



Australian White Ibis at Lake Claremont Photo : David Free

From the editor, Hilary Heptinstall

FOLC hosted a Smoking Ceremony at the end of NAIDOC week, which was very well attended. (See page 3)

The main planting season at Lake Claremont is now completed but FOLC members will keep busy over the next few months with weeding and general maintenance. Thank you, Heidi Hardisty, for your leadership during our planting sessions. (See page 4) The work of all our members is very much appreciated by the local community and I hear many comments about how beautiful the Lake Claremont area is now. It is good to see so much bird life in the area.

FOLC and the Town of Claremont would like to give advance notice of an important Citizen Science program which will help to protect turtle nests at our Lake Claremont wetlands.

We will be collaborating with Anthony Santoro and Murdoch University's Harry Butler Institute along with many other land care and conservation groups. More details will follow soon and we hope that our members will be interested.

THE END OF THE PLANTING SEASON

Text : Nick Cook Photos : Nick Cook and Nicky Armstrong

We had a wonderful finish to our planting season on the morning of Sunday, July 10.

Heidi Hardisty was unwell, so the session was led by veteran planter, Zac Hardisty. About 20 volunteers arrived at the McKenzie bushland on what turned out to be a beautiful morning.

Our volunteers planted 1800 native tubestock in about 3.5 hours, finishing up around 12pm.

This was a Town of Claremont (TOC) project with the TOC purchasing the plants and FOLC volunteers planting them.

Many thanks to Chloe Dolan from TOC for planning and for supplying a great morning tea.

Special thanks are due to Soozie Ross and her team of volunteers for organising and serving our morning teas throughout the season.

Many thanks also to all our volunteers for a great planting effort.

Zac Hardisty



The planting site



Dedicated planters, Alice Thomas and Charlie Townsend

TRADITIONAL LAND CARE

Talk given by Phil Walley-Stack on Sunday 10 July at 2 pm

To celebrate the final day of NAIDOC Week Claremont Council and the FOLC hosted a presentation by well-known Noongar man Phil Walley-Stack in a clearing amongst the paper bark trees by the FOLC Shed. Tea, coffee and delicious cake were served, names were ticked off, and people settled down on chairs surrounding a gently smoking fire pit, chatting amongst themselves and waiting for the event to begin. In came Phil, at ease in his environment and beaming at everyone, ready to share his insights with his keen and alert audience. Even the sun came out, with initially a few smatterings of rain: "Part of being in the bush", said Phil, smiling.



*Deputy Mayor, Annette Suann,
Phil Walley-Stack and Nick Cook.*

The focus of Phil's talk was caring for country and these are some of the things that he said:

- We are caretakers of country, not owners
- If you look after country, country looks after you
- Don't try to look after the whole country – just take care of your part – your spot
- Don't look away in the distance – look close
- Walk softly on this land. Stop and listen! The land is speaking to you quietly, in feelings

Phil talked about song lines, traditional stories that link all of Australia together as people sing their way along them: moving from one place to another, taking their firesticks with them, following waterways, lakes and rivers that are interconnected by the mysterious underground snake or rainbow serpent known as the Wagyl. Phil told us that he had been taken out bush by his grandfather, who had taught him many things: how to walk along old tracks and avoid treading on new shoots, how to notice mopokes (owls indistinguishable from trees) that sit observing you silently as you pass by.

Phil involved us in cultural activities too. After putting fresh leaves on the fire, smoke billowed up and people got up and moved towards the fire, holding out their hands to embrace the swirling smoke. Phil performed some chants for us in Noongar language, maintaining the regular rhythm with his clapsticks, clicking them together expertly in his left hand. Finally, Phil picked up his didgeridoo and, resting it on the ground, blew through it to produce a long, haunting sound that captivated us all.

Thank you, Phil, for a magical afternoon in a special Aboriginal place outside the FOLC Shed – and for sharing your culture so generously.

VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOT - Heidi Hardisty

By Rose Senior

Heidi Hardisty has been a key member of FOLC for almost 15 years, her interest in Lake Claremont kindled soon after she and her husband Paul moved into a house that they purchased in Myera St. Inspired by Soozie Ross who had formed a friends' group to focus on preserving the local bushland, Heidi soon became involved with the Lake - and has never looked back.

Born in Winnipeg, capital of the province of Manitoba in Canada, Heidi spent her teenage years in an isolated community where her Dad worked for a pipeline company. She teamed up with Paul in Calgary, where they were both petroleum engineers. Heidi and Paul left Canada in 1996, planning to be away for no more than a



After postings in the UK and Cyprus, Paul sold his company to an Australian firm and he and Heidi decided to move to Perth.

