



Black Swans in love! Photo : Ian Stewart

From the Editor

It has been wonderful to see the increased water levels at Lake Claremont after the recent record rainfalls. This has led to breeding among Black swans with several nests being built.

Thank you to local photographer, Ian Stewart, for sharing the beautiful photo above which was taken from the gazebo. A large Black Swans' nest can also be viewed from there.

Our Night Chat this month featured the 'Bee Babette', Dr Kit Prendergast. For those who missed this event, Naga Srinivas Karsala has made a video of the talk and it is available on the FOLC Facebook page.

NAIDOC week was celebrated in July and Lake Claremont is registered as a site of significance to the Noongar people. It's name is Galbamaanup in Noongar language. We should like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we stand and to offer our respect to Elders past and present.

JULY BUSY BEE

From Nick Cook. Photos : Nicky Armstrong and Naga Srinivas

We had a beautiful morning for our monthly Busy Bee!

We had a solid turnout with a few first time volunteers joining our regulars. A group of our regular volunteers headed off to do some hand weeding whilst the main group, led by Heidi, settled in for a planting session.

Starting in the Ballaruk bush and our remnant bush we continued our infill planting. We then worked our way back towards the shed and a welcome morning tea put on by Soozie.

500 plants were installed today and next month we have 2000 to plant on National Tree Day.



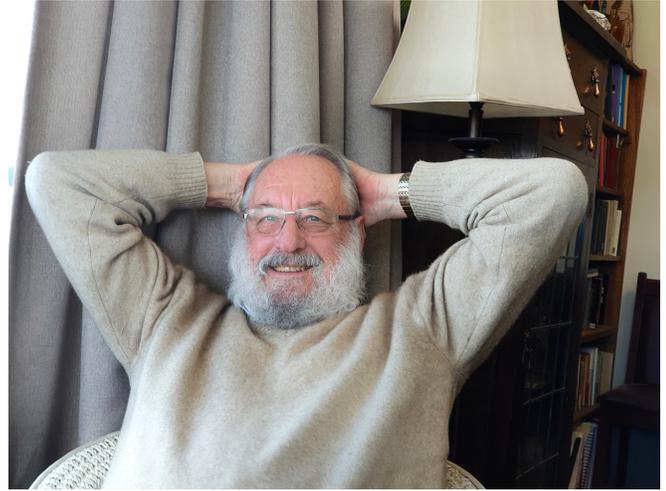
VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOT

Bruce Haynes: a man of many parts

By Rose Senior

Bruce is a larger-than-life figure well known to us all in his joint roles as elected member of the Town of Claremont (till his term expires at the end of this year) and active member of the Friends of Lake Claremont (since the group was formalised in 2003).

When I visited Bruce in his delightfully-cluttered Claremont apartment with sweeping views of the Swan River I learnt some of the many other sides of Bruce. A passionate West Australian, Bruce was born in Southern Cross and moved with his parents to various country towns before coming to Perth to conclude his secondary and tertiary studies.



“I enjoy siding with Sydneysiders when they criticize Melbourne, and siding with Melburnians when they criticize Sydney – because I know that our isolated country town is better than both.”

After fulfilling his contract with the Education Department to teach history to tricky high school classes, (“Sir, why are you still here? We got rid of five teachers last year.”) Bruce was ready for further study. Unable to take up scholarships offered by Harvard University due to the imminent birth of their third child, Bruce and his wife completed their PhDs in the philosophy of education at the University of Illinois. Back in Perth, Bruce purchased a house in Shenton Road, with a hole in the back fence providing easy access to Lake Claremont. Bruce’s connection to the Lake, and his passion for wildlife, conservation and community integration had begun.

As a philosopher Bruce is able to see the bigger picture. Apart from his ability to understand the importance of having a management plan to underpin decisions regarding how the Lake should be used, Bruce has developed an alternative principle to govern educational decision-making: trust in place of truth. This can be further explored in a book he has recently edited called ‘Trust and Schooling’ (Routledge, 2020).

As soon as I entered Bruce’s apartment I realized that since the age of seven he’s had an ongoing passion: stamp collecting. Strewn around the flat in bookshelves and on tables, chairs and the floor, are boxes, piles of envelopes waiting to be sorted, and plastic sleeves containing stamps ready for display. In response to his daughter’s stern warning, “You’re not allowed to die till you’ve tidied up your mess!” Bruce is now in the process of having his toilet relocated to the bathroom (the bath having been removed). Why? So that he can use the toilet cubicle as extra space in which to store some of his beloved stamp collection.

ADOPT- A -SPOT REPORT

From : Jenni Banister - Jones

Adopt-a-spotters are on the move!

Due to the resounding success of 2019 planting around the Shed, it was decided that the Adopt-a-spotters' efforts could be better used elsewhere. So the move was on up to the 2020 planting sites along Alfred Road.

An intrepid group braved the weather for morning tea at the Shed on 17 July, and then trudged up to the new area and got to choose their own spots. Most stayed on and did a massive amount of weeding. Within an hour of two, the site was nearly cleared!!

