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# River View



Government of Western Australia  
Summer 2007 | No. 42



## Tranby foreshore to be rehabilitated

Works will soon begin on a \$420,000 makeover of a popular part of the Swan River foreshore near Tranby House in Maylands.

The foreshore has been eroding for many years, causing loss of local vegetation and making the shoreline unsafe.

During the next three years, the Swan River Trust and City of Bayswater will work together to restore the eroded banks and rehabilitate it with fringing native foreshore vegetation.

Trust chairman Charlie Welker said getting the foreshore design just right had taken many months of consultation with the community.

"Through the Riverbank Program, the Trust has committed \$70,100 for the first year of work," Mr Welker said.

"Rehabilitation works will begin in autumn and include realignment of a pathway, fencing, bank stabilisation works and the planting of local native vegetation.

"The Trust is pleased to be working with the City of Bayswater – who should be

given credit for initiating the project – to transform the foreshore near Tranby House."

Riverbank funding is available to local government agencies for a range of foreshore rehabilitation and protection activities. Please call (08) 9278 0900 or email [info@swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au) for more information.



Eroded foreshore near Tranby House

## Welcome to new Minister

The Swan River Trust welcomes the new Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Disability Services, the Honourable Tony McRae, MLA.



New Environment Minister Tony McRae

Former Environment Minister Mark McGowan moved to the Education and Training; South West portfolio, following the State Government's Cabinet reshuffle at the end of 2006.

Mr McRae is the Member for Riverton and brings a diverse background of experience ranging across economic, environmental and social areas. He was first elected to the Western Australian Parliament in February 2001, re-elected in February 2005, and appointed to the Carpenter Labor Cabinet in May 2006.

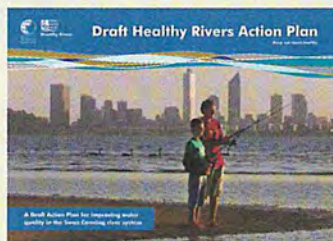
## Last chance to have your say

The Draft Healthy Rivers Action Plan is open for public comment.

The new Action Plan has been developed from ten years of water quality data and sound science, an independent evaluation of the existing program and stakeholder input.

This is your chance to have your say on the future of the Swan and Canning rivers - visit

[www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/healthyivers](http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/healthyivers) or contact the Trust on (08) 9278 0900.



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## Caring for the Swan and Canning rivers





## An historical river

Described by former Western Australian Premier Geoff Gallop as, "the State's playground", the Swan River is about 67 kilometres long, and carries between 50 and 70 gigalitres of water.

The Nyungar people inhabited south west Western Australia and cared for the river, which they called Warndollier, for at least 40,000 years before the arrival of European settlers in 1829.

The Dutch, French, Portuguese and British all visited Western Australia's coastline, but the expedition that discovered and named the Swan River was led by Willem de Vlamingh in January 1697.

Early accounts describe the river's many fish, black swans, and its use as a transport link. Boatmen found it very difficult to get people through the mud into the boats, having to carry passengers to the boats on their shoulders. Even in the 1840s and 1850s boatmen complained about glass in the river cutting their feet - there was already rubbish being dumped.

Early in the history of the colony settlers decided to change the river's natural environment. The first channel that made Burswood into an island was cut in 1831, to allow easier navigation. Major works to 'beautify' the river by straightening it were undertaken from 1903.

Industry was gradually established along the banks of the Swan and waste from industrial processes and septic tanks was channelled into it, causing problems for river managers for many years.

Increasingly local government authorities established rubbish disposal sites along their foreshores in an attempt to fill in wetlands and discourage mosquito breeding.

Even in the early days there were many varied pressures on the rivers, the legacy of which remains today. The Trust works to improve the water quality of the rivers for everyone's enjoyment.

To find out how you can keep our rivers healthy, or for more information on the history of the Swan and Canning rivers, contact the Trust on (08) 9278 0900.

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Thanks to Western Australian Museum historian Dr Sue Graham Taylor for contributing information to this article.

*Top: Boats for hire at Barrack Street Jetty circa 1900. Courtesy Battye Library*

*Middle: Cricket on the Esplanade with Perth City Baths in the background, circa 1905. Courtesy Battye Library*

*Bottom: Perth from Kings Park today*



## Swan region projects receive \$8.6 million

In January the Federal and State governments announced more than \$8.6 million for projects in the Swan region for the next two years.

