



The Urban Bush Telegraph

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

Winter 2008

BULLDOZING BIODIVERSITY IN BUSH FOREVER And Promoting Climate Change at the Same Time

No one in their right mind would propose building a new, straight road through Kings Park between West Perth and Shenton Park on the grounds that it reduces the travel distance and time between the two. Who would dream of severing a portion of Kings Park bushland in two to build a direct route from West Perth to Shenton Park just to make it quicker to go between the two? Such a proposal would be treated with the disdain it deserves and roundly rejected. Yet this is precisely what the majority of the councillors of the City of Armadale are proposing to do through Jandakot Regional Park — and it should receive the same response.

At the City of Armadale 'City Strategy Committee' meeting on 17th March 2008 a recommendation was passed to pursue a proposal for the extension of Keane Rd, Forrestdale through 'Bush Forever' site 342, part of Jandakot Regional Park. This recommendation was subsequently endorsed by a full Council meeting. Only one councillor voted against it, Councillor Pat Hart (bless her soul), who argued against the proposal on social, economic and environmental grounds similar to those enunciated in this article.

This proposal was not developed in consultation with local stakeholders, such as the residents of the existing portion of Keane Road who I recently asked about this issue and with the Friends of Forrestdale who are the local conservation group with a special responsibility for the 'Anstey-Keane Damplands' as the site is also known.

The Friends do not consider that there is any good economic or social reason for this proposal. The idea that the residents of North Forrestdale will use this road to travel to Armadale to shop is preposterous. The majority of residents of Forrestdale who live closer to Armadale than those of North Forrestdale no longer travel especially to Armadale to shop since the construction of shopping centres on Ranford and Warton Roads. Residents of North Forrestdale are even closer to these shopping centres, and to the major shopping centre at Livingston than they are to Armadale Shopping City.

The idea that the extension of Keane Rd would provide a link between the residents of North Forrestdale and Armadale made in the minutes of the 'City Strategy Committee' meeting on pages 42-3 is not substantiated with any documentation, such as statistically reliable surveys of these residents that they desire this road, or would use it, or that it would them feel connected with the City of Armadale. Roads don't make people feel connected.

Whilst it is incontrovertible that the extension of Keane Road would reduce the travel time and distance between North Forrestdale and the City of Armadale centre, this mere matter of convenience and several minutes of travel can hardly be balanced against the environmental damage it would cause by severing in two the Anstey-Keane Damplands. Reducing the travel time by reducing the distance between points 'A' and 'B' is hardly a good reason for building a road, especially one which would have such devastating environmental consequences as this one would.

Volume 2 of Perth's Bushplan (pages 208 and 209) sets out the conservation values of 'Bush Forever' site 342. These include the documented presence of the Southern Brown Bandicoot, or Quenda. Dividing this site in two would have devastating consequences on the movements of this secretive marsupial. This site also includes 'Significant Flora', including 'Declared Rare Flora', and 'Conservation Category Wetlands.' Cutting a swathe through this valuable dampland for the construction of a road will undoubtedly destroy biodiversity and contribute to climate change.

Reputedly there are more species of native flora in the Anstey-Keane Damplands than in Kings Park. As the latter is regarded as an iconic tourist destination and recreation site for Perth residents through which an additional straight road to cut out its curving, winding roads would not be countenanced, so the same courtesy should be extended to this portion of Jandakot Regional Park. Just because the latter does not conform to the conventions of the European park landscape aesthetic, as the former does, is no reason to sever it in two.

Just as a proposal to build a road directly between West Perth and Shenton Park straight through Kings Park to, say, enable a politician with a relative in Charlie Gairdner hospital to get there quicker would be rejected, so should a proposal to build a road straight through Jandakot Regional Park to enable a City Councillor resident in North Forrestdale to get to and from council meetings quicker be rejected too.

Rob Giblett

INSIDE

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Editorial

FIRE - how can we do better?

Sadly there were many fires in bushland again this summer. Clusters of fires lit by arsonists did massive damage to some areas, whilst others were luckily fire free.

Perth's bushland, while adapted to some fire in an unfragmented landscape, now suffers from excessively frequent fires. Most plant communities on the Swan Coastal Plain need *at least* 30 years to re-establish viable seed banks, some need more, and wetland ecosystems containing peat and acid soils should *never* be burnt. But fire histories for most of our significant sites in the past 50 years have seen ecological damage. Weed invasion takes over the native plants which are slow to regrow. Insect pollinators may not have enough time to build up before the next fire event. Fire is catastrophic for resident fauna which cannot repopulate isolated bushland patches and species are becoming locally extinct.

