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# Ecoplan NEWS

Issue 42 Winter 2002



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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
MURDOCH UNIVERSITY  
STIRLING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## Community volunteers bring informed change to Council management

Recent actions of bushland carers have resulted in positive amendments to bushland management.

The Friends of Trigg Bushland (FoTB) organised a focussed workshop with residents, councillors, bushland managers, volunteers, ecologists, scientists and the wider public to explore the latest ideas in the management of fire in bushland. The focus of the forum was protection of private and public property as well as biodiversity.

### Catalyst for open forum

A devastating summer fire in Trigg Bushland, a breakdown in normal fire reporting procedures, immediate post-fire actions of tree lopping and felling, local residents concerns that property and life were being threatened by wildfires, the City of Stirling's decision to consider a prescribed burning regime for local bushland and conflicting advice were the catalyst for this session.

### Experience gleaned from experts

FoTB organised for the forum to be informed by those most knowledgeable and for all participants to contribute their experience and understanding. Speakers included Mr Bob Dixon, Manager of Biodiversity at the Plant Science Directorate, Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority and Dr Ric How, Senior Curator of Reptiles and Mammals with the WA Museum. Although Professor Richard Hobbs of Murdoch University's Environmental Science Faculty was unable to attend, he provided a paper which was presented on his behalf.

### This causes that – in our bushland

Mr Dixon spoke of evidence gleaned from records of fires in Kings Park over a 50 year period, that prescribed burning does not reduce the incidence or intensity of fires. "Major fires have occurred in the park every 15 years regardless of whether there was a prescribed burning regime or not. Rather, colonisation by highly flammable weeds such as veldt grass and wild oats is encouraged by fire" explained Mr Dixon.



Friends of Trigg Bushland during post-fire weeding efforts. Photograph courtesy of the Community Newspaper Group, photographer Doug Sherring.

Professor Hobbs highlighted the most effective method of reducing the frequency of fire was to eliminate non-native grasses either via direct removal or using herbicides. He noted that in addition to encouraging fire, weeds prevent regeneration of native species.

Professor Hobbs also stressed the need to deal with fire risk on and near adjacent properties, alerting participants to the very practical, comprehensive and excellent guidelines developed by CSIRO.

Dr How told of the effect of fire on fauna, including the great toll of a hot fire on fire sensitive species' and that very few reptiles are able to escape an intense fire. He also highlighted the often overlooked importance of trees, logs and hollows as shelter and nesting and roosting sites for birds, bats, possums and even reptiles – strongly advising against their removal.

The presentations were followed by a focussed discussion that included contributions from experienced local and regional bushland carers Phylis Robertson and Dave Pike.

### Changes in management and budget

Two City of Stirling councillors attended the workshop and with the assistance of the



Ric How, Dave Pike, Phylis Robertson and Bob Dixon at the workshop. Photograph by Peter St Clair Baker

Council's environment staff were able to inform fellow councillors of the workshop's findings. Of particular interest to Council was the role of prescribed burning in encouraging weed invasion of bushland and the importance of weed control in fire management. Building on this, a motion initiated by the Technical Services Committee was later carried by the City of Stirling Council at their May 7 meeting. This Council decision has four prongs of extending the existing prohibition of controlled burning until community consultation is completed, expanding the weed control program through an additional \$28 000 in the 2002/03 parks operation budget, reviewing relevant internal budgets in conjunction with external grant program's and giving weed management and fire hazard a higher priority.

### Small steps

Although far more resources are needed for good bushland management, these initial changes together with better informed decision makers are significant steps, and the catalyst – local volunteers.



It took a while but the rain seems to finally have arrived along with winter. You can almost feel our bushland breathe a sigh of relief.

The bush is beginning to burst into flower, so don't forget to take the opportunity to enjoy it as you get stuck in to your winter tasks.

A warm welcome back to Margo after her year off -- it's good to see you back.



I managed to get out a see a number of groups over March and April and see what marvellous bush regeneration results have

been achieved through many volunteer hours both on the ground and in the office. Robyn Murphy and the Friends of Trigg Bushland presented a thoroughly researched and well-balanced fire workshop which was a great success achieving very positive results, see cover story.

I have continued to be amazed by the dedication and enthusiasm of everyone working in bushland and will be sad to leave Ecoplan, it has been very inspiring working with you all and I have learnt a huge amount. Thank you for your support.

*Bridget*

## Are you on the mailing list?



This newsletter is free to all those interested in bushland. If you would like to join the mailing list or add on a friend let us know! And don't forget to tell us if your address has changed. Contact Ecoplan (see Ecoplan contacts on this page).



My first few weeks back on the job have been packed with lots of action. The Skills for Nature Conservation program is in full swing. In April we held the first of the workshops *Planning a Successful Workday* in preparation for the many planting and weeding days coming up over the next few months. Everyone participated with great enthusiasm and valuable information was exchanged between all participants.

*Understanding the Values of Soil*, coordinated by Greening Australia (WA) was very well attended and appreciated. The May 18 workshop on *Helping Your Local Community to Protect Bushland, Wetland and Rivers* was a good chance to reach out to some new people and groups and will be repeated in the northern suburbs in October. Our seminar for World Environment Day, *Perth's Bushland Bonanza* was a great opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of the unique flora and fauna of the Perth area. Many thanks to all the presenters.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bridget for her valuable contribution to the Ecoplan program during my year of absence. As well as overseeing the change from DEP to Department of Conservation and Land Management, Bridget has managed to get out and meet many of the groups. She made sure the programs were up to date and running well and been a tremendous support to the many people she has come in contact with. Bridget will now return to her previous position with the Conservation Branch at the Department of Environmental Protection. We wish her well.

