



*A black swan at Lake Claremont Photo : Ian Stewart*

### *From the editor*

It is wonderful to have so much water in Lake Claremont in January and to see such a variety of water birds of different species. Ian Stewart took this beautiful photo of a black swan in December.

FOLC members have continued to work at Lake Claremont during December and January and we have welcomed some new volunteers. (See pages 2 -3)

Congratulations are due to two of our long time members.

Claire Brittain has been awarded the OAM. General division of the Order of Australia! She has been honoured for her volunteer service to the community of Claremont and to the environment. (see page 8)

FOLC Coordinator Nick Cook was added to the Conservation Council of WA Honours list in December. (See page 4)

FOLC membership fees are now due and we appreciate our members' continued support. (See page 11)

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## VOLUNTEERING IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

*From: Nick Cook Photos : Nicky Armstrong*

We held our last busy bee for the year on December 12.

20 keen volunteers were ready to go at 7am. The weather was perfect and there was a great atmosphere all morning.

We focused on fuel load reduction works, both fine fuels and separating the understorey from the canopy.

The team were enthusiastic and we all worked really well together. 116 weed bags were filled with fine fuels and a lot of other material was removed from the project site. This will be mulched and reused on site.



It was a great effort by our volunteers and Soozie had a terrific morning tea ready for us back at the shed. Such a wonderful group of people!

I was very grateful to our volunteers, Kathryn Choules, Charlie Townsend, Leslie Osbourne and Henry and Linley Simmons who answered the call at short notice to do some hand watering at 7am on December 27.

We watered our 2021 plantings in the Ballaruk bush area.

This area of the park is 'dunal' and is elevated (therefore further from ground water).

We managed to deliver almost 800 litres of water to our thirsty native seedlings. It was a great morning's work and your help is much appreciated.



*Charlie Townsend*



It was good to spend a little time out on the wetland on January 7. I was joined by volunteers Eva and Anna Czislawski. We donned our waders and headed out onto the wetland to harvest the flowers of the *Typha orientalis* before they set seed. We did this to contain their spread as each flower head will produce thousands of seeds. This was Eva and Anna's first time out on the wetland while it still held water, they both really enjoyed the experience.



Congratulations to Eva, on her recent award as Cottesloe's Youth Citizen of the year.

Our Busy Bee on January 9 was devoted to watering our 2021 plantings in the Ballaruk bush area. Thank you to all who came along to help and to Nicky Armstrong for the lovely photos.



## 2021 CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF WA COMMUNITY AWARDS

What a way to end the year! Thank you to everyone who came down to our 27th Annual Community Conservation Awards in Walyalup on Friday December 10. It was a beautiful celebration of the incredible people who worked tirelessly to protect WA's environment throughout 2021.

We are very proud to announce that FOLC Coordinator Nick Cook was added to the CCWA Honours List last night. The award acknowledges his long term commitment to the WA environment. The CCWA President, Prof Carmen Lawrence, presented the award to our inspirational leader. Congratulations Nick!



*Above : Nick Cook with his award  
Left : Nick with Carmen Lawrence*

## WATERING STATION FOR FAUNA

*From : Lance Banister-Jones*

You build it and they will come!  
We recently made some plumbing modifications at the shed including an outside tap and a watering station for fauna. This bobtail lizard was quick to take advantage of the new facilities!



## **VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOT**

### **Jenni and Lance Banister-Jones**

*By Rose Senior*

Jenni and Lance, well-known members of the FOLC, have slipped seamlessly into the vital roles that they now play in the ongoing success of our beloved organisation. If you walk around the Lake, or live anywhere in Claremont, the chances are you'll have seen Jenni and Lance cycling along with smiles on their faces ready to participate in FOLC events, regardless of the weather or time of day. Jenni and Lance are in a perfect second-time-round partnership, each with children in their late 30s. They were introduced by a mutual friend at the Dalkeith Tennis Club, who predicted they'd see eye to eye. How right she was!

#### *Lance and Jenni in cycling mode*



Jenni and Lance first appeared on the FOLC scene in 2017, taking over the coordination of the Adopt-a-Spot program from Norma Hay. They enjoyed working with all the adopt-a-spottees and last year handed over the coordination to Graeme and Grace Paton.

In 2019 Lance and Jenni also took on other roles. Lance became Treasurer of the FOLC and a member of the Board, and Jenni the Grants Officer.

