



***Black Swan with cygnets at Lake Claremont***

*Photo : Nicky Armstrong*

September has been another busy month for weeding, involving an extra Busy Bee as well as holding a weeding day with Woodside volunteers. Thanks to Heidi Hardisty for leading these sessions.

We enjoyed the Town of Claremont's Celebrate Lake Claremont this month and were pleased to be involved. (See page 4)

### **Update on local Cat Laws**

It is unfortunate that, due to significant amendments to the Local Animal Law 2023 put forward by Cr Peter Edwards, the State government has insisted that the Town of Claremont revisit the public consultation process. It is our hope that this will provide an opportunity to protect both Lake Claremont and the river foreshore from roaming cats as originally proposed. We will advise you when the public submission period opens.

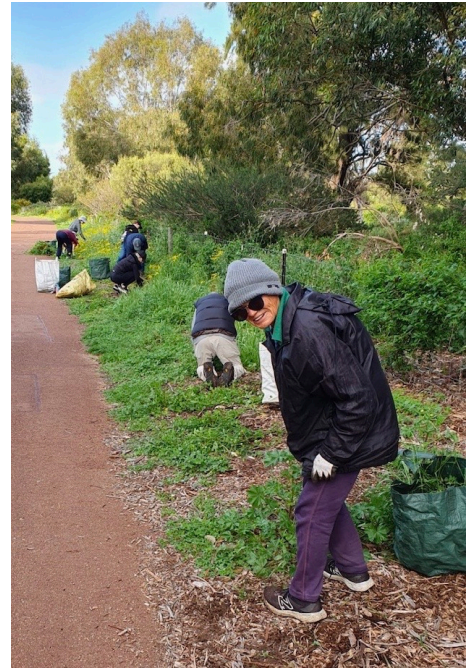
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## SEPTEMBER BUSY BEE - Weeding Away

*Fron : Heidi Hardisty*

We had great weather for our regular busy bee which is held on the second Sunday of every month. A dozen people attended, including a few for the first time along with our seasoned regulars. We tackled the weeds on the eastern side of the lake mainly along the footpath, removing annual veldt grass laden with seed, huge thistles, burr medic, whiteflower fumitory and marshmallow - all of which were growing vigorously. 70 bags of weeds were removed! Meanwhile FOLC's champion weeders, Norma, Dot and Linley, removed another 20 bags of weeds on the eastern side of the parkland near the houses north of Elliot Road.

At the end of the session, we were rewarded with a delicious tea of homemade goodies by Catherine McAuley. Thank you everyone for your wonderful efforts. Please consider joining us next month Sunday October 8 . We meet at the FOLC shed at 07:30am



*Above : Long time weeder, Alice Thomas*  
*Below : Young volunteers*



## WOODLAND WORK WITH WOODSIDE

*From : Heidi Hardisty*

FOLC teamed up with Woodside for a day in mid-September to care for the remnant bushland and reduce bushfire risk. The corporate day was organized by Olivia from Volunteering WA through their Corporate Volunteering Program designed to link up community groups with businesses wishing to contribute through team-based and skills-based volunteering.

Olivia and I led the group of 11 enthusiastic and hard-working people. We weeded out thistles and whiteflower fumitory, removed an unwanted pile of mulch from the bushland - making more space for local plants to grow - and started the annual task of removing small twigs and branches to lower the bushfire risk over the summer. We were lucky with the weather, and enjoyed each other's company, a delicious morning tea and lunch.

Days like this are important. The volunteers get to learn and spread the word about the importance of wetlands and preserving our biodiversity. The Woodside crew were very appreciative of FOLC's amazing restoration work which has led to increasing bird diversity and the reintroduction of quenda at Lake Claremont. FOLC is equally appreciative about Woodside efforts and involvement.

Note : Heidi is FOLC Planting Supervisor (Volunteer)



## **CELEBRATE LAKE CLAREMONT**

*From : Nick Cook and Hilary Heptinstall*

We had perfect weather for Celebrate Lake Claremont Day on Sunday, September 17. It was wonderful to see the community come together to celebrate and there were many activities in which to participate. There was a good turnout of FOLC members. We were pleased to share our marquee with Poppy Mahon and her friends from Youth Action for Wildlife and to collaborate on a joint display.

Congratulations [Town of Claremont](#) on a very well organised community event. Bravo!



