

BUSH FOREVER 325 MAKES WAY FOR MARINA



Photo by M Owen

Don Poynton of Joondalup Coast Care Forum is outlining the extent of the clearing of the vegetation for around 1,000 houses and 800 apartments.

On June 27, Don Poynton of Joondalup Coast Care Forum and the UBC held a walk at Ocean Reef to say goodbye to 26 hectares of the wonderful coastal vegetation at Bush Forever site 325.

Unlike Roe 8, both political parties supported this development. The following summarises what will be lost and the process that led to the final decision.

According to the glossy promotional material, the Ocean Reef Marina development will involve the redevelopment of the existing Ocean Reef Boat Harbour into a

world class mixed-use working marina including waterfront cafes and restaurants, 12,000sqm of retail/commercial space, public open spaces for the community, internal beach, capacity for 550 boat pens and 200 boat stackers, over 1,000 homes, approximately 4,700 parking bays, marine services located close to boat ramps and trailer parking.

Which sounds like a nice place to live or visit and just what Perth needs; until you learn that in November 2019 a Metropolitan Region Scheme amendment excised and rezoned 26.26 hectares of Bush Forever Site 325 to facilitate this development.

The project due to commence later this year will result in the clearing of locally rare plants including, the southernmost recorded occurrence of Yanchep Rose (*Diplolanea angustifolia*), the only recorded stand of Coastal Hop Bush (*Dodonaea aptera*) in Joondalup and Native Grape (*Nitraria billardiarei*) from along the cliff face. The fruit of the latter along with the fruit of the many mature Quandong trees (*Santalum acuminatum*) that will disappear, were valuable food sources for the indigenous Mooro people when they visited the coast.

In addition to the locally rare plants, around 100 other native plant species have been recorded including several priority species. These provide ideal habitats for a large range of birds including the White-winged fairy wren and foraging sites for Carnaby's Black Cockatoo. Local Coastcare

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Photo by M Owen

Don is showing young naturalist and bird lover Eddy, the tiny leaves of the *Allocasuarina*.

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Editorial

'*We're all in this together*' has been promoted by government during the pandemic with a strong message of supporting each other during social isolation and distancing. Leadership and action based on medical science by our WA Minister for Health Hon. Roger Cook MLA and Premier Hon. Mark McGowan MLA has successfully stopped rapid spread of Covid-19 and this is very much appreciated. Now projects to help get people back to work are being called for and some are being rolled out.

Fast tracking infrastructure projects such as road and rail and building is happening, but too often at the expense of good environmental planning and land management to maintain and restore our precious biodiversity. As Philip Jennings of the Wetlands Conservation Society stated in our Autumn UBT, '*Wildlife and its habitat need to be protected if we want to have a healthy planet*'. The Climate Change crisis and the Species Extinction Crisis are the reality.

Our UBC folk have formulated the **Science and Conservation Jobs Stimulus** proposal which has been presented to the State Government for funding in the forthcoming budget. See page 5. This presents a golden opportunity to provide hundreds of much needed government jobs for scientists and for on-ground bushcarers here in our much loved Perth Peel region, our *globally recognised biodiversity hotspot for conservation priority because it is under threat*.

But we all need to rise to the challenge to get this **Stimulus** proposal on the Government's agenda. To do this, the UBC implores each of us to take a printed colour copy of the **Stimulus** ([here](#)) to your local MPs electoral office (each of us has one MLA and multiple MLCs) and meet with them, or at very least with their office staff. The impact of presenting a printed document with fabulous photos taken by our members on the cover page is strong. Continue to invite your MPs to visit your local bushland with you and show them your local wildlife treasures. Explain that a major investment is needed in government jobs to protect and manage these treasures in our Bush Forever conservation reserve system. No other city in the world is located in Banksia and Tuart Woodlands, home to iconic species such as our endangered and much loved Carnaby's Cockatoo, and thousands of endemic wildflower species.

To find your local MP names and offices, go to www.parliament.wa.gov.au

"Because it is wondrous and beautiful": UBC Member Survey 2020

Over the first three months of 2020, while fires still raged over East, UBC surveyed members groups about their activities and opinions. While the response rate was low (25 out of 75 groups), some interesting findings were uncovered. Excluding the WA Naturalists Club, which has existed since 1924, the average length of operation of groups was 22 years. While this appears to be about the time period that UBC has existed, some like the Bassendean Preservation Group (35 years) pre-date UBC by a good ten years. Groups like the Friends of Trigg Beach (4 years) are the latest additions to WA's impressive history of community-led land management. We asked groups to estimate how many of their members were active on a monthly basis and found the average was 25 people, but that about half the groups had ten or less active members. The 25 groups who responded were interacting with 13 local governments, a variety of NRM organisations, state departments such as DCBA and the WA Planning Commission and not for profits like the Environmental Defender's Office. In addition to advocacy and engagement with community groups and organisations, half the groups held weekly or monthly bushcare activities. While these interactions will come as no surprise to readers, they provide a snapshot of a relatively small group of people performing an important public function and engaging with governments at all levels.

