



Lee Rose Beavis took this photo of a Whistling Kite at Lake Claremont. After it took off, it looked gracious as it cruised high above the wetland.

It is very sad to read about the new outbreak of Avian Botulism at Lake Claremont and we all hope that it will be contained before too many deaths occur. (See page 8)

On a positive note, it is good to read about the many community weeding events that have taken place at Lake Claremont in April. Many thanks to Nick Cook for his dedicated leadership and to all our volunteers. (See pages 2-4)

Thank you to David and Pam Free for their continuing work with the bird census at the Lake and for David's beautiful photos. (See pages 4-5)

COMMUNITY EVENTS AT LAKE CLAREMONT IN APRIL

From : Nick Cook

APRIL BUSY BEE

We had an excellent turn out for our Busy Bee on April 14. It was attended by 23 volunteers ranging in age from their early teens to 99 years old.

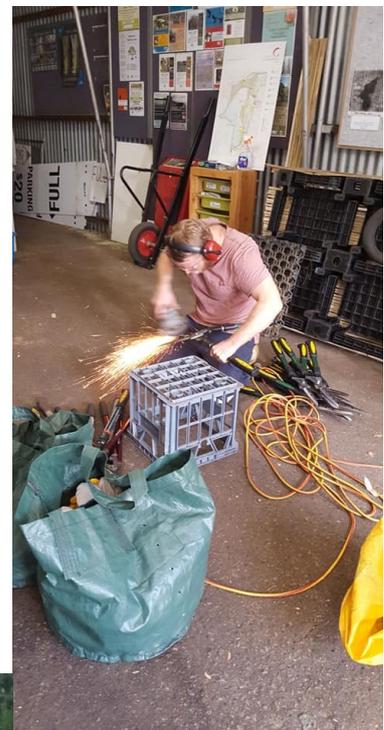
We split into 2 groups. One group led by Heidi Hardisty worked on the weeds in the North East corner of the park. The second group focussed on bushfire fuel load reduction. It was a very productive session.

Thanks to Cameron Randall, who brought his angle grinder and supervised the sharpening of our cutting tools.

Working on fuel reduction (below)



We finished with a terrific morning tea prepared by Soozie and Geoff Ross. Thank you!



Cameron Randall at work in the FOLC Shed (above)

Anthony Barr working on fuel load reduction



Continued on Page 3

CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS DAY

We had a very productive session on Friday April 5 with a group from Conservation Volunteers Australia. Our focus was on bushfire fuel-load reduction.

We spent the day in the remnant bush and were accompanied by the Red-tailed and Carnaby's Cockatoos!

The team worked very hard and I am delighted with how much we achieved. It was lovely to spend a day in the bush with this wonderful group.



Conservation volunteers at work

WINTER RAIN

It was lovely to have some good rain at Easter. Our plants needed a drink after a very dry summer! However, with the rains will come the weeds so we need to keep an eye out for emerging weeds.



Continued on page 4

YEAR 10 COMMUNITY SERVICE STUDENTS

The Year 10 community service students have been making bird nesting platforms over the last few weeks. Soon they will be placed on the lake bed and we will see if they meet with the approval of our feathered friends.



Bird nesting platforms made by the Community Service boys

AUTUMN BIRD CENSUS

From : David Free

My wife, Pam, and I did the autumn bird census on Anzac Day morning. We recorded 325 individuals of 26 species, about average for our autumn surveys. There were less waterfowl but more swamphens, cockatoos and silvereyes than normal. No unusual sightings were recorded.

This bold Willy Wagtail was determined to ensure that he was counted.

