

On-ramp decision – another natural heritage disaster

On June the 23rd, the Environment Minister Dr Judy Edwards handed down her decision to uphold appeals by Main Roads and the Shire of Kalamunda against an earlier advice made in 2003 by the EPA to reject a proposal by Main Roads to construct an on-ramp between Abernethy Road and Tonkin Highway in Forrestfield.

You may well wonder why there is any point in having a *Bush Forever* policy, an Environmental Protection Policy for Swan Coastal Plain wetlands, a Register of the National Estate, or even an Environmental Protection Authority when all these protective factors have failed to prevent Main Roads, and its ally the Shire of Kalamunda, from gaining approval to have an on-ramp constructed through one of the most pristine wetland/bushland areas in the metropolitan area.

The UBC and the Friends of Perth Airport Bushland opposed this development very strongly from the time they became aware of the proposal and they had every reason to do so. And the fact that the Commonwealth Government has permitted large scale clearing of high conservation value bushland and wetlands at the airport since the on-ramp proposal came to light made arguments for its rejection even more compelling. But the Minister for the Environment apparently didn't see the contradictory elements in expressing outrage over the "environmental vandalism" occurring at Perth Airport on the one hand and then on other approving the construction of a road through one of its most intact wetlands.

We understand the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Alannah MacTiernan, did not want the on-ramp proposal abandoned and applied considerable pressure on behalf of Main Roads.

Now that Dr Edwards has approved Main Roads' proposal to construct an on-ramp, our interest has shifted to the matter of how the access road between Abernethy Road and Tonkin Highway can be constructed so as to ensure it has the minimum environmental impact – both in the construction phase and in the longer term.

The UBC and the Friends of Perth Airport Bushland insist that putting the "on-ramp" on pylons – essentially constructing a bridge – is the best option. A bridge offers the prospect of minimising the long term impact of the ramp on the immediate environs of the beautiful Abernethy Road wetland and also offers the prospect of maintaining and enhancing the fauna link between



On-ramp site wetland in August 2005.

Photo by Margaret Owen

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Editorial

Here we are half way into the 10 year implementation of *Bush Forever*, and despite the Government's optimism that the program will achieve substantial outcomes, the Urban Bushland Council is becoming skeptical about the whole government commitment to *Bush Forever*. Certainly there seems to be confusion about the real purpose of *Bush Forever* and many state agencies and local councils do not respect the conservation purpose of sites. This is clearly documented by a recent outburst of criticism and misinformation in the local press by Cr Salpietro, City of Wanneroo. Titles of the articles; "Council questions Bush Forever classifications" and "Designated land now a 'liability' speak for themselves and show remarkable unwillingness to understand the issues associated with bushland protection in urban areas. These attitudes of ignorance have been allowed to fester in the vacuum of commitment by the State.

Then there is a list of proposals for development within *Bush Forever* sites that claim to be justifiable as they follow the Government's Statement of Planning Policy 2.8: Bushland Policy for the Perth Metropolitan Region. You can read more about those on page 3. The State Government is at fault because it has failed dismally to promote *Bush Forever* as a conservation priority. It has not properly informed the community even though *Bush Forever* was endorsed as a 'whole of Government' plan back in December 2000.

Many supported *Bush Forever* in the hope that it would mean a whole government commitment towards strategic planning for urban bushland protection. But it is obvious not everybody understands why should we bother about pieces of bush in the city, while the attitude of 'there is plenty out there' replaces knowledge of the facts. Firstly they are not aware that there is not much left, in fact less than 28% of the original vegetation remains in the Perth Metropolitan Region (outside the hills area) and many vegetation types have less than 10% remaining. Secondly, Perth is one of 3 highly biodiverse cities in the southern hemisphere. No other city boasts Banksia woodlands with Jarrah, Marri and Tuart trees in suburbia. The uniqueness and significance of vegetation and whole communities of insects and animals in the south west of Western Australia are internationally recognized. More than 75% of our plants cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

However this may mean nothing to those that look at land only as a source of income. People who invest in land make a specu-

lative investment and do so at their own risk. They ignore the nature conservation values at their peril. Similarly others may invest speculatively in shares but returns can never be guaranteed. Where can people go and complain when they lose money on the stock exchange? We do not hear much complaint about such 'losses'.

But our bushland has evolved over thousands of years and is an irreplaceable natural asset, not a liability. It is part of nature and like it or not we are all dependent on nature for fresh air, water and food. We all have a duty of care to retain natural areas and their rich biota. However, as a community we clearly fail to recognize the benefits of bushland in the city.

