

This report is for the calendar year January to December 2020 inclusive.

Conservation of bushland and wetlands

The voice for conservation of our bushland and wetlands is not being heard publicly and by Ministers. Lack of funding and commitment for government to adequately protect and manage our Perth and south west 'CAR' reserve systems remains a major issue, exacerbated by climate change. During the year we took the opportunity to call out to government to invest in *government employment in biodiversity conservation*. The UBC presented to Minister Dawson a *Science and Conservation Jobs Stimulus* proposal for a \$100 million investment in hundreds of government jobs to manage our Bush Forever 'CAR' reserve system. It was also sent to the Treasurer, Premier and other Ministers. We emphasised providing new jobs is a real positive. We encouraged our members to take copies of the Jobs Stimulus to their local MPs pre State budget and now pre-election.

Our ongoing key issues are:

- **Complete Bush Forever implementation**
- **Stop clearing and protect all TECs.** – Includes Banksia Woodlands of SCP TEC and Tuart Woodlands of SCP CE TEC etc.
- **Stop clearing and restore Carnaby's Cockatoo habitat**
- **Re-invest in science by State Government.**

Bush Forever

A **Bush Forever Round Table** (initiated by UBC) was held 23rd January at DBCA Kensington with officers present from DBCA Swan Region, DPLH, WAPC, WALGA, and with 5 UBC folk. WALGA expressed support to restart of the Perth Biodiversity Project or equivalent with funding of \$400,000 needed. The list of Bush Forever sites proposed to be transferred to DBCA remains the same, but there has been no progress due to failure of government to increase DBCA budget for the additional staff and resources needed.

In general terms, tactics of peak groups to successfully advocate increased funding and capacity to properly manage the Bush Forever CAR reserve system and our SW biodiversity hotspot need review and strengthening.

Climate change and clearing

UBC signed the CCWA document calling for action on climate change.

Minister Dawson/DWER in November released the 37 page 'Western Australian Climate Policy'. It provides a framework for action but the issue of land clearing and net loss of vegetation cover as a climate change issue is not addressed. Bush Forever is not mentioned.

A positive is action listed under '*Native Vegetation Rehabilitation Scheme: Invest in revegetation, habitat restoration and protection of existing vegetation to deliver at-scale environmental outcomes.*'

Increased fire risk and prescribed burning

Increased fire risk already evident, is an outcome of warmer and drier weather in our south west. There have been bad fires this summer. Fire management needs to switch to increased capacity for early detection and fast attack, arson watch and control, removal of dry grassy weeds especially on the Swan Coastal Plain. UBC does not support prescribed burning on the SCP as it increases grassy weed invasion, kills and starves wildlife, and produces human health impacts from smoke.

A Fire and Biodiversity Forum will be held 4-5th June 2021 in Margaret River.

The Denmark Environment Centre compiled a petition requesting review of the current prescribed burning program in south west WA which was signed by more than 76 groups, UBC was one. A second petition for individuals to sign was also signed by thousands and both were presented to State Parliament.

Tuart Woodlands CE TEC listing under EPBC Act

Initial discussions were held with DBCA's Julia Cullity of Urban Nature, Val English, and Bronwen Keighery about holding 2 separate one day events entitled *Talking Tuarts* in 2020 in order to raise awareness of the significance and listing. However these were postponed due to Covid-19.

Communities Environment Program 2019-20.

The UBC was successful in receiving a grant of \$20,000 for weeding Coolbinia Primary School bushland and for

forming a Friends Group. This enabled a Coordinator to be employed, and for a hand weeding contractor to remove the extensive grassy weeds within part of the good quality bushland. Covid-19 meant that time to complete the project was extended to 30th June 2021. The Coordinator organized a very successful 'walk and talk' community event with 97 people attending on Saturday 29th August - to learn of the natural treasures in the Jarrah and Banksia woodland, and to seek volunteers to be active in a Friends group. An enthusiastic Friends group has been hand weeding on a regular basis.

