



Biodiversity initiative – planning for a better future

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DURING the past decade numerous initiatives by State and local government and the community have helped protect many regionally significant natural areas. However, the recently launched Local Government Biodiversity Planning Guidelines for Perth Metropolitan Region sets a precedent in planning a better future for Perth's biodiversity.



Left: Cr Jeremy Dawkins, Chairperson of the Western Australian Planning Commission, at the launch of the Guidelines. (Photo: WALGA)



Right: (l to r) Local government representatives Sarah Dawson (Town of Victoria Park), Dee Murray and Danielle O'Neil (City of Wanneroo) at the launch of the planning guidelines. (Photo: WALGA)

The planning guidelines were prepared as part of the Perth Biodiversity Project (PBP), a local Government initiative established in 1999. The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) project involves many groups, including Perth's 30 metropolitan local governments, the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Swan Catchment Council, the Natural Heritage Trust, Greening Australia (WA), the Department of Environment, Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and Birds Australia.

This new initiative recognises the vital role that local Government plays in the protection, protection and management of Perth's biodiversity. Local government not only represents the level of government closest to the community, it is also responsible for the management of almost 8000 ha of bushland and makes land use planning decisions that impact on more than 75,000 ha of native vegetation.

For the first time, this initiative encourages local government to set targets for the protection of bushland, wetlands and other natural areas. The planning guidelines are the only initiative of their kind available to local government and assist by providing statistics, policies, tools and templates to develop and implement individual conservation plans for each region.

WALGA President Cr Bill Mitchell said: "Most importantly the guidelines offer a rigorous and transparent process for local government to follow when deciding whether bushland, wetlands or other natural

areas should be protected, as well as providing direction on how this can be achieved."

The guidelines introduce a four-phase planning process that results in the preparation and implementation of a Local Biodiversity Strategy.

- Phase one is the scoping phase, which initiates the local biodiversity planning process by obtaining council support and commitment to undertake phase two.
- Phase two is the preparation of a discussion paper, which will inform all stakeholders and the community of biodiversity resources and develop a vision, objectives and targets for biodiversity protection and management.
- Phase three is the preparation of a local biodiversity strategy that consists of four major components: a local planning policy for biodiversity conservation, an incentives strategy for private land conservation, planning for the management of biodiversity on local government land and formalising the protection status of locally significant natural areas.
- Phase four – is the implementation of a local biodiversity strategy. A number of new activities and policies will need to be implemented with regard to council policies and processes.

"To date the PBP has received a good response to the guidelines, with the City of Wanneroo and the Shire of Kalamunda signing up to a pilot program to implement phases one and two of the local biodiversity planning process.

"The City of Swan commenced a similar biodiversity planning process in 2003 with the assistance of PBP," said Cr Mitchell.

"We encourage all local governments to participate in this initiative as soon as possible. Local governments with significant areas of natural vegetation and high rates of land development will find that a local biodiversity strategy will assist in creating a more sustainable, liveable community and provide clearer pathways for future development."

To obtain a copy of the brochure about the Local Government Biodiversity Planning Guidelines, visit the WALGA website <http://www.walga.asn.au/projServices/pbp> or contact the Perth Biodiversity Project on 9213 2047 or email pbp@walga.asn.au.

* Kambarang is the season of decreasing rain covering October and November and Birak is the hot and dry time of December and January.



The days are beginning to warm and the flowers bursting forth into a wonderful expression of this season. Once again, the extraordinary beauty and miracle of spring reminds us how lucky we are to live in this part of the world.



One of the sad tasks I was called on to perform in August was to deliver a eulogy at the funeral of Andrew Thomson. While I considered this a great honour, we will certainly miss Andrew's enthusiasm, insight and support in the conservation area.



The Skills for Nature Conservation (SFNC) Program gained interim funding from the Natural Heritage Trust to continue this year's program and develop next year's program. The pilot program delivering courses to natural resource management professionals has ended but was well attended. Reviews and evaluations of the 2004 courses are being held and planning for next year is under way. You can contribute to the planning by attending a focus group on 16 or 18 November or by sending us your thoughts and suggestions. SFNC has also received external funding from the Shared Vision Grant to develop community programs.



Don't forget to check out the latest information about the Urban Nature program by reading the Urban Nature Bulletin on our website www.naturebase.net/urbannature

Rest in Peace - Andrew Thomson

Ecoplan News pays tribute to a dear friend and colleague, Andrew Thomson who died on 8 August 2004. Andrew was well known for his tireless efforts in conservation. In fact in 2002 he set himself the target of 1000 hours of voluntary weeding representing nearly three hours a day for each and every day of the year.

Andrew was connected with 35 community and social issue groups and was a regular attendee at the Skills for Nature Conservation workshops. Caring for our precious bushland was one of Andrew's great loves in life, and every one of us who had the privilege to work alongside of him has in some way been changed and influenced by our contact.



As we look at the spring flowers, we will know that the bushlands of Western Australia thank you Andrew for your enormous effort.

Farewell from Margo

After working for more than thirteen years with the Ecoplan program, Margo O'Byrne has decided to call it a day, and will finish up with CALM on 15 October 2004.

"I consider it a great privilege to have worked with Ecoplan from the start, to watch it grow and to be surrounded by so many wonderful people who are committed to working towards a better environment," Margo said.

"I feel that the expansion of Ecoplan and Urban Nature has been a very positive step and that with a great team, the program will go on from strength to strength. For me, the time has come to move on and pursue some of my other interests, in particular creative writing, art promotion and travel to other parts of the world.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone I have worked with over the years, including the Urban Nature team, other CALM and DEP staff and in particular, thanks to all the wonderful community people who are involved in the ongoing work for nature conservation. I have found it a very rich experience and I would encourage you to continue with this very important work.

"Thanks for the privilege."

Apology

In the Ecoplan Update of issue 50 the name of Bridget Hyder-Griffiths was omitted from the list of people who have worked on Ecoplan News during its 50 editions. Bridget managed the Ecoplan program during 2001-2002 and produced four editions of Ecoplan News. Many thanks Bridget. You did a great job.

In 2001, Andrew was honoured nationally when he was selected as one of the 5000 Australians in the Centenary of Federation Peoplescape Project. In 2003, he was a joint winner of the Bessie Reichbeth award for his services to the environment and also won the South Perth citizens award for his bushland restoration work.

Andrew's enthusiasm, passion, intelligent observations, support for others and willingness to listen will be sadly missed by all in the conservation movement.

On behalf of all our readers, we extend our sympathy to Andrew's family.

Contacts

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Conservation Council of WA

☎ 9420 7266
email: conswa@conservationwa.asn.au

Greening Australia (WA)

☎ 9335 8933
email: general@gawa.org.au

APACE

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email: apace@argo.net.au

Swan Catchment Centre & Council

Alison Nesbit ☎ 9374 3333
email: saicc@wrc.wa.gov.au

Urban Bushland Council

☎ 9420 7207
email: ubc@iinet.net.au

Perth Biodiversity Project (WALGA)

Andrew Del Marco ☎ 9213 2047
email: info@walga.asn.au

Regional Parks (CALM) ☎ 9431 6500

Summer Ecoplan News

Forward your news, activities and regional reports for the Summer Ecoplan News by **Wednesday, 1 December 2004**. Please keep your regional reports under 250 words and articles as brief as possible. Send us your photos! Fax, e-mail or write to Ecoplan (see Ecoplan contacts panel on this page). Thanks to all contributors. Newsletter compiled and edited by Erin Gisborne with assistance from Nicole Crook.

