

Strategic Assessment Perth - Peel Region

- Will it save our threatened Banksia woodlands?

The Commonwealth and State Governments are working together to conduct a Strategic Assessment for the Perth and Peel Regions under provisions of the EPBC Act. We believe the draft Assessment will be out for public comment at the end of June 2014.

The Urban Bushland Council is calling for the following to be included and enacted:

1. Assessment and listing of the nominated 'Banksia Woodlands of the southern Swan Coastal Plain' as a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) under the EPBC Act.

Notably the south west of WA is a globally recognised biodiversity hotspot for conservation priority *because it is under threat*. The Perth region itself is a hotspot within the larger hotspot - with species richness and endemism not seen elsewhere. Our Banksia woodlands are *under very serious threat* from clearing, fire, falling groundwater levels, declining rainfall, higher temperatures, disease, weed and feral animal invasion. Many of these threats can be managed, but, they are not properly managed or are not managed at all: eg groundwater abstraction.

2. Immediate suspension of all clearing and development proposals in the ~ 8000ha of Banksia woodlands currently zoned for development in the Perth region.

3. Bush Forever site protection in law

Formal vesting of *all* Bush Forever Areas as A class nature reserves under the Land Administration Act (or equivalent) for the purpose of nature conservation; and proper legally binding provision for their ongoing management.

A suitable conservation management authority must be allocated for each site. This could be DPAW or a local government authority for most sites.

Introduction, in law, of a conservation management obligation for all land managers (whether public or private) of all Bush Forever Areas.

4. State utilities

State government utilities and other bodies review their operational plans and reserves to avoid Bush Forever sites. This includes withdrawal of proposals currently being planned or assessed such as the Roe 8 Extension through Beeliar Regional Park, Pt Peron and Mangles Bay development; Underwood Avenue housing development, Keane Road extension through Anstey-Keane Damplands; Kiara TAFE site housing and school development.

There are still many sites or parts of sites which are vested or owned or controlled by state utilities but are not be-

ing managed for retention of their nature conservation values despite the 'whole of government' policy of the Bush Forever plan. Transfer of these sites to a suitable conservation management authority is required.

5. Mandatory legal protection of local bushland

Mandatory completion and implementation of Local Biodiversity Strategies by each local authority in Perth and Peel according to the Local Government Biodiversity Planning Guidelines for the Perth Metropolitan Region (PBP and WALGA March 2004).

The network of local conservation reserves, connected by ecological linkages and Bush Forever Areas, are all essential components to achieve protection of a 'CAR' reserve system with the overall 30% target.

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Editorial

It is now a year since we held our Bush Forever Report Card conference at Murdoch University. In his official opening speech, Minister John Day stated that the conference and the UBC's Report Card would be a valuable contribution to the review of the Bush Forever program which would be undertaken in 2013. Also in the conference conclusion, 'the proposed 10 year review of the plan is promised for 2013'. This was to include an audit of the status and progress of all sites.

The review including an audit has not been done.

The UBC believes that this is a serious failure in good governance. Surely the status of each Bush Forever site and the status of the whole picture of a suburban conservation system in our world class biodiversity hotspot in the Perth region is essential baseline data for the Strategic Assessment. In answer to almost all our questions of government we are told that the Strategic Assessment is the government's priority and will deal with the issues in a balanced way.

But what we see across the environment and planning agencies is virtually zero activity in finalising Bush Forever. For two years there has been no action to transfer the batch of some 70 sites to DEC now DPAW management after acquisition by the WAPC. No initial capital works have been done to set these sites up with fencing, gates, signage and initial weed management. And they are not being managed. This is government negligence.

The next chapter in continuing degradation of the unique Anstey-Keane Damplands, Bush Forever site 342, is on page 7. In addition, the Public Environmental Review (PER) giving details of the City of Armadale's proposal to construct Keane Road through the middle of this precious wetland site is now open for public comment until 3 February 2014. This proposal through Conservation

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6. Bush Forever audit

Immediate conduct of a comprehensive review and audit as specified in Bush Forever Volume 1 by suitably experienced and knowledgeable staff of DPAW and DOP in conjunction with WALGA's Perth Biodiversity Project and local government and community Friends groups.

The Minister for Planning made a commitment at our Bush Forever Report Card conference a year ago to conduct an audit of Bush Forever sites as a priority in 2013. It is most disturbing to know this has not happened. An audit is surely essential to inform the Strategic Assessment and for ongoing conservation management of the region.

7. Protection of habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo, Baudins Cockatoo and Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo

Category Wetlands of the highest value is at least as bad as the proposal for the Roe 8 Highway extension through the Beeliar Wetlands. Will the EPA assess this properly and find that the irreversible impacts on these critical assets are environmentally unacceptable?

Bush Forever has the objective of achieving at least 10% representation of each of the 26 Heddl vegetation complexes. The Bassendean complex central and south has only a pitiful less than 1% of its pre-European extent in Perth is protected in conservation lands managed by DPAW. With large areas cleared on Perth and Jandakot Airports, the UBC is calling for the Kiara TAFE site to be added to Bush Forever to boost this representation. See the story of this long community campaign on page 3.

The Strategic Assessment Perth and Peel Regions will be out for public comment in the new year. The UBC insists that each of the 287 Bush Forever Areas as well as the additions such as Channel 9 bushland and the Kiara TAFE site be formally transferred, vested and managed for the purpose of nature conservation as part of this. Also the network of ecological linkages and Local Biodiversity Strategies must be made mandatory and protected in law.

Has your group visited and written to your local MP to call for these actions?



This applies to all Banksia and Eucalypt woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain and hills. These threatened cockatoo species will continue to decline towards extinction until loss of habitat through clearing ceases.