We asked groups to describe biodiversity in their own words. The reason for doing this was to capture some non-scientific value statements from volunteers actively working to preserve biodiversity. The history of recent environmental disputes shows that the ways in which people value the environment are at least as important as scientific data about species and landscapes. Our member group sample repeatedly expressed conceptions of biodiversity that included health and interconnection.

A large variety of, and a significant quantify of, healthy native plants and animals in an area. This would indicate that the area is a healthy environment in balance and self-sustaining.

The complete suite of native flora and fauna and the interactions between each and all, for mutual benefit and health.

A diversity of ecosystems, species and genetic variation within a healthy, self-sustaining, natural environment.

When asked why it was worth preserving urban bushland, our member groups could easily capture different dimensions. In these comments, members also showed what motivates them to work year after year as volunteers.

Natural systems are important and an indicator of healthy environment and because it is wondrous and beautiful.

Bushland is the only place many of our native biodiversity have to live. By protecting the bushland we are giving other living things a place to live. Humans tend to think in human terms and ignore the fact that this planet is shared by many more species. I think the other life on earth is as important, if not more so, than humans. As the other species cannot preserve their own environment, I do it for them.

We can help with saving species. We have a stewardship to protect our natural heritage. Having a rich biodiversity in our suburbs endears nature to community and enriches our lives. Helping restore our degraded bushland showcases the beauty and wonder of local plants.

UBC Member Survey 2020 continues...

Preserving urban bushland is important to the group because nature (plants and animals) has its own intrinsic value and right to live. Additionally, people need urban bushland for many reasons: aesthetic pleasure, creation of fresh air, prevention of 'heat sinks', passive recreational areas, shade, noise reduction and privacy screening. Not least, seeing bushland reminds us all of the connection we have to the earth's total environment. This is important because the health of the earth is directly linked to our own health and literally to our ability to survive.

When we asked member groups a series of questions about UBC they said that they appreciated its advocacy role and resources like the website and events. Members were almost unanimously positive about our newsletter, The Urban Bush Telegraph.

[UBC] Makes us feel part of a larger picture and a context for our efforts.

Because UBC is an 'umbrella' group we have increased morale from knowing our efforts are shared by many others.

Members shared some of their concerns with us ranging from climate change to public behaviour in bushland. One group summed up the care/advocacy bind that many groups find themselves in:

We are trying to maintain a co-operative model with our local council and state agencies. We are mindful that increased agitation might get some of the goals met it could lead to a deterioration in our day to day dealings and routine maintenance and investment on site.

Multiple groups commented on their aging membership:

We need more young people engaging with urban bushland. Many groups have an older demographic (we were in our 30s when we got involved in bushcare- kids activities etc), yet we managed to juggle everything and find time to volunteer in the bush. Universities pour out students every year and it would be good to see more of them volunteering locally.

I think UBC should be more involved with the issues that groups care really about, eg. members getting older and lack of renewal of membership which will ultimately result in groups disappearing by natural attrition. UBC won't have member groups if this issue is not resolved soon.

We asked member groups what they thought needed to happen to preserve bush forever. This was the question groups had most to contribute, with many creative and useful suggestions. UBC members don't pull any punches when it comes to Bush Forever.

The legislation has to be finalised and put through Parliament. Our politicians are trying very hard to forget about it, helped by kow-towing bureaucrats who don't keep it at the top of the environmental agenda. Once finalised - if ever - the legislation has to be fully implemented and enforced.

There has to be an element of community ownership to act as guardians and proponents for the activities needed to preserve them.

We're still told that the dire financial state of the state economy prevents the budget expanding. Could we lobby before the next election for a pot of money for BF?

Set as much land as possible adjacent to the Bush Forever sites aside for revegetation with endemic species (seeds from the bush forever site itself).

Greater legal protection to prevent clearing and incursions for developments such as, but not limited to, housing, roads, utility services, etc.

They need to be given cultural value - not just scientific importance. Greater presence in town planning schemes.

Use one site as a demonstration of what can be achieved with management

Tipping point of climate change having immediate effect on Labor Government/whole of government and departments like WAPC, EPA.

Less focus on the economy as the driver of happiness and well-being within a community and more focus on highlighting the fact that interacting with the natural environment improves people's health and well-being as well as developing a community spirit.

The UBC member group survey highlights the multi-faceted value of Urban Bushland to the community and gives a glimpse of the unseen volunteer work carried out to protect these assets for the next generation. This feedback will assist UBC in planning for the future and continuing to support members.