*Margo O'Byrne*

## Spring Ecoplan News



Forward your news, activities and regional reports for the Spring Ecoplan News by 1 September 2001. Please keep your regional reports under 250 words and articles as brief as possible. Send us your photos! Fax, e-mail or write to Margo (see Ecoplan contacts panel on this page).

Thanks to all contributors.

*Newsletter compiled and edited by Colma Keating.*

## Contacts

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### Greening Australia (WA)

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### APACE

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### Swan Catchment Centre

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### Urban Bushland Council

Andrew Thomson ☎ 9420 7207

### Bushcare facilitator

Jon Kaub ☎ 9474 7052

### Perth Biodiversity Project (WALGA)

Carla Miles ☎ 9213 2048

Andrew Del Marco ☎ 9213 2047

'Ecoplan News is a quarterly newsletter of Ecoplan, a Department of Conservation and Land Management program to support community involvement in bushland conservation'.

# Ecoplan closer to the ground

After 11 years with the Department of Environmental Protection, Ecoplan has moved to the Department of Conservation and Land Management. Based in Kensington and moving from a skyscraper to the ground floor – Ecoplan looks forward to our ongoing collaborations. Check the inside cover of this edition for contact details and the autumn edition for a location map.

## Bushland Care Days for 2002

Once again many hard working bushland care groups in the metropolitan area will be taking part in the Ecoplan/Conservation Volunteers Australia *Bushland Care Day* program. Come along and enjoy a complimentary BBQ lunch and the wonders of the bushland whilst lending a hand at the same time – see *What's On* centre pages for details.

## Careful, we may have misinformed you...

Apologies to Kate Brown, Environmental Weeds Action Network Project Officer as we misrepresented some of her comments in the autumn edition.

As correctly stated, both *Alternanthera nodiflora* and *Persicaria decipiens* are perennial native species that readily colonise disturbed sites. However, they do not suppress arum lily seed. "They will help suppress the many annual weeds that often race in to fill up the space left when arum lily is controlled in wetland situations," clarified Kate. She also reminds us "To be sure the plants have been correctly identified, as *Persicaria decipiens* in particular may require specialist texts for correct identification".

## Brett's reasons

Although readers enjoyed the autumn cover story highlighting what Brett Tizard, fellow volunteers and the local Council had achieved at the Armadale Settlers' Common (ASC) – some thought the article lacked completeness by failing to inform why Brett chose to resign as President. Ecoplan News put that question to Brett and he explained "Over the last thirteen years, it has been my privilege to work with the Armadale City Council and the local community to manage and care for the Armadale Settlers' Common. It is however a time consuming task-master and unfortunately work and other commitments mean I can no longer do the job to the standards I have set myself". Once again, we wish Brett all the best for the future and express our appreciation for his valuable contributions.

## Landmark decision on land clearing

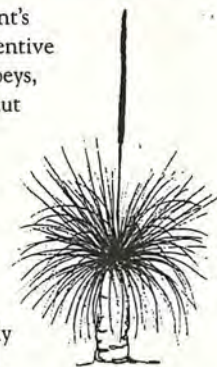
On 12 February in the Perth Court of Petty Sessions Magistrate Peter Malone handed down convictions under the Town Planning and Development Act 1928 against Soiland Garden Suppliers and Peter Pollock, Soiland's Operations Manager. They were charged with undertaking development without development approval, namely the illegal clearing of the Shreeve Road Wetland in Canning Vale in July 2000. Magistrate Malone also ruled that the \$50 000 maximum penalty for an individual, applicable under the Town Planning and Development Act, could be increased to \$250 000 for a corporation.

At the core of Magistrate Malone's decision is the determination that the clearing of vegetation constitutes development as defined in the Town Planning and Development Act. This provides for the Town Planning and Development Act to be the most powerful legislation to control the clearing of land in Western Australia. Prior to this decision, the only applicable legislation was the Soil and Land Conservation Act, whose maximum monetary penalty is \$2 000, although it has provisions for rehabilitating the land.

## Nearer to Nature and You

For the last ten years the Department of Conservation and Land Management's Hills Forest Discovery Centre and Go Bush program have been running inventive and fun outdoor activities. The great range has included breakfasting with joeys, making bushy arts, mixing it with mini-beasts, seeing forest fairies and gumnut gnomes, cooking camp oven cuisine and walking the 'nightshift'.

However, changes are afoot! Most importantly, the scope of the program is expanding from its forest home in the hills down to the coastal plain. As a result, the program is now known as 'Nearer to Nature'. The expansion process has already started and will continue during winter when you will be able to learn about Yellagonga and Herdsman Lake Regional Parks and Star Swamp. Come spring, the *Nearer to Nature* program will be more heavily promoted in the community to advertise the broader range of activities and venues. Keep an eye out as the program comes to nature areas near you!



If you would like to know more or have great ideas, ring the program's new manager May Carter for a chat on 9295 2244.

## Are your details correct?

Can you please check the mailing label of this newsletter to ensure we have your correct contact details. Also, if you would like Ecoplan to keep you informed of other bushland care information via e-mail, forward your address details to [ecoplan@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecoplan@calm.wa.gov.au).