Pam Free with a friend



OUR BIRDS

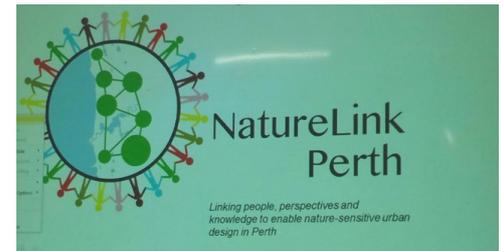
Text and photo: David Free

On 13th April I was strolling at the northern end of the lake, hoping to get interesting photos of a Black-shouldered Kite, when I spotted a bird that I have not previously seen in the metropolitan area. It was silently foraging for insects on the dry lake bed around the sedges and would fly a short distance, at waist height, if I approached too closely. I didn't recognise the bird, so I attempted to photograph it in order to assist identification. The best of the shots I managed is not as clear as I would like, but proved good enough for more experienced friends to give a positive identification. The bird was a non-breeding male Brown Songlark, *Cinchoramphus cruralis*. The males of this species are an easily identified sooty brown in the breeding season, when they sing loudly and clearly. Songlarks prefer grassland and sparsely treed woodlands; there are not many recent records of Brown Songlarks in Perth. This addition to my list brings the total to 116 species seen at our lake.



A Brown Songlark

APRIL NIGHT CHAT
Saving Perth's Precious Biodiversity
Jane Chambers
Text and photos: Rose Senior



Our audience for this month's Night Chat had its level of anticipation raised by the delayed arrival of Dr Jane Chalmers, our invited speaker from Murdoch University. However, while we were waiting, Jane's honours student Dallas Campbell filled us in on her own research project on the effect of mining on streams in the Pilbara - and how her intrepid supervisor Jane would set the adventurous tone by pushing her way through dense wetland vegetation - walking backwards.

This piqued our interest in our speaker even further - and we were not disappointed. When Jane finally arrived - flushed and apologetic - she was ready to go!

The focus of Jane's talk was on a large-scale project called NatureLink Perth, initiated by Murdoch University and launched on 1st February 2019. The goal of NatureLink is to promote nature-sensitive urban design, so that the biodiverse wetlands and bush lands, that characterize our extended city, are sustained. She also emphasised the key role played by wildlife corridors (including parks, gardens, backyards and verges) in linking natural ecosystems and eliminating isolated pockets of degradation.

Jane Chambers addressing the audience



Jane then outlined the need for a new approach, explaining that there is currently no holistic strategy informed by ecological understanding to guide the decision-making of local councils and other stakeholders. In a key visual she contrasted the ad hoc nature of bureaucratic divisions with the dynamic, flexible nature of ecological areas that function as integrated systems. She used the example of foxes who, ignoring council boundaries, roam the metro area at will, using railway banks and roads as highways. Some foxes have even been found establishing their lairs in one council jurisdiction, while foraging in another!

Towards the end of her talk Jane re-stated the overall aim of NatureLink Perth: to collect, integrate and synthesise the knowledge and perspectives of as many stakeholders as possible (not only scientists, policy and planning departments, urban developers, industry, local councils and so on, but also community and 'friends of...' groups such as ourselves, the FOLC).

Jane invited us to attend a symposium to be held at Murdoch on 4th July at which information will be presented, followed by a workshop the following day to develop an agreed coordinated approach to integrate nature into our city in such a way that Perth's precious biodiversity is sustained and enhanced.

ANOTHER AVIAN BOTULISM OUTBREAK

From : Nick Cook

On the 11th April, Town of Claremont (TOC) staff advised FOLC of a small number of bird deaths that appeared to be due to another outbreak of Avian Botulism. After last year's outbreak, in which approximately 350 birds were affected, TOC staff had been monitoring the situation closely. By Easter the numbers were still relatively low with roughly a dozen birds affected. With TOC staff not attending over the Easter break FOLC volunteers kept an eye on the situation.

On Easter Sunday 23 dead water birds were retrieved and one infected Grey Teal was rescued. The following day volunteers retrieved another 10 dead birds and rescued another Grey Teal. The sick birds were collected by Lee Rose Beavis (FOLC member) who also volunteers for WA Seabird Rescue, Lee transported the rescued birds to Native Arc for treatment. At the time of writing the total number of bird deaths is around 60. As I write this I have just received a txt message that another bird was found by one of our members and removed.

We would urge all members to please report any sightings of dead or sick birds to Town of Claremont via email or telephone. Outside of business hours WA Seabird Rescue can be contacted regarding sick birds on (08) 6102 8464 or message via Face Book.