Meetings with Ministers and follow-up communications: Science and Conservation Jobs Stimulus

UBC met with Minister Dawson 5th February, 25th August; and with his policy officers 14th May, 5th November. Our proposal for investment in a \$100 million *Science and Conservation Jobs Stimulus* was presented 14th May and again discussed with the Minister 25th August, and discussed again 5th November as a positive opportunity to employ hundreds of government officers to properly manage the Bush Forever 'CAR' reserve system, but was not taken seriously. It was also sent to the Treasurer, Premier and other Ministers for their consideration for funding of government jobs in bushcare and science in the State budget. It was ignored in the budget but is still much needed. Specific questions asked in writing at the 5th November meeting were promised a written response – which took 3 months!

The *Jobs Stimulus* has been widely circulated in the conservation community, and our members are encouraged to take it to their local MPs for their follow up.

UBC also met with DBCA Swan Region staff, and with Minister Kelly's policy advisors.

On 20th July, UBC representatives met with Vaughan Davies (A/Director General DPLH), and Andrew Hawkins (WAPC property Services) at the request of Minister Saffioti to discuss the *Jobs Stimulus* proposal, and especially Bush Forever. UBC requested that Minister Saffioti be advised to support this \$100 million funding boost in the then forthcoming State budget. We also emphasised the great value of the MRIF funding the Forrestdale Education Centre proposal which would facilitate and benefit education of local school children, human health, tourism, and DBCA Ranger services as well as on-ground conservation management of the Ramsar Forrestdale Lake 'A' class nature reserve. It has not yet been funded.

NatureLink Perth UBC representative M. Gray attended meetings 30th April, 25 June, and 18th September by webinar, and on 7 December at Murdoch Uni. Importance of completing Bush Forever was emphasised at one meeting, but suffered dismissive comment by DPLH attendee saying they are doing it anyway.

DWER discussion papers

During the year there were 3 important policy and Act review discussion papers open for public comment:

- **Native vegetation in WA.** DWER consulted with the UBC and Wildflower Society. The Issues paper did not mention the Bush Forever program. UBC and many others made submissions. DWER has not yet released its Native Vegetation Policy. UBC and other peak conservation groups have called for a moratorium on clearing for our South West Region biodiversity hotspot and the Wheatbelt. Clearing Permits should not be issued if at variance to one or more Clearing Principles. Continuing clearing patch by patch, species extinction issues, and climate change in these regions need much more public exposure. On 9th October, peak conservation groups UBC, Wildflower Society, Wilderness Society met with D/g of DWER Mike Rowe concerning regulation and governance of biodiversity matters.
- **Climate Policy in WA;**
- **EP Act Amendments.** Amendments proposed were open for public comment until the end of January. The Amendments were passed through Parliament.
- **10 year review of the EPBC Act 1999** was conducted by Dr Graeme Samuel.

Urban Bush Telegraph

We produced 3 during the year. This is a key way that news from our member groups in bushcare issues and progress is shared, together with the big picture issues of information on bushland conservation and advocacy. Updates on Bush Forever are included.

UBC Council meetings and events held 2019: lots of positive information sharing

- 3rd March: AGM and guest speaker Greg Keighery OAM. 'What makes WA so special?'
- 5th February: 16 attended the workshop facilitated by Colma Keating to help members write their own submissions on DWER's Native Vegetation in WA Issues paper.
- 31st May: Guided walks x3 (limit of 10 per walk) held in Neerabup National Park in conjunction with UBC member QREG. Effects of burning too often and poorly designed underpasses seen.
- 25th June: Council meeting with guest speaker Geoff Barrett 'Help Protect Our Urban Bushland Quendas'.

- 27th June: Guided walks x 2 (10 per walk) lead by Don Poynton entitled 'Farewell to Ocean Reef Bushland'
- 22nd July: Council meeting well attended with guest speaker Professor Kingsley Dixon 'Burning Our Bushland'.
- 5th September: Guided walk lead by David Pike in conjunction with Northern Suburbs branch of Wildflower Society. 'How has Fire Affected Landsdale Conservation Park?'. Visitors including some children engaged well.
- 15th October: Council meeting with guest speaker David Knowles of Spineless Wonders: *Putting insects to work in your bushland*
- 19th November: Council meeting with guest speaker Dr. Anna Hopkins. from ECU 'Why is bushland soil health so important – why are we degrading it?'