## Congratulations

The Piney Lakes Environmental Education Centre, designed by Gary Baverstock, built by the City of Melville and sponsored by the Lotteries Commission has been awarded the Building Category of the National Banksia Awards. The centre is not connected to mains electricity, water supply or sewage, with all of these services generated or supplied from renewable energy sources.

# Funding opportunities

## Funding Your Future

A new website has been launched to help community groups, businesses and educational bodies secure funding for their information and communication activities. Access is via the 'Business and Community' link of the WA Dept of Industry and Technology website [www.indtech.wa.gov.au](http://www.indtech.wa.gov.au).

## Community Conservation Grants

The Minister for the Environment's Community Conservation Grants are advertised in the second half of the year. Community groups can apply for up to \$5000, but funding is limited. To be placed on the mailing list for applications, contact D.C.L.M. on 9334 0455 or email [juliea@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:juliea@calm.wa.gov.au)

## CommunityLink Volunteers Award

The National Australia Bank is calling for nominations for their CommunityLink Volunteers Award. The aim is to recognise and financially reward (up to \$15 000) not-for-profit groups and encourage more Australians to work for their communities. Nominations close 26 July. For more information call the National Australia Bank 1800 807 121 or visit [www.national.com.au](http://www.national.com.au).

## NRMjobs puts something back

Email Media donates \$5 from every paid 'NRMjobs' advertisement to community groups and projects in the natural resource management and environment area. Donations (up to \$500 each) are targeted at groups and projects unable to access other funding. To apply, send an e-mail saying 'donation form please' to [adverts@emailmedia.com.au](mailto:adverts@emailmedia.com.au).

## Lotteries Commission Grants

Gordon Reid Foundation for Conservation Grants are available for conservation focussed projects, including on-ground works. For more information contact the program coordinator on 1800 655 270 or check out the website [www.lottery.wa.gov.au/corporate/grantsguide](http://www.lottery.wa.gov.au/corporate/grantsguide).

## Natural Heritage Trust (NHT)

For information on the Natural Heritage Trust call John Holley, Dept of Agriculture on 9368 3333 or visit the Federal Government program website [www.nht.gov.au](http://www.nht.gov.au).

# Learning opportunities

There are a range of learning opportunities available – call the following organisers and/or check out *What's On* centre pages.

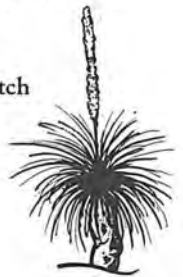
The **Skills for Nature Conservation** (Swan Catchment Centre/Ecoplan/Greening Australia (WA) Bushcare Support) seminar and workshop series continues to provide information sharing and training for bushland and wetland carers. Contact the Swan Catchment Centre on 9374 3309.

Apace run a series of training and development courses including bush regeneration, plant propagation and seed collection. For more information call 9336 1262.

The Eastern Hills Management Project team **Bush Skills for the Hills** program is targeting all those wishing to develop skills appropriate to the hills environment. Contact Loretta Bean on 9479 4808.

Naragebup – Rockingham Regional Environment Centre are offering a range of environmental workshops and short courses. Contact Naragebup on 9591 3077.

Ribbons of Blue/Waterwatch have a workshop program for educators, coordinators and volunteers. Contact Veronica Bennett on 9278 0356.



## Combine volunteering with learning

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) has a regular program of volunteering opportunities in practical conservation in the Perth metropolitan area. For more information call CVA on 9336 6911 or visit their website [www.conservationvolunteers.com.au](http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au).

## Can you help?

The City of Wanneroo's Generic Management Working Group is looking for examples of education materials and advertising that have been used to:

- promote the issues of fire in urban bushland and
- show the general public how to help with fire management.

Looking forward to any ideas or contacts.

Alice Stubber (Friends of Koondoola Regional Bushland) 9306 3221.

## Bushland Care Snippets

Do you have a story to tell? With support from a private philanthropist, Land & Water Australia (LWA) is funding Community Fellowships to the value of \$5-15 000 to provide inspirational people with the opportunity to share their practical natural resource management experiences. Submissions close 19 July. Visit [www.lwa.gov.au](http://www.lwa.gov.au).

The new Swan-Canning Precinct Planning Project aims to better integrate planning controls for land use development around the Swan and Canning Rivers by encouraging stronger collaboration between State and local governments, and local communities.

The Australian Association of Bush Regenerators has prepared a guide for recommended rates of pay for contractors which range from \$33/hr for primary target weeding through to \$75/hr for machine spraying – contact Ecoplan for a copy.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management has allocated \$30 000 for further research into Tuart trees as part of an initiative to arrest the decline in many trees along the Swan Coastal Plain.

Andrew Del Marco is the new manager of the Perth Biodiversity Project at WA Local Government Association. Previously he was the environmental officer with the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale.

Staff changes at the Swan Catchment Centre include Peter Nash's resignation, Liz Western now A/Manger and Bronwyn Ryan departing to take on the role of State Coordinator for Ribbons of Blue.

# Econotes: The Signs of Silence

by Ric How (Western Australian Museum) and John Dell (Department of Environmental Protection)

If you have ever wondered what really happens in our urban bushlands, then much of the answer is written in the tracks and signs on the soil surface of the paths you walk on. The excitement of seeing animals active during the day often deflects us from admiring the tracks that record their passing and that allow us to interpret so much more of what happens in the bushland – that we may never see.

