

LANDCORP ATTACKS ROOSTING SITE AT PERRY LAKES

-government fails to protect critical habitat at roost site

During stages 1 and 2 of the housing redevelopment at the old Perry Lakes athletics stadium, ~100 trees were removed by Landcorp. Stage 3 includes construction of 3 to 5 story apartments along Underwood Avenue and Meagher Drive.

The stated intention of Landcorp was "to go beyond what is required by the Perry Lakes Redevelopment Act and endeavour to retain as many trees as possible outside the designated protection areas." (Perry Lakes Redevelopment Plan July 2008) However the gap between intention and actuality was vast.

The first sign that many more trees were going to be cut down came on Friday 17 June 2011, when people in vests were seen looking at a huge old eucalypt among the corner roosting trees on site. This was tree 58. Those concerned about tree loss knew it was tree 58 because it had a

one metre tall '58' painted ignoble-y on its trunk above the cut line. By Saturday four great tuart trees and two smaller trees had been cut down. On Sunday, Alex Jones, Peter Jones and Margaret Owen walked around the whole site noting the trees marked with blue or yellow,



Mature trees at Perry Lakes being cut down to accommodate new housing development. Photo by M Owen

indicating that they were designated for the axe.

As a dedicated citizen scientist, Margaret monitors a major roosting site for Carnaby's Cockatoo at the corner of Underwood Avenue and Brookdale/Brockway Road in Floreat. Cockatoos roost in tall trees at three of the four corners of the intersection, with one corner being on the Perry Lakes site. This monitoring involves almost nightly visits to the site to count the cockatoos as they fly from the East Lake of Perry Lakes to tall trees at the intersection. Some mornings Margaret returns to the corner to see which way the cockatoos fly out, and usually follows them for a time.

It was on one such morning that Margaret saw a cherry picker and a team of men arriving at the Landcorp Perry Lakes redevelopment

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Launch of the New UBC Website

By John Dell

As most of you are aware the Urban Bushland Council is a peak body representing more than 60 community organizations all concerned with, and committed to conservation of urban bushlands. The UBC was formed as a result of a workshop held in 1992 and was formally launched in March 1993.

Since then the UBC has provided an effective forum for the groups it represents and has been pivotal in policy development, lobbying and raising pub-

lic awareness of the plight of our bushland and its flora, fauna and especially fungi.

Our urban bushlands are home to a stunning biodiversity. Just reflect for a moment on the plant richness. The Swan Coastal plain portion of the Perth Metropolitan Area has over 1200 recorded plant species, and to this you can add another 3-400 plant species from the Darling Scarp and hills.

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Editorial

Meeting with the Hon. Christian Porter, Attorney General and Treasurer. On Thursday, 4 August, 2011 a small group met with Mr. Porter for 45 minutes at his electoral office in Booragoon. Present were: Dr. Eddy Wajon (State President, Wildflower Society of Western Australia and President, Murdoch Branch WSWA) who instigated the meeting, Mary Gray (Urban Bushland Council), Diane Matthews (Treasurer, WSWA and Murdoch Branch WSWA) and Dr. Russell Hall (Secretary, Murdoch Branch WSWA).

Dr. Wajon made the following points:

- Many Bush Forever (BF) sites are struggling from a combination of climate change, poor management due to lack of funding, and falling under a variety of management authorities. As an example, Ken Hurst Park has lost about 70% of its *Banksia* overstorey due to two droughts over the last 4 years;
- Many privately owned BF sites and new offset sites are awaiting purchase, but \$100 million set aside for such purchases over the last decade has proven to be inadequate given soaring land prices;
- Handover of BF sites to appropriate management agencies and proper management (fencing, signage, rubbish removal, planting) is needed immediately to stop further degradation of many areas and this is not happening sufficiently rapidly. As an example, it is unclear whether some offset sites resulting from construction of Roe Highway Stage 7 have been finalised;
- The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) needs increased funding to manage BF and offset sites that are increasing in number and management needs;

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Let us consider for a moment the history of loss and what is left. In the foothills only 0.2-9.4% of the original vegetation complexes remains in secure reserves. On the Pinjarra Plains conservation is even more dire with only 0.1-4.6% of the original vegetation in secure reserves.

It is not only the plants that are in trouble – many of the animal species are in serious decline or have gone completely. Let's look for a moment at problems faced by our fauna.

Many of our animals have developed wonderful mechanisms for survival. But this survival is challenged and threatened by changes since European colonization. Land clearing, habitat degradation and fragmentation, introduced predators and competitors, introduced pathogens, and changed fire regimes all pose major threats to fauna survival.

Also many of our animals especially reptiles are largely invisible and therefore have no sense of interest or mystery to most people. This has an important conservation consequence as we cannot expect people to feel passionate about protecting the invisible.

We can only expect support for protecting our wonderful heritage if it is visible, or if people have some familiarity with it.

Because we cannot see them for ourselves, we need other means for people to get a glimpse of these special animals

The government should declare an environmental dividend from the State's mining royalties and other mining related income to offset the impact of mining on the environment.

Mr Porter encouraged those present to lobby DEC to internally re-allocate some of its available funds for management of BF sites, as Government contributions of large amounts of extra money for special projects such as this could only be achieved by taking away existing funding from education and health. Nevertheless, Mr Porter suggested making contact with the Minister for the Environment to seek new funding for DEC, through the State budget process, so that purchase and management of BF sites can be supported. It was also understood that such proposals coming to Cabinet would receive Mr Porter's sympathetic attention.