The UBC held a seminar on 17th May to review fire through three case studies. These were Star Swamp Reserve, Warwick Bushland and Careniup Swamp, and Forrestdale Bushland. Community speakers set the scene for each case followed by land managers. FESA and local bushfire brigade representatives contributed useful discussion together with community folk. The question then asked was "*How can we do better?*"

What were the issues?

From the case studies it was made clear that Friends groups still have issues with the lack of communication with fire authorities and land managers concerning fire events and fire prevention. Friends groups have considerable local knowledge and expertise and want to be included in post fire debriefs and preparation of fire management plans. Arson, the predominant cause of fires in bushland, is still not treated by the law as a serious and socially unacceptable crime and the law needs to be changed. At Star Swamp Reserve, there was a lack of fire readiness by adjoining householders and effective weed control remains an issue.

How we can do better

Many practical suggestions arose from the presentations and discussion and some issues were recurring themes. A summary of outcomes is shown below for each stakeholder group.

Messages for Friends Groups

- Keep in touch with land managers, FESA and local fire authorities especially before and after each summer fire season
- Invite local FESA staff along to weeding days and guided walks to help them gain an appreciation and a sense of ownership of your bushland. Make it a friendly social event with morning tea or sausage sizzle afterwards.
- Make sure you are familiar with fire management plans *before each summer*
- Insist on meeting with land managers and FESA well before

each fire season if you have unresolved issues with fire management plans, and especially weed control

- Make sure the extent of fire is mapped with a GPS system and that good records are kept. (Please note that the UBC has a GPS-camera mapping kit available for groups to borrow. Contact the UBC office on ubc@inet.net.au or tel 9420 7207) Monitor sites after fire

Messages for FESA and local fire brigades

- Hold debriefing sessions with Friends groups and land managers after fire events. For Warwick Bushland, debriefs should also include the school.
- Ensure media reports to reflect damage to bushland. For example media reports could change from '*there was no damage to property*' to '*while there was no damage to property, there was major damage to regionally significant bushland as x ha was burnt out and hundreds of small birds and tiny animals were either incinerated or left homeless and starving*'
- Make the public perception and legal reality of arson in bushland into a serious and socially unacceptable crime which threatens our unique natural ecosystems. This requires an amendment to existing law as well as public awareness raising.
- Update fire management plans in consultation with Friends groups and the land manager. There is considerable local knowledge and expertise within Friends groups which deserves recognition and respect.
- Provide continuous bushland education and awareness programs for fire fighters including site visits in winter and spring.
- In conjunction with the Education Department and the City of Joondalup, target a special fire awareness and school education program for Warwick Senior High School which is located within bushland. Twenty to 30 fires per year is excessive and needs to be addressed as a social problem. FESA could change the fire station boundary for Warwick Bushland so that only one station is involved. (The boundary goes through the bushland at present, thus two fire stations are involved and confusion could arise)

Messages for land managers

- Considerable local knowledge and expertise exists within Friends groups. Keep in touch with Friends groups, co-operate and work with them
- Update and implement fire management plans in consultation with Friends groups.
- Provide up to date maps, contact details, access and sensitive area information for each site to respective fire stations *each year*.
- Conduct site visits in spring each year with local FESA staff and Friends groups. Make it both an educational and social experience.



Congratulations

Fifty years of action towards increasing the knowledge and appreciation of Western Australia's wildflowers was honoured. The Wildflower Society of Western Australia was awarded the Conservation Council of WA's Len Howard Community Group Award in April. Environment and Climate Change Minister David Templeman presented the award at a special ceremony at The University Club of Western Australia.

After fifty years of standing at the forefront of the conservation movement, the Society continues to make a tireless commitment towards protecting the environment and increasing community engagement in conservation. "They are extremely worthy recipients of this award." said Conservation Council Director, Chris Tallentire.

Photo left: Dorothy Perret and Brian Moyle, Wildflower Society WA with the Award.

UNDERWOOD AVENUE BUSHLAND

It is so obvious that Underwood Avenue Bushland is too important to lose.

However to the Vice-chancellor and the senate members of the University of WA and to the Environmental Protection Authority members who recommended approval of UWA's proposal for housing, it is not obvious.

The Appeals Convenor has given his recommendation to the Minister for the Environment, Mr David Templeman, and we await his decision. These are desperate times.

