

The Urban Bush Telegraph

A crossroads for Carnaby's cockatoo, a flagship species on the brink

Few images more poignantly symbolise the plight of Perth's endangered bushland than that of a small flock of Carnaby's cockatoos wheeling through the sky, calling to one another as they thread their way between single stands of trees, and over roads and sprawling houses, seeking out the remaining patches of vegetation in which to feed and roost.

The Carnaby's cockatoo, with its graceful, loping flight and unforgettable lilting call, miraculously survived one of the most rapid land clearing events of the 20th century, which led to the creation of Western Australia's wheatbelt and the city of Perth, but also to the loss of more than 80,000km² of the cockatoo's feeding and breeding grounds. Previously labelled a pest, in more recent years the Carnaby's cockatoo has become well known and loved by the general public. Their social life can be observed readily among the backyards and local bushlands of Perth, as bonded pairs spend long moments preening one another and flocks jostle and play among the trees.

However, all signs point towards a looming crisis. Birdlife's annual Great Cocky Count shows a general decline in the numbers of Carnaby's cockatoos counted on the Swan Coastal Plain, and black cockatoo experts agree that these wondrous birds are in serious trouble, largely due to habitat loss and fragmentation, but also due to an increasing myriad of other alarming threats. Carnaby's cockatoos have been found to feed from some 87 species of native and introduced vegetation, showing some tolerance to changing resource availability, but their habitat range continues to shrink

as clearing continues on the Swan Coastal Plain which forces them to spend more time traveling and expending precious energy searching for adequate food sources.

Despite the grim statistics about the Carnaby's predicted future if current practices continue unchecked, the WA government has shown little commitment to turning things around for one of the State's most recognised endemic birds. The Perth-Peel region's 'Green Growth Plan', which, if implemented in its recently proposed state would lead to the reduction of up to 50% of the area's Carnaby's cockatoo population, was described by Environment Minister Albert Jacob as "the absolute best opportunity for this species" but did little to cloak the government's apparent intentions to drive development forward at the expense of wildlife and the environment. Meanwhile, funding for state environmental agencies and non-profit organisations fighting to protect black cockatoos has steadily trickled down over recent decades resulting in these groups becoming severely hamstrung and unable to effectively implement species recovery plans.

Several years ago, a paddock fire led to the loss of many Carnaby's nesting hollows in one of the most important northern wheatbelt breeding areas, highlighting the instant impact fire can have on a cockatoo population, as well as the dependence of the birds on the management (again, poorly funded) of breeding sites on privately held land. Adding to their woes, in recent years, a mysterious paralytic

syndrome specific to Carnaby's cockatoos has been discovered on the Swan Coastal Plain, leaving affected birds unable to walk or indeed to survive if not for the chance rescue of a passer-by, and intensive treatment by specialist veterinarians. Vehicle strike is also a major threat to black cockatoos alongside an explosion in the number of cars, with at least a hundred Carnaby's cockatoos rescued from the streets of Perth and its surrounds every year. Less than half of these injured birds make it back out the wild.

It is therefore critical that all remaining Carnaby's feeding, roosting and breeding habitat is protected, to enable the cockatoos to maintain, and eventually increase their population numbers to sufficiently robust levels that they can survive the pressures of other threats and stochastic events such as fire, disease and vehicle strike, which can knock smaller fragmented populations off the face of the earth. 'Strength in numbers' has never been a more important concept for the Carnaby's cockatoo.

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Editorial

The Urban Bushland Council has long been deeply concerned about the decline in the Carnaby's cockatoo population and continues to advocate for the following actions to be taken without further delay.

Clearing of Perth's Banksia woodlands, critical Carnaby's cockatoo habitat, must cease and federal protection granted to the woodlands as a Threatened Ecological Community.

The Banksia woodlands TEC nomination has been assessed and the proposed listing is currently with the federal Minister for the Environment, due for a final decision by the end of October 2016.

A commitment must also be made by the State government to complete the Bush Forever plan, the best strategic plan we have for the conservation of Perth's native vegetation and which the Urban Bushland Council considers 'unfinished business'. All Bush Forever sites must be secured as A class reserves for the purpose of conservation with their management properly funded. Concurrently, a significant revision of the first draft of the Green Growth Plan is needed, to address its inadequacies in protecting Carnaby's cockatoo habitat, and to specify revegetation management of the northern pine plantations in order to prevent a crash in cockatoo numbers.

Eight months out from the state election, we stand at a critical crossroads in the history of the Carnaby's cockatoo. It has never been more important for the future of this iconic species that the next elected government commits fully to urban bushland protection and leads us towards a brighter future for Perth's black cockatoos.

AVAILABLE UBC PUBLICATIONS

Perth's Bush Forever Report Card

Proceedings of a conference (December 2012)

Available through the UBC website:

<http://www.bushlandperth.org.au/resources/publications>

Perth's Banksia Woodlands - Precious and Under Threat

Proceedings of a symposium (2011)

Available from the UBC for \$20 plus \$3 postage.