The Swan Catchment Council will continue to work with partners, including the Swan River Trust, to implement the endorsed Swan Region Strategy for Natural Resource Management Investment Plan.

Swan River Trust environment programs manager Anthony Sutton said the Trust contributes to three of the 32 projects in the strategy.

"Natural Heritage Trust funding makes up an important component of several projects partly funded by the Trust," Mr Sutton said.

"These include the Foreshore Assessment Project, Skills for Nature Conservation, and Ribbons of Blue/Waterwatch.

"The Trust is working on a local and regional level - through the *Draft Healthy Rivers Action Plan*, and by working closely with the Swan Catchment Council - to protect the health of the Swan and Canning rivers."

The Strategy and accompanying Investment Plan is available online at [www.swancatchmentcouncil.org](http://www.swancatchmentcouncil.org) or by calling the Swan Catchment Council on (08) 9374 3333.



## New planning policy

The Western Australian Government has adopted a new high level planning policy, developed with the Swan River Trust, to protect the Swan Canning river system.

The policy will provide guidance to planning agencies when considering proposals likely to affect the river system.

It contains specific guidelines for nine identified parts of the river system from Blackwall Reach to the upper Swan and Canning, the Southern River and the Helena Valley.

The Western Australian Planning Commission and local governments will now apply the policy when making decisions, in relation to town planning schemes, the Metropolitan Region Scheme and various strategic plans.

The State Planning Policy 2.10 for the Swan Canning river system encourages:

- protection and rehabilitation of the rivers, while minimising disturbance or dredging where it will have an adverse effect;
- development which is sensitive to the river setting and takes into account the rivers' heritage values;
- improvements to public access;
- creation and maintenance of foreshore reserves; and
- opportunities for developing water-based transport.

The planning policies are available at <http://www.wapc.wa.gov.au>.



A dead tree at Minim Cove in Mosman Park

## Trust investigates death of riverfront trees

The Swan River Trust is investigating suspicious tree deaths in public foreshore areas along the Swan River.

Trust Riverpark manager Roxane Shadbolt said it was suspected that in some cases trees alongside the rivers may have been purposely damaged to improve river views.

"Recently trees have died along the foreshore in South Perth, Shelley and Mosman Park, and investigations are now underway to determine the cause of death," Ms Shadbolt said.

"Foreshore vegetation stabilises riverbanks, provides habitat for fauna and removes nutrients from water and sediment.

"It is protected by legislation and those caught breaking the law can be fined up to \$5,000.

"We encourage the community to report any activities which may be harmful to the rivers and shorelines by calling the Swan River Trust on (08) 9278 0900 or after hours on 0419 192 845."



## Jetty maintenance

Every five to 10 years, depending on location, use and weather exposure, jetties require an overhaul to maintain their upkeep.

Swan River Trust waterways program manager Liesl Jonker said the Trust encouraged local councils, private owners and State Government agencies to keep their jetties in good shape.

"Regular jetty maintenance is cheaper in the long run than having to remove and replace a jetty that has fallen into disrepair," Ms Jonker said.

"The Swan River Trust heavy lift jetty at Ellam Street in South Perth was grit blasted in January to remove paint and rust.

"Contractors engaged to undertake the works found several sections of the steel beams supporting the jetty had corroded over time. In some areas the beams had rusted right through.

"Metal plates were welded onto the beams to repair them and the beams were repainted.

"By repairing the jetty at this stage, engineering consultants advised its life has been extended by 50 years. In this case, a stitch in time really did save nine.

"During jetty maintenance the river and surrounding environment were fully protected from any harmful materials through total encapsulation of the jetty, which set a new standard in best environmental practice.

"While this significantly increased the cost of the job, the health of the river is the Trust's priority and we work hard to protect it from contaminants."

Ms Jonker encouraged jetty owners or those responsible for jetty upkeep to contact the Trust for advice on (08) 9278 0900.



