

The Urban Bush Telegraph

In July 2016 our whole community stood looking on in horror as a bulldozer removed 50 large trees and mature paperbarks in and around a much loved local wetland. The wetland is at the King William St entrance to Riverside Gardens, Bayswater. A peaceful refuge for many people, where the diverse native fauna in the wetland can be seen and heard all year round. Not many people knew that a large part of the paperbark wetland had been in private hands since the 1920's.

'No Houses in Wetlands' formed from the outrage that followed, resulting in the whole subdivision coming to a halt. We discovered that the WAPC subdivision conditional approval to the private developer was set in stone and given against the recommendation of the City of Bayswater. The City of Bayswater refusal was supported by advice from departmental staff in the Rivers and Estuaries Division of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

The WAPC approval was for a large housing subdivision and destruction of a wetland, less than 50 meters away from Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary, where the state government had recently invested \$1.5 million dollars on wetland restoration. The irony was extraordinary.

The City of Bayswater had good reasons for refusing the subdivision. The two wetlands involved were incorrectly classified by the Department of Water. Neither classification recognised the environmental value of the wetlands in the vicinity of the subdivision. No environmental assessment of the wetlands or surrounds was ever sought by the WAPC, either from the Developer or relevant state government departments.

Within weeks of the campaign commencing, Members of Parliament started appearing to have a look at the site for themselves. Our campaign had the front cover



By Rachael Roberts

of our local newspaper for almost two months straight, as we tried to get to the bottom of what was going on. Our wetland was discussed in the WA Parliament, on the steps of Parliament House, put on car stickers, on posters in front gardens and discussed on radio and television. We were very clear that further destruction to Carter's Wetland did not have community support.

Our Bayswater community has learnt the hard way that the vast majority of our wetlands have no protection under WA's planning laws.

We discovered that:

- a private developer can put in an application for a housing subdivision adjacent to or in a wetland and their application will attract no environmental scrutiny.
- the Department of Water and Department of Parks and Wildlife do not have the resources to assess a wetland before destruction is approved.
- no attempt will be made to identify the native species in a wetland or protect those species from being killed, as part of a development application.
- the wetland buffer guidelines for all wetlands in WA, drafted by the WA Planning Commission in 2005, have nev-

er been formalised by the state government.

Once a WA Planning Commission approval for subdivision has been issued, only the developer has a right of appeal. Even if the developer and government departments have failed to identify a wetland on the site and native animals are killed or injured during wetland clearing, there are no repercussions. The approval will stand.

No Houses in Wetlands was lucky enough to make contact with biologists, botanists and wetland experts who were prepared to assist us to identify the environmental values of the site. The City of Bayswater also stood by us from the beginning.

There are a number of ways in which the Carter Wetland can be saved but we are not there yet. No Houses in Wetlands is not going to stop this campaign until this wetland is fully in public hands and our state planning laws become urban wetland friendly.

In the meantime, we have asked the City of Bayswater to map every piece of remnant wetland and bushland in our area, determine who owns it and what needs to be done to prevent its destruction. This is being done. We would encourage everyone to have their Council do the same, and put in place a plan to save your important sites, before it is too late.

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Editorial

The UBC formed with the overall goal of seeking statutory protection for urban bushland in WA in the aftermath of the concerted but non-violent community action campaign to stop bulldozing of the Hepburn Heights bushland. (See page 9)

Here we are now 24 years later with a litany of campaigns still running. On the positive side, the election of the new state Labor government this year has seen delivery of their commitment to stop the construction of Roe 8 through the Beeliar Wetlands, to halt destruction of the Bayswater wetlands, and to stop the proposal to build roads through two Bush Forever reserves in coastal dunes at Scarborough.

What is remarkable is that the proposals for these three sites involved government agencies: Main Roads, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, and indirectly the City of Bayswater.

It is also remarkable that it took highly active and skilled community campaigns to gain government commitment and action to stop these proposals, rather than the proper environmental assessment by government. Indeed, the Barnett government has left a legacy of unfinished business and failure in government decision making according to existing Bush Forever policy, Statements of Planning Policy (SPP's), the native vegetation clearing regulations, and EPA policies. Failure to base decisions on scientific facts and protection of threatened species and communities is unacceptable. This has stimulated a call by The Leeuwin Group for an Environment Court to be established in WA.

In meetings with new Ministers, their advisors and departmental heads, we have strongly recommended that Bush Forever be completed as planned and according to our 'Call for Action on Bush Forever October 2015'. We have given them a list of priority site issues for action (see page 4). There is much to be done.

The UBC understands there is ample funding available in the Metropolitan Region Improvement Trust Fund (MRIF) to complete acquisition of all Bush Forever sites and to complete initial capital works and weed control to establish them as conservation areas and for public appreciation. The WAPC is responsible for expenditure of the MRIF and it is pleasing to see that sites such as Harrisdale Swamp are being set up properly as conservation areas. We also expect road reserves and proposed pipelines to be removed from sites such as Beeliar wetlands, Holmes Street bushland, Anstey-Keane bushland and Lake Joondalup reserve and other Bush Forever sites.

Will the Labor government act to properly protect and manage our precious urban bushland?

