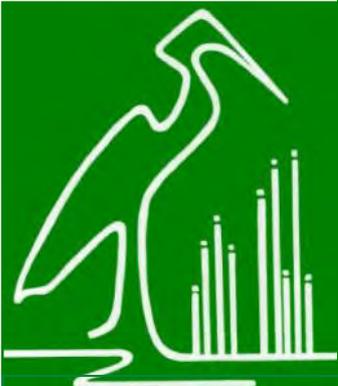


# CRREPA NEWS

## Newsletter of the Canning River Residents Environment Protection Association (Inc)

Editors: Stephen Johnston and Sue Stanley

**ENJOY YOUR FORESHORE RESPONSIBLY**



Members please contact us by phone (9354 9734) or email ([CRREPA@gmail.com](mailto:CRREPA@gmail.com))

or postal address (CRREPA Treasurer 21 Denise Close, Shelley 6148)

To see your CRREPA Newsletter in COLOUR view or download it from the SERCUL website.

[www.sercul.org.au/crrepa.html](http://www.sercul.org.au/crrepa.html)

Please 'like' us on Facebook by viewing 'Canning River Residents Environment Protection Association'

## CRREPA OPPOSES EXTENSION OF DOG EXERCISE AREA

**CRREPA has strongly opposed a move to extend the dog exercise area - where dogs can be off their leashes - from Beryl Avenue to Linkwater Street, Shelley, connecting two existing dog exercise areas.**

While most of the City of Canning's 58 dog exercise areas were established and Gazetted in 1976, it was only in relatively recent years that the boundaries of dog exercise and on-leash areas were signposted and really began to take effect. In its submission to the Council, CRREPA said that after such a long and slow progression to sensible dog management on the foreshore, it would be a most regressive step for Council to approve the proposed extension. It would leave only 1.4 kms or 23 per cent of the 6.1 kilometres of the foreshore where dogs would be restricted on leads. The dog exercise area already includes the longest continuous section of about 2.5 kms from Yagan Reserve to Fifth Avenue and the broadest area of parkland along the foreshore across Prisoners Point and the paddock north of the Shelley Beach toilet block.

"This serious imbalance cannot possibly be justified. It demonstrates a real deficiency that a significant change can potentially be made to a longstanding management provision for a valuable conservation and recreation reserve for Perth, let alone Canning residents, on the initiative of a small group of local residents. The Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore reserve deserves better than this ad hoc, incremental approach to management."

Dog exercise areas are "public places where dogs (apart from dangerous dogs) are allowed to be off-leash, provided the dog is under the control of a person who is capable of controlling it and who is carrying, and capable of attaching, a suitable leash." The "control" requirement is not always adhered to. Even in the on-leash sections, members have observed over many years the restriction being too often ignored with impunity as the chances of a Council ranger happening to observe this unlawful behaviour and taking measures to prevent it are remote unless they are responding to residents' notification about repeat offenders.

A number of current environmental issues along the foreshore with dogs off the leash are likely to be exacerbated if the dog exercise area is extended:

- Because the Rossmoyne-Shelley section of the Canning River is so shallow, it is a particularly valuable waterbird resting and feeding area. But the birds provide tempting targets for unrestrained dogs. While rarely caught by the dogs, the birds may move away from an area after repeated attacks.
- Revegetation sites which have been established and maintained by volunteers over many years suffer when dogs either chase through the plantings or scratch the ground after urinating.
- There is likely to be an increase in the amount and distribution of dog faeces along the foreshore as dog owners are less likely to collect the faeces if it is dropped some distance from them or in the foreshore vegetation. Apart from the harmful bacteria and parasites in dog faeces which can spread diseases and add to the river contamination, it is simply very unpleasant for other foreshore visitors to step, kneel or sit in it.



# TAKING ANOTHER STEP IN THE FORESHORE REVEGETATION

Over its 23-year history CRREPA's approach has generally emphasised incremental and long-lasting change rather than overly ambitious and unsustainable Initiatives.

Our proposal to the City of Canning for the next step in joint foreshore revegetation work in 2018 typifies this approach – a section of some 50 metres that links the eastern end of a past successful revegetation plot to the western end of last year's planting, from opposite the Corinthian Road-Riverton Drive intersection to opposite 121 Riverton Drive, Rossmoyne. The site comprises three sections:

- a narrow flat bank with minimal grass cover between Riverton Drive and a drop down to the river which has good canopy cover from the Melaleucas but is also subject to erosion with runoff in heavy rain from Corinthian Road;
- a narrow section, partly shaded by Melaleucas with some grass cover; and
- the largest section with minimal Melaleuca shading, quite thick grass cover and informal tracks down to the river.