The Green Skills' metro office has just moved!

The Green Skills team have relocated their office to the Environmental Technology Centre (ETC) at Murdoch University. Green Skills' metropolitan projects, including the Ecojobs Environmental Personnel Agency, will be operating out of the ETC office.

The new office contact details are 9360 6667 (phone) and 9360 7677 (fax). E-mail and website addresses remain the same. For further information visit the website www.greenskills.green.net.au.

Talbot Road brochure

Urban Nature, in conjunction with the City of Swan and the Friends of Talbot Road, has released a new brochure informing the local community about the Talbot Road nature reserve and how residents can help protect the area.



The brochure details the many species that exist in the area and explains the ecological importance of the reserve. It's a colourful brochure containing great tips about caring for the bushland and emphasising the unique plants and animals of the reserve. To obtain a copy of the brochure, contact the Urban Nature office on 9474 7053 or the City of Swan on 9267 9267.

Urgent voluntary recall

In July 2004, Syngenta Australia initiated a product recall of Fusilade Post-emergence Selective Herbicide, including pack sizes of one litre, five litres and 20 litres and affecting the batches between January 2004 and June 2004. Syngenta advises that some of these batches contain an additional herbicide that is not listed in the registered formulation that may make the product harmful to sensitive broad leaf crops. Any damage should be visible within seven days of application.

Return the product to the place of purchase. For further information, please call 1800 067 108 (9am to 5pm weekdays). If you are looking for an alternative herbicide, other grass selective herbicides (Targa and Verdict) are on the off-label Permit 4984 for use in bushland and are currently available from suppliers.

Contact your local community conservation group

There are hundreds of community conservation groups supported by thousands of volunteers working to restore and protect Perth's unique environment.

The Swan Catchment Centre (SCC) supports these groups by providing training, resources and information and it has recently updated its Community Conservation Directory. The directory is available online and provides easy access to more than 150 active community conservation groups in the Swan Region.

If you are interested in joining a community group or would like to connect with other active groups in your area, check out the directory at www.wrc.wa.gov.au/swanavon. If your group's details are not included, contact the SCC on 9374 3333.

Get involved in butterfly surveys

During the months of October, November and early December, CALM in conjunction with Curtin University are undertaking surveys of native butterfly species in remnant bushland (Bush Forever sites) around Perth. Surveys will be conducted three days a week at various sites, depending on weather. If you would like to be involved in the surveys or for more information contact Matt Williams on 9334 0399 or mattw@calm.wa.gov.au.



Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project By Neale Bougher and Roz Hart

The Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project (PUBF) field events have now finished for 2004, as most bushland fungi have now shut up shop for the year. The last walk was held on 31 July at Neerabup National Park with the Quinns Rock Environment Group. Despite the rain, we had a good turnout of fungi spotters and a wide range of fungi was found.

The success of the PUBF Project owes a great deal to the volunteers involved, particularly John Weaver and the 12 foray leaders who sharpened their skills so they could confidently lead the various foray groups.

No matter what the weather, our volunteers have capably and cheerfully assisted us at workshops, walks and biological surveys, allowing us to educate and interest far more people than we could have managed alone. We would like to thank Elaine Davison, Phylis Robertson, Kev'n Griffiths, Jason Young, Jane Bracken, Louise Little, Karen Clarke, Mark Brundrett, Jolanda Keeble, Margaret Langley, Sandra Thomas and Kirsten Tullis for their excellent efforts.

The forays have resulted in the collection of a vast amount of data—records of the fungus season, photos, GPS data and numerous fungi specimens that will be placed at the WA Herbarium. This information is now being assembled into a format that will provide easy access for future use and allow the supply of data to the community groups involved with the PUBF.

In addition, we hope to organise a Fungi Photographic Competition towards the end of 2004. Please watch out for news of this competition, especially if you have fungi photos you would like to enter.

The PUBF project have produced a colourful poster which is available from CALM at the Herbarium for \$5. Call Roz 9334 0500.

Above: Volunteers gather for the Ken Hurst Park biological survey (Photo: John Weaver)

Below: Coprinus sp. Ink cap growing amongst woodchips (Photo: Roz Hart)



Learning opportunities

Successful seed production

Thinking about establishing a seed production area or seed orchard? Then join the Cockburn Wetlands Centre and the City of Cockburn on Friday 12 November or Tuesday 23 November for a closer look at their seed production areas.

Successful seed production requires careful planning, management and harvesting. The workshop covers a range of topics including requirements, seed provenance, establishment and maintenance, and legal requirements on seed use. The Perth Biodiversity Project has funded these free workshops. For further information contact Denise on 9417 8460 or cwec@wetlands-education.org.

Certificates in Conservation and Land Management

Conservation and Land Management training courses are available from next semester, February 2005, at Challenger TAFEWA, Swan TAFEWA and West Coast TAFEWA.

These courses are ideal for people interested in improving their conservation and land management skills and gaining a formal qualification.

Levels 2, 3 and 4, including part-time evening courses, are offered at Challenger TAFEWA's Murdoch Campus with Level 2 at the Peel Campus. Challenger TAFEWA also offers flexible delivery courses for trainees, online studies and skills recognition. For further information contact Steve Ross on 9229 8427.

Recognise plants and control bushland weeds

There is a new short 40 hour course being offered at Challenger TAFEWA according to demand. Participants will cover plant recognition and controlling weeds using mechanical and chemical methods. They will also cover preparing and applying chemicals and learn how to transport, handle and store chemicals. Most importantly successful students will qualify for a licence to use pesticides in bushland from the Health Department. This is a new licence which should contribute to filling the current void in the industry. Anyone interested should contact Steve Ross at Challenger TAFEWA on 9229 8427.

Festival fun

A Wetlands Festival will be held at the Cockburn wetland centre from 9am to 3pm on Saturday 23 October to celebrate the tenth year of the centre's landcare, education and youth activities.

Between 9am and 10am, bring a trowel and help kick off the day's festivities by planting one of the centre's homegrown seedlings. Festival activities include guided walks, guest speakers, environmental displays, face painters, the Mucky Duck Bush Band, scouting activities, food and drinks, free prizes and much more. Alcoa World Alumina has generously funded this event, so come along and share in the fun at 184 Hope Road, Bibra Lake.

For further information, or if your group would like to set up a display, contact Denise on 9417 8460 or cwec@wetlands-education.org.



Friends of Cockburn Wetlands get ready for festival fun! (Photo: Denise Crosbie)



The Grow us a Home website is an innovative and interactive resource developed by Greening Australia WA (GAWA) for students in years five to nine. Through the clever use of animation and graphics, students can access valuable information about soil types, plant communities and the animals found on the Swan Coastal Plain and Darling Range. The site explains the vital role that plants play in providing a home for local fauna and in keeping the soil healthy.