*FOLC and Youth Action for Wildlife members*



*Nick Cook addressing the crowd*

## OUR BIRDS

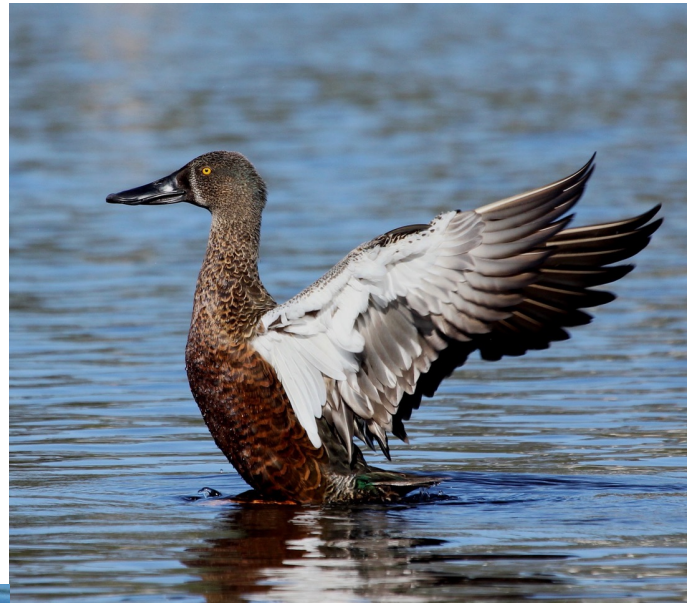
*Text and photos by David Free*

### **Australasian Shoveler, *Spatula rhynchotis*, Bardoongooba**

These most handsome birds are one of the ten species of ducks which visit Lake Claremont. They are said to prefer permanent water bodies, so we are very fortunate to be able to see them on our ephemeral wetland. They use their specially shaped bills to filter microorganisms from water or soft mud.

This species is endemic to Australia and New Zealand.

**NOTE:** While at Celebrate Lake Claremont, I purchased, from the Birdlife stall, a book with the Noongar names of our birds; I plan to include these in future editions.



*Male Australasian Shoveler (above)*



## FLOWERING IN SEPTEMBER

From : Karen Wood

**Harsh Hakea** *Hakea prostrata*  
Noongar names: Burrung, Doolgar, Pulgar

Plentiful nectar on the flowers of this bush shrub makes it very attractive to birds and insects. The flowers were also used by Noongar people who soaked them in water to make a sweet drink, sometimes allowing this to ferment into a mildly alcoholic drink called 'gep'.

The woody fruits which come after flowering were roasted in hot ashes and the seeds eaten. They are said to taste like roasted almonds.

The gum from some hakeas (and there are many varieties ) could also be eaten and could be stored in cakes for later consumption.

The flowers are very attractively soft and sweet compared with the prickly harshness of the leaves.



**Purple flag** *Patersonia occidentalis*  
Noongar name Komma

There are at least six varieties of this plant in the Perth region and many more around the southern states of Australia. The colour of the flowers in our area range from blue to violet to purple. Each flower lasts only a day - by evening the bloom closes to be replaced by another further along the scappy stem.

The stems are similar to many types of sedges and grasses so it's always a pleasant surprise when the attractive flowers appear.

Purple flag is found from the Murchison to Israelite Bay, especially in nutrient poor soils.



## SEPTEMBER NIGHT CHAT

*From :Hilary Heptinstall*

The speaker at our September Night Chat was Dr Damien C. Lettoof, who has worked at Curtin University and is now with CSIRO.

Damien spoke about the impacts of urbanisation on tiger snakes (*Notechis scutayus*) and their use as a bioindicator of wetland health. at our wetland areas.

Tiger snakes give birth to live young (they are viviparous) and mothers can have 8 -10 offspring per year.

*Nick Cook with Damien Lettoof (right)*



There are no tiger snakes at Lake Claremont but they are the top predator at other wetland 'islands' within Perth, including Yanchep, Lake Joondalup, Herdsman Lake and Bibra Lake. They are abundant and potentially live for 10-15 years. They are primarily frog predators.

The health of tiger snakes in urban areas is affected by

- Contaminants and bioaccumulation,
- Population genetics and isolation
- Habitat suitability and food availability

In our wetlands, tiger snakes accumulate metalloids. Herdsman Lake was the most contaminated with metals and Yanchep second. They also have trace amounts of rat poison in their systems.

Damien is researching PFAS (per and polyfluoroalkyl substances). PFAS are a large, complex group of synthetic chemicals, which have been used in a variety of everyday products around the world since about the 1950s. The levels were highest in Herdsman Lake and Joonalup waters but not detected in Yanchep.

Snakes are at the top of the food chain so these findings suggest that those below them e.g. frogs must also be contaminated.

Some opportunistic discoveries that Damien has made are that tiger snakes can eat baby bandicoots and turtles, they can eat bottle caps and die, and they can hold their breath for at least 18 minutes!