The Friends of Underwood Avenue were so fortunate to have a friend of the environment to light the spark which enabled us to have confidence to hold a public meeting for Underwood Avenue Bushland on May 5th.



Melissa Howe is that dynamic person. She did so much which included producing fliers, banners, contacts, letters and she harnessed the great band, Hedge Bandits Junk Band for the day.

At the rally, Trevor Walley, ancestor of Tulbuk a Swan River native, spoke of aboriginal connections to all the land around the area. Aboriginal people lived in the bush-

land right up until the 1950s and all the bushland is important to them.

However, the latest proposal by UWA states that "there is an opportunity to acknowledge indigenous heritage through interpretive signage and other means".

The other speakers at the rally were Kim Gates, convenor of the Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland, Mary Gray, our president and Margaret Owen, bushland explorer.

The Friends and the UBC called on the Minister to make his decision according to his Ministerial responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act, and



One of the Hedge Bandits Junk Band entertaining the crowd.

thus make his decision based on the breadth of scientific information available. We called on him to reject the UWA proposal as environmentally unacceptable and to add the whole 36ha Underwood site to the conservation estate – **forever**.

We also called on the Minister to amend the legislation for the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority to manage the four bushland areas, Bold Park, Underwood Avenue bushland, Shenton bushland and Kings Park and their connecting corridors. We want the bushland managed to conserve its conservation values.



Theresa Indich Walley writing to the Minister of the Environment appealing to him to save Underwood Avenue Bushland. Theresa is descendent from Tulbuk, a Swan River Native and she is a Noongar elder. Theresa's son, Trevor Walley, addressed the group at the public meeting.

People at the rally signed post cards which were delivered to the Minister the following week. Some of the comments on the post cards were; "Sad, sad, sad. It is shameful that a learning institution even contemplates destruction of bushland and homes for animals; and No more bush should go down in the Metro Area – or anywhere else; and Be remembered for doing the right thing please save this wonderful bushland."

A large group then walked through Shenton Bushland, which was saved from development by the Liberal Government, and then walked in a loop around Underwood Avenue Bushland. Not many people had been into the bushland before and comments were made on the intact understorey, the dense jarrah over-storey and the beauty of the bushland.

The Minister has yet to make his decision. You may have already sent a letter but further contact with the Minister will show that the community wants "Underwood, not under bricks". Housing, coffee shops, local offices and possibly a super-deli are a criminal proposal in place of bushland. Please help. The Minister's address is:

The Hon. David Templeman,
Level 29 Allendale Square,
77 St Georges Terrace
PERTH 6000



Mary Gray, President of the UBC addressing the crowd with Kim Gates, convenor of the Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland listening.

Photos and text by Margaret Owen

Group News Group News Group News

Bungendore Park Management Committee hosted its annual *Pancakes in the Park* on 29th and 30th March as part of the Hills Heartbeat Festival held in the nearby grounds of Armadale Christian College. The pancake event was organised in conjunction with the Armadale Lions Club which provides its outdoor cooking trailer and tables, chairs and cooks the pancakes with all the trimmings. It was an ideal way for people to enjoy pancakes in a bush setting and visit local bushland as well as seeing the displays set up by the Armadale Reptile Centre and the WA Raptor Rehabilitation Group. The reptile display enabled people to see and recognise venomous snakes in cages as well as interact with non-venomous pythons etc. The birds of prey were also popular, in particular the very-attentive Barn Owl, and it was an ideal opportunity for people to see and learn of the part played in nature by these birds.



Don Griffiths (Armadale Lions Club) and Jenny Pettet (WA Raptor Rehabilitation Group) with Gizmo the Barn Owl enjoying pancakes in Bungendore Park.

Photo: K. Sarti

Planning is underway for this year's tree planting on National Tree Day 27th July from 1pm to 3pm in a disused gravel pit in Bungendore Park (Bedfordale) as part of follow-up planting. Check Planet Ark's website www.treeday.planetark.com for full details.

Bungendore Park Management Committee will be holding a bushwalk on 21st September as part of the City of Armadale's Family Spring Walks programme. Full details will be available later from the City's Events Co-ordinator on 9399 0111.

