

Friends of Lake Claremont NEWSLETTER



We are seeing warmer days and lots of growth happening around the lake – including lots of weeds. Any time is a good time to volunteer but now is particularly good as you can enjoy the glorious weather. Please make sure to fill in Claremont's survey to give your support to tree retention locally – we need to work hard to retain and improve our canopy now for future generations!

- David Free discusses the Australian Hobby in **Our Birds** on pages 2 and 3.
 - Neil Hamilton discusses the Night Parrot; see Hilary Heptinstall's **Night Chat Review** on page four.
 - Peter Creighton offers **Guided Walks** and plenty more (p5)
 - Tony Barr keeps you up-to-date with **Activities and News** (p6)
 - A magical look at the **Pink Fairy Orchids** by Bruce Haynes (p7)
- Sarah Allchurch uses her advocacy powers to help save trees – do your bit too by filling in the **survey** for **Claremont's tree retention policy!** (p8)

OUR BIRDS

Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis* WOWOO
By David Free



Photo credit: David Free

Formerly called the Little Falcon, this species is similar to, but smaller than, the Peregrine Falcon. Longipennis refers to its long wings. Hobbys feed on grasshoppers and other large flying insects and on birds. They have been known to take birds larger than themselves. Small mammals, including bats and rodents, are occasionally eaten.

OUR BIRDS

Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis* WOWOO
By David Free

On September 14th I saw one at the lake being teased by two brave and mischievous Willy Wagtails.

Although relatively widespread, the Hobby is an uncommon bird; we are lucky to have them in Claremont.



Photo credit: David Free

NIGHT CHATS

Ornithologist Neil Hamilton and the Night Parrot
By Hilary Heptinstall



Neil Hamilton and Heidi Hardisty



Night Parrot. Photo credit: Bruce Greatwich

Neil has devoted his life to the nurture and protection of threatened species and is currently working on the Night Parrot (*Pezoprus occidentalis*) of which only about 200 remain.

He gave thanks to the rangers and the special Martu people, without whom the Night Parrot on display in the WA Museum, which was discovered with a broken wing, would not be on show for all to see (the only one in the world.)

Research has been ongoing since 2003 and Night Parrots were found in 2009 and 2011 in Lorna Glen and Milrose Stations. The call of Night Parrots in Lorna Glen consists of two single notes similar to a Bell Miner.

The biggest threats to Night Parrots are fire, feral cats and foxes.

Night Parrots are found in the areas of East Murchison, Little Sandy Desert and Great Sandy Desert. In 2023 Matuwas Kurrara National Park was formed and is now under a joint management between DBCA and Mantjiljarra Yulparirra, which should allow some protection of this species.

Night Parrots in WA were fitted with tracking devices and found to travel 35 km from the release site.

The Ghost Bird volunteers (GBV) have researched Night Parrot ecology and diversity since 2003 and have recorded 165 bird species. They have done a lot of research on desert plants.

They are always seeking support funding for publicity for The Night Parrot and have published numerous online articles as well as giving talks to community groups. At present they are working on a documentary and have formed a relationship with Curtin University.

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

GUIDED WALKS

By Peter Creighton

Thursday October 2, Saturday October 18 and Monday October 27 at 10am
Meet at the Tree of Life sculpture

Winter Plantings at Lake Claremont

The extensive habitat restoration seen in recent years at Lake Claremont has relied on volunteers of all ages, who have cleared, planted, weeded and watered to achieve the remarkable transformation of a former rubbish tip and golf course into a healthy wetland.

This winter, the Friends of Lake Claremont have worked with primary and secondary school students, university students, family groups, retirees and other members of the public, across twelve planting sessions. Collectively, they have completed new plantings on the grass area to the east of the lake, on the eastern buffer where Moreton Bay figs were removed due to polyphagous shot-hole borer infection, and on a former pathway on the north side of the lake.

Claremont resident Liz Borthwick attended a planting session for National Tree Day, along with members of her family. “We had a great time planting trees as a family,” said Liz. “I grew up playing here; we planted trees with the local school and it’s great to see this continue with my own children.

They came back a few days later to get photos next to the trees they planted so they can track their growth.”

The new plantings will provide future shade in the area and more wildlife habitat, while enhancing the park as an ecological linkage between the Swan River and other nearby remnant bushlands.

You can see some of the new plantings and learn more about the restoration project, together with the history of the lake, on one of the walking tours provided by Friends of Lake Claremont volunteers. Shorter walks of about 45 minutes along the eastern side of the lake will take place on Thursday 2 October and Monday 27 October. A longer walk around the whole lake, lasting about 90 minutes, will be held on Saturday 18 October. All walks are free of charge and commence at 10 am at the ‘Tree of Wonder’ statue, on the northern side of Tee Box Cafe, Lapsley Road, Claremont. There is no need to book - just turn up.