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2017 RECEIVERS OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA MEDAL

On Friday 8th September, two locally well known environmental volunteers were presented medals by Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AC, Governor of WA.



Kim Sarti OAM was awarded the Medal of the OA in the General Division for service to conservation and the environment.

Penny Hussey AM was appointed as Member in the General Division of the OA for significant service to conservation and land management practices in WA through a range of government and volunteer roles.



Kim Sarti OAM with his daughter Robyn (left) and Ron Johnston (Curator, Ornithology, WA Museum) and Christine Johnston at the Order of Australia investiture ceremony at Government House.

Photos courtesy K. Sarti

AVAILABLE UBC PUBLICATIONS

Perth's Bush Forever Report Card

Proceedings of a conference (December 2012)

<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.

<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.

PERTH'S BUSHLAND BIRTHDAY & PERPETUAL CALENDAR

Available by mail order from the UBC office for \$10 plus \$2 postage

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Compiled by: Renata Zelinova

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

Copy deadline - 10 October 2017

More groundwater decline from Groundwater Replenishment?

Groundwater decline is a major threat to the health of our Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain. This is recognised in the federal listing of Banksia woodlands as a TEC.

Groundwater levels have been falling steadily for many years largely due to the greatly increased and uncontrolled abstraction for irrigated agriculture, turf farms, golf courses, lawns and other industries.

Hydrogeological series Report no. 60 by the Department of Water, September 2012, attributed the 1.5m decline in groundwater level recorded near Loch McNess to 0.5m decline from lower rainfall and 1.0m from (human) abstraction. The Report also disclosed past recommendations to greatly reduce groundwater allocation volumes to specific levels, but these were never enacted.

The Water Corporation is allocated a certain volume of groundwater from specific borefields according to their licence set by Ministerial conditions under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. However the Corporation has exceeded their licensed allocation for many years but no remedial action has been taken. It is recognised that some borefields have been closed over the years, presumably due to falling groundwater levels.

The Water Corp's Groundwater Replenishment Scheme scored bold publicity in The Weekend West August 26-27 on Agenda pages (91-92): '*Turning waste into water*'. While treatment and recycling of Perth's wastewater is an excellent initiative, there are questionable impacts in the process as proposed. The assumption that re-injection of treated water into groundwater will stop the decline of groundwater levels on the Gnangara Mound is questionable. While groundwater levels might be maintained or increased at and near the point of injection, groundwater levels at the distant bore sites used for potable supply are not likely to be replenished for many years to come, if at all.

It is extraordinary that, as described in the West Australian article, the Water Corporation will be allowed an *extra allocation* of 14 billion litres this year, as soon as replenishment starts. While the article admits that groundwater levels have been 'hammered over the last 15 – 20 years', the claim is that the Water Corporation will '*give back to the environment*'. This may be true if overall abstraction rates are decreased, but certainly not if they are increased. This increase means that the groundwater drawdown around the Water Corp's bores will increase and worsen impacts on Banksia woodlands and wetlands. Why have our state and federal environmental regulators not seen, understood, and addressed this?

The proposed location of the Groundwater Replenishment pipeline in 3 Bush Forever Areas is also a major concern. While the UBC was called in twice to discuss the Water Corp's proposal, the UBC's advice, based on sound science and advice of experts, was ignored. The UBC recommended that the pipeline be relocated well to the west side of Lake Joondalup thereby avoiding impacts on Bush Forever sites 407 and 303, and nearly all incursions and impacts on site 299 Lake Joondalup, and it would importantly avoid all acid sulphate soils (ASS) and potential acid sulphate soils (PASS).

Late notice: The Minister for the Environment, Hon Stephen Dawson MLC has just dismissed the UBC's Appeal in a letter dated 28 August 2017. The letter also states that '*The decision on whether or not the proposal is to be implemented, and the conditions which apply to any such implementation, will be made under section 45 of the EP Act following the determination of the appeal. This process will be undertaken in the coming weeks.*'

The big picture issue of groundwater drawdown and its impact on bushland and wetlands due to excessive abstraction by all users – government, corporate and private – requires serious attention by the state government. The health and persistence of our precious Banksia Woodlands is at stake.

TREE PROTECTION?

The bushland linkages between Underwood Avenue and Shenton Bushlands, Shenton Park, are severely diminished.

Protection of Greenways is part of Bush Forever policy and the linkage along Bedbrook Place between the two Bush Forever sites is Greenways 19.

In 2011, the City of Nedlands commissioned Syrinx Environmental to identify the best linkage between the two Bush Forever sites, and the resulting options came before the City. Pressure from the landholder resulted in the Syrinx Greenway agenda item being withdrawn.

Six years later the landowner has cleared all of his lot right to the back fence, even though adjacent landholders had kept a 12 metre-wide strip of bush to act as a greenway. In the middle of the lot, one Jarrah tree has been retained, fenced within a 'tree protection area' although whether it will survive its cruel treatment remains is to be seen (*see photo to the right*). The landowner was fined \$500 for clearing the whole lot.



Photo by M. Owen

BUSH FOREVER: UBC's priority site issues for action 2017

BF244 Beeliar Wetlands: North Lake & Bibra Lake

Remove Roe 8 & 9 from road reserves and transfer to 'A' Class Reserve status and have it included in the Beeliar Regional Park.

