



**Lake Claremont at Sunset**

*Photo : Naga Srinivas*

*From the editor*

The Friends of Lake Claremont are very excited to announce the release of the first quendas at Lake Claremont on the evening of February 22. It was good to hear Nick Cook talking on ABC Radio about the Quenda Release Programme and also of the work that has been done by FOLC over the years. Well done, Nick! (See page 2 )

We are very pleased to welcome back our Community Service students from Scotch College and Christ Church Grammar School. They have done a wonderful job of constructing and painting watering stations and bandicoot bungalows for quendas and other wild life. (See page 3)

It is interesting to read in the Post Newspaper that a dual name is being considered for Lake Claremont by the Lake Claremont Advisory committee.

“According to Noongar traditions the Lake Claremont wetland was created by the Waugal and continues to be of cultural significance to the Noongar people. The area was traditionally used for camping and hunting until the families were moved on by the government in 1951.”

We will await the decision of the committee with interest.

Our first Night Chat session for 2022 was held on February 22 and was a very interesting and informative evening. For those who missed it - Naga Srinivas has filmed the session and it is available for viewing on the FOLC Facebook page.

## QUENDA RELEASE PROGRAMME

Also known as Southern Brown Bandicoots, quendas (*Isodon obesulus fusciventer*) are digging mammals which help improve soil and promote plant growth. Quendas help disperse seeds on the site due to their diet and can spread fungal spores to the benefit of plants. They also play a significant role in fine fuel load reduction.



### From : The Town of Claremont.

With support from Friends of Lake Claremont and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) the Town has started its trial release of Southern Brown Bandicoots into the Lake Claremont wetland. The initial release will see 15-20 members introduced into the area with the hope of establishing a small but stable population. Should the trial be successful it is hoped the Lake can serve as a launch pad for further releases in surrounding bushland. The Town is committed to preserving our natural wildlife and has introduced increased fox control and protection measures. We are also asking residents to do their part by following responsible pet owner guidelines by keeping dogs on leashes in designated areas and keeping cats inside after dark.

### From : Nick Cook

On a personal note...

Thank you to all the volunteers who have contributed to our efforts to make this release a success.

Thank you to the FOLC Board for backing this initiative and my efforts to advocate for it. Special mention to Kevin McAlpine who first proposed the idea of quenda relocations.

The Parks Dept at Claremont (past and present staff) have been behind this all the way and the final approval of this project is in no small part due to their efforts!

*Quenda release : Naga Srinivas*



I attended the release on the evening of Wednesday February 23 of two quendas. It was without doubt one of the most special days of my life. To be releasing a priority 4 threatened species into Lake Claremont is a great privilege and a very special achievement, of which every FOLC member should feel incredibly proud. Week one of our quenda relocation project has been a great success with thirteen quendas released so far - ten males and three females. One of the females is carrying two babies in her pouch!

Community support for the release program has been overwhelming.

Post release we expect that there may be some dispersal into nearby residential gardens as the quendas explore their new home. Please do not feed or interfere with the quendas. Feel free to put a water dish out during the hot weather.

Please report any sightings of quendas to Town of Claremont and/or FOLC. We would love to see any photos.



## YEAR 10 COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMME

*From : Nick Cook   Photos : Naga Srinivas*

Our Year 10 Community Service Program is back for 2022. This is our 12th year of running this event with Christ Church and Scotch College students.

On Friday we had a very special task for the boys and a special visitor, our Mayor Jock Barker.

*Scotch College students with Jock Barker and Nick Cook*

The boys constructed and painted ten wildlife watering stations and prepared two bandicoot bungalows ready for distribution. This was the perfect job to be completed under the shade of the paperbark trees at the FOLC shed on a very hot afternoon.

The boys enjoyed using the spray cans and Jock Barker joined in too!





## MINI BUSY BEE

*From : Nick Cook*

On Sunday February 20 we held a mini Busy Bee. A small group of volunteers arrived at 7.00am, to install our new watering stations that were put together by the CCGS and Scotch College students on the previous Friday.

A few stations needed a little work to fix leaks but we managed to get six stations filled and installed.

These watering stations will not only be great for our Quenda but also for other species including lizards and skinks.



*Our volunteers*



*A watering station installed*

## FEBRUARY BUSY BEE *From : Nick Cook      Photos : Nicky Armstrong*

Earlier this month we had our regular busy bee. The Ballaruk bush area sits high and dry in our landscape at Lake Claremont and hand watering was our focus.