Mary Gray pointed out to Mr Porter that the Government has actually lowered the Metropolitan Land Improvement tax rate for windfall profits resulting from new land re-evaluations; increasing/restoring this rate could/should be a source of funding for both purchase and management of BF sites. It was suggested that we contact the WA Planning Commission to seek a review of the tax rate in order to raise the required additional funds.

Due to a busy diary, Mr Porter was unable to accept an invitation to attend one of the Spring wildflower walks being conducted by the Murdoch Branch WSWA in September, but it was suggested that if/when the City of Melville hosts a future State Cabinet meeting, a walk in Wireless Hill Park could be part of the program.

and plants and to learn something of their fascinating biology.

That is why the work of the Urban Bushland Council and all the groups it represents is so important. Their wonderful work enables us to share and experience the diversity of our often fleeting and hidden treasures.

I now quote the famous words of the renowned Senegalese Environmentalist, Baba Dioum, from a speech he gave at the general assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature in New Delhi in 1968. These words encapsulate the philosophy behind the UBC's dedication to the environment:

***"In the end, we will conserve only what we love,
We will love only what we understand,
And we will understand only what we are taught."***

It is absolutely true that the power of knowledge can open our minds. And through its website the Urban Bushland Council opens our minds to a wealth of information and gives us direct access to the wonderful hard working community organizations it represents.

Conservation owes an enormous debt of gratitude to those diligent hard working deeply committed individuals who volunteer on behalf of the Urban Bushland Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honoured and delighted to launch the Urban Bushland Council's website and congratulate all involved. May it greatly influence the conservation of our precious urban biodiversity.

LAUNCH OF THE NEW UBC WEBSITE

John Baas, UBC Project Officer (Web)

The UBC website (www.bushlandperth.org.au) was formally launched at the newly opened DEC Biodiversity Conservation Science Centre on 3 August 2011 by Mr John Dell, with 35 members and supporters attending. It was a great opportunity to launch this major achievement by UBC and to also recognise the recent award to John of the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service provided to the advancement of natural history and conservation.

Those in attendance were shown a number of the key features of the website by Project Manager John Baas, website designer Nik Rivas Barnao of Webthread and web developer Tony Loxton of Digital Dialogue.



Photo by M Owen

Friends group's representatives and other guests at the UBC website examining landscaping around the new DEC Biodiversity Conservation Centre in Bentley.

Feedback from industry has been that UBC has had great value for money in this project.

At time of launch, the UBC website had 110 pages including twenty 'full' individual Group pages and with a total of 56 Groups with some presence on the site. The 'Groups' pages can be very comprehensive with most including a description of the group, a series of images that can be expanded using 'Lightbox', a 'Googlemap' showing location. Other material can be made available for download, including YouTube videos. The site also has links to Facebook and Twitter; these being managed by a UBC volunteer. Educational materials are also being developed and, over time, this section will be expanded.

John Baas has volunteered to continue as site administrator and can be contacted at jdbaas@bigpond.com for any changes to pages.



Photo by M Owen

John Dell, Office of Environmental Protection Authority (pictured above) launched the new UBC logo at the same event, using the following words:

Australia is amazingly diverse with over 7% of the world's total biodiversity. Therefore our responsibility is huge because it is incumbent on us to protect this wealth. Let's put this in context with other parts of the world. Our extraordinary diversity is twice that of Europe and North America combined!



Photo by M Owen

John Baas, Project Manager for the new UBC website speaking at the launch.

The website is now an essential resource for anyone interested in urban bushland issues. Outstanding features of the new website include:

- A beautiful front page that includes a slideshow of key bushland images as well as access to key features within the site
- Web pages for every Friends group affiliated with UBC
- Capacity to transact online for membership fees, donations and publications
- a sophisticated campaigning tool which allows UBC to undertake sophisticated online campaigns targeting politicians and others with influence
- an e-newsletter service; and
- A collection place for key documents about Perth's urban bushland.



Photo by M Owen

Mary Gray, Vice-President UBC acknowledges the project team responsible for the new UBC logo and the new website.

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Preventing Arson in Urban Bushland

Cath Cooper

The arsonist is dropping delayed incendiary devices along the coast, unaware that they are being tracked in real-time on a computer database, which is calculating his direction and speed of travel. Meanwhile, hidden in the bush, high quality video cameras begin recording as the arsonist moves into view, revealing his identity. This might sound like something from a police TV show but it is actually the technology that FESA is using to identify and prosecute arsonists in Western Australia, according to Craig Waters from the Fire Investigation and Analysis Unit in FESA.

Craig told the July UBC General Meeting that approximately 40% of fires are deliberately lit, which while being down from 50% in the past is still a disturbingly high number. In Western Australia approximately 28% of these fires are solved, with the arsonist being caught, which is very impressive given that the national average is only 8%.

Some of the reasons given for people lighting fires were: insurance fraud, crime concealment, revenge, excitement, attention seeking and mental illness (pyromania). The characteristics of a "typical" arsonist include: male, mid-late teen, broken family, poor education, socially dysfunctional, and often seen at the fire watching and/or wanting to help. It is estimated that 80% of arsonists will return to the scene of the fire so covert surveillance with hidden cameras is often used to help identify them. The Extinguish Arson Intelligence Database (EAID) is a spatial database which can map fire locations and analyse the time of day/day of the week that fires are being lit and the type of fires to identify clusters and plan covert surveillance. Information from 000 callers is also very important to provide information on the location of newly started fires and of people seen in the area.