For those who missed it, there's still a chance to stake your claim to a new spot. Just tee up a time with Lance. And if you'd like to join the Adopt-a-spot program, please call Lance on 0418 922 885 or email folc.wa@gmail.com



Our dedicated Adopt -a- Spotters



Spectacular blossoms of Cockie's Tongue (*Templetonia retusa*) at Lake Claremont Photo : Heidi Hardisty

OUR BIRDS

Text : David Free. Photo : Ian Wallace



Australian Little Bittern, *Ixobrychus dubius*

This small and very shy bittern is highly sought after by birdwatchers. A few years ago, the news that they had been seen at Lake Claremont spread like wildfire. Bird watchers and bird photographers from near and far descended on our lake in large numbers and the WA Museum was very interested.

In Western Australia, the range of the Little Bittern appears to be limited to the south-west and the Kimberly. Its secretive lifestyle, mostly skulking in dense reedbeds, means that it is rarely observed. When at risk of being seen, bitterns will “freeze” in an upright posture amongst the reeds. The juvenile’s striated plumage makes them even more difficult to detect. Michael Morcombe, author of the Field Guide to Australian Birds, speculates that it may be more widespread than sightings suggest. The low-pitched booming call can sometimes be the only indication of its presence.

I have seen this rarity at the lake but I didn’t manage to get any photos. Thanks to Ian Wallace for permission to use his.

FLOWERING IN JULY

From: Karen Wood

Basket Bush *Spyridium globulosum*

At first glance the flower clusters of this bush are a dull, dun colour, but a closer look shows a tiny white yellow centred flower with a pinky red surround. The bush grows to between 0.6 to 3 metres tall on the coastal plain, taller inland. It can be found from Geraldton to Israelite Bay, though, as it is killed by fire, much has been lost since European settlement. The larvae of of moths feed on the foliage in spring.

There are several fine specimens of this native, easily seen from the footpaths around Lake Claremont in the revegetated areas. *(Pictured left)*

Prickly Moses. *Acacia pulchella*

The Perth Noongar name, Mindaleny, is thought to be a corruption of Prickly Mimosa. This is one of the few wattles to have leaves, rather than phyllodes, and so is easily identified, especially as it's a fairly common plant from Geraldton to Esperance. It flowers early, often at the same time as the brilliant purple of *Hovea* and *Hardenbergia* make such a wonderful display in the bush. The seeds were picked early by indigenous people and could be pounded and made into a bread called mereny. Prickly Moses is a small bush, usually no more than a metre high. *(Pictured centre)*

Jacksonian sternbergiana. *Green stink wood* Noongar name. Kabbur

The name stinkwood comes because when the wood is burnt, especially when green, it smells like a urinal!

However, this species is of great importance to native bees, butterflies, beetles and other insects. The specialised Black Jacksonian bee is the main pollinator. Green stinkwood is able to resprout after fire and can colonise disturbed soil though it prefers the more fertile soils. Because of its high biological value it is recommended for bush restoration projects. This specimen was found in the Ballaruk bush near Gloucester Street. *(Pictured right)*



LAKE CLAREMONT IN JULY

From : Nick Cook

AN INTERESTING STRUCTURE

I found this structure near the FOLC shed this month. It is great to see kids getting out in nature and being creative!

No screens or devices required, just a little imagination!



TURTLE PREDATION

Sadly we continue to see predation of our turtles by ravens at Lake Claremont! FOLC volunteer, Lyssandra, called in this about this turtle that she spotted by the path with a Raven still feeding on it. If you find a turtle, dead or alive, please message or contact us



CARNABY'S COCKATOOS

These Carnaby's Cockatoos were seen lunching on Rottnest Island Pine cones at Lake Claremont remnant bushland. The males have the pink eye ring. Thank you to Kevin McAlpine for the photos.



UWA GUIDED WALK

On July 16 I had the pleasure of hosting a group of students from UWA. Thanks to Clare from UWA Student Guild for organising the event.

We started with a short guided walk covering a bit of the lakes history and it's significance to the Noongar people. Then off to the shed to kit up for a stellar weeding session.



We weeded some path edges and then cleaned up a site that will be planted later this month.

The group were fantastic and we had a good chat as we went.

We filled 33 bags to the brim in around 2 hours!

Then we finished up with coffee and cake back at the shed.

Many thanks to our volunteers, it was a pleasure to meet you all.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD ACTIVITIES

The morning of July 4 was too wet for photographs but our Duke of Edinburgh candidates turned up for work as usual at 8am.

Hand weeding was the order of the day. We hit the path edges along Creswell Oval then proceeded to the 2020 planting site along Alfred rd.

The guys and girls put in a super effort in fairly cold and wet conditions and did a great job. They filled about a dozen bags.

Ella (Yr 9) got her first driving lesson in the gator as my attempt to cross the living stream was a complete fail! Ella drove while Rav and I pushed. Phew the gator came unstuck pretty easily and saved me some explaining to the Town

We finished a little early and all headed home for a hot shower and the heater!

GREENSKILLS WEEDING SESSION

It's that time of year again!

