



Friends of Lake Claremont



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Ted's Corner Geoff Ross

I am mostly known as the scone baker! Soozie and I started to do the refreshments for the friends group monthly busy bees some years back. It was about the time that Soozie handed over the coordination of the group to Heidi. We realised that the refreshments were an integral part of the social fabric of the group and had to be maintained. The format for the teas has morphed over the years but the standard these days is incomplete without my scones. It all started really when Joan Tock made some strawberry jam and gave us a jar. We thought, wouldn't it be nice to have some scones. Then the ritual started and with Joan's jam and freshly whipped cream the routine was established.

Another interest of mine is photography. It started with a new camera with which I was taking photos of flowers in our own native garden. They turned out quite well so I progressed to photos of scenes at the lake and flowers when in season. As an experiment Soozie and I had some of our garden photos made into greetings cards and then the idea was conceived of making cards for the friends group using photos from around the lake. Our first series of cards was of birds which are often seen at the lake (most of those photos were actually taken by our bird specialist David Free). In due course we hope to make another couple of series of cards featuring flowers and fauna and in the meantime my flower photos often appear under the "In Bloom this Month" heading in the monthly newsletter including this one!

IN BLOOM THIS MONTH

The Chenille Honey-myrtle (*Melaleuca huegelii*) is a shrub that grows up to 5m tall. It is prized for its showy flower-spikes which are attractive to insects including several species of jewel beetle, butterflies, moths, native bees and wasps. Moths in large numbers visit the flowers at night and it is often used for bee keeping. It has a well-developed rootstock that enables it to resprout from below the ground after a fire. It can take up to 20 years or more for the regrowth to develop into a full sized shrub again.



Photo by Geoff Ross.



OUR BIRDS

The Freckled Duck (*Stictonetta naevosa*) is comparatively uncommon in the Perth metropolitan area and is keenly sought-after by birdwatchers. I saw it for the first time at Lake Claremont last year having been alerted to its presence by Kevin McAlpine. It is about the same size as the very common Pacific Black Duck and sometimes mixes with them however, the plumage is very distinctive so there is no possibility of mis-identification given careful observation. When breeding the male has a red base to the bill. Please let me know if you see any birds nesting or with young.

Photo and text by David Free.

ANNUAL BUSH TO BEACH WALK, SUNDAY 12TH OCTOBER

Wardun Beelier Bidi section which is part of the Whadjuk Trails

Text by Soozie Ross and photos by Nancye Miles-Tweedie

Glorious weather made this year's walk perfect. Reaching around 22 degrees at 2pm was just right for comfortable walking. Everything including the weather was perfectly organised by the Friends of Shenton Bushland and Mosman Park. There were 37 people walking ranging in age from approx. 12 yrs to probably 80, though I didn't ask! Many were familiar faces from bush care groups in our region but also lots of new and younger faces which were good to see.

The walk was from North Fremantle station / Leighton around to the Swan River at Fremantle bridges and then hugging the river foreshore as much as possible all the way to Peppermint Grove foreshore and ending at Cottesloe train station. It was 14 kms at a delightfully leisurely pace with pauses to admire the scenery and features.

As a cyclist who has regularly covered that area I had not realised there were some hidden walking tracks not accessible by bikes which were truly delightful and which felt like the midst of the bush.

Along the way we were given heaps of amazing information about the local areas from bushcare organisers. In Mosman Park Sue Conlan (Friends of Mosman Park) showed us native spinach, native celery and native apricot amongst other edible plants. She had even made us some native spinach quiche (cultivated from seed in her own garden). In that section of the river foreshore is the home for the last specimen of the rare *Boronia Alata* plant.

We saw a large mature bob tail lizard and a dugite snake which slithered away under the concrete paving as we approached. We saw an osprey circling its nest though no young were seen.

We learnt heaps of interesting historical and geological gems as we passed along. *Did you know that:*

- ▶ The old soap factory used to drain all its waste directly into the river via a tunnel?
- ▶ The old state engineering works built the keel for Australia II?
- ▶ Minim Cove had a ferry service to Preston Point before the bridges were built?
- ▶ Buckland Hill and Rocky Bay were quarried for limestone in the late 19th and early 20th centuries for Perth's roads, buildings and the North Mole?
- ▶ The Minim Cove reuse project removed 13,920 tonnes of contaminated soil from the banks of the river?
- ▶ In Garungup Park, 2 caves are said to be the final resting place of Waugal (creator of Swan River)?

Minim Cove is an important place for Aboriginal history. It was a major camping and fishing area for those who were travelling from north Fremantle to the Perth area. Tools found there date back 9,930 years. Other geological surveys record the retreat and advance of the ocean in middle to late Pleistocene age. It was the site of the first land grant in 1839 following European settlement and was known as Billy Goat Farm. It operated as a dairy until 1920.



Walking along the Swan River at Minim Cove.



Exquisite views across the Swan River on the walk.