Yet, there is evidence that for general well being, people need to be close to nature. Why do we escape to natural areas for relaxation when the hectic life in busy suburbia is taking its toll on our health? Because it makes us feel better. People need to understand this and also the fact that here in Perth the opportunities are on our doorstep and we should not be forced to travel hundreds of kilometers in search of nature.

Many also do not know that by allowing clearing of vegetation we are losing an unknown number of opportunities for discoveries of future cures for diseases not to mention resources for all sorts of productive uses. For example, only about 5-10% of our fungi has been identified and described and we still have little opportunity to study their potential benefits. Unfortunately not many studies have been done to document these benefits and in blissful ignorance of lost potential many prefer the quick benefits of making money from selling 'unused' land. Once vegetation is cleared, we cannot bring it back. It is lost forever.

There are numerous examples from all over the world illustrating how over-clearing of land creates lots of other problems, very costly to those communities to repair, yet still ignored. Clearing of forests in Bangladesh worsens seasonal flooding. Over clearing of our own wheatbelt has resulted in massive salinity of farmland. Loss of coastal vegetation leaves foreshores vulnerable to storm erosion and dune destruction.

Some parts of Perth, including the City of Wanneroo, still have the opportunity to protect large parts of our natural heritage that future generations will be able to enjoy as we do now. So instead of playing the blame game, we need to work together to find ways of protecting what is left for our benefit, for the benefit of nature itself, and for the benefit to future generations.

which could be facilitated with the establishment of a well-vegetated "greenway."

It has long been a concern of such groups as the UBC and the Friends of Perth Airport Bushland that opportunities to enhance vitally important ecological links between a string of very significant bushland reserves on the eastern side of the Swan Coastal Plain from the Swan River, through such sites as Perth Airport Bushland, Dundas Road Bushland, Hartfield Park, and the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands to the Canning River Regional Park are not only being ignored but actively destroyed.

The WA Government has an opportunity to make some small amends for a very bad environmental decision by providing funding for the construction of a bridge rather than a solid earth-work's structure and the UBC has put this proposition to relevant ministers. If the construction of the on-ramp is deemed to be so vital for Perth's road network, it can hardly be claimed it does not warrant a sophisticated design intended to minimise environmental impacts.

(Continued from page 1)

Perth Airport Bushland (Bush Forever Site 386) and Dundas Road Bushland (Bush Forever Site 319).

Main Roads is well aware of the importance of wildlife corridors and ecological connectivity – being one of the State Agencies which guided the production of *A Strategic Plan for Perth's Greenways* (Tingay and Associates, 1998). It is also well aware of the issue of road construction leading to habitat fragmentation. In a document released to inform the public of its "preferred practice" in relation to this problem entitled *Design of Fauna Underpasses* (Doc. 67-08-83, June 2002) Main Roads canvasses various designs for maintaining fauna habitat connections, including bridges, and correctly points out that "under the West Australian Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 and Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 there is an obligation to protect fauna and flora where possible." The on-ramp site happens to be Perth Airport bushland's closest link to Dundas Road bushland and there is undoubtedly some existing interchange of fauna such as small birds, bandicoots, reptiles, and amphibians

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT GOING OVERBOARD

We all love our white sandy beaches and our coast. But it seems we'll love them to bits.

The Urban Bushland Council is appalled by the range and extent of development proposals, which claim to enhance people's enjoyment of the coast, but destroy unique natural areas. Outrageous is the recently released Concept Plan 'Cape Peron' that includes a major marina cut into the Point Peron peninsula, residential and tourist/ mixed use development spreading over most of the peninsula, destroying the ancient natural environment and completely ignoring the environmental values of the area that were recognised by the State Government in *Bush Forever*.

Point Peron bushland, Bush Forever Site 355, is one of the very few remaining examples of what once covered the coast of the Perth Region. Therefore the Government should follow the recommendation to manage this bushland as part of the Rockingham Lakes Regional Park. There is plenty of scope to 'develop' or redevelop without land clearing.

If we seriously consider the impacts of climate change and associated changes to coastal processes, the highly dynamic character of this part of the coast, the ongoing water quality problems associated with marinas and canal developments; and the risk of acidification, the Environmental Protection Authority would reject these kinds of developments in principle as being totally environmentally unacceptable. Canal developments in NSW are banned because of acid sulphate soils.

The Urban Bushland Council finds it outrageous that 5 years after government's endorsement of *Bush Forever*, there are still developers that completely ignore its purpose and that we have a Government that will even entertain proposals that will have such an enormous impact on a regionally significant area zoned for 'Parks and Recreation'.

