

The Extinction Crisis for Carnaby's Cockatoo – A Fight for Survival

By Heidi Hardisty

Birdlife Australia released the results of the 2015 Great Cocky Count with the alarming news that the population of Carnaby's Cockatoos continue to decline in the Perth-Peel region at a rate of 15% per year. Estimated from roost counts, there were fewer occupied roosts and fewer birds in each roosting flock over the past six years (2010-2015). Given this worrying news, UBC arranged for two experts to speak in December on aspects of Carnaby's Cockatoo and their fight for survival: Dr Christine Groom and Dr Geoff Barrett.

Dr Christine Groom spoke about her recent PhD research on how Carnaby's Cockatoos utilise the urban landscape. One of the major focuses was to identify their important habitat so the species can be conserved and enhanced, and to help improve planning to limit the impact of development. She satellite tracked 23 reha-

bilitated birds and spent a great deal of time observing them in the field, investigating their movements, diets and behaviour. Some of the more unusual behaviour included: digging with their beaks; eating banksia leaves, licking leaves to drink water, leaf bathing to wash their feathers, sunbathing to dry their feathers and playing with each other to practice behaviour. Her major focus was describing the Carnaby's major daily activities (foraging, drinking, roosting, and commuting) in the bird's typical day: wake at dawn, feed throughout the morning, drink, rest, feed throughout the afternoon, drink before bed and settle down to roost at night.

While foraging, the birds fly on average approx. 5.5 km from their roost in morning and after a rest, travel about the same distance again in the afternoon. They forage on both native and exotic species in bushland remnants and people's yards, in the

canopy and on the ground. The roadside can be a dangerous place; Carnaby's can be struck by cars as they take off slowly. People can help by planting cockatoo food species (like banksias) in safe places, protecting remnant bushlands, and putting up signs near roadside feeding areas.

Carnaby's spend a good deal of time commuting to find food. During their daily flights, they often stop and rest using existing trees in gardens or remnant bushlands. She said we should be looking after our green space and increasing the tree canopy in our city.

Carnaby's drink from both permanent and temporary sources, like wetlands and birdbaths. Water sources can be precarious, like roadside puddles, and providing safe drinking opportunities is vital. Repairing potholes and fixing reticulations can all help to reduce hazardous puddles on the road.

At twilight, the birds congregate in an area to rest over-

(Continued on page 4)



Photo by M Owen

Just one of the many challenges facing Carnaby's black cockatoos in their home region.

Inside this issue:

Mixed News in the Green Growth Plan	2
Simple lessons from Lower Canning	3
Establishing native seedlings in a heavily kangaroo grazed area	6
Group News	7

Editorial or *Mixed News* in the *Green Growth Plan*

The State Government is planning to significantly downsize the conservation estate in the Perth and Peel Regions to accommodate more housing and industrial development. The Premier's Department recently released its "Green Growth Plan" for accommodating 3.5 million people in the region by 2031. The plan is supposed to ensure that the biodiversity of this internationally recognized hotspot is conserved while the urban complex is allowed to grow along the lines of the Directions 2031 urban growth strategy. The State Government is hoping that the Commonwealth will accept the plan and endorse the growth strategy and not subject it to any further environmental assessments.

At first glance the Green Growth Plan looks attractive. It is full of positive spin. It promises an expanded conservation reserve system with better management arrangements; improved water quality and measures to protect wetlands; and measures to support Carnaby's cockatoo. The Government claims that it will add 170,000 hectares to the conservation estate and establish the Peel Regional Park and provide 116,000 hectares of Carnaby's cockatoo habitat. The additional 170,000 hectares will be added over 25 years and includes 50,000 hectares of land outside the Perth and Peel regions. The remaining 120,000 hectares will be selected from 210,000 hectares of current regional parks, bush forever and vacant crown land.

This means that there will be a net loss of 90,000 hectares of land that was earmarked for conservation in the System Six Report and the Bush Forever plan. This land will be used for housing, roads, industrial estates and mining.

The wetland promises are also dubious. The new wetland buffer guidelines which are promised will only apply to conservation category wetlands, which account for only 17% of the remaining wetlands in the Perth and Peel Regions. When you take this together with the fact that over 80% of the original wetlands in this biodiversity hotspot have been destroyed since the European settlers arrived in 1829, this means that the Government is proposing to protect just over 3% of the original wetland system. Does this constitute an adequate and sensitive response to our rich biological heritage?

A careful reading of this Green Growth Plan makes it clear that the State Government is offering very little to conservation. In fact the net result will be a downsizing of the conservation estate that has been built up by successive governments over the past 50 years. The so-called new reserves are new only in the sense that they are existing reserves that will be converted to more secure land tenure over the next 25 years. The promises of extra funding for their management are vague and seem to rely on the sale of current reserves to developers and the use of offset money from development projects. There are a few worthwhile, minor additions to regional parks and the Peel Regional Park is long overdue (and will be established by 2040, according to this plan).