The site is fun, easy to use and offers a special education pack for teachers. The initiative is supported by Alcoa and the Public Education Endowment Trust and can be accessed by visiting www.growusahome.org.au.

Funding opportunities

Community funding program sustainable development category 2004/05

The City of Joondalup has invited funding applications from eligible organisations to conduct projects, events and activities in 2004/05. A key objective of the funding program is to encourage sustainable development through environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable initiatives that are in line with the strategic objectives of Council.

The City also encourages applications from not-for-profit organisations that:

- encourage the development of new businesses within the city;
- fill an identified economic need within the community; or
- provide a positive contribution to the well being of the community.

Applications close on 7 October 2004. For further details contact the City's Sustainable Development Officers, Benjamin Reay on 9400 4219 or Brendan Tapley on 9400 4967.

Regional park community grants 2004/05

CALM's Regional Parks Unit will shortly be calling for Expressions of Interest for conservation projects to be undertaken on CALM-managed land in the Beeliar, Canning River, Darling Range, Jandakot, Herdsman Lake, Rockingham Lakes, Woodman Point and Yellagonga Regional Parks.

A total of \$50,000 is available with individual grants ranging from \$500 to \$5000. For further information and an application package contact Sandra Hohloch at CALM on 9431 6500 or sandrah@calm.wa.gov.au.

Community conservation grants

Community groups can apply for up to \$5000 from the Minister for the Environment's Community Conservation Grants, although funding is limited. For further information and to receive an application package, contact Sharon Poore or Sue Darmody at CALM on 9334 0455 or sharonp@calm.wa.gov.au.

Econotes: grand spider orchid

By Lisa Bland and Andrew Brown

Spring is the perfect time to see rare wildflowers in our local bushland, including our magnificent orchids. Orchids are fascinating, delicate flora, which make up one of the three largest groups of flowering plants in the world.

The South West of Western Australia provides habitat for many orchid species and boasts a larger number of terrestrial orchid species (those which grow in the soil) than any other state.

One particularly rare and interesting species is the grand spider orchid, *Caladenia huegelii*. The genus *Caladenia* contains about 180 different species with 140 of these found in WA.

The grand spider orchid

In 1871 Heinrich Reichenbach named the grand spider orchid, *Caladenia huegelii*, in honour of Baron von Huegel, who collected the species sometime prior to that date. It is one of the largest native terrestrial orchids, growing between 26 and 70cm tall and on occasion has been found to grow up to one metre. It has one or two flowers (rarely three) on each plant and can be seen in flower from mid September to late October.

Where will you find it?

Caladenia huegelii is found on well-drained grey sandy soils in banksia/jarrah/allocasuarina woodlands between Wanneroo and Busselton, and on rare occasions extends to areas of adjoining calcareous sand. Populations of this species are currently known from approximately 30 sites but many are small with each containing less than 10 plants. Populations are also relatively isolated and fragmented due to much of their habitat being cleared for agriculture and urban development.

Friend of fungi and wasps

Caladenia huegelii has a highly specialised pollination mechanism designed to attract males of a single species of thynnid wasp. It produces a pheromone that mimics the female thynnid wasp. Following the scent the male eventually lands on the lip (labellum) of the flower, which is modified to loosely resemble the flightless female. When the male tries to fly off with the supposed female mate, the hinged labellum causes the wasp to knock against the column of the flower resulting in either the deposit or removal of pollen.



Caladenia huegelii, commonly known as the grand spider orchid. (Photo: Andrew Brown)



A close up photo of the grand spider orchid's labellum, which loosely resembles the flightless female thynnid wasp and attracts the male wasp in an attempt to achieve pollination. (Photo: Andrew Brown)

Like all orchids, *Caladenia huegelii* relies on a symbiotic association with micorrhizal soil fungi for germination of seed. This relationship enables the orchid to obtain nutrients from the fungus in the nutrient poor soils found on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Closely related caladenia

Caladenia huegelii is distinctive for its large flowers and long cream-yellow-green labellum with a curved maroon tip.

However, it may occasionally be confused with other *Caladenia* species including *C. arenicola*, *C. paludosa* and *C. georgei*. The easiest way to tell it apart is by its larger labellum with longer marginal fringe segments that are often split at the ends. This species has also been found growing closely to the *Caladenia longicauda*, which it occasionally hybridises with. A good key to identify South West Australian species of *Caladenia* is found in *Nuytsia* (2001).

Future of the species

The requirement for *Caladenia huegelii* to co-exist with both the thynnid wasp pollinator and soil fungi, in addition to ongoing pressure from clearing its natural habitat explains why the species is currently listed as Declared Rare Flora and ranked as critically endangered.

In response to this CALM has established threatened flora recovery teams in the Swan and South West regions in order to develop and co-ordinate recovery actions and attempt to reverse the survival rate of the orchid, and others species like it.

Re-surveying all known populations and other suitable habitat where new populations may occur will be undertaken during September and October 2004 and aims to obtain a greater understanding of the distribution and status of the species.

If you spot the grand spider orchid growing in your bushland or wish to assist in the surveys please contact Emma Adams at the CALM Swan Region office on 9368 4399 or emmaa@calm.wa.gov.au. More information on the species and its management is also available from the CALM Swan Region office.

Further information

- Hoffman, N. & Brown, A (1998) *Orchids of South-west Australia* (second edition with suppl) University of Western Australia Press, Western Australia
- Brown A, Thomson-Dans, C & Marchant, N Eds. (1998) *Western Australia's Threatened Flora* Department of Conservation and Land Management, Como
- Department of Conservation and Land Management (2001) *Nuytsia*, Vol 14, No 1/2, Western Australian Herbarium, Western Australia

What's On Spring 2004

Opportunities to participate! Visitors always welcome. Most activities are FREE!

REGISTRATION/CONTACT DETAILS for organisations providing a series of activities are as follows:

- Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) Bush Skills for the Hills, 9424 2222, email mail@emrc.org.au or visit www.emrc.org.au.
- Friends of Warwick Bushland. The Bowling & Tennis Club carpark, Lloyd Dve, Warwick. Call Robyn 9342 6840 or Karen 9342 8482.
- Naragebup. Rockingham Regional Environment Centre, Safety Bay Rd (opposite Lake Richmond), Peron. Call 9591 3077.
- Skills for Nature Conservation (SFNC) A partnership between the Swan Catchment Centre (SCC), Ecoplan and Greening Australia (WA). Call SCC 374 3333.
- WA Naturalists' Club Information available at www.wanats.iinet.net.au or contact the Club Office 9228 2495.

- Wilson Wetlands Action Group Call Russell 9258 7301 or Gay 9451 4012.
- Conservation Volunteers Australia 20 Stack Street, Fremantle. Bus transport available, leaves Fremantle at 8am. Contact Linda 9336 6911 or perth@conservationvolunteers.com.au.
- Urban Bushland Council (UBC) at the National Trust Building, 4 Havelock St, West Perth. Call UBC 9420 7202 or ubc@iinet.net.au.
- Urban Nature Bushland Restoration Training Day, Talbot Rd (Cnr Talbot Rd & O'Connor St) & Brixton St (Alton St) Call Kate 9474 7032
- Nearer to Nature (N2N) Department of Conservation and Land Management. Call 9295 2244. Lots more activities, brochures available in all local libraries or visit www.naturebase.net. New, more affordable prices for all activities.