Then there are all the proposals within foreshore management plans released for public comment over the past few months. Plans for Burns Beach foreshore, Two Rocks-Yanchep foreshore or the recently released Jindalee foreshore management plan, all include proposals for grassed and landscaped areas within *Bush Forever* sites! Some within vegetation in lesser condition, but some proposing to clear vegetation in Very Good-Excellent condition. Then there are proposals for carparks within the *Bush*

Forever site, which if implemented would require major earthworks changing the dune landscape. If that is not enough, a drainage sump to collect water from the adjoining development site seems to be regarded as an appropriate addition to a conservation reserve, and a series of access tracks to the beach, in some areas boardwalks every 100-150 metres are being proposed. And finally, to enable people to enjoy the ocean views, dual paths along the foreshore within the foredunes are suddenly fashionable.

Finally, there is the latest proposal for a dual boardwalk along the foredunes from Trigg to Scarborough. City of Stirling is promoting this proposal as their way of protecting the dune vegetation from expected increase in visitors at these beaches during the coming surf life saving championships.

What is really alarming is the justification being used for inappropriate developments: **Draft** Statement of Planning Policy 2.8: Bushland Policy for the Perth Metropolitan Region. The Urban Bushland Council has repeatedly warned the Government about the weakness of the SPP when it was released for public comment last year. It is full of contradictions and ways of 'getting approval' for developments in *Bush Forever* sites. The above proposals are coming all too soon vindicating our concerns.

The Government needs show its serious commitment to conserve and manage all Bush Forever sites in an interconnected reserve system. It needs to work harder on getting the message across that Bush Forever Sites only conserve the bare minimum of our rich natural heritage and are a "NO GO" for development.

There is still opportunity to comment on two of the above mentioned projects:

Boardwalk proposal at South Trigg Beach
Submissions close 30 September 2005

Lot 12 Marmion Avenue, Jindalee Foreshore Management Plan
Submissions close 18 October 2005

If you would like more information about any of these please
contact the UBC office on 9420 7207
or email to ubc@inet.net.au

BUSHLAND AREAS UNDER THREAT

- WEBSTER ROAD BUSHLAND, FORRESTDAL
- BUSHLAND AT KEWDALE FREIGHT TERMINAL
- PERTH AIRPORT (BFS 386)
- CONSERVATION CATEGORY WETLAND AT BERINGARRA AVE, MALAGA
- PART OF BFS 293 (NOWERGUP)
- BURNS BEACH FORESHORE
- TRIGG BEACH BUSHLAND (BFS 308)
- ASHTON RD BUSHLAND, BULLSBROOK (BFS 88)
- BFS 344 (BANJUP)
- BANJUP BUSHLAND (BFS 263)
- BUSHLAND ADJACENT TO THOMSONS LAKE (BFS 391 & BUSHLAND ALONG HENDERSON RD, MUNSTER)
- COASTAL STRIP FROM WILBINGA TO MINDARIE (BFS 397)
- ALL BUSH FOREVER SITES IN THE **NEGOTIATED PLANNING SOLUTION** IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY
- KIARA TAFE SITE
- BOLD PARK (BFS 312)
- KEN HURST PARK (BFS 245)
- NORTH LAKE (BFS 244)
- UNDERWOOD AVE (BFS 119)
- POINT PERON (BFS 355)
- FARRINGTON ROAD BUSHLAND
- JANDAKOT AIRPORT (BFS 388)



Perth Urban Bushland Fungi

GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS OF PHASE 1

31st August marked the end of Phase 1 of the Perth Urban Bushland Fungi project. It is time to look back at what has been achieved during the past 18 months of the project.

The project aimed to raise awareness about the role of fungi in our ecosystems and increase the capacity of the community to confidently identify fungi and conduct surveys of fungi in bushlands. Another objective was to collect baseline data on fungi for a number of bushland areas and integrate fungi into biodiversity management strategies. It was seen as an ambitious project but not only were the broad objectives met, the stated outcomes for Phase 1 were exceeded.

Community involvement and awareness

One of the most significant achievements of PUBF project was the large number of people that participated in the activities and the generosity of a number of volunteers that helped the project by organizing and promoting their local activity, helping with the specimens at the WA Herbarium, volunteer leaders at each fungi activity and the enormous contribution by John Weaver by running the project's website.

At 68 events held during the 18 months of Phase 1, more than 2000 people attended, many actively contributing towards the environmental outcomes. Participants included not only naturalists, but members of the general public who had never before attended such an activity in their local bushland, university students and lecturers and a number of officers working in bushland management and employed by local councils or other government departments. A Photographic competition organized during the 2005 fungi season attracted a number of people with over 100 entries (see page 5).