*Young waterers.*



*Tea at the shed*



## VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOT - Karen Wood

*By Rose Senior*

Karen Wood is a well-known member of FOLC, living in a house alongside Creswell Park, which she describes as her window on the park. She is passionate about the wildlife that proliferates on her doorstep: plants, trees, birds, flowers, fungi, insects and native animals– you name it, Karen is bursting with enthusiasm and keen to share her environmental knowledge and insights with others. Still going on twice-yearly expeditions into the bush with her equally enthusiastic sister, Karen fills her i-pad with close-ups of native flowering plants in all their beauty and variety. She particularly loves the Nyungar names for certain native plants: 'djubak' for the donkey orchid, 'toolbardi' for the bottlebrush and 'kondil' for the sheoak.



A girl from the bush, Karen was born in Narrogin and brought up in Harvey, receiving her secondary education at Perth Modern School before studying history at UWA. Having met her husband Harry, an engineer from York in the UK, Karen was destined to travel the world and live in a variety of cities and countries: Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Toronto, New Zealand and the UK (twice), before finally settling in Swanbourne in 2000. Karen explains how liberating she found it to leave ultra-conservative WA in her early twenties and live her life in countries where she could explore progressive ideas more fully.

Once back in the Town of Claremont it didn't take Karen long to re-kindle her passion for the conservation of remnant bushland. A keen golfer, she saw the threat of urban development if the long 9-hole golf course closed in 2004 and immediately organised petitions and bombarded *The Post* with letters of protest. Once her activist potential and environmental concerns were recognised Karen was invited to represent the West Ward on the Claremont Council, a role she fulfilled for 9 years.

In 2018 she became a member of the Advisory Committee for the FOLC.

Karen is a passionate supporter of the Friends of Lake Claremont and is absolutely delighted that the Friends is such a strong community group that is going from strength to strength as it continues to collaborate so proactively with the Town of Claremont.

## OUR BIRDS

*Text and photos by David Free*

### **Spotless Crane, *Porzana tabuensis***

Early in February I was asked to help identify a photo of a bird taken by a local resident. It turned out to be a Spotless Crane, a species which I hadn't seen at the lake for a few years. Quite probably they have been present each year, when conditions, as now, were suitable.

These birds forage for insects and seeds on soft mud and in shallow water. However, they are extremely shy and move very fast when they feel under threat. It took me a couple of long waits in my portable bird hide to get these photos.

Spotless Cranes have bred at our lake; the photo of the chick was taken in 2015. Their nests are well hidden in reeds or sedges and 3-6 eggs are laid.





## FEBRUARY NIGHT CHAT

*From : Hilary Heptinstall*



*Nick Cook, Heather Johnstone, Brendan O'Toole, Max Hipkins and Martina Bovell*

There was a full house for our February Night Chats session and we were pleased to welcome Heather Johnstone, secretary of the Victoria Park Tree Board and Brendan O'Toole the Chairperson of the Nedlands Tree Canopy Advocates along, with Martina Bovell and Max Hipkins from Nedlands.

We started the evening by watching a documentary film, 'Made in the Shade'. Heather has rights to this documentary and it was its first showing in Perth. It showed how Sacramento in the USA went from being a city with very few trees and a dependence on nuclear power to a 'City of Trees' equal with Paris by 2017.

The nuclear power plant closed in the late 80's and since then there has been fund raising and huge community involvement and tree planting.

Heather Johnstone then spoke to us about what is happening in the Town of Victoria Park. There was a lot of land clearing and all trees were removed when West Coast Eagles' ground, Lathlain Park, which contains two ovals, was created.

After strong community reaction to this, a 'Tree Board' was established by Victoria Park Council. This board, of which Heather is secretary, meets once a month and carries out regular fund-raising activities. They aim to plant 2500 - 3000 trees per year. Heather is also studying for a Master's Degree in Forestry.

The Town of Victoria Park now has an Urban Forest Strategy and Strategic Community Plan to increase vegetation and tree canopy, which may be viewed online.

*Continued on page 8*

Brendan O'Toole is Chairperson of the Nedlands Tree Canopy Advocates. He moved to Dalkeith thinking it would be a good area to raise a family, but soon became aware of the removal of trees to build large houses which occupied the whole of a large block, leaving little space for vegetation. Other states have penalties for the removal of significant trees but most LGAs in Western Australia do nothing to prevent this.

We need trees for many reasons including natural air conditioning, natural wind breaks, privacy screen, aesthetics and carbon sequestration. They also provide homes and food for our native birds and other fauna.

The Nedlands Tree Canopy Advocates was formed in 2020 with the aim of creating a green tree canopy from the river to the sea, preserving trees, encouraging the planting of trees and replacing lost trees with the appropriate species. In 2021 the NTCA moved online and grew to 700 members. After working with NTCA, Nedlands council recently passed a new street tree policy and a species list which now includes Tuart, Marri and Jarrah. The next step is a scheme amendment that will protect significant trees on private property.

There were many questions to our speakers and one person asked if we could form 'The Western Suburbs Tree Canopy Advocates'!