Jenni has recently submitted a grant application for purchase of infrared cameras to monitor the nocturnal movements of native and feral fauna around the lake. If successful, there would be lots of opportunities for members to be involved in setting up cameras and analysing data. What an exciting community project this could become!

Lance and Jenni's views are in line with the new focus of FOLC: creating community awareness of the restored bushland that lies at the heart of Claremont and encouraging the ongoing involvement of people living near the Lake. Committed environmentalists (you only have to walk past their open garden on the Claremont/Dalkeith border to bear this out), they are passionate about nurturing complex ecosystems and animal habitats in urban bushland.

They are also keen to encourage members to become more involved. To this end, Lance will be looking for someone to replace him as Treasurer in 2022!

Let's hope that the educational vision of Jenni, Lance and members of the FOLC Board will continue to bear fruit in the years to come.

## OUR BIRDS

*Text and pictures by David Free*

### Eastern Osprey, *Pandion cristatus*

The Osprey is found all along the coast and sometimes ventures up rivers. It builds a large stick nest, usually on a rocky outcrop, which the pair add to year after year. One pair bred for many years atop a tree on the river bank below Jutland Parade. Unfortunately the old tree eventually blew over.

Two or three eggs are laid. The incubation period is about 35 days and the young birds stay in the nest for a further 50 days.

Ospreys feed almost exclusively on fish, although they will take other birds and small animals.



Pam and I saw one at the lake the other day but it seems not to have stayed for long. The bird pictured is a female; males lack the striated throat.

## JANUARY BIRD COUNT

*From : David Free*

in January my wife Pam and I conducted a survey of the birds at Lake Claremont. The day was mild, partly cloudy with an easterly breeze. The lake still has a good depth of standing water, except in the extreme north east sector. The water gauge is muddy and difficult to read but shows about 1.5m. The bushland is very dry.

We observed 712 individuals of 37 species. These results are very much higher than our average summer census. The water level clearly suits ducks and coot, which were present in large numbers. Breeding activity, not normally seen at this time of the year, was noted for Swan, Australasian Grebe, Swamphen, Coot, and Stilt. A highlight was the sighting of four Sacred Kingfishers. As these are usually solitary birds, the implication is that this was a family group.

## FLORA AT THE LAKE IN JANUARY

From : Karen Wood

### *Calothamnus quadrifidus* (Pictured below left)

Kalos means beautiful and Thamnos shrub. Quadrifidus describes the floral structure. The Noongar name is Kwowdjard or Quietjat.

The long flowering period of this shrub is over, but it is fascinating to see the prominent fruits pictured on the scrubby plants around our Park. (*below centre*)

The flowers are rich in nectar so attractive to birds and insects. Indigenous people also liked the nutritious sweetness which could be sucked from the flower or collected for fermenting into a drink which was called Gep.

*Calothamnus* was first described by Robert Brown who was with Matthew Flinders on the "Investigator". He collected a specimen from Lucky Bay near Esperance. This was in 1802 or 1812, depending on the source!

This native is hardy and not prone to disease or pest attack (unlike my roses) and so is a welcome garden plant provided that it has a regular prune.

### Old Man Saltbush. Noongar – Purngep, Binga or Pining (Esperance) (*Below right*)

This bush can be 2 metres high with a spread of 4 metres. It is widespread in the drier areas of southern Australia, from WA across the south to South West Queensland.

I am told that it is loved by sheep and that those animals feed on it because it has a salty flavour much like the special marsh sheep so beloved of the French.

The silvery grey leaves may be treated like any leafy vegetable; blanched, lightly fried or wrapped around meat or fish. The leaves can also be dried, crushed and used like a garden herb. The leaves are rich in protein, anti oxidants and minerals. It is easy to see why this saltbush was so valuable to the indigenous people of this land.

Teas can be made by boiling the crushed leaves for a few minutes. This concoction is useful as a skin cleanser or to bathe and soothe wounds.

The seed is tiny and wind borne with the male and female parts appearing on different plants.



## **CLAIRE BRITAIN HONOURED** *From : Heidi Hardisty*

Claire writes: -

*'It is a huge honour to be recognised with an OAM. This award is recognition of all volunteers who support the Friends of Lake Claremont and the other organisations that I have been involved with.'*

As a founding Director of FOLC Ltd, Claire held positions as secretary, treasurer and grants officer for over 12 years. Claire was successful in winning \$615,000 in grants, and hence instrumental in the transformation of the former long 9 golf course at Lake Claremont into a beautiful park and nature area.