Fully fund and restore the whole Roe 8 & 9 corridor in partnership with Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor group.

Complete a new Corridor Park Management Plan encompassing the economic, cultural, social and environmental requirements of the wildlife park.

BF342 Anstey-Keane Damplands (Forrestdale)

For urgent attention: Ensure the Water Corporation's Balannup Wastewater Pressure Main is not permitted in this Bush Forever Area.

Acquire Lots 67 & 69 Skeet Road with MRIF.

Remove the local road reserve.

Transfer all Lots to A Class Reserve status for the purpose of nature conservation in the Jandakot Regional Park.

Complete initial capital works and establish a visitor/education centre and research program with MRIF.

Fund management of whole area by DBCA.

BF119 Underwood Avenue Bushland (Shenton Park)

Note: State approval to UWA for clearing and housing development lapsed July 2015. And the draft federal government decision in 2007 was that approval not be given. The environmental significance of the site is now much greater.

Acquire the whole site using MRIF and transfer to 'A' Class Reserve status for the purpose of nature conservation.

Complete initial capital works, weed and feral animal control with MRIF.

Allocate a suitable land manager (?City of Nedlands).

Review and increase the odour buffer zone around the Subiaco Wastewater Treatment Plant due to the planned doubling of capacity of the Plant.

Link BF218 to BF119 Linkage Shenton Park Bushland to Underwood Avenue Bushland

For urgent attention: Remove all proposed buildings to fully retain the regionally significant ecological linkage in Landcorp's redevelopment of Shenton Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) redevelopment site.

BF125 Holmes Street Bushland (Southern River/Huntingdale)

Note: The proposed extension of Garden Street by City of Gosnells is a 'Controlled Action' under EPBC Act for 8 x MNES, including a CE TEC Claypan Wetlands on SCP. EPA failed to assess.

Stop the proposal to extend Garden Street in the regional road reserve shown on Bush Forever map. This will also save money.

Remove the road reserve and transfer it to the conservation estate as 'A' Class Reserve in BF 125.

BF355 Point Peron & Adjacent Shoalwater Bay

Note: The proposed canal development and housing near the deep freshwater Lake Richmond threatens existence of the only known thrombolite assemblage of its type (critically endangered). Sea level rise and extreme weather events will increase. WAPC to decide rezoning proposal from P&R to urban.

Stop Mangles Bay Marina and canal development in Pt Peron reserve.

Reject rezoning of Pt Peron reserve to urban. Retain as P&R and reserve status.

Part BF331 Alfred Cove & Adjacent Busland (Applecross)

Stop Wave Park proposal by City of Melville on Swan River foreshore in migratory bird habitat.

BF51 White Road Bushland (Orange Grove)

Acquire Lots 29 & 30 White Rd with MRIF. Owner wishes to sell to WAPC for conservation.

BF325 Coastal Strip Burns Beach to Hillarys

Note: Failure of EPA to formally assess inland section. Decision on inland section of proposal rests with WAPC. Questionable marina development is being formally assessed by EPA therefore all planning and decision-making by WAPC should cease until outcome of EIA completed.

At Ocean Reef, retain and restore BF325 with no incursions.

BF387 Greater Brixton Street Wetlands (Kenwick/Wattle Grove)

Control hydrology at and in buffer zone of Alison Baird Reserve.

Prevent dewatering and hydrological changes in industrial development around Brixton St Wetlands – MKSEA.

BF299 & BF407 Yellagonga Regional Park and Woodvale Nature Reserve

Remove proposed location of pipeline from Lake Joondalup Nature Reserve and Woodvale Nature Reserve and Beenyup CCW.

Relocate Water Corporation's Groundwater Replenishment pipeline to Joondalup Drive (well to west side of Lake Joondalup).

BF43 Cottonwood Crescent (Dianella)

Acquire Lot 1 Gay St Dianella with MRIF and add to BF43.

Complete initial capital works and weed control for additions to Bush Forever 43 with MRIF.

Transfer Lot 1 and all former Channel 9 bushland to 'A' Class Reserve status and vest in City of Stirling for conservation management.

BF308 & F310 Trigg Bushland & Floreat Beach Bushland (City Beach/Scarborough)

Note: Labor has already acted to stop road proposal by

MRA along beach front in coastal reserves. This will save money.

Retain coastal dune reserves intact with vesting in City of Stirling.

Follow on with the proposal to remove road reservation within the sites.

BF309 Farral Road Bushland (Stratton)

Note: Bush Forever policy states there is a presumption against clearing on the eastern side of the Swan Coastal Plain as less than 10% remains. This policy and BF status was ignored.

Restore the Farrall Rd wetland recently bulldozed contrary to advice from Blackadder Woodbridge Catchment Group.

BF386 Perth Airport and adjacent bushland

Note: Perth Airport bushland is highly species rich, is in excellent condition, is highly significant fauna habitat, but has only 1.5%, 1.2% of their vegetation complexes secured for conservation, well below the 10% target. Clearing for non-aviation purposes has been highly destructive.

Stop any further clearing in Perth Airport bushland and wetlands.

BF335 Minim Cove Mosman Park

Minim Cove is part of Greenway 24: part of a regionally significant contiguous bushland/wetland linkage (see Bush Forever Part A, Map7).

