



Black-fronted Dotterel. David Free

Black-fronted Dotterel *Photo : David Free*

David captured this beautiful photograph at Lake Claremont where a group of six dotterels have been foraging for invertebrates in the moist mud and very shallow water for some time now.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

National Volunteer Week is this month, from May 21st – 27th. This is a great opportunity to thank all our wonderful volunteers who help in so many different ways, in planting and behind the scenes. Your efforts are much appreciated by the whole community and we receive many positive comments about how wonderful the Lake Claremont area is looking now. Well done everyone!



BUSY BEE APRIL 8

From : Nick Cook and Heidi Hardisty

We held a very productive Busy Bee in April. My apologies for the confusion over the start time as we now move into winter hours. My fault! (Nick) Future Busy Bees will start at 9.00 am.

Today we worked along the buffer near Cresswell and Scotch ovals. This is the last section of the buffer to be protected by fencing. The volunteers pruned back the vegetation in preparation for the new fence. We managed to tackle the entire 300m length!

We welcomed two first time volunteers and also received some lovely feedback and thanks from park patrons. It is always rewarding to hear that the community values the awesome transformation of Lake Claremont.

When I suggested that the *Banksia dallanneyi* (couch honeypot) pictured would be trimmed, I met with much protest. It remains a stunning specimen and we have requested that it be 'accommodated' when the fence is reconstructed.

Well done to all our volunteers and big thanks to Soozie for a great morning tea.



Volunteers at work



Banksia dallanneyi



OUR BIRDS

Text and photo : David Free

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*

This raptor often perches in a semi-concealed position, from which it will ambush its prey. It is easily overlooked and probably visits our lake more often than one might expect from the limited number of sightings. Goshawks feed mainly on small mammals (rabbits are a favourite) and birds. It is fast, powerful and very agile in flight. The Collared Sparrowhawk is an almost identical species but is somewhat smaller; identifying one from the other can be very difficult.

Brown Goshawk. David Free



AVIAN BOTULISM BREAKOUT *Text and photos : Nick Cook*

Late afternoon on Sunday April 22 Town of Claremont (ToC) officers received a report from a member of the public regarding a small number of dead birds at the Lake. Jared (Supervisor Parks and Environment) attended and sighted a small number of dead birds and collected one sick bird. The bird was then taken to Murdoch University vet clinic for diagnosis and treatment.

Around the same time on Sunday FOLC received a similar report via our Face Book page. We contacted the Town and ascertained that action was already being taken.



Dead and dying ducks at Lake Claremont

Continued on next page

AVIAN BOTULISM BREAKOUT *(continued)*

On Monday morning at 7.30am I met with ToC staff at the Stirling Rd jetty. We were met with a terribly sad sight. The staff and I donned our waders and retrieved 21 dead Pacific Black ducks from the water. One sick bird was rescued and taken to the Swanbourne Vet clinic who then passed the bird on to a native animal rescue group.

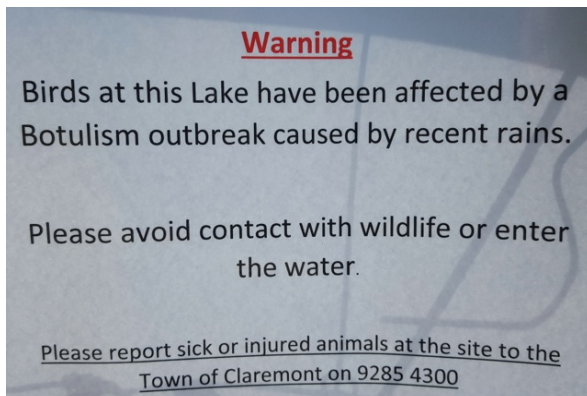
By midday Monday we were told that Murdoch vets had reached a clinical diagnosis of Avian Botulism. This diagnosis will be confirmed by an autopsy.

ToC staff again attended the lake on Tuesday morning and another 13 dead birds were removed and 2 sick birds passed onto vets at Swanbourne.

