

**A painting by Indigenous artist Aileen Garrett***Photo: Naga Srinivas Kasarla**(See page 2)****From the editor***

It has been a very successful year for the Friends of Lake Claremont and, despite the set backs caused by Covid-19 restrictions, we have achieved great things!

Nick Cook writes about our 2020 season in his report on page 9 and thanks everyone for their efforts.

The person who most deserves our thanks this year is our wonderful, hard working coordinator, Nick.

He has been present at all our FOLC planting and weeding sessions this year and has also led sessions for school groups and various environmental groups. He has attended many meetings and has been a great contributor to this newsletter.

He is always encouraging and uncomplaining and has been an inspiration to us all.

We send our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to all our readers and look forward to another successful year in 2021.

FOLC AGM 2020

From : Hilary Heptinstall Photos: Naga Srinivas Kasarla

FOLC held their AGM in the late afternoon of November 21 in the beautiful bushland outside the FOLC Shed.

The gathering started with drinks and delicious nibbles before the formal meeting. There was a good turn out of about 35 members. Nick Cook chaired the meeting and all ran smoothly.

A proposed change to the constitution was accepted and all members of the Board of Management were re-elected. Nick thanked all those who have contributed to the smooth running of FOLC and Zac Hardisty proposed a vote of thanks to Nick for all that he has done this year.

When the official business was over, we moved to general business where the members had the opportunity to ask questions of the Board and discuss issues related to the wetland. We are very fortunate to have such passionate and dedicated volunteers and a lively discussion ensued.

Bruce Haynes proposed a motion that FOLC acknowledges the efforts of Nick Cook, Karen Wood and Leeuwin Beeck for their work on the Lake Claremont Advisory Committee.

The Town of Claremont wishes to thank FOLC for all their efforts and have engaged mural artist, Brenton See, to paint a mural on the FOLC shed.

The meeting finished with a wonderful surprise!

FOLC member and ex - Councillor, Karen Wood, had approached Nick Cook prior to the meeting and explained that she wished to present a beautiful painting by Indigenous artist, Aileen Garlett, to the Friends group.

What a wonderful gift! Thank you, Karen



Tony Barr, Nick Cook and Zac Hardisty with the painting by Aileen Garlett

Many of us drove to the meeting, but 101 year old Joan Tocock walked there - to and from her home in Swanbourne! You are an inspiration to us all, Joan! The AGM was followed by a BBQ and drinks under the paperbark trees. Many thanks to our volunteers who set up the event, brought food and manned the barbecue.



The audience in the scenic bush setting

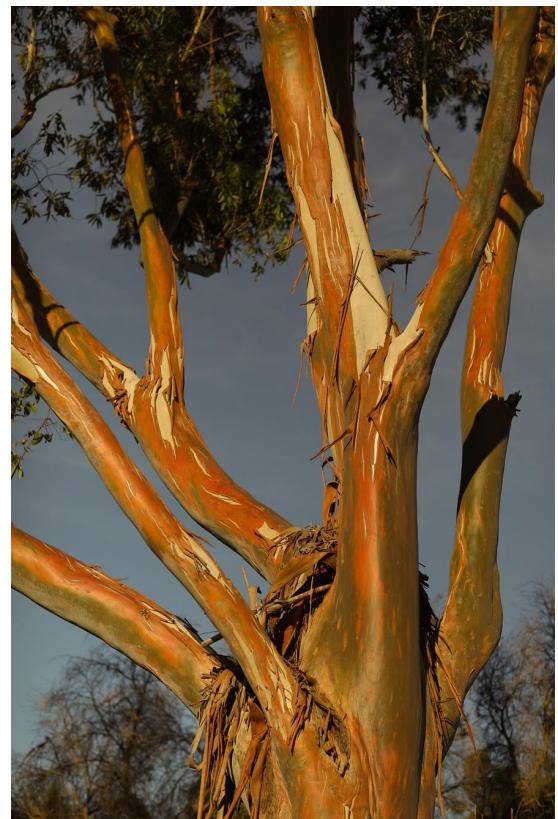


Joan Tocock



*Left : Geoff Ross
manning the
Barbecue*

*Right : A beautiful
tree near the shed*



NOVEMBER BUSY BEE

From : Nick Cook

We had a great turn out of volunteers for our Busy Bee on November 8 with about twenty volunteers arriving for our early 7am start.