Endangered Black Cockatoos in Western Australia

Proceedings of a symposium .

Available through the UBC website:

<http://www.bushlandperth.org.au/resources/publications>

***Burning Issues* - proceedings of a workshop about fire management in urban bushland. (2002)** Available from the UBC free.

***Building Partnerships between Community Groups and Local Government for Our Bushland* - proceedings of a seminar (2000)**

Available from the UBC free.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Compiled by: Renata Zelinova

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO: ubc@bushlandperth.org.au

Copy deadline - 15 October 2016



In October, the UBC will host a talk by Kate Brown from the Department of Parks and Wildlife on findings of research at Paganoni Swamp. The research investigated changes in species richness and cover in native and introduced flora following autumn prescribed fire in a 700-hectare Banksia/Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) woodland that had not burnt for more than 30 years. Effectiveness of management techniques at reducing weed cover and the impacts of grazing by Western Grey Kangaroo (*Macropus fuliginosus*) postfire were also investigated.

The results show that autumn prescribed fire can facilitate increases in weed cover that can be limited with specific management techniques of targeted weeds postfire. Postfire grazing was found to have significant adverse impacts on native species cover and vegetation structure, but it also limited establishment of some serious weeds including Pigface (*Carpobrotus edulis*). Manipulating herbivores in time and space following prescribed fire could be an important and cost-effective way of maintaining biodiversity values.

For time and venue of talks hosted by the UBC, see the back page of the newsletter. In August, Kingsley Dixon from Curtin University will talk about WA's biodiversity hotspot and in November, Renata Zelinova will discuss the issues of ecological connectivity in fragmented landscapes.

All welcome. By purchasing a \$5 door entry raffle, you will have a chance to win great prizes such as a framed photo by Marg Owen or various books.

Great gift idea

PERTH'S BUSHLAND BIRTHDAY & PERPETUAL

CALENDAR

\$10 plus \$2 postage

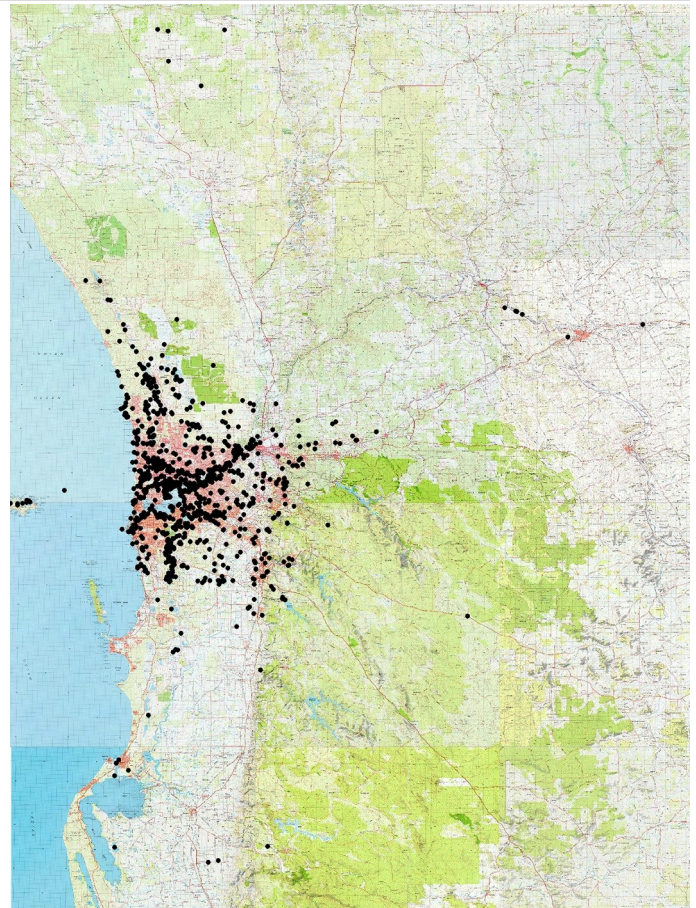
Available by mail order from the UBC office.

Operation Rainbow Roost needs your help

Rainbow Lorikeets maybe gorgeous birds but they are also a serious pest in Perth. Since the 1960s when 10 Rainbow Lorikeets were released in Perth, the population has increased to over 40,000 birds. Lorikeets now are present from Yanchep to Mandurah and to Chidlow, in the east. To work out the exact population and distribution of this pest species, BirdLife Western Australia and the Department of Food and Agriculture Western Australia have launched Operation Rainbow Roost (<http://birdlife.org.au/projects/operation-rainbow-roost>). This has been funded by the State Natural Resource Management Program.