Special thank you: to our dedicated UBC Committee members Margaret Owen, Chris Allbeury, Christine Richardson, Sue Conlan, Colma Keating, and also UBT Editor Renata Zelinova, and many others who help with submissions, information and advice, and attend meetings with agencies. It is very much a friendly team effort to continue to provide a voice for the bush, to share information and advice, and to help others. Sincere thanks to you all.

It is the wonderful, collaborative and extensive on-ground bush care work done by UBC member groups which we acknowledge and treasure.

SUBMISSIONS, SITE ISSUES AND CAMPAIGNS

Below is a summary of the key site issues that involved our attention during 2020 in conjunction with our Member groups. Also attached is a list of the submissions on proposals and Clearing Permits and appeals that were submitted by UBC 2020. The contribution of many members in doing all this work is gratefully acknowledged.

No	Site or issue	Submission or action on	Outcome
1	Tuart Forests and Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain now listed as critically endangered (CE) TEC under the EPBC Act.	Plans for an awareness raising conference including briefings by DOEE staff were started by DBCA Swan Regional Office in conjunction with the Wildflower Society and UBC.	<i>Proposals deferred due to Covid-19.</i>
2	Anstey Keane Damplands BF 342	Water Corp proposed to take limestone paving and other materials into the track cleared for the pipeline installation through the site.	<i>After prompting by UBC and Friends of Forrestdale, DBCA stopped this action and the track was smoothed over only.</i>
3	Forrestdale Lake Nature Reserve	Burning plastic off copper wire with toxic smoke in the reserve started a bushfire. Friends of Forrestdale reported details of the incident and perpetrators to police, DBCA Pollution watch, City of Armadale.	<i>Lack of action by police arson authorities to follow up likely offenders.</i>
4	Deliberately lit fire on 24th January at former channel 9 bushland	High conservation value TEC SCP 20a partly burnt. Extinguished quickly by on-ground fire fighters with help of water bombers. Need for	<i>Resolution of conservation of Lot 1 Gay St and fencing, and weed control needs attention – not yet provided.</i>
5	Lot 56 Cottonwood Crescent and part adjacent former channel 10 site.	High conservation value bushland TEC SCP 20a at Lot 56 still not secured for conservation.	<i>No further progress</i>
6	Prescribed burning	UBC folk attended the Wildflower Society's Seminar on Prescribed Burning and Native Flora held at the Ecology Centre.	<i>Wildflower Society committed to preparing a position paper.</i>
7	Kids Bridge from Children's Hospital to Kings Park	Expensive proposal by Main Roads in conjunction with the Hospital involves some clearing and incursions with construction of the bridge into Kings Park bushland. UBC met with Main Roads officers 20 March 2020.	<i>Project approved.</i>
8	Underwood Ave Bush Forever 119	Friends group requested UWA to work with them/collaborate on hand weeding and conservation management. Friends met WAPC Chairman David Caddy to request acquisition of the site with MRIF.	<i>No progress. Site still not acquired by State and transferred to conservation estate as A class reserve.</i>