Kim Sarti

Friends of Trigg Bushland is proud to announce the launching of the Friends of Trigg Bushland web site. This site is still under development, but already, with help, the Friends of Trigg Bushland have collated lots of interesting information to help our local community, schools and those from elsewhere learn more about the plants, the animals, ways to get involved and some of the problems and pleasures at Trigg bushland. Nina McLaren is one of our very active members. Nina has been the driver behind this project and has created the beautifully artistic layout of our budding web site.

Our web site was made possible as part of a Community Grant for Tuart Conservation and Management. The tuart mapping conducted by our group and described on our web site is another aspect of the work funded by this grant.

Friends of Trigg Bushland is presenting, to a teacher in-service conducted by the Department of Environment and conservation at the Henderson Centre in Star Swamp in late May, information about our activities for tuart conservation and management and resources available on our web site. We hope that our web site will provide a window into the Trigg bushland for teachers, students and the wider community, that might instil in them a greater appreciation of our natural heritage and a desire to become more active in their local bushlands.

Also included on the site is other information about the group's activities including our guided walks. If you are interested in learning more about our group, or the bushland itself, check out our budding web site, make a note of the dates and come along. Exploring our web site is not as much fun as exploring the bushland itself, but we think it is a pretty good place to start. We hope that you find many things here to interest you. Find us at www.triggbushland.org.au or see you in the bush!

Peter St. Clair-Baker

Friends of Star Swamp Bushland

The Star Swamp Bushland Reserve has bounced back following the massive bushfire that swept through 60% of the Reserve in March this year. The grass trees have responded in their hundreds to the fire, sending up magnificent flower stalks which are covered in bees, beetles and honeyeaters. Most of the mid-range shrubs are shooting at the base, sending up vigorous new growth to replace the burnt, and new seedlings have emerged from the ashes.

As expected, weed numbers have exploded, with the bulb weeds particularly thick this year. The City of Stirling has been spraying for veldt grass and has trialed weeding programs on several other species, including Geraldton Carnation Weed, but it is a daunting task. The Friends Group continues its monthly weeding morning, having some success in a very small area of the Reserve, but it will be almost impossible to win the battle against introduced weeds.

One bright point to note is the germination of hundreds of tuart tree seedlings, mostly in the ash beds of tuart trees which were destroyed. If the bushland can survive without a further fire for the next few years, these will go a long way to restoring the higher canopy in the Reserve.

The recent fires in Yellagonga Regional Park and Warwick Regional Open Space indicate that there is probably a 'firebug' operating in the northern suburbs and this is worrying for all areas of urban bushland. Everyone will need to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity in their local bushland to police or FESA, so that the risk of deliberately lit fires can be kept to a minimum.

Christine Curry

Friends of Hepburn & Pinnaroo Bushland

For many years now, Alan Lloyd, one of the founding members of the Friends of Hepburn & Pinnaroo Bushland, has been collating references and writing an account of the 20 year battle to save Hepburn Heights Bushland. Alan has also persuaded several of those involved to make contributions. This has always been with the aim of producing a book on the subject that would inform the community at large about this important part

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**Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project has
a new website:**

www.fungiperth.org.au

Western Australia's Chief Scientist, Professor Lyn Beazley launched the new PUBF website on the 15 May 2008. About 100 guests attended a gala event at the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre.

Information about how to collect fungi, fungi field book, interesting facts, planned events and generic information about the project is presented in a new, user friendly way.

2008 FUNGI SEASON ACTIVITIES:

Sunday June 15

Wungong Catchment Workshop

Water Corporation/PUBF event

For more information contact fungiperth.org@iinet.net.au

Saturday June 28 - Sunday June 29

West Bay Bushland, Augusta

PUBF/Environmental Research Group Augusta (ERGA)

To register contact David Dale on david@thedaes.biz

Saturday July 19

Lake Gwelup Fungi Walk

10 am

PUBF/Friends of Lake Gwelup

To register contact Wayne Eddy on wayne.eddy@iinet.net.au

Sunday August 3

Fungi Walk for the Mundaring Truffle Festival

Mundaring Arts Centre

To register contact Jenny on

JHaynes@mundaringartscentre.com

**CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS
AUSTRALIA**

Moved to a new address: 2 / 343 Newcastle Street ,
Northbridge

Volunteer Information Sessions are held on the first Tuesday
of each month between 5.30 and 6.30 pm at the CVA office.

For more information phone 9227 5711 or email to
perth@cva.org.au.