This plan is a serious threat to the conservation of our urban bushland and wetlands and it is important that we all take the time to read and comment on it. The plan may be found at the DPC website www.dpc.wa.gov.au/greengrowthplan. Click on documents and you will find 3000 pages of spin, but the essence of it is in Draft Action Plan H, which is only 30 pages long. Comments close on 8 April 2016. Please read it and consult the map on page 19 to see how it affects your local area. The reserves coloured in light blue are the ones under threat.

All UBC members and supporters are invited to attend a
BRIEFING ON Green Growth Plan 3.5 million
Friday 26th February 10am – 12 noon.
More details on the back page of the newsletter.



Photo by M Owen

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.

Great gift idea

**PERTH'S BUSHLAND BIRTHDAY & PERPETUAL
CALENDAR**

\$10 plus \$2 postage

Available by mail order from the UBC office.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Compiled by: Renata Zelinova

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

Copy deadline - 15 March 2016

SIMPLE LESSONS FROM THE LOWER CANNING

Extract from: *Canning River Residents Environment Protection Association (Inc.) (CREPA) & City of Canning at the WA Wetland Management Conference 2016, Bibra Lake*
By Colma Keating, CREPA

Except for areas of dedicated beaches (with access to the river and grassed strips) one of our goals is to have robust natural vegetation between the walk/cycle path and the river's edge. Like all of you, so far this has taken lots of time, effort, resources, generosity and goodwill. Certainly also some moments of frustration as well as lots of enjoyment. These are some of our lessons from the Lower Canning about taking care of the people that make the difference.....

Splitting up the foreshore – for the first 8 years we worked up and down the foreshore inviting all members to each work session. Then in 2002 we split our 6kms into five sections and invited members and other locals, including residents of Riverton Drive that runs parallel to our area to five foreshore walks all held at same time. Participants got to decide which area they would join and each group then decided when they would work. We believe this met a number of needs including:

- attachment to a particular bit of the foreshore
- a spot closer to home and
- a day and time that suited participants.

This approach also shared the coordination tasks across five volunteers. For bigger weeding and planting sessions - the entire membership is invited.

One hour, tools down – a mantra for our hands-on sessions. Short and sharp sessions, letting people go back to their other lives to take kids to sport, hang out the washing, read the paper etc without feeling guilty. It took us a long time to learn this lesson. Previously we worked until the job got done and sadly lost many a future foreshore carer along the way. For our 'bigger sessions', we extend to two-three hours followed by a 'sausage sizzle' or some such. A great way to provide a simple 'reward' as well as the opportunity to 'catch up'.

Adding 'enjoyment and discovery' to corporate days is similar to the 'one hour, tools down'. Whilst many corporates offer staff for a day, we know that after a long day of weeding they may never put their hand up to help again. So one approach is to organise a morning's hard yakka followed by lunch and then canoeing upstream into the Canning River Regional Park. Again this provides some 'reward', introduces people to the wonders of our natural areas reinforcing the importance of our work and their contribution as well as makes the day more enjoyable, thus hoping they will want to return.

Moving to different sites on a corporate weeding day – another approach Sallie has found effective in reinvigorating vollies on a long day. Apart from being able to enjoy a different part of the foreshore, it is easier to clearly see what weeds are to be removed.

Doing 'stuff with fellow groups' - This time last year, as the City of Canning was to be dismantled and subsumed



Photo provided by G&D Matthews

Outcomes of the restoration efforts by CREPA at one of the sites along the river, 'Grecian's Spit'. Above, Grecian's Spit in 1995; below, the same site in 2014.



Photo by C Keating

within neighbouring councils, we wanted to thank the staff whom we'd worked with over the years. We jointly hosted it with our fellow community conservation groups. Doing such things has been a great way to spend time with like-minded people, and has led to more sharing of information, seeking guidance, and having someone to gripe with when that is what is needed.

The power of happy snaps – thanks to all the 'happy snappers' and 'serious photographers' CRREPA has a great collection of photos that show either what we have all achieved (ie the changes on the ground) or the people involved along the way. Often those who have been in it for the long haul get a lovely reminder at what has been achieved, new folk get a surprise as they thought the foreshore vegetation was always there and members and other vollies can see their efforts are appreciated as we use pics in our newsletters, AGM slide shows as well as often in a quick e-mail post a working session with thanks and a pic or four of that day's helpers.

Nature's help along the way is certainly gained from our location. As vollies and the city staff toil away we get lovely 'philips' from river dolphins, swans, ospreys, feeding frenzies ...or just the changing light on the river.

Thanks for letting us share some simple lessons and we'd love to learn some of yours.

(Continued from page 1)

night. There is only a 50% chance that they will return to the morning roost site. They prefer to use a network of interchangeable roosts while foraging in a particular area. They settle in trees at least 20 years old. Many are exotic trees, probably because the birds are avoiding noise and have a great view. People can help by protecting existing and potential roost sites and by planting future ones.