The increasing interest in fungi is also evident by the increasing number of people visiting the project's website, by mid September 2005 after only 3 months in operation, over 3,500 hits were recorded.

Large media coverage of the PUBF project activities by newspapers and newsletters of several organisations reflect the genuine interest in fungi. ABC radio 6WF invited the project's Mycologist to one of its programs on two occasions. The talk back session attracted more callers than could be answered on the show.

Environmental achievements

During Phase 1 almost 2000 fungi were recorded. Of those, over 300 specimens were processed and lodged at WA Herbarium, including some new records for Western Australia (e.g. the decomposer fungus *Mycena nargan*) and some new species to science (e.g. *Inocybe violaceocaulis*, which is a beneficial partner of eucalypts). Other significant species include *Tubaria furfuracea* that is abundant in urban bushland but was not identified previously and *Rickenella fibula*, which is a micro-habitat fungus restricted to moss beds.

One of the major outcomes of this project is the inclusion of fungi in a management plan of bushland in addition to consideration of flora and fauna and also that the management strategies consider fungi at all levels. This management plan, Draft Bold Park Management Plan 2005-2010, is the first to do so and was recently released for public comment.



Dr N Bougher, the PUBF Mycologist, presented Dr J Edwards, Minister for the Environment; Science, with a copy of PUBF Fungi Field Book as one of the project's significant outcomes



Dr J Edwards, Minister for the Environment; Science presented John Weaver with a Certificate of Appreciation for his enormous contribution to the PUBF project at the launch of the PUBF website on 3 July 2005.

Photo by M. Owen

Photo by M. Owen

The first ever inventories of fungi have been prepared for 14 bushland reserves each representing a different vegetation community on the Swan Coastal Plain. Data for another 10 reserves will be processed. This is a major contribution towards our knowledge of fungi in the Perth Region. The reports provide geo-referenced photographs of all fungi collected in the reserve and aerial photos of the collection sites.

Information on fungi diversity for selected Bush Forever Sites was also included in the Department of Environment's Reference sites database.

Significant increase in the number of fungi specimens and detailed data at the WA Herbarium, more than doubling the State collection to over 20,000 permanent voucher specimens, has been achieved as a result of field work during this project and also with the addition of CSIRO's fungi Herbarium to the WA Herbarium, a transfer that was triggered by this project.

Other significant achievements

- PUBF publications including the **PUBF Field Book**, an innovative self-managed field book, and **PUBF Fungi Kits**, 6 articles published in scientific journals and books, 4 scientific conference papers, 4 scientific on-line publications, 4 scientific reports, 3 science manuals and 3 educational posters
- The PUBF website www.fungiperth.org.au is being visited regularly by a large number of people.
- The project is being used as a model for bushlands in other regions of WA and Australia.
- A number of new partnerships formed. A very important one is the support and provision of infrastructure by WA Herbarium for the project. The University of Western Australia as well as the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority contributed to the success of the project by contracting the services of the project's Mycologist and the Community Support Officer. The project team worked closely with the Perth Biodiversity Project team.

THE 2005 WEST AUSTRALIAN FUNGI PHOTO-GRAPHIC COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION

Over 100 fungi photographs were entered into the inaugural Fungi Photographic Competition announced at the start of the 2005 fungi season. Entries were displayed at the Henderson Environmental Centre at the Star Swamp Nature Reserve (Groat Street, North Beach) on 27th and 28th August 2005. Awards were announced and presented at 4.30 pm on the Sunday.

There were five categories in the competition:

1 *Fungi in their natural habitat*

Out of 54 entries in this category, the photo of *Aleurina* sp. by Kirsten Tullis was the winner.

2 *Nature's Fungal Art*

Twenty six photos were entered in this category, the winner being Peter Foss with his photograph 'Chromium' (Rooting Shank Fungus).

3 *Fungal relations* (i.e. interactions with fauna/flora/fungi)

Out of 18 entries in this category the winner was Joe Froudust with his photo 'Mycological Motel'.

4 *Fungi Theme/Story* (set of 3 prints on one mount having a theme or telling a story)

Winning photo was entered by Jolanda Keeble.

5 *Open Youth* (under 17 years of age)

There were no entries received in this category.

The judges remarked at the presentation ceremony that all entries were of a high standard showing initiative and imagination in both the choice of subject and the presentation of each photograph. The technical aspects of the photography also drew favourable comment. Often the best features of a fungus were particularly difficult to highlight while still maintaining 'balance' in the image. The overall high standard of the entries made judging difficult, however a 'winning' photograph was selected in each of the four categories with several photographs 'highly commended'. They can be viewed on the PUBF website www.fungiperth.org.au.