FESA is proactive in arson reduction strategies with rewards offered through Crimestoppers, media awareness campaigns, Strikeforce Vulcan (doorknocking known arsonists on extreme fire days), JAFFA (juvenile intervention program) and covert surveillance. FESA also want the bushfire laws enforced with custodial sentences (which allow for 20 year custody, equivalent to a life sentence).

If you see suspicious behaviour in bushland or evidence of fire lighting you should call Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000 and the information will be sent to the arson squad. All fires should be reported to 000.



Regina Drummond, Friends of Brixton Street, Craig Waters, FESA and Mary Gray, UBC (from left)

City to Surf Runners Alerted to Threats to Bushland and WA icons

Marg Owen



Photo by H Hardisty

The annual City to Surf goes right along Underwood Avenue past Underwood Avenue Bushland. The route continues on past the Landcorp Perry Lakes redevelopment, where significant roosting and feeding trees for Carnaby's cockatoos were destroyed.

This year, we had a presence on the side of the roadway. Bush-lovers from Lake Nowergup in the north to Beelihar Wetlands in the south, held up signs and ingeniously made model cockatoos to alert people to threats to the survival of black cockatoos and threats to our bushlands.

Paul Hardisty and Sabine Winton (Save Lake Nowergup) tied for best spruikers as they yelled encouragement to the runners and walkers, topped off with a bit of 'message.' Kath Howard (WWF) had a wonderful depiction of a red tailed cockatoo, painted by a friend.

If you have lost track of what is happening with the University of Western Australia and Underwood Avenue Bushland, this is not surprising as varying proposals for housing have been put forward for over eleven years. Last year, approval for housing in the bushland was given by the Local Government (the City of Nedlands), and by the State Government. In December 2007, the Federal Government officers recommended that the proposal for housing not be approved. This advice would have then gone to the Federal Minister for the Environment but the proposal was withdrawn by UWA the following day. There is nothing before the federal government now.

It was reported in the Post newspaper in July 2011 that the City of Nedlands had sought legal advice about building within the odour buffer of the Subiaco Waste Water Treatment plant. Whether this relates to UWA and Underwood Avenue Bushland has not yet emerged.



Photo by M Owen

Clearing of Carnaby's cockatoos' roosting habitat at Perry Lakes to make room for new apartments.

site. The cherry picker fronted up to the magnificent Marri tree along Underwood Avenue. Every evening cockatoos flew into this tree before flying to the roosting trees. It was a beautiful tree. According to new DEC policy, (not yet published), such trees are considered part of the critical habitat of the roosting site.

Margaret crossed the road and stood between the tree and the cherry picker. Margaret recalled that some time was spent there shaking, before all the machine drivers were instructed to leave the site. Margaret was told they left because the area was not fenced, rather than because she was standing in the way.

On Monday 20 June, the erection of a fence around the perimeter of the site was started.

Over each day, many people were trying to have the design of the development modified and the loss of mature trees minimised. The group contacted the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Planning, the Department of the Environment and Conservation, the Lord Mayor of the Town of Cambridge, the Department of Indigenous Affairs, the federal Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and Landcorp. Landcorp told the group that 40 trees were to be cleared. The Hon. Giz Watson, MLC Greens, asked questions in parliament. The Post newspaper was doing a wonderful job keeping the public informed on developments each week.

Investigations were underway to see if big old Eucalypt 58 could be saved. As interested people were on site talking to the Liaison Officer about that tree and other trees, cockatoos were flying over the area. In fact on this day the cockatoos did not fly away from the roosting site in the morning and hung around nearby trees. It was considered that Eucalypt 58 had to come down because its upper branches would have reached over the apartment lot boundary and its roots would have been in the way of foundations. A scientist with an x-ray machine on wheels discovered that there were twelve major surface roots extending from tree 58. Landcorp decided that this tree could be saved and the plan is to build a bridge over the root area.

The group continued to try to save significant large trees. However the group learned that entrance roads had been designed so that they entered right where large trees grew.

On Friday 24 June further large mature trees were cut down.

On Saturday 26 June a massive Tuart along Meagher Drive was cut down.

The following week another major and massive Tuart was cut down. The explanation why one of these trees had to go was that the boundary was wrongly marked and that the Tuart was within the boundary. It was also stated that it is difficult to get accurate GPS readings under trees.

On Friday 1 July the tree loppers were back and moved in to take down two 18-20 metre high Eucalypts, possibly *Eucalyptus rudis*. If these trees had been incorporated into the design, they would have looked magnificent. As the rain pelted down, Margaret, Alex and Mary Gray

watched some of the smaller side branches being sawn off and fall, fall, fall to the ground.

It was when the man in the cherry picker put a great big wedge high up and into the main trunk of the first tree, that Margaret and Alex slid under the fence to stop the butchery. It was hard to hear him yelling from his bucket to get out of the area. Margaret and Alex thought he also was saying that the trees were not *Eucalyptus rudis*. That makes a difference? Not in their eyes.

Wembley police arrived and because Margaret and Alex were not prepared to move on, they were arrested, surrendered their belongings, and climbed into the paddy wagon. By the time the police took the baled out pair back to their cars near the site, the two trees were down.