▶ *Story continued on following page.*

Chidley Point used to be a remote picnic area reached only by boat. In the 1920s it was popular for fishing, crabbing and catching rabbits. In the great depression Chidley Point became the makeshift home for many unemployed families who were living off the land. Along the foreshore and in caves camps remained until the beginning of WW2.

Stephanie Clegg took us around the actual waterline from The Coombe to the Swan Canoe Club. We discovered an historic man made cave and some Greek letters signifying the location of a fresh water spring.

You can follow the Wardun Beeliar Bidi walk anytime as pamphlets with maps have been printed. These are available from your local council.



Cave on the banks of the Swan River near "The Coombe" in Mosman Park. The cave was excavated and not created by erosion.

BUSY BEE

On October 12 the group was targeting Fumitory and other weeds growing amongst the natives in the Remnant Bush. These are the weeds that the contractors are unable to target because of their proximity to the native vegetation. This is a high priority task and an important part of our contribution to the TOC's weed management strategy.

We were a bit low on numbers and two of our heavy hitters (Heidi and Norma) were only able to stay for a short while. It's no surprise that we were a bit short handed as the previous two Sundays we have had an awesome turn out for our 'special' weeding sessions.



We headed off into the bush under perfect weeding conditions, cool and overcast. Our target weed Fumitory has a seed bank life of around 20 years and, at this time of year, can quickly bolt to seed. It's difficult to walk past weeds out in the open but it was our mission to focus in amongst the understory plants. The Sunday morning crew are a very social bunch and the weeding time is a great chance for the friends to catch up. As always Joan had the registration taken care of and as one volunteer commented "if you are late and not sure where we are just listen for the sounds of chatter and Alice's laugh".

The bush is looking terrific at this time of year with many plants (besides the weeds) in flower. The group was particularly impressed with the Hackett's Hop Bush (*Dodonaea hackettiana*) which has a beautiful pinkish flower and stands about 2-3m tall.



I left the group early to investigate a report by one of our volunteers of a dead turtle at the South East end of the Lake. I found the turtle, at the water's edge, with the help of a young family that had spotted it whilst walking. They had many questions and were very interested in the wildlife at the lake. The kids wanted a closer look so I collected it and we chatted about what may have caused its demise. The turtle shell was undamaged and the neck and head were still attached which suggests to me that a Raven was most likely responsible.

The turtles appear to have been very active lately which indicates that the nesting season is on and the turtles are likely leaving the lake in search of their nesting site. This is a good sign that we have active laying females, although they are at their most vulnerable to predation whilst looking to lay their eggs. We collected 5 dead turtles between 4 October and 12 October all appear to be victims of the Raven (this is only my opinion) which is a native bird. Please report any turtle sightings (wanted dead or alive!) as we are trying to collect as much information as we can about the turtle population at the lake.



Having collected the turtle I returned just in time to catch the group finishing up. We headed to Hillary's home for a chance to chat on the balcony over terrific brewed coffee (Well Done Terry) and Hillary's delicious cakes and slice. A well deserved treat after a productive session. Thanks to all who volunteered.

ENJOY LAKESIDE VIEWS

Lesley Langley, president of the Claremont branch of the CWA had an idea to install a bench by the side of the lake with a plaque to acknowledge the contribution made by Joan & Ted Tocock to Lake Claremont. Joan is herself a long time member of the Claremont branch of the CWA as well as the Friends of Lake Claremont.

As the Town of Claremont had two benches available they installed them on the eastern side of the lake near the par 3 golf course and together with the CWA funded the plaque which has been affixed to one of them.

On your travels around the lake you can now sit for a while and take in all that the lake has to offer.

Photos by Geoff Ross



Two new benches.



Joan and Family at the bench with the plaque.

FUNDS RAISED FROM SHOW PARKING

Once again the Friends of Lake Claremont were lucky to be able to share in the raising of funds from Show parking behind the golf course clubhouse on Lapsley Road.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who worked in shifts to manage the parking. It was well worth the effort with a total of \$7,922 being raised over 4 days and these funds will be set aside for special projects.

THE SWAN RIVER TRUST & ALCOA LANDCARE PROGRAM



By Claire Brittain

The Friends of Lake Claremont have been successful in gaining a grant which has not been applied for by us previously. This grant is for \$16,000 for The Wetland Buffer Project.

The Swan River Trust and Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP) was established in 1998 by Alcoa and in 1999 the Swan River Trust joined the program. To date the program has funded more than 1100 projects worth over \$7 million across the metropolitan area. Funding is available for a wide range of revegetation and rehabilitation activities within the Swan Region including retention, restoration and management of bushland and wetland vegetation and the protection and enhancement of the quality of surface water in wetlands.

Lake Claremont is a Conservation Category Wetland (one of the few left in the Western Suburbs) and a Bush Forever Site. The buffer is an interface between the Lake and irrigated parkland and protects the Lake from nutrients. As this is planted there is less groundwater used as some of the open space has been converted to native vegetation.