Carnaby's Cockatoos really have adapted to living in an urban landscape. This means that humans greatly influence where the Carnaby's feed, drink and roost. Christine summed up by saying her research can be used to help the birds as well as ourselves. "A win-win situation."

Dr Groom's doctoral thesis submitted for PhD, 'Roost site fidelity and resource use by Carnaby's cockatoo, *Calyptorhynchus laritostriis*, on the Swan coastal plain, Western Australia', UWA' can be found in the Research Depository: http://research-repository.uwa.edu.au/files/5164511/Groom_Christine_2015.pdf



Photo by M Owen

The mood was sombre as Dr Geoff Barrett from the Swan Region of the Department of Parks & Wildlife (DPAW) presented the 2015 Great Cocky Count results. In addition to the alarming trend that all 3 threatened species of black cockatoos are declining in number, he stated that only 40% of the potential cockatoo feeding habitat on the Swan Coastal Plain remains today. Plus the area of occupancy for the Carnaby's Cockatoos has declined by 50% since the middle of the last century.

Geoff did have some positive news. Baudin's Cockatoos may have more of a chance than previously thought. Although the birds are notorious for raiding apple orchards and still shot illegally, there have been recent successes in netting trials. Although there is an initial costly investment, there are added benefits that help recoup these



Photo by M Owen

costs far faster than anticipated. Besides less damage to the apples and hence a larger crop to sell, nets reflect sunlight therefore keeping the orchards cooler which results in less water use and better apple quality.

DPAW is undertaking a number of cockatoo recovery actions. These include mapping and assessing the black cockatoo habitat, on ground works like revegetation, land acquisition through offsets, providing planting guidelines for cockatoo food, raising awareness, and rehabilitation of injured birds. DPAW has also been involved in the Strategic Assessment of the Perth and Peel Region which aims to look at cumulative impacts of clearing on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) like the black cockatoos.

The management of breeding sites is of particular concern with the goal of protecting and repairing existing hollows, as well as adding artificial hollows. Although some trials have shown that black cockatoos are utilising up to 20% of the artificial hollows installed, the picture is grim. Dr Barrett was blunt: "By 2050 there will be a housing crisis for all hollow breeding birds".

Geoff spoke highly of the Great Cocky Count which has served as a successful model for other citizen science projects. Six counts were carried out annually from 2010-2015 with 300-600 volunteers participating each year. Counters are allocated a specific roost and use a standard method to count the birds as they fly into the roost. As shown by Dr Groom's research, they generally roost where banksia woodlands are within 6km of the roost site.

The survival of the urban population of Carnaby's is in question. Only one-third of the potential feeding habitat in the Perth and Peel Region occurs in land managed by DPAW. Offsets are not often in the correct places to support an urban population as many offsets are north of the Perth city limit. Dr Barrett also pointed out that Carnaby's Cockatoos need to consume large quantities of food, the equivalent of 60 banksia cones per day! Hence, it is more important than ever to protect the critical habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoos which is defined as foraging habitat (banksia woodland, pine plantations,



Photo by M Owen

other remnant vegetation), as well as night roosts and breeding sites.

Dr Barrett then spoke about the population viability analysis (PVA) recently done by DPAW. This confirmed that adult survival is important to viability and that numbers of cockatoos will depend on available habitat. For Carnaby's, 90% of pairs breed each year, 60% fledglings reach their first year, and if the adult lives to 4 years of age then it is likely to survive until it is 35 years old. Although the PVA did not predict the extinction of the Carnaby's, there were questions regarding the assumptions used in the model. The model included existing banksia woodlands plus the pine plantations as part of the Carnaby's foraging habitat. But over the next 20 years thousands of hectares of banksia woodlands will be cleared and the government has since announced that they will only replant 5,000 of the 23,000 ha of pine plantations.

Presentation by Geoff Barrett is available via the UBC website: http://www.bushlandperth.org.au/images/stories/cockie_page/barrett_abc_talk_dec_2015.pdf

Thank you very much to both speakers for their wonderful talks, as well as their passion and dedication to saving the Carnaby's Cockatoos.

Environmental Defender Faults Government's New Biodiversity Law

On 10 February 2016, the Environmental Defender's Office (EDOWA) released a 36-page white paper recommending against passage of the WA Government's Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015, at least in its current form.

The Bill, introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 25 November 2015, was touted by Premier Colin Barnett as a "momentous step forward in the conservation of the State's biodiversity" and "a very significant achievement".

EDOWA's paper strongly disagrees with the Government's assessment, however. According to the paper, the new law's touted benefits "are illusory at best – a mirage". While the paper recognises the Bill has some good features (repealing two obsolete laws, substantially increasing potential penalties for violations, providing a process for listing protected or threatened species and ecosystems), according to EDO Principal Solicitor Patrick Pearlman, "the new law takes a giant step back in many other ways".