GOING TO COURT

Alex Jones represented herself in the Perth Magistrates court on 19 July 2011 and she had prepared a succinct and well-written 'Plea in Mitigation'. She complimented the Wembley police who were very courteous and understanding. Alex explained in her plea that she simply had to stop what she believed to be irreparable damage to the environment and wildlife habitat. Alex believed that she had a duty of care to prevent a wrongful act from occurring. Her plea in mitigation also explained the importance of trees at the site as critical habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoos, the environmental and health benefits of trees, their aesthetic values and their commercial benefit to the community.

Landcorp's guidelines, as shown on their website, include "*Leadership through the protection and management of natural systems, habitat and biodiversity.*" Of ecosystems, Landcorp has "*Protect and enhance natural landform, natural flora and fauna and increase the number of healthy ecosystems.*" Because of these statements, Alex advised the Magistrate that she believed that she could investigate with Landcorp the possibility of further tree retentions. Alex also believed that the state government would take the necessary action to investigate questions asked in parliament by the Hon Giz Watson MLC about the tree removal and cockatoo habitat. A further and important point was that the Swan Valley Nyungah Community was very concerned about the destruction of trees and the life the trees support and claimed that they were not consulted about the clearing. Three experts, witnesses in mitigation, were present to give evidence but the Magistrate did not have time to hear them. However Alex had put the questions she intended to ask the witnesses on paper before the Magistrate and he read through her statement.

The Magistrate gave Alex a spent conviction and a \$300 fine with costs.

Margaret Owen appeared in court the following week, represented by solicitor, Andrew Maughan. Magistrate Paul Heaney was the presiding magistrate. After Margaret stood and pleaded guilty, Mr Maughan began explaining to Magistrate Heaney, Margaret's '*long-standing interest in the study of cockatoos which are endangered cockatoos.*' Mr Maughan continued with a short explanation of what happened on the day followed by Margaret's personal virtues. Magistrate Heaney interrupted Mr Maughan saying; '*I find a fundamental inconsistency with*

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people who are these protesters. When a protestor deliberately sets out to break the law....they can hardly come and ask the courts for a spent conviction so that there is no record recorded because they deliberately go out and break the law to get the publicity that they need. If they don't want convictions then don't do the crime'.

Magistrate Heaney had an aversion to 'those protesters deliberately seeking publicity' as evidenced by his continuing comments on this aspect. 'But she needs the publicity. They need the publicity to bring their case to the forefront. She's not going there just to sit quietly and no-one notices' he said. The thrust and parry continued with Margaret's solicitor arguing that Margaret 'attended the site as a conservationist not as a protestor.' After a little time and because of parity with Alex's sentence His Honour concluded 'She'll get one [a spent conviction] because of the parity system....but I don't know that I would have given her one. Stand up please Ms Owen - this matter will be a fine of \$300, costs of \$121.95, and there will be a spent conviction order to keep your record clean'.

-wrong answers to questions in parliament

As mature and irreplaceable trees at the Perry Lakes Landcorp site were being cut down due to poor planning and an inability to appreciate their worth, The Hon Giz Watson asked seven questions in the Legislative Council of the Minister for the Environment. The questions were asked on 21 June 2011 and some notice had been given. The first question was;

Is the Minister aware Carnaby's Black Cockatoos have a roosting site within the Perry Lakes Development?

The answer to this question was;

Advice from the Department of Environment and Conservation is that there have been six Carnaby's black cockatoo night roost sites recorded within three kilometres of the corner of Underwood Avenue and Brookdale Street.

While none are within the Perry Lakes development, one is adjacent to it.

This answer was astonishing. And it is incorrect.

The roosting site is on the corner of Underwood Avenue and Brookdale Street and the cockatoos roost in the tall trees on three of the corners of the intersection including on the Perry Lakes site.

The site is a major site which has up to 500 Carnaby's Cockatoos roosting there at the peak period.

The site is monitored in the Great Cocky Counts and DEC receives roosting numbers and flock composition records from almost every night from January to August/September. In DEC/Birds Australia records, the site is R15. In the Great Cocky Count of 4 April 2010, DEC and Birds Australia staff members were seen and photographed there as they participated in the count. The group, including a filmmaker and radio journalists stood facing the Landcorp Perry Lakes corner to count the birds flying in.

The Minister for the Environment was informed that his information was incorrect and he replied straight away by email: 'Thanks for the email.... I will check with DEC on this discrepancy in advice, with yours. Bill'. That was on 24 June 2011. Eight weeks later a reply was received from the Minister.

The Minister confirmed that the site is named R15 and the site in the Great Cocky Count records of 2006 was named as "Perry Lakes Reserve (cnr Underwood Ave and Brockway Rd)". However the GPS for the site is 1.1 kilometres away to the west. This is either an incorrect GPS or the birds may have roosted there around 2006 when the GPS reading was made.

The cockatoos roost on the Perry Lakes Landcorp site and two other corners of that intersection.

The Minister's letter concludes "I can assure you that the Government is committed to the conservation of this species and to doing so while also providing for developments necessary to meet the needs of the broader community".

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The Perth Metropolitan Region is a part of that extraordinary diversity with, - as I noted a short while ago, - over 1500 plant species. To this we can add 71 reptile species, about 140 land birds and thousands of invertebrates, not to mention the myriad fungi species. Many of these species are icons. Think of the wonderful black cockatoos, our magnificent banksias and our bizarre kangaroo paws.