Bush Forever 325 makes way for Ocean Reef Marina Development

(Continued from page 1)

groups have found over six hundred macroinvertebrates, among them the near-threatened Graceful sun moth.

Three Priority 3 Ecological Communities that have taken thousands of years to establish themselves will be replaced by a Residential precinct, a mixed use (Commercial/Recreation) precinct and a Marine Enterprise precinct, fed by two new roads up to four lanes wide, which will fragment the remaining Bush Forever and endanger the lives of the fauna, particularly the reptiles that live there.

One of the most disturbing and senseless acts of environmental vandalism is the proposed demolition of a 900m section of 8m high limestone cliffs that characterise, what has been described as, “the most scenic piece of coastline in the metropolitan area”. Along with the current shared path, these will be blasted and dozed into the ocean over the top of the State’s lucrative commercially fished abalone reef to provide landfill for a housing development. The houses will then have to be protected by a 6-8m high seawall!

How this can be allowed to happen in light of Perth having the fastest sea level rise of any Australian capital city, the expected increase in the frequency and intensity of storm events and therefore storm surges and being in defiance of the City of Joondalup’s own Coastal Infrastructure Adaption Plan, is beyond comprehension.

Why is this happening? Unlike Roe 8, this is a project that both parties supported at the last election. Labor, who was attempting to win back the local seat, initially promised \$40 million to “kick start” the uncosted project. The Barnett Government upped the ante with a pledge of \$105 million before Labor increased its contribution to \$120 million. Meanwhile those who don’t follow politics and local government, that is most of the population, remain ignorant to this day, about the pending destruction of the bush and their cherished coastline.



Limestone cliffs and coastal dunes to be replaced soon with new residential and marina development at Ocean Reef. Photos by D Poyton

Three strikes against the environment!

In June 2014 the EPA advised that an MRS amendment to excise and rezone approximately 27.5 ha from Bush Forever 325 for the purpose of developing *a world class recreational, residential, boating and tourist development, referred to as the Ocean Reef Marina Development at Ocean Reef*, did not need to be assessed under the Environmental Protection Act 1986. Strike One!

This was despite EPA’s Statement of Reasons and Public Advice stating the development *will impact on about 19.5ha of native vegetation to be cleared and has the potential to indirectly impact other parts of Bush Forever site 325 and is likely to impact terrestrial fauna through the removal of habitat*. There was, and still is, no right of appeal against such a decision.

Instead of an assessment, the City of Joondalup (the proponent prior to handing the project over to Landcorp/DevelopmentWA) was required to prepare a Negotiated Planning Outcome (NPO) - in effect, find some like-for-like land that could be purchased and added to the conservation estate, as an offset.

In 2019 DevelopmentWA secured 26 hectares of “unlike” land at Carabooda, adjacent to Yanchep National Park. This land acquisition combined with rehabilitation of 5 ha of degraded vegetation adjacent to the development area was determined to counterbalance the environmental impacts to the portion of land excised from Bush Forever Site 325.

The weakness of the Act was further demonstrated recently when DWER issued two Native Vegetation Clearing Permits for the development despite one application being assessed to be *at variance* to two of the Clearing Principles and *may be at variance* to three others, while the other application was assessed to be *at variance* to four of the Clearing Principles and *may be at variance* to two others! Strike two!

Under Section 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, *The CEO may make a decision that is seriously at variance with the clearing principles if, and only if, in the CEO’s opinion there is a good reason for doing so*.

The good reason in this case being quoted as the offset land purchased at Carabooda under the NPO was more than an

equivalent replacement. *The inferred presence of two ecological communities with higher conservation status at the offset site, namely Tuart Woodlands and Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain, was determined to be of a higher conservation outcome, despite the two Priority Ecological Communities (at Ocean Reef) not being represented.*

The fact that there will be a net loss of irreplaceable coastal vegetation, landscape and public amenity was not deemed sufficient to sway the argument.

UBC and Joondalup Community Coast Care Forum were among the groups and individuals who lodged appeals and made presentations to the Appeals Convenor. However, even if the Appeals Convenor accepts the arguments put forward by the appellants and writes a favourable report, *the Minister may allow or dismiss the appeal to which that report relates and the decision of the Minister shall be final and without appeal* (Section 107.(2)).

On 1st July 2020, the Minister dismissed the appeals. Strike three!

OCEAN REEF NEEDS YOUR HELP

A campaign to prevent the destruction of this coastal habitat will be launched on
Saturday 18 July, 3 pm at the Ocean Reef Boat Harbor.

www.saveoceanreef.com

SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION JOBS STIMULUS

Full details of this UBC proposal is [here](#).

A great opportunity is before us to transform the recent events of the Covid-19 pandemic and 2019/20 bush-fires, and the ongoing impacts of changes in our climate, into long term enhancements for the environment and the economy. Investment in the understanding and nurturing of this, arguably the greatest biodiversity of any city in the world, will secure this perpetual asset for generations to come and create the basis for a sustainable economic input for the future for our State.