Maintain and enhance the linkage from Swan River Estuary to Indian Ocean via Vlamingh Parklands as in WAPC Report 1998.

Stop rezoning of Lots 225 and 346.

To all urban environmental groups,

In case you have not been made aware – in the State Government budget handed down on Thursday they have omitted to include any funding for urban Landcare – funding which you would apply for from the State NRM Office – there is millions for the regional area – through Royalties for Regions but nothing for the urban area.

I am calling on all environmental groups within the metro area to contact their local members to express their concerns.

This position is totally unacceptable - the State Government continues to approve the destruction of important bushland and wetlands within the metro area for further urbanisation and now cuts off funding for those in our community that assist in the repair and management of what we have left. We have proven that in the urban area for every \$1 the Government invests it has a return of 4 -5 dollars ----- Unbelievable....disappointing.....totally unacceptable.

**Pat Hart
Chairperson**

**South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare
Inc: SERCUL**

◇ What's new? ◇ What's new? ◇

The 2017 Great Cocky Count Report Is Out

Birdlife WA released the findings of the 2017 Great Cocky Count held on 9th April 2017. It is estimated more than 1,500 volunteers contributed to the survey.

Some of the key outcomes:

- The minimum population count of Carnaby's Black Cockatoo in Perth and Peel was 10,248 (similar to 2016);
- 73% of the Carnaby's Black Cockatoo recorded in Perth and Peel were associated with the Gnangara-Pinjar pine plantation;
- A single roost site located east of Yanchep recorded 3,528 Carnaby's Black-Cockatoos (34% of all recorded in Perth and Peel);
- Trend analysis of roost sites in Perth and Peel found significant declines - estimated decline rate of 11% per year;
- The 2017 Great Cocky Count recorded approximately 30% of all black-cockatoos in SW WA; with total populations estimated at 40,000 for Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo, 12,000 for Baudin's Black-Cockatoo and 15,000 for Forest Red-Tailed Black-Cockatoo (FRTBC);
- The population of Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo in Perth and Peel is significant at the species scale, with four of the five largest known roosts and six of the ten largest;
- 2017 recorded a large increase in the numbers of FRTBCs on the Perth-Peel Coastal Plain, up 60% on 2016;
- FRTBC have replaced white-tailed black-cockatoos at 23 confirmed roost sites in the past four Great Cocky Counts.

To read the full report go to

<http://birdlife.org.au/documents/GCC-report-2017-final.pdf>

LATEST BLACK-COCKATOO RESEARCH TALK BY WA MUSEUM'S RON JOHNSTONE

Friday 13th October, 4-5.40pm at the Ecology Centre, Floreat

Register via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/black-cockatoos-ron-johnstone-wa-museum-talks-about-his-latest-research-tickets-37379929375>

2017 DIG CONFERENCE

Friday 29th September 8.45am-16.40pm

Murdoch University

Registration: www.dwg.org.au/dig-conference

The 2017 Dieback Information Group conference facilitates the sharing of the latest research developments and management tactics for combatting Phytophthora Dieback. The full program includes keynote address by Prof. Stephen Hopper who will focus on Dieback and Kwongan - novel perspectives from an ancient diversifying flora.

Cost: \$90 concession, \$180 full price

There is also Pre-DIG Green Card training happening on 28th September
www.dwg.org.au/green-card



Group News Group News Group News

Baigup Wetland Interest Group

2017 has been, and continues to be, a busy and interesting year at Baigup Wetlands. Funding from the Swan Canning River Recovery Program and Swan Alcoa Landcare Program allowed us to clear invasive *Typha orientalis* out of one of the constructed lakes on the site. Although this *Typha* is a native plant increasingly thought to be probably endemic to the region, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions recognizes its invasive tendencies disturbed environments and provided City of Bayswater with a permit for its removal in 2015. Clumps of existing (and now more visible) *Shoenoplectus validus* and *Baumea articulata* are expanding noticeably, while revegetated *Juncus pallidus* (2013-2017) is showing a great affinity for the area, self seeding as well as spreading vegetatively throughout.



Secondary Lake at Baigup showing first clump of *Typha* cleared in 2016 and remainder still spreading in 2017.

Photo: Ruth Folley



Secondary Lake after clearing. Revegetated sedges along shoreline on left. There are many more clumps to the right out of view.

Photo: Jan Duifhuizen



Photo left: Remnant *Shoenoplectus validus* (left) and *Baumea articulata* (right) spreading now to create a more biodiverse habitat.

We have been absolutely blessed with volunteers this year. In addition to our own workdays for BWIG members, we have had Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) Green Army and also their regular volunteer teams, Curtin Volunteers and volunteers from the Fo Guang Shan Temple in Maylands.

Photo right: Curtin Volunteers with Penny Lee (centre).



Photo by J. Slehofer

Group News Group News Group News

Wildlife Corridor

Now almost 5 months since work was stopped on Roe 8 and the furious work behind the scenes since that time will soon become evident. The time taken for remediation of the site including removal of asbestos, removal of mulch piles and removal of some of the limestone tracks has been excruciatingly long considering how rapidly the initial destruction took place and despite the diligent work of community members keeping the process on track.