What is important within this fantastic diversity is the dependency of one species on another. The interconnectedness between them is paramount, in other words how do they contribute to the ecological processes that make our systems function and continue to exist and to evolve. Even more important is the fact that they need to evolve with climate change.

We mustn't just look at the species. It is the composition of our bushland assemblage that is important. What is the distribution in time and space? How does the assemblage function? What is the role of pollinators? Are they

obligate or optional? What happens if we lose our pollinators? Disruption of plant/pollinator mutualisms can create a cascade of events affecting many species.

What is the importance of keystone species? How much do we know about their role? Even more important what don't we know?

The new Urban Bushland Council logo is a wonderfully stylised version of a bird feeding on a Banksia flower - thus symbolising the interconnectedness of birds, pollinators and feeders and flowers, as well as recognising Banksias as icons of our urban bushland. This logo informs us that our conservation goals need to be all inclusive. Let's not forget that conservation goals are not short-term. Our vision should be set for centuries rather than decades or generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted to launch the Urban Bushland Council logo. May it inspire many to help conserve our precious urban biodiversity.

Group News Group News Group News

Friends of Yellongga Regional Park

The "Adopt a Spot" was a great success at Lake Goollelal on August 11th.

About twenty highly motivated staff from the offices of Edith Cowan University turned up with their mechanical rubbish "picker-uppers" ready to assault wayward papers and even prepared to tackle the odd syringe.

Such valuable personnel couldn't be allowed to get away so easily. Gary Tate (our resident naturalist and expert on all things reptilian, fungal and avian), with thousands of pictures on his handy I-pod to make a point, took a small group of five on a short tour and rubbish pick up around Lake Goollelal.

The rest of the gang together with a few FOY members got stuck into planting over 150 young plants - taking advantage of our wet winter and the equally wet soil. A welcome morning tea was had on return of the lucky tourists. Then we all swapped and went to another site to put in another 150 plants.

FOY members scored an invitation to lunch from our new friends from Edith Cowan University and accepted the twenty mechanical rubbish pick-ups as a gift. A beneficial day all round.

Kevin McLeod

Bungendore Park Tree Planting

22 hardy souls braved foul weather on Planet Ark's National Tree Day on July 31 to plant nearly twice the number of seedlings normally attempted each year. Grown from seed collected within the park, approximately 1700 seedlings were planted within 2-and-a-half hours despite miserable conditions. Students from neighbouring Armadale Christian College planted the remaining seedlings the following week, bringing the total to 2000. Whilst previous years' plantings have focussed on revegetating former gravel pits within the park, this year the seedlings were used to revegetate a fire break that had been hastily pushed through a previously undisturbed area in order to control a bushfire last year. Bungendore Park Management Committee member and tree planting co-ordinator, Craig Nock commented, "On behalf of the committee I would like to thank those members of the local community who joined with us to restore this part of the park. For volunteers to turn up in such dreadful conditions was greatly appreciated."

This year the Bungendore Park Management Committee celebrates 30 years of caring for the park on behalf of the City of Armadale.

Miriam Stanborough

Friends of Star Swamp Bushland

The Star Swamp Bushland Reserve is looking good at the moment, with a lot of re-growth over winter and most species now bursting into flower. The Friends group has been undertaking strategic plantings this year, with degraded sites showing little signs of natural regeneration being targeted. An area near the Henderson Environment Centre has been planted out this year and, next year, a larger area along the southern boundary will be

progressively planted up. A 'corporate activity day' by staff from Karrinyup Shopping Centre and their affiliates resulted in a large patch of gazanias being weeded from the Reserve in July. This was a great interactive experience for both the Friends and the Karrinyup staff and, for many, was a first-time experience of environmental volunteering. We hope to build on this in future years.

Christine Curry

Friends of Hollywood Reserve

Our next working bee is Sunday, 11th September at the usual time of 9 am to noon with a break at 10.30 for morning tea. It will be weeding again - weeds are thriving. We should go back to this year's planting and check on the plants, clearing out the weeds from around them. The City has arranged for our sick trees to be treated and this is being done. Spraying for veldt grass has also been done and hopefully will continue on the Black Flags which multiply before your eyes. Freezias are flowering well, so feel free to pick them, and hopefully take the bulbs as well.

The Reserve is colouring up beautifully with blue, yellow and red showing up. The burnt area has a wonderful display of Sundews - they obviously enjoyed the burn. Also the Milkmaids (*Burchardia umbellata*) and Vanilla Lilly (*Sowerbaea laxiflora*) are everywhere in the burnt area. The Snail Orchids (*Pterostylis nana*) are plentiful this year, the Greenhoods (*Pterostylis vittata*) are almost over. Pink Fairy Orchids (*Caladenia latifolia*) will be out shortly. The earliest Donkey Orchids (*Diuris longifolia*) have been and gone in the northern section. We hope soon to find them in the southern section, but at the moment the quantity of weeds precludes this.

Ducks had made a nest on the ground in the northern section, fingers crossed they managed to raise their young without being hounded by loose dogs.