'Avian botulism occurs all over the world. This is a paralytic disease brought on by the Botulinum neurotoxin (BoNt). The degree of avian botulism outbreaks in populations is largely determined by how favourable conditions are for *C. botulinum*. Ideal conditions for the presence of the BoNt carrying bacterium consist of low-oxygen, high-protein available substrate. This is common of shallow and stagnant waterways. Other factors such as pH and temperature, as well as a likely number of unknown factors contribute to the prevalence of outbreaks.' (Wikipedia)

General consensus between ToC staff and vets is that this outbreak was likely brought about by a combination of environmental factors following the large rain events in January/February. High nutrient levels washed into the lake by these rains resulted in an algal bloom which, as it breaks down, contributes to low oxygen levels.

'Avian botulism is not contagious in that it is not spread from bird to bird. Instead it is spread to birds through their consumptions of maggots infected with the toxin. Maggots become infected by feeding on substrates and organic material that host the Type C BoNt. When an infected bird dies the maggots that feed off of it become infected themselves. These maggots are in turn consumed by additional birds. Thus with every infected carcass brings several infected maggots which increases the number of birds that can contract the disease.' (Wikipedia)



ToC staff will monitor the site daily to remove dead birds and rescue any sick birds. Members of the community can greatly assist this effort by reporting sick or dead birds to Town of Claremont on 9285 4300 or by email toc@claremont.wa.gov.au. We encourage members to use a free phone app called Snap, Send, Solve. This app allows users to take a photo, capture location and reports directly to the Town. Reporting sightings will help reduce the severity of this outbreak!

Nick has given me a very sad update to this article. On Saturday he retrieved over 60 birds from the lake taking the total for the week to well over 100 birds! Ed

WILDLIFE NEAR THE LAKE

From : Nick Cook

A baby Motorbike frog was found this morning in a residential garden very close to the wetland

Litoria moorie, the motorbike frog is the most common frog found in South West WA.

One of our volunteers kindly gave me a batch of tadpoles from her garden which is just on the other side of Lake Claremont.

It is important that tadpoles are not transported more than a couple of suburbs from their home so as to prevent the spread of disease, particularly chytrid fungus.



A baby Motorbike Frog Photo : Nick Cook



The recent rains have encouraged frogs to wander from the lake! This slender tree frog was one of several spotted in a garden in Strickland St at the end of April.

Slender Tree Frog Photo : Hilary Heptinstall

Not only is it the time for baby frogs !

The people at TORRN tell me that some of their incubated eggs have begun to hatch. So please keep an eye out for hatchlings around the lake over the next few months. If you see any in the open space, gently pick them up and release them at the waters edge where there is vegetation for protection and they will not be seen by predators. This small act of kindness can increase their chance of survival dramatically. Councillor Sara Franklyn spotted two turtle hatchlings heading to the water on the North side of the lake.



Turtle hatchling Photo : B Hatcher

Late last year Zac Hardisty rescued a gravid female turtle, which had been attacked by ravens at the lake. Sadly, she was too seriously injured to be saved so had to be euthanased. Two eggs were harvested from her following euthanasia - one was unviable but one egg made it all the way through and hatched this week! Once the volunteers at TORNN have fattened him up, they will return him to his home at Lake Claremont. Thank you to Karen and the volunteers at TORNN.

THEN (2003) AND NOW (2018)

From : Soozie Ross

THE MOAT WESTERLY

These photos were taken on the western side of Lake Claremont, where the footpath separates the Cresswell area from the watercourse. The island is on the right. The photographer is looking in a north-easterly direction. In 2003 the footpath was closer to the edge of the Lake and the dead Typha (bulrush) plants, which were invasively taking over the area, can be seen. Typha has now been replaced by native plants, which provide magnificent habitat for our local birds and other animals.



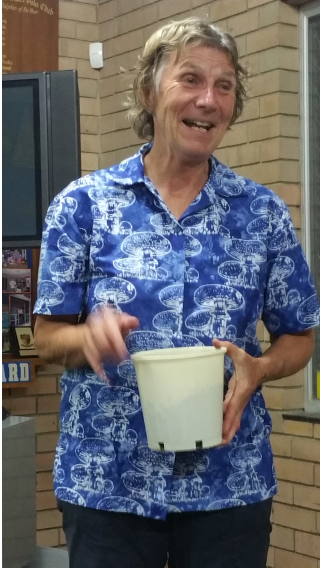
The west side moat looking north in 2003

The same view as above in 2018



A CAPTIVATING TALK

Text and photo : Rose Senior



Roz Hart

On 24 April Roz Hart presented a fascinating Night Chat on the topic of fungi, the mysterious kingdom of organisms that are found everywhere in the world. They live underground and therefore out of sight and out of mind – until their fruiting bodies, in the form of mushrooms, emerge after the winter rains. The gills under the mushroom caps release clouds of spores that are dispersed by the rain.