We headed into the Eastern buffer zone for a serious weeding session! We had one group in the buffer zone, another group worked the bank while a third group on the lakebed tackled some monster thistles.

It was a very productive morning with 75 bags filled with weeds.

We finished up with Soozie's awesome morning tea and a good chat about upcoming events and issues around the Lake.

Many thanks to all who joined us.

Over the next month we will be running a number of weeding sessions on Sunday mornings, see page 11.



Above: Young volunteers at work

Left : FOLC Director, Delia Hendry, with Duke of Edinburg volunteer, Fei Fei



A successful morning's work

OUR BIRDS

Text and photo by David Free

Striated Pardalote, *Pardalotus striatus*

This pretty little bird is more often heard than seen, its repetitive "chip chip" call carries a long distance. Pardalotes feed on insects and lerps, usually in the upper canopy of eucalypts. They are not common at the lake but they can sometimes be found in the mature gums in the north west part.

Striated Pardalotes build their nests in tree hollows, often at a good height from the ground. Both sexes take responsibility for nest building, incubating and feeding the young. I am not aware of any breeding record at the lake.



GUIDED BIRD WALK From : Hilary Heptinstall

David Free led a guided bird walk for FOLC members on Friday November 30. It was a most enjoyable occasion. In very dry conditions, we walked on the dried- up lakebed and members spotted several species of birds using binoculars. David said that the number of bird species spotted was less than usual due to the unseasonably warm temperatures. My favourite bird was the Weebill, *Smicrornis brevirostris*, a small bird with a correspondingly sized beak. At 9cm long it is Australia's smallest bird. Photo : David Free



IN BLOOM IN NOVEMBER

From : Karen Wood

I am very keen that people understand how incredible our flora is! Much is made of the fauna, but so many of the bushes and flowers round our lake are found nowhere else in the world. Every time I see these amazing plants, I think how wonderful it is that FOLC have brought them to us!

Melaleuca huegelii (Chenile Honeymyrtle) (right) is a member of the family Myrtaceae and is endemic to the south west of WA. It flowers between September and February. It is listed as a wheat belt native but is doing very well around our lake. It is a great insect attractor. Maybe there is a native bee on this one?

Kunzia glabrescens (below left) is also called spearwood and the suburb to our south was named after it when many plants were found by early settlers.

This flower is found only in our South West from Gin Gin to Bremer Bay with the largest population around Albany. It can be in flower until mid December given the right conditions, in transition areas between wetlands and sandy drier areas, which is no doubt why it does so well here.



Hemiandra pungens (below) is a small genus of about eight species all of which grow only in WA. It performs best in dry climates as it dislikes humidity. Sometimes called snake bush, Hemiandra belongs to the mint bush family, Lamiaceae, and is fairly common in the coastal sands and wood lands of our South West. It has been planted at Lake Claremont by the FOLC.



MILLENNIUM KIDS AT LAKE CLAREMONT

From : Nick Cook and 'Anthropology from the shed'

We had an inspiring day on country with Millennium Kids on Sunday, September 15, as we hosted a special gathering of the Millennium Kids Green Lab environmental programme.

Traditional Custodian, Nyungar Land & Culture Protector, Iva Hayward-Jackson, welcomed the group to country and gave an interesting presentation on how Nyungar people once relied on everyday science for their survival. He said that scientific knowledge connected his people to the intricacies of their particular environment and that they had a great knowledge of plant, animal, fish and bird seasonal cycles and behaviour. Iva concluded his talk by conducting a smoking ceremony with his nephew, Drew, in which everyone participated. He commented that the smoke from the Eucalyptus leaves, that his people used in this ritual, was not just a ceremony but science and that it cleansed the human body.



Above : Iva and Drew - smoking ceremony.

Right : Millennium Kids Celebrating their UNAAWA Enviro Award 2020 with members and friends.

Below : Bush walk



Then, with Town of Claremont Bushcare Officer, Johanna Riddell, we walked and talked with the kids focusing on our precious wildlife and the threats they face.

Later, we took the kids out onto the wetland to visit an incredible ancient paperbark tree and wondered what stories it might tell of the past.