Anyone interested can join in a range of bush regeneration
activities at various locations:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 16 - 20 June | City of Nedlands - bushland reserves |
| 16 - 20 June | Mosman Park - Buckland Hill |
| 21 - 22 June | City of Cockburn - wetland restoration |
| 23 - 27 June | Ellen Brook Nature Reserve |
| 23 - 27 June | City of Fremantle |
| 31 June - 4 July | Perth ZOO |
| 31 June - 4 July | City of Bayswater - wetland restoration |

Activities include flora monitoring, weeding, site preparation,
radio tracking and GPS recording of vermin baits, trail maintenance.
For more information about future events visit the
CVA website www.conservationvolunteers.com.au
or freecall **1800 032 501**

Wildflower Society of WA—Northern Suburbs Branch
invites anyone interested to attend a

50th Anniversary Celebration

**Prof. Stephen Hopper
Director of Royal Botanic
Gardens, Kew UK**

Will present a free lecture on

**HALF CENTURY OF EXTRAORDINARY
DISCOVERY: WILDFLOWER SCIENCE IN WA
SINCE 1958**

When: Monday 30 June 2008 at 7:30 pm

Where: Edith Cowan University, Joondalup Campus
Lecture Theatre 19.141 - follow the signs from Lakeside
Drive entrance to ECU.

Limited places so booking essential. Phone Christine on 9447 2983
or 0430 013 364.

**Western Australia has a new
APPEALS CONVENOR**

Anthony Sutton replaced Garry Middle as the new Appeals
Convenor on Monday 19 May 2008. Anthony Sutton was
working as Manager, Strategic Policy and Planning at the Swan
River Trust and will bring a wide range of experiences from
across the environment portfolio.

Garry Middle is returning to academic life as Associate Profes-
sor at the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Curtin
University.

**ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS ACTION
NETWORK**

Saturday 26 July 5.00 pm

General Meeting

**Anyone interested in weed management in bushland is in-
vited to attend the next meeting with an opportunity to lis-
ten to a local community bushland management team and
to network .**

**Venue to be advised. For more information contact Diane
Matthews; mailto:gdmattthews@ozemail.com.au**

**Wildflower Society of WA
STATE CONFERENCE
28 and 29 JUNE 2008**

WA Ecology Centre, Bold Park

To register contact the Wildflower Society
wildflowers@ozemail.com.au or during office hours
10am – 2.30pm Tuesday and Thursday phone 9383 7979

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

'Discovering Dieback' Education Kit

Teachers from Armadale Primary School developed an award winning dieback education kit and will be demonstrating its use at a FREE sundowner (complimentary canapés, wine & beer) at Piney Lakes Environmental Education Centre. A FREE 'Discovering Dieback' Education Kit will be provided to all teachers attending the event. The sundowner will be held on **Thursday the 19th of June 2008**, from 4:30PM to 6:00PM, at the Piney Lakes Environmental Education Centre, Leach Highway (between Murdoch Drive and Riseley Street) Winthrop. Please RSVP by the 10th of June to Steve McCabe, Dieback Project Coordinator (9374 3312 or steve.mccabe@water.wa.gov.au).

Do You Care For Your Country?

Swan TAFE in Midland is introducing a new series of lectures. Beginning in the fourth week of July 2008, the themes covered include wildflower surveys, indigenous culture, seed collecting, bush restoration and collecting seeds and cuttings. For more information, contact Ted Johnson (ted.johnson@swantafe.wa.edu.au) or Anne Taylor (anne.taylor@swantafe.wa.edu.au, ph 9374 6314)

2008 Australasian Wildlife Management Society Conference

HUMAN IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE

Held at Fremantle, WA on 24 - 27 November 2008, the conference will look at such topics as invasive and threatened species, climate change, habitat disturbance and sustainable wildlife. Submissions of abstracts for presentations close on 29 August. To find out more visit <http://www.awms.org.nz>

DIG Conference 2008

The registrations for the Annual Dieback Information Group Conference 2008 are now open. The conference will be held at the UWA University Club Banquet Hall on **Friday the 4th of July 2008**. Program topics include latest dieback mapping, phosphite research, innovative education and much more. Anyone who has an interest in Phytophthora Dieback and it's devastating impact on our environment is invited to attend. For more information or to register contact Steve McCabe (steve.mccabe@water.wa.gov.au, phone 9374 3312).

