

BANKSIAS

By Margaret Owen

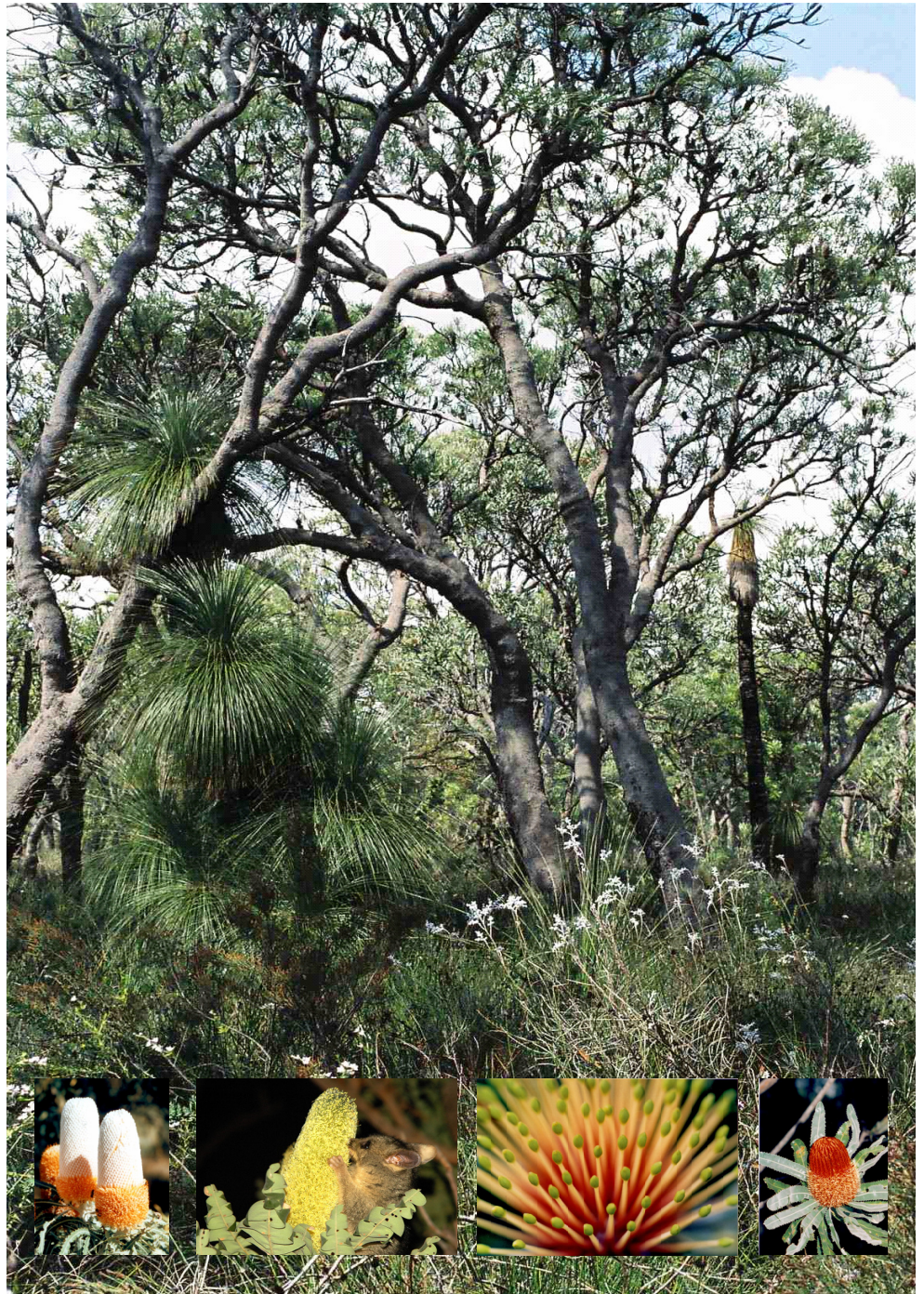
*'Their beauty is so fine; the detail
so elegant; the whole, so strong.'*

George Seddon.

Robyn Williams, journalist and science writer, called George Seddon the Professor of everything as he has held chairs in our universities in English, Philosophy, Environment and Geology.

