

Friends of Lake Claremont NEWSLETTER



As we wind down for the summer break nature is in full bloom, the weeds keep on growing and the sun keeps on shining! We always appreciate our volunteers and we'd love some extra help this month selling raffle tickets to buy more plants for revegetation – see details on page 7!

- David Free discusses **Our Birds** on pages 2 and 3
- Dr Claire Doll talks street trees in this months' **Night Chat Review** by Heidi Hardisty (p4)
- Peter Creighton tells us about the first Europeans to visit Lake Claremont and about our **Guided Walks** (p5)
- Tony Barr talks current events in **Activities and News** (p6)
 - Friends of Lake Claremont **Raffle tickets** available from November 1 (p7)

OUR BIRDS

Australian Wood Duck *Chenonetta jubata* MARANGANA
By David Free



Male Australian Wood Duck, photo credit David Free

This beautiful small duck was previously relatively uncommon in the south-west; the population is said to have expanded greatly with the spread of cultivation and the creation of farm dams. They are abundant at Wembley golf course, where they graze fairways and rest on the water reservoirs.

Wood Ducks breed at our lake, nesting in tree hollows. Look out for ducklings at this time of the year. The males aggressively defend their young but many still get predated.

OUR BIRDS

Australian Wood Duck *Chenonetta jubata* MARANGANA
By David Free



Female Australian Wood Duck, photo credit David Free



Family of Australian Wood Ducks, photo credit David Free

NIGHT CHATS

Dr Claire Doll and Rethinking Public Open Spaces

By Heidi Hardisty



In October, FOLC welcomed Dr Claire Doll, Research Fellow at the UWA Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy to Night Chats. She presented 3 studies from her recent PhD research on park and verge garden design which could lead to better outcomes for

our community and nature. In her words we need to stop “sleepwalking into a browner, hotter future” and do something about it. In one study, her research team examined different urban park designs and which ones were best at conserving water, as 17% of urban water in Perth is used for irrigation. They conducted a survey of 1500 people in 9 local councils (including: the City of Bayswater, Town of Claremont, Town of Cottesloe, City of Stirling and City of Melville) to determine people’s view on the different park designs and to gauge the public’s willingness to pay for each.

Using cost-benefit analyses, the results show that the most popular and highest net-present value park design has about 40% watered grass and 60% native vegetation. Water savings are realised as native vegetation only has to be watered for the first few years. Hence, environmental, social welfare, and cost-saving gains can be made by moving away from parks dominated by watered-grass to a more balanced mix of watered grass and native vegetation.

Another study was conducted to understand public views on garden verges and help local government design programs. It was found that native plant subsidy programs are highly valued by the public and most individuals prefer a groundcover of either native vegetation (54%) or watered grass (35%).

Furthermore, those who regularly see native gardens are more likely to prefer them in their neighbourhoods. Claire notes “Native verge gardens are contagious!”

She then sent out a survey that listed the characteristics of verge trees in the neighbourhood and asked the residents to select which characteristics they most and least prefer. People cared most about trees that support insects, birds and reptiles and required little water to survive. Other concerns were visual appeal, maintenance, WA native, litter, pollen, shade, pest, Australian native, fire, scent.

She then asked the question of what street trees are most preferred by the public. Answers were influenced by whether information was provided along with the survey, e.g. trees with environmental characteristics ended up with top rankings when information on which trees support native biodiversity and are drought tolerant were provided.

Based on these main concerns, the researchers predicted that the top preferred street tree would be the Red Flowering Gum. But they were surprised when people chose the Jacaranda as their favourite. Clearly other factors influenced their choice. The next favourite trees chosen were the Red Flowering Gum, the Coral Gum, the Fuchsia Gum and the Crepe Myrtle.

Check out more of Claire’s research here: <https://www.econclaire.com/pos>

That concludes the Night Chats programme for the year.