Mike Bamford, Chair of BirdLife Western Australia said that “Rainbow Lorikeets are a very aggressive species which are out-competing the local parrots”. He also said “the Red-capped Parrot is now almost extinct from a large part of the Perth Metropolitan Area, and it’s most likely that the introduction of Rainbow Lorikeets has been a significant contributor to this loss”. Lorikeets are also a threat to the endangered Carnaby’s Black-Cockatoo as both species nest in tree hollows, and the aggressive lorikeets will displace the larger cockatoos. Rainbow Lorikeets have been declared a pest species in south-west Australia by the Department of Food and Agriculture Western Australia (<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/birds/rainbow-lorikeet>). It is estimated that Rainbow Lorikeets damage approximately \$3 million worth of commercial fruit crops each year in south-west Australia. Lorikeets can also spread bird diseases including *psittacine* beak and feather disease and cause fouling and damage to private and public amenities.

BirdLife Western Australia is asking the public to report any sites where the Rainbow Lorikeets roost at night. They usually gather at communal roost sites at sunset and this provides a good way to estimate the number of lorikeets in the region. Some well known Rainbow Lorikeet roosts are at Cottesloe Beach, the Perth Zoo and Perth



Rainbow Lorikeet records (BirdLife Atlas data 1998-2015)

Airport; but there are likely to be hundreds of roosts scattered throughout the suburbs. The Cottesloe Beach roost hosts over 2700 lorikeets and is possibly the biggest roost in Perth!

Please also report if you see any lorikeets in the outer Perth Metropolitan area. Lorikeets are present from Yanchep to Mandurah and past the hills to Chidlow, but it would be useful to get a more accurate picture of their current distribution. By doing this we can monitor more accurately future expansions of their distribution. We are particularly interested in reports of lorikeets in the suburban fringes, the hills area, rural and semi-rural areas.

You can report any information by using an electronic form at <http://birdlife.org.au/projects/operation-rainbow-roost>, by emailing rainbowroost@birdlife.org.au or by phoning the BirdLife Western Australia office on 9383 7749.



Photo by M Lauva

Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015 – Petition and handover on 16 August 2016

Handover of petition to the Upper House (the Bill has now passed the Lower House). Read more and download the petition here and return by 12 August:

<http://www.ccwa.org.au/biodiversity>

Viveash subdivision squabble

By Mel Brackley

On April 26th the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) passed the Viveash subdivision application. This was in spite of safety and environmental concerns expressed by the City of Swan, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Environment Regulation and the Viveash Community.

Neither the City of Swan or those engaged in correspondence and representing the Viveash Community Network (myself included) were notified or aware of the possibility of asserting/ supporting their recommendations via deputation at the WAPC. Not very transparent, not very impartial, not very democratic, not very mindful of community aspirations at all.

We then witnessed the bulldozing of the largest of the Eucalyptus Wandoo trees, the very pocket visible as mature trees on an aerial photo dated 1953.

Bulldozing stopped when the City of Swan realised that Pindan had not met some of the conditions required for subdivision approval. Pindan returned to remove the two remaining large Wandoo trees, in spite of having not yet met subdivision approval conditions.

Soon after Councillor David MacDonnell forwarded a motion at Council to employ two further Compliance Officers to enable the City to keep an eye on developers behaving badly. The City's Planning Officer acknowledged that their source of being made aware of breaches of subdivision approval, more often than not, came from vigilant community members.



In early July, an ally in the fight to prevent deforestation in Viveash, alerted me to Pindan's recommendations that the WAPC alter the area required to be allocated in the subdivision as public open space (POS). Pindan's argument for a decrease in POS was an admission of incorrect initial calculations, based on an area including already existing roads within the application area. They self-corrected the amount of POS from 4500sqm to 4048.5sqm.

In addition to this, Pindan recommended that the WAPC force the City of Swan to accept cash-in-lieu for POS, and by so doing forgo the mandatory 10% POS required in any subdivision, with the intention that the City use the cash-in-lieu to upkeep areas already designated as Parks and Recreation in the City.

In making sense of jargon I elicited that in the initial subdivision, approved by the WAPC, there was no allocation of POS, except for 2 dinky areas required to be shown as pedestrian access way. Based on community objection to the subdivision, all 14 councillors voted unanimously to refuse the application for subdivision or, more realistically, accept it with a reduction of 31 lots to enable a bush reserve. Pindan based their current cash-in-lieu argument on the fact that the City requested they be offered the opportunity to consider cash-in-lieu initially, before community concerns and aspirations to retain vegetation were known to them. When the recommendations for a bush reserve were forwarded to WAPC, and subsequently ignored, the City made it clear to Pindan that POS was required due to community upset at the loss of bushland. Pindan argued further that because the Department of

Parks and Wildlife assessment determined that there was no legal basis for retaining vegetation and therefore, as the intention of POS was for the provision of amenity through bush retention which would not be forthcoming, it was contrary to the intentions of the City to have the POS. Pindan also argued that the necessity for POS should be viewed in the context of greater POS in the form of the Swan River foreshore. It is poignant to point out that the aforementioned DPaW assessment remains unseen by representatives of the Viveash Community Network due to an appeal against its release under the Freedom of Information provisions.