Roz captivated us with her knowledge of these weird and wonderful organisms, explaining that they aren't plants at all, having more genetically in common with animals. Having outlined the main roles of fungi, Roz encouraged audience participation. In response to her question 'Where do fungi grow?' answers came thick and fast: 'In dead tree trunks'; 'pushing their way up through the bitumen'; 'between my wife's toes' and so on. A range of questions also flowed: 'Does superphosphate damage them?' 'Are truffles fungi?' 'Are they resistant to round-up?' and so on. Roz had ready answers to all our questions, admitting when she didn't know and emphasizing how much more there still was to be learnt about fungi.

The range of photographs that Roz projected gave us a stunning introduction to the variety of exotic shapes, sizes and colours of fungi – with their names routinely reflecting their characteristics: Earth Tongues, Birds Nest Fungi, Jelly Fungi, Dog Poo Fungi, Ink Caps, Velvet Curry Punk fungi, Scotsman's Beard and so on. The meaning of the Death Cap Fungus needs no explanation, while the Ghost Fungus glows luminously in the dark.

Roz explained that down the ages fungi have conveyed a sense of mystery and foreboding, since some are poisonous and others not - while their fruiting bodies appear, change in appearance and disappear again so rapidly. Roz warned us to be cautious about eating fungi we find in the wild, saying that Europeans have been trying and dying for a long time. 'Leave a note in your fridge with half the mushroom you've consumed' was her advice.

Thank you, Roz, for your fascinating talk. I'm sure we'll all be inspired to go on truffle forays and to take photos of the not only of the caps and gills of each fungus, but also of their individual habitats, as you suggest.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY NIGHT CHAT AT LAKE CLAREMONT

SHARING WETLAND EXPERIENCES

Speaker: Ruth Clark

Tuesday 22nd May, Claremont Aquatic Centre, 5:30-7:00 pm

Ruth Clark, of the Waterbird Conservation Group, will recount the group's management experiences over the past 25 years, including highlights and challenges in a semi-rural area. A lively discussion is planned to compare these experiences with those of the Friends of Lake Claremont in an urban setting.



Ruth Clark is a founding member, Secretary and Wetland Trustee of the Waterbird Conservation Group established in 1984. The Group formed in response to a botulism outbreak at Thomsons Lake Nature Reserve and was the main rescue group for waterbirds for over 15 years in the Perth area.

In 1993 the Group's direction changed when it took on the vesting of Folly and Maramanup Crown Reserve in Baldivis and has actively managed and restored the reserve since.

The event is hosted by the Friends of Lake Claremont at the Claremont Aquatic Centre, 12 Davies Road, Claremont. **The talk commences at 6:00 pm. Please note the new winter time. Doors open for refreshments at 5:30 pm.** A gold coin donation is appreciated.

Calendar May 2018

Day	Event	Time
Friday May 4th	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm
Friday May 11th	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm
Sunday May 13th	FOLC Busy Bee and Tea Lake Claremont	9:00 – 11:00 am
Monday May 14th	FOLC Board Meeting	5:30 - 7:00 pm
Friday May 18th	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm
May 21st – 27th	National Volunteer Week	
Tuesday May 22nd	International Day for Biological Diversity	
Tuesday May 22nd	Night Chats at Lake Claremont Lake Claremont Aquatic Centre	Talk 6:00 -7:00 pm Doors open at 5:30 pm
Friday May 25th	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm

Check out the yearly calendar on the [FOLC Website](#) to find dates of future events.

Like us on facebook!

Had a great moment at Lake Claremont?

Why not like us on facebook and post your picture and story?

Friends of Lake Claremont facebook page

<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.

www.friendsoflakeclaremont.org

Newsletter articles and photos from members are most welcome and should be sent to the editor, Hilary Heptinstall
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natural resource
management program