Critical habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo includes vegetation within a 6km radius of roost sites; and vegetation within a 12 km radius of breeding sites. More field surveys are needed to find additional roost sites and breeding sites.

Protection of all black cockatoo habitat must be legally binding by the State under either a new regulation under the Environmental Protection Act or under a new Biodiversity Conservation Act.

The compromises have already been made and it is now critical that Bush Forever is fully implemented and funded by the State to underpin the Strategic Assessment.

Kiara Bushland - *The bush with (almost) nine lives*

Kirsten Tullis, Save Kiara Bushland

Kiara Bushland is still there, though this could well be its last hurrah. It all started in 1995 when some local people and I learnt that the Kiara TAFE Site, as it was known then, was up for urban development under a Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) Major Omnibus Amendment. It was Landcorp who had its eye on this rather lovely 14 hectare bush block on the corner of Morley and Bottlebrush Drives. Our group back then, a team between Kiara Progress Association and my group Bayswater Greenwork (I live in Bayswater), got to work and discovered after doing extensive community consultation that most locals either wanted a TAFE college or the bush to remain. Life one.



Photo by K Tullis

Fringed Mantis Orchid; *Caladenia falcata*

Our community research was thorough. We door-knocked and hand-delivered WA Planning Commission submission forms and 1700 questionnaires to local letterboxes. Around 170 questionnaires were returned to us. Of these, around 5% preferred rezoning and housing, and 95% opposed rezoning. At the same time we ran a petition to both Houses of Parliament, gathering 700 signatures or so for each. In August 1996, 601 public submissions (most being signed forms) were sent to the WAPC. Almost all opposed the rezoning. After a technical glitch in our favour, having been placed in the wrong amendment, and because of high community opposition it was withdrawn. Life two.

In 1997 TAFE decided they didn't need the land. The community idea of a 'managed bushland park' grew in response to another MRS Major Amendment. To this one submission supported urban rezoning, 65 were against it. As well we organised a second petition. Around 900 signatures were gathered and presented to State Parliament. The Liberals were in and the amendment passed through the Lower House. It was then the Upper House' turn, and on 1st July 1998 a rigorous debate on the future of the Kiara TAFE Site was played out. The vote to disallow the amendment, due to Labor, the Democrats and Greens having the numbers, was a relief for us. The Hansard document is fascinating reading – go to

<http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/hansard/hans35.nsf/16ab30a0303e54f448256bf7002049e8/5a937887ccc740f84825663900742173?OpenDocument>. I

should acknowledge the enormous contribution from Clive Brown MLA, who was the local member for Labor who batted for us from the inside of Parliament. Life three.

Landcorp transferred the land to Homeswest (Landstart) in 1998. They presented three development options to the community (keeping the bush was definitely off the table!) and decided the best use of the land was 70% urban and 30% public open space. We were not happy with their process and did a random door to door survey of a hundred locals. We found while eleven people liked the idea of the 70/30 split and six had other ideas, the majority, 83, wanted a managed bushland park. On this basis we continued with our campaign. In keeping with the 'Public Purposes' zoning a police station was built in one corner the following year.

In November 2002 Landstart invited community members to a workshop for suggestions on how the site should be developed, promoting their preferred option of 70:30 development. Again we were not happy with the process. The following year they called for written submissions on development options. By 2004 we formed



Photo by K Tullis

Woolly Dragon; *Hemiphora bartlingii*

“Save Kiara Bushland”, and did another leaflet drive to the immediate vicinity. 75 were returned and these were the results: 68 [managed bushland park], three [50% TAFE : 50% bushland], and four going for the Landstart option [70% development : 30% public open space]. While this showed us there was still strong support to keep the bush, during this year there was another community group “Concerned Kiara Citizens” running counter to us. They put out their own leaflet opposing what we were doing (with a few inaccuracies), but as contact details were not included, I don’t think we found out who they were. Life four.

As an election was building for February 2005 we lobbied and gained support from local MLA candidate Martin Whitely, who won the seat along with Labor. Support also came from Greens MLC Alison Xamon, and both joined us on bush walks. In May that year the City of Swan (which has never supported us) voted to give ‘in principle’ support to Landstart’s ‘outline development plan’ and rezoning to ‘Urban’. The City requested a MRS Minor Amendment in 2007, and we plus the UBC and others put forward a very strong case to keep the bush. We welcomed the support of the WAPC Hearings Committee, and the Department of Environment and Conservation, who recommended most of Kiara Bushland be added to Bush Forever. Life five.

A long time passed. In May 2010 Liberal Environment Minister Bill Marmion rezoned Kiara Bushland to ‘Urban’, ignoring community wishes and the Hearing Committee’s advice. Life six.

Later that year we found a new interesting species – a mantis orchid that we’ve lately confirmed is *Caladenia falcata* or Fringed Mantis Orchid (see photo). Like the Woolly Dragon (*Hemiphora bartlingii*), also pictured, it is significant for its rarity on the Swan Coastal Plain. The native plant species list grew to 167, plus we added a few mosses and more fungi. We and the UBC reminded the Department of Housing that they had to refer the bush to

the Commonwealth government under the EPBC Act for Carnaby Black Cockatoo habitat. We were then thrown another lifeline as the WAPC and Department of Housing agreed with us and the UBC that there was merit in pursuing a swap with cleared land next to Lockridge Senior High School so that the bush could be kept. The Department of Housing put their plans on hold. Life seven.

A long time passed, again. In 2012 a fire station was built next to the police station, previously approved because of the old Public Purposes zoning. Just recently we learnt that the Department of Housing is again pressing ahead with development. It might have something to do with the Lockridge High School land being targeted for a disability justice centre. Under the EPBC Act they referred Kiara Bushland for White-tailed and Forest Red-tailed Black habitat. We and the UBC made a submission to the Commonwealth, passing on information the Department of Housing had played down – including the importance of the bush for endangered cockatoos. Now we await the Commonwealth’s decision. Life eight, and counting.