World Conference on Ecological Restoration

The Society for Ecological Restoration International (SERI) is a non-profit organisation for people who are actively engaged in ecologically-sensitive repair and management of ecosystems. Members include scientists, planners, administrators, ecological consultants, landscape architects, philosophers, teachers, engineers, natural areas managers, writers, growers, community activists, and volunteers, among others. The SERI World Conference on Ecological Restoration will be held at the Perth Convention Centre from the **23rd to the 27th of August 2009**. SERI is now calling for expressions of interest in attending the conference (EOI period closes 30th July 2008). For more information, or to submit an expression of interest, please go to: <http://www.seri2009.com.au/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY COASTCARE GRANTS

Part of the Australian Government's *Caring for our Country* initiative, Community Coastcare provides small grants of up to \$50,000 and larger-scale grants up to \$250,000 for community groups and organizations to undertake coastal restoration and preventative work to protect coastal and marine environment.

For more information phone 1800 552 008 or visit the Caring for our Country website at www.nrm.gov.au

Applications close 25 July 2008

NATIONAL RESERVE SYSTEM - CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING IN 2008-09

Government, non-government and community organisations are now invited to apply for funding to buy high priority land to be turned into a protected area, establish a private protected area on high priority land they already own, or develop cooperative arrangements between Indigenous groups and nature conservation agencies for the management of protected areas.

For more information and obtain the guidelines go to

<http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/nrs.html>

Applications close 27 June 2008



JARRAH FOREST REFERENCE SITES

Seven new Reference Sites were added to the 40 sites established on the Swan Coastal Plain part of the Perth Metropolitan Region as part of the **Perth Region Plant Biodiversity Project**, a collaborative project between the WA Local Government Association's Perth Biodiversity Project and the Department of Environment and Conservation. The new reference sites represent major variations in plant communities found within, or in the close proximity to, Darling Plateau part of the PMR.

The Reference Sites were set up for public education about Perth's unique plant communities across the Perth Metropolitan Region. For each Reference Site a Reference Site File was compiled, including a detailed site description summarizing the environmental values, plot based information, aerial photos showing the location of these sites and photo reference points for each site.

One of the main criteria for the selection of Reference Sites was that they provided a good example of a vegetation community they represent and that they were easily accessible to public. Land managers and anyone interested in bushland management are encouraged to visit the Reference Sites that contain the same plant communities as the reserves they are managing and compare the two. This comparison might be useful for determining management priorities for their reserve.

Information about each Reference Site will be soon available from the PBP website: www.walga.asn.au/about/policy/pbp

Alternatively contact the PBP on 9213 2047 to request a copy for a site of your interest.



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of our recent local history. Thanks to Bill Marwick, of the Wanneroo & Districts Historical Society, volunteering his services, we now have a 143 page edited proof ready for printing. We are now at the stage of seeking grants for the cost of an initial print of books to supply libraries, schools and interested groups and individuals. We hope that this goal will be achieved by the end of the year, at which point we intend to organise a book launch to celebrate what we consider will be a major achievement.

Ralph Henderson

Friends of Lake Gwelup welcomed the decision by the Western Power not to pursue the Lake Gwelup Reserve as a candidate site for building a large power substation and are now further reviewing a site near the freeway in Stirling. The joint efforts of the City of Stirling, DEC and the community has lead Western Power to rethink their proposal. While this battle is

over, future development possibilities may be endless if the status of this C-Class Reserve is not changed to an A-Class Reserve.

Monthly guided walks are held at Lake Gwelup. The next walk will be on Saturday 21 June at 8 am. Meet at the Scouts Hall off Huntriss Road in Karrinyup.

In July, the Perth Urban Bushland Fungi project and the UBC's *City Bush Guides* will be heading to Lake Gwelup for a survey. All are invited but it is imperative that you RSVP for the event to wayne.eddy@inet.net.au. Time and meeting place for the fungi walk will be provided on RSVP. Places are limited and hot soup and bread will warm up participants while they will be listening to an informative assessment of the fungi gathered during the day. For more information about the Friends Group contact Wayne on 0407 383 425 or Betty on 9444 5640 or email to folgmail@inet.net.au.

Medina sees Green

A little history of Medina and the Medina Residents Group

Medina is a unique suburb in the southern outer metro area of Kwinana. To many the area is only known as an industrial strip but travel up behind Rockingham Road and the strip and you will find a best kept secret – a valley of green where around 1500 workers cottages from the 50's and 60's nestle among tuart, banksia, jarrah and grass trees on natural undulating land.

Medina was built in the early 50's for the many migrant workers and their families of the emerging industries of BP Oil Refinery, BHP Steel Mill and Alcoa Alumina Refinery and the suburb was extremely fortunate to be designed by renowned W.A. Town Planner, Margaret Feilman.