The photographic exhibition and award ceremony was hosted by the 'Friends of Star Swamp' as part of their 20th anniversary celebration. Mary Gray, President of the Urban Bushland Council, presented the winners with a certificate and a beautiful fungal print from the collection of the noted botanical artist, Katrina Syme. The competition and award ceremony was followed by a barbecue as part of the Anniversary Celebrations for the "Friends" group.

The success of PUBF Phase 1 is due to enormous support from a small army of volunteers. All the dedicated leaders, tireless enthusiasts that helped out regularly at the Herbarium and the project's webmaster John Weaver. And let's not forget that most of the project management has been conducted by volunteers.

Their efforts are gratefully acknowledged.



Aleurina sp by Kirsten Tullis



Chromium (Rooting Shank Fungus) by Peter Foss



Mycological Motel by Joe Froudust

IS THERE GOING TO BE PUBF PHASE 2 ?

YES! The project management team is pleased to announce that Lotterywest is supporting the project further by providing community-support funding for Phase 2. So, fungi enthusiasts can look forward to some more action in 2006.

In addition, the Urban Bushland Council has been informed that CALM is developing a new Mycologist position.

More Clearing at Perth Airport

Over the past several months Westralia Airports Corporation (WAC) has cleared another 37 hectare site at Perth Airport east of Horrie Miller Drive and carried out a major diversion of the Southern Main Drain. This follows upon the clearing of around 35 hectares of high conservation value bushland during the summer of 2003/2004. But the Commonwealth has allowed the WAC to carry out these latest clearing operations without any public environmental assessment process. Most of area was not intact bushland but it did have significant fauna habitat values. It provided habitat for large numbers of bandicoots and many species of birds that are seldom seen in suburban areas. An area of seasonal wetland is also being filled despite the fact that it contains the Priority Species water plant *Villarsia submersa* (pictured below).



Photo by Kevin McLean

And although the clearing works appear to have impinged on areas listed on the Register of the National Estate and areas that have been included in *Bush Forever*, the Commonwealth apparently took the view that the works would not involve a "significant environmental impact."

Under the *Airports Act (1996)* the Airport lessee is obliged to produce a Major Development Plan, which involves a 90 day public comment period, if the lessee proposes to undertake a development that is likely to have a "significant environmental impact." The lessee is also required to produce an MDP if a proposed development involves the construction of a new building "where: the building is not wholly or principally for use as a passenger terminal; and the cost of construction exceeds \$10 million or such higher amount as is prescribed." If the site has been cleared for construction purposes, how is it that these site works have not been included in a Major Development Plan relating to the total construction process?

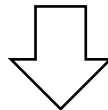
But of more concern to the Friends of Perth Airport Bushland is the Commonwealth's disgraceful disregard for the environmental significance of the remnant natural areas at Perth Airport. The diversion of the Southern Main Drain has seen the waters of the drain taken along a deep, newly-excavated channel that runs in a line directly abutting a magnificent linear wetland that was once part of the huge Five-Mile-Swamp. Five-Mile-Swamp, which was a very prominent feature in early maps and aerial photographs of the area, has been largely destroyed by drainage works undertaken over the past few decades. For such a drainage project to be deemed to have "no significant environmental impact" is completely unacceptable and it is indicative of an environmental protection regime that is quite dysfunctional. If the Commonwealth Government has the intention of entrenching Third-World standards for flora and fauna conservation in Australia it could use Perth Airport

as its showcase. It is one of the few areas in Perth where it claims to have complete control over environmental protection and its record is deplorable.

And in yet another proposal involving bushland clearing, Westralia Airports Corporation hopes to lease 32 hectares of land in Hazelmere to BGC for the purposes of constructing and operating a brickworks. This proposal is now the subject of a Major Development Plan that will be out for public comment over the next three months. It is our understanding the preparation of the plan did not even involve a flora survey of the proposed site – even though a portion of it is in *Bush Forever*. The bushland on the site is in variable condition – from very good to quite degraded but there are a great many mature trees around the golf course area which would also help give the site strong habitat values for a range of fauna species. This proposal is being opposed vigorously on public health grounds but it should also be understood that it involves further losses of remnant bushland and fauna habitat.



Photo by Kevin McLean



This Banksia woodland was cleared to make room for the new Woolworth's distribution park in summer 2003/2004.



