



Juvenile black and white stilts enjoying the unusually high January water level at Lake Claremont. *Photo : David Free*

The holiday season is almost over and the Friends of Lake Claremont will be getting back to their regular activities in February. The monthly Busy Bees have continued over the holiday season with some enthusiastic volunteers (see page 2).

There are plenty of opportunities for volunteering with the FOLC (see page 6).

Our monthly Night Chat sessions also commence in February with this month's session being held at the old tin shed (see page 11).

World Wetlands Day is on February 2. Read Claire Brittain's interesting article about this on page 8.

Holiday Busy Bees

From : Nick Cook

Sunday December 9

This was our final Busy Bee for 2018. A solid turnout of about 16 volunteers were in attendance and we were very happy to welcome 2 first timers.

The group walked past the recent TOC bush fire management works on our way to the top of the dune beneath the drive in site. We cleared the weeds on the edge of the area that had recently been 'eco mulched' (see photos below). These areas will now be vulnerable to weed infestation.

Our volunteers progressed to the wetland buffer and tackled some monster weeds that were in a difficult spot.



It was a great effort from everyone and we finished off with a festive morning tea (thanks Kate and Avril).

Sunday January 13

FOLC had a great start to the year at the January Busy Bee. A number of new recruits joined us including some very enthusiastic young families. Pruning, weeding and rubbish collection was the order of the day. This was followed up by a terrific morning tea provided by Kate Lambie



Birdlife Australia Bird Walk Sunday December 17

From : David Free

Seventeen members and five guests arrived at Lake Claremont in time to join me for the seven-thirty start. The day was warm and sunny with some breeze. Lake Claremont normally dries completely in the summer. Heavy rain in January 2018 meant that this year the lake didn't dry, and the high water temperature last year produced ideal conditions for avian botulism. In early autumn we lost over three hundred birds, mostly waterfowl. Good winter rains then filled the lake to the highest level seen in many years, and on the morning of our walk the water level was much higher than usual in mid December. Waterfowl numbers have now mostly returned to normal, except for the Grey Teal.



Participants on the walk

On our walk we saw seven duck species, including both Hardhead and Bluebills with young in attendance. These two species do not normally breed in this shallow lake. The only waders spotted were Black-winged Stilts, Avocets and a solitary Black-fronted Dotterel.

No crakes were seen but we were lucky enough to observe the Buff-banded Rail.

Unfortunately we missed out on a Boobook family that I had seen on the day before. Nothing very exciting was spotted but total of forty eight species were reported over morning tea in a shady spot outside the gym.

Nick Cook, Coordinator of the Friends of Lake Claremont, gave us some interesting information about the lake's population of oblong (long necked) turtles.

A family of Bluebills



A thank you from Nick Cook

I had the pleasure of joining David Free from Birdlife Australia (and a FOLC member) on his bird walk. We had a very enthusiastic group who were very interested to hear about our flora and fauna and learn some of the history of the site and the revegetation project.

Thank you David for sharing your extensive knowledge and so generously providing beautiful bird photographs.

OUR BIRDS

From: David Free

Tree Martin *Petrochelidon nigricans* (previously *Hirundo nigricans*)

Two small insect eating birds can often be observed flying over our lake, the Welcome Swallow (featured in the June 2016 newsletter) and the Tree Martin. Tree Martins can be distinguished from swallows by their shorter tails and dull white rumps. Sometimes we see mixed flocks of martins and swallows, twenty or more individuals, feeding above the lake. These busy birds are found in all but the most arid parts of Australia.

They nest in tree hollows and sometimes in crevices in cliffs; some of our birds use the roof of the gazebo, nesting between the corrugated iron and the ceiling.



NEW CALENDAR YEAR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

From : Soozie Ross, Membership Secretary.

Members should have received an email about your membership of Friends of Lake Claremont. Please read it carefully as you will have been informed if you are currently paid up or if you are due to renew your membership. If you think this is in error please let Soozie Ross, our membership secretary, know.

The membership list will be reviewed shortly and amended. Your email address will be included in the regular communications that we provide if you are a financial member. We suggest that paying your membership for an extended period offers benefits.

If you choose to pay for longer than a year, then you will not have to fill in a new form every year. However, we would still need to keep your contact details up to date.

And you won't have to organise the payments or have the Membership Secretary on your back!