The Bill, Mr Pearlman said, "gives virtually unfettered discretion to either the WA Environment Minister or DPAW's CEO in decision-making, leaves both the scientific community and the public out in the cold when it comes to identifying vulnerable species, critical habitat or key threatening processes, gives offenders defences that will likely undermine enforcement efforts, and broadly exempts government and industry from the new law's reach". "Even worse", Mr Pearlman added, "the Bill appears to promote short-term declines to foster development and permits the Minister to allow species to be taken to the point of extinction". "That's simply repugnant to any notion of biodiversity conservation", he said.

The paper notes that the new law fails to provide the deterrent of imprisonment that exists under many current laws. "Removing even the threat of jail time for harming highly threatened species is particularly disturbing given the Government's current efforts to jail peaceful protestors for 'interfering with lawful activity'", Mr Pearlman said.

Keith Claymore, the paper's co-author agreed, noting that "the Bill proposes to codify and mandate some programs and processes that been around for many years, but offers little more in the way of actively promoting and advancing biodiversity conservation at a State and bioregional scale". "Significantly absent in the Bill, when compared to other Australian and overseas biodiversity laws, are provisions for a statewide biodiversity strategy or periodic evaluation and reporting on the state and condition of WA's biodiversity", Mr Claymore added.

"Lack of provisions to establish an independent scientific advisory committee to assist with the future Act's implementation, and lack of provisions for sandalwood management that reflected best practice standards and ensured sustainable use was of particular concern to us", he said.

EDO's white paper is being published to encourage informed debate and to ensure the new law isn't adopted without significant amendments – including allowing citizens to enforce its provisions – and is available at <http://edowa.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0d24f90d5806ca4d8d4595775&id=a5cbfcc3b2&e=1f4c3211ed>. The Bill is expected to be debated in Parliament before State elections next year, possibly in this sitting period.



Establishing native seedlings in a heavily kangaroo grazed area

By Ruth Clark, Waterbird Conservation Group

Maramanup Sanctuary, Baldivis, is home to about 30 or more western grey kangaroos. They travel from Maramanup through farming lands and other reserves and back again every day.

The Waterbird Conservation Group have been revegetating the wetland for over 21 years and have noticed certain areas are more prone to grazing by the kangaroos than others.

Recently the Group received funding from the Department of Parks and Wildlife's Perth Banksia Woodland Community Restoration grants to extend the revegetation into the adjacent upland sandy area of the Bush Forever



Photo by R Clark

site managed by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC). Previous attempts to plant in this area using normal plastic guards had proven unsuccessful with heavy kangaroo grazing resulting in inhibited growth or death.

Former Department of Planning officer Doug McArthur worked closely with the Group to maintain and manage this area effectively. It is with this continued support through officer Richard Forknall that the WAPC was able to contribute to the project by erecting 800m of fence around the Banksia woodland plantings (herbs, shrubs and trees) to protect them from the kangaroos. The fence is 1.5m high including 15 horizontal wires with graduated spacing from 7.5cm at the bottom to 17.5cm at the top and 15cm wide vertical spacing. There are 3 white 4mm coated sight wires positioned along the bottom, middle and top to alert the kangaroos of its presence. Steel posts were used to support the fence. It is intended that the fence will be removed (and reused elsewhere) when the

plants have grown sufficiently large enough to cope with any grazing.

The fencing has been up since April 2015 and has been successful in keeping the hungry kangaroos out. The plants are flourishing as a result.

As the kangaroos are mobile within the area and can travel at high speeds we did not want to impede their usual travel

routes and so ensured we did not fence across their main track lines. Therefore we only fenced a 0.7ha open area and did not join this up to the flooded gum area where we planted hundreds of *Banksia littoralis* seedlings.

Department of Parks and Wildlife provided funds for the use of Eko Tek Tree Guards (pictured above) for the protection of the *Banksia littoralis* seedlings. With the use of steel pegs holding the base of the guard and tall bamboo canes holding the sides it is proving to be fairly successful. These have been in place for 6 months. Only one guard has been knocked down during this time and unfortunately the seedling was nibbled to within a few centimetres of the ground.

Let's hope the kangaroos don't get hungrier as the summer warms and the protection continues to keep them out.



Photo by R Clark



Photo by R Clark

Group News Group News Group News

Friends of Paganoni Swamp

Paganoni Swamp Reserve is an important conservation reserve due to its size (700 hectares) and the range of vegetation types present. Therefore, it's extremely gratifying to have received two grants to undertake valuable on-ground work for the period 2016 to 2018. As well as being the recipients of a SALP (Swan River Trust and Alcoa Landcare Program) grant, we were also successful in gaining a *Resilient Landscapes Grant* funded by the Australia Government's National Landcare Program. Our projects align with the goals of these grants which centre on protecting, retaining and restoring ecosystems across the landscape to ensure they are thriving, sustainable and valued by the community.