Medina was Margaret's first gig as a Town Planner, she was the first woman Town Planner in Australia and at 32 years of age probably one of the youngest. Margaret had recently returned from an internship in Europe, restoring and rebuilding towns bombed during the 2nd World War. Her first impression on returning to W.A. was the uniqueness, beauty and diversity of our natural environment. At a recent presentation to Curtin University Town Planning students, Margaret remarked how the ecology of the Kwinana area was as equal or better to any in the South West. She was committed to creating communities that were in harmony with the natural environment. At a time when many other urban parks comprised lawns and rose beds, Medina's parks consisted of native trees and wildflowers. 50 years on our bush parks are a natural treasure, a legacy of Margaret's vision. To compliment the bush parks there are large tracts of bushland surrounding the town, particularly The Spectacles, 360 hectares of wetland and Banksia woodland to the east and Leda Nature Reserve to the south.

The Medina Residents Group was formed in July 2005 in response to our local authority's – The Town of Kwinana – plans to redevelop public open space in the area. We are a group of Medina residents and friends of Medina who saw the enormous tsunami of new housing developments heading our way and knew we had to do something if we were to retain our architectural, social and natural heritage. Medina has been earmarked

for infilling by the State Government and this is supported by the Town of Kwinana.

Not that we are anti-development but we believe - and some would say naively – that it is possible to have development and retain trees and character. You just need to be creative and think outside of the box.

To date there have been many positive initiatives that would not have happened without the enormous efforts of our volunteers including:

- A moratorium on the development of Public Open Space until the completion of the Town Planning Scheme review.
- A reduction in the number of blocks allocated for future subdivision.
- Classification of Medina as a Historic Precinct by the National Trust.
- The development of Residential Design Guidelines for Medina (to be completed this year).
- The inclusion of sites such as Chalk Hill and Medina Ave street trees in the Municipal Heritage Inventory.
- The development of a Medina Heritage Walk.
- Participation in the multicultural celebration, The Medina Ding Dong.

Currently we are lobbying the Council for a review of their existing urban bush policy, a restoration plan for McGuigan Park (our first park) to return it to a healthy natural bush park and continuing in the process to develop the Residential Design Guidelines.

So plenty to do.... If you would like to venture down to Medina for a cuppa and a bit of a walk through our beautiful bush parks or maybe even a guided heritage tour give us a call we'd love to meet you.

For more information contact medinareidents@hotmail.com
Pauline 9439 3171 Mandy 9419 3201

Mandy Grubb

Mother Nature Stories—Learn & Share

A COCKATOO STORY; RISING BEFORE THE BIRDS

The western suburbs group of Carnaby's cockatoos roost at two places, Hollywood Hospital car park and the corner of Underwood Avenue and Brockway Road.

Sometimes, after flying in to 'the corner' site, the group looks like it is settling in for the night, but under cover of just a slightly lighter shade of complete darkness they fly off to somewhere.

However if they stay the night, the following morning they may fly east down Underwood Avenue, feeding as they go. The *Banksia prionotes* (see photo below) in the bushland is a valuable source of food. The cockatoos bite off a flowering cone and holding it in the left foot they pull off the flowers and get nectar and grubs. The cones are then dropped to the ground.



Thinking I could see the cockatoos in the bushland on a particular Saturday morning, I went there rather too early, at 5.30am.

Darkness reigned.

As I walked up the hill, sheet lightning flashed from the south. The black sky to the west was as dense and saturated as a black pudding. Pobblebonk frogs were calling and a car alarm prompted a kookaburra to start a half-hearted laugh.

An hour later, still the day looked like light was never going to come. Practiced cyclists breasted the hill without even puffing and the leader exclaimed to his flock "Just look at that sky!"

Then it started raining.

I decided to retreat and by car, went to 'the corner'. Still it was dark but I could see the cockatoos there in the big trees. They had had a sleep-in for an extra hour and a half. When they finally started flying around it was raining so heavily that I lost track of them.

Perhaps they found a tree and put their heads down again to wait out the wet.

BABY MYGALOMORPH PRIMITIVE SPIDERS BRAVING THE WORLD (photo bottom right)

The expert on ants had recently told me that there is a large diversity of ants in Shenton Bushland and that Underwood Avenue Bushland would have a similar diversity. The little things that matter, that is the diversity near the base of the food chain, are not considered important enough to be surveyed when development proposals are made.

