



Nicky Armstrong took this beautiful photo of a Buff Banded Rail in December. It can be a little shy but is one of the most striking birds at Lake Claremont.

The Friends of Lake Claremont have been very busy over the holiday period with several Busy Bees and Weeding sessions being organised (see pages 3-5).

Congratulations to Jenni Bannister-Jones on obtaining a substantial grant from the Commonwealth Environment Programme. (See page 10)

It is great to have input from our regular contributors. 'Our Birds' from David Free features on page 2.

I think we are all keen to learn about the history of the Lake Claremont area and another very interesting article from Mary Yates appears on page 8.

It is said that volunteering, particularly in the open air increases happiness and prolongs life span. See Rose Senior's very interesting reflection on page 9.

Best wishes to all our members for a happy and productive 2020. We hope to see you all at the Lake!

OUR BIRDS

Text and photos : David Free

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, *Corachina novaehollandiae*



This insect eater is found throughout Australia. They have a characteristic undulating movement, alternately flying and gliding. On landing they lift and drop their wings alternately, accounting for their colloquial name, "Shufflewing". In flight they often make their soft churring call. These birds generally perch high in the tree, presenting a challenge to photographers.



Rufous Whistler, *Pachycephala rufiventris*



Until three or four years ago we had not seen this striking bird around the lake. Now, with the maturing first re-vegetated areas supporting a healthy insect population, they can be regularly seen and heard in our northern bush area.

The male is unmistakable with his white throat, black band below and rufous underparts. The female is a pretty bird, her buff underparts streaked with black.

Rufous whistlers are great songsters, calling loudly, especially in the breeding season.

A male Rufous Whistler

FOLC ACTIVITY AT THE LAKE

From : Nick Cook

The FOLC volunteers have been very active in December and January and there have been several working sessions.

DECEMBER BUSY BEE

Our Busy Bee on December 8 was devoted to mulching of the 2020 planting site which is now almost complete thanks to the hard work of our volunteers. It was a great effort followed by a terrific morning tea. Thanks to all our volunteers.



TACKLING A SPEAR THISTLE INFESTATION

A small but very dedicated group of 5 volunteers headed out onto the wetland on Friday December 27 at 7am to tackle an infestation of Spear Thistle (pictured right). The thistle was well over head height in spots and covered in razor sharp spines that can penetrate the toughest gloves! We began by cutting off the flowers and seed heads and then the main trunks were dug up with a pitchfork and cut up with long handled loppers. In less than 2 hrs we filled 38 bags!



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Anthony Barr, Consie Woods, Nick Cook and Norma Hay



We held another session with the Spear Thistle on the following Monday, again with a small group of five volunteers. In a two hour session, we filled another 38 bags with weeds.

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers. It was a great effort!

And as a bonus I found this tiny little frog amongst the reeds. I have not seen this species before and am waiting for an ID.

I am told it is a moaning frog.



JANUARY BUSY BEE

Text : Nick Cook. Photos : Nicky Armstrong

We had a great turnout for our Busy Bee on Sunday January 12. Twenty two volunteers joined us for an early 7am start.

Out on the lakebed we worked on weeding the Bushy Starwort and Spear Thistle.

It was very humid out there and it was hot and hard work. The volunteers put in a sensational effort and filled 80 bags!!!

It was lovely to have a new face, who joined us all the way from England, Hi Helena! Thank you for your help.

We finished off with a terrific morning tea provided by Soozie and Geoff Ross.

Our leader, Nick Cook



Many thanks to Nicky Armstrong for taking the photos and for being a valued and enthusiastic FOLC volunteer



TURTLE ACTIVITY AT LAKE CLAREMONT

From : Nick Cook. Photos : Nicky Armstrong and Chloe Davidson

Swamp life can be tough, a constant struggle for survival. Our Oblong turtles face many pressures. Ravens are their primary predator. On January 4, **Nicky Armstrong** photographed this group of ravens attacking an adult turtle.



Our turtles have been very active lately. This was a good news story. On Friday, January 10, Town of Claremont Field Officers came across a grounds keeper from Scotch College, he had with him a young (sub-adult) turtle that he picked up on the playing fields. The turtle was successfully returned to the lake.

Water levels are getting very low now, so it is possible this turtle had left in search of another lake rather than aestivate in the mud over the dry summer?

Hopefully he makes better choices next time?

Many thanks to the gentleman from Scotch College!!!

Thanks to **Chloe Davidson** for this photo.