Well, with all of that background information there is a little bit of good news. On June 28th, Councillor David MacDonnell and I, with the help of a few very knowledgeable and similarly impassioned people, presented deputations to the Statutory Planning Committee (SPC) as to the reason Pindan should be required to provide POS. One in, one out. Your clock starts now. No media presence. Packed room of skirts, heels, suits and briefcases.

We detailed and showed photographic evidence of the destruction, identified significant vegetation, spoke of community aspirations, amenity to which we were accustomed and which we deserved and identified what remained as meeting black cockatoo foraging, nesting and roosting criteria. I took my eldest son who has collected the nests, enlisted the help of local bee keepers, fashioned the wood of the great Wandoo and collected and is cultivating the seeds of *Hakea undulata*. I told the SPC, with regards to my son's presence that they were accountable to my son, and all future generations for the decision they were making.

I discovered through David MacDonnell that we were successful in upholding the requirement for Pindan to provide POS. I was also advised that the City of Swan could identify the location.

Sadly, I have since learned that Pindan is appealing WAPC recommendations to the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT).

I said to my Partner tonight, "...Terrible, isn't it. They have got their way, despite a community imploring they leave as much native vegetation as possible. Not happy with that they want to cheat us of every last little bit..." Hmmm, I didn't quite say it like that, but the meaning was the same.

PS. If you have any knowledge of who took the sign, erected on the verge opposite the sales office on the corner of Colyton Street and Bernley Drive, alerting buyers to investigate brickwork emissions, I would be most interested. To date my outlay has been in terms of time. The sign involved the outlay of money and my partners star pickets!!!! I would appreciate their return.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS



Social Media for Community Groups

Saturday 27th August 2016
(Morning tea provided)

8.45am - 12.00pm

Venue: Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, Selby Street, Churchlands

Cost: \$30 per person

Is your community group using Social Media to attract new members or promote your group's activities? In this workshop you will discover how to target a wider audience and give your group an online presence. This introductory workshop will familiarise you with popular social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It will cover how to achieve the most impact for your group's profile, engage regularly and effectively with existing members and build your group's social network.

To register for this event, go to <http://perthnrm.com/community/events.aspx>

Volunteer Guide to Bushland Weeds

Sunday 18 September 2016
(light lunch provided)

9.15am-1.30pm

Venue: Carramar Community Centre, Function Room, Carramar

Cost: \$30 per person

The Volunteers Guide to Bushland Weeds workshop will focus on identifying weeds commonly found in bushlands of the Perth region, how to effectively remove them, and building partnerships with land managers for a unified weed management approach. For more information about this workshop go to page 10 of this newsletter.

To register for this event, go to <http://perthnrm.com/community/events.aspx>

These workshops are part of the **Volunteer Capacity Building in NRM Series**





Spring is almost upon us again! As part of the Spring Into Armadale festival, the **Wildflower Society of WA, Armadale branch** will be holding its “*Nature’s Beauty Revealed*” event over the weekend of 10th & 11th September at the Armadale Settlers’ Common Field Study Centre.

In conjunction with other Armadale, Gosnells and Serpentine bushcare groups, there will be colourful displays and information on local parks and reserves, wildflower displays, Marmum Mia Mia aboriginal artefacts display and a close-up encounter with a Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. There will also be craft, frog painting and colouring activities to keep the kids entertained.

At 10:30 am on each day there will be a 1¼-hour return guided walk through a section of the Settler’s Common reserve. A bus will leave from the Study Centre taking walkers to the eastern section of the Common. The native flora can then be easily observed by following the recently installed wheelchair-friendly paths which loop around through the bushland.

For those keen gardeners, or those just want to find out more about on native plants, Wildflower Society members will be available to give native gardening advice and on the Sunday a selection of native plants will be available for sale.

Mark this event in your calendar – come and find out where these natural bushland treasures are, talk to the volunteers who manage these reserves, and how you can help them.



Kim Sarti



Friends of Brixton Street Wetlands

Enjoy a free Walk & Talk in the Brixton Street Wetlands with Clare Calderia

“Bringing bush back to the Burbs”

When: Wednesday 17th August 2016

Where: Alton Street, Kenwick.

Time: 9.00 am – 11.00 am

Morning Tea Provided

RSVP 16th August : 9459 2964

Baigup Wetland Interest Group

The difference a substantial grant can make to environmental restoration is currently being noticed at Baigup Wetland on the Maylands/Bayswater border immediately downstream of Garratt Road Bridge on the Swan River. Last year Baigup Wetland Interest Group secured a Swan Canning River Recovery Project (SCRRP) grant of \$75,000, the only one for the Swan. (The bulk of the total \$400,000 went to Canning River groups.) At Baigup most of the funds are being spent on weed control and revegetation in the Maylands section, a ‘C’ Class Reserve at the south-western end of the reserve. This area has a history of market gardening and domestic use for orchards, goat pasture, etc., dating from perhaps as early as the mid 1800s to the mid 1950s and later.