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		Large numbers foxes seen in December in the bushland, reported to UWA. Rainbow Bee-eaters tunnels run over by tractor.	
9	Former channel 9 bushland Dianella	Unauthorised clearing along edges. Proposed to be added to Bush Forever. Most is WAPC owned. City of Stirling has agreed to manage the site as an addition to Cottonwood Crescent BF site.	<i>No progress</i>
10	Ocean Reef Marina project by DevelopmentWA	Letter sent to Premier and relevant Ministers for a review of the whole Ocean Reef Marina proposal (includes major adjacent land developments with clearing). Clearing broken into a set of small proposals for clearing permits, a questionable process. Submissions and Appeals made. Rally held by active local group 22 November.	<i>Rigorous assessment of the cumulative impacts of clearing avoided. Clearing approved patch by patch.</i>
11	Former BF site at Lot 102 Farrall Rd Midvale	Site was sold by government to developer Satterleys. Proposal for subdivision was assessed by EPA. UBC strongly supports Friends of Blackadder-Woodbridge Catchment Group in opposing subdivision. Representatives from both groups met the Appeals Convenor on site on 24 th August.	
12	Bunbury Outer Ring Rd (BORR)	Main Roads proposal goes through high conservation value bushland. Lots of community opposition to this by Gelorup group. BORR Southern section: EPA Assessment 2225 under s38 referral, assessment on proponent information. UBC submission 20 November 2020. Also was a Controlled Action under S18 & 18A of EPBC Act Submission to Main Roads WA, copy to DAWE.	<i>Assessed formally by EPA as PER. Assessed through preliminary documentation. Assessed by DAWE as a Controlled Action under EPBC Act. Outcome not yet known.</i>
13	EPBC Act 10 year review discussion paper	Review as required every 10 years under EPBC Act. Prof Graeme Samuels' Discussion Paper included questions for public comment. It highlighted shortcomings/failure of the Act and its implementation.	<i>Interim Report by Prof Graeme Samuel was very good as it identified major shortcomings and changes to the Act needed.</i>
14	Metronet Rail Eglinton-Yanchep	Rail extension PER by EPA.	<i>Proposal approved by EPA</i>
15	Clearing at Lot 912 Midland Rd Bushmead for housing	MRS Amendment proposed to allow clearing of Forrestfield Vegetation complex of which only 1% is secure for conservation, target is at least 10%. Site is adjacent to BFA 213 Bushmead, and in high fire risk zone. UBC Deputation presented to WAPC 19 th August by zoom. Recommended the MRS Amendment be refused and the site be added to the adjacent BF site Bushmead.	
16	Anstey Keane Damplands BF 342	The need to acquire the last 2 Lots and to set up the whole Area with fencing, signage, visitor services is outstanding. Public Notice of acquisition given.	<i>Last 2 Lots finally acquired by WAPC by compulsory acquisition. Tenders for initial capital works prepared, work not yet done.</i>
17	Trail bike proposals in Manning Lake and adjacent bushland BF 247, in Beeliar Regional Park	Bike trails proposed through the Park and in old quarry sites. Active local Manning Park group opposing this. UBC representatives attended a site visit led by Environment Officer from City of Cockburn. UBC concerns expressed: active recreation and cycling should not be permitted in this BF Area. Includes endangered TEC SCP 26(a) Limestone ridges. Is major roost site for the endangered Carnaby's. Comments sent to City of Cockburn.	<i>Outcome not yet known</i>

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18	Bold Park BF 312	Motorised and non-motorised trail bikes on Bridal Trail are causing danger to walkers. Concern by Steve Easton of BGPA, cameras used to identify riders.	
19	Perth Airport draft Master Plan and ongoing development proposals	UBC submission made 4 th June. A petition proposed by NRPB to save Perth Airport bushland and wetlands was presented to the House of Representatives for the on-line petition for signatures until 30 th September 2020. Call to Perth Airport P/L and shareholders for reinstatement of former Conservation Precincts and their <i>protection in perpetuity</i> . Opposition to new runway which threatens Munday Swamp, and to NW development	<i>Accepted by the House of Representatives for circulation for signatures.</i>
20	Lot 4&5 Ludlow Rd Myalup Peel-Yalgorup Lakes risk	Limestone extraction proposal will have impact on 6 significant MNES including a Ramsar wetland of the Peel-Yalgorup Lakes. Hydrological impacts could be catastrophic and irreversible.	?
21	Broadcast Australia housing proposal at Lot 802 Erindale Rd Hamersley	Clearing for housing on 13.5 ha good quality Banksia Woodlands TEC. Lots of community submissions – 172 requested a PER. Multiple MNES including Tuart Woodlands CE TEC, Banksia Woodlands TEC, Carnaby's Cockatoo, FRTBC.	<i>Broadcast Australia proposal to clear to be assessed by EPA as PER</i>
22	Lot 102 Farrall Rd Midvale, former BF site	Proposal for subdivision was assessed by EPA. Has CE FCT SCP 20c: Shrublands and woodlands of the eastern side of the Swan Coastal Plain. Only 0.5% of the Guilford Complex and only 1% of the Forrestfield Complex remain in secure tenure in the Perth Peel region.	<i>EPA and the Minister approved the subdivision despite strong appeals.</i>
23	Carnaby's Cockatoo population	In western suburbs: ~170 roosting at Hollywood reserve and ~500 at Perry Lakes in winter this year as Marri seed plentiful this year.	
24	Installation of cockatubes in Shenton Bushland	The idea was initiated by a Shenton College student. City of Nedlands, the land manager, assisted with installation of the cockatube.	
25	EPBC Amendment (Streamlining Environmental Approvals) Act 2020	Disturbing amendments to facilitate fast approvals rather than rigorous assessment and ensuring MNES are protected.	
26	Quinns Rocks Caravan Park expansion into BF site	Quinns Rocks Residents Group concerned about the proposed expansion into the BF site. QREG also objected.	?
27	City of Stirling and Surfing WA clubroom extension into BF site	Council staff believes this is an appropriate development. Community opinion does not support this.	?
28	Deliberately lit fires in Cottonwood Crescent Bushland, BF43	Fires lit 23-24 September thought to be by drug addict, fast response by DFES. Unfortunately quality patches of Xanthorrhoea burnt.	
29	Fires lit in Greater Brixton St Wetlands BF	Thought to be lit by drug user, offender caught at another site.	
30	Yule Brook Regional Park proposal	Detailed proposal by Hans Lambers supported by Bronwen Keighery, UBC, and others presented to WAPC Tim Hillyard at DPLH.	