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On January 13, I experienced my own turtle rescue.

Heidi called me while she was following a turtle crossing the Scotch college playing fields. This is an off-lead dog exercise area with the added threat of magpies and ravens. Given the threats and fading light I waited till dusk after the ravens had left before I returned it to the Lake near some fringing vegetation. Thank you to Heidi and Paul Hardisty.

Yet another turtle rescue story comes from new 14 year old FOLC member, **Eva Czislowski**, who writes:-

'I was looking at the lake from the platform when I saw a man placing something wrapped in a green doggy bag down onto the soil. He said, "It's the best we could do" to his young daughter.

I realised it was an oblong turtle and I was thrilled to see it since it was my first. However, a crow was nearby, admiring the scene, so I covered the turtle in leaves as it walked off into a heavy bush. I went back to talk to the man, asking him where he had found the turtle. He said it had been in the middle of the children's playground, which does not seem safe for a turtle at all. I'd love to help these turtles stay safe from crows and from children.'

The camouflaged turtle



NATIVE BEE SURVEY

From : Nick Cook

Our intrepid Native Bee scientist, Kit Prendergast, was at Lake Claremont in January, continuing to survey our native bee assemblages.

Nice work, Kit! We are very much looking forward to hearing about the results of your work later in the year.

So far it all looks promising!!

A link to a great clip from 2019 Gardening Australia featuring Kit talking about Native Bees is given below.

There will be a new segment aired on Gardening Australia on the 7th Feb also featuring Kit and Native Bees in WA.

There is much that suburban gardeners can do to plant flowers that attract and support native bees. Contact FOLC for a special planting guide prepared by Kit for use by gardeners and land carers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch...>

WHO WAS H.C. SUTHERLAND?

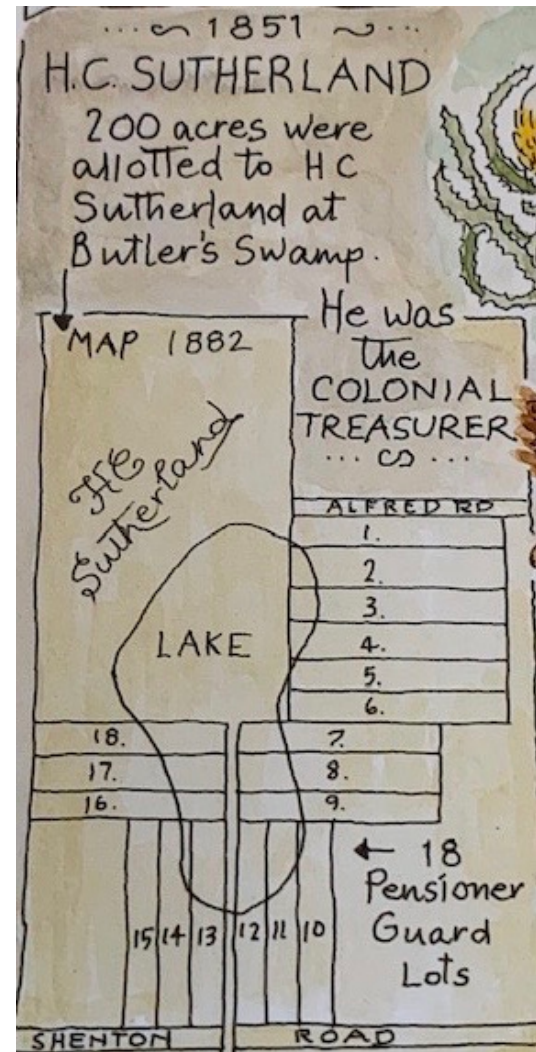
From : Mary Yates

After a four-month voyage on the wooden barque, *PARMELIA*, HENRY CHARLES SUTHERLAND arrived in Fremantle on June 2 1829. He was in company with Lt. Governor James Stirling, founding Colonial officials, the first group of free settlers, and stores – to start the new Swan River Colony.

Sutherland was then aged 25 and was to become the Assistant Surveyor, and brought with him his new bride, Anne. In this position, Sutherland was to share surveying duties with John Septimus Roe, the Surveyor-General, who was also on board.

Their first job was to survey Cockburn Sound, as directed by Stirling, followed by town plans for Perth and Fremantle. Further up the Swan River, at Guildford. Sutherland was tasked with creating Guildford township allotments. This was deemed his greatest single achievement.

However, these two men were incompatible in a working relationship and Sutherland requested to be moved to another department as it was affecting his health. Indeed, throughout his 25-year working career, he was constantly in poor health.