The **'Science and Conservation Jobs Stimulus'** will involve **major government investment in creating new jobs to get people back to work** here in our SW biodiversity hotspot, which is also the most populous region of our State.

We recommend a **recurrent investment of \$100 million** be added to the State budget allocation for the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) for biodiversity conservation in the Perth Peel region. This would allow DBCA to fulfil its biodiversity conservation obligations and to promote and provide visitor experiences in nature. Below are just some of the State Government employment opportunities to protect our unique biodiversity and economic assets.

Bush Forever (*Refer 'Bush Forever Call for Action 2020'*)

There are 287 Bush Forever Areas (BFA) needing more bushcare. Those Areas already under DBCA Parks and Wildlife management need many more on-ground staff for proper bushcare. In addition, there is a major ongoing employment opportunity for management of the set of Bush Forever sites currently held by the WA Planning Commission (WAPC) to be transferred to the conservation estate as 'A' class reserves for the purpose of nature conservation. This requires a major increase in recurrent funding for on-ground managers to control weeds and feral animals, to provide visitor services, Rangers, as well as for botanists, biologists, mycologists and technicians to survey and monitor sites.

- Employ 5FTE scientists in DBCA to manage the transfer and implementation of protection for all BFA as on MRS map in collaboration with DPLH and WALGA.
- Employ hundreds of teams of on-ground bushcarers including trained hand weeders, local indigenous people, rangers, botanists, ecologists.
- Establish an Interagency Working Group to help facilitate this process.
- Advise all government agencies (especially Main Roads, Water Corporation, Landcorp) that BFA are no go areas.
- Strengthen the *Environmental Protection Act* to include legal protection, mandatory monitoring and management of all Bush Forever sites, including that no clearing can be permitted in Bush Forever sites.

Forrestdale Education/Visitor Centre and DBCA base. *As proposed by the Friends of Forrestdale.*

Opportunity for employment of at least 4FTE (City of Armadale, Education Department) + 10 or more additional FTE (DBCA Jandakot Regional Park).

Regional Parks e.g. for *Rockingham Lakes Regional Park, and Forrestdale*

Each of the Regional Parks and recommended Regional Parks require employment of additional permanent staff for implementation and on-ground management.

Employ scientists

- There are unknown and undescribed species of flora and fauna and fungi in our biodiverse SW hotspot including the Perth region. Employ teams within DBCA of botanists, biologists, ecologists, mycologists and technical assistants to fill the knowledge gaps by surveying, mapping and recording our biodiverse ecosystems. These gaps are already documented for the Swan Region, in State of Environment (SOE) reports, and in Auditor General's reports.
- Boost the Threatened Species and Communities Branch of DBCA with at least 10 FTE botanists to investigate and survey, map and document sites of rare and priority taxa and communities in the Swan Region.
- Establish an Environmental Weed Science Division in DBCA with at least 10, preferably 20 FTE.
- *See attached **Saving Rare Orchids** project proposal.* Deserves generous funding.
- Establish and fund an ongoing **Restoration and Rehabilitation** group of scientists within DBCA for the Banksia Woodlands TECs, and for the Tuart Woodlands TEC.

Post fire management, and fire risk management

Grassy weed control on the Swan Coastal Plain is urgently needed to reduce fire risk especially on road verges and edges of bushland sites as well as in bushland areas. LGAs, Main Roads and DBCA need additional on-ground staff to do this effectively. All bushland land managers need many more staff and resources to properly map, monitor and control grassy weeds. Note that prescribed burns should not be carried out on the Swan Coastal Plain as it actually promotes grassy weed growth thus increasing fire risk and destroys biodiversity.

There is a 2+ year history of repeated fires by illegal copper wire burning in Forrestdale Lake Nature Reserve. Despite evidence being given to police, arson squad and the land manager, police admitted that they do not have enough officers and resources to investigate and prosecute the offenders. This is unacceptable as it threatens the biodiversity and public safety from the air pollution and fire risk. **There is an urgent need for employment of many more police, investigation teams and police arson squad for the south west and also for other WA regions.**

Most fires in the Perth Peel regions are caused by **arson**. Facilitate arson watch and control with increase of employees in WA Police, Arson Squad, DBCA, DFES, and in collaboration with community friends groups. The effective **Juvenile And Family Fire Awareness ('JAFFA')** program deserves revitalisation and boosting by DFES in conjunction with DBCA and the community – throughout WA.

Nominate the South West Biodiversity Hotspot for World Heritage listing

Employ a Coordinating working group of senior scientists to do this.

In addition to acknowledging and protecting the natural areas, it will lead to an increased international focus for nature tourism.