As these activities decreased after the 1960s, the area became overgrown with *Typha orientalis*, Pampas Grass, and other perennial and annual weed species prior to and following resumption, originally for a riverside highway which fortunately was never built, although a large gas pipeline was put through with devastating ecological effect in 1986. During these years, local residents would routinely fire the Maylands section as an annual fire and weed management strategy. While this may have worked in the short term it of course stressed any remnant *Melaleuca raphiophylla* communities and exacerbated the weed problem enormously. Weedy *Casuarina glauca* is now dominant in some sections, partly because of this, although increasing salinity of river and floodplain is also a key factor.

Group News Group News Group News



Photo by P Lee

John Castro and Anissa Winkler getting stuck into weeding at our last work day, May 29.

About two thirds (the Bayswater end) of this approximately 20ha Bush Forever site is freehold land under the control of the Department of Planning. City of Bayswater has an informal management role and has spent very little at the Bayswater end over the last 15 years, partly because of well established revegetation now up about 20 years old there. This includes a small number of Marri and Banksia trees intermixed with regenerated Melaleuca and *Eucalyptus rudis*, plus a lot of perennial weeds, including Blackberry that urgently need attention. The only SCRRP funds spent in this area were to remove Arum Lilies near the bridge and about 35 *Poplar alba* trees which were spreading into surrounding bushland. The main reason for concentrating expenditure in the 'C' Class Reserve was the indeterminate nature of the ownership/management situation in the Bayswater section of Baigup Wetland.

Typha has been the major challenge for several decades at Baigup. Former community groups such as Bayswater

Integrated Catchment Management (BICM), Greenworks and Friends of Baigup Wetland (late 1990s to 2004) made an impressive impact on Typha on either side of the sealed pathway that runs through longitudinally. To-day only relatively small clumps remain in these areas.

Because of the aggressively invasive tendencies of this species, a DPaW permit is allowing wholesale eradication in the 'C' Class Reserve using the SCRRP funds. Since 2012 Typha has been spreading rapidly into the Secondary Lake, one of two constructed lakes created in 1999 and 2000. Jan Duihuizen's photo shows where a large 'island' has been removed, while top up funds from the SCRR project will continue the work of removing all Typha from the Secondary Lake and its surrounds.

Extensive planting of native species is currently under way, involving not only Baigup Wetland Interest Group volunteers, but also three local high schools, Conservation Volunteers Australia and Green Army workers. BWIG's next work day is September 25. To learn more about our group, check out our UBC page where you can register to receive quarterly newsletters and other occasional notices or our Facebook page or contact bai-gup@iinet.net.au

Baigup Wetland is an important conservation area representing some key features of the original fringing vegetation of the Swan River. Its extensive sedge plains are protected federally as an example of an increasingly rare Coastal Saltmarsh Threatened Ecological Community (TEC). BirdLife WA's database for Baigup and immediate surrounds includes 86 bird species officially identified since mid 2012, with several more known to visit but frustratingly absent during surveys. Wanton destruction by property developers of mature wetland about a kilometer upstream adjacent to Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary in mid July was just another act compromising the integrity of the tenuous wildlife corridor from the hills to the sea, a chain of increasingly isolated patches of native vegetation in which Baigup is an essential linking element.

Penny Lee

Photo below: The Secondary Lake where Typha has been cleared out and Conservation Volunteers planting seedlings.



Photo by J Duihuizen

Group News Group News Group News

Friends of Hollywood Bushland

Friends of Hollywood Reserve have taken advantage of the weather to plant 1000 seedlings into Hollywood Reserve. They have been ably assisted by 200 Hollywood Primary School children, who in the 2 hours allotted to them, managed to plant 400 seedlings. The other 600 seedlings have been planted out by our volunteers.

The photos were taken by William Day, whose father was instrumental in saving Hollywood Reserve in the early 1970s. Convenor Bill Gardner welcomed the children, Councillor John Wetherall thanked them on behalf of the Council, for their work. Kay Rae talked about the importance of fungi and showed samples, and the City of Nedlands Bush Care Officer demonstrated how to plant. The children really enjoyed their morning out and hopefully one day, we will have some younger volunteers.

The work of the volunteers will continue on the 2nd Sunday of every month, when we will tackle the weeding.

Trish Hewson



Photo by W Day

Students from the Hollywood Primary School learning about bushland before planting.