We are now seeing significant regrowth appearing and weeding is being carried out by a contractor experienced in working around native vegetation. In the coming weeks the awful temporary fences will be replaced by more robust and visually acceptable conservation fencing. The type and positioning of the fencing has been carefully considered, with for example, rabbit proof fencing in the North Lake Reserve divided into several sections to protect the regrowth and subsequent plantings and also allow movement of native fauna.

Community members from the Wildlife Corridor Group and the Wetlands Centre have been meeting up to four times per week with representatives from Main Roads, City of Cockburn, DPaW, the Conservation Council and scientists to ensure the very best outcomes for the rehabilitation of the cleared area. One of the major outcomes is initiating the development of a 10 year management plan for the rehabilitation of the area. The scoping document was developed from a very intense collaboration of the groups above and focuses on community being integrated into the process and rehabilitation to the highest level possible. There will be extensive community consultation so watch this space for your chance to be part of the amazing project, the Roe'd to Recovery.

Felicity McGeorge

Native Plants For Residents Programme 2017

In 2016 a Native Plants for Residents programme run by Environment House on behalf of the City of Bayswater was so well received that it was repeated in 2017. City Of Bayswater residents could visit Environment House or various stalls to collect up to 10 native plants per household for their home gardens.

Over the 2 years, 13,000 plants of 24 species propagated by *Men Of The Trees* have been distributed. We discovered several residents were privately looking after areas of their local bushland so they were directed to the City's environmental officers to assist with their bush-care work. Volunteers Alan Benn and Jo Bower have overseen the project, whilst other volunteers contributed their knowledge and experience in native plants to assist residents with plant selection. Many of the plants early in demand were kangaroo paws, and smaller herb and shrub plants – a likely result of residential density increases and the size of private gardens decreasing. That said, we are seeing more verge planting of natives by local residents.

Thanks must be given to both City of Bayswater and

residents for the enthusiasm of the such a scheme – that we will endeavour to continue in years to come.

Jo Bower and Warren Haley

Going full circle with Nowergup Lake Commitment

I've long made contributions in this newsletter about our campaign at Lake Nowergup. As some of you may remember it was a hard battle but one we won. With the help of so many in the community and in particular through the support of UBC we were able to stop the bushland from being cleared adjacent to this lake.

As such the lake symbolises the start of my accidental journey to State Parliament. From that local activism I decided to run as a Councillor at the City of Wanneroo and in March this year I was elected as the Member for Wanneroo in the State Parliament as part of the McGowan Government.

It's no surprise then that I continue to advocate for our local area and I'm excited to report that I've commenced the initial works with Environment Minister Stephen Dawson in relation to my commitment to provide environmentally appropriate access and recreation facilities at Lake Nowergup in the Neerabup Nature Reserve. Our \$100,000 commitment will provide parking facilities, visitor signage and improve recreational access and amenities for visitors.

When doorknocking during the election, many people told me that they didn't know that Lake Nowergup even exists. I am proud that I can now deliver upgrades to the Reserve that will allow more people in the northern suburbs to discover this hidden gem without damaging the environment.

As the northern corridor develops and our residents seek out open spaces to explore, this commitment will enhance opportunities for our residents to get back to nature and experience the natural habitat of Carnaby's Black Cockatoo and the potential to see some of the other 56 species of bird which call this place home as part of the Lake Nowergup Fauna Sanctuary.

If anyone would like more information about Lake Nowergup or would like to discuss other priorities in Wanneroo, please call on 9405 1244, email at Sabine.Winton.MLA@mp.wa.gov.au or drop by my office at Wanneroo Central.

CONGRATULATIONS

Dr MARJORIE Apthorpe

Founder and long-time Co-ordinator of Friends of North Ocean Reef-Iluka Foreshore who has been named the **winner of the 2017 Coastal Champion Award** at the WA Planning Commission's Coastal Awards presentations.

Group News Group News Group News

Friends Hit New Heights Transforming Lake Claremont

The Friends of Lake Claremont (FOLC) have had another unbelievably successful planting season at Lake Claremont. The group has reached several major milestones this year: leading more volunteers than ever before, planting over 300,000 native seedlings in the past 8 years, and completing the planting on the edge of the lake, effectively completing a 30 year old dream to protect and restore the wetland buffer.

Cr. Bruce Haynes started this journey in the late 1980s heading up a research project which showed that the wetland was important not only to the native wildlife, but equally as important to the community. For 14 years the FOLC have been hard at work restoring the wetland and Cr. Haynes, as part of the group, is thrilled with their achievements. He recognizes the benefits that the lake provides to the Town of Claremont, stating "I now regard Lake Claremont as its jewel in the crown".

The opportunity to restore the entire edge of the lake, or wetland buffer, arose when the Town of Claremont (TOC) closed the long nine golf course in 2009 and kept all 21 hectares as parkland. The Town then created a "Park Concept Plan" which showed about half of the area was to be converted back to native vegetation. With the direction and support of the TOC, the FOLC were able to apply for grants, mainly to purchase plants to restore these areas. Since 2009, the FOLC have won over \$580,000 in grants for the community!