SUBMISSIONS 2020	APPEALS 2020
Environmental Protection Act 1986 proposed amendments consultation by DWER To DWER 24 January 2020	CPS 6409/3 Appeal against Amendment to conditions of clearing permit on DP 053/19, Lot 3052, and on Lot 15450 on DP 40341, Jindalee.
DWER's Native Vegetation in WA: Issues paper To DWER Native Vegetation Strategy 9 February 2020.	
10 year review of the EPBC Act To Prof. Graeme Samuel AC, EPBC Act Review Secretariat, DOEE 12 April 2020 Have your say questionnaire on the Interim Report by Prof. Graeme Samuel completed August 2020.	
Subdivision of Lot 102 Farrall Rd Midvale on Supplementary Report To EPA 3 April 2020	CPS 8787/1 Appeal against clearing for part of Ocean Reef Marina project.
Lot 123 Mortimer Rd Casuarina proposed subdivision. To EPA for PER assessment 8 April 2020	
Bunbury Outer Ring Rd (BORR) –on additional information requested of Main Roads To EPA 7 April 2020 Also BORR Southern section – Assessment 2225 under s38 referral to EPA 20 November 2020. Also Controlled Action under EPBC Act s18 &18A To Main Rds and DAWE 7 th December 2020.	
Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements RCNDA 27 April 2020	
MRS Amendment 1366/57 for Lot 912 Midland Rd Bushmead for housing and clearing. UBC Deputation made to WAPC meeting 19 August 2020.	CPS 8788/1 Ocean Reef Marina against clearing of 4.47 ha. Also met with Appeals Convenor.
Perth Airport draft Master Plan 4 June 2020.	
EPBC 2019/8388 lots 4 & 5 Ludlow Rd Myalup: proposed Limestone Extraction	
MRS amendment 1369/57 for rezoning 112 ha to Urban and Urban Deferred for housing and high school in West Piara. Includes bushland, wetlands.	
Erindale Rd Hamersley for assessment by EPA as PER 8 June.	
	Lot 102 Farrall Rd Midvale: Appeal against EPA report 1683 for subdivision for housing in former BF site 309. 10 July 2020 Also met with Appeals Convenor on site 24 th August 2020.
Intention to amend Class 'A' Crown Reserve 24581 and 27572 for the Mitchell Freeway Extension from Hester Ave to Romeo Rd. Comments sent to DPLH. 15 August 2020.	
Goodwood Estate Lot 9002 Prowse Rd Capel . To EPA for assessment by EPA as PER.	