Wildflower Society Murdoch Branch

The last year wildflower walk at Anstey-Keane reserve attracted about 25 wildflower enthusiasts. We plan to keep on promoting that beautiful bushland – the second most diverse natural jewel on the Swan Coastal Plain. You can learn about the details on our Anstey-Keane 2016 Facebook page. Please share the link with your friends.

David from Friends of Forrestdale Lake and Neil from Murdoch Branch will join us again to share their vast knowledge on diverse flora and fauna of the reserve.

We have compiled a list of wildflowers we saw last year and it is very likely that they will greet us again this year. You can find the wildflower list on the following link:

<http://www.wildflowersocietywa.org.au/news-and-views/anstey-keane-jewel-lets-have-a-walk/>

Anstey-Keane Wildflower Walk

Sunday August 28

10.30am-12.30pm

Meet at the track to the Anstey-Keane bushland opposite 186 Anstey Road, Forrestdale

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1729670607308431/>

Pawel Waryszak

Community revegetate degraded tracks on Guilderton dunes

Nearly 50 people aged 5 to 93 gave up their Sunday morning on June 12 to restore the north Guilderton dunes. It was the second community planting event since the area was fenced off from vehicular access in 2014.

Local volunteers were joined by members of the 4WD Club of WA. The volunteers split into teams to tackle the three different sites and everyone got stuck in planting the 2,000+ seedlings which featured a dozen species found on the dunes. All new seedlings were fitted with corflute tree guards to protect them from the elements and nibbly pests. The weary planters were rewarded with lunch and a cuppa before a few hardcore volleys headed back on to the dunes to finish planting the last few seedlings. 32mm of rain fell Sunday night to help bed in the seedlings.

The event and most of the seedlings were funded through a devolved grant received from the Northern Agricultural Catchment Council with funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme, with extra seedlings funded through a Moore Catchment Council WA Natural Resource Management Programme project which propagated dune seedlings at a workshop held in November 2015.



Guilderton volunteer planting team at north Guilderton dunes.

Photos courtesy to the Moore Catchment Council

Fate of the Darling Range Regional Park Still Unclear

Tony Fowler

Nature Reserves Preservation Group (NRPg) Inc.

What has happened to the Darling Range Regional Park since it was first announced in 1990, with well-deserved fanfare? In the intervening 26 years, the Park (now under the banner of The Parks of the Darling Range yet, fortunately identified as Mundy Regional Park), still awaits a management plan. Like other long-serving and long-suffering members of its Community Advisory Committee, I despair of ever seeing this management plan.

This depressing picture is despite the best efforts of a series of Chairs, community members, local government representatives and on-ground and behind-the-scenes DPaW staff. The huge amount of time and effort expended by these individuals has, however, not been totally wasted. The committee's stewardship of those areas agreed to be within the park has ensured that problems threatening the values within the park, are tackled as they arise and, that community concerns are addressed. Given the apparent lack of historical "memory" within local and state government bodies, a brief history of the topic seems in order.

The proposal to establish the Darling Range Regional Park was first announced in 1990. A draft document was released in 1993, attracting 120 submissions supporting the proposal, including one from the Shire of Kalamunda. The Minister for Planning released the final Park proposal in October 1995.

Since an amendment to the MRS was required to secure the land required for the Park, MRS amendment 978/33 (1996) was advertised for public comment. This *'Darling Range Regional Park Amendment'* was unambiguous both in the chosen title and in its aim to secure areas of land for the Regional Park, proposing, in part, *'...the reservation of an additional 15,000 hectares of State or Local Government owned or vested land for inclusion into the Regional Park'*. The local governments involved were: *'Shires of Swan, Mundaring, Kalamunda and Serpentine-Jarrahdale and Cities of Armadale and Gosnells.'* The Darling Range Regional Park was proclaimed in the Government Gazette of 22 November 1996, which declared amendment 978/33 as taking effect *"on and from 14 November 1996."*

The Darling Range Regional Park Community Advisory Committee was a natural development of the *'Interim Management Committee'* intended to be established *'as soon as possible following the completion of the current amendment'* by the Department of Conservation and Land Management. It appears to be at this point that not ALL lands proposed for inclusion in the Regional Park under Kalamunda's K13 proposal were transferred to CALM for management.

The Darling Range Regional Park retained its name until 2004. However, following a review of the DRRP, an examination of a 'Parks of the Perth Hills concept' and the

establishment of five new national parks, from January 2004, the management of the Department of Conservation and Land Management lands was declared to be in accordance with this 'Parks of Perth Hills' concept. It was declared that: *'From March 2004, a series of existing national parks and state forest will replace Darling Range Regional Park and will be managed under the title Parks of the Perth Hills.'* (Parks of the Perth Hills Stakeholder Presentation October 2003).

Despite the above declaration, over time, the changes of name of this Regional Park Community Advisory Committee have proved confusing, e.g. Parks of the Darling Range C.A.C. (2005), Darling Range C.A.C. (2007 – 2010), and, again, Parks of the Darling Range C.A.C. (2012 to present).