In his book "The Old Country, Australian Landscapes, Plants and People", Professor Seddon writes that 'In south-western Australia, it is the Banksia that lights up the world.' However at the conclusion of that chapter he says that 'we will probably not be able to see banksias in their natural environment in Western Australia in one hundred years time'. He sees banksias only surviving in botanic gardens or domestic gardens, in the same way as some animals now only survive in 'prison camps'.

Photos on the right show the design of one of the new postcards distributed by the Urban Bushland Council WA. The main photo, taken by Kevin McLean, depicts Banksia woodland Floristic Community Type 20b in Bush Forever Site 321 Brickwood Reserve in Byford. The inserts show just some of the Banksias found in Perth and were donated for the postcards by Phylis Robertson, Tony Kirkby and Margaret Owen. See inside for information about the *Saving our icon - Banksias* project.



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and more...

Editorial

While there is plenty of evidence that even a single isolated tree has a great role to play in our environment it seems to be easier to remove them to give way to a new development, housing development or a larger sporting oval. When concerned groups or individuals oppose such development, they often receive a response that some lost trees will be replaced with new landscaping. It is clear that those planners seem to be ignorant of the fact that 200 - 300 years old trees cannot be replaced.

We humans pride ourselves on our technical achievements, yet we seem to find it extremely difficult to build around the existing environment, incorporating the ancient giants into new designs.

Loss of trees from our urban landscape is becoming an increasing problem. The evidence is that a growing number of concerned people have contacted the UBC office seeking help. New initiatives have become evident such as the formation of a new group - Western Region Environment Network (see page 5) and the latest involvement of a gardening celebrity, Sabrina Hahn in efforts to save an old Tuart and a multiple headed grasstree from destruction at Kwinana.

One way of changing the trends is to educate people about the values of trees and bushland in urban areas. Spread the message using the postcards you should have received with your newsletter.

On a positive note, the UBC was pleased to be involved in the process of Bush Forever Site selection for management priority under the Biodiversity Conservation Initiative funding, received by the Department of Conservation and Environment. We welcomed the opportunity to provide input into the selection of sites that should receive immediate attention. On ground works at the sites selected by DEC will be implemented within the next six months.

The Urban Bushland Council WA wishes to thank all members and supporters for their work for urban bushland protection and look forward to your involvement next year.



MAN'S INHUMANITY TO TREES

A tumbleweed could have rolled down Hay Street unimpeded because everyone was at the football grand final.

On this day the bulldozers smashed about at the northern end of Perth Airport for the future construction of a brickworks.



One old jarrah tree (not on the picture) estimated to be 340 years old stood in the area between fairways. It had probably started growing around 1666 and after the first sixty or so years had started to develop hollows. The hollows grew and were the nesting sites for Pardalotes, Sacred Kingfishers, Tree Martins, Wood Ducks, Corellas and more.

In another nearby old jarrah a pair of Kestrels was nesting. In one part weeping foliage of the jarrah supported climbing Hardenbergia and in this ball of colour Yellow-rumped Thornbills had a nest; a big ball of material with a side entrance and with a false nest built into the top of the ball.

In its submission to Westralia Airports Corporation on the Brickworks Major Development Plan, the Urban Bushland Council wrote of these old trees:

Massive old jarrah trees, especially on the Swan Coastal Plain - are now something of a rarity and they are a reminder of the character of the landscape during the pioneering years. The trees are aesthetically beautiful but in the peculiarly Western Australian fashion wherein a fairly harsh environment slowly sculpts a living monument to ecology which has large dead limbs intermingled with fresh green effusions of leaves; soaring, jagged perches jutting out above tufts of foliage: branches with hollows of all shapes and sizes for nesting; and massive, blackened, burned-out trunks. The Urban Bushland Council would regard the destruction of these trees, which are on land owned by the Australian people - to be an act of barbarism.

The writers of the Matiske Flora and Fauna Report prepared for BGC were unable to appreciate and therefore convey the outstanding habitat and heritage values of the old jarrah trees. The mention of trees with hollows gets two sentences. One sentence says of nesting birds using hollows This was particularly apparent in several larger Jarrah trees in the survey area. In the Report's conclusion, it is recommended that where feasible, maintain habitat trees for nesting bird species. Obviously that was not feasible.