In a final note I took up this cudgel because Kiara Bushland was about the closest bit of bush to my home in Bayswater. I’ve worked alongside many dedicated people, a few who also date back to the first days and others who have joined us at various times. Thanks to all, some who include and are in no particular order: Paul Hamilton, Jane Hamilton, Linda Atkins, Craig Atkins, Rod Henderson, Bill Shaw, Jonathon Lester, Linda Taman, Mary Gray, Dan Panton, Phillip, Andrew, Andrew, Zenon, Russell, Kevin, Rob, Barbara, Phylis, Dave, Ken, and Rolf. Other activities we busied ourselves with included bush walks and bush clean ups. There were also innumerable meetings to organise and attend.

My article is short, and misses so many details. In terms of accuracy, digging into my memory and kept records, I’ve tried to capture as best I can what happened from our point of view - after all 18 plus years is a long time.

2013 Great Cocky Count Results

Matt Fossey, Threatened Cockatoos Project Manager, BirdLife Australia

The results of this year’s Great Cocky Count were released in November. There has been some media interest in the key findings so you may have already read an article about it in your local paper or online. The full report and summary is currently available from: <http://birdlife.org.au/media/future-looks-black-for-carnabys-cockatoos/>.

The 2013 count of 5800 cockies in the Swan Region was a 44% increase from 2012 but numbers are still down by 14% on the 6700 birds recorded in 2010. The increased numbers observed in 2013 were focused in the Northern suburbs and Northern Swan Coastal Plain areas.

The greater numbers of Carnaby’s counted north of the Swan River is potentially due to parts of the Gngangara, Pinjar and Yanchep pine plantations being cleared, removing critical feeding and roosting habitat, and causing the cockatoos to move to coastal locations where they are more easily observed.

The 2013 results also show a change in how the cockies are utilising some of the best-monitored metropolitan roosts, which highlights the need to monitor as many sites as possible in order to pick up movements between roosts and to better assess the Swan Region population as a whole.

While the Great Cocky Count’s value remains strongest in and around Perth (now with 4 years of consecutive data), confirmed roosts in regional areas will, in time, provide information on Carnaby’s population changes beyond the Swan Region.

Thank you to all volunteers for participating in this year’s Great Cocky Count. Without their support, such an extensive survey would not have been possible. In particular, I’d like to thank Tam Kabat, who did an outstanding job coordinating the 2012 and 2013 Great Cocky Counts and writing the technical reports.

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THOUSANDS KILLED AS BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT GOES WRONG

Sylvia Tetlow

In the eight years I have lived in Craigie I have enjoyed the visual amenity of the native bushland scenery behind my house. The bush was part of the buffer zone around the Water Corporation's Beenyup Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). I enjoyed the wildflowers in spring and the many birds, mammals and reptiles that called the bush, and sometimes my backyard, their home. The bush was dense and in good condition and its scenery enabled easy imaginings of being in nature and feeling free, providing a mental escape from stifling suburbia. *This bushland enhanced our quality of life.*

The native vegetation provided an adequate buffer between about 30 residences in Craigie and the activities of the WWTP and proposed Groundwater Replenishment Plant (GWRP). The integrity of the native bush buffer was of utmost importance in creating a barrier and absorbing a great deal of noise and vibrations from the WWTP/GWRP activities and associated heavy haulage vehicles as well as dust and odour. The bush provided a great service as well as visual amenity.

A few months before December 2012 residents adjoining the Beenyup buffer received a letter from the Water Corporation to say that 'fire mitigation' works will be undertaken. As in previous years this was assumed to relate to the annual maintenance of the 10 m fire break behind our homes which separates us from the bush buffer.

In late November 2012 a bulldozer started work on the fire break. In early December an excavator was brought on site and began clearing a strip of bushland alongside the firebreak. At this stage we thought they were extending the fire break by removing the dense vegetation next to it as part of their 'fire mitigation'. Residents became alarmed when it did not stop there. The excavator continued for six weeks to remove **all** of the under- and mid-story native vegetation (possibly up to 60 native species) up to a height of 2 m over an area of about 5 hectares. All debris was removed off site. The contractors also cut off all of the lower limbs from the remaining trees including banksias.

When they had finished their destruction it looked like a sparse dust bowl with only some tuarts, banksias and blackboys left. Where we had beautiful bushland before we now had unobstructed views of their operations including traffic, storage piles that

look like rubbish tips and plant infrastructure. Now there was effectively no buffer against the nuisance of industrial activities some 50 – 100 m from resident's homes. Without the native vegetation screening residents are now directly exposed to increased nuisance from noise from heavy haulage trucks that operate day and night, noise and from WWTP – alarms/sirens/P.A. phones, light pollution from their flood lights and loss of visual amenity. The easterly winds now bring rubbish blown across the waste land, dust, weed seeds and herbicide drift.

Clearing the buffer was done without community consultation and greatly distressed many unsuspecting residents. Over the six week period it took to clear the vegetation residents tried to find out what was going on and stop the clearing. It was very hard to get hold of anyone in the Water Corporation as they have a thick line of defence. They could only get as far as the communications officer and were blocked - no one seemed to know what was going on. After much research we found the person responsible for authorising the clearing; he was the coordinator of operational risk in the customer service group. He repeatedly told us they had the permits to clear and they would not stop because they were doing it to save our lives and properties from fire. It was the result of the knee-jerk reaction by government to the Keelty report on the 2011 Perth hills bushfires.