Nature Reserves Preservation Group (NRPg), having been represented on these committees for over 15 years, has, for the past three years, been campaigning to save a block of pristine bushland (Reserve 30314). Rezoned as Parks and Recreation under Kalamunda proposal K.13 in 1996, for inclusion in the Darling Range Regional Park, this reserve is now subject to a Metropolitan Region Scheme amendment (1271/41) proposing to deprive it of that P&R designation.

Reserve R30314, Lot 59 Wilkins Road, was undoubtedly intended for inclusion in the Regional Park, together with the other K13 reserves. Since 1996, no motion has been passed, nor gazettal made to exclude it from the Park. These facts have not prevented the current MRS amendment (1271/41) being prosecuted with enthusiasm by Kalamunda Council staff and Councillors and, by the local Member for Kalamunda, both in his role as local member and in that of his recent past role as Minister for Planning.

Whilst the fate of reserve R30314 and other reserves intended for inclusion in this park are of great concern, systemic failings within the current conservation system may prove to be of even greater importance. Past failures to place reserves (as intended) under the management of CALM/DEC/DPaW, the current lack of protection for Bush Forever sites and P&R designated reserves, together with a failure to provide the management plan for this Regional Park emphasise the extent of these failings.

The current Parks of the Darling Range Community Advisory Committee is continuing to work towards the creation of a management plan for the parks. In this effort, community members have the support of representatives of member Councils and of the Regional Parks unit of DPaW. The extensive work performed by on-ground operation staff of DPaW is an indication of their commitment to the parks. Community concerns brought to the

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

table, are attended to promptly, despite the exponentially increasing heavy workload.

I must stress that this article is representative solely of my views as President of the Nature Reserves Preservation Group. Official comments or statements on behalf of the Advisory Committee, come only through the Chair of that committee. Whilst I remain the NRP representative on the Community Advisory Committee, my views do not necessarily reflect those of other Advisory Committee members.

Places are still available

Australian Naturalist Network 2016 Excursions

The WA Naturalists' Club is hosting a series of tours this spring that are open to everybody with an interest in nature. There are three tours planned:

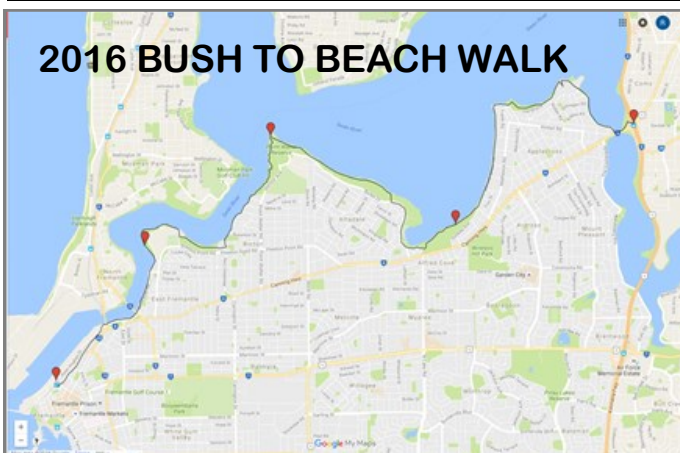
Northern Tour Wildflowers and Birds
24-30 September

Southern Tour Wildflowers and Birds
10-16 October

Abrolhos Island Tour
25-30 September

For more information and book go to
<http://www.wanaturalists.org.au/ann-2016/>

2016 BUSH TO BEACH WALK



The 2016 Bush to Beach Walk is planned to follow the southern side of the river from Fremantle Train Station to Canning Bridge Train Station, covering about 19 km. This walk will provide a good opportunity to examine river restoration efforts by the Swan Estuaries Reserves Action Group.

Proposed date: **25th September** (World Rivers Day)

Draft map is shown on Google Maps at: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MTZwsDCQGCIR2YLD5dh8xBJpstg&usp=sharing>

Volunteers continue to sharpen their skills in NRM

By Sharon Munro

Perth NRM has added a new workshop to its *Volunteer Capacity Building in NRM* series. The series was created in response to volunteer needs identified in the *Community Capacity Survey in NRM* run in 2015. Since the series inception, Perth NRM has developed the Grant Writing Secrets for Success and Attracting and Retaining Volunteers workshops, and the First Aid for Volunteers program.

The latest addition to the *Volunteer Capacity Building in NRM* series is the Volunteer Guide to Wetland Weeds workshop. This workshop was run on Saturday, 14 May 2016 at the Canning River Eco Education Centre in Cannington. During the four hour workshop, attendees from industry and volunteer groups learned weed identification techniques, control methods suitable for sensitive wetland habitats, safety while working in and around water, and the importance of building strong partnerships with land managers.