The weeds are popping and we are pleased to welcome back the team from Greenskills. FOLC has received a \$16,000 Grant from SALP to engage hand weeding contractors. Greenskills staff will compliment the work of our volunteers in our efforts to reduce reliance on chemical control of weeds at lake Claremont.

FOLC have committed to taking on the most environmentally sensitive areas for our hand weeding project. This includes the entire wetland buffer and the remnant and Ballaruk bush. Annabelle and her team got stuck in on Friday and filled 55 bags



FERAL BEES

One of our weeding crew reported finding this feral bee hive in the trunk of a fallen Banksia tree.

Having reported the hive on a Sunday evening, our Bushcare Officer arranged for the hive to be re-homed by a contractor on the Tuesday. This was a great response from our team at Parks Department.



JULY NIGHT CHAT

From : Hilary Heptinstall Photo : Rose Senior

The speaker at our July Night Chat was Dr Kit Prendergast, the 'Bee Babette'. She spoke on the topic of 'Honeybees not the 'honeys' of the bee world'.

European honeybees *Apis mellifera*, have perennial eusocial colonies of up to 10,000 individuals. A colony consists of a reproductive queen who lays eggs, sterile workers (daughters) who care for the brood, hive maintenance and food gathering and male bees (drones) who die after having sex with the queen. (My husband says he is glad that he is not a male honey bee!) *Kit Prendergast with Nick Cook*



European honeybees were introduced into the South West of WA in the 1840s and now exist in managed and feral colonies.

Honey is only produced by honey bees and native "sugarbag" stingless bees which are not found in the South West of WA.

Australia's honey industry is worth \$100 million per year for hive products and \$14.8 million for pollination services. WA is renowned for high quality honey.

SW Australian native bees are mainly solitary, they have no colonies and no care of offspring. Over 40 species of native bees have been found at Lake Claremont. These vary in size and the species of plant which they pollinate.

Kit has done PhD research over two years across fourteen urban sites and gardens to investigate whether honey bees compete for resources with native bees. She found that honeybees are much less specific to the species of plants they choose and that more plants are reliant on honeybees than native bees.

Interactions between honeybees and native bees in urban area vary by year habitat type and native bee type. Some native bees are more vulnerable to competition than others.

To protect our native bee species Kit feels that we should

- Eradicate/ prevent feral honey bee colonies (as done at Lake Claremont)
- Limit backyard beekeeper densities
- Introduce mandatory swarm prevention courses
- Plant more flowers that native bees prefer so that there are enough for them to coexist

Kit has written books and produced merchandise to improve our knowledge of native bees. More can be learned by contacting Kit at

kit.prendergast21@gmail.com.au

Thank you, Kit, for a very interesting evening and we send our best wishes for the great work that you are doing to protect our native bees.

HATCHLING SEASON

From : Nick Cook

It's hatchling season at Lake Claremont!

I received a call in late July from Megan Wallis, a local resident and regular visitor to Lake Claremont. Megan had spotted a hatchling on the limestone path along the Scotch playing fields and called for advice.

Thank you, Megan, for stopping and taking the time to assist our precious wildlife! By gently picking up the hatchling and releasing it amongst fringing vegetation at the water's edge Megan has improved his/her chance of survival by around 90% .

On the pathway our hatchling is vulnerable to bikes, dogs, Ravens and more! It is much safer amongst the dense fringing vegetation.

Megan tells me that this wildlife experience made her day!!

Please let us know if you see a hatchling. It helps give us an idea of the position of nests and the level of breeding activity.

Please keep your eye out for our precious wildlife!

TURTLE PREDATION UPDATE

From : Nick Cook

The turtle pictured below was found on Friday July 30 under the Paperbarks by the FOLC shed. It appears by the neck injury and shell damage to have died as a result of a dog attack. This is not an isolated incident! I also picked up another dead turtle from a Lakeway St resident that had been found near the living stream. It also had puncture wounds and shell damage consistent with a dog attack. This is totally unacceptable. Lake Claremont is a precious Conservation Category Wetland, dog owners have been allocated a very generous 45,000 sqm of off-lead dog exercise area, the rest of the park is designated on-lead for the safety of other park users and the wildlife. I see far too many dogs off-lead every single time I am at the lake. Whilst many dog owners do the right thing too many do not, this needs to change!"



GUIDED FUNGI WALK

From : Nick Cook

On July 18 we were treated to a guided, fungi walk by microbiologist, Roz Hart.

The walk started at 10am with about twenty of our FOLC members. We managed to find quite an array of fungi despite about 15mm of rain falling within the hour.

The heavy, at times, rain really added to the feeling of being in nature! It also made morning tea at the shed just a little more welcome!

Big thanks to Roz and all our members that braved the elements.

A full description and photos of the fungi found on the walk will be found in the September newsletter.

Roz Hart with her fungi knife



AUGUST EVENTS

August 1 National Tree Day at Lake Claremont

August 6 Yr10 Community Service Program

August 8 Monthly Busy Bee plus BHP Corporate team- Planting

August 9 FOLC Board meeting

August 12 Lake Claremont Advisory Committee meeting

August 13, 20 and 27 Yr 10 Community Service Program

August 15, 22 Duke of Edinburgh volunteers

August 24 Night Chats- to be advised



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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