In February 2013 after some of the initial shock and grief lessened a little we began to think more clearly. We wanted an explanation and to find out the truth. We decided to check if the Water Corporation had the correct permit to clear native vegetation. Initially the Department of Environment could find no permit so an investigation commenced. The clearing was then assessed by the Department of Environment Regulation and found to be in contravention of the Native Vegetation Protection regulations. After eight months a decision was made - no action will be taken against the Corporation! Instead they have given DER a verbal agreement to revegetate the cleared buffer area, although nothing to this effect has been documented by DER. Even though the bush was cleared illegally, the Water Corporation only refer to it as a 'mistake'. Residents met with representatives from the Corporation in May, October and December 2013, each time stating our concerns and requesting they re-



Photo by S Tetlow

Bushland before clearing in September 2012 (above and below).



Photo by S Tetlow

The same area of bushland after fire hazard reduction clearing, December 2012 (above and below).



Photo by S Tetlow

vegetate and manage the area to provide us with a vegetation screen to their activities. Although they verbally agreed, to date, we have had no formal response or commitment to revegetate the buffer.

It is now 12 months since the bush was cleared. The natural regeneration of native vegetation is very slow and absent in most parts. Many banksias have died from water stress and being disturbed and the area is now infested with weeds. The weeds (wild oats etc) setting seed now will next year be a much heavier infestation and a fire hazard – the very thing



Photo by S Tetlow

the bush was supposedly cleared for in the first place.

The native bushland that was once behind my house enhanced my quality of life not only by providing industry nuisance abatement but also by providing visual enjoyment, a sense of place and a connection to nature. The ignorance in wantonly destroying this ecosystem service beggars belief. The Water Corporation's environmental vandalism killed thousands of plants and animals - they have no voice but I will continue to campaign for their rights on their behalf.

STOP PRESS

ANSTEY KEANE UNDER FURTHER THREAT

City of Armadale proposes to complete Keane Road – through the middle of the precious jewel that is the Anstey Keane Dampland!

The City of Armadale has prepared a Public Environmental Review (PER) to construct the final stage of Keane Road, Forrestdale and has called for submissions by **3 February 2014**.

These local road works, if approved, would require the clearing of 1.65 ha of native vegetation and disturbance of the wetland ecosystem to accommodate the road pavement, dual use pathway and road drainage swales.

The PER details can be found in the 'Out for Comment' section of the City of Armadale website: <http://www.armadale.wa.gov.au>

The Anstey-Keane Dampland and Bush Forever Site (342) in Jandakot Regional Park in Forrestdale is the second most floristically diverse of 500 sites. The site includes rare flora and two threatened ecological communities and is mostly Conservation Category Wetlands. Follow the Anstey-Keane campaign on the UBC website.



Photo by B Fremlin

The City of Armadale starting the clean up at Anstey-Keane wetlands.

Update on developments at Anstey-Keane Dampland

Immediately following a front page article in the local newspaper on November 7 highlighting the shameful build-up of rubbish dumped illegally in Skeet Road, Forrestdale, the City of Armadale (CoA) conducted a clean-up of the area. However, rubbish is again starting to accumulate and the CoA needs to prevent entry of unauthorised vehicles beyond the sealed section of the road by installing a secure gate, heavy and durable, that cannot easily be breached. This should be backed up with signage, clearly stating that rubbish dumping at the site is illegal and that penalties apply.

The significance of this area is its proximity to Lot 67 Skeet Road, part of Bush Forever site 342 and Jandakot



Photo by B Fremlin

The same site after clean up.

Regional Park. This block is currently in private ownership, but the government has pledged to buy it to be included in the Anstey-Keane conservation estate. The process, however, is protracted, and in the meantime the area continues to suffer from rubbish dumping and the unlawful use of off-road vehicles. Lot 67 is unfenced, has no signage and lacks any form of management. This leaves it open to abuse and it facilitates offenders' access into Anstey-Keane Dampland.

Visitors to Anstey-Keane, who come to enjoy the park's abundant natural qualities, often come away disheartened by the extent of inappropriate behaviour taking place here. Joyriding, and rubbish dumping (most of which goes unchecked) should not be tolerated in a valuable ecological site such as this.

Accordingly, the Urban Bushland Council and the Friends of Forrestdale are urging the government to purchase Lot 67 – along with the equally important Lot 69, which is in excellent condition – without further delay. These two blocks will be valued additions to the Anstey-Keane conservation estate and their acquisition will enable better management of the entire Bush Forever site.

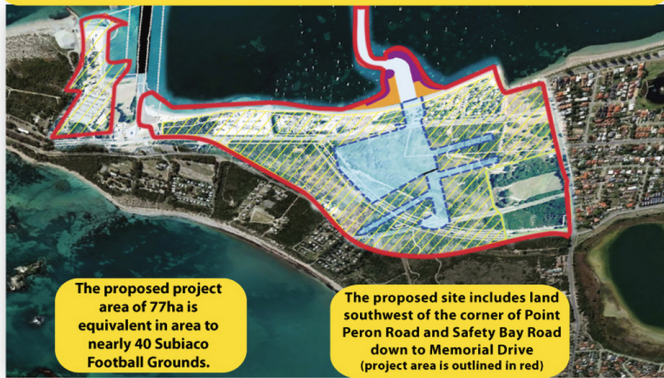
Bryony Fremlin

Point Peron in Peril

Situated fifty kilometres south of Perth at the lower end of Cockburn Sound is the wonderful Point Peron. This natural bushland area was given or granted to the State of Western Australia in 1964 by the Commonwealth Government for public use and recreation purposes. Over time some restricted developments have been built in the area such as a caravan park, sailing club and boat ramp. Cockburn Sound is a marine wonderland with penguins, seals and dolphins breeding in the area, despite the degraded sea grass meadows in the Sound, and the area boasts the richly biodiverse Lake Richmond with two federally listed critically endangered ecological communities: the Lake Richmond thrombolites and the Lake Richmond sedgeland. The thrombolites are related to stromatolites, like those found in Shark Bay, and are an example of one of the earliest forms of life on earth. The

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Point Peron is under attack!