Heidi is a committed environmentalist, handing out how-to-vote Greens leaflets at the Swanbourne polling station at the recent federal election, asking tricky questions to people whose opinions she challenges, and in her own words sometimes “screaming and yelling” to get her views heard. The other day Heidi expressed outrage at the amount of glad wrap used in a local coffee shop to encase a single muffin.

In 2018 Heidi found herself facing a difficult situation. Should she move to Queensland with Paul, who had been offered the position of CEO of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, located 40 kms south of Townsville – and join an environmental community over there? Or should she remain in Myera St, continue her close association with the Friends, and support her two sons who both work and study in Perth: Zac (27), who is on the FOLC Board, and Declan (24), who plays Aussie Rules for the Claremont Football Club.

Heidi decided to keep both options open, commuting between WA and Queensland for several years. When in Perth she would be involved in the FOLC planting season and the WA footie league – and when in Queensland she would support Paul in the isolated complex on the edge of a national park in which they lived. But in 2020 covid struck and Heidi found herself in lockdown in Queensland. This led her to analyse her feelings about Perth: “My heart is here”, “my family hub is here”, “my true friends are here”, “and for me WA is home”. We value your sentiments, Heidi, and look forward to your ongoing commitment to FOLC for many years to come!

A TRIBUTE TO SOOZIE ROSS

From: Nick Cook Photos : Nicky Armstrong

Soozie Ross is the heart and soul of our group. Formerly the Coordinator of FOLC, Soozie now heads up our catering team.

Always there with a hot cuppa, yummy treats and a warm smile !

Soozie has roped in some new recruits this season, friends from another group called the Action Outdoors Group.

This month, Soozie, Suzanne Fielding and Connie Birch (*pictured right*) served up a very welcome and delicious morning tea for our planting volunteers.

THANK YOU Soozie and crew!



VISIT FROM FRIENDS OF PERRY LAKES

From : Nick Cook Photos: Tina Thomson

This month I had the great pleasure of hosting the, recently formed, Friends of Perry Lakes group and taking them on a guided tour of the lake and our revegetation project.

This was a great chance to share some of our learning along the way.

Their group has been busy planting this winter and I look forward to following their progress.

We had a great walk and talk, with lots of interesting questions.

We even had a quenda sighting in the Eastern buffer! A perfect finish to our tour!



FUNGI AT LAKE CLAREMONT

From: Karen Wood

Birds Nest Fungus *Crucibulum laeve*

This most fascinating fungus is only found during rain. Each one is tiny. The crystalline particles behind are sand grains. The “eggs” are attached to the “nest” by fine threads which break when raindrops knock the eggs out of the nest, thus spreading the spore. Birds Nests are widespread in bush land, but very easily overlooked especially as they disappear quickly once the sun comes out. These were found in the remnant bush on the north side of Lake Claremont. (*pictured left*)

Glistening inkcap mushroom *Coprinellus micaceus*

This is a common and beautiful fungus especially when young. It grows in clusters on dead or decaying wood, so around Lake Claremont it comes up often in older mulch, or sometimes at the base of trees. Very widespread. The inky part is the spores under the cap which are black or very dark brown as can be seen in these mature specimens. (*pictured centre*)

Amanita, (possibly *Amanita virosa*)

This mushroom is an introduced species, probably from Europe. It is uncommon here but is found around Canberra where it is suspected to be associated with eucalyptus as well as introduced deciduous trees. I have never seen it in our area before.

If it is *Amanita virosa*, then it is poisonous. (*pictured right*)



Birds Nest Fungus

Glistening inkcap mushroom

Amanita

OUR BIRDS

Text and photos by David Free

*White-fronted Chat, *Epthianura albifrons*.*

The White-fronted Chat is one of four chat species found in Australia and the only one likely to be seen in the south-west. They prefer open country, treeless to sparsely treed, and can usually be seen on open, damp, ground near salt lakes or marshland. They are gregarious and small parties forage for insects on the ground or in low bush.

Breeding occurs from July to January. Three to four eggs are laid, which hatch after two weeks. The young fledge two weeks after hatching.

When conducting the bird census in April 2001, the late Miss Norah Brockman and I saw a group of fifteen on the golf course. I haven't spotted them at our lake since then. Please let



Female White-fronted Chat



Male White-fronted Chat

JULY BIRD CENSUS

On 25th July morning my wife Pam and I conducted a survey of the birds at Lake Claremont. The morning was cold, partly cloudy and still. There was water in all parts of the lake. The gauge by the jetty showed approximately 1.55m.