Most of us have observed the slow and ponderous bobtail meandering along during the day, dragging its large body on stumpy legs and leaving a swathe of depressed sand with little toe prints beside. We may also have been brave enough to wait the passing of a dugite and seen the long sinusoidal depression left behind as it moves effortlessly past. However, in all probability, we will have avoided all those daylight scurries in the bush in the fear that it was just such a venomous resident. In fact the rustle in the bush is most likely a harmless skink or large monitor going about its daily business of looking for prey or searching for a mate.

## The dramas of the night before

After dark the bushland really comes alive for much of the fauna. Most of our mammal, reptile and frog species – not to mention thousands of spiders, scorpions, centipedes and insects – are usually active after sunset, the time most of us are settling down to an evening meal, a good book or the nightly TV.

The evening's silence is sometimes broken by the cacophony of frog calls after rain or the hoot of an owl or 'oom' of the tawny frogmouth. However, in general the silent

world after dark is one of great activity that is reflected in the myriad of tracks and scats visible on the soil surface in the morning.

## Reading tracks, scats and scratch marks

Kangaroos leave their mark in the form of parallel and widely spaced hind feet impressions with a pointed claw mark. When they have been feeding, you may see a long and irregular dragging of the tail with handprints in between more closely spaced hind feet marks. The handprints are often mistaken for the footprints of a dog.

### "Look down, the answer is at your feet!"

Bandicoots (Quendas) hurry past leaving indentations from their long claws designed for digging or leave pointed holes where they have dug in search of worms, frogs or other underground animals.

Unfortunately, the most common sign of mammals is generally the small depressions of the alternate footprints of the introduced house mouse, or if we are lucky small dunnarts (native carnivorous marsupials).

Reptiles such as burrowing skinks and fossorial snakes are amongst the most active vertebrates after dusk and all leave their characteristic tracks on the sands of the coastal plain bushlands. Many of these species only come to the surface during the more humid evening period and are therefore seldom seen by us diurnally active humans – but their tracks remain for all to see.

The presence of mammals is also observed by the presence of their scats (faeces) – that are deposited after feeding. These scats together with scratch marks on tree trunks are the most obvious signs of the common brushtail possum, another nocturnal forager.

## Feral activity

With all this night time activity, it is little wonder that introduced predators find such rich pickings after sunset. Our bushlands are riddled with the footprints of cats and red foxes as they search (and usually find!) their prey. Follow tracks of either of these species and you will often notice where they have stopped to search for prey or left their characteristic droppings. Many unusual records of species have been found in an examination of the scats of these most effective and destructive predators.

## Hone your skills

So pause every now and then when you next stroll our bushland paths and marvel at the signs of activity that are all around you – each of which tells an individual piece of the night's (or day's) history.

## Useful guides & courses

Triggs, B. (1996) *Tracks, Scats and Other Traces: a field guide to Australian mammals*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Skills for Nature Conservation sessions 'Making the most of fauna tracks & traces' in August and November – refer *What's On* section in centre pages.

### BrushTail Possum



### Kangaroo



### Bandicoot



### Dunnart



Illustrations from Barbara Triggs publication 'Tracks, Scats and Other Traces'.



# REGIONAL REPORTS

## North West Region

### Guiding the use of local plants

by Renata Zelinova

As suburbs spread around Quinns Rocks and new residents establish their gardens, the rich bushlands are replaced by roll-on lawns and palms. To assist residents in conserving biodiversity, promoting a local sense of place and saving water, the Quinns Rocks Environmental Group (QREG) has produced a brochure on growing local plants. The guide was prepared by Renata Zelinova and sponsored by the City of Wanneroo and the Water Corporation.

Local plants are those indigenous to the local area. QREG prefer the word local to native as native refers to anything Australian, whereas local recognises the climate and landscapes, and so the flora, varies from place to place. Growing local plants is a practical way to keep some of the local flora in the landscape and provide habitat for small animals like butterflies, geckos and birds. Being suited to local climate and soils, local plants save on water consumption and fertiliser use.



Some of the guests at the launch of the brochure. From left: David Wake (QREG), Dianne Guise MLA Wanneroo, John Steynjies (Water Corporation), Jon Kelly Mayor, City of Wanneroo, Renata Zelinova (QREG) and Cr Ian Goodenough, City of Wanneroo.



Over fifty people attended the launch of the Grow Local Plants brochure.

The Mayor of Wanneroo, Jon Kelly, launched the brochure in April at a function attended by fifty people, including residents and councillors. The launch included a talk by Hazel Dempster of the Wildflower Society on growing local plants.

Over 90 people have contacted the group interested in receiving a copy of the brochure which is being distributed through libraries, selected nurseries, the Water Corporation and the City of Wanneroo. It is also available from QREG.

Contact David on 9420 7268 or Renata on 9305 9382.

### Local action at Periwinkle

by Rene Duthie

Periwinkle Bushland is a 3.7ha bushland reserve in Mullaloo (west of Marmion Avenue and bounded by Periwinkle, Charonia and Meridian Rds). It is representative of the Tuart-Banksia Woodland that once occurred in this area. The Friends of Periwinkle Bushland (FoPB) was formed by members of the local community in April this year, with aims to keep the bush tidy, gain community interest, plant native species, weed out non-local flora and re-introduce local fauna.

Our first month has been a success with a lot of enthusiasm, good ideas and much time given, including a successful walk where a 'friend' highlighted the plants of interest. We are very fortunate to have a very informed 'friend' whose understanding of the bushland and plants is invaluable to our group. A further walk was organised where David Taggart kindly came to show us further plant species and how to recognise them.