Just some examples of local employment opportunities are presented in the Stimulus for:

- ◆ Yanchep National Park
- ◆ Bold Park
- ◆ Forrestdale Nature Reserve and Jandakot Regional Park
- ◆ Rockingham Lakes Regional Park
- ◆ Burns Beach to Hillarys Boat Harbour coastal strip management, and BF 325
- ◆ Perth Hills National Parks: John Forrest NP, Walyunga NP, Avon NP.
- ◆ Research and Community Saving Rare Orchids, and effective conservation DBCA Science
- ◆ Swan River foreshore revegetation at Ashfield Flats and Pickering Park, Bassendean Bindaring Wetland Bassendean.
- ◆ Riverbank Erosion Mitigation at Baigup Wetlands, Bayswater.

Community Action to Protect Ramsar Listed Wetland

By Jane O'Malley, Chief Executive Officer, Peel Harvey Catchment Council

Community continue their long battle to protect the Peel-Harvey Estuary from a marina and 2.5km channel to a proposed land based urban development on the Eastern side of the Estuary.

At the Shire of Murray's June Council meeting there were 13 deputations to an audience of over 100 people. The Shire moved their meeting to their civic hall to accommodate the crowd, with nearly all attendees showing their support for the Shire in their decision to prepare a Local Planning Scheme amendment to remove a marina as a permissible use under the Point Grey zoning.



Photo by D Rennie

Birds of the Peel-Yalgorup Wetland.

12 deputations supported the amendment, with the 13th being the developer.

Community are very concerned about the impacts the Channel and Marina would have on the Peel-Harvey Estuary, which is the jewel in the crown for the 53,000 ha Peel-Yalgorup Ramsar system, protected under international convention and widely recognised as the economic base of the Peel Region.

Impacts on the commercial and recreational fishing industries, tourism, lifestyle and livelihoods were key messages. Science and evidence based case studies of similar developments were cited. Concern over the financial implications for the maintenance dredging were highlighted, along with impacts on culturally significance areas and opportunities for economic benefits gained by areas that protect their natural values.

The Peel-Harvey is recognised by the State and Commonwealth as an 'at risk' Estuary and both are funding restoration programs.

David Bolt, Shire President compared the channel to "building a highway through Kings Park".

There was a cheer through the crowd when Council voted for the Amendment. <https://www.mandurahmail.com.au/story/6807737/save-our-estuary-residents-rally-behind-shire-of-murray-to-stop-point-grey-marina/>

The scheme amendment process is anticipated to take up to 15 months and is subject to a number of approvals, changes or delays.



Photo by R D'Raine

Pt Grey Ralley, 2012



Photo courtesy PHCC

Brian Toussaint shows the weed and black ooze where sandy shores used to be.

Initially the scheme amendment will be referred to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) to determine whether environmental assessment is necessary and to WAPC for approval to advertise.

Pending approvals, the Shire will then invite submissions over a 60-day public advertising period, following which an item will be tabled at a respective meeting, for Council to consider supporting or not supporting the amendment.

Council's resolution and supporting documentation will be referred to the WAPC for consideration and subsequent referral to the Minister for Planning.



Photo courtesy PHCC

Dr Steve Fisher (PHCC) interview with Today Tonight on the health concerns for the Peel-Harvey Estuary.

Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor

By Sally Marsh, Convenor

Members of the Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor (CCWC) was heartened by the recent announcement by the State Labor government of a Class A Conservation Reserve listing for the Beeliam Wetlands south of Progress Dr, and bounded by Hope Rd, Bibra Dr and Farrington St. Whilst this move does not completely stop the possibility of a road through the wetlands it is a step in the right direction in securing the long-term protection of this land. The new Crown Reserve 53313 covers 610 hectares and includes four separate areas including North Lake, Farrington Road bushland, South Lake, parts of Kogolup Lake, portions of The Spectacles and Treeby Lake (Jandakot Regional Park). This is good news for the Beeliam Regional Park as their management committee have been trying for these parcels to be included since 2007.

Our group has been concerned for some time that the east-west connectivity vegetation link provided by the bushland corridor on the land previously set aside for the Roe8/9 highways has not been recognised by State and local government planning. We sought clarification on the status of mapped Perth regional ecological linkages and their application to the east-west connectivity link between the Beeliam Regional Park and the coast. A report by Nam Natura Consulting, prepared for CCW earlier this year, included the following key points:

- The Perth Regional Ecological linkage lines sought to include areas that were assumed to be protected or having opportunities to be protected, considering the land use provisions at the time of their mapping (2004).
- While the principles and need for establishing east-west connectivity remain, the opportunities to achieve this can change with changes to land use provisions. Thus with the State Government 2017 commitment to remove the reservation for Primary Regional Roads in Metropolitan Region Scheme for sections known as Roe 8 and 9, lands within this no longer required road reservation provide the best option for connecting Beeliam Regional Park to the coastal bushland reserves.