David & Trish Hewson



Photo courtesy Friends of Wireless Hill

Wildflower Walk at Wireless Hill Park

Sunday 11th September

Organised by the Friends of Wireless Hill and the Wildflower Society WA

Meet at the Main car park off Almondbury Road, Ardross. Bring your camera, wet weather gear and a hat. Distance is approx 1km, but the walk takes an hour to an hour and a half. The walk trail is accessible by wheelchair. Gold coin donation is appreciated. Further information: Margaret Matthews 9285 2589/ 0402105649 Kate Creed 9316 8109

Wildflower Society WA (Murdoch Branch)

Following is a list of guided Spring wildflower walks being hosted by members of the Murdoch Branch, WSWA:

Sunday, September 11 9:00am at Wireless Hill Park , Ardross
Sunday, September 18 10:00am at Orelia Reserve, Orelia
Sunday, September 25 10:00 am at Samson Park , Samson

Congratulations to

HEIDI HARDISTY

Winner of the 2011 Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award



Heidi Hardisty accepting her Award at the State NRM Conference held in Perth.

Nomination for the Award was submitted by Claire Brittain from the Friends of Claremont Lake. Claire in her letter outlined Heidi's tireless efforts in restoring important wetland habitat:

'Heidi Hardisty arrived in Australia in 2006. Within 6 months she was heavily involved at Lake Claremont (a Conservation Category Wetland and Bush Forever Site near her home).

The Friends of Lake Claremont (FOLC) is a community group formed in 2003 to rehabilitate Lake Claremont. Heidi took on the role of Co-ordinator in 2007. She was running the group almost single handed for a time. Since 2008 she has been one of 3 members of the board which has taken FOLC through a formalisation process to become a Company Limited by Guarantee and to apply for Deductible Gift Recipient Status.

Heidi was instrumental in introducing a School Community Service Program at Lake Claremont in 2009, for Year 10 students from Scotch College and Christ Church Grammar School who work at the Lake every Friday afternoon during term. She has teachers and volunteers from FOLC to help supervise these sessions. Some of the duties are planting, tree guard installation and removal, seed collection and propagation, cutting propagation, weeding and rubbish removal. This year the group have planted 3,000 seedlings on Friday afternoons. Since starting this program FOLC have been approached by local primary schools to do special projects for their environmental studies. Heidi also gives talks to schools and is involved with the Scotch College Baccalaureate program.

The Friends of Lake Claremont members meet on Sunday mornings monthly for a working bee at the Lake, planned and supervised by Heidi.

Heidi and the FOLC Board meet with the Town of Claremont (TOC) Supervisor of Parks and Gardens monthly to plan the Friends of Lake Claremont and Schools working program in line with the TOC Concept Plan for Lake Claremont.

'Clean up Australia Day' and 'National Tree Day' are coordinated by Heidi each year.

Heidi obtained the first grant of \$20,000 for FOLC which was for the Riparian Revegetation for the shore of the Lake. Since then the Board have won two others, a CAG grant of \$20,000 and a NRM grant of \$45,000 to continue this work. In order to service these grants Heidi has sourced 200 extra volunteers to plant seedlings ensuring that maximum value for money is achieved.

Heidi started 'Celebrate Lake Claremont'. This is an annual Community Awareness Day which will be funded this year by an IYV+10 grant of \$1000.

Heidi has recently completed a Bush Regeneration Course and a Native Seed Collection Course which has enabled her to teach the students, with the added benefit of them growing the seeds in their school nurseries to plant back at the Lake.

Heidi has done numerous other courses to benefit the FOLC and students including a City Bush Guides Course and is involved in environmental organisations- Conservation Council, Urban Bush Council, Carnaby's Cockatoo Collective. She is also involved in the establishment of the Bush to Beach Walk.

FOLC have been runners up in the KAB Sustainable Cities awards (Youth Legends and Community Action) for 2 successive years.

Heidi's untiring devotion to Landcare deserves recognition.'

Congratulations to

ARMADALE GOSNELLS LANDCARE GROUP

**Winner of the
2011 Urban Landcare Award**

Presented at the State NRM Conference,
recognising 13 years of conservation efforts.

Friends of Brixton Street Wetlands Garage Sale for Cockies

The Garage Sale will be on the 29th and 30 October 2011 at 87 Kenwick Road Kenwick. 8.30 to 1pm Saturday and Sunday. The beneficiaries will be the Black Cockatoo Preservation Society, Canning Mills Road Martin.

We will accept most things, except old TVs and items to do with computers, printers etc. We will take items up to Thursday prior to the Garage Sale, because it takes us a couple of days to set up and we know what is there and how it fits. We especially welcome furniture and household goods in reasonable condition. We plan to have a sausage sizzle, because that was well accepted last time. Also we will invite George the honey man to sell honey and donate a small profit from each

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jar, so we will do our best to make it interesting and something for everyone. I have heaps of frangapani plants and other bits that need to go, so plants will be welcome as well.

We can pick up goods because we have a trailer and I have a good husband who supports everything I get into.

Also we have our **Flora guided walk at Brixton St Wetlands** on Saturday 17th September at 9am. The guided walk is with Bronwen and Greg Keighery. Insect display by Otto Muller. Live Music during morning tea. Gold coin donation. This is part of the Eco walks we have in the City of Gosnells every year.

Native Grasses talks: On Tuesday 18th October we will be having author and Research Associate at the WA Herbarium, Una Bell talking on Native Grasses. Also Kate Brown from Urban Nature with display and talk on native grasses.

This will be at the "Mud Hut" Community Hall, corner Brixton St and Kenwick Road. Starting 6.30pm to 8.30pm. Light supper will be provided. Gold coin donation.