To build on this we are preparing a list of the plants in the bushland, cross-referenced with Rippey and Rowan's The Plants of the Perth

Coast and Islands. Photographs of approximately 30 plants are now available to help with identification.

To assist with rehabilitation efforts, the City of Wanneroo is providing 500 local plants that will be planted by the FoPB, local school children and/or the community.

To let people know about our activities and encourage them to join, we did a letter drop to approximately 225 homes and we are keeping in touch with broader activities through CoastCare, Mullaloo Progress Association and Wanneroo Council Conservation Committee. Casual chats with park users indicate they are pleased that the group has been formed.

Contact Dot Lullfitz on 94013724.

## Environment Centre at Star Swamp

by Christine Curry

The new Henderson Environment Centre, located within the Star Swamp Bushland Reserve in Groat St, North Beach, will be open from 8 – 10.30am on the fourth Saturday of the month. The Centre will also be open on special events days, including the spring wildflower walk on Sunday September 22. The walk will commence at 2pm with the Centre open on this day from 1 – 5pm. See the What's On centre pages for details.

Contact Christine on 9447 2983.

## North East Region

### Working with Ecojobs at Warwick

by Karen Clarke & Robyn McElroy

The Friends of Warwick Senior High School (SHS) Bushland have again been successful in receiving funding from the Swan Catchment Urban Landcare Program (SCULP). The grant of \$555 will employ qualified Ecojobs staff to help the friends group remove environmental weeds from the School's Bushland. Warwick SHS is planning to install a high security fence around buildings that contain a limited number of access points and we hope this will help reduce the trampling and vandalism that occurs each day as people move to and from the school through the conservation areas.

A patch of the Declared Plant skeleton weed was found recently in Warwick Open Space (apparently a number of infestations have been found in the Joondalup/Wanneroo area). This patch was growing on a disturbed bank created during installation of the Leisure Centre's tennis courts. The sighting was reported to the quarantine section of the Department of Agriculture and in response a research officer has inspected the site and is setting up a control program. It has been great to have support from knowledgeable staff to assist in weed control.

The City of Joondalup has employed a consultant to review the 1995 Warwick Open Space Management Plan. We hope this will highlight outstanding conservation issues to council and provide more support for on-ground management.

Contact Karen on 9342 8482 or Robyn on 9342 6840.

# REGIONAL REPORTS



## Central

### Good results lead to more trials

by Jan King

The Bushcare Day on Mt Henry Peninsula in May included a variety of activities and a broad age range in participants. One activity was based on the pleasing germination and survival rate from trials of direct seeding in four 1m quadrats in the same area (this time last year). It involved sowing the seed of several varieties into bare patches in a grid pattern over 10m. Students treated the seed and the ground with smoke from bee smokers (great fun!) and leguminous varieties were pre-heated. Three students and two adults participated.

Meanwhile, two adults and four students assessed the survival of understorey species planted last year that received some hand-watering. The plants were identified and counted in conjunction with the tree guards being removed. Results showed the survival rate was 75% – after watering with about 500ml per plant on four occasions through summer.

These two activities will be repeated in June in another area that was seeded and planted last year.

Thirdly, in preparation for a funding application to the Swan Catchment Urban Landcare Program (SCULP) for veldt grass spraying next year, Tim Heckler from Bunyip Contracting assisted by three of our weeding stalwarts assessed the regeneration of weed. Tim also guided our photographer to locations best suited for monitoring shots.

Students volunteering their Thursday afternoons to Aquinas College's Community Service – Environment Program have been working on 'track maintenance' since late April. This involves raking the mulch back on to the track to expose the sand shoulder, trimming dead branch overhangs, placing the cuttings as brushing onto bare areas and least popular – weeding.

Contact Jan a/h on 9337 6296.

### Upgrade for South Perth seed orchard

by Andrew Thomson

The City of South Perth (CoSP) has decided to upgrade their seed orchard at Davilak Reserve. Tony Freeman from Apace visited the site to advise on the most productive species to propagate. Supporting

this upgrade, is continued success with the local schools seed collecting project initiated by Sean Smith, (CoSP Environmental Officer). This local provenance seed has been cleaned at the Swan Regional Seedbank managed by Apace and will be grown in the South Perth nursery.

*Banksia menziesii* that were planted five years ago in the degraded edges at Goss Avenue bushland, are flowering magnificently. Even Davilak Reserve is beginning to look a bit like natural bush with some flowering seedlings over two metres high, some dead tree branches lying on the ground and dead habitat trees left standing.

Contact Andrew on 9450 3424.

### Weeds and keen young people at Kensington

by Andrew Thomson

How often are invasive weeds such as Geraldton carnation weed (*Euphorbia terracina*), cape tulip (*Homeria* sp.) and black flag (*Ferraria crispa*) spread by contaminated limestone brought in to make paths? In May I spent a couple of hours at the Kensington bushland digging out a shallow mat (2-3m square, to a depth of 10cm) of small black flag bulbs. There were none there last year, highlighting the potential for these weeds to spread out of control in a very short time. To keep on top of the weed problem, the Friends of Kensington Bushland (FoKB) have been lobbying for a bushcare worker to be appointed. Although FoKB have not yet been successful, we are pleased that the Town of Victoria Park has agreed to allocate staff to maintain these bushland areas.

In May the FoKB organised a successful planting day with the assistance of a group of keen young people.

Contact Andrew on 9450 3424.

