



# Friends of Lake Claremont NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

What an invigorating time of year - cool nights and moist soil along with brilliant sunny days - you can almost see the plants growing! There are a couple of celebratory events on this month - check our activities and news for more details and join us for some community fun! Get in touch via [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com) with any questions.

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# OUR BIRDS

By David Free



Photo credit: David Free

“The photo shows rictal bristles at the base of the bill, which are thought to assist in catching insects.”

## SPECIES PROFILE

COMMON NAME

Grey Fantail

SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Rhipidura albiscarpa*

NOONGAR NAME

Kadjinak

As revegetated areas develop a diverse ecosystem that supports more insects, the Grey Fantail is another insectivore which has returned. They first arrived in the bushland to the north of the lake but now they can also be seen in the eastern buffer zone.

Grey Fantails are closely related to the slightly larger Willy Wagtail but tend to be shy and less confident. They are very active when feeding, fanning their tails when perched and making frequent short flights in pursuit of their prey. The song is a high pitched tinkling or sometimes a lower chipping call.



What happened to

# Butler's Swamp?

By Peter Creighton

Join a guided walk at Lake Claremont and you'll be exploring the area that was known for more than a century as 'Butler's Swamp'.



John Butler, an early landowner in the 1830s, grazed cattle in these wetlands north of the current Claremont town centre. Over the decades others operated dairy farms, orchards and market gardens in the vicinity, but by the 1950s the marshy land had become degraded, polluted and infested with mosquitos.

A change of name to Lake Claremont in 1955 marked the beginning of the area's rehabilitation, initially to create sporting and recreation facilities on reclaimed land and more recently to restore habitat for native wildlife. The resulting urban oasis would be unrecognisable to John Butler but is now greatly enjoyed by a wide range of locals and visitors.

The free walks, led by guides from the Friends of Lake Claremont, showcase many of the environmental improvements in the area and provide an opportunity to experience its tranquil delights. The walks are on:

**Thursday 7 May (45-minute walk)**

**Saturday 16 May (75-minute extended walk)**

**Monday 25 May (45-minute walk)**

The walks commence at 10.00 am and are open to all. No bookings are required - simply meet the guide at the **Tree of Wonder sculpture**, located on the northern side of the Tee Box Cafe (Lapsley Road, Claremont). For more information, please contact the Friends of Lake Claremont at [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com).

# DESERT DISCOVERY

By Hilary Heptinstall

Desert Discovery Inc. is a diverse and exciting organisation of people from teachers and social workers to farmers and medical scientists. The goal that unites them is the love of our natural desert environment and the desire to share that love through education and enhancement.

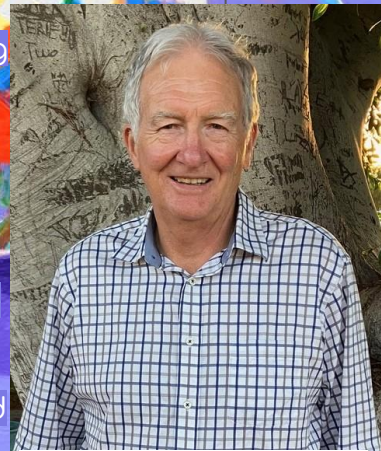
The range of skills means the methods used for this outcome vary and include ecological surveys, talking with traditional owners, recording specimens for the herbarium and working with local wildlife groups. The knowledge and experience has grown over the 30 years the group has been active.

Speaker, Mark Conlan, who is president and treasurer of Desert Discovery Inc., and Sue Conlan, his wife, who is director of Friends of Mosman Park Bushland, are no strangers to this work. One project the group worked on was at Yeo Lake Nature Reserve, a large protected area in the Great Victoria Desert northeast of Laverton in the middle of Western Australia.

It acts as a critical arid-zone biodiversity refuge, featuring an intermittent salt lake and a diverse population of flora and fauna.

One aspect of enhancing the environment is control of feral animals like camels, which are capable of emptying precious waterholes which would normally support the local wildlife. One former SAS volunteer came up with a creative solution in camel stew - although he learned in hindsight a good camel stew needs a good 12 hours in the pot to be tender!

Desert Discovery is an inclusive group and is keen to hear from anyone who would like to get their feet on the group in this rough but exciting terrain. If you are keen please get in touch: [desertdiscovery@gmail.com](mailto:desertdiscovery@gmail.com) but be aware the costs for any travel and expenses are covered by the individual and there are no "mod-cons" in the desert!



Desert Discovery's Mark Conlan

# CARPETS, TIGERS AND OTHER SNAKEY TALES

Night Chats May Guest:

## David Pearson

Principal Research Scientist;  
Dept. Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)

The Perth region has an incredible diversity of snake species; a great joy for herpetologists, but a source of horror for many others!

Tiger snakes and Carpet Pythons are two species that are near and dear to David's heart. He'll discuss some research that includes the detailed study of these typically cryptic and misunderstood miracles of nature.

Living life on your belly without any limbs or eyelids has its own particular challenges and has resulted in amazing adaptations and life histories of snakes. Hear examples about this and the unusual characters who find them irresistible.

Hosted by

Friends of Lake Claremont

Tuesday May 19th

Claremont Lawn Tennis Club  
Shenton Place, Claremont

Doors open 5:30 pm for refreshments

6pm start

All welcome - gold coin  
donation appreciated

# DUKE OF EDINBURGH 2026 PROGRAM



Acacia, Jocelyn and Lydia in the Duke of Edinburgh program.  
Photo Credit: Nick Cook

The Duke of Edinburgh program for 2026 started this month when Acacia, Jocelyn and Lydia helped to plant this *Corymbia ficifolia*. The planting was dedicated to Acacia in honour of her birthday on the day (26th April)! They then moved on to tidy up some of the 2025 planting sites.

Our Duke of Edinburgh program is open to students 14 years and over. The group meet most Sundays at 8am - if you would like to join please get in touch via [folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com).



# ACTIVITIES AND NEWS

By Tony Barr

It seems as though we are in for a good season of rainfall that will keep the lake topped up for the coming year. We are up to 108 mm at Lake Claremont including 13 mm over the Anzac Day long weekend.

There are a number of events coming up in May. The Town of Claremont has organised An Afternoon at the Lake (Saturday 9 May, 3:30-5:30pm). This is aimed at children but food trucks will also be there. We'll be asking for some volunteers for our shortly. We are hoping the weather is kinder than for Lake Claremont Day last year.

There is also a Young Locals Nature Sundowner on 16 May 3-7 pm. This is aimed at young adults and twenty-somethings and you need to register to get a free ticket to attend (numbers are limited).

The Lake Claremont Advisory Committee is meeting on Thursday 14 May. If you have any issues to raise, please contact me via email ([folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com)).

March's Busy Bee was attended by around 30 people and removed some of the encroaching plants from around the eastern buffer plantings from 2025, giving them the space to hopefully thrive during the winter (some of them are doing very well already). The next Busy Bee will be on May 10. We'll most likely be weeding or preparing for the planting in June. Please come along and meet other members of the Friends.

We are also after volunteer(s) who can act as a membership officer, greeting new members and volunteer(s) to assist organising Night Chats. We are also interested in volunteers to join the Turtle Tracking program. There have been reports from around the metropolitan area of turtles nesting (or migrating) over the summer and during April so please take care around all lakes and wetlands.

Please contact me via email ([folc.wa@gmail.com](mailto:folc.wa@gmail.com)) if interested in the roles of activities.

# CONTACT DETAILS & OUR SPONSORS



natural resource  
management program



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