ADOPT A SPOT SUMMER UPDATE

From : Jenni and Lance Banister-Jones

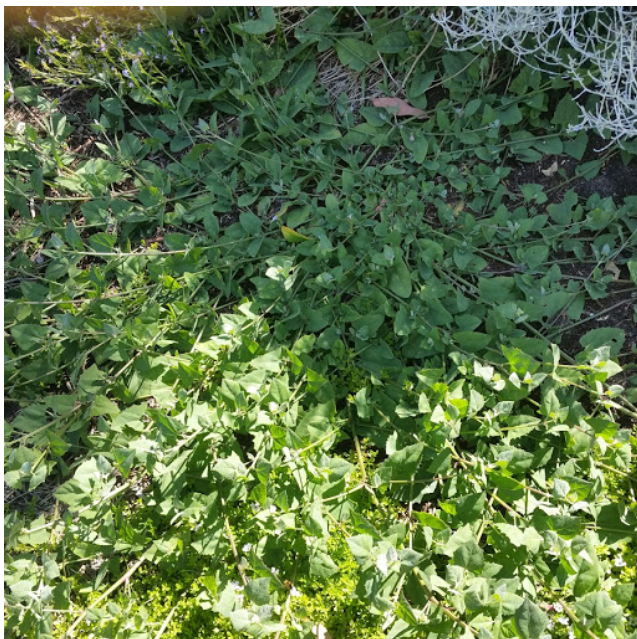
It is the quiet season for weeds, but we've noticed there are still a few coming up, particularly the flaxleaf fleabane and yet more thistles! The latter are much smaller than their ancestors in spring, but they are still producing flowering heads!

There's also a weed we haven't seen before growing on the banks of the lake. It looks a bit like the flaxleaf fleabane but has darker green pointy leaves.

Angela, the Council's Bushcare Officer calls it an aster and apparently there used to be masses of it. The photo shows what it looks like – it can grow over a metre tall! Please remove them if you see any.



Aster



Also, along the lake's edge are rambling plants. I don't know the name but according to Angela, they're natives, so please leave these!

There are a number of lemon scented gum seedlings in our spots near the huge trees. They have rough hairy leaves which smell of lemon when crushed. They need to be removed as they're not native and there is also a height restriction on plants in the eastern buffer.

Rambling plants along the lake's edge

Overall the spots are looking relatively weed-free and the plants are just hunkering down to survive the summer heat.

There are a few small spots still available if you'd like to join the Adopt-a-Spot program. Please check out the information on the website (under Volunteer) and email folc.wa@gmail.com or call the coordinators, Lance & Jenni on 0418 922 885.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITH FRIENDS OF LAKE CLAREMONT

From : Soozie Ross

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS?

Here is one for you which is achievable and will be most satisfying.

Help in a practical way with the Friends of Lake Claremont. Start small without a long term commitment and you will be surprised how much you enjoy yourself!

If at first the activity doesn't seem right, we can offer something else to try depending on your interests, prior experience and passions. Contact us today via email folc.wa@gmail.com or talk to one of our organisers at an event.

Here are some of the things you could do:

Plant, **weed**, talk to groups of people about what we do, **journalism**, media communication, **provide IT support**, design educational materials, **edit newsletter**, coordinate with schools for school group hands on activities, **environmental education**, communicate with other "Friends Of" groups, **supervise groups of volunteers for planting / weeding**, talk to people at community stalls such as at "Celebrate Lake Claremont", **supervise fun activities to engage children at "celebrate Lake Claremont" event**, **letter drop local communities**, update / maintain notices in noticeboard in the park, **join the Board of Management for formal commitment**, collect seeds, **design promotional materials**, coordinate sale of uniquely designed greetings cards promoting Lake Claremont, **take photographs**, liaise with corporate groups wishing to volunteer, **supervise registrations and signing on for activity sessions**, provide refreshments for volunteers at work in the bushland **and more!**

The Friends of Lake Claremont (FOLC) is a community organization run entirely by volunteers. Our mission is to assist in the conservation and enhancement of Lake Claremont, a Conservation Category Wetland.

We work closely with the Town of Claremont (TOC) and the Lake Claremont Advisory Committee who help guide projects and coordinate tasks to enhance the lake's habitat. The TOC also provides funding for fencing and infrastructure which helps us obtain government grants to carry out planting projects.

There are many volunteering opportunities for students and local residents. Please do check out our website under volunteering and also our Facebook page. We endeavour to update it regularly: <http://www.friendsoflakeclaremont.org/>

Monthly Busy Bee & Tea

On the second Sunday of every month, FOLC meet at the lake for various projects such as planting native seedlings, removing invasive plants, hand weeding, and collecting rubbish. Times: 8 – 10am Nov-Mar, 9-11 am April – Oct. Meet at the old tin shed on the northeast corner of Lake Claremont.