Reprinted with permission from <http://www.handsoffpointperon.com>

thrombolites live on the edge of the freshwater Lake and despite having a recovery plan administered by the state government there is still much unknown about the distribution and ecology of this ancient community.

It was with great dismay and outrage that the UBC wrote an appeal and met with the Appeals Convenor in May 2013 following the EPA's recommendation for significant land clearing and dredging for a canal housing estate in this area. Of particular concern were the many errors in the proponent's submission to the EPA and the apparent acceptance by the EPA of these errors as fact. Our appeal listed no less than 29 appeal grounds ranging from disregard of the precautionary principal, to grave concerns for the critically endangered ecological communities of the freshwater Lake Richmond including impacts from altered water level and quality, the clearing of 40 ha of Bush Forever and the clearing of TEC's and Priority 3 floristic community types. There are many unknowns about the possibility of successful rehabilitation work suggested as an offset of this destruction.

We now await the Appeals Convenor advising the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Albert Jacob, and for his decision on this matter. The UBC strongly urges the Minister to advise his government that precious areas such as Point Peron should never be cleared and Lake Richmond thrombolites should never be put at risk from this canal development, and instead the whole area must be conserved and managed in perpetuity.

Read more here:

<http://www.bushlandperth.org.au/campaigns/hands-off-point-peron>

Save Beeliar Wetlands Group

It's been a fantastic year for the Beeliar wetlands with all the October rain pouring in, the lakes were filling well, with swans nesting on North Lake and the new bird hide on Bibra Lake finally floating on water!

The Save Beeliar Wetlands Group (SBW) have had a busy time with fundraising and lobbying. We had a very

successful fundraiser earlier in the year at the Hilton Bowling Club with local bands "The Damsel Flies West, Isabella's Garden, Lady Luck, The Kiss List and Sugar Child with DJ Checkers all donating their time to help raise funds for the campaign. Greens MLA the Hon Lynn McLaren, and Sam Wainright from Fremantle Road to Rail, also spoke at the event.

We then had an incredibly busy September with the EPA releasing its conditional approval recommendation on Roe 8 to the Minister only a week after the Federal election. We had an intense fortnight gathering information and support for our appeal. Due to the hard work of Kate Kelly, Catherine Baudins, Lee Macintosh, Felicity and too many others to name, we put in a very substantial appeal, and the EPA received over 160 appeals on their recommendations. It was absolutely amazing to see how the community got mobilised around this time and support poured in from many quarters. Our facebook page friends swelled to almost 2000 members, and we had offers of support from a great number of people. Thanks everyone for stepping up to help! We have welcomed a great bunch of new people to the campaign group.

Since then we have had the news that Colin Barnett will not be building Roe 8 in this term of government. Whilst this is good news, and a bit of a reprieve, we have heard this kind of rhetoric before as Roe 8 keeps getting put off and on the government's agenda. Whilst it's great to take stock of our success in bringing the campaign to public attention, an emerging threat is the prospect of preliminary clearing in the proposed road development envelope. This could occur reasonably soon if Minister Jacob accepts the EPA's recommendation of conditional approval for the project, and even although the appeals process is still underway we are raising a legal fighting fund. Any contributions are very welcome (through our website savebeeliarwetlands.com). In the longer term SBW remains fully committed to the deleting Roe 8 from the MRS.



Photo by N Chinna

Save Beeliar Wetlands Group at the Fremantle Parade in November

Group News Group News Group News



Photo by N Chinna

To make sure we are ready for any possibility we recently held a Non Violent Direct Action workshop facilitated by Jess Beckerling from the Forest Alliance. A NVDA group has now formed and is continuing to meet to develop strategies for peaceful direct action to conserve our wetlands. We also had a float in the Fremantle parade which was a lot of fun despite the 37 degree heat.

The Barnett Government's forced council amalgamations may pose another threat to North and Bibra Lake as Fremantle, Melville, and Kwinana have joined forces to try to obliterate Cockburn from the map. This would mean the North and Bibra Lakes would fall in the city of Melville who are pro Roe. We are putting our support behind the 'Hands Off Cockburn' campaign.

We continue to lobby and advocate for our extraordinary and precious wetlands. We hope all at UBC and member groups have a safe and relaxing Christmas break.

Nandi Chinna

The Friends of Success Hill Reserve located on the banks of the Swan River, Seventh Avenue, Bassendean have had a very successful and busy year conducting non chemical ecological restoration at this Class A bushland reserve and registered Aboriginal sacred site.

The unique environmental and cultural heritage of this site has been under threat from veldt grass and other invasive weeds, neighbouring turf management practices and a lack of protection from trail bike riders and other inappropriate uses of this sacred site and nature reserve. After years of heavy chemical spraying with the herbicide Fusilade Forte with limited results and adverse spray drift impacts, the group decided to utilise people power to remove the veldt grass and restore the ecological integrity of the bush.

Over three weeks in August 2013 volunteers hand weeded the veldt grass removing up to 80% of the infestation.



Photo by J Bremmer

Volunteers hand weeding in Success Hill bushland.

We believe we have removed the majority of the veldt grass and have created a more manageable situation for the future. We intend to start earlier next year and expect there to be less veldt grass than this year making our job a little easier. I am very much looking forward to documenting this process for the benefit of other friends groups who also believe that we must move away from our reliance on fossil fuel based herbicides in the ecological restoration of our natural environment.