## Hills Region

### Winter activity in the Eastern Hills

collected by Jenny Johnson

#### ALICE HEBB RESERVE

For the next few months weed removal, especially tagasaste and watsonia, will be the main activity of the group. Trees, understorey and groundcover plants obtained through the Shire of Mundaring's Tree & Canopy Program will also be planted during this time.

#### KINTORE RESERVE

Dieback control, rabbit control and replanting areas decimated by dieback will be the activities for winter. The Gould League's book on nesting boxes for birds and small marsupials has been a comprehensive guide as we work on some nesting sites for the reserve.

#### THE QUARRY RESERVE

Activities will involve removal of exotic trees, weed control, creek restoration and protection of the area, supported by our Swan Catchment Urban Landcare Program (SCULP) grant.

#### BROOKSIDE PARK

A surveyor, two engineering students from Midland TAFE and members of the group are undertaking a survey of Jane Brook to enable future engineering works to be carried out to control severe erosion in the Brook in Parkerville. Land Management students (also from TAFE) are continuing stream restoration projects downstream in the Brook.

#### HOVEA CONSERVATION PARK

After a few years talking about creating a compensating basin in the Park, works are now underway to create a wetland to control stormwater run-off. The idea to utilise this run-off came from one of our members. The earthworks are under the control of the Shire of Mundaring to transform an unsightly former gravel pit into a valuable asset. Trees, shrubs and ground covers from the Shire's Tree & Canopy Program will be planted by the group to create a favourable habitat for fauna. Other activities over the winter during bushcare mornings will include planting, erosion control and weed control follow-up.

#### JANE BROOK KENSITT STREET PROJECT

The aim is to restore the section of Jane Brook that runs along Kensitt Street in Stoneville, where the Brook runs through private property adjacent to the bridle-track. Two of the properties changed hands a few years ago and the new owners are keen to clear the area of blackberry, bridal creeper, bamboo, watsonia, wattle, grasses etc and to restore the Brook to its natural state. After investigations and lots of assistance from the Shire of Mundaring's Landcare Officer (Linda Raynor) and Bushcare Officer (Linda Kirchner) a Friends Group was formed and was successful in obtaining Swan Catchment Urban Landcare Program (SCULP) funding for this year. This forms part of a six year plan to restore this section of Jane Brook.



# REGIONAL REPORTS

On-ground work has commenced – wattle has been removed and spraying for bridal creeper and watsonia will follow. Early June will see the Friends Group together with a Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) team hand remove a small section of blackberry (which has been previously slashed) ready for planting with indigenous plants. On September 21 another CVA team, along with Friends of Kensitt Street will plant over 600 rushes along the Brook. Its an exciting start to restoring this section of Jane Brook and we welcome any help.

Contact Jenny on 9295 4467.

## South East Region

### Weeding in the Canning Regional Park by Andrew Thomson

Going to a new area is always a good learning experience so I was delighted when Stuart Harrison (CALM regional parks officer) gave me two new areas to work in along the Canning River. In wetlands where many understorey plants are weeds, one must be cautious, as it is very easy to pull out native grasses and native plants such as *Myoporum caprarioides*, *Persicaria decipiens* and *Alternanthera nodiflora*. It is also surprising how weeds such as *Atriplex prostratum* can become very invasive following disturbance associated with planting seedlings and sedges.

Contact Andrew 9450 3424.

### Bite-size care for the Canning by Grecian Sandwell

The Canning River Residents Environmental Protection Association (CRREPA) has recently divided up the foreshore into five 'care sections'. Volunteer coordinators for each section have done letter drops, held foreshore walks and organised weeding sessions on regular days that suit nearby volunteers. We hope this focus will enable more group members and local residents to care for areas of the Canning they consider 'their front yard'. It is also hoped this new arrangement provides more support to our president Diane Matthews, enabling her to focus on working with the Canning Council and government agencies, as well as connecting with other community environment groups.

Contact Grecian on 9354 9734.

### Black Creek Wetland surviving the dry by Gill Brennan

Despite the horrendous summer drought and Black Creek providing only a light (but continuous) water flow, the new wetland on the corner of Welshpool Road and Station Street in Queens Park has flourished. Amazingly we have had a 95% survival of the 30 000 seedlings put in last winter. Many water birds (some nomadic) are using the wetland on a regular basis and some have even bred in the environs.

A promotional get together was held in February and we were most pleased with the attendance of City of Canning (CCC) Councillors Della Donne and Beacroft, CCC staff Mary Ross and Anna-Marie Penna, Wetland Conservation President Joan Payne and the Black Creek Wetland designer Karl Karu. We are also grateful for assistance given by Jo Stone and fellow Canning River Regional Park Volunteers, including their magnificent refreshments. We have received positive comments from local citizens but alas no new members – in spite of a letter drop and publicity in The Canning Times.

### Draft management plan for Ken Hurst Park by Eddy Wajon

The City of Melville has recently re-affirmed its support for both Ken Hurst Park and the Friends of Ken Hurst Park (FoKP) by indicating it will be appointing a consultant to prepare a draft management plan. Priorities for consideration in the plan's development include fencing and rubbish removal. To implement aspects of the completed plan, the City has proposed an allocation of \$50 000 in the 2002/03 budget. It has also indicated it is prepared to assist FoKP in rubbish removal efforts and with costs of bush regeneration courses for volunteers.

Contact Eddy on 9310 2936.