Above: A corroded section of the Ellam Street jetty in South Perth

Below: The jetty was fully encapsulated to prevent contaminants entering the river





## Help Keep our rivers healthy

### Tips for boating

- Tenders left on the foreshore damage vegetation and block access - they should be taken home.
- Take your rubbish home with you - especially old fishing tackle.
- Avoid damaging native vegetation - only launch your boat, dinghy or tender at an approved launching ramp.
- Keep fuel and oil out of the rivers by regularly servicing your engine and refuelling carefully.
- Spend a couple of minutes checking solvents, residues and cleaning agents can't run into the rivers when maintaining your boat.
- Anchor in areas clear of seagrass and avoid tying up to shoreline vegetation.
- Reduce your speed and boatwash.
- Contact the Trust for a Boating Guide, which includes a map of the Swan and Canning rivers and practical information for boaters.



## Great Gardens

The Great Gardens team is gearing up for its biggest ever autumn series of workshops, beginning 17 March.

A Waterwise endorsed program, the team has also delivered workshops from February to March with support from the Water Corporation, as part of the 'Surviving Summer' series.

To register your attendance at one of the autumn Great Gardens workshops, log on to [www.greatgardens.info](http://www.greatgardens.info) or phone 1300 369 833.



## Get involved with Ribbons of Blue

The Swan River Trust is now delivering the Ribbons of Blue environmental education program for the Swan region.

By teaching participants about water quality monitoring, the program raises understanding, develops skills and encourages more environmentally friendly behaviour.

The program is open to schools, community groups and local governments. It addresses water quality issues across the catchment in the Swan region.

Short-term educational opportunities are available or long-term activities may include selecting a site for ongoing water quality monitoring and restoration.

A wide range of resources are also available for loan, including games, education kits, videos and monitoring equipment.

To find out more about how your organisation can get involved with Ribbons of Blue, contact the Trust coordinator on (08) 9278 0900 or email [info@swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au).



Woodlands Primary School students examining macroinvertebrates at Jackadder Lake



# Conference marks World Wetlands Day

Each year on World Wetlands Day, 2 February, a conference is held to commemorate the signing of the Ramsar Convention, designed to protect significant wetlands.

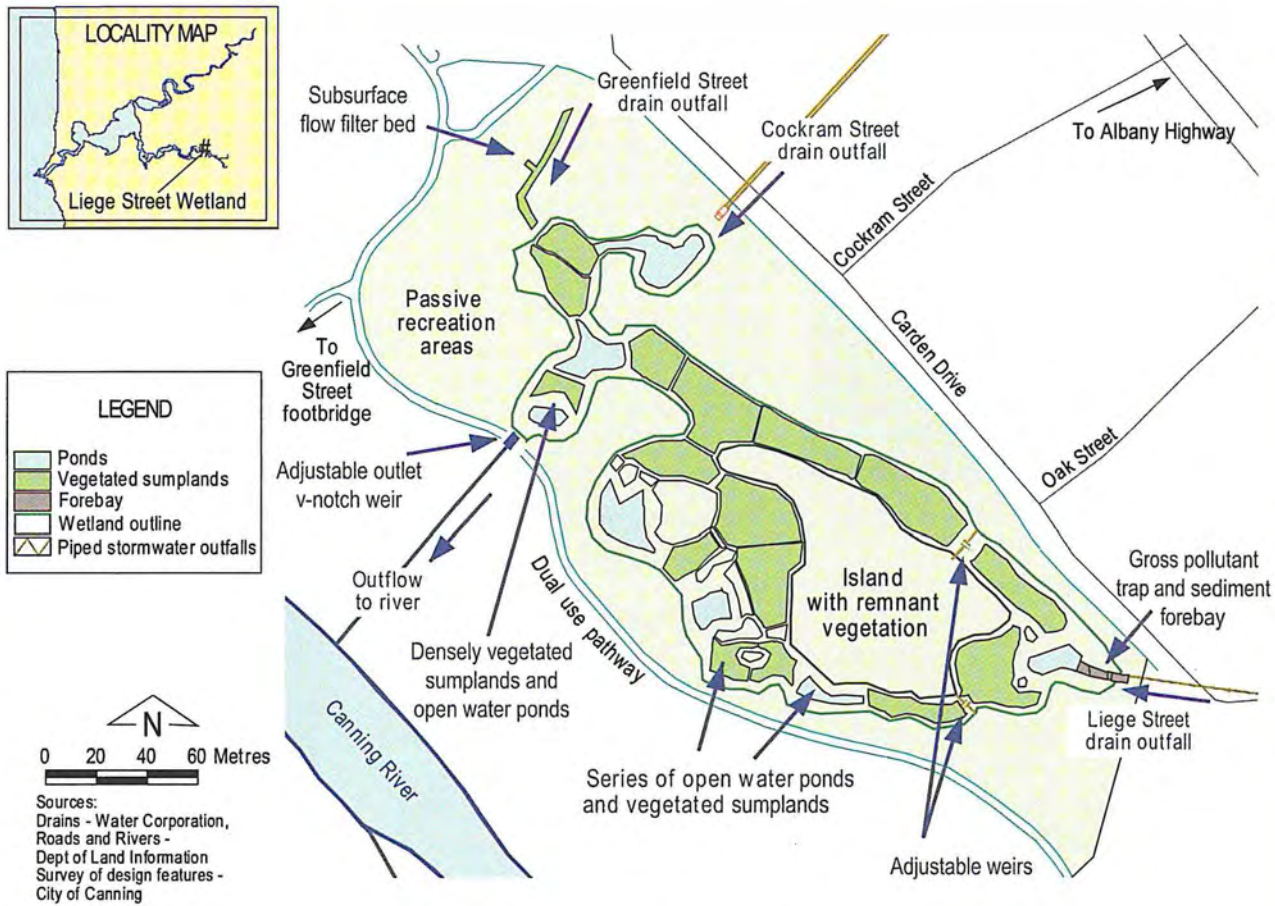
The 2007 Wetlands Conference brought together community groups, landowners, local and State Government officers, and the private sector to share knowledge on wetland management.