By identifying the road reserve corridor as the "best option", we feel this report strongly supports the validity of our group's wildlife corridor vision, and urge State and local governments to take it into consideration when considering the future land use options for the Roe8/9 lands. If you would like a copy of the full report please email us on Mail-CockburnWild@gmail.com.

Our activities this year have been delayed but are slowly beginning to re-commence. Twice monthly weeding and mapping activities have recommenced using Covid-19 protocols. Activities associated with two new grants have also been delayed but are now being planned. A grant from Keeping Australia Beautiful Council will enable us to work with students from Southwell Primary School and local residents to address littering and dumping in the bushland along Blackwood Ave.

Other planned activities over the next 12 months will be a seed collection and propagation workshop, seasonal flora ID walks, and bird monitoring at four sites along the corridor. Two aboriginal cultural heritage walks involving Traditional Owners will also be held. These activities are being funded by a grant from the 2019 Communities Environment Program. We are looking forward to a busy and productive year pursuing our vision and objectives for the Wildlife Corridor.

Go to <http://www.cockburnwild.org/visionmap/> to view the interactive vision map for the CCWC.

NO FERAL FISH IN OUR WETLANDS PLEASE !

By John Chester, Friend of Yellagonga Regional Park and DBCA Community Advisory Committee

There are compelling reasons why you should not dispose of unwanted ornamental fish, such as Koi Carp or Goldfish into our wetlands' lakes.

In May and June this year, an electro-fishing exercise was undertaken in Lake Goollelal, Kingsley, by a team from Murdoch University's Centre for Sustainable Aquatic Ecosystems, co-ordinated by the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, with funding provided by the Environment Minister. This involved using a small boat and passing an electric current through the water, stunning any nearby fish which then floated to the surface to be captured in a net.

The results were surprising to say the least. In just two outings, the team captured 11 Koi Carp, the largest being 72cm long and weighing 6.3 kg. A further 59 Goldfish were captured, the largest of these being 40cm long and weighing 1.1kg.

Previous surveys show the lake system contains two especially valued resident native fish species, the Pygmy Perch and the Bluespot Goby, both being small in size, an evolutionary adaptation for surviving frequent drying out of the lakes.

So, what are the specific problems with having large feral fish sharing the lake with our native fish? Firstly, Carp are known to eat smaller fish as well as their eggs, which makes

the smaller native species subject to significant predation. Secondly, carp and goldfish are active habitat modifiers. Their vigorous bottom feeding stirs up sediment, releasing nutrients which in turn promote algal blooms. Lastly, but most disturbingly, the feral fish are clearly vectors for disease with many of the captured fish found to be infested with Asian Fish Tapeworm and fungal Red Spot Disease. Our native fish would have little tolerance to these introduced parasites. All this adds up to feral fish being unwanted pests, with the serious potential to damage a valuable and irreplaceable wetland ecosystem.

So, no dumping of unwanted fish here please!



Dr David Morgan from Murdoch University captures a very large carp from Lake Goollelal, Kingsley. Photo by Dr Stephen Beatty, Murdoch University



Electro-fishing, Lake Goollelal, Kingsley. Photo by Wayne Childs, DBCA



Some of the huge Koi and Goldfish taken from Lake Goollelal, Kingsley. Photo by Wayne Childs, DBCA

Auditor's Report Shows the Government's Failings to Protect the Environment

In late June, the federal Auditor-General Grant Hehir tabled a [damning report](#) on federal authorities' handling of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act. Incredibly, he found Australia's premier environmental law is administered neither efficiently or effectively.

Group News Group News Group News

One more step along Roe'd to recovery

By Felicity Bairstow

It is now more than 3 years since the construction of Roe 8 was halted after the Liberal party's spiteful dummy spit that saw a 5km stretch of bushland and wetlands destroyed for a road to nowhere. Since that time community members have worked with the State Government through the Rehabilitating Roe 8 project to bring about a transformation to the cleared area. Nature has done a pretty amazing job too and the wetland area in particular is a testament to the value of good weed control and nature doing its thing. Thank goodness the topsoil was left!

We all know too well that there is no such thing as perfect protection for our natural areas but an A Class reserve is a step in the right direction and so it was great to hear that the area of the North Lake Reserve which includes the Roe 8 Road reserve had been designated an A Class Reserve along with several other areas in the Beeliar Regional Park. There remains a Bill before the Legislative Council to delete the road reserve from the Metropolitan Region Scheme and this is a further step we look forward to.

A NEW NAME & A NEW LOGO for Friends of Kensington Bushland

By Fiona Audcent-Ross

Kensington Bushland (KB) is one of the few remaining banksia woodland sites in the central suburbs of Perth. The 9.1 hectares of bushland is recognised as vitally important to both the environment (designated Bush Forever Site #48) and to the local community. We're lucky enough to have both Carnabys and Red-tailed black cockatoos visit our bushland.