## South West Region

### More on offer at Naragebup by Ann Goodale

Naragebup – Rockingham Regional Environment Centre continues to develop and deliver a wide range of short courses, environmental forums, monitoring programs, resources and guidance. Recent initiatives include a broadening of the sustainable Quality Living short course program, the establishment of a Marine Management Office (to be launched 13 July), a forum on marine monitoring and the appointment of a Sustainable Residential Officer. This particular initiative is sponsored by Australand to assist residents in the new Anchorage Estate with developing gardens that attract native fauna (frogs, butterflies and birds) and are waterwise.

Contact Naragebup on 9591 3077.

## ADVANCE NOTICES

### Weedbuster Week

What will you be doing 13-20 October? To register your participation or to check the Weedbuster Week events calendar log onto [www.weedbusterweek.info.au](http://www.weedbusterweek.info.au) or contact Sandy Lloyd, Dept of Agriculture 9368 3760, [sllloyd@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:sllloyd@agric.wa.gov.au).

### Tracks & Trails and You

Making Tracks 2002 National Conference coordinated by the Department of Sport and Recreation 14-16 October, Mandurah. There is a call for abstracts and focus sessions include 'heritage and environmental links'. Your opportunity to guide and influence the location, management and use of trails in our natural environments. Contact Trailswest on 9387 9700 or [trailswest@dsr.wa.gov.au](mailto:trailswest@dsr.wa.gov.au) or [www.harvestroad.com.au/~strail/](http://www.harvestroad.com.au/~strail/).

### Birds Australia Open Day

Learn more about birds and their habitat with Birds Australia on 26 October at Perry House, 71 Oceanic Dve (adjoining Bold Park), Floreat. Contact Birds Australia 9383 7749 or visit [birdswa.iinet.net.au](http://birdswa.iinet.net.au).



# Group Profile: The Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre Inc.

## Inspiration and partners

The Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre (CWEC) was established in 1993, realising a dream of the Wetlands Conservation Society to cater for the southern metropolitan region through a facility similar to the Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre. The City of Cockburn matched a Federal Government grant, dream became reality and nine years on – the Centre has become a thriving non-profit community organisation.

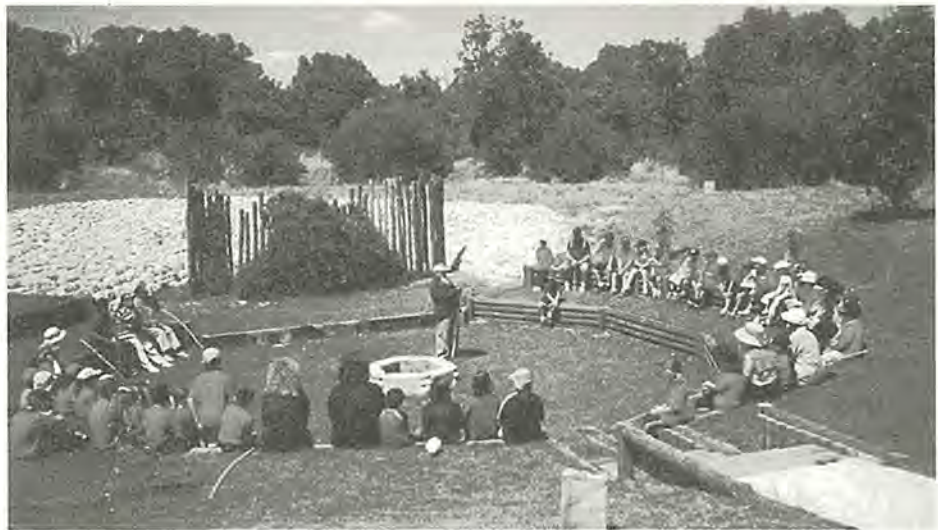
CWEC provides a base for several hundred people belonging to the Wetlands Conservation Society, the Friends of the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre and the 1st Bibra Lake Scouts. Representatives from these member groups and councillors in the City of Cockburn manage the Centre, with two full-time staff, supporting volunteers and activities. Management funds are raised through the hire of the facilities for meetings, workshops, conferences and private functions whilst operating costs are met through grants, contract work, education services and the ongoing support of the major sponsors City of Cockburn, Alcoa World Alumina, Water and Rivers Commission and Amcor Fibre Packaging.



Felicity, Jen, Norm and Rex enjoy morning tea in the field

## Heart of the Park

Ideally located in the heart of the Beelihar Regional Park near the south-eastern foreshore of Bibra Lake, CWEC is adjacent to a variety of interconnected lakes, sumplands and damplands, merging into dryland communities. The variation in habitat supports an abundance of wildlife. Throughout the year one can view the daily movements of ibis (to and from their feeding grounds), seasonal migrations of thousands of grey teal and black duck (as they disperse to more secluded inland breeding locations) or even transequitorial migratory waders (seeking drought refuge as Lake Forrestdale and Thomsons Lake become dry during the summer months).



School students listening to a talk on indigenous values by Noel Nannup at the Cockburn Wetland Centre amphitheatre

"These represent only a fraction of the comings and goings of our faunal population, but highlight the need to view each wetland not in isolation, but rather as parts of a total ecosystem," explained Denise Crosbie, the Centre's Environmental Education Officer. "One of the rewards for being involved is that no matter what time of the day or year, there is always something different to see and always more to learn," continued Denise.

## Eight years on

CWEC aims to provide a Centre for landcare, environmental education and youth activities. Over the past eight years, since the Centre was an Ecoplan News cover story (*Issue 9, Autumn 1994*) volunteers under the guidance of the Centre staff have developed

extensive outdoor facilities including nature trails, bird hides, an amphitheatre, landcare demonstration sites, displays and a plant nursery. More than 40 000 seedlings have been planted and maintained within reserves of the Beelihar Regional Park.