The theme of this year's conference was the role of wetlands in promoting a healthy fisheries program. Conference attendees discussed the variety of freshwater fish species in Western Australia and the impacts feral fish can have on native populations.

Speakers highlighted the importance of the Aboriginal connection with wetlands, the role of education in increasing community awareness, and using policy in protecting diminishing wetland areas.

The Swan River Trust and South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare presented on the Liege Street Wetland, using a poster to show its design features and outcomes.

The workshops provided information on the latest techniques in wetland education, management, restoration and weed control, based on local experience.



Design features of the Liege Street Wetland

*Keep our rivers healthy*





Trust officers Alison McGilvray and David Fardig

## Trust works with yacht clubs to clean up river



Further water quality sampling is being undertaken

An environmental consultant has been appointed to further investigate high levels of a banned substance found in the Swan River near yacht clubs.

Swan River Trust Riverpark manager Roxane Shadbolt said preliminary findings in August 2006 showed high levels of the banned substance tributyltin (TBT) found in anti-fouling paint, and some heavy metals including copper.

"The Trust informed yacht clubs and follow-up inspections were made at

all river-based clubs and marinas with slipways," Ms Shadbolt said.

"Because of concerns regarding the high levels recorded, an independent review of the early snapshot investigation was undertaken. This highlighted limitations in the sampling, monitoring and interpretation of first-round data.

"Given the results of the review, the Trust will undertake a further sampling program to improve the accuracy of the data and assess it against environmental and human health guidelines.

"We will continue to liaise with the yacht clubs to discuss future sampling, the results, and environmental management plans to address contamination.

"The Trust encourages the community to work with us and report any activities that may be harmful to the rivers or shorelines."

## Our people

Two Trust staff were recently recognised for their works protecting the health of the Swan and Canning rivers.

Senior natural resource management officer David Fardig received a certificate from the Western Australian Police acknowledging his assistance in establishing a command centre office during Skyshow and air race events.

Trust waterways officers collected more than one and a half tons of rubbish from Perth Waters and Matilda Bay following Australia Day in January. To date, the Trust has helped clean up following 14 Australia Day celebrations on the Swan River, collecting more than 24 tonnes of rubbish.

Natural resource management officer Alison McGilvray received first class honours in Environmental Science for her thesis on the foreshore condition of the Swan and Canning rivers.

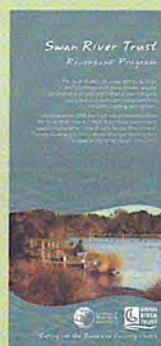
The joint project between the Trust, Murdoch University and Swan Catchment Council included more than 120 kilometres of foreshore from Fremantle to the Ellen Brook.

Alison's paper, *Swan River: Understanding vegetation type and its condition for more targeted foreshore management*, is a valuable resource, providing greater understanding of the actions required to better manage foreshores.