In 2015, the Jirdarup Bushland Precinct was pronounced by the Town of Victoria Park (ToVP), merging KB and the surrounding areas of *George Street Reserve* (2.7 ha) and the *Kent Street Sandpit*, recognising their importance and the fact that these areas do not function independently, but instead are linked, providing the Town with a combined valuable natural asset.

We thought it was time, therefore, for us to change our name; we are now the **Friends of Jirdarup Bushland** (previously we were Friends of Kensington Bushland). Our new name better reflects the passion we all have for the whole of the Jirdarup Bushland Precinct, of which KB is an important part. Jirdarup means 'place of birds' and we certainly have lots of them (59 different species at last count).



With our new name, we needed to update our logo; \$155, and a few months later, we're very pleased with the result. Our new logo features a red-tailed black cockatoo in flight and below that there's artwork by the well-known local Aboriginal artist Darryl Belotti (of both Yamatji and Nyoongar ancestry) provided to us courtesy of the ToVP. The rings symbolise a meeting or resting place and the three parallel lines a journey/paths. There's plenty of lovely paths to explore walking around our precious Bushland. Lots of park benches too, to sit and take in the wonderful natural surroundings.

OUR MAJOR BUSHLAND RESTORATION PROJECT BEGINS

So often we hear bad news on the fate of bushland; that precious small (and not so small) areas of bushland are to be lost to development. It's with great pleasure, therefore, that the Friends of Jirdarup Bushland can share their great news story – with a major bushland restoration project getting the green light, our area of bushland is increasing! Our vision for the currently locked-up Kent Street Sandpit is a restored native woodland for the benefit of cockatoos (We are the "Place of Birds", after all), the local community and conservation of our precious fauna and flora. First, though, a bit of background may be helpful; the Kent Street 'Sandpit' is approximately 8 hectares of land lying immediately to the south of KB. The Sandpit was previously a sand quarry and then, later, a rubbish dump, and so it is a contaminated site.



The centre of the sandpit in mid-summer.

Photo by R Audcent

Group News Group News Group News

In 2000 the Town of Victoria Park set aside the Sandpit for 'passive recreation and cultural purposes' and in their 2012 Environmental Plan the Sandpit was still earmarked for revegetation. Any action on the revegetation of the site was problematic, due to issues arising from its contaminated status. The Friends, therefore, pushed for action on the contamination status and in 2017, the site was reclassified by the Department of Water & Environmental Regulation as 'remediated for restricted use', allowing it to be restored for passive recreation purposes.

To encourage action on the stated Council policy of revegetation, the Friends ran a Facebook poll in July 2019 (we got over 1000 votes and 96% were in support of revegetation), followed by a formal petition to Council. We were delighted, therefore, when the Town of Victoria Park passed a resolution in their November 2019 meeting to start plans for the revegetation!

Earlier this month the Friends met with Council staff and the designers contracted by the Town to draw up the designs for the restoration. Exciting times lie ahead! This is a huge project given, for example, the size of the land, its contamination, and the existing weed loads. The Friends and wider community are committed, however, to playing our part in making this a hugely successful project. Once revegetated, the Kent Street Sandpit will almost double the size of the existing bushland. We hope to plant lots of trees to support the cockatoo populations under stress due to dwindling food sources. The opening up of the previously locked site will be a wonderful boom to the community - and community involvement in the restoration will be significant, with the Friends group playing a pivotal role (e.g. planting, weeding, watering, and events).

If you want to know more or want to get involved with this very special project, then please get in touch with us – the more the merrier!



Photo by M Owen



Photo by M Owen

Western Spinebill (left) and Spotted Pardalote photographed in Underwood Avenue bushland this Autumn.

Small birds travelling

By Marg Owen

I had read that small birds move up and down the land in response to the blossoming of plants and abundance of insects after rain, particularly in summer and autumn.

My eyes were opened to this seasonal movement this year in **Underwood Avenue Bushland**. The bush had been very quiet. Then in April there was an influx of small birds, some quite spectacular.

Most are quite hard to see, being either within bushes, on the dark ground amongst dried grass, up very high, or like little jet fighters, chasing each other around. In contrast however, the Spotted Pardalote appears to be a curious bird as on two occasions recently it has come within a metre and I have had to go backwards to get a photo in focus.

Another stunning bird that made me gasp when I saw it was a male Western Spinebill.

The last time I saw one was around seven or eight years ago. This year there has been quite an influx of what was once a very common little bird. Several people have reported seeing these birds recently in their gardens.

A Tawny-crowned Honeyeater was another new sighting, and a birdo friend sighted a White-naped Honeyeater in Kings Park. He also has seen a Yellow-plumed Honeyeater at Cottesloe Golf Course. A hundred years ago this was the commonest species of honeyeater in the Tuart Woodland, he advised.