Lee Rose Beavis with an infected bird



Nick Cook

Avian Botulism is a strain of botulism that affects wild and captive bird populations, most notably waterfowl. This is a paralytic disease brought on by the Botulinum neurotoxin (BoNt) of the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. *C. botulinum* can fall into one of 7 different types which are strains A through G.[2] Type C BoNt is most frequently associated with waterfowl mortality. (source, Wikipedia)

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. Huge die-offs caused by BoNt are the result of this maggot cycle. 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 every infected carcass brings several infected maggots which increases the number of birds that can contract the disease. In this way massive outbreaks can occur. (Source Wikipedia).

We are very grateful to the volunteers at WA Seabird Rescue and Native Arc for all their efforts to assist our native wild life.

2019 PLANTING SEASON

9th June & 28th July

From : Heidi Hardisty

Revegetation work at Lake Claremont will continue this winter, although on a much smaller scale. The FOLC are purchasing 5000 native seedlings, with funds raised from the Royal Show parking in September, to plant around the FOLC Shed on the north-east side of the wetland. The work is directed by the Town of Claremont and the Lake Claremont Management Plan.

The Town of Claremont is responsible for preparing the site by removing invasive grasses and a few of the Tamarisk trees which are Weeds of National Significance (WONS). The Town will also provide mulch to be spread by Scotch College and Christ Church Grammar School Year 10 students participating in the FOLC Friday afternoon Community Service Program.

The FOLC will plant local native seedlings consisting of groundcover, shrubs and trees like tuart, jarrah, marri and banksia which will provide more and better wildlife habitat, and beauty.

The FOLC will also be responsible for organising and leading community volunteers to plant the seedlings. There will only be 2 public planting sessions this year with the goal of planting 2000 seedlings at each session:

1. Local Residents Planting Day Sunday June 9th

2. National Tree Day Sunday 28th July

We will need 8-10 people to help lay out plants from 8:00 – 9:00. Planting will commence at 9:00 and conclude by 11:30. Tea will be provided for all. The wonderful Indian ex-pat group, the Shah Satnam Ji Green S Welfare Force Wing, will be joining us on June 9th.



Shah Satnam volunteers

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY NIGHT CHAT AT LAKE CLAREMONT

You are invited to join 'Dr Bugalugs' (Dr. Darryl Hardie) from ABC Local Radio, as he offers great clues on identifying, caring for and managing your bugs to get the most benefit for your garden or patch of bushland.

Dr Darryl Hardie has been working with the Department of Agriculture and Food WA and the recently amalgamated Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development for over forty years on a range of entomology projects. As an environmental entomologist, Darryl has dedicated much of his time towards studying the effects of different invertebrates in changing environments. He enjoys educating industry and interest groups on a myriad of subjects relating to entomology and his current favourite talk topic is "Good Bugs, Bad Bugs".

Dr Darryl Hardie



Darryl will be discussing organic and non-organic methods of pest control and the relationship between insects and gardens, particularly how to control main garden pests including fruit flies, wasps, psyllids, mole crickets and aphids.

Date: May 28th, 2019 **Time:** 6- 7:30pm

Venue : The Clubrooms, Claremont Aquatic Centre, 12 Davies Rd, Claremont

Refreshments are served from 5:30pm for a 6:00pm start. The talk and formal questions finish at 7pm, but all are welcome to stay until 7:30pm. A gold coin donation is appreciated.



Calendar May 2019

Day	Event	Time
Friday May 3rd	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm
Friday May 10th	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm
Sunday May 12th	FOLC Busy Bee and Tea Lake Claremont	8:00 – 10:00 am
Monday May 13th	FOLC Board Meeting	5:30 - 7:00 pm
Friday May 17th	Year 10 Community Service Program	1:30 - 3:00 pm
May 19th – 26th	National Volunteer Week	
Tuesday May 21st	International Day for Biological Diversity	
Tuesday May 28th	Night Chats at Lake Claremont Lake Claremont Aquatic Centre	Talk 6:00-7:00 pm Doors open at 5:30 pm
Friday May 24th and 31st	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.



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 to the editor, Hilary Heptinstall
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