The Federal Minister for the Environment, Mr Campbell, said on the weekend of clearing at the former golf course site at Perth Airport that he was confident that the 60 conditions placed on BGC in relation to approval having been given, would be met. He added 'It is after all a golf course.'

Marg Owen

END OF THE YEAR CELEBRATIONS AT Mt HENRY PENINSULA BUSHLAND

On Saturday 2 December, over 40 people came along to celebrate the beauty of bushland in our city at Mt Henry Peninsula. Beautiful weather and the lovely facilities kindly provided by the Aquinas College helped to make the day very enjoyable. Mary Gray, UBC's President, welcomed all participants, including Giz Watson, MLC and Kim Dravnieks, City of South Perth Environment Coordinator. It was particularly satisfying to see employees from Australia Post, a sponsor of the Saving our icon—Banksia project, at the event.

Jan King from Friends of Mt Henry Peninsula (photo below) gave an informative presentation on the values of the bushland and the work the Friends group is doing. Then Jan and Joe King lead the walk through the heritage listed privately owned bushland.



Photo by R Zelinova

The walk, featuring a young Osprey in his nest, was followed by a launch by Giz Watson, MLC of two new postcards. Ms Watson thanked the Friends Group for their efforts to keep the bushland for future generations. (See photo below)



Photo by R Zelinova

After the launch, all enjoyed morning tea while examining informative displays and sharing their experiences with other participants.

Summary of Jan King's presentation:

The Mount Henry Peninsula is in the Lower Canning region and is part of the Aquinas College property and owned by the Christian Brothers, who have retained it as a reserve. It is Bush Forever site 227.

The soils have been listed as Bassendean sands, but it lies on the eastern margin of the Spearwood dune system, with soils varying from Karrakatta yellows to Cottesloe browns.

Consequently, it contains a variety of vegetation associations from foreshore salt-tolerant species, those adapted to the limestone slopes and others growing on a variety of soil types on the sand ridges. To date, over two hundred species of native plants have been identified. Some of the plants recorded are scarce and others occur outside their normal range.

The Mt Henry Peninsula Management Plan was first written by the City of South Perth in 1993 and revised in 2004. The Mount Henry Peninsular Conservation Group (MtHPCG), including staff, students, parents and a number of local community members have been supported by Aquinas College, the City of South Perth, the Minister for the Environment's Community Conservation Grant (CCG), the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP), and the Dieback Working Group. This year Urban Nature established GPS reference points and mapped the weeds on the Peninsula, providing recommendations for control priorities, some of which have been addressed.

A range of projects has been undertaken. Veldt Grass control followed a fire in 1997, and has been ongoing (SALP). Establishment of an Osprey nesting platform (pictured

here), with assistance from Western Power, Land for Wildlife and Aquinas College past students followed the collapse of their nesting tree. The Ospreys have bred there over the past three years.

Rabbit population control, track maintenance, seed collecting, planting, direct seeding and monitoring have all been incorporated, along with guided walks and field studies within the school curriculum.

Rehabilitation of the slopes (CCG) to counter human impact, soil erosion and reduce fire risk has been successful in separate projects on four sites around the peninsula since 1994. The rehabilitation of school slopes close to the buildings is currently in progress and engages the students in plant propagation, planting and maintenance and the various methods of weed control. Students volunteer for Community Service – Environment every Thursday after school, and the MtHPCG meet monthly on Saturday afternoons during the school year. Of the 733 volunteer hours spent on bush care this year, 59 students have given 416 hours.

Work in the bushland is sometimes accompanied by impacts on the flora and fauna that we would rather not happen. No doubt they will continue to happen, and will continue to be addressed. But the discoveries, such as ten unlisted species found last year; the delights, such as quenda diggings now throughout the peninsula; and the mysteries, such as what little creature makes a pile of Dryandra flowers after eating out the ovary, will continue to enthral us. May it always be Bush Forever!



Photo by R Zelinova

Group News Group News Group News

Friends of Brixton Street wetlands have a new banner, which was made possible by support from the Maddington Kenwick Sustainable Community Leaders Network. Proudly displayed for the first time at our activity morning on 21st October. Friends Group members are very happy with the banner. Our activity mornings are on the 3rd Saturday of every month. We have a small walk to greet the wetlands followed by our work activities. Morning tea is provided.



