



*The Lake in April Photo : Ian Stewart*

*From the editor : Hilary Heptinstall*

Lake Claremont still remains dry after a very long, hot summer and our volunteers' main work this year has involved hand watering. We are very grateful for their efforts. (See page 2)

We have been successful in securing another \$2000 grant to purchase plants from Planet Ark's "The Seedling Bank" for which we are grateful.

May will be a very busy month for Friends of Lake Claremont. National Volunteer Week will be held from May 20 - 26 and we will be holding a Barbecue to recognise the efforts of all our FOLC volunteers on Sunday May 26. This event is sponsored by a grant from Volunteering WA.

We will celebrate the WA Tree Festival with a concert from Junkadelic on Sunday May 5 (See page 6)

The speaker at our May Night Chat session on May 21 will be a representative from SERCUL. SERCUL is contracted by Town of Claremont to conduct water quality testing. The talk will discuss water quality testing at Lake Claremont and should be very interesting.

## APRIL BUSY BEES

*From : Nick Cook*

As the long, hot summer continues and in the absence of any rain, we continued our hand watering activities through April. We held two busy bees over the school holidays to ensure the survival of our 2023 plantings.

Thanks to Soozie Ross, Averil Balfe and Shelley Hatton for putting on a terrific morning tea and to Nicky Armstrong for the great photos.

Our year 10 students from Scotch and CCGS continue to hand water at our Friday sessions.



*Enjoying morning tea after the hard work*

## TURTLE TRACKING AT LAKE CLAREMONT

*An interim report*

*From : Rose Senior*

On Thursday 11 April a group of FOLC members gathered at the Shed to hear Anthony Santoro present his updated findings of his research into the wellbeing of the endangered snake-necked turtles that inhabit 17 wetlands around Perth.

Anthony began his talk with an overview of the Turtle Tracker Program across all Perth's wetlands. This has been an outstanding success in terms of the number of volunteers participating in the program: 120 volunteers in 2022, growing to 470 in 2023!

*Nick Cook with Anthony Santarino*



However, many factors prevent Anthony from collecting comprehensive data or drawing definitive conclusions on the survival of snake-neck turtles in Perth's wetlands at this stage.

In terms of Lake Claremont, Anthony outlined the results of his turtle population survey for 2023/24: a total of 17 turtles observed, 4 dead turtles seen, 9 nests protected and 102 hours of searching completed by volunteers using the TurtleSat app. He noted that there has been most turtle activity in the remnant bushland down one side of the Lake, and that there don't seem to be as many large turtles this year, judged by the size of their carapaces. Predators are of course an ongoing problem, with ravens being the main culprits, followed by foxes who destroy the nests. The lengthy summer period that we've just had, which has caused the Lake to dry out, hasn't helped either.

The situation regarding the presence of snake-necked turtles nesting around Lake Claremont is therefore an ongoing concern. But we still have a group of committed and enthusiastic citizen scientists, keen to carry on the good work. And on another positive note, Anthony reiterated at the end of his talk that, even if 90% of turtle nests are destroyed by predators, the remaining 10% of these will be enough to ensure the on-going viability of this species at our Lake.



## TURTLE RESCUE

*From : Nick Cook*

Our turtle hatchlings have started to emerge even though there is no water in the lake at present. Many thanks to Year 9 students, Chloe and Charlotte, who found this little hatchling and did all the right things to ensure its survival. They picked up the hatchling, brought it home and put it in a container with just a tiny amount of water. They then called us at FOLC for advice. We took it to WA Wildlife Hospital and, when the time is right it will be released at Lake Claremont. This was a great effort from young wildlife warriors.

This is what it's all about. Our turtles at Lake Claremont are very precious to us. For the last two years our volunteers have been working with Murdoch University and the Save our Snake-Necked Turtle programme. Our turtle trackers have been out during the nesting season protecting nests. Well done to the Turtle Tracker volunteers and to the girls!