Night Chats will be back the third week of February 2026 when we welcome poet John Kinsella to share some of his works on WA’s unique biodiversity.

GUIDED WALKS

Thursday November 6, Saturday November 15 and Monday November 24 at 10am
Meet at the Tree of Life sculpture. Article by Peter Creighton



When Europeans First Came to Lake Claremont

For thousands of years, Wadjuk Noongar people camped around the wetlands at Galbamaanup, now also known as Lake Claremont. But who were the first Europeans to visit the lake? The available evidence suggests that they were probably Dutch. The renowned geologist and maritime historian, Dr Phillip Playford, traced the voyage to Western Australia of Dutch sea captain Willem de Vlamingh. Relying on ships' logs and Vlamingh's personal journal, Playford recounted that on 5 January 1697 the captain sent ashore a party of 86 men on the coast near present-day Swanbourne. The men walked eastwards until they came to the body of water that Vlamingh would name the Swan River. Along the way, the explorers skirted around an 'inland lake', which Playford concluded was probably Lake Claremont. If so, this would be the first known visit by Europeans to the lake, and its first mention in any European journals.

Today, much of the lake and its surroundings would be unrecognisable to Vlamingh's men, although a few old trees may have survived. To see and hear more about the changes that have occurred, you can join one of the free walking tours offered by Friends of Lake Claremont volunteers. Shorter walks of about 45 minutes along the eastern side of the lake will take place on **Thursday 6 November** and **Monday 24 November**. A longer walk around the whole lake, lasting about 90 minutes, will be held on **Saturday 15 November**. **All walks 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.

ACTIVITIES AND NEWS

By Tony Barr

The October Busy Bee was again well attended. We initially hit the weeds around the Strickland Street 2024 plantings (50 bags) and then made a small indent on the weeds in the remnant bush further south (about 70 bags). A lot of whiteflower and wall fumitory (*Fumaria capreolata* and *muralis*), common sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) and prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), with some blackberry nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*) and blue lupin (*Lupinus cosentinii*).



Night Chats

At the October night chat we heard from Dr Claire Doll from UWA about choices people made in selection of street trees with different information available and in future park composition.

October Rainfall

As at the evening of 27th October, the cumulative annual rainfall at the Town of Claremont's gauge at Lake Claremont was 801mm, with 30mm falling over Friday and Saturday of the last weekend of the month. This means it has been another month with above average rainfall. However, we are now heading into summer and very soon we will be watering the plantings from this year.



We also appreciate all donations via the Containers for Change scheme in WA. Our membership number is **C10906559**.

Some sad news

Pam Free died early in October. Pam was an illustrator and painter of birds and accompanied her husband on his monthly bird surveys around the lake for many years. We will all miss her presence and our thoughts are with David and family.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET AWAY?

Friends of Lake Claremont Raffle
By Claire Brittain

RAFFLE TICKETS \$5

1st Prize: 4 nights accommodation
for 4 at the Grange on Kalgan
including a half day
tour.
Valued at \$1300

2nd Prize: 3 nights accommodation
for 2 adults and 2 children
at Ningaloo Coral
Bay including
cruise (\$1150)

Other prizes include:

- ☆ A dozen bottles of wine from Flametree wines (\$336)
- ☆ 1 month platinum membership at Method Health (\$160)
- ☆ Gift vouchers for Tee Box Café (\$100 and \$50)

A big thankyou to our
sponsors:



FOR TICKETS PLEASE CONTACT US!

We are looking for volunteers to sell tickets - If you can help please get in touch for more information. Email Claire mcbrit@bigpond.net.au or Delia folc.wa@gmail.com.

We hope to raise a total of \$12,500 to re-vegetate Lake Claremont including the areas lost to the Polyphagous Shot-hole Borer.

The Start Date is 1 November 2025, end and draw date is 14 December 2025 with results published here, the POST and on our Facebook page.

CONTACT

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Since 1998



natural resource
management program



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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