It was a great community capacity building action and a pleasure to work together with the traditional owners. It is so important for bushcare groups to have the permission and confidence of the indigenous elders and traditional owners when undertaking restoration works at registered sacred sites. It was also great to have the support of the Town of Bassendean's Mayor John Gangell and Councillors Pule and Bridges to encourage the community to support non - chemical ecological restoration. This site is on the banks of the Swan River in a location already identified as heavily impacted by chemical residues so it was important for us to know that we were not contributing to these toxic impacts on our river ecosystem. The commonly used herbicide Fusilade Forte is not appropriate to use near waterways as it is an aquatic toxin. It also prevents native species regeneration undermining the very efforts we are seeking to achieve in bushland restoration.

Jane Bremmer



Photo by J Bremmer

Mayor John Gangell with volunteers after a hand weeding session.

Group News Group News Group News

Bungendore Park Management Committee celebrated the national Bushcare's Major Day Out on 8th September by conducting a "Walk and Weed" event to remove Narrowleaf Cotton Bush and Arum Lily in the south-east corner of the park. Participants walked some 800 m down the eastern firebreak to the weed outbreak on a hilly slope where there is a small population of Blackbutt *Eucalyptus patens*. Pancakes and refreshments were provided after the event by the Armadale Lions Club. Thanks to the City's bush crew for its involvement on the morning.

Concurrent with the weeding activity was the City of Armadale's Spring Time Family Bush Walk nearby in the park. Some of the family walkers took advantage of the parks promotional material made available. Thanks to Ron Withnell (committee member) and Southern Hills Christian College for its facilities on the day.

The 11th annual Bungendore Bush Breakfast was held 10th November in the bushland setting of the park. The Armadale Lions Club did a marvellous job (as always) in cooking the bacon, eggs, tomatoes, hash browns etc. – nearly 70 people attended. After the breakfast, local member Hon. Tony Simpson officially released the new pamphlet "Bats of Bungendore Park" that describes the eight species of bat that are to be found in the park. Three students from the Armadale Primary School (under the supervision of Mady Colquhoun, Science Specialist) mounted a great display of bat photos and information and some bat boxes that they had made at the school. The students were busy answering questions about their involvement at the school and about bats. In keeping with the day's theme, all the children (and some adults) were given bat-shaped biscuits and bat masks made by Kim Sarti.

The beginning of December marks the start of the "silly season" of festivities as everyone winds down for the year. The combined Armadale and Gosnells Bushcare end-of-year breakfast event was held 1st December at the Armadale Settlers' Common Field Study Centre. Cr Ruth Butterfield, Armadale Deputy Mayor, outlined some of



Hon. Tony Simpson with Chloe, Beau and Jack showing their bat biscuits and bat boxes made at school.

the groups' involvement and acknowledged the great work undertaken by volunteer Bushcare groups. Within Armadale City alone, some 5,465 volunteer hours were recorded for the year in environmental activities. Pat Hart (Chair, Bushcare and Environmental Working Group) also spoke of the dedication and great work done by the environmental officers and the Bushcare team. We held a minute's silence for Cam Clay to reflect on his contribution towards the environment and local bushcare.

Committee has been successful in obtaining two grants to continue its long-term habitat enhancement programme – a Swan Alcoa Landcare 2014 grant to undertake weed control in the park, and a State NRM 2013–14 grant to continue the Dieback treatment programme and boundary weed control to prevent future weed incursions.

Kim Sarti

Baigup Wetland Interest Group is a network of people who care about Baigup and want to preserve it as a valuable natural resource for wildlife, the health of the Swan River and human recreation, wellbeing and education.

Efforts during 2013 were mainly directed to improved liaison with the City of Bayswater and enhanced community education via a quarterly electronic newsletter. Two successful bird walks were also held (the first organised by Birdlife Western Australia and supported by BWIG and the City, a talk on Oblong Turtles was organised with the Maylands Historical Society and Clean Up Australia day brought out 20 hardworking volunteers. Members are currently involved in planning water monitoring and signage, weeding and wildlife monitoring. An informal management committee has recently come together to provide a more robust organisational structure and expanded core expertise.

Baigup is part of *Bush Forever* site No. 313, which includes both sides of the river from the east end of Maylands Peninsula to Garratt Road Bridge. It's also part of Precinct 9 (Ascot to Guilford) of the Swan/Canning



Photo by K Sarti

Hand removal of Narrowleaf Cotton Bush.



Photo by M. Bassanelli

Baigup wetland

Riverpark. Baigup is registered in the *Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia* and is subject to protection under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Approximately 70 species of birds have been identified at Baigup in the last 18 months. Frogs, native Water Rats and Oblong Turtles are also present and extensive sedge plains along the river are valuable reminders of the original state of this important section of remnant floodplain. Unfortunately, *Melaleuca raphiophylla* has suffered badly from rising river levels and increasing river salinity, although some stands of trees watered by springs and channels from the back of the reserve remain healthy. Baigup is unusual along the river in that it has never been used for landfill, although post-contact uses included market gardening, animal pasturing, and orchards into the 1960s at least.

UBC members may remember the valuable work done in the early 2000s by the former Friends group. The value of once again having a community group involved in Baigup was highlighted recently when an exotic Red Eared Slider Turtle was observed several times in the reserve and subsequently caught in a nearby street. These American turtles have become naturalised in several places on the East Coast and threaten native ecologies in several parts of the world. They're considered a serious threat by the WA Department of Agriculture and Food.

If you would like to receive newsletters from Baigup Wetland Interest Group, please contact the coordinator, Penny Lee, at baigup@iinet.net.au

Reprinted with permission from the Friends of Baigup Newsletter.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID PIKE

David Pike, Friends of Star Swamp President, was one of only two Individual Landcarer Award Finalists in the prestigious 2013 Western Australian Landcare Awards. David was nominated for over 30 years voluntary service to a number of groups, including Friends of Star Swamp Bushland and the Wildflower Society of WA. The ceremony was held at Government House, with Greg Warburton taking out the award for work in the Avon River area.