The SALP grant concentrates on revegetation of the northern swamp close to Paganoni Road which has become degraded due to a variety of factors. We are planning to intensely plant *Gahnia trifida* seedlings which are being grown up by a local nursery, Nuts about Natives. We are taking an active management approach through trialling different revegetation techniques to find the most effective and efficient way of restoring this patch of bushland. There is also a weed control component in the grant.

The *Resilient Landscape* grant involves three parts – construction of a limestone “bridge” to inhibit the spread of

dieback on the eastern boundary, further revegetation efforts (all with local seeds grown up by Nuts about Natives) and more comprehensive weed control. On the eastern boundary it is proposed that a limestone “bridge” will be strategically constructed over the existing track at entry/exit points of the dieback zone to reduce the possibility of the disease being spread westward into Paganoni Swamp Reserve (the pathogen is intolerant of alkaline conditions). This aspect of the project is important in order to maintain the quality of existing vegetation.

An effective monitoring program is a vital component of the grant process - it enables us to assess the value of different techniques. Just as vital are grants which exist over longer time frames than just a year as it gives us the opportunity to make changes where necessary resulting in more favourable outcomes.

Leoni Stubbs

Friends of Star Swamp Bushland

2016 promises to be another busy year for the Friends of Star Swamp Bushland. Ongoing bush regeneration work includes revegetation of a site on the southern side of the swamp. This area was fenced temporarily a couple of years ago and has been progressively weeded and planted out each winter, with a good deal of success. The Friends group is assisted in this by the City of Stirling's Community Volunteers, with between 20 and 40 people turning up on designated Sundays over autumn and winter to help out.

Another area on the eastern boundary of the Reserve has also been partially fenced to provide additional refuge for our quenda population. In this section, there is evidence of ongoing quenda habitation, mainly through monitoring of their characteristic diggings, although we are yet to see any animals on camera. The Green Army project in the Reserve has focused on this area, with participants learning various bush management skills while they contribute valuable work-hours to the project.

Our monthly program of guided walks will continue on the fourth Saturday, with two nocturnal walks scheduled for 27 May and 23 September, as well as participation in Clean-Up Australia Day 2016 and a monthly weeding morning in strategic areas of the Reserve.

Christine Curry

Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland

Underwood Bushland is home to Brown Goshawks and a pair breed there every year. Last year the parents produced one young, who is now possibly only a couple of months old. Also the forest red-tailed black cockatoo pairs have produced young who are about the same age as the young goshawk.



Dieback affected vegetation in Paganoni Swamp Reserve.

Photo by L Stubbs

Group News Group News Group News

Goshawks live in the bushland over summer, and red-tails visit the bushland every morning. The young of both species have a lot to learn. On one occasion I saw a young red-tail hanging up side down by one foot, with his mother looking on with concern. He just had to learn to open his toes to release his grip, which he eventually managed to do.

Last week a flock of red tails were in the bushland in the early morning, preening feathers, bonding, showing off, investigating tree hollows and enjoying life. Suddenly they took off together in alarm and presumably the goshawk had frightened them. The flock flew off in a circle to the north side of the bushland. However three of the flock had not taken off. Two of the flown flock flew back to check on things.

The three were a family group and then I saw the female start to bite the branchlet on which the juvenile was perched. The juvenile jumped to another branchlet. The female bit that branchlet off, the juvenile fell and then flew and they were off.

The female was using her tricks to make the juvenile fly. How intelligent is that.

Of course we need this bushland protected. However the University of WA needs some encouragement to withdraw the housing proposal and to follow another path. The then Premier Richard Court saved Shenton Bushland but that was state government land. Ideas are welcome.

Marg Owen



Photo by M Owen.

A juvenile Forest red-tailed cockatoo with wings up-stretched as he falls and before flying.

UPDATE ON THE CAPE PERON COASTAL PARK (HOPEFULLY NOT TO BE CALLED THE MANGLES BAY MARINA)

EPA Review

We are awaiting the findings of the audit into the way the EPA ignored its own policy regarding offsets. The Mangles Bay Marina was recommended for approval by the EPA and then approved by the Environment Minister during the same time span as the Roe 8 approval. Many of us are still shaking our heads as to how many major issues the EPA managed to minimise or just neglect. Offsets for loss of seagrass and 56 ha of coastal bush are

two, but there are also groundwater concerns, lack of knowledge about the aquifers, and sub-surface geology, water quality in Mangles Bay.

Has the EPA ever invoked its fifth principle - the Precautionary Principle? Unfortunately unlike the Roe 8/Beeliar group, we did not lodge an appeal within the six month limitation period, so we will not be following that avenue. But there might well be other outcomes that we could pursue in court if we had more funds.

