

# FRIENDS OF ALLEN PARK BUSHLAND GROUP



## Spring Newsletter 2019

As the year draws rapidly to a close, there's little time to read correspondence but this newsletter conveys important information and invites feedback from you, so please read on. It also reminds us of the Spring that hadn't really sprung. There was a short period of yellow wattles and pink fairy orchids flowering abundantly, and then the summer pattern began in haste. Now having just experienced a record run of 40-degree temperatures for December gives all the more reason to



*Volunteers and their stash of weeds*

call on you for support. Fortunately, the watering cycle started early and once again, thanks go out to those who've been along to help sustain the struggling seedlings. This work will need to continue throughout the long summer ahead if we want the plants to survive. We therefore urge people to volunteer an hour or 2 to relieve the regulars who've championed the cause.

Spring brings with it a multitude of weeds that need to be managed to reduce fuel loads and enable the native plants to draw moisture and nutrients without pesky competitors. Pictured left is a group of weed busters targeting fumitory in the Boobook Sector early November.

### **Swanbourne Oval**

Thanks to Vicki a Coastwest grant to revegetate the northern end of the oval means that a further 0.4Ha will be included into the conservation area - a win for the bushland at Allen Park. Currently the ring-lock fence and path is being installed around the northern edge of the oval and allows continuity of the path from Melon Hill to the beach. It is anticipated that we'll work together with Swanbourne Coastal Alliance to plant in May-June next year and will be one of the year's main activities.

### **AGM**

The AGM in November took place at Mattie Furphy's and unfortunately the bee presenter was unable to attend, but hopes to be invited next year instead. A night walk was planned as a last minute alternative, but inclement conditions prevailed so the walk was called off. Of note, 1780 seedlings (23 species) were planted this year near the rugby field, Flyash Hill, East Melon Hill and Boobook Sector, while Ecojobs completed planting in the Swale and in the Seaward Corridor. A total 930 volunteer hours were recorded for 2019.

As some would know following the announcement at the AGM in 2018, the executive committee was to see in a newly appointed treasurer and president at the 2019 AGM. However, new developments have come to light, which then led to an agreement at this year's AGM that the committee would retain their positions until they have feedback from members about a restructure and formation of a new umbrella group of bushlands in Nedlands.

### **Succession Planning**

Following meetings between the executive committees of bushland groups in Nedlands, it was agreed that each group would invite their members to provide feedback on a new proposal.

Nedlands is fortunate to have a number of reserves jointly managed by the City and the communities that live close by. The exception is Shenton Bushland, which is bordered by light industry and Irwin Barracks. For the past 20 - 25 years, specifically the Friends of Shenton Bushland, Hollywood Reserve and Allen Park have been dedicated to caring for their respective patches and been supported by a very proactive Environmental Conservation team at the City: formerly Steve McCabe, then succeeded by Vicki in 2007 and Ken more recently. They are very dedicated and highly valued by all bushland groups.

It has been proposed that an umbrella group be created providing a number of existing bushland groups with a single executive council. The intention is to reduce the administrative burden imposed by the requirement for an executive council that is mandatory for each group. The executive for each of the bushland groups is aging and there are no volunteers stepping forward to take over those roles. The bushland groups would continue to operate independently in terms of their bush care whilst each group's unique identity is maintained.

The suggestion to be put to all the groups' memberships is whether an incorporated umbrella group could be created to carry out the roles of chair, treasurer and secretary enabling groups to surrender their incorporation, thus reducing the red tape that Associations are now burdened with. It is possible that we may be able to find individuals through volunteering WA and in the community of Nedlands who would be willing to take up these administrative roles.

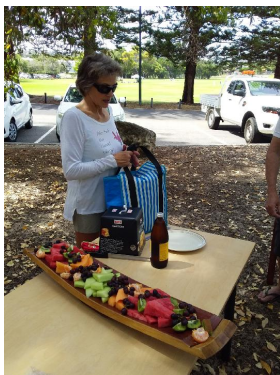
This is not a new model - there are a number of groups that operate across Perth, including Nature Reserves Preservation Group in the Shire of Kalamunda, Bushcare and Environmental Advisory Committee in Armadale, and various catchment groups in the Shire of Swan, Mundaring. Structures vary, but there's room for an informal gathering of groups to operate with the support of the City of Nedlands. The idea has been supported by the Urban Bushland Council, which sees member groups operating similarly. Some thought has already been given to strengthening the bushland corridor (of which we form a part) across the Western Suburbs. It is anticipated new groups could form in Mt Claremont and Shenton Park. We now ask:

- ***Do you support the formation of an umbrella group to administer the bushland groups in Nedlands? Please explain your response.***
- ***Should FOAPBG continue to stand on its own?***

***Your opinion is important to us. Please give it some thought and reply to Judy, our Secretary. Given the proximity to holidays, a further reminder for feedback will be sent out in the New Year.***

### **Allen Park Cottage**

It would be a wonderful way to wrap up our newsletter with good news about the cottage's new lease in life. However, further delays to the restoration effort are due to the administration reassessing their costs and priorities. This is despite assurances that planning and design work for the remediation of the cottage had already commenced and that there was the potential for the full project to be undertaken in the 2019/2020 financial year (if the council is supportive). We are still lobbying and hopeful of a good outcome for our 100 year old cottage. The CEO agreed that the fallback option in the event that no further funds were available, would be to utilise the \$140 000 already approved to do the basic remediation and maintain the cottage in a workable state. Let's hope that this is confirmed in the very near future, as the cottage will be entering its 5<sup>th</sup> year of deliberations while it continues to decline in condition through no doing of our own.



*Preparations for bush brekkie*

### **End of year Bush Brekkie**

In the tradition of the FOAPBG, the wind up for the year included a bush brekkie under the magnificent marri tree. The morning's activities to find bridal creeper and remove berries, was followed by this sumptuous spread (see left). As the group heads into the summer recess, its hoped there's some help with the watering!

Memberships are now due, and thanks to those who've already paid. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas, From all of us and the cottage skinks!