Connecting kids with nature

Every year the UBC is contacted by a number of school teachers seeking information about engaging students with their local bushland. This year the UBC has visited primary schools across the metro area talking to students on a number of bushland issues. These include visits to the Subiaco School's Pre-primary class for a talk on black cockatoos and a similar talk for Year 2s on Harmony Day. We also visited Year 1 students at Boyare PS on National Tree Day and undertook a "Treasure Hunt" of different trees growing on the school grounds. We visited Year 6 students at St Emelie's PS on a number of occasions to investigate the three banksia species in the school bushland plus a weed mapping exercise, Year 5 students at Iona Primary about Perth biodiversity, tree planting with Bush Cadets from Mt Lawley High School, bushwalks and weeding with Kindy students from Perth College, and tree identification activities and wetland investigation with Mt Lawley Primary School Science Club.

We look forward to continuing these activities in the new year and encourage local groups to create links with schools to assist teachers in engaging students with their local environment through bushwalks, citizen science, weeding or tree planting activities. Environmental professionals may be interested in joining the CSIRO's Scientists in Schools program which matches interested schools with scientists. Introducing children to the wonders of our biodiversity is a lot of fun and it is essential if we are to ensure we create a society that values and conserves our unique urban bushland areas.

Marg Owen

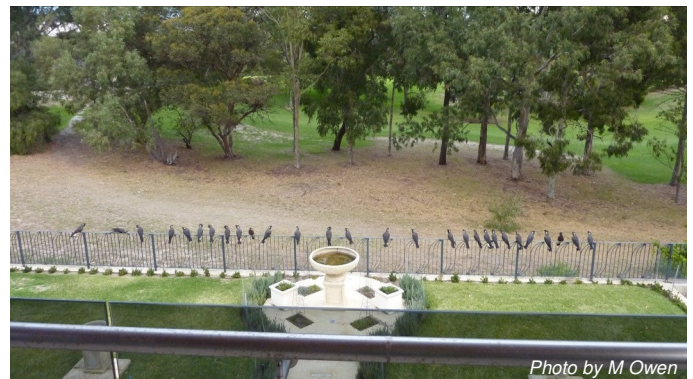


Photo by M Owen

(Continued from page 4)

The 2014 Great Cocky Count will be funded by the Perth Region NRM and will take place on Sunday 6 April 2014. Please mark the date on your calendars! BirdLife Australia is currently recruiting for the 2014 Great Cocky Count Coordinator and we hope to welcome a new coordinator on board in January.

To report new roost sites and send roost count reports go to: greatcockycount@birdlife.org.au. All other black-cockatoo related queries can be directed at matt.fossey@birdlife.org.au or phone 9287 2251.

2013 UBC submissions and comments

Listed are most of the submissions/comments the UBC made over 2013. A huge amount of work has gone into commenting on these proposals.

14 January 2013: submission to WAPC on MRS Scheme Amendment 1236/57: Bush Forever Definition Clause insertion and Removal of Clause 16.

8 February 2013: submission to WAPC on MRS Minor Scheme Amendment 1241/57 Murdoch Mixed Use precinct. *UBC suggested that the conservation area be zoned P and R. Proposal approved as advertised. The WAPC stated that the bushland 'is not considered of regional significance' and that protection and management would be considered at the more detailed structure planning stage.*

24 February 2013: comment to CEO City of Swan Development Proposal for lots 2,171 and 172 Plymouth St Woodbridge. The proposal was for housing on the eastern side of the Swan Coastal Plain in a flood risk area.

12 March 2013: comment to City of Joondalup on proposed synthetic hockey pitch, 2 grassed hockey pitches, clubrooms and other works on Warwick Open Space. *Council approved this proposal subject to funding.*

20 March 2013: comment to the CEO City of Stirling on the proposed Coastal Dune Boardwalk- North of Scarborough Beach to South of Trigg Beach to CEO City of Stirling. *Proposal rejected by the City of Stirling after a huge local campaign.*

14 April 2013: appeal against the granting of a Clearing Permit to Main Roads for the Gateway Project, Perth Airport and Freight Access, City of Belmont and Shire of Kalbarunda, 103 hectares (CPS 5242/10). *Project underway.*

23 April 2013: comment to the City of Nedlands opposing the development of 11 Bedbrook Place for a St John's Ambulance depot in Bedbrook in bushland in the linkage between two Bush Forever sites, Shenton Bushland and Underwood Avenue Bushland. *Corridor being kept on the west side and depot building design flipped to save several mature tuart trees.*

26 April 2013: to the CEO City of Armadale, public comment under the EPBC Act on the construction of Keane Road through Anstey -Keane Wetlands. 2009/5053. The federal government has determined that the project is a controlled action.

13 May 2013: appeal to the Office of the Appeals Convenor against the EPA Report 1471 on the Mangles Bay Marina-Based Tourist Precinct. UBC strongly opposes the excavation of a marina and canal estate at Point Peron that would result in the clearing of 40ha of Bush Forever vegetation and alter the hydrology of Lake Richmond. The UBC did a 65page submission.

14 June 2013: comment on the clearing for the interchange of Reid Highway-Malaga Drive interchange and the impact on Lightning Swamp. *Project approved.*

19 June 2013: submission to Perth Airport on the draft Major Development Plan Clearing of Southern Aviation Support Precinct and construction of Taxiway Charlie Extension.

21 June 2013: comment to the Native Vegetation Conservation Branch on the proposal to clear some trees for a carpark at WA Sports Centre, Venues West, City of Nedlands. Most trees retained. *UBC met with VenuesWest on site.*

26 June 2013: comment on the MRS amendment Lot 911 Midland Road Hazelmere: 'Bushmead'. UBC recommended that the area assigned Urban or Urban Deferred zoning is significantly less than shown and that significantly more bushland is included in Bush Forever.