WAPC Amendment

Many submissions (~500!) were made on the proposed rezoning of the Bush Forever site to urban by 13 November 2015. A major focus has been the coastal setbacks to adapt to climate change driven sea level rise. Even the City of Rockingham complained that the rezoning should at most be to Urban Exploration. The 'Hands Off Point Peron' submission was a substantial work of 600 pages and a number of us have taken the opportunity to speak in person to the WAPC panel. In late January we received letters advising us that we would be invited to speak at some point in the future.

Hands Off Point Peron Inc.

Two public meetings are planned - update on the Cape Peron Coastal Park on February 10th and a Picnic Day on the Oval at Point Peron on 3 April. (See page 9)

Housing development instead of marina

Ironically some leaks are now suggesting that the proponents will build a housing development without a marina or canals. The business case for the marina is becoming more dodgy by the month: on top of the huge cost of excavation and dredging (maybe \$500 million), the ten plus year construction period, the risks of environmental problems, the City of Rockingham is refusing to manage the waterways, and the housing market is in a slump. The proponents have issued a revised schedule of works which shifts the marina away from the first stage. Behind this, attempts to extract binding obligations and commitments from Cedar Woods beyond just words that a marina would be constructed at some point - have failed. Even city councillors are becoming concerned that the whole rationale for this proposal is in danger of evaporating and all we will get in exchange for Bush Forever 355 will be a housing development.

Leases terminated

Two lease holders, the City of Perth RSL (caravan park) and the Aviation Industry Workers Association have been advised that they need to vacate and remove all buildings by March this year. Some variations have been made for long term residents of the caravan park. Removal of asbestos from many of the buildings will be expensive and slow. It is not clear who will pay for this.

Fish killed by diatom spike

The immediate cause of the fish kill in Cockburn Sound in December has been claimed by the Department of

Group News Group News Group News

Fisheries to be a spike in the numbers of the diatom *Chaetoceros*. However many of their tests were not completed when the Department published its report on 8 January and have still not been released. Nevertheless the report did conclude that the problem originated in Mangles Bay, well researched as having the most polluted water in the whole of the sound. And the bigger question - why did the diatoms spike then? - has not been dealt with yet. If Mangles Bay is the most polluted (presumably nutrient enriched) now, what would the disturbance of a marina do?


Movement within the ALP?

Following the fish kill, a public meeting in Rockingham protested the situation. The Hon. Mark McGowan attended and spoke. In spite of many questions from the crowd about his position on the Mangles Bay Marina, he did not give a clear response.

His Facebook site contains a statement that he "opposes canal estates" but that he supports projects that will bring jobs to Rockingham. Again no unequivocal statement about THIS canal estate marina. A month earlier he had commissioned a phone survey into public attitudes on the Mangles Bay Marina. In spite of several requests he has refused to publish even the bare results. Some are guessing that they show what many have experienced - overwhelming opposition - otherwise surely he would have published them to vindicate his earlier position of supporting and indeed initiating the project.

Please contact the member for Rockingham Mark McGowan and ask him why is he allowing the government to take our public park, breach a 50 year old agreement with the Commonwealth, do so by flawed environmental procedures, support a non-viable project with public monies and refuse to let us know how much of our monies they are giving to a private developer? Tell him that **Cape Peron Coastal Park is a golden opportunity**. A world class coastal park covering all of Point Peron is infinitely better for the economy, the environment and the health of our community. Email mark.mcgowan@mp.wa.gov.au or phone 9592 7422

James Mumme



FIRST MEETING FOR 2016
Friday 26th February

Octagonal Hall, McGlew St, Glen Forrest
Doors open at 7.30 pm for an 8.00pm start. \$2 entry

Our guest speaker will be
**Dr Stephen van Leeuwen, Assistant Director,
Science & Conservation at DPaW**

Topic TBA

Visitors most welcome
Contact Cathy Car via email: catherine.ann.car@gmail.com



**SAVE OUR POINT PERON
FAMILY PICNIC AND
RALLY**

STALLS LIVE MUSIC

**STOP THE BULLDOZERS
HELP CREATE CAPE PERON
COASTAL PARK**

ART AUCTION RAFFLE PRIZES KIDS ACTIVITY

**Sunday 3rd April 2016
11pm - 3pm**

**Cnr Safety Bay Rd & Memorial Dve
BYO picnic and chairs etc (Toilets on site)**

cape-peron-coastal-park.com
handsoffpointperon.com



Cape Peron Coastal Park
Hands Off Point Peron

The Never Ending Story

How many times have we said 'It's never ending'? An application for clearing is advertised on top of another application. Fingers are tapping away at keys rather than turning pages of books which might be read for pleasure or clicking knitting needles knitting a fair isle jumper.

On 16 December 2015, Landcorp's redevelopment of Royal Perth Hospital site at Shenton Park was advertised as a referral to the federal government under the EPBC Act. Comment was due by 6 January 2016 - over the holiday period.