And this year was no exception. Volunteer Claire Britain, the FOLC Secretary and Grants Officer, secured three major grants to purchase over 30,000 seedlings for the 2017 planting season: one from SALP (Swan Alcoa Landcare Program) and two from the State NRM (Natural Resource Management) Program. The focus was to complete the wetland buffer planting funded by the SALP grant and one of the NRM grants. The funds from the second NRM grant is being used to create pockets of native vegetation on the old golf course on the east side of the lake. The work on this grant will be completed next year.

The FOLC coordinate and lead all the volunteers. It is a massive amount of work led by Heidi Hardisty, the dedicated Coordinator of the group and full-time volunteer. "I like to ensure that there is a big environmental educational component involved for the planters, especially the school children. I cannot thank everyone enough for their participation!"



Indian ex-pat group, the Shah Satnam Ji Green S Welfare Force Wing



The FOLC group held approx. 45 planting sessions this winter, including over 30 sessions with local school children. Each year the popular school program grows. This year, more than 800 children and 50 teachers participated from the following primary and secondary schools: Scotch College (Year 7s and 10s), Christ Church Grammar School (Year 10s), Quintilian School (all classes), Methodist Ladies College (Year 3s), Freshwater Bay (Year 4s), Mount Claremont Primary School (Year 5/6), and JTC (John XXIII College Year 7s and 11s). Together they planted over 9000 seedlings!

The FOLC also held their 4 regular public planting days: Local Residents' Planting Day (June 11th), Planting for the Birds (July 9th), National Tree Day (July 30th) and Friends Planting Day (August 13th). Over 7000 seedlings were planted by 300 volunteers over the 4 days.

For the fifth year in a row, students from 5 local universities (UWA, Murdoch, Curtin, Notre Dame and ECU) joined us for Uni Planting Day in August to celebrate National Student Volunteer week. Eighty-five students planted 2500 seedlings in under 2 hours!

And once again the wonderful Indian ex-pat group, the Shah Satnam Ji Green S Welfare Force Wing, contributed to the project planting 7300 seedlings over 5 sessions. The restoration work over the years has been extremely successful. One of the key indicators are the many small bush birds returning to the site including the Western Gerygone and the Variegated Fairy-wren, the latter of which had been absent for more than 15 years. "It is wonderful seeing the old golf course being transformed into a beautiful park and nature area, in what I call true reclamation work!"

Heidi Hardisty

Whitford Nodes Staircase?

The City of Joondalup (against the advice of its own Capital Works Committee and ecological assessment) is proposing to build an exercise staircase on the southwest facing slope of the northern dune at Whitford Nodes within Bush Forever Site 325.

The long community struggle to have the area protected from urban development in the 1980's appears to have been forgotten, as has the extensive body of research into the Quindalup Dune system by the Semeniuk Research Group and the Wetlands Research Association.

Bush Forever Site 325 is the coastal strip from Burns Beach to Hillarys - an indicative place that maintains



Coastal vegetation at Whitford Nodes.

coastal ecological processes and is an important ecological corridor and refuge for a diversity of invertebrates, birds, reptiles and mammals such as Echidnas and Quenda.

The Reserve is already under pressure from many different recreational users. The recent closure of the horse exercise area shows the current inability of the Reserve to cater for all recreational users. It is illogical to introduce another user group.

Bush Forever Site 325 and Marmion Marine Park face many threats, principally the proposed massive infill urban development at Ocean Reef, but also weed invasion, trampling of vegetation, antisocial behaviour, litter and dumping of household rubbish and garden waste common to many urban bushland areas. It makes no sense to add to these threats by clearing remnant vegetation to duplicate an access path. The staircase is a duplication of the already existing extensive pathway network to the dune top lookout. Site visits to raised staircases similar to that proposed around the northern suburbs showed all had significant litter problems and erosion and weed invasion edge effects.

The Quindalup Dunes of the Whitford Cusp are unique and should be conserved to protect their biodiversity and geoheritage values. The proposed staircase would significantly alter the terrain of the steep dunes, dune ridge, and dune swale, and their vegetation at the Whitfords Nodes that are important remnants of the original parabolic dune system.

Mullaloo Beach Community Group Inc has been actively involved in restoration projects at Mullaloo since 2006 and is strongly opposed to this proposed incursion into Bush Forever Site 325. We are concerned by the potential for numerous negative environmental impacts. Currently the vegetation is varied and in good condition due to the diversity of habitats provided by the good condition large-to-small scale landforms. The floristic communities present are similar to that described by Semeniuk & Meagher (1981) and Semeniuk, Cresswell & Wurm (1989).

Construction of the staircase would require clearing of vegetation, with a corridor of impacts on vegetation during construction beyond the width of the staircase. This would change topography, impact vadose zone hydrolo-



Limestone formations at Whitford Nodes.

gy and thus the vegetation habitats available on the site. Changes to wind movements caused by the structure would perturbate the natural wind/soil/vegetation relationships, and removal of vegetation would make the dune susceptible to erosion in this high-wind coastal location. This clearing of vegetation would be repeated when the structure needs to be replaced. Use and maintenance of the structure would further disturb landforms, vegetation and fauna and add to already substantial parking demands in this very popular family park. The staircase would provide access points into the dune system resulting in further degradation of the surrounding vegetation.