Thank you to both Heather and Brendon. You are doing an amazing job and it was a very interesting and enjoyable evening.

## **SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION**

*From : Nick Cook*

We had some wonderful news on February 28.

Our Grants Officer Jenni Bannister-Jones has just advised me that FOLC have been successful in our application for a \$7,500 Stronger Communities grant from the Federal Government!

We will use these funds to purchase trail cameras for monitoring our quenda population and other fauna at lake Claremont.

Big thanks to our local Member for Curtin, Celia Hammond for her continued support of our efforts to preserve and enhance biodiversity at lake Claremont.

Well done Jenni!



## QUENDA RELEASE – THE WORK CONTINUES!

*From : Nick Cook   Photos : Gemma and Craig Fowler*



Our Scotch College and Christ Church Year 10 boys put together more bandicoot bungalows on Friday February 25 and on the following Sunday we installed them in the revegetated areas.

Our volunteers started work at 7am. It was great to welcome new members and first time volunteers the Scannell family!

It was a lovely, relaxing session behind the fences on a somewhat cooler morning.

On Sunday evening we had another successful release with some special guests.

It was good to welcome long time FOLC members, Heidi Hardisty and Kevin McAlpine, with his wife, Michelle, and their grandchildren.

Annabelle Walsh, our webmaster, Tom Paul and Lyssandra Lumley, who will both be helping me with our monitoring program, also joined us.

Special thanks to Graham Thompson for sharing his experience and knowledge of quenda (and broader issues). This was a great chance for us to learn directly from experts in the field.



## EUROPEAN WASP ACTIVITY

*From : Nick Cook*

I have had discussion with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding European wasp activity in proximity to Lake Claremont. *European wasp (pictured)*



This is a pest that we definitely do not want to establish itself in our neighbourhood. If it does you can say good bye to picnics, barbecues and outdoor entertaining!

If you live locally, please consider the "adopt a trap" program to assist DPIRD in eliminating these introduced pests

To assist in ID the common paper wasp has yellow antennae and the European wasp has black antennae.

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/.../european-wasp->

## TURTLE ACTION

*From : Nick Cook*

Our turtles were active in early February. Thank you to local residents who reported turtle sightings. Please do not hesitate to contact FOLC if you see a turtle in trouble.

Tamsin contacted us and a healthy female was rescued from a garden on busy Alfred Rd.

Judging by her weight I would suspect she was carrying eggs and looking for a nesting site.

Due to a pet dog and proximity to the busy road I released her back to the wetland

Hopefully she will show better judgement on her next attempt to nest!

On the same day, other Alfred Rd residents, Liz and Nick, found this injured turtle in their backyard.

The turtle had a carapace fracture that is almost certainly a car strike.

We hope that this can be repaired and the turtle saved.





## MARCH DATES

Year 10 Community Service

Fridays March 11, 18 and 25

March Night Chat

Tuesday March 22 at 5.30pm

Night Chat details will be sent to members by email

## LAKE CLAREMONT IN FEBRUARY

With water levels still at unusually high levels for February, the water birds have remained at Lake Claremont throughout the summer and Nicky Armstrong and Naga Srinivas have taken some lovely photos.

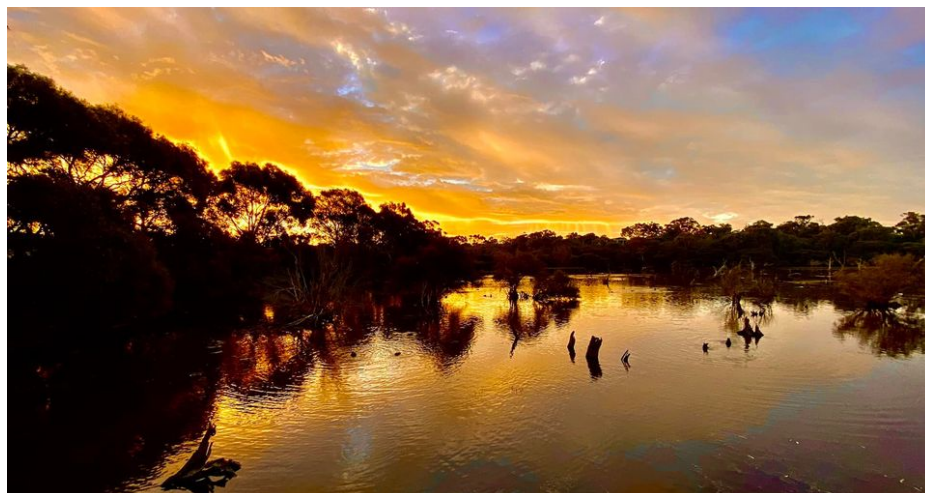


Pink-eared duck



Glossy Ibis

*Nicky Armstrong*



Lake Claremont at sunset

*Naga Srinivas*



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

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