



Lake Claremont after the rain in early February *Photo : Hilary Heptinstall*

From the editor

It was lovely to see water in the lake after 37mm of rain on February 7. Unfortunately most of this water has disappeared now!

We are happy to announce that Mary Yates has organised a plant identification course at Lake Claremont. There will be two sessions on the mornings of Saturday March 20 and 27. See page 7 for details of this course.

It is good to hear that Night Chats will recommence on March 23. I think we have all missed our monthly get-togethers. It promises to be a very interesting evening. See details on page 11.

We are lucky to have such dedicated volunteers at FOLC. There are too many to name them all but special thanks this month go to Jenni Banister-Jones for all the work that she has done in obtaining funding for FOLC.

I should also like to acknowledge Norma Hay for her tireless contribution to our War on Weeds. She is a passionate worker and has made an enormous contribution to weed management and strategy.

FEBRUARY BUSY BEE

Text : Nick Cook Photos : Naga Srinivas Kasarla and Nicky Armstrong

We held our monthly Busy Bee on February 14. It was a warm day but we had a terrific turn out with about twenty four volunteers, including three first timers at Lake Claremont. We love to welcome new members and first time volunteers.

I teamed Nicky up with new member Theresa Moss to show her the ropes. Being out on the wetland amongst the native vegetation is a special experience. It is very peaceful, you wouldn't know you are close to the middle of the city!



The main group headed out onto the Northern section of the wetland to mop up Bushy Starwort and Spear Thistle. A very productive session saw us fill 36 bags of mostly smaller weeds.

It feels as though we are really getting on top of the weeds this year!

The second group led by Norma headed to the revegetation site near Elliot Rd to begin the task of managing the Ruby Saltbush. After consultation with leading practitioners and TOC, it has been agreed that this species, as well as Rhagodia will require some management going forward. With a massive revegetation project like Lake Claremont, we are always on a steep learning curve! We are very fortunate to have access to advice from leading experts in their fields to assist and advise us.





A great morning's work

We finished up at the shed for a terrific morning tea, put together by Soozie Ross, and had an update on current issues around the wetland.



ADOPT-A-SPOT SUMMER NEWS

From : Jenni Banister Jones

Well done, Adopt-a-spotters! Lance checked out all the spots this week and couldn't find a weed!! There's some couch grass but that should be controlled by the contractors. It seems that even that deluge in early February didn't entice the weeds to emerge. But keep an eye out as the weather cools down. They'll be back!

And we'll organise another get-together soon! But if you've got any queries, please call Lance on 0418 922 885 or email folc.wa@gmail.com

MARRI RED GUM *Corymbia calophylla* From : Karen Wood

We are all familiar with the “honky nuts” produced by this native tree which is sometimes a nuisance to the tender footed or to youngsters on bikes. However, the produce of a Marri, its fruits (the nuts), its seeds, flowers leaves, bark and wood are all important food sources for a wide variety of creatures including birds, bees, wasps, spiders, beetles, butterflies and moths. The Marri was also extensively used by the Noongar people. The kino or gum which exudes from the tree contains tannins which have antiseptic qualities and thus is useful as a disinfectant and as a cure for diarrhoea. The blossoms give off a sugary syrup. They can be dipped in water to make a sweet drink.

The Marri grows from Geraldton to Cape Riche and inland to beyond Narrogin.

Although the Marri will grow in poor soils the biggest and healthiest of the species indicate better soil for agriculture and so very large specimens were routinely removed. Fortunately we have some Marri trees in our area which will, with luck and care, reach the enormous girth and height of their forebears. Do look out for them. Some are still flowering though February is usually the end of the flowering season for this magnificent tree.

These flowers and immature fruits (*left*) are very much “end of the season”. Some years the tree can be covered almost completely in a cream froth. Late December or January is the time of full flowering, but not every Marri flowers every year.



The picture on the left shows the mature fruits (Honky nuts) which give away the Marri's location.

Look upwards at the tree when you see them on the ground. They may be cracked open and the enclosed seeds eaten by cockatoos and/or parrots.

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It is easy to see why so many insects, spiders and so on live in the Marri bark. So many nooks and crannies to be hidden away in!



Marri kino or gum is caused by a wound to the tree, probably due to a beetle or other insect infestation in the bark. The trees' growth does not appear to be affected by this infestation.



View from the south end of Lake Claremont in early February

OUR BIRDS

Text and photo by David Free

Brown Goshawk, *Accipiter fasciatus*



The Brown Goshawk is fairly common but not often seen. They lurk on a concealed perch, from where they can ambush their prey, which can be taken in flight or on the ground. Goshawks will eat rabbits, lizards and birds; chicken are an easy meal.

The smaller Collared Sparrowhawk has identical plumage and it can be difficult to differentiate between species. Goshawks have a rounded tail, whereas the sparrowhawk's tail is square.

Goshawks' stick nests are high up in a tree. Sometimes they will refurbish an old crow's nest. The nest is fiercely defended.

Many years ago, whilst running in Bold Park, I was swooped and lightly slashed on the shoulder.

FOLC TREE AND SHRUB IDENTIFICATION COURSE

From : Mary Yates

You may remember Nick Cook asking, at our AGM, for projects which could be offered to our members this year. At the time I suggested it would be good to run a course identifying some of our native trees and shrubs, especially those which cause confusion by being similar to each other. A good example here is the Melaleuca family. However, when you have an idea, it suddenly becomes yours to follow through!

