a dugite and a bobtail that he witnessed on his doorstep. "There are 42 different species of birds I have identified in the back yard," he said. "And snakes are occasional visitors."

A couple of weeks ago he watched a deadly dugite struggle to swallow a bobtail in the backyard. "I thought the bobtail was a gonner but the snake could not quite get its mouth over the head," he said. After 40 minutes the snake took off when Dr Stewart disturbed it. "I left the bobtail there because there was no point in letting the snake go hungry," he said.

A few hours later, he saw that although it was bleeding from its mouth, the bobtail was alive and moving. "I took it into protective custody. I fed it water, cheese and tomatoes and other things bobtails like" he said. After four days it had recovered and he set it free. Dr Stewart said he and his wife Cyndy had a live-and-let-live approach to snakes.

Ant mimicking nymph bug

Is this an ant or is this not an ant? (see photo below)

My Field Guide to Insects in Australia says “The principal characteristic of ants is the waist.....” This insect appeared to have a waist but on very close inspection, the waist was a virtual waist, as the appearance of the waist was caused by the grey colouration, leaving the brown bit ‘nipped in’.

As far as I can work out, this bug is the nymph of a pod-sucking bug, *Riptortus serripes*. The adult has wings so may fly away if threatened, but the nymph has yet to develop wings so it has developed this camouflage for protection. Predators do not like to eat ants.

This bug is very common in Underwood Avenue Bushland and is seen mainly on the Jacksonia plants which are also favoured by some species of ant.

Such specialised adaptations take your breath away.



Photo by M Owen

Two beautiful moths

There on the track in Underwood Avenue Bushland was a dead white moth, so hairy, so white and so dead.

I found out later, (thanks to Don Herbison-Evans), that it was a female *Trichiocercus sparshalli*. When the caterpillars of this moth are young they sometimes follow each

other end to end but they become solitary later. Both male and female adults have a bald patch on the top of their heads. I read that ‘adults feign death if handled’. Now was my *Trichiocercus sparshalli* (pictured below) dead or was she feigning death?



Photo by M Owen

The *Oenosandra boisduvalii* (see photo below) was impressive because of its hairiness and its beautiful camouflage. The colours in its wings are very similar to colours in the bark of some Banksia trunks, but this one was on a Banksia leaf, hiding during the day.

The adult male and female moths of this species are so different that they were thought to be different species. This moth too, feigns death when disturbed. It is suggested that the ploy of feigning death may cause a predator to lose interest.

I have seen weevils feigning death but after a trawl through the internet I find that many animals employ this defence mechanism; snakes, opossums, fire ants, salamanders and fish are some of them.



Photo by M Owen

Pink Lady apple sticker in fox poo

Foxes are opportunistic feeders and will eat anything they can find.

I have not seen quail in Underwood Avenue bushland for several years and as the foxes are active in the bushland, that probably accounts for the demise of the quail. Foxes

also dug into all the rainbow bee-eaters' tunnels a few years ago, and ate the baby bee-eaters.

But foxes also eat seeds and fruit. I was very surprised to see that the little sticker from an apple, proclaiming 'Pink Lady', had passed through a fox's alimentary canal and was enfolded in the poo, intact, undigested and still colourful.



Photo by M Owen

◇ What's new? ◇ What's new? ◇

Biodiversity in our Backyard

We tried to demonstrate "Biodiversity in our Backyard" for the Conservation Council's photographic competition as part of Conservation Week. "Our backyard" could be our own backyard, natural areas in our community or National Parks and wilderness areas.

From the 250 entries eighteen finalists were selected. Zimmerman Photo Lab printed and mounted the photographs beautifully and finalist photographs were displayed at the Perth Zoo. The Minister for the Environment, Donna Faragher officially opened Conservation Week at a function at the zoo and announced the winners.



Photo by W Eddy

Wayne Eddy, won the open amateur category with a stunning photograph of a rainbow bee-eater with a dragonfly in its beak.

Margaret Owen was a finalist with a photograph of a baby Western Bearded Dragon which was sitting on a Banksia prionotes flower on the ground, which had been bitten off the tree and dropped by a Carnaby's cockatoo. This photograph was taken in Underwood Avenue Bushland.



Photo by M Owen

CLIMATE CHANGE - FACT SHEETS

The Office of Climate Change has produced a series climate change fact sheets and case studies. These publications are now available from the DEC internet site (<http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/our-environment/climate-change/reports-and-publications.html>)

Fact sheets

- 1 - Consequences of the impacts of climate change in WA
- 2 - Reporting greenhouse gas emissions
- 3 - Emissions trading
- 4 - Climate change projections for Western Australia
- 5 - Mandatory Renewable Energy Target - explaining the legislation
- 6 - Evidence of our changing climate
- 7 - What is adaptation?

Case studies

- Climate change case studies: Water
- Climate change case studies: Agriculture
- Climate change case studies: Human settlement
- Climate change case studies: Biodiversity

Shire of Mundaring

Is seeking comments from community on its

Draft LOCAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

The Draft document can be viewed at the Shire's libraries or downloaded from its website:

<http://www.mundaring.wa.gov.au/ResidentServices/Planning/Pages/PublicConsultation.aspx>

Submissions are due 6 July 2009



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Perth, Western Australia**

For more information go to www.ser.org

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 \$30 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

Individuals:

Supporter membership is only \$20 per year (GST included). Supporters can attend meetings and receive copies of the "Urban Bush Telegraph"

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 WA EVENTS 2009

COMMUNITY PLANTING ACTIVITY

Assist in the revegetation and planting aftercare of important remnant coastal vegetation

Sunday 9 August 9.00 - 11.00 am

On beach front along West Coast Drive between North Beach and Watermans Beach (UBD Map 225) Fisheries car park, near Elvire Street intersection with West Coast Drive

Bring along your favourite planting implements, wet weather gear and appropriate footwear and some morning tea to share. For more information contact Rae (Stirling Natural Environment Coastcare) on 0419 191 710

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BUNGENDORE BUSH BREAKFAST

Sunday 8 November 7.30 - 8.30 am

Bungendore Park, Admiral Road, Bedforddale - entry through Armadale Christian College car park (UBD Map 413)

Be an early bird and listen to the bird chorus in a wonderful bushland setting whilst enjoying a mouth-watering fully cooked breakfast.

Following the breakfast will be the release of the '*Birds of Bungendore Park*' report.

UBC PUBLICATIONS

Wetlands to Wastelands? - proceedings of a seminar about the future of bushland at Perth Airport (2004)

Available at UBC's website

<http://members.iinet.net.au/~ubc/html/infosheets.htm>

Burning Issues—proceedings of a workshop about fire management in urban bushland. (2002)

Out of print.

Building Partnerships between Community Groups and Local Government for Our Bushland –proceedings of a seminar (2000). Available from the UBC for \$5.50, postage included

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.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Compiled by: Renata Zelinova

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

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