The categories bring similar types of activities together in chronological order:

- Listen, Look and Learn – talks, walks, seminars.
- Get Your Hands Dirty – bushland, river, wetland and coastal hands-on care
- Develop Your Skills – courses, workshops, training and development
- Delivering the Message – expos, festivals, conferences and 'theme weeks or days'

Listen, Look & Learn

October

- 2 Saturday – 4 Monday Excursion to the Wheatbelt with the WA Naturalists' Club →
- 5 Tuesday 7:30pm Greener towns and cities - retaining, restoring and managing urban bushland in WA. Talk presented by Hon Colin Barnett MLA for UBC. ▲
- 10 Sunday 8.30am Indigenous walk with Friends of Dianella Bushland. Call Jan 9344 2872.
- 14 Thursday 8pm Buzz pollination & Australian plants by Philip Ladd at the Armadale Wildflower Society, History House, Jull St, Armadale. Call Chris 9398 9140.
- 15 Friday 9am – 1pm & 1.30 – 5pm Get the Point with Nearer to Nature at Woodman Point Regional Park. Come out and enjoy a variety of innovative activities created by students from Notre Dame University. Cost involved. *
- 15 Friday 7.30pm Lizards talk presented by the Kwinana/Rockingham/Mandurah Branch of the WA Naturalists Club at Naragebup. ☉
- 15 Friday 7.30pm Spotlight Walk Guided walk with Friends of Lake Gwelup. Meet at Scout Hall, Huntriss Rd Gwelup. Call Betty 9444 5640.
- 16 Saturday 8am Guided walk with Friends of Lake Gwelup. Meet at Scout Hall, Huntriss Rd Gwelup. Call Betty 9444 5640.
- 16 Saturday 9am – 12pm Wildflower walk hosted by Bush Skills for the Hills, EMRC at Glen Forest Superblock, Tilbrook St §
- 16 Saturday 5.30 – 8pm Night walk with Friends of Yellagonga at Karakamia Sanctuary. Call Bernard 9405 1091.
- 17 Sunday 10am – 12pm Creery Wetlands walk with Nearer to Nature at Creery Wetlands Nature Reserve. Discover the importance of urban nature and the work to rehabilitate this area. Cost involved. *
- 23 Saturday 1 – 3pm Local plants for year-round colour workshop at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉
- 23 Saturday 2 – 4pm Extinguishing Extinctions. Nearer to Nature at the Hills Discovery Centre. Come face to face with animals from the Kanyana wildlife rehabilitation centre, and learn about the work CALM wildlife officers do to save them. Cost involved. *
- 24 Sunday 9am – 5pm Point Walter Talking with Nearer to Nature at Swan Estuary Marine Park. Join a Nyoongar guide and hear stories of the area from an indigenous perspective. Cost involved. *
- 24 Sunday 9am – 10.30am Walk on the wild side with Marc Lane at Brixton St wetlands. Meet at Alton St. Bookings essential 9452 9999.
- 28 Thursday 7:30pm Conservation Council of WA Environment Matters, guest Speaker: Hon. Dr Judy Edwards MLA, Minister for the Environment discuss the Labor Government's environmental policy and key environmental issues. City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi St, West Perth. Call 9420 7266 or email conswa@conservationwa.asn.au.
- 30 Saturday 8am Guided nature walk with Friends of Trigg Bushland. Call Phyllis 9349 9105.
- 30 Saturday 1 – 3pm Attracting frogs to your garden at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉

- 31 Sunday 10am – 1pm Djoowak – Generations (Bankwest Seniors Week) with Nearer to Nature at Herdsman. Discover one of Perth's fabulous regional parks on a special day designed for seniors and their families to enjoy a guided walk, learn about the plants and animals in the park and hear stories from Nyoongar elders about traditional indigenous use of the area. *
- 31 Sunday 9am-10.30am Wetland wonders with Greg Keighery at Brixton Street wetlands. Meet at Alton St. Bookings essential 9452 9999.

November

- 2 Tuesday 7:30pm Nest boxes for wildlife presented by Joe Tonga for the UBC. ▲
- 6 Saturday 10am – 12pm Native sedge, rush and native grass field walk hosted by Bush Skills for the Hills, EMRC. Meet at Boya Quarry carpark, Coulsten Rd. §
- 6 Saturday 1 – 3pm Attracting birds to your garden at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉
- 7 Sunday 7 – 8am Breakfast and guided walk Bungendore bush breakfast, Bedfordale. Admiral Rd. Bookings essential call Frank 9397 5491 or Miriam 9498 1570.
- 11 Thursday 8pm Cockatoo care program presented by Mary-Anne Clunies-Ross at the Armadale Wildflower Society, History House, Jull St, Armadale. Call Chris 9398 9140.
- 12 Friday 7.30pm Night walk with Friends of Dianella Bushland. Call Jan 9344 2872.
- 13 Saturday 1 – 3pm Attracting butterflies to your garden at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉
- 20 Saturday 8am Guided walk with Friends of Lake Gwelup. Meet at Scout Hall, Huntriss Rd Gwelup. Call Betty 9444 5640.
- 20 Saturday 1 – 3pm Worm farming that really works at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉
- 21 Sunday 9am Excursion to Forrestdale with the Kwinana/Rockingham/Mandurah Branch of the WA Naturalists Club. →
- 26 Friday 7 – 8.30pm Strawbale building course Theory at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉
- 27 Saturday 10am – 3.30pm Strawbale building course Practical at Naragebup. Cost involved. ☉

December

- 1 Wednesday 6.30pm Xmas dinner with the Friends of Baigup Reserve. Call Harry 9271 3242
- 3 Friday 7pm Christmas function. WA Naturalists' Club. →
- 5 Sunday 9am – 12pm Nature walk and Christmas celebrations with Friends of Warwick Bushland. ☉
- 5 Sunday 9am Christmas party with the Wilson Wetlands Action Group. www
- 17 Friday 7.30pm Members night and BBQ Kwinana/Rockingham/Mandurah Branch of the WA Naturalists Club at Naragebup. ☉
- 18 Saturday 8am Guided walk. Friends of Lake Gwelup. Scout Hall, Huntriss Rd Gwelup. Call Betty 9444 5640.