Photo by Margaret Owen

Perth Airport invited public comments on the

Draft Major Development Plan— Clay Brick Manufacturing Plant

Prepared under the *Airports Act 1996* and Preliminary information under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Comments need to be sent to Westralia Airports Corporation
PO Box 6 CLOVERDALE WA 6985

by 16.00 WST **30 November 2005**

Group News Group News Group News

The year 2005 saw the **Friends of Baigup Wetlands** and **Friends of Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary** working together in a joint venture, which was very successful. Also it gave the members an opportunity to understand and identify the bird life and their role in our ecosystem. A special appreciation and acknowledgement must go to our mentor Eric Singleton who spent countless hours passing on his experience and knowledge to our members.

The bad news is the presence of acid sulphate soils. The Sanctuary is contaminated and its ecosystem is in danger of dying. Now, using all aquatic science experts to provide a method on how best to manage the environmentally sensitive area, a preliminary report revealed high levels of nutrient and metallic contaminated the water and the lake bed. The likely causes for the pollution were contaminated surface runoff and groundwater from the old tip.

Friends group would take this opportunity to thank all those experts for their strong support and encouragement with the immediate problem.

A petition was circulated by the Friends of Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary to provide a disability boardwalk, a gazebo and a drinking fountain. They collected 816 signatures within 4 weeks. The City of Bayswater supported the idea, but the boardwalk will not be installed at Bird Sanctuary until the acid sulphate soils are under control. The gazebo will be temporarily located in the Riverside Gardens West.

The Friends planted in excess of 7000 plants, which help to formalized the Butterfly Patch, Meandering Bird Flight Path and the Melaleuca's along the north side of the water course.

Finally, with the help from our sponsors we are now able to provide long sleeve shirts and caps each with the group's logo to all our Friends group members. The controllers are in bright orange colour to make identification easy (see photo below).



Coming events

9th October and 6th November - Field Day at the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary Meet at 9.00am at the river end of King William Street, Bayswater. We will do general housekeeping.

27th November Field Day at Hinds Reserve, Bayswater. Meet at 9.00am near the Garrett Road Bridge. We will do monitoring, seed collecting and discuss what we have achieved during year 2005 and reset goals for year 2006.

Morning tea supplied and remember your safety gear plus water.

30th November Xmas Dinner

At 6.30 pm at a venue to be arranged.

Harry Bastow

Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland

It wasn't long before I was transfixed, gazing in wonder at some prehistoric looking bugs, which I have since found out to be nymphs of a species of tree hopper. They are common in Underwood Avenue and live on tree trunks. One of their amazing features is that they have two very long 'frayed' waxy filaments coming out of their posteriors. The bugs either hold the filaments flat to the tree trunk or they can snap them up vertically, so that they look like antennae. I believe that predators may mistake the rear ends of the bugs for their heads and in striking at the wrong end the bugs are then able to escape. Paul Zborowski, writing in New Scientist noted;

'This mimicry is further enhanced by the bug's habit of moving either sideways like a crab, or backwards to complete the deception. As well as all this protection, when all else has failed, it is capable of very fast, long jumps that leave the predator bemused.'



Photo by Margaret Owen

As I watched the tree trunk, another type of bug approached, walking down the Jarrah trunk. It disturbed two little bush cockroaches who came out from under the bark and then retreated and it walked slowly past the tree hopper bug without attacking it.

A Collared Sparrow-hawk flew by, and I listened to its silent flight. When it has babies, they will be almost as noisy as human babies and will learn, with time, to be secretive and silent.

Greenhood Orchids have nearly finished flowering and the leaves and early buds of Spider Orchids are about. Intriguing varieties of fungi are present after the rains.

If I had \$80,000,000 or more, I would buy Underwood Avenue bushland from the University of Western Australia. As the University proceeds with its plans for destruction of the bushland, we, the community may find we have come to the end of the road and it will be too late to stop the bulldozers.

I call on the Government of Western Australia and the University of Western Australia to meet. It is far too late in our history to be still thinking that we can accommodate conservation with bushland destruction for motels, restaurants and houses.

Margaret Owen

Bungendore Park Management Committee invites you to

BUNDENDORE BUSH BREAKFAST

Sunday 6th November 2005 7.30-8.30am

Admiral Road, Bedfordale

Be an early bird and listen to the Black Cockatoos and songs of other birds while enjoying a mouth-watering fully cooked breakfast, fruit, cereals etc. followed with a guided bush walk at 8.45am.

Book by 2nd November by phoning Jim/Elaine 9497 3353 or Irene 9399 3386 Cost : \$5.00

Group News Group News Group News

Quinns Rocks Environmental Group celebrates its birthday on the World Environment Day and this year marked the 20th anniversary of the start of local action for conservation.