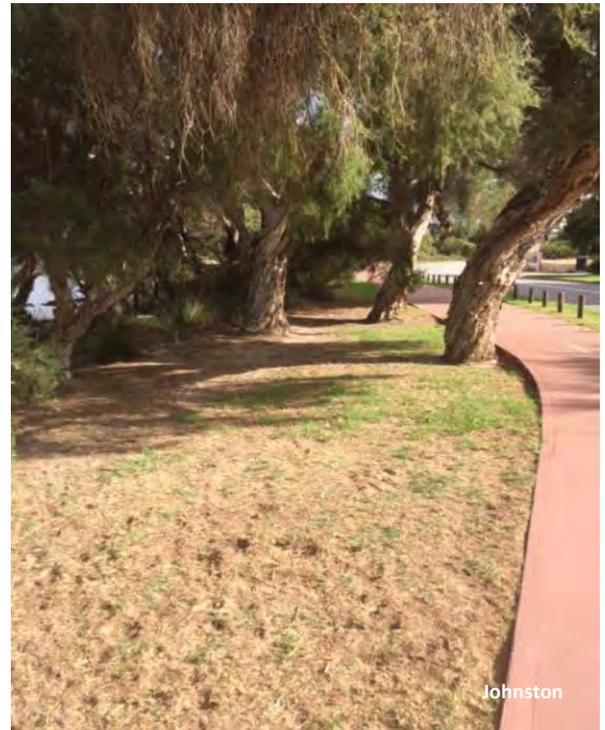
At our annual planning meeting with the Council Environment staff Merise Blackburn, Amanda Strano and Max Box on 8 February 2017, we suggested that possibly the best treatment for the eroded bank was a swale that could hold the runoff temporarily and be planted with *Centella asiatica* and sedges. Plant selection for the rest of the site will be determined in consultation with the Council but is likely to be similar to the range and density of plants that have generally grown well over the last eight months opposite 123 to 129 Riverton Drive. A small number of access paths to the river following current informal routes should be retained and hardened with crushed limestone.

This year we are not looking to do any major new plantings but focus on maintenance weeding and using the Council's allocation of 500 plants for infill at existing sites using species including *Facinia nodosa*, *Dianella revolute*, *Gahnia trifida*, and *Conostylis candicans*. We also hope to be involved with the Council's Bushcrew in the planting of the steep bank above the former beach stabilisation site of Halophila Bay where the fence above the embankment will be removed.



Other issues raised with the Council at the meeting included the need for:

- succession planting quite urgently for the *Melaleuca raphiophyllas* between Modillion Avenue and Shelley Bridge that have been subject to senescence through age and borers. Grecian Sandwell suggested the use of *Melaleuca cuticularis* (Saltwater paperbark), *Melaleuca preissiana* (Stout paperbark or Moonah) and *Eucalyptus rudis* (Flooded gum); and
- the Council to ensure compliance by builders during construction and in the future by Adventist Aged Care with the environmental regulations covering the eight-storey Rossmoyne Waters development.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS and THANK YOU

We are very grateful for the support provided by the City of Canning and SERCUL.

# *Melaleuca raphiophylla* declining along the Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore

By Grecian Sandwell

*Melaleuca raphiophylla* (Swamp Paperbark) trees along the Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore are in serious decline as increased salinity, reduced rainfall and the effects of *Cassytha racemosa* (Dodder Laurel) weaken the trees, leaving them vulnerable to borer attack.

Dodder Laurel is a native parasitic perennial climber which draws nutrients from its host and often covers the *Melaleuca* crowns, weakening them significantly.

Borers are insects that bore holes into native and exotic plants. A range of insects is involved, mostly beetles and their larvae, that are found mainly in living, but generally weakened plants. In severe cases borers can cause death of the plant. But healthy plants are normally able to tolerate borer attacks as new branches outgrow the weakened old branches which then fall off.

Natural enemies of borers are birds, the assassin bug, predacious beetles, parasitic wasps and fungi. In some species, exudation of gum restricts borer activity. Wilting shoots, branches or crown dieback are early signs of borers while exit holes and accompanying sawdust are more obvious. There is no natural reproduction of these trees in the saline environment of the Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore but in the Yagan and Wilson Wetlands they reproduce well. Normal senescence or ageing will take its toll and without natural reproduction we may well see the species disappear from some areas.

What to do? We can replace trees with a concerted succession planting programme to maintain their presence along the foreshore but we should also plant the more salt-tolerant *Melaleuca cuticularis* (Saltwater Paperbark) at the same time to ensure good tree coverage.

References: City of Bayswater and WA Dept. of Agriculture and Food.