All these travelling little birds only have narrow corridors along which to travel between bushland areas. So the best idea now, is to keep and manage what we have left and to enhance green corridors between natural areas.

Weeding in the Marine Park

Reprinted with permission from Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Newsletter

Over past weeks small groups of SERAG volunteers have steadily removed a sea of fleabane, pig-face, pockets of woody starwort, *Atriplex prostrata*, rose pelargonium, sea rocket and evening primrose from a terrestrial section of the Marine Park at Pelican Point.

Aided by a SALP Grant, the site is being prepared for winter plantings of local samphire - propagated for us by APACE - to support its natural recovery there.

There was some considerable discussion about whether or not to remove Jersey cudweed (*Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum*). FloraBase describes its naturalised status as 'Mixed (Native in Part of Range, Naturalised Elsewhere)'. But we were unsure of its native range.

Apparently the annual herb is found in a range of vegetation communities across Australia - on plains, hillsides, riverbanks, wetlands and drainage areas.

Growing to 45 cm high and branching from the base, its stems and leaves are greyish white with a woolly covering. It has many flower-heads, with outer bracts a shiny yellow, and flowers yellow.



The management of *Atriplex prostrata* at recovery sites along the Tompkins Park foreshore is an enormous challenge.

Mainly a weed of wetter and somewhat saline situations, particularly along creek margins and in estuaries, the species is regarded as an environmental weed in Western Australia. Indeed, *Atriplex prostrata* is listed as one of the major weeds of saline areas in south-western Western Australia.

Atriplex prostrata; piles of weeds ready for the trailer.
Photographs courtesy M Matassa & R Napier

On a morning in mid-May we made a concerted effort to remove it (and other weeds) from a current project site, before its seed fell. Volunteers worked in relay to meet gathering limits, and DBCA provided a trailer for the biomass.

The recovery of this degraded section of foreshore is supported by funding from the Western Australian Government's State NRM Program - assisting in the purchase of replacement native plants and any herbicide treatments required.

The Waterbird Conservation Group INC

Dedicated its May 2020 Ardea Newsletter to the memory of Maureen Campbell, pictured right at one of countless wetland and bushland restoration activities she took part in over the years. Maureen was an active member of the Waterbird Conservation Group (WCG) since 1984 and is being remembered as a dedicated volunteer and friend, always ready to rescue injured or diseased waterbirds, even if it meant wading into cold water.

Maureen led the Group as President between 2004 and 2007 and then as Vice President for another 4 years from 2008 to 2011.



City of Cockburn Community Citizen of the Year Award 2020 Joint Winner Felicity Bairstow (pictured left)

Felicity's volunteer contribution has been recognised by the City of Cockburn at their annual Community Citizen of the Year Awards earlier this year.

She has been volunteering more than 10 years with the Cockburn Wetlands Centres, 25 years volunteering with the Save Beelihar Wetland campaign and many years with the Wetland Conservation Society. In 2016, Felicity joined the WCG and since 2018 she is an active WCG Committee member.

Congratulations Felicity!

The Waterbird Conservation Group is going ahead with planned winter planting activities at Folly and Maramanup wetlands. To find out about planting days and location, please email to waterbirdgroup@gmail.com.



EVENT

BURNING OUR BUSHLAND

Wednesday 22 July from 18:00 to 20:00pm

Presentation by Professor Kingsley Dixon

Why indiscriminate burning will alter permanently our bushlands and why we need to rethink how we use fire in our landscapes.

Our biodiversity is going up in smoke, harming our health, the plants and animals that make Perth and the South-west of Western Australia a world biodiversity hot spot. After making headway in the 1990's with collaboration of DFES, DBCA, bushcare groups, community and local governments, we have returned to hierarchical decisions. Our scientists are showing us the compelling evidence!

Come along and meet our special guest Professor Kingsley Dixon from Curtin University and previously Foundation Director of Science at Kings Park and Botanic Garden.

Join us for refreshments at 6:00 pm with the talk starting at 6:30 pm

Venue: City West Lottery House 2 Delhi Street West Perth, next to City West train station.
ubc@bushlandperth.org.au <https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/>



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 \$60 a year (GST included). A growing membership strengthens the cause and groups benefit from the network.

Individuals:

Supporter membership is only \$50 per year (GST included). Supporters can attend meetings and receive copies of the "Urban Bush Telegraph"

The annual membership fees include an electronic copy of the *Urban Bush Telegraph* (currently published quarterly). Printed copies can be ordered at a cost of \$15.00 per annum for four editions.

Join or renew on-line (<https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/membership/>) or send your name, address and cheque to:
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Urban Bushland Council WA Inc



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NEWSLETTER ITEMS

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