Forty members and supporters gathered on June 24 to celebrate the special occasion. We filled the Seaview Cafe on Ocean Drive, Quinns Rocks, to mark this achievement and renew friendships at our anniversary dinner. People came from as far afield as Albany (former committee member Natalie Reeves and family). They included past and present members involved in campaigns to stop Mindarie Tip and save local bushland, looking after finances and organising meetings and taking part in bushland surveys and bushcare days. We caught up on old times, pondered the future and shared in the cake, in the form of a butterfly and chenille honeymyrtle, our emblem.

Recent bushcare days have involved planting to rehabilitate degraded areas of local bushland. Tube stock planted out by volunteers was grown from locally collected material.

In June, hundreds of plants were planted in the coastal dunes off Longbeach Promenade, Mindarie. Weed species are being removed, public access regulated and local species planted in to enhance the area as part of the 'Hands On For Our Coast' project, involving the City of Wanneroo and QREG, and supported by a Coastwest grant.

About fifteen people helped plant out near the Banksia woodland off Tapping Way, in Gumblossom Reserve, Quinns Rocks on July 10. Students from the local Quinns Rocks Primary School also lent a helping hand.

In August, some 31 volunteers including local girl guides took part in planting in the coastal reserve off Quinns Road - see picture below.



In our bushcare efforts we limit planting to degraded sites with little indigenous vegetation. In sites in better condition the focus is on controlling weeds to help native plants regenerate.

Next Bush Care by the Beach activity will be held on Sunday 9th October at Gumblossom Reserve, Quinns Rocks. Meet at 8.00am on the carpark off Tapping Way, Quinns Rocks.

Australian Association of Bush Regenerators

Invites anyone interested to their

2005 Forum

Feral Animals in Natural Areas —Cat Control Case

Presenters to be announced

This forum will provide an update on feral animal management in natural areas, including some of the latest research and programs using cat control as a case study.

Wednesday 9 November 2005 at 7:30pm
at

Kings Park Administration Centre
Fraser Ave, Kings Park

Wetlands Conservation Society (Inc) is concerned that the Government is slow to follow up on its commitments with major delays in endorsing the new Wetlands EPP and the failure to list additional nominated Ramsar wetlands. In addition, despite work proceeding on the construction of stage 7 of the Roe Highway through Ken Hurst Park in Leeming, and that some plants have been translocated in an effort to save as many specimens as possible of the rare grand spider orchid, the promised offsets for the loss of Banksia woodland and DRF has not eventuated. The land at Frazer Road that was earmarked as an offset was devastated by fire last summer.

Even more concerning is the Government's failure to announce a timetable to delete stage 8 of the Roe Highway. This is planned to run between North and Bibra Lakes, through wetlands and pristine bushland. Because of the Government's hesitation the road lobby has resumed its campaign to build Roe 8, claiming that it can be made "environmentally friendly". The WCS continues to oppose stage 8 because it is no longer necessary as a result of the Government's Freight Strategy.

Another cause for concern is that more than 20 years after the Farrington Road Blockade in 1984, the City of Cockburn has revived the idea of building a dual carriageway through the Beeliar Regional Park between Murdoch University and North Lake. Although the EPA has rejected this proposal on two previous occasions, the City of Cockburn has employed a road safety auditor to justify its case for the second carriageway. The City failed to consult most of the key environmental and heritage stakeholders and has based its proposal solely on perceived safety issues. It rejected a request from the North Lake Residents Association for traffic calming rather than road widening. The WCS has written to the EPA to object to the City of Cockburn's proposal and the process that they have followed.

Finally, there is a proposal for a marina that would destroy more than half of Bush Forever Site 355 and would greatly impact on Lake Richmond.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

FRIENDS OF STAR SWAMP & QUINNS ROCKS ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

For 20 years of action for conservation of urban bushland

COMMUNITY WATER GRANTS

The Australian Government's Community Water Grants are grants of up to \$50,000 to help local community organisations save, reuse or improve the health of their local water courses.

Grants are available for projects related to:

- Water saving/efficiency
- Water reuse/recycling
- Improving surface and groundwater health

To find out more or obtain an application form, visit

Www.communitywatergrants.gov.au

Or phone Freecall 1800 780 730 and ask for a form to be posted to you.

APPLICATIONS CLOSE 4 OCTOBER 2005

Legal Liability of Councils for Spraying of Chemicals

Giz Watson MLC (Member for North Metropolitan Region) has received legal opinion in relation to the potential liability of Local Government Authorities when spraying pesticides.