Get Your Hands Dirty

October

- 2 Saturday 9am – 1pm Bushcare day with Bushlinks at Kallaroo Park, Mullaloo. Call Alice 9487 0632.
- 2 Saturday 9am Weed control with CVA at Kallaroo Reserve, Joondalup. BBQ lunch provided. ☉
- 3 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Parkerville-Brookside Park on Owen Rd. Call Jenny 9295 4467.
- 9 Saturday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Hovea-Falls Park, cnr Victoria and Falls Rd. Call Jenny 9295 4467.
- 10 Sunday 8am – 10am Bushcare by the beach with Quinns Rock Environmental Group, Kinsale Reserve, cnr Kinsale Drv and Ducannon Rise Mindarie. Call Renata 9305 9382.
- 10 Sunday 9am Field Day with Friends of Baigup. Meet at first carpark Memorial Drv, Riverside Gardens. Call Harry 9271 3242.
- 13 Wednesday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Brixton St Wetland. ▲
- 14 Thursday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Talbot Rd Bushland. ▲
- 16 Saturday 9am Working day with Friends of Brixton St. Meet at Alton St. Call Regina 9459 2964.
- 17 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bush regeneration Warwick Bushland. ☉
- 17 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at the Hovea Conservation Park, cnr Brooking and Hedges Rd. Call Herbie 9298 8220.
- 17 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Stoneville-Timbortop Park, Timbertop Wy. Call Lisa 9295 1017.
- 17 Sunday 10.30am – 12.30pm Working day Piesse Brook. Meet end Schipp Rd. Call Linda 9293 3102.
- 23 Saturday 9am – 12pm Planting day with Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park, Edgewater. Call Jennifer 9448 0053.
- 24 Sunday 9am – 12pm Site maintenance Crawls Project with Wilson Wetlands Action Group. www
- 27 Wednesday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Brixton St wetland. ▲
- 28 Thursday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Talbot Rd bushland. ▲

November

- 1 Monday -5 Friday 9am – 3pm Weed removal with CVA and Nedlands bushcare team at Nedlands Bushland Reserves at Allen Park and Hollywood Reserve.
- 7 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Parkerville- Brookside Park on Owen Rd. Call Jenny 9295 4467.
- 7 Sunday 9am Field day with Friends of Baigup Reserve. Meet at carpark Memorial Drv. Call Harry 9271 3242.
- 10 Wednesday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Brixton St Wetland. ▲
- 11 Thursday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Talbot Rd Bushland. ▲
- 13 Saturday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Hovea-Falls Park, cnr Victoria and Falls Rd. Call Jenny 9295 4467.
- 14 Sunday 8 – 10am Bush care by the beach with Quinns Rock Environmental Group Gumblossom Park. Meet at Community Centre carpark, Tapping Way, Quinns Rocks. Call Renata 9305 9382.
- 20 Saturday 9am Working day Friends of Brixton St. Meet at Alton St. Call Regina 9459 2964.
- 21 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bush regeneration Warwick Bushland. ☉
- 21 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Hovea Conservation Park, cnr Brooking and Hedges Rd. Call Herbie 9298 8220.
- 21 Sunday 9am – 12pm Bushcare in the Hills at Stoneville-Timbortop Park, Timbertop Way.
- 21 Sunday 10.30am – 12.30pm Working day with Friends of Piesse Brook. Meet at end of Schipp Rd. Call Linda 9293 3102.
- 21 Sunday – 23 Tuesday 9.30am – 3pm Site maintenance at Mills St Stream. www
- 24 Wednesday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Brixton St Wetland. ▲

HIGHLIGHTS

- Bushcare Month - October** Promoting the need for maintenance and restoration of our native bushlands both in urban and rural settings. For events and projects around Australia. Visit www.deh.gov.au/events/index.html.
- World Habitat Day – 4 October** The theme of this year's World Habitat Day will be cities – engines of rural development. It underlines the importance of mutually beneficial linkages that are essential for the development of cities and rural areas. For further information visit www.unhabitat.org/whd/2004.
- Earth Science Week 10 – 16 October** Highlights a range of global environmental issues. Visit www.earthsciweek.org/.
- National Weedbuster Week 16 – 24 October** Highlights the issues with weeds in our bushland and gardens. Visit www.weedbusters.info/.
- National Water Week 17 – 23 October** Highlighting the need to save and conserve water in Australia. For events around Australia visit www.savewater.com.au/waterweek/.

- 25 Thursday 9am – 12pm Bushland restoration training day with Urban Nature at Talbot Rd Bushland. ▲
- 28 Sunday 9am Field Day with Friends of Baigup. Meet at Garrett Rd Bridge. Call Harry 9271 3242.
- 12 Sunday 8 – 10am Bush care by the beach with Quinns Rock Environmental Group at North Mindarie foreshore reserve. Meet cnr of Seaham Wy and Kinsale Drv Mindarie. Call Renata 9305 9382.
- 12 Sunday 9am Rehabilitation work with CVA at Mudurup Rocks, South Cottesloe. ☉
- 18 Saturday 9am Working day Friends of Brixton St. Meet at Alton St. Call Regina 9459 2964.
- 20 Monday – 24 Friday 9am – 3pm Weed control and rehabilitation work with CVA at North Lake. ☉

Develop Your Skills

October

- 2 Saturday 1 – 4pm Fantastic floral! (beginners) Skills for Nature Conservation at Cockburn Wetlands education centre, and find out more about local plants. Examine flowers up close and see how botanists arrange them in families. Bookings essential. ✦
- 9 Saturday 9am – 4pm Practical bush regeneration workshop hosted by Bush Skills for the Hills, EMRC. §
- 9 Saturday 9.30am – 3.30pm Managing weeds in your patch – strategies for ongoing control. Skills for Nature Conservation at Piney Lakes environmental education centre. Learn about different methods of weed management, both chemical and alternative. Bookings essential. ✦
- 19 Tuesday – 20 Wednesday 4 Seasons Seminars – Bringing it together! Everlasting Concepts seminar focusing on landscaping with WA plants. For more information, visit www.everlastingconcepts.com.au. Bookings essential. Call Sue 9275 3404.
- 30 Saturday 1 – 5pm Minibeasts. Skills for Nature Conservation at the Piney Lakes Environmental Education Centre. Learn about the role of insects in urban bushland and wetlands. Bookings essential. ✦

November

- 2 Tuesday – 4 Thursday Seed collection courses with Apace. Cost involved, bookings essential. Contact Susan 9336 1262 or apace@apacewa.org.au.
- 16 Tuesday – 18 Thursday Seed collection courses with Apace. Cost involved, bookings essential. Contact Susan 9336 1262 or apace@apacewa.org.au.
- 16 Tuesday 11.30am – 2pm Putting the year in focus! Join Skills for Nature Conservation at CALM Kensington and help us plan an exciting and effective training program for 2005. ✦
- 18 Thursday 5.30 – 8pm Putting the year in focus! Join Skills for Nature Conservation at CALM Kensington. Plan an exciting and effective training program for 2005. ✦

December

- 7 Tuesday – 9 Thursday Seed collection courses with Apace. Cost involved, bookings essential. Contact Susan 9336 1262 or apace@apacewa.org.au.

Delivering the Message

October

- 1 Friday – 4 Monday 9am – 5pm Friends of Kings Park Wildflower Festival plant sale! As the sole plant sale outlet for the festival, the Friends will be presenting an outstanding display of quality native plants suitable for growing in suburban gardens. Contact the Friends office on 9480 3643 or friendskp@btpa.wa.gov.au.



Bunbury/ Busselton Region

Bunbury Naturalists' Club meetings and natural history talks are held at 5.30pm every second Tuesday of the month in the Conference room, Lotteries House, Victoria Street Bunbury. Outdoor excursions are held on the third Saturday each month. Call Shirley 9791 5915.