The grants allowed FOLC to purchase over 350,000 native seedlings which were planted in the park by volunteers organised and led by the Friends of Lake Claremont. Claire also volunteered for Alzheimers WA, a not-for profit organisation conducting cutting edge research on the causes and early diagnoses of Alzheimers Disease and Dementia. While a Director of the board from 2000 to 2006, she was Vice Chair from 2003-2006, and contributed to fundraising and rolling out world-leading services in dementia care.

Claire was the inaugural Administrator for the Collectors Club for 13 years. This group of people, interested in art, have supported WA artists and galleries for 25 years.

Claire has also held smaller volunteering roles at the Art Gallery of WA and Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club. With a group of friends, she participates in maintenance on a section of the Bibbulmun Track and raised money for a self-composting toilet on the track by attracting sponsorship to climb Mt Kilimanjaro with her partner John Mackay. She continues her volunteer work on the Town of Claremont Foreshore Committee, helping to conserve and enhance our natural environment. Thank you Claire for your enormous contributions and congratulations on your very well-deserved award.

## **MEMORIES OF LAKE CLAREMONT** *From : Hilary Heptinstall*

I spoke to our oldest member, 102-year-old Joan Toccock in January. She was keen to reminisce about the work done at the lake in the late 1990's and early 2000's before FOLC was established in 2003. Soozie Ross had recently moved into the area and organised weeding and planting sessions around Lake Claremont with a group of volunteers. These sessions were followed by morning tea in the Ross's garage – a forerunner to the formation of FOLC and the delicious morning teas at the FOLC shed!



*Joan and Ted Toccock with Bruce Haynes*

## BIRD LIFE AT LAKE CLAREMONT IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Our wonderful photographers have made the most of the abundance of birds at Lake Claremont in December and January and have taken some beautiful photographs.



Black winged stilts



Swamp hen

*Photos : Nicky Armstrong*



Australasian shoveller



Welcome Swallows

*Photos : Ian Stewart*

The young swallows have flown the nest in the gazebo and are now being fed outside by the parents.



Sacred kingfisher with Willy wagtail



Australian grebe with young. *Photos David Free*

David Free writes that Australasian Grebe regularly breed at our lake. At the moment there are at least two pairs with young in tow. The young birds will often ride on a parent's back. If you look carefully you should see two of the three young this adult is carrying.

David Free spotted a group of seven Sacred Kingfishers which he believes are a family group, most likely nesting in the hollow stumps of the dead paperbarks out on the lake bed. Historically we have only reported individual sightings so this is fantastic news.

*Photo : David Free*



## FOLC MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND FEE INCREASES

*From : Nick Cook*

February is membership renewal time. We greatly appreciate all of your support, and your ongoing membership is very important to us. A strong membership allows us to be a strong advocate for the wetland and the environment. We wish to encourage those of you who have not already renewed your membership to use the online payment system on our website (link below), this is a quick and secure way to stay subscribed as a FOLC member.

[Membership Levels – Friends of Lake Claremont](#)

With the loss of our annual fundraising event the FOLC Board have decided to increase membership fees to \$20 for an individual and \$40 for a family.

## QUENDA RELEASE AT LAKE CLAREMONT - UPDATE

*From : Nick Cook*

All paperwork has been approved and all permissions have been granted. As soon as a suitable number of Quenda are available they will be relocated to Lake Claremont and released. Post release the FOLC volunteers will be involved in monitoring of Quenda and other fauna at the wetland, more on this in next month's edition. We would appeal to local cat owners to consider keeping their pets inside at night and to dog walkers to abide by on-lead areas around the park. FOLC volunteers will be distributing information pamphlets to adjacent residences.

Photo by S. Cherriman



## FEBRUARY DATES

Feb 4, 11, 18 and 25	Year 10 Community Service Program
Feb 13	Sunday Busy Bee
Feb 14	FOLC Board meeting
Feb 22	Night Chats TBA



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](http://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](mailto:heptins@bigpond.net.au) 0411 052 329

## CONTACT

E-mail: [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com)

## POSTAL ADDRESS

Friends of Lake Claremont Ltd.

P.O. Box 837