A four page document, entitled '*Legal opinion in relation to the potential liability of Councils for Spraying Chemicals*', provides a brief overview of the legal framework for the application of chemicals by LGAs and their contractors including potential legal liability considerations.

The document is available from Giz Watson's website
www.giz-watson.org

Bushland Weeds: A practical Guide to their Management

By K Brown and K Brooks, published by the Environmental Weeds Action Network, Perth RRP \$38.50

The book covers the biology and known control methods of serious weeds on the Swan Coastal Plain and Jarrah forest, including case studies.

The publication can be purchased through the Wildflower Society of WA at Perry House, Perry Lakes Dr and Oceanic Dr, Floreat on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10.00 am and 2.30 pm or by phoning (08) 9383 7979.

Fumitory Bio Control Program

Dr Aaron Maxwell from CSIRO is seeking information on what might presently be attacking Fumitory species. He is starting to develop a Fumitory bio control program and therefore is asking people to take a close look at this weed over the coming weeks and to contact him to report instances of possible attack from pests and diseases.

There are three main Fumitory species in Western Australia *Fumaria capreolata* (White or Climbing Fumitory), *F. muralis* (Wall Fumitory) and *F. densiflora* (Narrow-leaved Fumitory).

To forward reports or to request further information contact:

Dr Aaron Maxwell
Post Doctoral Fellow in Plant Pathology
CSIRO Entomology and CRC for Australian Weed Management
Private Bag 5
P.O. Wembley WA 6913
Ph (08) 9333 6159
Email: Aaron.Maxwell@csiro.au

When is a remnant too small?

Dave Coats (CALM) presented a fascinating talk at the AGM of the Conservation Council on 28 July. Results of research hot off the press indicate that even individual isolated trees in paddocks are important for the movement of genetic material across the landscape and should be kept. Research being carried out in the wheatbelt has implications for application of the clearing principles under new clearing regulations. Individual trees play a significant role in biodiversity conservation especially in a fragmented landscape as we have on the Swan Coastal Plain.

We know that about 75% of the ~8000 flora taxa of the South West Botanical Province is endemic. There is evidence that Banksia species have been present in WA for at least 50 million years! We have an incredibly ancient flora with many relict species, a large number have a geographically restricted range, many have existed in isolated fragments for a long time, and there are an unusually large number of rare plants.

The work in the wheatbelt is part of a collaborative research project involving CSIRO Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research, Land & Water Research, the Queensland Government and CALM's WA Herbarium. Dave Coats and his colleagues worked on pollen movement in 20 populations of *Eucalyptus wandoo* and *Calothamnus quadrifidus* in the Dongolocking catchment.

For Wandoo, which is insect and bird pollinated, up to 90% pollen came from another population more than 1 km away. This

finding was unexpected. In one site where there were just 4 Wandoo plants, the gene flow was greater than 1 km (ie the pollen was carried by pollinators > 1km). Thus there was significant movement of pollen across paddocks for Wandoo suggesting that isolated paddock trees are probably extremely important in maintaining small populations and as conduits for gene flow across the landscape.

However in smaller populations there was a dramatic reduction in seed production despite the gene flow. This is an effect of inbreeding and there is less genetic diversity in smaller populations.

For *Calothamnus quadrifidus*, which is almost entirely bird pollinated, less pollen comes in from outside the population in small remnants. Birds don't like moving across big paddocks without shrub cover.

Seed production is related to population size, with a threshold for population size of 100- 200 plants. Eastern States research found similar population thresholds.

The implication of this finding is that small and isolated populations are not good for seed collection for revegetation work. There is a need to focus on the *both the size of a remnant as well as the provenance*. A tiny population closest to a revegetation site is likely to have a high degree of inbreeding and unviable seed as well as poor seed set.

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

UBC meetings

Monday 3 October 2005 at 7.00 pm

Speaker: Dr Geoff Woodall, Department of Agriculture

BUSH FOODS - NEW DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH IN WA OF BUSH FOOD PLANTS

Australian Societies for Growing Australian Plants Seminar

Free public "A J Swaby Address"

Held at Music and Drama Centre, Hale School Wembley Downs

Tuesday 1 November 2005 at 7:30 pm

Speaker: Steve Appleyard, Department for the Environment: Acid Sulphate Soils

Held at the National Trust building, 4 Havelock St, West Perth

All interested are welcome.

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

Editor: Renata Zelinova

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

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PO Box 326 West Perth WA 6872

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

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

Copy deadline - 15 November 2005

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