For more details, email FOLC at folc.wa@gmail.com.



Liz Borthwick (second from right) with her mother, Marj Borthwick, husband Tim Reynolds and their children Winifred, Wills and Meg, during a planting session at Lake Claremont. Photo: Nick Cook

Claremont Tree Survey

Draft Local planning policy 211 is up for public comment. Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P9R75B6> to have your say!

Future generations will thank you for saving our trees!



ACTIVITIES AND NEWS

By Tony Barr



It has been a real traditional Perth winter with cool weather and lots and lots of rain, with above average rainfall continuing into djilba/spring. There is a lot of flowering of native flora both here in Perth including around Lake Claremont and throughout Western Australia in response to the rain, lengthening days and warmer temperatures.



Unfortunately it has also brought an explosion of weeds around Lake Claremont. We had to cancel this month's Second Sunday busy bee due to the adverse weather conditions forecast, in particular the high winds which may have brought down trees and branches. However the Monday weeding group has been doing a sterling job as well as the contractors, active adopt-a-spotters and other community volunteers for in subduing some of weeds.



The forecast inclement weather also caused the cancellation of the Celebrate Lake Claremont day as winds would have created havoc with the marquees and wouldn't have been great for the attendees either.



We will be having a board meeting in October. If anyone has any issues they wish to raise, please send an email to FOLC.wa@gmail.com



The September night chat was a very interesting account of the rediscovery of the night parrot in Western Australia, identifying it best done with your eyes.

Night Chats at Lake Claremont – 21st October **Rethinking public-open-space design** with Dr Claire Doll

Changing climate conditions call into question the suitability of historic public-open-space (POS) design and management practices. New environmental economic research is aimed at understanding how POS can best be designed to benefit society - rethinking urban POS design from monocultured, watered-lawn-dominated spaces towards alternatives that incorporate more drought-resistant native plant species. Dr Claire Doll is a Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia (UWA) Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy.

Night Chats is hosted by the Friends of Lake Claremont and will be held on **Tuesday 21st October at the Claremont Lawn Tennis Club**, on Shenton Place in Claremont. **Doors open at 5:30 pm for refreshments, with a 6:00 PM start.** No bookings are required, but a gold coin donation is appreciated. Everyone is welcome.

PINK FAIRY ORCHID

By Bruce Haynes



What makes the recent spread of Pink Fairy Orchid (*Caledenia latifolia*), including the white variant, on either side of the path from the Strickland Street cu-de-sac so remarkable is that it is another indicator of the success of the rehabilitation of Lake Claremont environs. This is a natural reintroduction of a species to the remnant bushland where they would have been years ago but have been missing for many years. Pink Fairy Orchids are found between Geraldton and east of Esperance and their status is Not Threatened so it is to be expected to find them in healthy bushland like Lake Claremont. The soil in the remnant bushland is soft and fences prevent trampling which is a major threat to all plants in the area. Keeping the weeds under control is probably another factor in natural reintroduction of local

native species. Perhaps over time we will find more naturally reintroduced species such as those currently flowering in the Shenton Park bushland. We already have a 50% increase in bird species recorded, including the Musk Duck heard calling recently. Now, at least, we have two types of Pink Fairies at Lake Claremont, one near Strickland Street and the other with Mum at the café. For a more general overview see Haynes, B. (2025). *Local Volunteers in an Evolving Ecological Civilization*. In: Peters, M.A., Green, B.J., Misiaszek, G.W., Zhu, X. (eds) *Handbook of Ecological Civilization*. Springer International Handbooks of Education. Springer, Singapore.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-8101-0_36-1



TREE RETENTION POLICY

Have Your Say!
By Sarah Allchurch

The Town of Claremont has released Draft Local Planning Policy 211 – Tree Retention for public comment. This policy will protect mature trees (over 8m in height) on private land, where around 80% of tree loss occurs.

Perth has the lowest tree canopy of any Australian capital city and no statewide protections for trees. Claremont now has the chance to join Nedlands, Bassendean, Peppermint Grove, Cambridge, Fremantle, Victoria Park and South Perth in protecting trees for its community.

Why it matters:

- Trees shade our streets and homes, keeping suburbs cooler and reducing power and water bills
- They clean our air, support biodiversity and habitat and improve health and wellbeing
- They preserve Claremont's unique leafy character for future generations

SURVEY LINK:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P9R75B6>

CLAREMONT POLICY PAGE:

<https://claremont.wa.gov.au/council/news/proposed-draft-local-planning-policy-211-tree-retention/>

Submissions close 5:00 pm, Monday 27 October 2025

CONTACT

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If you would like to contribute to our newsletter, please write to us or join us for our busy bee on the second Sunday of every month.



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