The Friends of Lake Claremont have been revegetating the Buffer zone and Woodland around Lake Claremont for 6 years now and have won 5 Caring for our Country grants to revegetate the Buffer Zone. We are now nearing completion of the buffer area which will completely surround the Lake. FOLC use indigenous native tube stock for all planting.

Originally when we started planting the grant sites we were more successful than anticipated. This has meant that some areas grew vigorously and still look quite dense. As they continue to grow the upper story (trees) will be higher than the mid story (shrubs) and foliage will not be as thick. The Town of Claremont and FOLC Board have been conscious of the fact that the community wish to appreciate the views of the Lake and the birdlife associated with it. With this in mind the southern and eastern sides of the Lake have been and will be planted with low profile plants.

The buffer is important as it provides habitat for migratory birds, some marine species and it is also a foraging area for Carnaby's Black Cockatoo. Birdlife Australia survey the Lake each quarter and they are seeing bird species which have not been seen at the Lake for years and some are now even breeding there. There are also bats and Oblong Tortoises which reside at the Lake and help eat mosquito larvae. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the Oblong Tortoise's are in decline and FOLC believe adding habitat will give them more protection from predators.

The Friends of Lake Claremont would love you to come and help plant this grant next season but if you're unable to help we hope you will be able to spot new bird species inhabiting the Lake or enjoy sitting on one of the newly installed benches to admire this wonderful natural asset in our suburb.

BUILDING NEW HOMES AT LAKE CLAREMONT

There is a definite shortage of housing in Perth, particularly for wildlife. Luckily Tony Lalor and the gang from the Men's Shed at Mosman Park have kindly made and donated 12 nesting boxes for the area around Lake Claremont, including 7 duck boxes, 3 parrot boxes and 2 possum boxes. Vern Williamson from WA Timber Sales generously donated the exterior ply wood required for all the boxes. FOLC's Kevin McAlpine has been able to install one of the duck boxes in the lake bed recently. He is hopeful that Pink-eared ducks will still have a chance to use it this year as the rains have been good and the lake is full. The remaining duck boxes will be installed when the water drops in autumn, before the next breeding season. The Men's Shed have offered to assist Kevin with the job. The Town of Claremont will install the parrot and fauna boxes over the coming months.



Prime real estate for rent. Pink-eared Ducks only

FAREWELL CHRIS MENAGE

After 9 years as a teacher at Scotch College Chris Menage will be leaving at the end of this year.

"It is very much with mixed emotions that I have decided (with the support of my family) to take up a new position in Victoria next January as Head of Boys' Boarding at The Peninsula School in January 2015." Chris said, "I hope to continue promoting the sustainability and liveability message over there, the plan being to gradually retrofit the Boarding House and do some important landscaping work. We are excited about the opportunity."



Program leaders Bruce & Heidi farewell Chris Menage

Chris has been involved in the Friday afternoon Community Service Program for the last few years as the Scotch College supervisor of the year 10 boys. We will miss him.

The FOLC wish Chris Menage all the best for an interesting and happy future. Good luck!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many ways you can contribute, from bushcare to office work. Each month we will highlight an available position or task. Contact Heidi if you are interested in volunteering: M. 0416 614 696

Volunteer Position Available: Notice Writer. Create posters for our bulletin board including FOLC Sunday busy bees and special events. Ideally 2-3 posters per month, but can opt for less. Must have a computer and software (such as Word or Publisher).



NOTICES

Adopt-a-Spot

Now that the planting season is over our full attention is turning to weeding. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to adopt a kitchen sized plot in the park at Lake Claremont to keep rubbish and weed free all year long. All it takes is a monthly visit. Gloves and instruction provided.

For more info please contact Heidi M 0416 614 696 or email: folc.wa@gmail.com

EWAN Weed Forum

"Environmental Weeds: Past, Present and Future" Friday 28th November 8:00 – 4:30 pm \$15 Kim Beazley Lecture Theatre – Murdoch University

Email: enquiries@environmentalweedsactionnetwork.org.au or Telephone: (08) 9331 3693.

Like us on facebook!

Had a great moment at Lake Claremont? Why not like us on facebook and post your picture and story?

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Lake-Claremont/159586380873009?ref=hl>

The Friends of Lake Claremont Ltd. (FOLC) is a community organization established and run by local residents all of whom are volunteers.

Our mission is to assist in the conservation and enhancement of Lake Claremont, a Conservation Category Wetland and Bush Forever Site

November

2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 FOLC Busy Bee – Hand Weeding	10 FOLC Board Meeting – 5:30 pm National Recycling Week	11	12	13	14 Corporate Volunteer Day with Woodside – 8:30-1:30 pm	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Adopt-a-Spot-Weeding by CVA 8:30 am – 1pm	25	26	27	28 EWAN Weed Forum 8:00 – 4:30pm <i>See notices</i>	29

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