5 July 2013: comment to the City of Cockburn on the proposed Cockburn Central West Structure Plan where a Resource Enhancement Wetland was proposed for filling and an artificial wetland proposed for construction. *The City rejected the proposal.*

31 August 2013: comment to Native Vegetation Conservation Branch on the Cottesloe Golf Club proposal to clear 0.175ha of native vegetation but no application to clear the 83 (or 91) trees. *It transpired that the trees were not original but had been planted and therefore were not protected under the Environmental Protection Act 1986.*

9 September 2013: submission to the Chairman of the EPA on the Roe Highway Extension, Public Environmental Review.

25 September 2013: appeal to the Appeals Convenor against the EPA Report on the Roe 8 Highway Extension. *EPA recommended to the Minister that the project be approved. Project put on hold.*

7 October 2013: comment on referral to EPBC on WA Hartfield Park Sporting field extension.

27 October 2013: comment on the referral to the EPBC on Jandakot Airport Holding's proposed clearing of Precincts 6 and 6A at Jandakot Airport.

12 November 2013: comments to the CEO City of Swan and request for a meeting with the Department of Planning relating to the Bushfire Amendment to the Local Planning Scheme, City of Swan.

24 November 2013: comment on the referral to the Department of the Environment Canberra, by WA Housing Authority for a school and housing on the Kiara TAFE site. *UBC strongly recommends that the site be withdrawn from development and be added to Bush Forever under the Strategic Assessment.*



Cam Clay (L) and Armadale Wildflower Society members at Settlers' Common busy bee, October 2013

Obituary—Cam Clay

It is with sadness we acknowledge the passing of Cam Clay on 12th November 2013, aged 73.

Cam has always had a strong community involvement, in his early years with Youth Hostels Australia, and later when he and wife Faye moved to Bedforddale he joined the Bedforddale Volunteer Bushfire Brigade starting a long association with this group (and eventually being made a life member of the brigade).

On retirement, Cam became increasingly involved in all aspects concerning the local environment and in landcare. Cam served as chairman of Armadale-Gosnells Landcare Group (AGLG) for 12 years where at planting days, forums, meetings etc. he would be an advocate for

landcare. For the past 10 years, Cam was treasurer of South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) and was deputy chair of the City of Armadale's Bushcare and Environmental Working Group.

Along with Faye, Cam was active in RoleyBushCare and the field days of injecting trees in the Dieback control programme of local Roleystone reserves and a member of the Armadale Wildflower Society. Cam also volunteered on many occasions at the Armadale Settlers' Common and Bungendore Park where this year he auger-drilled many hundreds of holes into the gravel ready for the seedlings on planting day.

Cam was also an Honorary River Guardian through the Swan River Trust.

In 2011, Cam had the rare double honour of receiving two Australia Day Citizenship Awards from the City of Armadale – the Active Citizenship Award for a person 25 years and over, and the Environmental Contribution of the Year Award. He was also held in high regard by the City of Gosnells and its environmental community.

Cam was a leader in all aspects of caring for our bushland and waterways over many years and expressed his opinion strongly in support of the environment. He was renowned for his tenacity and commitment and was respected for this.

The community has lost a great environmental advocate and, for those who knew him, a great friend. Vale Cam Clay.

Kim Sarti

◇ What's new? ◇ What's new? ◇ What's new? ◇ What's new?

Call for registrations

2014 WA WETLAND MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

**World Wetlands Day, Friday 31 January 2014
9am-4pm, Bibra Lake**

The Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre is calling for registrations for the 10th WA Wetland Management Conference. If you would like to attend please contact Denise Crosbie, Wetlands Officer via email denise@cockburnwetlands.org.au to obtain the program and the registration form. Registration forms for up to 8 or 12 people are available upon request or on website: <http://cockburnwetlandscentre.wordpress.com/>

Due to the generous support of sponsors, the City of Cockburn, Department of Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia, fees are kept to a minimum (concessional registrations available).

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY SUNDAY 2 MARCH 2014

To register a site or volunteer go to
<http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/>

Environmental Protection Bulletin No 20:

Protection of Naturally Vegetated Areas through Planning and Development

In December 2013, the Environmental Protection Authority released a bulletin which sets out its views and expectations for the design of urban and peri-urban development proposals in order to protect naturally vegetated areas.

The new bulletin complements Guidance Statement 10 (EPA 2006), Bush Forever (WAPC 2000 & WAPC 2010), the Clearing principles in Schedule 5 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, Guidance Statement 33 (EPA 2008) and Liveable Neighbourhoods (WAPC 2007).

Its aim is to assist in the integration and consideration of naturally vegetated areas during all stages of land use planning, from strategic planning to subdivision and development planning, to meet the EPA's environmental objectives for vegetation, flora and terrestrial fauna.

To download the document go to
http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/policies_guidelines/envprotectbulltn/Pages/default.aspx

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

Urban Bushland Council Activities UBC AGM and Council meeting

Wednesday 5th March 2014

Guest speakers Greg Keighery and Val English of Department of Parks and Wildlife:

'Our Banksia woodlands: will we lose them?'

Meet at 6pm for drinks and nibbles and 6.30pm start at the City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi St West Perth

For information visit www.bushlandperth.org.au

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.

Managing our Bushland - proceedings of a conference about the protection and management of urban bushland (1998)

Out of print; available in libraries.

Burning our Bushland - proceedings of a conference about fire and urban bushland (1995)

Out of print; available in libraries.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Compiled by: Renata Zelinova

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

Copy deadline - 10 February 2014

PERTH'S BUSHLAND BIRTHDAY & PERPETUAL CALENDAR

\$10 plus \$2 postage

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