The Centre is also a focus for community education on wetland ecology and management, catchment management and landcare with an extensive resource and library collection holding more than 800 catalogued items. Thousands of visitors including school groups use the Centre every year and CWEC also runs workshops for members of community groups and government departments.



## A highlight or three

The Centre's Landcare Coordinator, Rex Sallur took some time out to reflect with Denise on the more memorable moments during their past six years of coordinating activities at the Centre. "Definitely laying the last stone to rest in our new amphitheatre!" exclaimed Rex. "With the help of one of our GreenCorps teams we shifted a lot of soil to make that happen".

Shifting soil reminded Denise of a joint project with the Larkhill Landcare Group to salvage 600 mature balgas (*Xanthorrhoea preissii*) that were destined for the mulcher. "I watched all those tip trucks arriving and wondered at the enormity of the task that lay ahead of us. But we completed the project and can now stand back and see those ancient plants thriving in our revegetation sites," explained Denise. "And of course there was the Olympic Landcare Day involving more than 600 volunteers planting 5 000 wetland plants on Father's Day 1999, with the large yellow tree still standing testimonial to the event".

## Open invitation

CWEC staff, volunteers and management are proud of what their community-run organisation has achieved. Over the years they have built upon their many successes, along with their share of failures. "It is only through these ongoing experiences and the sharing of them that we can learn and continue to improve – come and visit us," enthused Denise.

## Contacts

Denise Crosbie or Rex Sallur on 9417 8460 or [cwec@wetlands-education.org](mailto:cwec@wetlands-education.org).

# Resources

## More Skills for Nature Conservation Information Sheets

The Swan Catchment Centre, the Department of Conservation and Land Management's Ecoplan program and Greening Australia (WA) are pleased to offer the following Information Sheets as part of the Skills for Nature Conservation community training program:

- What Scum Is That?
- To Plant or Not to Plant?
- How to create a successful website.
- Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Chairperson Skills (and effective meetings).
- Bookkeeping and the GST.

Information Sheets from previous years are also available including project and time management, attracting volunteers, project evaluation, creating effective displays and media relations.

For copies, call any of three partner organisations:  
Swan Catchment Centre 9374 3333  
Ecoplan 9474 7040  
Greening Australia (WA) 9335 8933.

## Complimentary networks and info updates

The following are interactive e-mail lists or periodical info updates prepared by community organisations, government and/or private enterprises and distributed free of charge.

**NRMtalk** is an e-mail discussion list for communicators working in natural resource

management, water and environment fields in Australia and New Zealand. To subscribe, send a blank e-mail to: [nrmtalk-subscribe@emailmedia.com.au](mailto:nrmtalk-subscribe@emailmedia.com.au).

The Australian Association of Bush Regenerators has established an e-mail discussion list to assist networking amongst bushcare and landcare volunteers and coordinators. To subscribe to **The Bushcare Group** send a blank e-mail to: [bushcare-subscribe@yahoo.com.au](mailto:bushcare-subscribe@yahoo.com.au).

A summary listing of **terrestrial, riverine and marine submissions and reports** with closing dates and contact information is compiled weekly by the Marine & Coastal Community Network. To receive, send your request to Edwina Davies Ward: [wa@mccn.org.au](mailto:wa@mccn.org.au). Note: focus is broader than marine.

Compiled by the Water and Rivers Commission in liaison with the Australian Association of Environmental Education the **EEN Network** provides a weekly update of coming events, State, national and international news as well as training, funding, employment, scholarship and voluntary opportunities. To subscribe, send your request to [environmental.educators.network@wrc.wa.gov.au](mailto:environmental.educators.network@wrc.wa.gov.au).

## Website & Database Watch

The WA Museum celebrated World Environment Day with the launch of a new website that provides free on-line access to mammal, bird, reptile and amphibian records collected during the Museum's 111 year history. **FaunaBase** has been developed to assist naturalists, teachers, students, environmental consultants and those who

are simply interested in the fauna of the WA ([www.museum.wa.gov.au/faunabase](http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/faunabase)).

Birds Australia WA has placed over 65 **bird brochures** on their website. The brochures are in PDF full colour format and contain site information and typical species to be found at a ranges of sites across WA ([www.birdswa.iinet.net.au](http://www.birdswa.iinet.net.au)).

The Department of Local Government and Regional Development has updated the **WA Grants Referral Directory** – a compilation of public and private grants and other assistance programs available to regional and metropolitan communities, businesses and local governments ([www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/grantsreferral.dir.html](http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/grantsreferral.dir.html)).

An easy to understand **Environmental Education Directory for WA** has been developed by the Swan Catchment Centre (SCC) in partnership with the Australian Association for Environmental Education (WA) and Murdoch University. The directory outlines the key objectives, main activities, target audience, location, cost, duration and contact details of various environmental education programs ([www.wrc.wa.gov.au/swanavon](http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au/swanavon)). To have your environmental education program included in the directory contact the SCC on 9374 3333.

## Recent Publications

Australian Environment Directory (2nd Edition) – provides an overview of environment agencies and programs at federal and state levels, as well as information on environmental research, associations and organisations. Available from Hallmark Editions 03 9530 8900 or [hallmark@halledit.com.au](mailto:hallmark@halledit.com.au).

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