Dodder Laurel smothers Melaleucas



Borer holes

# TURTLE TALK AT CRREPA'S AGM

**How did the oblong turtle get its name and where do they come in the food chain in WA's temperate wetlands?**

These and many other interesting aspects of the oblong turtle will be discussed by Dr Caitlin Bartholomaeus in her presentation at the CRREPA annual general meeting on **Thursday 11 May 2017 at 7.00pm at the Canning River Eco Education Centre (CREEC)**. Dr Bartholomaeus studied the oblong turtle for three years for her PhD in Environmental and Conservation Sciences at Murdoch University. Apart from describing the turtle's physical characteristics, its feeding habits and preferred habitat, Dr Bartholomaeus will also talk about some of her field-work, the challenges of Perth's urban environment for oblong turtles and the value of citizen science when studying urban species.



The AGM following Dr Bartholomaeus' talk will include brief summaries of CREPA's past 12 months from president, Stephen Johnston; treasurer Bill Lambe and foreshore coordinator, Grecian Sandwell. After the election of office-bearers for 2017-18 we will vote on the Association's proposed new constitution which largely follows the so-called Model Rules prepared by the State Government for incorporated associations, partly to ensure that their constitutions all have 19 basic legal requirements. Refreshments will then be provided.

**All members are encouraged to attend what is always an enjoyable and interesting evening.**

## Please join us for your 23rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

**WHERE:** Canning River Eco Education Centre  
Kent Street Weir (cnr Kent St & Queens Park Rd)

**WHEN:** Thursday 11th May 2017 6.45pm for 7pm  
**RSVP 4th May**

Essential to let us know if you are coming and for catering.  
Please ring Roslyn on 9457 4590 or e-mail [crrepa@gmail.com](mailto:crrepa@gmail.com)

## Nominations are open for CRREPA's 2017/18 Committee

Commitments include four meetings per year and an area of responsibility such as archives, liaison with City of Canning, grants, foreshore groups, end-of-year picnic etc. Enquiries to Stephen 0447 273 727 or e-mail him at [crrepa@gmail.com](mailto:crrepa@gmail.com)

### WEBSITES OF INTEREST

**River Guardians**

<http://www.riverguardians.com> (inc Dolphin Watch)

**Birds of the Canning River**

<http://www.canningriverbirds.com>

# MANY HANDS OVER SUMMER MAKE FOR HIGH PLANT SURVIVAL RATE

By Grecian Sandwell

There was no shortage of volunteers for our 2016/17 summer watering roster. Twenty three members took part in the programme and eight sites received a weekly watering. Thank you all very much for your efforts – they were really appreciated.

The City of Canning greatly assisted by watering five sites fortnightly.

The biggest single advance in our watering this summer was that through our association with the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) we had their 600-litre water tank with a petrol pump on a trailer delivered to us full every second Wednesday afternoon by SERCUL employee, Dan Friesen. It was then towed by volunteers to our newly planted sites opposite 123–129 Riverton Drive, Rossmoyne where we generally found that two tanks or 1200 litres were needed with the refill at a tap at Rob Bruce Park. After a second half refill we then watered the plants on the drainage outlet trench opposite 231 Riverton Drive, Shelley. The whole exercise took about two to two and a half hours and the trailer was then collected by Dan early the following morning on his way to work. We certainly hope that we can replicate the same arrangement next summer and are immensely grateful to SERCUL for the equipment and Dan for the delivery and pickup which saved more than an hour's driving to and from the SERCUL depot in Kenwick.

All these combined efforts resulted in an excellent plant survival rate which CRREPA always strives for. Mysteriously *Baumea juncea* was the only species to struggle despite a great start with the use of TerraCottem, good following rainfall and weekly watering. Although many of these plants appear dead, closer examination often reveals a green stem indicating the rhizome is still alive.

Below, The SERCUL (left) and Council (right) water tankers fill up at Rob Bruce Park



## A NEW VISITOR TO OUR SHORES



Spotted along the Shelley-Rossmoyne stretch of the Canning by the growing band of CRREPA bird watchers – the Great Crested Grebe, the largest of the grebes. Probably its most distinctive feature, as its name suggests, is its distinctive black double crest.

Murray Radestock took this photo of the Grebe near the pipe opposite Rob Bruce Park on 12 March.

The Great Crested Grebe is most commonly found on rivers, lagoons, lakes, swamps, reservoirs, saltfields, estuaries and bays across a large part of Australia. Although its conservation status in WA and four other states is “secure”, like many other water birds it is threatened by reduction of its freshwater wetland breeding habitats through various processes including altered drainage, increased salinity, clearing, grazing and extraction of groundwater.