*Chloe and Charlotte*



*The rescued turtle*



## MARRI AND JARRAH IN THE LONG HOT SUMMER

*From : Karen Wood*

This month I have been trying to identify trees by looking at their bark; a difficult task according to the experts, unless you also study the fruits and foliage as well. The fact that bark changes according to both age and conditions makes the task even harder. However these two common eucalypts are relatively easy to spot even if the foliage is high in the canopy and the fruits have been dispersed.

Jarrah, *Eucalyptus marginata*. is endemic to WA. It has rough grey-brown bark which it sheds in long flat strips. When the bark is freshly peeled off colour underneath is orange but fades fairly quickly to grey. The timber from Jarrah is used extensively on account of its hardness, termite resistance and rich colour. Jarrah Forrests have sadly been largely felled, though there are some remaining stands in our national parks. A good one is to be found near Dwellingup. Jarrah has an interesting history in this corner of the country - well worth investigating. *Jarrah bark (right)*



The second local tree fairly easily identifiable by its bark is Marri, *Corymbia calophylla*. Of course the honkey nuts beloved by Carnaby's cockatoos which litter the ground underneath this tree are the big give-away. The path outside our gate has been smothered with opened nuts, evidence of the cockies presence even if the loud squawking, quite joyful really, didn't alert the neighbourhood to their presence.

Marri bark, as pictured is made up of small tessellations which elongate as the tree ages. The young tree has very distinct patterns which do not seem to shed at all.

The name Marri comes from the indigenous people of the Blackwood district south of Perth.

*Marri bark (left)*

## FOLC GUIDED WALKS

*From : Averil Balfe and Jenni Banister Jones*

Averil Balfe's first guided walk around Lake Claremont happened on Thursday March 28. Two ladies joined her and experienced the dry, ephemeral lake. They were excited to have a quenda join our tour!

The new art by Brett See was greatly admired and the tour concluded happily with everyone having enjoyed their experience.

Jenni Banister-Jones says that there's a buzz in the air at Lake Claremont in autumn! It's a wonderful time to walk around the lake and find out what is happening by joining the Friends of Lake Claremont's free guided walks.

The walks will be held on Thursday May 16 and Monday May 27. They all start at 10.00 am and last for about 45 minutes. Meet at the end of Lapsley Road, at the Tree of Wonder statue outside the Tee Box.

You can learn about the history of Lake Claremont and the revegetation project. You may even see a quenda!

For more details, email the Friends' group [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com) or check it out on Facebook.

## WA TREE FESTIVAL – Junkadelic Brass Band

Friends of Lake Claremont and Millennium Kids invite you to join them on Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the WA Tree Festival. The whole family are welcome to join us in the park for a free concert by the Junkadelic brass band. Celebrating all things trees! Bring a rug and a picnic and settle in to the groovy tunes of Junkadelic. The event runs from 4pm to 5.30pm and will be held on the grass north of the Teebox café. Don't forget your dancing shoes!



## OUR BIRDS

*Text and photos by David Free*

### **Brown Honeyeater, *Lichmera indistincta*, Djindjokoor**

The Brown Honeyeater is the smallest and most common honeyeater found in the bushland around our lake. At this time of the year they are quiet but they loudly and continually proclaim their territory in the winter and spring breeding season. Two eggs are laid in a small cup nest. Brown Honeyeaters are to be seen in most of Western Australia where there is suitable tree cover.

Like other honeyeaters, they feed on nectar and insects. They can sometimes be seen briefly hovering at a flower.



### **Bird Census**

On 14th April my wife Pam and I conducted a survey of the birds at Lake Claremont. The day was warm, still and sunny.

Following a prolonged rainless spell, the lake is almost completely dry, with just a few damp patches in the southern sector. The bushland is suffering but many mature eucalypts are in flower, attracting nectar feeding species. Honeyeaters and Rainbow Lorikeets were more numerous than is normally the case. Raven and Silvereye numbers were also above average. As was to be expected, we saw no ducks.