Conservation of our diverse coastal environments often seems to be overlooked in this region of diversity of flora and dune forms. We hope the government will recognise the area's unique conservation values and again act to protect the Whitford Nodes and not build an unnecessary staircase in an environmentally sensitive area.

I would like to thank Dr Vic Semeniuk for his insights and scientific explanations of my instinctive recognition of the unique physical environment and biology of the coast, and the Urban Bushland Council for their time and efforts in helping me raise awareness of this issue.

Sharon McArthur

Coastcare Coordinator, Mullaloo Beach Community Group Inc.

Friends of Hepburn & Pinnaroo Bushland

Direct action by the Hepburn Woodlands Preservation Group in the late 1980's and early 1990's resulted in saving 20 hectares of Banksia woodland in Padbury known as the Hepburn Heights Conservation Area from planned destruction to make way for housing. The Friends of Hepburn & Pinnaroo Bushland (FOHPB), with Alan Lloyd as the first Chairman, was formed in 1993 from the Hepburn Woodlands Preservation Group. Our mission is "To promote and participate in the formal management, conservation, rehabilitation and protection of Hepburn Heights Conservation Area, to ensure long-term environmental sustainability and compatibility with human use".

In 2009 FOHPB published a book "Saving Hepburn Heights Bushland". Written by Alan Lloyd and Bill Marwick it documents the saga of the Hepburn Heights campaign. The book is still available and highlights the tremendous efforts put in to save this magnificent piece of urban bushland.

Group News Group News Group News



The day after fire in January 2015

In 1993 a Management Plan was prepared for the Hepburn Heights Conservation Area Management Committee. The same year work began in clearing rubbish and removing weeds from the area. In 1995 major revegetation was undertaken in the areas that had been bulldozed prior to the success of the saving campaign. The whole area was subsequently fenced and walking paths created. In 2013, the City of Joondalup commissioned a comprehensive Flora, Fauna and Fungi survey and in 2015 produced the "Hepburn Heights Conservation Area Management Plan" which governs the way the area is managed by the City of Joondalup.

Weed control is a large part of the work by City of Joondalup and the Friends group. Weeds here have been a moving feast, with different weed species dominating over time. In the past perennial and annual grasses such as Veldt Grass and Wild Oats, along with Pelargonium capitatum were a major problem. Subsequently Geraldton Carnation weed, Fumaria, Lachenalia and lupins were major concerns and more recently Stinking Roger (*Tripteris clandestina*), Cape Tulip and Wild Gladiolus have become prevalent.

For the last three years we have undertaken a project to control Cape tulip and Wild gladiolus. Following City of Joondalup success in controlling Cape tulip by wiping with herbicide, FOHPB applied for a Department of Parks and Wildlife Perth Banksia Woodland Community Restoration Grant for 2014–2016. Our successful grant application included hours of weed mapping and monitoring by the Friends, funds to engage a herbicide contractor, and commitment from the City of Joondalup to provide advice and weed control. Julia Cullity from De-



The fire affected area in August 2017.

partment of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions provided great advice and assistance with this project. Results in monitoring quadrats have shown an 84 per cent reduction in Cape tulip over the three years, with similar results for Wild gladiolus. Over the three years Friends Group members also hand weeded these and other weeds. Cape tulip and Wild gladiolus numbers are now such that it is feasible for them to be hand weeded by removing the bulbs. Good rainfall this year has made the soil loose and many of the bulbs are coming out easily.

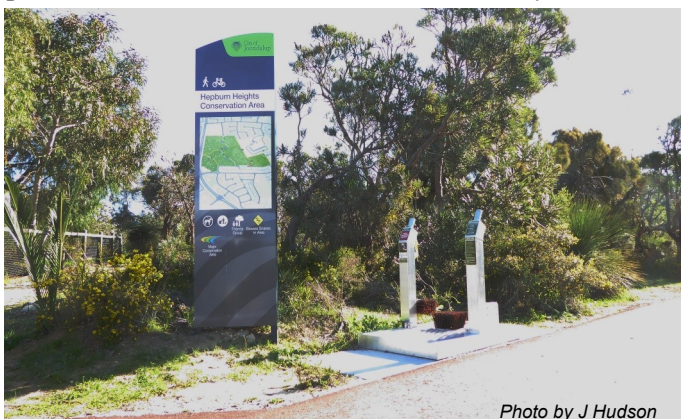
FOHPB plant seedlings each year in disturbed areas. This year 250 seedlings were planted. These included Xanthorrhoea preissii, acacia truncata, banksia sessilis, Ptilotus polystachyus, Tuart and Jarrah trees.

In January 2015 a bushfire swept through 1 hectare of the bushland. Thanks to the fast and efficient work of the fire brigade the fire did not spread very far. Since then we have concentrated our weeding in the burnt area, pigface being one of the most prolific weeds since the fire.