## New publications

A new poster demonstrating the design features of the award-winning Liege Street Wetland is now available on the Trust website [www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au](http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au).

The new Riverbank Program and Trust brochures can also be viewed on the website, or call (08) 9278 0900 to receive hard copies.





## Swan River Trust regulations

Public comments received by the Swan River Trust on the draft regulations for the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* are now being evaluated.

The new legislation is expected to be proclaimed later this year, together with the regulations.

A copy of the draft regulations can be found on the Trust website [www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au](http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au) under Legislation & policies, or by calling the Trust on (08) 9278 0900.

## News in brief

- Members of the public reported several sightings of bull sharks in the Swan and Canning rivers in January and February. The Department of Fisheries reminds the public to remain cautious, especially in the Canning River near Shelley Bridge. Shark sightings should be reported to the Water Police on (08) 9442 8600.
- The Trust is organising a site for Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 4 March on the Canning River. Call events officer Rachel Wilson on (08) 9278 0914 to register your interest to volunteer.
- In response to an increase in mooring licences at Bull Creek and community concern, 120 new and existing mooring owners received an environmental education leaflet in January on how to help keep our rivers healthy.

## Eco education centre soon to be unveiled

Construction of an eco education centre on the banks of the Canning River at Kent Street Weir will soon begin.

The Canning River Regional Park Eco Education Centre recently received the final nod from the Environment Minister Tony McRae, Swan River Trust and City of Canning.

Trust communications manager Wendy Yorke said the Centre would provide opportunities for environmental education and new community facilities in a natural setting beside the river.

"The Centre has been developed by a project team led by the Department of Environment and Conservation and the City of Canning," Ms Yorke said.

Primarily aimed at the 15 public high schools and 73 public primary schools in the Canning District, the local community will benefit from:

- nature-based activities offered through the Centre;
- interpretive information about the Canning River Regional Park;
- the opportunity to participate in volunteering revegetation activities;
- a meeting place for community groups; and
- a café for visitors to the Centre and Park.

Construction of the Centre is expected to be completed by December this year. For more information please contact the Department of Environment and Conservation Regional Parks Unit on (08) 9431 6500.



An artist's impression of the eco education centre, courtesy of the Department of Environment and Conservation

## Conservation volunteers protect foreshore

A new volunteer project, Special People, Special Places, is underway to look after the Swan River foreshore surrounding the Burswood Entertainment Complex.

Conservation Volunteers Australia began by identifying some of the major threats in the area in April 2006, and working with groups of volunteers to address these issues in Burswood Park.

Vegetation was planted to help control water temperatures, prevent weed growth, reduce algal blooms, and control non-native grasses and weeds on the foreshore.

Coir logs were installed by the river's edge to reduce the effects of erosion caused by power boats and the effects of weather and tide. Native species were planted behind the coir logs to stabilise the sandy riverbanks.



CVA volunteers at Burswood



## Crawley Baths river statue gets go-ahead

A proposal to erect a 2.5 metre high statue at the old Crawley Baths site near Mounts Bay Road has been given the green light by the Swan River Trust.

The Trust discussed the proposal at its February meeting and decided to recommend approval following a public comment period.

Chairman Charlie Welker said public submissions strongly supported the project, and so the Trust recommended approval.

"The statue commemorates the heritage value of the old Baths site and the impact on the environment and boat navigation will be negligible," Mr Welker said.

"The Minister is expected to make a final decision shortly."



The Crawley Baths river statue

## what's on

### March

- 4 Clean Up Australia Day
- 17 Great Gardens autumn series begins
- 17-25 Conservation Week
- 18 Skills for Nature workshop – Propagation for beginners
- 31 Skills for Nature workshop – Easy funding for environmental projects

### April

- 1 Healthy Rivers Community Expo – Autumn River Festival
- 12-15 Gardening Australia Expo
- 14 Skills for Nature workshop – Stop dieback
- 28 Skills for Nature workshop – Monitoring and evaluation

For information on upcoming events, contact the Trust on (08) 9278 0900.

## Sailing National Championship

More than 100 competitors took part in the Cherub Sailing National Championship from 27 December 2006 to 3 January 2007 on Melville Water. The Swan River Trust supported the event by donating calico bags, t-shirts and environmental information.



## Swan River Trust

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ISSN 1324-0404

Printed on 100% Tudor recycled paper