As part of the workshop, attendees received Perth NRM's latest publication, the *Weed Control Guide for Volunteers: Wetlands*. This guide contains information on control methods and offers basic control plans for individual wetland weed species. The concept of weed control will continue to build in the *Volunteer Capacity Building in NRM* series with a workshop directed at Bushland weeds coming in September.

The next workshop from Perth NRM will be Social Media for Community Groups on 27 August 2016 at Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre. The workshop will help community groups learn how to build an online presence and expand their social network. For more information visit: <http://perthnrm.com/community/events/social-media-for-community-groups.aspx>

For more information on these workshops or the *Volunteer Capacity Building in NRM* series, contact Sharon Munro on 9374 3333 or community@perthnrm.com.



Photo courtesy Perth NRM

CALL FOR UNDERWOOD AVENUE AQUISITION

The UBC has written to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) to request acquisition of Bush Forever Area 119 Underwood Avenue Bushland, Shenton Park. This site is suffering from ongoing lack of conservation management. In particular there has been no control of grassy weeds after the recent fire there. The WAPC can purchase the site with Metropolitan Region Improvement Fund (MRIF), then conduct initial capital works and grassy weed control before the next fire season so that habitat is protected. In contrast, the nearby Shenton bushland Bush Forever site displays so well the good condition of bushland which has been achieved with good management (by the City of Nedlands and the Friends group) and has very much less fire risk.

The content of the UBC letter to the Chairman of the WAPC, Mr Eric Lumsden, follows.

The Urban Bushland Council brings to your attention the timely need for the WAPC to now acquire the whole of Bush Forever Area 119, Underwood Avenue Bushland, for a number of compelling reasons.

Firstly, the proposal for clearing and development of the site by UWA that was given approval by the state Minister for the Environment under the Environmental Protection Act has now lapsed. Notably this did not allow UWA to proceed as approval was also required under the federal EPBC Act, and this was not obtained.

Secondly, assessment of a similar earlier proposal by the federal government under the EPBC Act resulted in a draft decision that approval *not be granted*. However UWA withdrew their proposal before the final decision was made. Nevertheless the details of this assessment are still relevant.

Thirdly, the environmental values and significance have substantially increased since these earlier environmental impact assessments were made. Further, threatening processes to maintenance of the biodiversity conservation values of the bushland in the region have increased. Attached is a statement of the increased significance of Underwood Avenue Bushland as presented to the Chairman of the EPA and the OEPA. A report by the (then) DEC identified all the bushland within a 6km radius of the major roost site for Carnaby's Cockatoo (on the corner of Underwood Avenue and Brockway Rd) as 'critical habitat'. Indeed most of Underwood Bushland is within 1km of the roost site and is highly significant foraging habitat.

Fourthly, the landholder (UWA) of Bush Forever 119 is not adequately managing the site to maintain its conservation values. For example there has been no grassy weed control, especially post fire, and foxes are not controlled resulting in death of significant avian fauna such



as the migratory Rainbow Bee Eaters.

Fifthly, the neighbouring Wastewater Treatment Plant is planned to likely double its capacity which means that the odour and safety buffer zone to exclude development around it should also substantially increase and include all of the Bush Forever Area 119.

Sixthly, this is a bushland area of both regional and national significance that requires on ground management by a suitable conservation land manager to maintain its values. The area deserves to be acquired and transferred to the conservation estate as an A class reserve for the purpose of conservation and passive recreation only. Thus Bush Forever Area 119 is not 'developable land'. The Urban Bushland Council supports the rezoning of the Area to Parks and Recreation Reservation if this is necessary for its acquisition and transfer to secure public ownership for conservation. Please note that public ownership and conservation of Underwood Avenue Bushland is widely and strongly supported by the Perth community and our Member groups.

Will you facilitate this process, for completion *this year 2016*, so that the whole of Bush Forever Area 119 is transferred to A-class reserve status with a suitable conservation land manager allocated and funded?



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THE URBAN BUSH TELEGRAPH



Urban Bushland Council's Events

Talk by Kingsley Dixon from Curtin University:

WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE IN A BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT

Wednesday 24 August - 6.00pm light refreshments for 6.30pm start
at Conference Room 7, City West Lotteries House, West Perth

Guided walk - Harry Sandon Park, Attadale (Bush Forever Site 226)

Saturday 17 September 9.00-11.30am

Talk by Kate Brown from the Department of Parks and Wildlife:

LESSONS FROM POST-FIRE RESEARCH AT PAGANONI SWAMP

Wednesday 19 October 6.00pm light refreshments for 6.30pm start
at Conference Room 7, City West Lotteries House, West Perth

At all talks \$5 raffle door entry for great prizes. All welcome.

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 \$45 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

Individuals:

Supporter membership is only \$35 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

Office:

URBAN BUSHLAND COUNCIL WA Inc

Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street West Perth WA 6872

Ph 9420 7207 E-mail: ubc@bushlandperth.org.au



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