WA NATURALISTS CLUB GUIDED WALK

From : Nick Cook Photos : Nicky Armstrong

It was a great pleasure to host the WA Naturalists Club this morning at Lake Claremont, thank you, Tanya Marwood, for the invitation to talk to your group. What a lovely group of people they were!

The weather was perfect for our two hour, guided walk around the lake. The focus of the talk was on our turtles but we covered a lot of other ground including the history of the lake, the activities of FOLC and the history of the revegetation project.

There were plenty of birds on show for our visitors including a number of waders. The highlight for me was the willy wagtail attending her chick in the nest.

The group had a lot of great questions and we had a very good chat about some of the challenges involved in managing a wetland.

As a complete bonus one of our guests has expressed her desire to join us in volunteering at Lake Claremont.

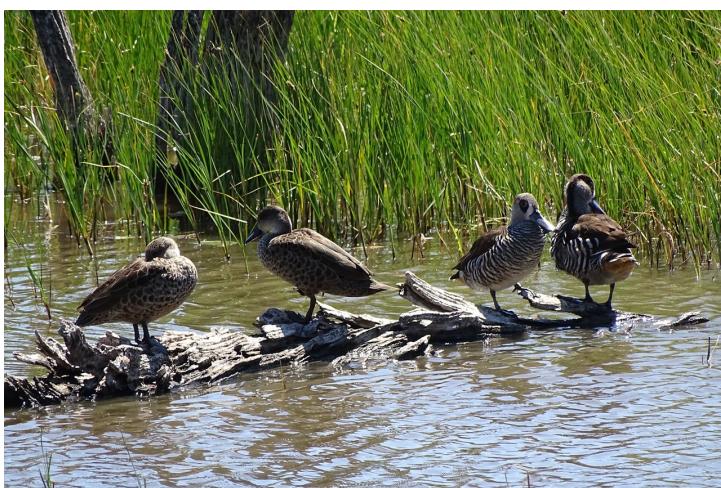
We bumped into FOLC member Nicky Armstrong at the start of the walk and she has been kind enough to share some of her lovely photos with us. Thank you, Nicky.



*Above : The group enjoying the lake
Below : Grey teal and Pink eared ducks*



*Above : Little Pied Cormorant
Below : Red-necked avocet*



COORDINATOR'S REPORT 2020

From : Nick Cook

I should like to thank our Board of Directors for their guidance and support throughout a challenging year, and all of our volunteers and members for their ongoing support of our conservation efforts. This year has certainly been like no other with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated government mandated lock downs and restrictions. Our activities were interrupted by the pandemic to varying degrees. Despite that we had another very successful year which included a major milestone being achieved with the completion of the major revegetation works as defined by the Lake Claremont Master Plan. This was the culmination of over 10 years of planting by FOLC members and the wider community, led by Heidi Hardisty. With approximately 380,000 native plants funded by FOLC and its funding partners and planted by volunteers this is truly a very special achievement of which we can all be extremely proud.



We have continued to strengthen and build on existing relationships and partnerships. We have developed closer ties with our Traditional Custodians and continue to do so. Our strong relationship with the Town of Claremont has always been a key part of our success and the sense of collaboration has never been stronger. We have also built on our partnerships with scientists/academics, fellow conservationist/land care groups and funding partners such as Planet Arc, SALP and others.

As we transition away from a focus on major plantings, we have made a major effort on weed control and the reduction in the need for chemical weed control. David Hay has taken on the newly created role of Weeding Coordinator and has done a terrific job on a steep learning curve. Led by Norma Hay the weeding crew worked right through the summer and, supported by other volunteers, achieved incredible results, particularly out on the lakebed. We continue to supplement the great work of our volunteer weeders with environmental contractors from Green Skills. In conjunction with the Town of Claremont's increased commitment to hand weeding we are seeing a significant reduction in the use of chemical weed control at the lake.

Environmental education continues to be an important focus for the group. Despite the short season, our Night Chats series was a great success with a fabulous line up of speakers and a full house most evenings. I wish to thank and congratulate Nicky Armstrong for stepping up as Coordinator of Night Chats as well as Chloe Davidson, Naga and Anu Srinivas for their assistance in promoting the events. Soozie and Geoff Ross have also made significant contributions to the running of these events.