Regina Drummond

Friends of Landsdale bushland

Landsdale Park is a Threatened Ecological Community and the Friends have only hand-weeded there, rather than using spray, with the exception of on the firebreaks. The reserve is fenced and is in excellent condition, so the Friends maintain it that way by pulling the gladioli each year. However in January 2009, fire went right through the bushland. Many gladioli came up after the fire. For the last two years the City of Wanneroo has assisted the Friends with weeding, which is a great help. This year four crew from the City tackled a bad area while two Friends attacked gladioli from the firebreak. This made a big difference. The City is also tackling foxes in the park and they advertised Phylis Robertson's walk, as part of the City's spring activities. The path has been resurfaced and tiles and slabs in the path replaced. It is not possible to enter the Park at any time and we recommend you participate in a guided walk on the first Saturday of the month from 8am to 9am. It is well worth a visit as the bushland is species rich and so beautiful.

Marg Owen



Photo by M Owen

Robber fly with a feral bee photographed in Landsdale bushland.

Canning River Residents Environmental Protection Association (CRREPA) members were joined by experts from the Swan River Trust on a walk along the Canning River foreshore last month. Stephen Lloyd and Augustine Okom (Swan River Trust) talked about what has been happening with the tides over the past 7-8 months and discussed alternative ways of managing the area.

Stephen highlighted the 4 key impacts on our tidal levels:

- climate change (potential impact of 20cm since 1897, including 5.4cm since 1993)
- decadal lunar cycles (an 18.6 year cycle with a 20cm amplitude from trough to peak). We are just coming off the peak.
- daily tidal variation (averages 0.5cm)
- storm surges (frequency and impact vary) We have had an unusual year with 4 significant low pressure systems that have allowed the tides to rise and storm waves to penetrate further up the beach / foreshore.

Bow Waves, CRREPA also highlighted that increased use of water boats combined with higher tides has contributed to greater bow waves penetrating further up the shore.

If you are interested in further reading, download the following paper http://www.bom.gov.au/bluelink/summerschool/docs/Pattiaratchi_Lecture_Notes.pdf or the proceedings of City to Cape 2100 Sea-Level Rise Seminar, held in July 2011: <http://www.atse.org.au/resource-centre/func-startdown/352/> Refer pages 10+11.



Photo by Keating

CRREPA members discuss impacts of changes to tidal levels on management of the Canning River foreshore.

Key management options discussed included moving our rehabilitation efforts further back from the existing shoreline (eg behind our existing sedge strips), so that impacts of sea level rise and decadal lunar cycles are reduced, continue the practice of letting any fallen trees/shrubs remain on site, use more salt tolerant local species eg *Ghania trifida* (Sword Sedge), *Melaleuca cuticularis* (Salt Water Paperbark), Samphires (Halosarcia, Sarcocornia), Saltbushes (Atriplex, Samola, Rhagodia) and Sporobolus virginicus (Salt Water Couch), train plants for saltier environment by watering with 25% salt, then 50% salt and hardening up plants before planting out.

Based on a report by Colma Keating and Grecian Sandwell, CRREPA

Effects of drought on bushland — a personal experience

By Irene Tallentire

The frightening number of reports on the declining health of forest ecosystems in southwest Western Australia is cause for grave concern. I'd like to share observations made on our Gidgegannup property where parts of the bushland is suffering with some areas ravaged by tree death.

The property consists of a mix of different soil types; all typical of the Darling Range. The property has granite outcrops, areas of Jarrah, Marri and *Eucalyptus acedens* and one area dominated by Casuarina. Most of the bushland has a rich and beautiful understorey. The topography of the area of the tree deaths varies from flat to undulating with loamy to lateritic soils. Prior to the deaths the bush was in excellent condition with a plant species assemblage typical of the area.

Three years ago, early in the summer, the Casuarinas started to show signs of stress. They would look dead and dry; and appeared not to recover, even during the winter months. However, late last winter we realised that most of them were in survival mode, sending some green shoots again. The same observation was made for *Grevillea endlicheriana* found near granite outcrops. These plants dried off during the summer but grew again from what appeared to be dead branches.



Photo by I Tallentire

What appears to be a dead or very stressed forest of *Allocasuarina fraseriana* over unaffected understorey species. Introduced Pine trees also respond well to the drought conditions.

We were very relieved to see that Grass trees and Zamias are not showing any signs of stress, suggesting that dieback isn't the problem.

We concluded that many trees and shrubs were in a survival mode, as they appeared to recover by early spring growing green leaves on what appeared to be an otherwise miserable or dead plant. *Allocasuarina humilis* and *A. fraseriana*, along with *Hakea undulata*, *Banksia grandis*, Marri and Jarrah were mostly affected, whereas the understorey species, such as *Acacia pulchella*, *Hakea trifurcata*, Hibbertias, *Gastrolobium*, and

Orchids, are growing as usual. Curiously, the exotic pine nut trees that were planted by the previous owner of the property 20 years ago are not showing any sign of stress.

Encouragingly, areas surrounding dead *Banksia grandis* have a multitude of baby *Banksia* growing. The same phenomenon appears to apply to areas surrounding dead *Allocasuarina fraseriana*. Could it be that bigger trees with big water needs are more fragile and susceptible when there's a succession of droughts? From my observation it appears that a small amount of post winter soil moisture is enough for *Banksia* and *Casuarina* to get a start, but will they survive after a few years?