A very good botanical friend, Vanda Longman, has enthusiastically agreed to run this course for our members, and I will be there to help.

We have chosen ten plants for each walk over two Saturday mornings. Each one will last for about 1 ½ hours. We will walk a very short distance from the Tin Shed on the first week and from Strickland Street on the second. These ten specimens will be discussed to the exclusion of any others. We believe that then you will be able to positively identify twenty trees after these two meetings and we could perhaps add more later on. You will be welcome to add more details, such as the birds which feed on the fruits and so on.

Participants will be expected to bring a clipboard and pencil or pen, to draw a single leaf from each of these specimen, as well as a magnifying glass. (We have received permission). Drawing is the very best way to learn and look, however poor you may think your efforts may be.

For the first example you will be given a sheet, with leaf drawn, for you to follow and then add your own notes. We intend to keep to leaf-identity because that is almost always the only feature that we may have. A bonus will be finding flowers or fruit.

We intend to keep to the botanical name only, as each plant has its own name and then there is no confusion with common names. Where we know, we will also add Aboriginal information. We will have various handouts to assist as well.

You may already know and be able to identify some of the plants we have chosen but may still be able to add interesting additional details to your knowledge as well as ours.

Nick will be sending out an email advising of this two-session course. It will be held on 20th and 27th March and have very restricted numbers.

We hope that you will be interested to join us!



FOLC SHED DEVELOPMENT

From : Nick Cook



Many thanks to FOLC Director/Treasurer Lance Banister-Jones, TOC contractor Tony and FOLC member Geoff Ross (pictured above).

In early February they replaced a lot of rusted sheets on the FOLC shed. The re-sheeting of the shed is now complete.

This is another great example of collaboration between FOLC and Town of Claremont with FOLC providing the labour and TOC paying for the materials.

The shed is now ready for mural artist Brenton See to begin work on the first piece of public art to be installed at Lake Claremont!

We are looking forward to seeing Brenton's work which will feature native birds, animals and plants found at Lake Claremont.

Keep an eye out as you walk round the lake because Brenton is due to commence work in March.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewals are now due and a further reminder email will be sent shortly.

GRATITUDE POST

From : Nick Cook



Our Grants Officer Jenni Bannister-Jones recently attended a breakfast function hosted by our funding partners SALP and NRM.

As previously announced, this \$15,000 grant will be put to use in our War on Weeds in 2021.

FOLC and Town of Claremont have made a major effort to reduce reliance on chemical weed control with a significant increase in manual/hand weeding efforts around Lake Claremont. Our 2020 weeding program was a great success with a high level of coordination between FOLC volunteers, FOLC contractors GreenSkills and the Town's contractors Sustainable Outdoors and Black Swan.

We are very grateful for the support of SALP, Alcoa, Perth NRM and DBCA who recognise that long term initiatives/projects, such as ours, require ongoing funding and support. This funding is critical to the success of our War on Weeds!

UPDATE FROM THE COORDINATOR

From : Nick Cook

"Both prior to and at our AGM, a number of members raised concerns about the proliferation of Ruby Saltbush and Rhagodia amongst the revegetated areas and its smothering of other species. The FOLC Board committed to consultation with experts in the field. After these consultations, general consensus is that management of these two species is desirable and we have already begun the process on the Eastern side of the park. We will further assess the extent of the issue and work on a plan of action in conjunction with the Parks and Environment staff.

Nick in action



I am pleased to report that our very wily fox has now been eradicated after several months on the prowl. I have worked closely with the Town of Claremont and contractors over some time in an effort to secure a better approach to the issue of fox management. I believe we have now made major steps in the right direction with regards to how we manage this issue going forward. The key here has been collaboration and a willingness to try a different approach. Our March Night Chats speaker will address these very issues and more.

I received a terrific response to my call for assistance with the Year 10 Community Service Program. A big thank you to all those who responded and more of a general thank you to all our members and volunteers who step up time and time again to help keep this wonderful group going. We will continue to achieve great things!

MARCH CALENDAR

Date	Activity
Friday March 5	Year 10 Community Service
Friday March 12	Year 10 Community Service
Sunday March 14	FOLC Busy Bee
Monday March 11	Board meeting
Friday March 12	Year 10 Community Service
Tuesday March 23	March 23 Night Chats

MARCH NIGHT CHAT

From : Nick Cook

FOLC are delighted to have Dr Scott Thompson as speaker at our first Night Chats event of 2021.

Scott is Partner and Principle Zoologist at Terrestrial Ecosystems, a locally based environmental consultancy. He is a local resident and very familiar with Lake Claremont and its environs.

Dr Scott Thompson and Detection Dog Dazzle on the Job



Scott will discuss opportunities to better manage vertebrate fauna in the urban, peri urban and rural areas. He will include the need for better communication and collaboration amongst landholders and stakeholders as well as the need to seek current, well informed information on management strategies.

He will also discuss the case for a more evidence based approach to feral animal management and guidelines on issues such as fauna translocations.

Drawing on his experience as a specialist in invertebrate fauna management Scott will discuss a range of issues including fauna salvage and relocation programs, feral and pest animal management, use of nesting boxes, fauna monitoring programs and effective use of consultants and experts. These are all issues that are highly relevant to the future and better management of Lake Claremont as well as all of our local nature reserves.

Night Chats will be held on Tuesday 23rd March at the Claremont Lawn Tennis Club.

Refreshments will be served from 5.30pm with the talk commencing at 6pm. We will be sending out an email, numbers are limited and RSVP will be required due to Covid-19 restrictions."



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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