We observed 286 individuals of 25 species. These results are lower than our average autumn census, which has sometimes taken place when there has been water in the lake. Breeding activity was observed only for the Red Wattlebird.

## APRIL NIGHT CHAT

*From: Rose Senior*

For the first of our Night Chats for 2024 we were delighted to have Kate Chaney, Federal Member of Parliament for Curtin, speak to us on the topic of Curtin's Pathway to Net Zero: what we as individuals can do to address climate change. Kate was wonderfully enthusiastic and articulate about this project, which emerged from her desire to do something positive and to promote change at all levels of society. As she explained, volunteer and community-driven action can ultimately influence change at the highest levels of government policy.

*Kate Chaney with Nick Cook*



Kate expressed her gratitude to the many volunteers who have worked so tirelessly during 2023, by providing their time, energy and expertise, either into community projects, or into the production of the Pathway to Net Zero report. She then outlined five broad areas that the report addresses: reducing our demands on the electricity grid; constructing more environmentally appropriate buildings; becoming less motor-vehicle dependent; protecting our green spaces and tree canopy; and reducing our organic and plastic waste.

The report takes the form of a colourful 70-page booklet containing a wealth of engaging information in the form of numbered points, pie charts, tables with attractive logos, case studies of what is done in other countries, questions to stimulate reflection and discussion, ideas for further action and so on. The booklet also contains lively drawings and suggestions from primary school children on how to address climate change.

After her talk, Kate left time for responses and comments from FOLC members regarding what we can do in our own neighbourhoods to implement change. Although swept along by Kate's enthusiasm, some people identified practical difficulties, such as not being able to place solar panels on roofs without removing neighbouring trees, not being able to walk or cycle to local shops because so many independent shops (butchers, hardware stores, chemists, banks, etc.) have closed, not being able to use public transport because of the infrequency of buses and so on. A few practical suggestions were put forward, such as encouraging people to double-glaze their windows (a practice that is compulsory in many European countries) and placing organic kitchen waste in 'worm farms' that generate liquid fertiliser for our gardens.

We thank you, Kate, for sharing your publication with us and giving us such a stimulating talk.



## KEEPING CATS AT HOME SEMINAR : WHO'S IT GOOD FOR?

*From : Heidi Hardisty*

**Who for:** Anyone with an interest in protecting local wildlife and our domestic cats. This seminar will include a focus on what local councils can do.

**When:** Sunday 19 May 1pm-3pm

**Where:** Grove Library Community Room, 1 Leake Street (cnr Stirling Highway), Peppermint Grove

Three experts, Dr Bruce Webber, University of Western Australia, Adin Ling, Fremantle Councillor and Dr. Heather Crawford, Conservation Biology PhD at Murdoch University will speak to us.

For more information and to RSVP for refreshment purposes, contact Chilla Bulbeck [chilla.bulbeck@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:chilla.bulbeck@adelaide.edu.au) Mob: 0407165753

## NATIONAL TREE DAY GRANT

*From : Heidi Hardisty (Planting supervisor)*

FOLC is very grateful to have received a \$2000 grant from Planet Ark's "The Seedling Bank". This will be used for the winter planting season at Lake Claremont. FOLC also obtained a \$5000 grant from the Town of Claremont late last year. FOLC will use the funds to purchase 3100 native seedlings and will organise and lead volunteers from local schools and the community to plant the seedlings this June.

We will celebrate National Tree Day early as planned with our major public planting day Sunday, 9th June commencing at 08:00 am. Please come along!

But there has been a change in the planting location. We will now plant on the northwest side of the lake adjacent to Strickland St, where a giant a fig tree was removed due to the polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB). We had planned to plant on the wetland buffer on the east side of the lake where 7 Moreton Bay Figs were removed due to the PSHB, until the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) told us we would have to postpone those plantings until 2025.