Busselton Naturalists' Club Meetings start at 7.30pm. Check the Busselton Margaret Times to confirm details or listen to ABC Regional Radio. Contact Bernie on (h) 9727 2474, (w) 9752 1949 or bmasters@iinet.net.au to book a bus seat and for general enquiries. Excursion bus normally leaves from Pries Avenue, Busselton, at 9am. All welcome.

The South West Region Herbarium Group meets when working on the Herbarium. Visitors are welcome to all activities. For further information call Shirley on 9791 5915.

Leschenault Community Nursery Inc. For further information on how to be involved call Shirley on 9791 5915 or Mark 9791 4670.

The Geographe Community Landcare Nursery is now taking orders for the 2005 planting season. Plan your project early to ensure you can get the right plants. The Nursery is open Mondays and Tuesdays from 8am to 4pm and all volunteers and visitors are welcome. Call our coordinator Lynne on 0409 376 976.

October

20 Wednesday 7.30pm Presentation on spiders hosted by Busselton Naturalists' Club by guest speaker Dr Mark Harvey, Senior Curator, Department of Terrestrial Invertebrates, WA Museum.

24 Sunday 4pm Owl spotlighting and great marsupial night stalk at Wonnerup possum trail with Busselton Naturalists' Club. Bring torches, spotlights etc...

November

10 Wednesday 7.30pm Presentation on orchids of the Stirling Range hosted by Busselton Naturalists' Club with guest speakers Tony and Ayleen Sands.

21 Sunday 9am Nature Walk through the proposed Forest Grove National Park with Busselton Naturalists' Club.

December

8 Wednesday 6pm Christmas Party with Busselton Naturalists' Club at the RSL Hall, Causeway Rd.

These events are forwarded for inclusion in the Swan Catchment Centre's monthly information sheet and Riverlink web site at www.environment.wa.gov.au/swanatom as well as the Environmental Education Network.

Please send us your January, February and March events by December 1, 2004.

REGIONAL REPORTS

All groups welcome visitors
and new members.

Hills Region

Looks like a good year in the hills!

By Jenny Johnson

Winter has been kind to the hills plantings. In view of the rain that has occurred in the past few months, all groups are optimistic that this year's survival rates will exceed those of 2003. Even with a dry summer, a wet winter usually saturates the soil, which greatly assists plant growth and ensures good seed stocks within the bushland. Seed viability has been a concern in the Hills region, as the below average rainfall experienced over the past few winters means that the seed has not been maturing to replace aging shrubs and ground covers.

Over 12,000 plants have now been placed in the old gravel pit at Timbertop Way, Stoneville. Last year's plants are now flowering, so it is hoped that natural germination will follow next year. The ponds have been created and filled with local wetland species to make a habitat. The work, undertaken by the Midland Campus of Swan TAFE, is nearing completion and once finished, the project will be handed over to the local Friends group.

The excellent winter rains have flooded low-lying sections of Brookside Park, Parkerville and Falls Park, South Hovea. Further activities will be carried out in October.

The Parkerville Primary School has been busy at Parkerville Village South, planting shrubs and ground covers supplied by Mundaring Shire.

The Friends of Lion Mill Creek (FoLMC) held a successful planting day in August, with more than 70 children and adults from the Mundaring Scout Group attending. Many of the children were obtaining points for their environmental badges. Some of the initial planting techniques were hilarious, especially the idea that if you throw your rushes into the middle of the creek they are bound to grow. It didn't take long for everyone to get the hang of it though.

One of the FoLMC members recently found a cage/trap wedged under the low bridge and discovered that it was full of long necked turtles. All 20 turtles were found alive and CALM was contacted immediately. It is thought that they were destined for export. Please check your creek lines regularly!

For further information, contact Jenny on 9295 4467 or Linda on 9290 6666.

Busy with new planting at Stoneville

By Sandy and Roger Stone

Blue Wren Reserve in Stoneville has been an active place, with the Friends of Blue Wren (FoBW) planting many local native species, all of which were grown from seed this winter at Rural Trees Chidlow. The FoBW group successfully secured funding from the Natural Heritage Trust to purchase the plants and new tree guards to protect the seedlings from the pesky rabbits. Remaining funds will be spent on maintenance works and a contractor, who will slash the winter grasses and spray the growing *watsonia*, *gladioli* and *cape tulip*.

The Friends would like to thank the Swan TAFE students for their time and expertise during the planting days held in June and August. The Friends are also grateful for the volunteers provided by the Ministry of Justice.

Dieback is an ever present problem, and to 'arrest the threat', the FoBW have injected the standing jarrah trees with a weak solution of phosphite. To stop the spread of this pathogen, strict hygiene is essential—a teaspoon of wet soil on your shoes contains thousands of spores, which will be transported around the reserve or to your own garden. Because of this threat, some paths have been closed to horses. An application has been completed for funding for 2005 SALP program and the Friends has been accepted for the first round. The Friends have also secured funds from the Mundaring Shire.

For more information, contact Sandy and Roger Stone on 9295 1468 or the_stones@optusnet.com.au.

Calling new friends

By Linda Stanley

Over the coming months, the Friends of Piesse Brook (FoPB) will be holding monthly 'Busy bees in the park'. This year marks the fourth stage of the weed eradication project for the Kalamunda National Park. The areas where the weeds are under control look lovely, but there is a long way to go before the Friends reach the confluence of Helena River and Piesse Brook.

There are a number of tributaries that run into Piesse Brook and the FoPB are not able to care for them all.



Swan Tafe students with Supervisor Ted Johnson. (Photo: Sandy Stone)

We are hoping that some new groups will be formed to look after these tributaries, otherwise the hard work that has gone into weed control works along Piesse Brook will be wasted as seed is continuously washed down from the tributaries. If anyone is interested in forming a group please feel free to call us for advice and information.

For more information, contact Linda Stanley on 9293 3102 or Loretta Bean on 9424 2247.

Central Region

Big issues and big plans for Shenton Bushland

By Dani Boase-Jelinek

In May, employees of Woodside Energy generously volunteered a day of labour for works at Shenton Bushland, including weeding and installing shade-cloth along the Defence Department fence to reduce weed seeds being blown into the bushland.

Following the wonderful decision by the Minister for the Environment, Dr Judy Edwards to reject the current proposal by the University of Western Australia to subdivide the Underwood Avenue Bushland, we have been considering how to protect the bushland permanently.

A possibility is the inclusion of Underwood Avenue bushland as part of a regional park encompassing Kings Park and Bold Park. However, this may have implications for the Friends of Shenton Bushland (FoSB) and could mark the end of the group, as it presently exists. The FoSB are also debating how this bushland can be saved from the threat of future subdivision and development. All comments and suggestions on this matter are welcome.



REGIONAL REPORTS

The FoSB will be taking a two-pronged approach to weed control in 2005. The current approach of spraying of veldgrass and weeds to stop them taking over the bushland will be continued. In addition, a strategy for reducing the area of bushland infested by weeds will begin, with the view to eliminating weeds from the area. To support these activities, the FoSB are applying for funding under the Community Conservation Grants and SALP programs. As part of the strategy, the FoSB also plan to remove mounds of soil created 50 years ago, which are a continuing source of weed infestation.

There are plenty of opportunities for people interested in physical activity to become involved with Shenton Bushland and all are welcome!

