



Think Global. Act Local.
EST. 1996

Autumn Newsletter 2023

This newsletter brings good news!

Good news for all those who've walked past Lot 150 over the past 10 years and imagined how good it would look if it melded seamlessly into the surrounding bushland. The landmark agreement was announced on the 24th May to adjust the bushland management boundaries to include Lot 150 (which was where the ranger's cottage once stood at 11 Sayer Street) and the strip along Odern Crescent east of the driveway to the rugby club linking with the remnant bushland on the corner at Clement Street.



Lot 150 on Sayer Street looking north



Odern Crescent east of driveway

This is a wonderful outcome to allow for restoration of both areas. We understand the zoning won't change, but it will not inhibit opportunities to continue to improve and grow the overall canopy in Allen Park for the benefit of everyone.

We all know that there is a big push to increase the tree canopy across Nedlands. Importantly, the understorey is critical for biodiversity. Whilst street trees can support the overall canopy, the understorey improves soil health, provides cooling for our big trees, supports the myriad of pollinators, provides habitat and foraging for vertebrates and keeps us all healthy. This can be achieved in areas such as Lot 150, the corridor along Odern Crescent, and the area abutting the Norn Bidi trail.

Amongst the 1800 plants designated for Allen Park this season, we are able to start a reintroduction of some important food plants for the Carnaby's and Red-tailed Black Cockatoos. We can now plan to include some to be planted in Lot 150 this winter.

We appreciate that there will be more preparation required to revegetate on the strip along Odern Crescent so planting will be next year in this area. On the back of Vicki's good planning efforts that resulted in the successful revegetation on the northern end of the Swanbourne Oval in under 2 years, we anticipate the Odern Crescent Greenway will be greatly enhanced in much the same way. The concept designs for Norn Bidi trail north of the Bridge Club are progressing slowly. Hopefully the trail will be complete by the end of the year. Planting around that area will need to be considered, and not necessarily undertaken by our group.

Thank you to volunteers

At last, the season has broken, and brought relief for the volunteers who've been watering hundreds of seedlings on a fortnightly basis in 2 project areas – south Sayer Street and in the Boobook Sector. Thankfully the relocation of the water storage tanks cut watering time by half. Caitlin and James watered seedlings on Odern Crescent over the past 5 months, and were rewarded with a batch of easter eggs and watering cans! Sophie also helped out in the Boobook Sector.

Thanks also to the City of Nedlands for outsourcing irrigation to the seedlings all the way up the track from the rugby club carpark to the crest of the hill, a huge effort. We are also grateful for the regularity of the supply truck that delivered water to the storage tanks during that period.



Sophie (above right)

James and Caitlin



Nedlands Natural Area Friends Group Appreciation Day was hosted by Swanbourne Coastal Alliance in ideal conditions. The focus was an insect study guided by Daniel Heady from the WA Insect Study Society. Daniel led the group around the Swanbourne Oval and beach area, swooped over shrubs with a large net to sample a myriad of tiny invertebrates, much to the delight of the nature enthusiasts. Examples such as bark lice found on *Olearia axillaris* in macro view showed them to have very colourful zebra like stripes. We found rove beetles in banksia and in seaweed, and plume moths in pelargonium with wing position like the letter “T”, a distinctive feature.

Although spiders do not fit into the insect study, we could not shy away from finding a peacock spider, also known as a dune jumping spider. The specimen was an immature individual, lacking the vibrancy they are renowned for. This didn't dampen our enthusiasm for them.



Peacock spider

Daniel's study is now enabling Nedlands' bushland group members to contribute their findings to the **iNaturalist app**. There is a project “**Insects of Nedlands Parks**” that we encourage you to join and post any of your findings in Nedlands to the study. To this date, there have been 328 observations, 155 species and 59 observers and 138 identifiers.