Could we be heading to an ecosystem type that is dominated by understorey species and how successful will they be without canopy cover? With the general dryness, what are the implications for fire frequency?

I'm particularly concerned about the impact this ecological change will have on animal species. Nature is opportunistic for example birds can switch to other sources of food. Along the road, just before our property, I saw a Black Cockatoo on *Hakea trifurcata*, at nearly ground level. To what extent will the increasing scarcity of tree species be compensated for by an abundance of smaller plants.

It would be interesting to study at this localised level the evolution of our bush and the repercussions of climatic change on associated wildlife.



Photo by I Tallentire

Healthy *Grevillea bipinnatifida* with the "dead" forest of Casuarinas in the background.

CARNABY'S COCKATOO FAMILY IN A WEMBLEY BACKYARD

By Marg Owen

In late July a small group of Carnaby's Cockatoos started coming into my neighbour's tipuana tree on successive days to eat the seeds. Then on 2nd August, I heard the incessant sound of a young cockatoo demanding food. Cautiously creeping outside I saw I had a family of four cockatoos in my backyard in a *Eucalyptus formanii*. I live in Wembley.

Experts have suggested that a group of four cockatoos consists of a mother and father nearly always with a begging chick and also with last year's chick. The begging chick was insistent with his begging for over an hour, and my neighbour thought the sound was some mechanical device. Males can be identified by the red eye-ring and dark beak and a male kept watch while a female had a mid-day doze.

Bushland clearing and fragmentation are the major causes of Carnaby's Cockatoos heading for extinction. This government continues to approve clearing of Banksia woodlands and in our area conservation groups have seen approval given for seven areas to be cleared. Cockatoos are starving, and their numbers are plummeting.



Photo by M Owen

This beautiful photo of a Tawny frogmouth was taken at the Perry Lakes by Marg Owen on her regular visit counting Carnaby's black cockatoos.

It was not exhibiting its cryptic pose, one would imagine because it was night-time. These birds are active at dusk (Pizzey).



Symposium Managing for Healthy Forests

Friday 21 October
8.30am - 5.00pm

At Valley View Restaurant & Reception Centre,
10481 West Swan Road, Henley Brook

Scientists, environmental managers and community will come together to discuss current research investigating effects of climate change on our struggling woodlands and forests. Featuring presentations from Prof. Nicholas Coops, Dr. Geoff Stoneman and key researchers from the Western Australian State Centre of Excellence for Climate Change, **Woodland and Forest Health, the Symposium will deliver** information and adaptive management options to improve and maintain the health of woodlands, forests and ecosystem services.

For further information and registration please visit our website www.foresthealth.com.au or subscribe to our blog at <http://blogonforesthealth.com>

2011/12 Community Grants

As part of the **2011/12 State NRM Program**, eligible groups can apply for grants of between \$10,000 and \$50,000 to help protect and conserve natural resource assets in Western Australia.

Government Agencies, Regional NRM groups and individuals are not eligible.

Applications must be received by 5 pm **9 September 2011**.

Visit the State NRM Office website for more details: [http://](http://www.nrm.wa.gov.au/grants/state-nrm-program.aspx)

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Coastwest Grants Program 2012

A total of \$1,300 000 is available in the latest round of Coastwest Grants opened in July 2011. Grants are provided to community groups to work in partnership with coastal managers in on ground coastal and marine rehabilitation, restoration and preventative conservation projects. Applications for grants of up to \$150 000 will be considered although applications for lesser amounts, particularly between \$20 000 and \$50 000, are especially encouraged. **Grant applications close at 5pm Thursday 29 September 2011.** Successful applications will be announced at the end of 2011. To download the funding guidelines and applications go to

<http://planning.wa.gov.au/4978.asp>

WEEDS SOCIETY OF WA OF INC

Presents a workshop

ADJUVANTS - Spray formulation and efficacy

21 - 22 September 2011

Venue: Theatrette, Department of Agriculture and Food, Baron-Hay Court, South Perth

International and national experts will explain adjuvant types, when to use them and many other aspects of effective use.

Cost: \$225 (\$200 for WSWA members) Volunteer/student sponsorships are available.

To register and for more information write to info@wswa.org.au

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 \$35 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

Individuals:

Supporter membership is only \$25 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

Visit to 'LOWLANDS'

Sunday 25th October plan to arrive **9.30am** for day visit to 'LOWLANDS', Lowlands Rd Mardella. Bring picnic lunch. Walks morning and afternoon. Family and friends welcome.

Travelling south down Kwinana Freeway, exit and turn left into Mundijong Rd, then turn right into Kargotich Rd and go to end at T intersection and turn right into Lowlands Rd. Go *straight ahead* until you reach Lowlands gate. Shut gate after entry, travel slowly until you see small bridge on LHS and turn left over it. Stop at the first cottage on your right.

For more information contact the UBC office on 9420 7207

All welcome

Check the Events page on the UBC website www.bushlandperth.org.au for other activities

UBC PUBLICATIONS

Perth's Banksia Woodlands - Precious and Under Threat
Proceedings of a symposium (2011)
Available from the UBC for \$25 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 \$25 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 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)
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: email ubc@iinet.net.au

Copy deadline - 15 November 2011

PERTH'S BUSHLAND BIRTHDAY & PERPETUAL CALENDAR

\$15 plus \$2 postage

Available by mail order from the UBC office.

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