We recorded 401 individuals of 40 species, slightly above the average species number for our winter surveys.

Breeding activity was noted for Black Swan; we saw six nest mounds, one of which contained newly hatched young. Grey Teal, Pacific Black Ducks and Coots numbers were below average. Black Swan, Swamphen, Magpies, Silvereyes and Brown and Singing Honeyeaters were more abundant than normal.

YEAR 10 COMMUNITY SERVICE : *From Nick Cook*

On Friday July 22 we had a great session with Year 10 students from Christchurch Grammar School.

We had about 50 seedlings to plant at the Lisle Street path and a bit of weeding to do nearby. We had grown some everlasting plants from seed and planted about 75 of these throughout the other plantings. Hopefully this will make a nice 'entry statement'. Well done, lads!



BANDICOOT BUNGALOW BUILDING *From : Nick Cook*

Earlier in the year, Matthew approached FOLC looking for a project for his Scotch College Year 8 Community Service initiative. Over the last few months Matthew, as well as building 10 bandicoot bungalows, has done some planting at Lake Claremont.

On Sunday July 24, we installed Matthew's bungalows in the Northern section of the park. Thank you, Matthew, for a great and very meaningful contribution to conservation at Lake Claremont.



Matthew in action



A bandicoot bungalow

QUENDA UPDATE

The Town of Claremont have installed new signs at Lake Claremont, helping passers by to spot a quenda and to learn more about them.

Have you seen a quenda yet?



Town of Claremont and FOLC continue to receive reports of quenda sightings from members of the public. The area near the Lapsley Road noticeboard seems to be a hotspot for sightings.

Our quendas appear to be settling in very well and we continue to see lots of digging activity across the park.

Please keep us informed of any sightings.

A quenda release in March



JULY NIGHT CHAT

From : Hilary Heptinstall

Our speaker was Simon Cherriman, an awarded wildlife photographer, researcher and educator who runs 'Insight Ornithology' and the 'Re-Cycology Project.'

He said that a gift of a bird watchers' journal in early childhood started a life long passion for birds and nature. Simon has worked with many school and community groups in making nest boxes.

The most common trees in Australia are Eucalypts, which form hollows when their inside decays. Hollows may also be caused by termites. It can take a hundred years to form a hollow and many vertebrate species are dependent on them. The best hollows are those which have a door, a corridor and a floor!



Simon Cherriman with Nick Cook

The bad news is that, with logging over the years for the formation of farmland and residential areas, many old trees have been removed and highly flammable 'pole forests' now exist in their place.

Bush fires have also destroyed many habitable trees, reducing the number of hollows available for nesting.

It is important to build nest boxes to replace lost habitats. As a child, Simon made possum boxes for his and his neighbours' gardens.

A nest box is simply an artificial tree hollow attached to the outside of a tree or a structure such as a building, bridge or pole.

Once built, it is important that nest boxes are checked regularly. If one is built in your garden, it can easily become part of regular gardening routine and can be a source of great interest. It is important that nest boxes are tailored to fit the species.

A project in the Perth Hills has seen 230 boxes built on 25 properties.

Simon works with school children in making nesting boxes from discarded building materials. He sees nest building as a way of restoring vital connections with nature.

Thank you for a very interesting talk, Simon. There were many questions and copies of Simon's book 'Hollowed Out' were snapped up!

More information about Simon can be found on his website www.simoncherriman.com.au

THANK YOU TO THE TOWN OF CLAREMONT

From : Nick Cook

FOLC would like to thank the Town of Claremont for their ongoing support of our group and the restoration work that we do.

In early 2022 we applied for and received a TOC Community grant. We used this money to build our capacity to manage volunteer projects around the park.

We added 4 new wheelbarrows to our fleet of barrows and some new mulching forks also. This allows us to better resource our Year 10 Community Service program.

Two different ladders were purchased and these will be used for a variety of tasks including fauna monitoring.

Also on our wish list was a fan for the shed in summer and a battery and pump to make hand watering easier from our new water tank.

The FOLC make a considerable contribution to not just the wetland but to the community and we are now better equipped to continue doing so.



AUGUST CALENDAR DATES

Friday August 5, 12, 17, 26

Year 10 Community Service Project

Sunday August 14

Busy Bee. 8am

Tuesday August 23
Tennis club

August Night Chat 5.30pm Claremont



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

CONTACT

E-mail: folc.wa@gmail.com

POSTAL ADDRESS

Friends of Lake Claremont Ltd.

P.O. Box 837

Claremont WA, 6910