Despite this, he climbed the Official ladder from his original position to the peak of Colonial Treasurer, also becoming a Member of the Executive and Legislative Council and serving on numerous committees.

Over the years he had been purchasing various properties – from plots in Perth and Fremantle, to farmland at Kojonup. He also bought blocks of land in the district known as Perthshire (now Claremont) for 50 pounds, two hundred acres of which are of interest to us. They are shown here as part of the Pensioner Guard Lots at Butlers Swamp.

Eight months after the death of his first wife Anne, he married Fanny Bussell. He died of cancer in 1855 aged 51 and is buried in the East Perth Cemetery.

HAPPINESS AT THE LAKE

A Reflection by Rose Senior

Our precious Lake Claremont, an oasis of cherished bushland in the heart of our suburb, is becoming increasingly surrounded by apartment blocks and urban infill. Many people who've made the decision to downsize initially breathe a sigh of relief when installed in their compact new homes: no more lawn to mow, weeds to pull up, or washing to peg out. How nice to sit at leisure on a pocket-size balcony with a few potted plants, admire the view, do the crossword – and then amble down to the local cafe for a coffee. In other words, why not stick to a well-established routine - perhaps at times feeling a bit isolated and lonely?

Dr Paul Dolan, a happiness expert from the London School of Economics, tells us that a life of laid-back leisure doesn't necessarily make us feel happier. What we need to do is to break our 'blinkered' habits by trying new things – in the case of Lake Claremont walking along a new section of path, stopping to watch or listen for evidence of wildlife, or saying hello to walkers as they pass by. Many people welcome the opportunity to exchange a few words, particularly when you've noticed something you'd like to share - or shown admiration for their child or dog.

Dr Dolan also defines happiness as experiencing pleasure and purpose over time. People who jog round the lake on a regular basis, who play golf, or who use the gym equipment, clearly have a sense of purpose – and gain a sense of achievement when their goal is reached. Other people, however, prefer working towards collaborative goals in a ready-made, friendly social environment. For them, membership of the Friends of Lake Claremont – and taking on a physical or a more desk-type role if so desired – is an excellent path towards happiness!

A note from the editor.

Thank you, Rose. This seems an appropriate time to feature the devotion to the lake of our centenarian, Joan Tocock, and her late husband, Ted. Joan is a perfect example of how FOLC membership can lead to long life and happiness. Many of us have enjoyed moments of contemplation while enjoying the view from the Tocock bench.



UPDATE ON GRANTS

From : Jenni Banister-Jones

We were informed in late January that our application for the Commonwealth Environment Program (CEP) grant had been successful. The money (\$18,000 plus GST) will be spent on employing contractors to hand weed in areas where we've planted and in the remnant bushland.

A big thank you to Celia Hammond, our Federal MP, for selecting us as one of the 15 organisations in the Curtin Electorate to apply for this grant.

Contract hand weeders in the eastern buffer section of the lake



THE LAKE IN JANUARY

From : Nick Cook

The wetland has almost completely dried out now. This is part of it's natural cycle and is very beneficial to the health of the wetland. I visited this afternoon to check on our feathered friends. So far we have not seen a single case of Avian Botulism this summer.



FEBRUARY NIGHT CHAT

The speaker for our February Night Chat will be Margaret Owens from Friends of Underwood Bushland. It will be held on Tuesday February 25 at Claremont Tennis Club. Refreshments commence at 5.30 pm and the talk at 6.00pm. A gold coin donation would be appreciated.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	TIME
Friday Feb 7	Year 10 Community Service Programme	1.20-3.30 pm
Sunday Feb 9	FOLC Busy Bee	7.00-9.00 am
Monday Feb 10	FOLC Board meeting	
Thursday Feb 13	Lake Claremont Advisory committee meeting	
Friday Feb 14	Year 10 Community Service Programme	1.20-3.30 pm
Friday Feb 21	Year 10 Community Service Programme	1.20-3.30 pm
Tuesday Feb 25	February Night Chat at Claremont Tennis Club	5.30pm



natural resource
management program



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Friends of Lake Claremont facebook page [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends of-Lake-Claremont/159586380873009?ref=hl](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Lake-Claremont/159586380873009?ref=hl)

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

Website www.friendsoflakeclaremont.org

Newsletter articles and photos from members are most welcome and should be sent to the editor, Hilary Heptinstall - heptins@bigpond.net.au 0411 052 329

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