Adopt-a-Spot Program

The FOLC have a program called Adopt-a-Spot. Individuals, families and groups adopt a kitchen sized spot at Lake Claremont parkland and keep it rubbish and weed free all year. You will need to visit your spot at least once a month from Feb- Dec. Training provided.

Winter Planting Season

The major planting work takes place in June and July. Some of the public dates correspond to our regular Sunday Busy Bees and there are a few more extra planting sessions like National Tree Day. Dates are posted on our website.

We generally host 12-16 school planting sessions (morning or afternoon) in the last 2 weeks of June. We can send you an invitation in early February if you are interested in participating.

Year 10 Community Service Program

In 2009, the Friends of Lake Claremont started the year 10 community service program with local high schools. We hope that by volunteering the students can discover the beauty and importance of Lake Claremont, contribute to the community, and have fun.

Currently two local schools participate: Scotch College and Christ Church Grammar School. The program runs most Friday afternoons during term time from early February to late September, with a session in late October. The students are engaged in various projects to help enhance and restore Lake Claremont and its surrounds. Basic bush regeneration principles and tasks are taught like seed collection, planting and weeding. There is opportunity for volunteers to get involved with the community service program to help Nick Cook supervise the students.

Friday Morning Weeding

Weeding is the key to the success for our restoration work. The group targets weed hot spots throughout the year”

Other on the Ground Sessions

We can also plan special volunteer sessions throughout the year. Generally a group size of 15-20 people/students is ideal. In the planting season we can accommodate larger groups.

Behind the Scene

In addition to work down at the Lake, there are also other opportunities to help. We need photographers to take pictures of the lake and our events for our newsletter, website and Facebook page. We need people to design posters for our monthly Sunday Busy Bees and special events. Please see the colourful page indicating the variety of ways you can help us.

Friends of Lake Claremont Ltd. <http://www.friendsoflakeclaremont.org/>

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

From : Claire Brittain. Photo : Nick Cook

World Wetlands Day falls on February 2 and marks the anniversary of the day the International Convention on the Wise Use of Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) which was signed in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971. Wetlands are aquatic ecosystems with plants, animals and soils adapted to wet conditions which often require and can survive permanent or periodic inundation. Water in wetlands can be still or flowing; it can be fresh, salty or brackish. They do not have to be continuously wet; many wetlands in Australia remain dry for years at a time.

Australia is a signatory to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar) and at the 11th meeting in 2011 along with other member countries agreed to a set of principles for the planning and management of urban and peri-urban wetlands. Urban are those which lie within the boundaries of a city or town, while peri-urban are located in areas adjacent to them. It is important to recognise that wetlands rarely exist in isolation from other waterways.

World Wetlands Day is a day when wetlands are celebrated around the world for the vital benefits they provide. In addition to providing habitat for plants and animals, wetlands provide water storage, improve water quality and reduce pollution. Wetlands also protect against natural hazards, slowing floodwaters, reducing the risk of fire and protecting against erosion of riverbanks and coastlines. Wetlands and associated vegetation can provide a cooling effect to surrounding areas in summer and also moderate strong winds. In short they are a tapestry of biodiversity upon which we all depend.



Wetlands can also contribute to the wellbeing of the community by acting as urban green spaces which provide aesthetic appeal, landscape diversity and recreational opportunities. They can also contribute to cultural heritage and spiritual values. Additionally, wetlands provide easily accessible educational opportunities to learn about the environment.

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Wetlands are potentially at risk of direct habitat loss, altered water regime, pollution, biodiversity loss due to the introduction of exotic species and other ecosystem modifications. The guidance for planners and developers is to conserve wetlands, restore and create wetlands, include the value of wetlands in the land, educate the community, undertake integrated planning and recognise and address health and safety issues. Unfortunately this advice is not always taken.