This has now prompted us to start a **Melon Hill iNaturalist** project if you'd like to know more about your findings by sharing your photos of the flora and fauna in Allen Park. It is in its infancy, so your contributions will be most welcomed. Just search for “**Melon Hill**” in **iNaturalist** once you have the app and start posting! It's lots of fun and easy to use.

Rewild Perth – visit their amazing website and register your native garden <https://rewildperth.com.au> Let's create the corridors for local wildlife. Our cockatoos need you!

Activities over Djeran (April-May)

After the early onset of rain, 8 tuart seedlings were planted on Melon Hill and in surrounding areas. These were propagated and lovingly tendered by Peter Bibby and who had found them germinating in the Heritage Precinct. Marri seedlings are sprouting too, so they will also be transplanting into nearby areas. It is most encouraging to see natural recruitment of these magnificent trees in Allen Park. Pictured here are Jen and Rob planting one of the tuarts.



Banksia attenuata

Those traversing Melon Hill on the Booh Djinoong Bidi (the crest trail) will have noticed piles of mulch, either surrounding *Banksia attenuata* seedlings, or in random piles. Contractors set them out in anticipation of this winter's planting program. The mulch will serve to protect and prevent desiccation of the delicate proteoid roots. The long-range forecast is for a dry winter, so there's a trial to assess the benefit of this technique versus a 'do nothing' approach.

Banksia prionotes, commonly known as acorn banksia is going to be introduced to Allen Park this winter. There are wonderful specimens bordering Underwood Avenue Bushland and their bark is quite distinctive.

Allen Park Cottage

The whereabouts of unspent funds that had been set aside for restoration work at the Allen Park cottage was one question put to the administration leading in to the Nedlands Council AGM on the 15th May. \$75,465 had been allocated for the 22/23 financial year. \$67,893 was spent on construction: partial asbestos removal, initial repairs, minor works - \$36,591. The professional fees – design and heritage report amounted to \$31,302.

All this amounted to another lost year and the cottage still in limbo. The address to Council was to reiterate the necessity to fix the neglected building and highlight the need for community assets, especially those of historical significance, to be retained. These buildings give sense of place and provide small spaces for occasional use by our communities.

The Nedlands Council AGM was the forum to urge the City to act on restoring this much-loved heritage building. A motion was put and carried:

That Council:

- 1. Instructs the Chief Executive Officer to take immediate preventative action to ensure that the Allen Park Cottage does not deteriorate any further.***
- 2. Considers allocating \$600,000 in the 2023/24 budget to complete the restoration of the Allen Park Cottage to its circa early 1900s condition as identified within the Heritage Report.***

The motion will be taken to the ordinary council meeting later in June. A firm commitment to fund the project is absolutely necessary.

Now the weeding begins and erosion control is much needed in some areas. Fortunately, work is already underway and Vicki engaged contractors to retain the large tuart south of the junction of paths near the crest of Melon Hill. Unfortunately, we know that the sand is very mobile, and incursions onto the steep slope have caused significant erosion. Coir matting serves its purpose as it is long-lasting and provides structure. Planting between coir rolls this winter should stabilise the slope and protect the large tuart on the crest of the hill.



Erosion control - coir matting installation

Melon Hill Bushland Group, local community members, Nedlands council and professional groups have all worked together to provide preventative dieback treatments for old growth Tuart trees in Melon Hill's Boobook Sector. We hope this will be an ongoing project and you will hear more about it later in the year.