We will plant mainly shrubs and ground cover with a few dozen trees which will help to increase the health and biodiversity of the bushland adding habitat for the local wildlife including butterflies, frogs, reptiles, birds, and quenda. The plantings also enhance the bushland's function as a wildlife corridor between the Swan River, Herdsman Lake and other bushland in the western suburbs. "The Seedling Bank" program was set up by Planet Ark in 2019 to supply native seedlings to schools and community groups around Australia,

*The planting area on Strickland Street*



## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION (EPBC) BARBECUE AT LAKE CLAREMONT** *From: Hilary Heptinstall*

We were very fortunate to have Curtin MP, Kate Chaney, (right) hold an EPBC barbecue on April 27 at Lake Claremont. She said that, since the election and for the past two years, environment and climate remain the most significant issues that people raise with her in Curtin. Reforms to the EPBC have been waited for since the Samuels Review in 2020/2021. The Government is progressing the reforms in 3 stages.



Stage 1 is complete and included establishing the Nature Repair market and expanding the water trigger. Stage 2 will be legislation to establish a Federal Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and a Federal Environmental Information Authority. Stage 3 will be the balance of environmental law reforms as outlined in the nature positive plan.

The staged process has been met with disappointment, and Kate has been agitating for urgent reform (although she also acknowledges that it must be done properly). The minister has agreed to release a public exposure of the Stage 3 reforms, which the UBC and other groups in Curtin and WA will have chance to view.

We are in biodiversity debt in WA and, although our flora and fauna have learned to adapt, the heatwaves in February were a tipping point. Last October, Kate convened a meeting of biodiversity and threatened species experts and academics (many of whom happen to live in Curtin!). After discussion, they put together a detailed submission.

Some pressing priorities are:-

- A. **TARGETS** - Ambitious and quantifiable targets to achieve a net gain of nature
- B. **DATA** - Resources an authority responsible for maintaining a biodiversity and conservation database.
- C. **BETTER USE OF OFFSETS**. Recalibrate the purpose of offsets to be 'prevention and avoidance' rather than 'rehabilitation and offset'.
- D. **CLEAR MITIGATION HIERARCHY**. Where a project might cause irreversible damage, decision makers must have the power to decline approval.
- E. **CUMULATIVE APPROACH** Look at cumulative impacts of any proposals or actions across the regions.
- F. **CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE** Recognition of species and communities that are most culturally significant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- G. **WATER**

Kate is keen to hear from her constituents about any biodiversity challenges that they are facing. [kate.chaney.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:kate.chaney.mp@aph.gov.au)

The evening concluded with a very enjoyable barbecue. We were pleased to welcome visitors from other 'Friends' groups.

## FOLC VOLUNTEER POSITIONS VACANT

The following FOLC volunteer positions for 2024 were advertised in the February newsletter and are still vacant. We would be very grateful if we could find members to fill these positions. Please email FOLC at [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com)

### FOLC Membership Secretary

Gina Shirley retired in February from her position as the FOLC Membership Secretary. We thank Gina for her hard work and commitment over the past 4 years and we now really need someone to take on this role.

The Membership Secretary's key role will be aiding in membership recruitment and retainment. Members will be welcomed and encouraged to become involved in volunteering, events and activities.

Are you friendly and good with computer spreadsheets and keeping records (or willing to learn)?

### FOLC Grants Officer

Commencing April- May 2024

Jenni Bannister-Jones will be retiring soon as the FOLC Grants Officer. We thank Jenny for her hard work and many successes over the past 5 years.

The main role of the Grants Officer is to research grant opportunities, apply for grants, track and assist in acquitting the grants, and write reports on grant outcomes and budgets.

Skills needed: excellent written and spoken communication; good organisational and record keeping skills; ability to work well independently and as part of a team; ability to use various software and online platforms.

For more information, or to be considered, please contact [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com) if you are

## MAY DATES

Sunday May 5	WA Tree Festival Junkadelic Concert 4.00pm
Fridays May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Yr 10 Community Service
Sunday May 12	FOLC Busy Bee
Sunday May 19	Millenium Kids Greenlab
Tuesday May 21	May Night Chat Session. 5.30pm
Sunday May 26	Volunteer celebration BBQ 4.00 pm



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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