The World Wetland Day theme this year is **Wetlands and Climate Change**. Wetlands play a critical role in storing carbon and reducing the impact of extreme weather events associated with climate change. They store floodwater and can protect coastlines from storm surges. Wetlands play a critical role in storing carbon and reducing the impact of extreme weather events associated with climate change. They store floodwater and can protect coastlines from storm surges. Find out more about WWD and the Ramsar Convention on the World Wetlands Day Website. <https://www.ramsar.org/activity/world-wetlands-day>

You will have by now recognised that Lake Claremont is an Urban Wetland and is one of the few left on the Swan Coastal Plain. Despite this others are being removed at an alarming rate. While Lake Claremont is not classified as a Ramsar Wetland it is a significant asset and we are lucky enough to have it in the Western Suburbs. You will also recognise that the Friends of Lake Claremont have done a wonderful job in the restoration and revegetation of our wetland despite previous land reclamation and degradation. We are fortunate that the Town of Claremont now recognises the worth of this area and has been very supportive of our efforts. This is an ongoing project and we can all be proud of ourselves and celebrate World Wetlands Day as we really do have something to celebrate.

CO-ORDINATORS REPORT

From : Nick Cook

Welcome back everyone. We hope you all had a wonderful Xmas break with family and friends.

In 2019 we go into our 11th year since the long 9 golf course was closed and the Lake Claremont wetland revegetation project began in earnest. In that time FOLC has attracted \$619,375 which has enabled members and community volunteers to plant a staggering 360,000 plus native seedlings and transformed a degraded wetland into a thriving, healthy ecosystem that provides habitat for an incredible variety of native birds and wildlife. The wetland is now recognised as a high value, Conservation Category wetland of regional significance. A jewel in the crown of the Town of Claremont's natural assets and something the whole community is proud of.

2019 is also the 11th year of our Yr10 Community Service Program. At the end of last year we were struggling to fill the 'on-ground' leadership position for the program and seriously considering having to shut it down. After very positive discussions with Christ Church and Scotch College we are pleased to have found a solution and have filled the Supervisory role. It is clear that the schools highly value the program, as do we.

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We are, however, still keen to hear from any members who can volunteer 2.5 hrs as an assistant supervisor, instructing a small group of students in basic tasks on the occasional Friday afternoon (1pm-3.30pm). Please let us know if this is of interest.

We are also very pleased to announce that FOLC have committed to planting the site around the old tin shed in 2019. FOLC were unsuccessful in 2 grant applications (in 2018) to fund this project and so the Board of Directors have agreed to fund the purchase of native plants out of monies accumulated by FOLC fundraising over past years. The amount to be spent is approximately \$20,000. All necessary approvals from Town of Claremont are already in place.

We have also committed to assisting the Town of Claremont in planting native trees and shrubs in the vicinity of the newly extended dog off-lead area.

Our 2019 season of Night Chats kicks off at the shed, under the paperbarks, on February 26th at 5.30 for 6pm with a Nyungar cultural evening. We are excited to welcome a new speaker this year, Mr Leonard Thorn. Don't miss it!

Another busy year ahead! As always we appreciate the support of our members and the wider community. FOLC memberships are due for renewal this month, please make our Membership Secretary's life easier by attending to them promptly. Consider extending your membership and even invite your friends to do so. As a registered charity we also have tax deductible gift status for valued donations! You can also show your support by liking and following us on Facebook.




Our wonderful volunteers at the FOLC shed where planting will take place this year

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Date	Event	Time
Sun Feb 10	Busy Bee Meet at the old tin shed	8.00 - 10.00am
Tues Feb 26	Night Chat Session at the old tin shed	6.00 -7.30 pm Refreshments from 5.30pm


Night Chats at Lake Claremont



Join us outdoors under the paperbark trees, as guest speaker Leonard Thorn shares aspects of bush tucker, bush medicine and traditional Nyungar culture.

Nyungar Cultural Presentation

Leonard Thorn is an Indigenous Cultural Educator who provides Aboriginal activities. He teaches cultural history, the significance of the Perth area to Aboriginal people and how Aboriginal people used to use the land and its resources.




- Join Leonard to discover the Nyungar people's strong connection with water bodies, such as Lake Claremont and the surrounding landscape, which forms the basis for much of their cultural and spiritual identity.
- Follow in the footsteps of the Nyungar people to experience first-hand how the resources provided by the land and water were traditionally used and how the seasons dictated their availability and seasonal use.

Tuesday 26th February 2019 | Time: 6:00pm to 7:30pm

Meet at the Old Tin Shed, situated off Lakeway St, Lake Claremont (follow the limestone path).
Email folc.wa@gmail.com for a detailed map of the location.

Refreshments served from 5:30pm for a 6:00pm start.
Talk and formal questions conclude at 7:00pm but all are welcome to stay until 7:30pm. Please bring a camping chair or picnic rug to sit on.


www.friendsoflakeclaremont.org
A gold coin donation would be appreciated.



natural resource
management program



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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
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