We continued our longstanding relationship with local schools with our Year 10 Community Service Program where the boys engaged in numerous conservation activities including planting, weeding, mulching, fuel load reduction works, building native bee hotels and nesting platforms.

Hilary Heptinstall has continued to produce a very high quality newsletter every month and we are very fortunate to have many talented contributors.

Our website continues to go from strength to strength thanks to our very talented webmaster Annabelle Walsh. A great deal of work has been put in by Annabelle to transition us to online membership renewals and the uptake has been very encouraging. Naga Srinivas has taken our Face Book page to new heights with his awesome photographic skills and he has also initiated live streaming and recording of our Night Chats events in order that we reach an even wider audience. We now have over 1400 followers on Face Book!

Planting season 2020 was like no other. Early in the pandemic it was not clear if we would be able to plant at all! For the first time Heidi Hardisty was unable to lead the planting sessions (it took a global pandemic to keep her away!) and I offer many thanks to Zac Hardisty, Tony Barr and Aernout Boere for stepping up and leading the planting season whilst Heidi coordinated the logistics and rostering arrangements from her home in Far North Queensland.

Despite the restrictions on public gatherings we managed a well run and safe series of planting sessions that were well supported by our members, the local community and our friends the Sha Satnam Ji Welfare Force Wing. Funded by a SALP grant we planted around 8,000 natives and completed the installation of major revegetation works. Planning for 2021 infill planting is already well under way.

As FOLC Coordinator I work very closely with the Town of Claremont Council and Administration. The level of support and collaboration between the Town and FOLC is a key factor in the success of the Lake Claremont restoration project. FOLC are intimately involved in the management of the wetland and surrounds and I would like to thank and acknowledge the support and dedication of the Town's Parks and Environment staff and look forward to continue working with them all.

We have continued to attract new members this year and it is particularly encouraging to me to see an increased interest from younger people in the community wishing to be involved.

FOLC continues to be in a strong financial position and is well placed to fund future projects. Our Treasurer and Company Secretary, Lance Bannister-Jones has done an outstanding job of managing the company's financial arrangements and his experience has been invaluable to the Board of Directors as we review our company structure to meet the future needs of the group. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Mr Rick West for performing the audit of our accounts and for his professional advice. Our Grants Officer Jenni Bannister-Jones has had a very successful year and we continue to attract grants funding from a variety of sources.

The Covid-19 pandemic really brought home 2 key themes for me.

1. What a truly amazing and vital community asset we have created in partnership with the Town of Claremont. It is now a highly prized natural space, valued by the entire community. The benefits to our environment and to our own physical and mental wellbeing are immeasurable.
2. Our volunteers are a truly resilient and dedicated group of individuals who highly value the opportunity to contribute to conservation efforts at the wetland as well as the social benefits of volunteering with FOLC.

As always it is a great privilege to make my contribution to the leadership of this group. It would not be possible without the support of our membership and the, too numerous to mention individually, volunteers that offer their time and skills to the running of our group. The role of Coordinator is not just about managing volunteers and the affairs of the group. It is also the first point of contact with the wider community. I receive a lot of feedback from people in the community and I can assure you that they overwhelmingly value the contribution FOLC volunteers have made to the restoration of Lake Claremont. Our wetland is much loved and appreciated by all and continues to be a thriving haven for our native wildlife.

THANK YOU ALL

Nick Cook. FOLC Coordinator

On Saturday, fifteen intrepid Adopt-a-spotters gathered to have fun and chat about some of the ideas that came up at the AGM. These wonderful people have lots of ideas, enthusiasm and knowledge! **THANK YOU**

Keep up the weeding - we're winning! And if anyone would like to adopt a spot, we have one spot left in last year's planting around the Shed. Please call Lance 0418 922 885



*From L to R Standing : Alisen, Averil ,Graeme, Max, Penny, David, Troy, Delia, Marine
Sitting : Riley, Monelle, Lance, Aish, Mary*

DATES FOR DECEMBER

Sunday weeding sessions December 6 and 13 7.00 -9.00am

FOLC Board meeting 14th Dec



natural resource
management program



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 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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