For more information, contact Dani on 9381 3470 or bojel@ii.net.au

North-East Region

Living streams in Yellagonga

By Jennifer Hawkes

Friends of Yellagonga (FoY) have had a busy winter revegetating lakeside areas at Duck Landing, Ocean Reef, Kingfisher Cove, Bindaree Terrace and Edgewater. Participant numbers were high, even in the rotten weather, which was great to see!

An exciting new project for the FoY is the rehabilitation of Wanneroo's Church Street stormwater drain into a living stream. The City of Wanneroo (CoW), together with the FoY and the Yellagonga Catchment Group (YCG), will undertake revegetation works to create a habitat, encourage biodiversity and take up nutrients before they enter the lake. Strategically placed rocks, or riffles, will slow the passage of water and further improve the habitat along the drain.

In early winter, the *Arundo donax* (bamboo) was removed from the lake's edge and the *Typha orientalis* was removed from the drain. The bamboo was then replaced with local native trees and plants. The YCG and the CoW hosted this huge effort.

Unfortunately, the heavy winter rains caused erosion within the channel and the soil disturbance resulted in activating the acid sulphate soils in the area. The good news, however, was that it brought about immediate action by the CoW, CALM and the Department of Environment. We suggest you always exercise extreme caution when disturbing soil around a wetland.

For further information, contact Jennifer Hawkes on 9448 0053.

North-West Region

Efforts are rewarded at Periwinkle bushland!

By Dot Lullfitz

Periwinkle is a 3.7 ha bushland reserve bounded by Periwinkle, Charonia and Meridian Roads in Mullaloo. The reserve is representative of the tuart banksia woodland that once occurred in this area. The Friends of Periwinkle (FoP) group aims to keep the bush tidy, raise community interest in the area, revegetate the reserve with native plants, remove weeds and introduced flora and encourage local fauna.

Much of last year's planting is flourishing and FoP members are hoping they will eventually grow and set seed for further regeneration. This year, Mullaloo Heights Primary School planted more than 100 plants and the FoP planted more than 400, which is a great effort by all involved.

The recent weeding day targeted Geraldton carnation weed. The pleasing news is that the weeds were certainly thinner on the ground than last year, so it was encouraging to see the impact of our efforts. It just goes to show what a few people and support from the local council can achieve.

For further information, contact Dot Lullfitz on 9401 3724 or Dhullfitz@spartan.com.au.

Porteous Park gets international aid

By Mike Norman

On 31 July 2004, the Friends of Porteous Park (FoPP) in Sorrento were joined by 11 volunteers from Japan, Korea and Thailand

to remove targeted weed species from the bushland section of the park. Raincoats were the order of the day, but the damp soil made weed removal far easier.

Since 2002, the FoPP have waged a war against six weed species occurring in the bushland and we were pleased when the City of Joondalup (CoJ) arranged conservation volunteers to join local residents to help that morning.

The Porteous Park bushland has a high level of biodiversity, with nearly 100 native species having been recorded in the area. Until a few years ago, weed invasion and rubbish dumping were threatening its natural values. However, the works done at Porteous Park have dramatically improved the aesthetic appeal and ecological value of the bushland and the number of germinant weed species is rapidly decreasing. Given a helping hand, nature can repair itself!

The FoPP currently consists of 20 residents who mainly live around the park. In addition to the social activities of the group, the members are learning about bushland plants and bush regeneration techniques. One member has started a photographic record of all the flowering plants in the park.

There are over 100 natural areas in the CoJ, which are managed by the Council, but currently only nine Friends groups exist. All of these natural areas are in need of attention and a Friends group can greatly assist this process.

For further information, contact Mike Norman on 9448 1978.



Volunteers from Japan, Korea and Thailand assist Friends of Porteous Park with weeding. (Photo: Mike Norman)

REGIONAL REPORTS

Actions on coast care at Joondalup

By Mike Norman

Joondalup Community Coast Care Forum (JCCCCF) was officially formed in February 2000. The aim of the JCCCCF is to monitor issues and initiate actions relating to the Joondalup coastal strip from Marmion to Burns Beach.

The JCCCCF has been busy on many fronts. The group is in the fourth year of the Sorrento Beach project, which is a five to 10-year program to restore a weed invaded and plant degraded dune system back to health. More than 1600 seedlings were planted in June 2004, with 900 of these placed with wind guards. Two weeding days using volunteers have been undertaken and a bush regenerator contracted by the CoJ has done further work on the more difficult weeding.

The JCCCCF has been involved in the implementation of the Coastal Management Plan prepared by the CoJ. The group is pushing the council to ensure a proper schedule of work is developed and prioritised to avoid inappropriate works being undertaken. More than \$200,000 is available for work on the coastal strip this year.

The JCCCCF is working on a number of other coastal actions, including the safe beach access at Ocean Reef, a dual use path through Mullaloo, campaigning for the retention of natural vegetation as part of the Burns Beach development, the provision of amenities at Ocean Reef and the construction of a firebreak and access path at Silver Sands Drive, Iluka.

For further information, contact Mike Norman on 9448 1978.

Ten thousand seedlings planted by volunteers at Yanchep

By Nicole Lincoln

This month has been a busy time for the Yanchep National Park Volunteer Group. This amazing group of volunteers aims to plant the 10,000 seedlings that were propagated from seed collected by group members.

The planting site is situated midway along the woodland walk trail and was once used for a residence. The house was removed several years ago, leaving a degraded area that is perfect for replanting and direct seedling trails. A 'sea of green' currently describes the site and the group encourages you to take a short stroll and find out why. Funding for this project was received through Community



Left: Volunteers Joy and Elizabeth spreading rust fungus to non affected bridal creeper. (Photo: Nicole Lincoln)



Right: Esme bagging rust affected bridal creeper. (Photo: Nicole Lincoln)

Conservation Grants 2003/2004 program. Well done and thank you to all the volunteers. An amazing effort and result by all!

This year, fences and tree guards are being used to deter hungry kangaroos from nibbling on the delicious seedlings. The guards will later be removed to display an array of native local species that complement adjacent bushland areas.

Bridal Creeper combat is underway at Yanchep National Park as part of a joint project between CSIRO, CALM and the Volunteer Group. Bridal Creeper is a very invasive weed and is spread mainly by fruit feeding birds. The plant prevails over native species by forming dense mats of tuberous roots below the ground and thickly entwining vines with dense foliage above ground and into the canopy.

The volunteers are translocating rust fungus (*Puccinia myrsiphylli*) from the already infested Bridal Creeper to those areas not affected. These actions assist with increasing the natural spread of the rust fungus and ultimately reducing the spread of the Bridal Creeper.

For further information, contact Nicole Lincoln on 9561 1004 or nicolel@calm.wa.gov.au.



South East Region

Great Gladly Grab at Murdoch

By Gemma Schryver

This year, the Diploma students of Conservation and Land Management at Murdoch TAFE are running the Great Gladly Grab; an annual event organised to reduce the number of gladiolus weeds in the Murdoch Bushland. A major component of this event is to inform the community that the pink gladiolus is actually a weed, not a pretty native.