We had just finished making comments to the WAPC on the rezoning of this site from 'special purpose medical' to 'urban.' We had argued that we were happy for the mainly cleared part of the site with some heritage buildings to be rezoned to urban, but the 3.4 hectares bushland strip on the western side we argued, must be rezoned Parks and Recreation to protect this regionally significant ecological linkage and critical habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo. The WAPC's decision on rezoning has not yet been released.

The latest plans by Landcorp for housing and development include five multi-storied buildings in the bushland linkage with some 'from eight storeys'. The buildings 'from eight storeys' are, as described by Landcorp, 'on the western ridgeline, demonstrating the site's potential

Group News Group News Group News

for increasing the residential development opportunities and providing spectacular views to Perth CBD, with no major visual impact for nearby Daglish residents.' That's why they want development in the bushland. Also specified is the breaking up of the remaining bush into 2,500 square metre 'cells' divided by 20 metre wide clearing between each cell. The bushland is to be developed as 'managed parkland.' The linkage values (between two Bush Forever sites) as well as the bushland and its inhabitants will disappear from the face of the earth.

It seems very odd that Landcorp's proposal to the federal government was different from what Landcorp was presenting locally as their plan. In the federal government proposal Landcorp stated: 'At this stage of the planning it is unclear what vegetation is to be retained.'and...'... while committing to retaining as much vegetation as possible, Landcorp has employed the precautionary principle and has referred the worst case scenario that all of the vegetation on the site may potentially be cleared'.

Because the proposed plan at State level, and the plan to the Federal government were so different, we spent time just before Christmas requesting that the Federal government Department of Environment 'stop the clock' and that Landcorp be required to provide the missing information. Although we did not know it, our document was received on 23rd December and considered, but not accepted. We had to carry on writing a submission on the Landcorp proposal to the federal Department of the Environment.

There was and is great public interest in the proposed development and around 70 submissions were received.

On 8 February we found out that the Department of Environment had considered the worst case scenario of clearing the whole bushland part and the Department considered that this would not be critical to the species (Carnaby's cockatoo) as a whole. Therefore the proposal was considered 'not a controlled action.'

We have requested information on the reasons for this decision.

In addition the WAPC had approved the advertising of the Landcorp Shenton Park Hospital Redevelopment Improvement Scheme for public comment. The WAPC had wanted the plan to be advertised before Christmas but this was not possible and it was advertised shortly after Christmas. We have yet to do this comment.

Landcorp presented public displays of the proposals on 6th and 11th February. The argument for developing in the bushland and the fragmentation of the bush is to meet new fire risk guidelines. Landcorp should not be locating any buildings in the linkage, even if they do provide spectacular views.

During this period as well, the Defence Housing Association was proposing the clearing of part of Bush Forever

site 315, Allen Park, in Swanbourne, to build new houses for SAS families, with some of the site to be sold off for public housing. We commented on this, objecting to the clearing.

The Education Department and the state government are proposing a new City Beach High School with four possible sites suggested, all of which involve loss of bushland. Even though some sites were designated 'Bush Forever', the State government said the sites were 'vacant land.'

On top of all these proposals, there is also the massive process (under the *EPBC Act*), the strategic assessment for Perth and Peel. Relevant documents were released for public comment on 17 December titled 'Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan @ 3.5 million.'

We are told there are some 3000 pages of documents – but these do not all seem to be publicly available as yet. Remarkably absent are big clear maps showing native vegetation extent, Bush Forever, and proposals for protection and clearing and zoning. Will all Bush Forever sites be protected? How much of our precious Banksia woodlands will be cleared?

Chapter 15 of the Commonwealth Impact Assessment Report (Part D) is all about Carnaby's cockatoo and it is recommended that everyone read it carefully. Work out how much habitat will be cleared. Also note that the Gngangara pine plantations will be nearly all cleared and not replanted with pines or Banksia woodland species. It is estimated that some 4000 Carnaby's will be lost as a result – a very significant impact on a Matter of National Environmental Significance.

Groups are working on Roe 8, Point Peron, Ocean Reef, as well as other shocking proposed developments.

And then there's the new Biodiversity Conservation Bill. If passed at some stage, will it produce a better outcome for our biodiverse and threatened environment? Early analysis shows there are major gaps which need extensive amendments, or better still, it should be completely redrafted.

Marg Owen

Funding opportunity COMMUNITY CAPABILITY GRANTS

Available through the State Natural Resource Management Program and supported through Royalties for Regions., with \$24 million funding commitment over three years.

Small projects between \$1,000 and \$10,000 with a time frame of up to 12 months. Applications close on

30 May 2016, unless fully subscribed.

Online applications now open at nmr.wa.gov.au

Environment Minister Albert Jacob must resign over Roe 8 approval scandal

By Chris Tallentire MLA, Shadow Minister for Environment, Climate Change

Albert Jacob is responsible for the Roe 8 environmental approval mess. It's all because of his preparedness to rubberstamp the project, regardless of its disastrous environmental consequences.