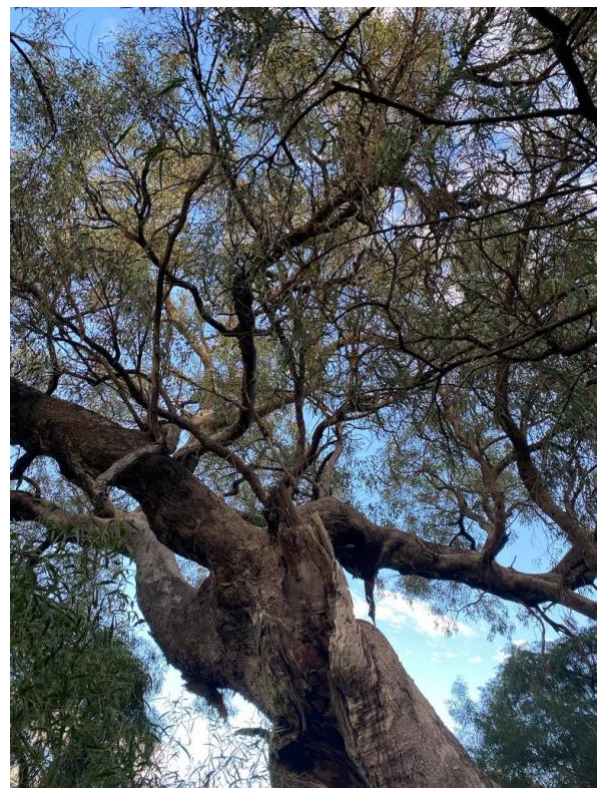
Youths are leading the charge

Our executive committee was very impressed by a presentation by a most inspiring young advocate for change. Poppy Mahon who featured in the Post (May 27, p3), has created a website to educate and grow the movement against the use of second-generation rodenticides. Poppy has taken on big corporations to stop stocking the product that is known to have fatal consequences for raptors such as the Tawny frogmouth and Boobook owls we hold so dear to our hearts. **Youth Action for Wildlife** needs your help, so log on to Poppy's website

www.youthactionforwildlife.com





and sign the petition.

Help support our local wildlife like Ollie the Sayer Street resident



Which Rodent Bait Is Safe For Our Owls, Pets, Quendas and Wildlife?

Check the ingredients as some brand names are very similar

 First Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (FGARs) Containing: Warfarin Coumatetralyl (Racumin) Sodium Chloride 	 Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) Containing: Brodifacoum Bromadiolone Difenacoum Difethialone Flucoumafen 
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WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

READ THE PACKAGE...DON'T BE MIS-LED BY INITIAL INFORMATION, SGARs ARE NOT SAFE FOR OTHER ANIMALS

DON'T USE SGARs.... Secure entry points to your home, so the rodents can't get inside Don't leave food or rubbish around Don't leave pet food outside Keep your compost away from your house

Make sure your pest control company does not use SGARs

If you need to use bait, use FGARs e.g. Warfarin (Ratsak Double- Strength), Coumatetralyl (Racumin) or Ratsak Natural (salt based) , or a rodent trap, sonic device
 Write to your local IGA, Coles, Woolworths, Bunnings and Mitre 10 to stop selling SGARs

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY (Print this page)

Comment on Nedlands Dog Local Law and dogs in Public Places Council Policy. Open for comment. Closes 16 June. Online Your Voice. <https://ehq-production-australia.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com>

PLANTING – WE NEED YOU!! New volunteers are most welcome!

Meet at the back of Mattie Furphy's House in the Heritage Precinct to sign in and disinfect shoes. Please bring your water bottle. Gloves can be provided. Morning tea follows planting.

All planting days start 9am and end approx. 11.30 am

Tuesday 6th June

Planting Banksias in Boobook Sector and south of Sayer Street

Saturday 10th June

Planting Lot 150 and Boobook Sector

Tuesday 13th & Tues 20th

Planting banksias in various areas

Saturday 24th June

Planting Walkway & Lot 139

Saturday 1st July

Planting top of Melon Hill



Melon Hill Bushland Group

WhatsApp group



If you'd like to keep up to date with activities please join Whatsapp

Are you a member – if not would you like to join?

Contact us by email melonhillbg@gmail.com, or Secretary Judy jhe74786@bigpond.net.au see us on the Urban Bushland council website Find us on FaceBook, Instagram

@Melonhill_bushland

Please consider the logo – **Think Global, Act Local**: Join us to help care for our local patch. You can make a difference!

Written by L Shaw for MGBG