The Murdoch TAFE students are in charge of getting things underway. Students are asked to form a group and collect as many flower heads as possible to stop the seed from spreading further, while being careful not to trample the bushland. Each team gets a prize and the team with the most 'gladdies' wins the major prize. It is hoped that enough funding will be available to hold a sausage sizzle for everyone involved. This is a good way of getting people to volunteer and also inform them about pink gladiolus, the technicolour alien.

For more information, contact friends_of_murdoch_tafe@yahoo.com.au.

Group Profile: Waterbird Conservation Group

A small group of unwavering, passionate volunteers has worked tirelessly for 20 years to ensure that WA waterbirds are protected and their natural habitats rehabilitated. What the group lacks in numbers, it makes up for with effort and determination.

Big event sparks beginning

The Waterbird Conservation Group (WCG) began in February 1984, sparked by an outbreak of botulism at Thomsons Lake in Jandakot. People throughout Perth rallied to rescue hundreds of sick and dying birds, including pelicans, swans, ducks and wading birds. Twenty years later, some of the people who were involved at that event still remain as dedicated to rescuing WA's waterbirds.

WCG President, Joan Payne, said: "The incidences of recorded outbreaks of botulism in the metropolitan area appear to have declined, so we have not seen an outbreak of the same scale in recent years. It is not really possible to know whether this is related to improvements in wetland management or not."

Thankfully, there have been some important wetland initiatives that have improved water quality over recent years, including the installation of sewers in areas with a high water table, greater environmental awareness within local government, modifications to drainage practices, raising water quality standards, the employment of environmental officers and management plans being prepared and implemented. The WCG has been one of the key non-government organisations involved in supporting these wetland initiatives.

Evolving and moving with the times

The WCG's initial focus on the rescue and rehabilitation of sick and injured waterbirds has evolved over the years. There is still a core group of active waterbird carers, though the number of people able to help has dropped significantly.

"The closure of the WA Native Bird Hospital left a large hole in our capacity to care for the birds and this vacuum has unfortunately not been filled," said Joan.

The WCG also remained vigilant in its quest to phase out game hunting and blood sport of waterfowl in WA, a result that saw duck shooting banned in 1992.

During the last 10 years the group has focused on addressing the causes of waterbird deaths, such as the loss of wetlands, their degradation, pollution and poor management, rather than the symptoms.



Regina Drummond and Joan Payne cutting the cake at the "Afternoon of Memories" with members looking on. They were (L-r) Paul and Margaret Wilson, Astrid Herlihy, Kate Creed, Maree Kowald, Karen Drummond, Helen Barnes and Eva Crockenberg. (Photo: Ruth Clark)



Members Maurice and Joanne Cammack show daughter Emma and son Joshua photos of the group's activities. (Photo: Ruth Clark)



Below right: President Joan Payne addressing past and present members at the celebrations. (Photo: Ruth Clark)

"Apart from actively training and supporting people in the rescue and release of sick, injured or orphaned waterbirds, the WCG also works hard to promote the responsible management of existing wetlands to all levels of government, as well as other bodies that administer wetlands," said Joan.

The WCG strives to increase public awareness about the need to conserve existing wetlands and has actively campaigned on a range of issues including the conservation of the Brixton Street Wetlands, establishing the Canning River Regional Park, protection of the Creery Wetlands in Mandurah, protection of the Tomah Swamp in Wattle Grove and opposing the Argentine ant spraying at Herdsman Lake. In addition, the group manages a Wetland Trust Fund, which enables it to carry out rehabilitation work and purchase wetlands for conservation purposes.

The WCG has several locations that remain the focal points of its on-ground work, in particular Folly and Maramanup Pools in Baldivis.

Celebrating 20 years!

The WCG recently achieved a great milestone and celebrated 20 years of caring for waterbirds and their wetlands with an 'Afternoon of Memories'. Twenty-five past and present members attended the afternoon, renewing acquaintances and reminiscing about the work carried out. Joan presented a certificate of appreciation to each member and discussed the long and effective history of the group. Treasurer, Mark Cliff, put together a video of highlights that showed the group's members rescuing and caring for sick and injured waterbirds, while committee member Regina Drummond provided a huge birthday cake for all to enjoy.

Joan said: "A great time was had by all and it really made us realise just how much we had achieved during the 20 years. It's just so fulfilling to know that we have helped to make a difference."

Contacts

For further information about the Waterbird Conservation Group activities or to become a member, contact Ruth Clark on 9339 5501 or ruth.clark@iinet.net.au.

Resources

New and useful publications

- **Biodiversity Incentive Programs in WA Guide** - is now available for WA landowners and community groups involved in nature conservation. The booklet released in July outlines the many government and non-government programs available to assist in the management, protection and rehabilitation of bushland and natural wetlands. The booklet can be ordered from CALM and the Department of Environment or can simply be downloaded from CALM's NatureBase website by visiting www.naturebase.net/orc/pdf/biodiversity_incentives.pdf
- **WEEDeck – weed identification cards**
This is a series of 172 full colour weed identification cards, divided into three packs—tropical, subtropical and temperate. Each card contains high quality photographs that show the distinguishing features of each weed as well as easy to follow, detailed descriptions. The WEEDeck cards are available at an upgraded national weeds web site, which provides practical information on weed detection, identification and control. To download visit www.weeds.org.au.
- **Threatened species recovery review**
Nearly 10 years after the last critical look at recovery planning in Australia, this report by Susan Moore and Susan Wooller of

Murdoch University examines the advantages and risks of the three types of threatened species plans used in Australia today. This is an excellent resource for anyone involved in recovery planning and can be downloaded by visiting www.wwf.org.au.

- **Stormwater Management Manual for WA**
Produced by the Department of Environment, this manual promotes a new approach to the management of stormwater in WA. To reflect this new approach, the manual replaces the *Manual for Managing Urban Stormwater Quality in Western Australia* produced by the Waters and Rivers Commission in 1998. Copies of the completed chapters can be downloaded by visiting www.wrc.wa.gov.au/protect/stormwater/index/htm.
- **Groundwater Guidelines Report**
Dr Steve Appleyard has prepared a set of draft guidelines on managing groundwater in acid sulphate soil risk areas. The guidelines address immediate concerns on the common practice of dewatering soils as part of construction and development activities on the Swan Coastal Plain. The report can be found at: www.enviro.wa.au/downloads/2561_ASS_GroundwaterControl_0312.pdf.

Website watch

- The **Conservation Council of Western Australia** has a new website. The site contains everything you want to know about the Council, from community workshops to current campaigns. In addition the site enables you to look at recent editions of *The Greener Times*. Visit www.conservationwa.asn.au.
- **Aboriginal site information** – to check if your land is an Aboriginal site, visit the Department of Indigenous Affairs website www.dia.wa.gov.au/gis/asp/gistheme.asp. If your site is registered, you will need to consult with Elders of the specific family group. Further information can be obtained from Robert Reynolds, Senior Heritage Officer, on 9274 4288.
- The **Department of Environment and Heritage** has a new website, www.lendahand.gov.au. The site contains a wide range of information about natural resource management around Australia and includes helpful hints and information about how the community can help lend a hand to improve the state of our environment.

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

If not claimed within 7 days, please return to

PO Box 1167, Bentley Delivery Centre, Kensington, WA 6983



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