Tribute to Lois MacKenzie

"In Feb 2007 it will be a year since Lois MacKenzie passed away and Friends of Brixton St would like to acknowledge the work Lois did in the Wetlands over many years and way back when we had "Bush Care Days" organised by Eco Plan - Lois together with Brian Crute, unique, dependable people, always there to help with the weeding etc. Miss you at our mornings Dear Lady - a beautiful flower in another place."

Regina Drummond

Friends of Trigg Bushland (Inc) have been busy with their new project; surveying tuarts. Progress report, reprinted from the Group's newsletter with permission, follows:

Nina McLaren, Ian Johnson and Peter Alcock have begun the daunting task of mapping and recording every tuart alive or dead in Trigg Bushland. The preparation involved developing a spreadsheet to capture and record the data. Drew Haswell of Department of Environment and Conservation and Robert Powell a member of FoTB also of DEC have assisted with the development of the recording sheet. We are keen to hear from any FoTB members who are interested in assisting with this work. Not everyone needs to know how to use a Global Positioning System (GPS). The partner need only know how to use a pencil to fill in the sheet! I have done it and I found it enjoyable.

Another exciting achievement was to have a senior class from St Mary's school become involved in the mapping and recording of information about tuarts. Nina, Ian and Peter Alcock are to be congratulated for this initiative, as are the teachers and students for their enthusiastic re-

sponses. These girls, with their teachers, mapped an area behind their school. The work was submitted for competition in Geographical Information Systems. We wish the girls every success.

St Mary's presented FoTB with a poster presentation of the work performed that we displayed at a recent *Future for the Tuarts* forum.

In the longer term, St Mary's staff and students have offered to continue assisting with the mapping work and also to become involved in other areas of bush care. Members of the Committee met with staff from St Mary's and then with City of Stirling Environmental Manager, Daniel Rajah, who was most supportive of students becoming involved in re-planting, propagation and weed control. Daniel showed a keen interest in fostering environmental values in tomorrow's adults and we appreciate his support of our initiatives.

Peter St Clair-Baker

Congratulations to

Mike Norman

From Joondalup Community Coast Care Forum

For the high commendation by Senator Ian Campbell, Minister for the Environment and Heritage
Given at the announcement of the fifth annual
Award for Coastal Custodians

Mike Norman was nominated for his long standing commitment to revegetation of his local coastal area.

The recipient of this year's award was Dr Tim Ealey, who developed a method to mass-cultivate environmentally friendly sea-grasses and mangroves in Westernport Bay in Victoria.

Northern Suburbs Branch of **Wildflower Society WA** is holding free monthly guided nature walks, starting at 8.00 am:

- 1st Saturday (odd month) Meet on Landsdale Rd approx 250 m west of Alexander Dr (Ph Phylis 9349 9105)
- 1st Saturday (even month) Landsdale Conservation Park behind Landsdale Rd approx 100 m east of Evandale Rd Darch (Ph Phylis 9349 9105)
- 2nd Saturday (odd month) Errina Rd bushland beside High view Park, meet on the eastern end of Errina Rd Alexander Heights (Ph Phylis 9349 9105)
- 2nd Saturday (even month) Koondoola Regional Bushland. Meet on Koondoola Ave opposite Burbridge Ave (Ph Elizabeth 9342 0616)
- 3rd Saturday Lake Gwelup Reserve. Meet at Scouts Hall carpark on Huntriss Rd, Gwelup (Ph Betty 9444 5640)
- 4th Saturday Star Swamp bushland. Meet at the Henderson Environment Centre at the end Grout St North Beach (Ph Christine 9447 2983)
- 5th Saturday Trigg bushland, meet in carpark between St Mary's School & Millington Reserve, Karrinyup (Ph 9448 9192)

Saving our icon - Banksia

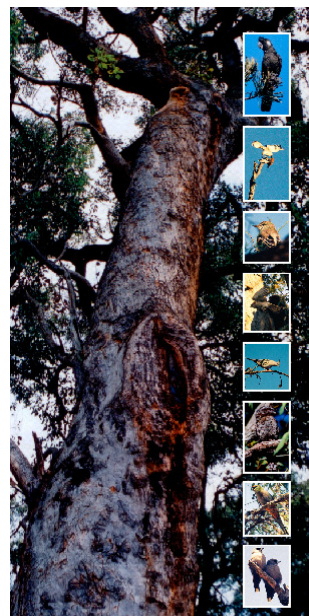
The UBC have been given a \$3300 grant through the Australia Post/Landcare Community Development Grants program earlier this year. The funds enabled printing of a poster and the two postcards, and organising a free bus trip showcasing some of the special bushland areas in Perth.