Albert Jacob is critical of the EPA for not following policies and guidelines that have led to the Supreme Court decision. In fact, Albert Jacob is responsible for:

- Denigrating and revoking policies, including important wetland environmental protection policies that, according to section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act, have the force of law;
- Signing-off on the dismissal of 165 appeals against Roe 8 with an explanation that failed to acknowledge the Swan Coastal Plain Lakes Environmental Protection Policy; and,
- Signing the Ministerial Approval Statement allowing Roe 8 to proceed.

Fortunately, Chief Justice Wayne Martin has ruled that the EPA assessment and the Minister's decision to approve Roe 8 were invalid. But now Colin Barnett and Albert Jacob want to waste taxpayers' money on an appeal.

The Supreme Court concluded that the EPA took no account of its own published policies when it made the decision to approve the project. This was a monumental failure. The

Minister must take full responsibility because he dismissed appeals and signed-off on the Ministerial Approval Statement.

It appears Mr Jacob and his Liberal colleagues pressured the EPA into approving the project, even after it said in 2003 that it wasn't environmentally safe to build the free-way through the wetlands.

The Liberal Government must abandon the Perth Freight Link project altogether and Mr Jacob should resign.

The Environment Minister's first responsibility should be to protect the natural environment for future generations. Mr Jacob trashed appropriate environmental oversight and scrutiny of this project and has shirked his responsibility as Minister.

The Liberal Government pressured the EPA into approving this project from the start. The EPA itself made it clear in 2003 that there was no way the project could proceed in an environmentally safe way, but the Liberals pressed ahead anyway.

The Perth Freight Link is a planning and environmental disaster. It has failed human and environmental tests and must be scrapped altogether.

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

How can you better attract and retain volunteers for your community group?

If attracting and recruiting environmental volunteers is an on-going challenge for your community group, then you're not the only one. Many groups comprise seniors as volunteers and attracting a younger demographic can be a real challenge. An upcoming practical workshop hosted by Perth NRM can now help you with strategies to better plan, recruit and manage your volunteers.

Community workshop: Attracting and Retaining Volunteers Saturday 12th March 2016, Piney Lakes Environmental Centre, Leach Hwy, Winthrop Registration 8.45am. Workshop 9.00am - 1.00pm (Morning tea and light lunch provided)

Cost: \$30 per person

To register, go to <http://www.trybooking.com/177098> or <http://perthnrm.com/community/events/attracting-retaining-volunteers-workshop.aspx>

The workshop will cover:

Planning for volunteers:

- ◇ How to gather support from your group for your volunteering program.
- ◇ How to audit the type and amount of work that needs to be done to increase your group's productivity and effectiveness.

- ◇ How best to allocate tasks to the most skilled individuals.

- ◇ What materials you need to produce to better manage your volunteers. Recruiting volunteers

- ◇ How to identify exactly what type of volunteers you may want and how to screen them for suitability.

- ◇ How to articulate and promote your group's uniqueness and the value it delivers to the community.

Managing volunteers

- ◇ How to keep your ideal volunteers interested and motivated.

- ◇ Strategies for orientation and training: how to provide meaningful work and produce useful resources.

Retaining volunteers

- ◇ How to reward, recognise and develop the skills of your volunteers to keep them keen and involved.

- ◇ How to assess the value of your volunteers.

- ◇ How to communicate this value to funders and other key stakeholders.

Part of the Volunteer Capacity Building in NRM series, this workshop is a result of the Community Capacity in NRM Survey, run annually by Perth NRM. The series is funded through Perth NRM and the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

For more information about the event, please contact:

Annette Hoskisson, Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator, Perth

NRM Ph: (08) 9374 3333 Email: annette.hoskisson@perthnrm.com

ECO MAY 2016 - Register by 4 April to be listed in program booklet

Eco May is back in 2016 bigger and better thanks to the wonderful feedback we received from our members groups and support groups who took part last year. Please **register your event early** online, or contact us on 9420 7266 if you have questions/would like to discuss options.

Register Now: <http://goo.gl/forms/b9dqnA8S7i>

Early registrations will allow production of a program this year, its distribution via email, social media and postal mail where appropriate. Added media exposure along with facebook & twitter will assist in boosting the numbers to your event. Email to the Eco May Organising Team: ccwa.events@CCWA.org



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THE URBAN BUSH TELEGRAPH



Urban Bushland Council's Events

BRIEFING ON PERTH & PEEL GREEN GROWTH PLAN @ 3.5 million Friday 26th February 9.30am for 10am start – 12 noon.

At Citywest Lotteries House 2 Delhi St West Perth. Morning tea provided. Pay parking in Delhi St \$4/hr

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Including a presentation by EPA Chair, Dr Tom Hatton:
Update on the Perth and Peel Growth Plan for 3.5 million.**

Tuesday 8 March 6.30pm - 8.30pm

City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi Street West Perth

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:

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Lotteries House 2 Delhi Street West Perth WA 6872

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



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