With the ant information fresh in my head, I paused to look at what seemed to be ants moving over a burnt tree stump. However, these little creatures were not ants but probably a primitive spider species. These primitive spiders have to rear up to strike unlike the modern spiders. I could see about 50, each moving across thread and trailing silk thread from each of the two long spinnerets. They were probably getting ready to disperse.

A NET-CASTING SPIDER



Last year in early May I found an intriguing spider in Underwood Avenue Bushland; a net-casting spider. The spider was hanging downwards close to the ground and was holding its catching net in its four front legs.

In the same month but a year later, I went to the same place and there was another net-casting spider, close to the ground and holding its net. This spider was smaller than last year's, so I presume that it is progeny of the previous one.

These spiders are also called ogre-faced spiders as two of the eight eyes are enormous. The spiders are active at night and I read that their brilliant eyes can capture photons (particles of light) as many as 2000 times the number absorbed by human eyes.

The net-casting spider positions itself above a surface across which a prey animal could walk. Should such an animal come within range, the spider lunges down stretching its net wide to trap and entangle the prey. The spiders are also sensitive to air currents and can lunge towards aerial prey.

Another spectacular aspect of these spiders is that after making the net, the spider sometimes deposits some spots of white faeces on the surface over which the prey might walk. These are thought to act as aiming points.



Text and photos by Margaret Owen

A Visit to Woodman Point Nature Reserve

A fine Autumn Sunday in April saw a small group visit the Woodman Point Nature Reserve in Coogee. This is a well-preserved area of remnant bushland representing approximately one sixth of the Woodman Point Regional Park and is a good example of the Quindalup Dune Vegetation System.

Unlike many areas of urban bushland, this Reserve is exceptional because the greater part has not experienced fire for many years; indeed it is thought that some portions have NO fire history at all! The vegetation thus remains in very good condition and previous use by both the Defence Department, as a WW2 ordinance depot, and the Health Department, as a quarantine station since late 19th century, has also contributed to its preservation. It is probably a good example of the flora that would have been here before European settlement.

Although some areas on the perimeter have experienced cool fires in recent decades there are fine stands of mature Tuarts, unusual in such close proximity to the ocean, and Rottnest Island Pines, a threatened ecological community.

In addition to the threatened ecological community this reserve is also home to several rare species such as *Dodonaea hackettiana* [Hop Bush], *Diplolaena dampieri* & *Ameyema miquellii* [Mistletoe]. Of course weeds have intruded into the Reserve the major one being Bridal Creeper. The DEC has a weed management strategy for the greater park and is pro-



Photo by M Owen

Identifying plants in the Woodman Point Nature Reserve

gressively removing woody weeds such as Victorian Tea Tree and Japanese Peppertrees and revegetating with locally occurring species.

A “Friends Group” is presently establishing itself and intending to organise regular walks to promote this unique living museum. Hopefully we will be able to give an update on these activities in future UBC Telegraphs.

I am most grateful to the UBC for arranging this visit and also for giving me the opportunity to use some of the information gained from the 2007 City Bush Guides Course by leading this group.

Richard Cooke



Photo by M Owen

Grand old Tuart in the Woodman Point Nature Reserve



Photo by R Cooke

Acacia rostelifera thicket at Woodman Point.

Support the Urban Bushland Council

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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.

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URBAN BUSHLAND COUNCIL WA EVENTS 2008

Saturday 19 July 10 am - 12 noon

FUNGI WALK AT LAKE GWELUP

Guided walk with the *City Bush Guides*
and the Perth Urban Bushland Fungi project
Meet at Scouts hall, off Huntriss Road, Karrinyup

Saturday 17 August 10 am - 12 noon

EXCURSION TO GARVEY PARK, ASCOT

Guided walk with Friends of Garvey Park
Meet at the end of Fauntleroy Avenue, Ascot

All welcome

For further information contact Margaret Owen on 9381 1287

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)

Available from the UBC for \$11, postage included.

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). Available from the UBC for \$11, postage included.

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:

The Editor, Urban Bushland Council

PO Box 326 West Perth WA 6872

or fax (08) 9420 7208, email ubc@iinet.net.au

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Office:

URBAN BUSHLAND COUNCIL WA Inc

Lotteries House

2 Delhi Street West Perth WA 6872

Ph 9420 7207 Fax 9420 7208

E-mail: ubc@iinet.net.au

Web site:

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