The aim of the project was to raise awareness about the biodiversity values of the Perth Region, with a special focus on an iconic species of the region—Banksias. That is why the main photo on the poster and one of the postcards shows a Banksia woodland and all the UBC activities in 2006 included visits to bushlands with different Banksia woodland communities.

The poster and the postcards are available from the UBC office or the Conservation Council office at 2 Delhi Street, West Perth.

The Australia Post/Landcare Community Development Grants differ from many other grants in that community groups have an option of putting the money towards any aspect of their environmental efforts. Other groups interested in applying for the grant should visit www.landcareonline.com or visit their local Australia Post outlet.

The UBC wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Marg Owen, Kevin McLean, Phylis Robertson, Tony Kirkby and Paul Sexton, who kindly donated photographs for the project.



New Environmental Group in Western Suburbs

In November, a concerned resident called on other residents in the western suburbs who share his concerns and at a meeting it was proposed to form a new group - "Western Region Environment Network".

The intentions of the new group are to preserve all parklands, reserves, bushland, trees and open spaces in the western region encompassing suburbs from Mosman Park to Wembley Downs through Leederville and Subiaco.

The inaugural meeting was attended by persons representing either themselves as concerned residents, members of Friends groups or members of Action groups. The group represents people who have excellent technical knowledge of the relevant environmental issues and have in their own way been active in promoting environmentally sustainable ideas through petitioning or other activities.

The Western Region Environment Network or WREN is embarking on strategies to make councils and councillors and State Government ministers more open and accountable and responsible to the community for environmental matters and also to elicit support from high profile members of the community. If necessary they are planning to run candidates for existing council positions in addition to lobbying both Federal and State politicians.

Anyone interested in obtaining more information about WREN is encouraged to contact Wayne Monks on 9245 1428 or email to wmonks@hn.ozemail.com.au

CONSERVATION WEEK 17 - 25 March 2007

To find out more how you can participate and take advantage of opportunities to promote your activity go to www.conservationwa.asn.au
Or phone (08) 9420 7266



Perth
Urban
Bushland
Fungi

For updates check the project's website

www.fungiperth.org.au

FINDING THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL REVEGETATION

Take part in an online survey and you could win \$1000 towards your tree planting or direct seeding projects.

The online survey, which will take about 15 min to complete, can be assessed on www.questionpro.com/akira/TakeSurvey?id=477080 or contact Sonia.Graham@csiro.au

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Lotterywest

Gordon Reid Conservation of Natural Heritage Grants

Applications for funding can be lodged anytime. To find out more visit the website on www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au or phone 9340 5270 or 1800 655 270

Operation Backyard—Westpac

An ongoing funding opportunity to help provide both labor and financial resources to support the successful completion of environmental projects in local communities.

For more information go to www.westpac.com.au/internet/publish.nsf/content/wiwcsi%20operation%20backyard

Education for Sustainable Development Grants

The Australian Government programme aims to support sustainable development in Australia through improved approaches to education and learning for sustainability. For guidelines and application form go to

www.deh.gov.au/education/programs/index.html

The closing date is 20 January 2007

Support the Urban Bushland Council

Join or renew your membership

Groups:

Membership with voting rights is available to groups committed to the protection of urban bushland for \$30 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

Individuals:

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

Send your name, address and cheque or postal order to:

Treasurer, Urban Bushland Council WA Inc, PO Box 326, West Perth WA 6872

Urban Bushland Council WA

Invites all its members and supporters to its

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 6 March 2007 7.30 pm

**At Conference Room, City West Lotteries House,
2 Delhi St, West Perth**

Program includes a talk by guest speaker Dr Neale Bougher, Mycologist from DEC and presentation of fungi reports from 2006 fungi season .

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

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If possible, send contribution on floppy disk in IBM format. Disks will be returned.

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