Damien's main findings are that tiger snakes are suffering health impact from contaminants. This reflects contamination in the lower food chain.

Damien is now conducting research in assessing the health of frogs around Perth and Brisbane. He has just begun water sampling in Lake Claremont. He has the ability to assess motorbike frogs but would also like to grow the capacity to assess moaning and banjo frogs at highly contaminated sites.

Thank you for speaking to us, Damien. It was a very interesting evening.

## ADOPT A SPOT *From : Linley Simmons*

Friends of Lake Claremont "Adopt a Spot" group has been functioning for several years.

There are currently 33 weeders plus the Rotary Club Western Endeavour which has 3-6 active workers. We are concentrating on the woodland north of the lake near Alfred Road.

Adopt a Spotters are allocated a spot to keep as weed free as possible. You chose how large the area is and weed as leisurely and often as you like. Photos are available of the local weeds on the notice board in The Shed. We are currently working on an email file of weeds to send to everyone with a Spot. You can also send me a photo of any plants you are not sure about.

If you don't fancy weeding alone, consider joining Norma's group. About 7 of us meet every Monday morning at 7.30am in the Elliot Road planted area.

If you are interested, contact [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com). Your details will be forwarded to me and I will arrange to meet you at your Spot and explain the process."



Help us keep Lake Claremont  
beautiful by joining

## ADOPT A SPOT

You will be allocated a spot to weed at your leisure.  
Once weeded, it only takes a few times a year to  
maintain. The weeds die off in Summer.

TO JOIN CONTACT  
[folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com)



## JOAN TOCOCK

*From : Hilary Heptinstall*



Averil Balfe and I visited our oldest FOLC member, Joan Toccock at her South Perth nursing home this month. She was in very good spirits and was pleased to see us.

At 104, she is still interested in Lake Claremont and was very pleased to hear all our news.

She is a role model for all of us!



## THE LAKE IN SEPTEMBER

### BEAUTIFUL BOBTAILS

*By Heidi Hardisty*

It is Spring and with the warmer weather the Western Bobtails are now active. These large skinks seek out the sun to help maintain their body temperature to function at their best. Please be careful along the footpaths, especially if you have a dog or are riding a bike.

Bobtails are monogamous and mate in early summer, giving birth to 1-3 live babies, usually 2 in late autumn. The gestation period is about 150 days. After birth, the babies shed their skin and eat it along with the remains of the yolk sac, membranes and placenta which are rich in nutrients. The young are able to live independently from birth but often accompany their mother for 1-2 years. A bobtail may live up to 70 years!



Please remember that all WA native wildlife are protected under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. A person must not 'take' fauna unless the person has lawful authority to do so. In the Act, take means to kill, injure, harvest or capture fauna by any means. But you can rescue an injured native animal. Contact the Wildcare Helpline 9474 9055 for instructions. Look out for these beautiful bobtails at Lake Claremont or in your garden.



*Left: A quenda at the Lake  
Photo : Sue Frawley*

*Right:  
A turtle tracker releasing a turtle*



## YEAR 10 COMMUNITY SERVICE

*From : Heidi Hardisty*

September has been another productive month.

One Friday, the Scotch College boys helped to build turtle nest protectors which will be used by the Turtle Trackers.

Paul Reiffer and Charlie Townshend led the work. Meanwhile the Christ Church Grammar students were led on a guided walk by Heid Hardisty to learn the importance of wetlands and volunteering for the community. Another afternoon, the boys weeded along the eastern buffer, collecting 47 bags of weeds. A great effort!



*Turtle protectors*

## COMMUNITY DONATIONS CAMPAIGN

*From : Nick Cook*

We should like to offer our thanks to the Commonwealth Bank (Claremont Branch) for nominating Friends of Lake Claremont to participate in their Community Donations Campaign.

FOLC received the highest number of votes from the community and received a \$500 donation. Nick met with branch manager, Tim Thompson, to collect the winning cheque.



*Tim Thompson and Nick Cook*

## BIRDS AT THE LAKE IN SEPTEMBER

There has been an abundance of bird life at Lake Claremont in September and talented photographer, Nicky Armstrong, took this beautiful photo of a Pink-eared Duck using a nesting box installed by FOLC a few years ago.



## OCTOBER DATES

Sunday October 8	Busy Bee. 7.30pm
Friday October 13	Year 10 Community Service Project
Tuesday October 17	Night Chats Kingsley Dixon 5.30pm Claremont Tennis Club
Friday October 20	Year 10 Community Service Project
Sunday October 22	Millenium Kids youth volunteering forum



natural resource  
management program



## CONTACT

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

## POSTAL ADDRESS

Friends of Lake Claremont Ltd.

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Claremont WA, 6910

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