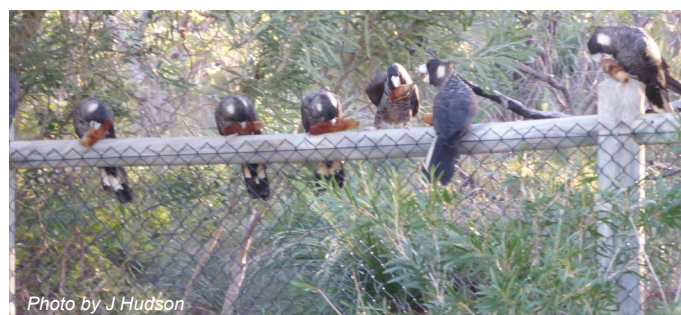
Recent upgrades to the Conservation area include refurbished perimeter fencing, interpretive signage and installation of pathogen hygiene stations. Asphaltting of the limestone paths has improved safety and accessibility for people walking and running in the bushland area.

Spring is a time for flowering and species now in flower include Hibbertia hypericoides, Hovea trisperma, Jacksonia sericea, Banksia sessilis, Acacia pulchella and Swan River Myrtle (*Hypocalymna robustum*). Orchids including Spider orchids, Donkey orchids, cowslip orchids, Rattle Beak orchids, Banded Greenhood orchids will soon be in flower. The bushland is looking in really great condition following several years of good rainfall.

John Hudson



The informative signage and pathogen cleaning station at one of the entrances into Hepburn Height Conservation Reserve, Padbury.



Many bird species can be seen here, including Carnaby's Black Cockatoos that take advantage of the many Banksia growing.

Group News Group News Group News

It's amazing! Tiny turtle frog found in Underwood Avenue Bushland

It's a wonder they're ever seen as the tiny turtle frogs are as small as sultanas and are the colour of the grey-black sand...and they're under stuff like Banksia cones on the ground. Their restricted diet is termites that feed on the roots and wood of Banksias.

It was quite a wintery Friday in August and these are the sorts of days when you have a chance of seeing the baby turtle frogs under fallen Banksia cones or bits of jarrah.

Turning over a piece of jarrah in Underwood Bushland there to my wondering eyes was a jelly-baby-like turtle frog. They have been described as 'perhaps the strangest and most secretive inhabitants of Banksia woodlands'.

I read that adult males come to the surface following spring and summer rains and call for females. The male then burrows underground followed by the female, perhaps as far as 1 to 2 metres. Very unusually in the animal kingdom, mating does not occur straight after courting. During the dry summer the pairs remain buried and mating does not occur until towards the end of summer, followed by egg laying.

Banksia woodlands such as Underwood Avenue Bushland that provide food and habitat for such remarkable species, are critical for their survival.

Margaret Owen



Photo by M Owen

Turtle frog in Underwood Avenue bushland.

EASTERN HILLS WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

Friday 23rd September- Monday 26th September
Excursion to Coorow - 3 days exploring wildflower country with wildflower enthusiasts. A variety of accommodation is available. For more information email Fran at frankininmonth2004@yahoo.com.au

Monday October 9th and 23rd 12-3pm
Octagonal Hall 52 McGlew Road, Darlington
Propagation Group. Learn to propagate your own native plants from seed.
Contact Sandy at sandyroger.stone@gmail.com

Friday 27th October 7.30pm
Octagonal Hall 52 McGlew Road, Darlington
Max Crowhurst is a specialist plant propagator at Kings Park. He will discuss tissue culture of Australian native plants for preservation and propagation purposes.

Web: <http://www.wildflowersocietywa.org.au/branches/eastern-hills-branch/>

UBC walk with Friends of Queens Park Bushland

Despite the large chance of getting wet, 17 people including two interested children, Addy and Koda, came to the UBC/Queens Park Bushland guided walk in August and we didn't even get wet.

Queens Park Bushland, Bush Forever sites 283 and 424 is located in the suburbs of Queens Park, East Cannington and Welshpool and is surrounded by industrial sites and housing.

The bushland covers around 36 hectares, broken up into blocks of various sizes. The reserves consist of open woodland of Marri, Jarrah and Banksia species with fringing woodlands of Flooded Gum and Melaleuca along the damp areas.

The Friends of Queens Park Bushland (FQPB), formed 25 years ago, saved part of the bushland from development after a housing proposal did not proceed, and then they expanded their interest to include all of the bushland in the area. The Friends Group are recording and attempting to identify every species of flora, fauna and fungi in the bushland.

Monthly group activities are held. The website is friendsofqueensparkbushland.org.au.

Congratulations on all your achievements FQPB. Those at the walk were so impressed with the fact that this area of bushland persists and is home for the diverse species of plants, animals and fungi within the area.



Photo by M Owen

Along the track with local guides, Sian and Sarah.



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Urban Bushland Council's Events

Thursday 28 September

Ray Froend, Professor ECU: THE HIDDEN THREAT TO BANKSIA WOODLAND HEALTH - GROUNDWATER DECLINE

One of the major pressures on Banksia Woodland is reduced water availability. Low rainfall and unsustainable groundwater use have contributed to persistent changes to this important ecosystem. This presentation will explore the impacts of this ongoing change to woodland health and character, and the implications for conservation and restoration efforts.

**Meet at 6pm for light refreshments, then 6.30pm start
City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi St West Perth**

Saturday 7th October 2017 9.00-11.00am

WALK WITH SUE CONLAN, FRIENDS OF MOSMAN PARK BUSHLAND

Meet at the Vlamingh Memorial 2 Curtin Avenue, Cottesloe

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

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