## POSITIVE INITIAL MEETING WITH CRS KUNZE AND HALL

The lack of an up-to-date authoritative management plan for the Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore, public damage and theft of foreshore vegetation and lack of readily available water for new plantings were three of the main issues raised at a meeting on 21 December last year between CRREPA committee members and Councillors Ben Kunze and Patrick Hall who represent Bannister Ward. The foreshore forms one of the Bannister Ward boundaries.

A CRREPA briefing paper prepared for the meeting said the commitment by the Council to prepare a master plan for the Shelley Beach Park was a great step forward. But it begs the questions: What about a current plan for the rest of the foreshore between Yagan Reserve and Shelley Bridge? Why is there such a limited focus on Shelley Beach? *The Shelley Rossmoyne Foreshore Management Plan* that was prepared for the City of Canning and released probably in late 1999 or 2000 needs updating and has no status that is apparent to CRREPA in its regular liaison with the Council. In the transformation of the foreshore since suburban development, many initiatives have been undertaken independent of each other that have had long-lasting negative and positive impacts. Without an overall plan that is endorsed, resourced and implemented by the City of Canning and endorsed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW), this quite unsatisfactory piecemeal style of management will continue.

The briefing paper also highlighted that without countless thousands of hours of voluntary labour, conservation and revegetation work would never have progressed as far as it has. But regrettably without the continuing vandalism, theft and trampling of that vegetation, the voluntary public work would have had an even greater outcome. These problems have been evident right along the Swan and Canning Rivers for many years and despite considerable education initiatives in signs, pamphlets and media, underpinned by legislation which could result in prosecution, the problems continue unabated.

The CRREPA committee members – Grecian Sandwell, David Thwaites, Bill Lambe, Sue Stanley and Stephen Johnston – urged the councillors to respond to residents who oppose revegetation of the foreshore by strongly reiterating that the



foreshore reserve is managed by the Council for the whole community for its environmental and recreation values; protection and expansion of native vegetation cover is vital for enhancement of both those values.

Crs Kunze and Hall were receptive to the views put forward at the meeting. There was acknowledgement of the big loss of tree cover in the City of Canning, mainly on private land, and the unreasonable notions of some people living opposite public areas about their assumed “rights” in relation particularly to trees, on the public land.

The committee is keen to keep in regular contact with the councillors on what is the most important area of Council-managed land in their ward.

### YOUR CRREPA COMMITTEE 2016 - 2017



**President:**  
**Vice President:**  
**Secretary:**  
**Treasurer:**

Stephen Johnston  
Sallie Bryant  
Elsie Fisher  
Bill Lambe

**Committee Members**  
Grecian Sandwell, Roslyn Bartholomaeus,  
Sue Stanley, Dick Bolton and David Thwaites

## **DID YOU HEAR US?**

**By Stephen Johnston**

### **Have you ever wondered what happens to your submission on a government plan or proposal?**

It obviously varies greatly depending on the size of the proposal and therefore the number of submissions that are received, whether it's Commonwealth, State or local government and whether the government agency is willing to consider environmental issues.

All of this was highlighted in February for CRREPA in responses to its submissions on the WA Department of Transport *Perth and Peel Transport Plan for 3.5 Million People and Beyond (Transport @ 3.5 Million)* and on the residents' petition to the City of Canning to extend the dog exercise area from Beryl Avenue to Linkwater Street, Shelley.

In thanking us for our "valuable submission", the Department of Transport advised us it was one of nearly 700 received during the three-month consultation period. "The responses were collated and themed by an external agency, analysed by the Transport Portfolio and the draft plan reviewed and revised, where appropriate." There was no apparent consideration by the Transport Portfolio of the potential impacts on a Canning River nature reserve so the proposal to construct a bicycle-pedestrian bridge from Fifth Avenue to the Lagoon Conservation Area at Salter Point when Perth's population reaches 3.5 million, remains in the final plan. Given the slowing of Perth's population growth with the State's economic downturn and that the most optimistic predictions a couple of years ago were that Perth would not reach even the three million mark until the end of the 2020s, there is, pun intended, a lot of water to flow under the bridge before the Salter Point bridge is given any more serious consideration.

By comparison the City of Canning's response to our submission was refreshingly prompt and personal. The Manager of Parks and Environment, Mary Ross, advised me that it would be included as an attachment to the Report to Council and referred to in the document. I was subsequently advised that it would be tabled as a separate attachment to the Council report. Whatever the councillors' decision, it is at least reassuring that our views are given due recognition by the Council.

## **2016 SUNDOWNER**

About 30 people celebrated another successful year for CRREPA at the pre-Christmas sundowner at Shelley Beach Park on 4 December last year. Unlike the previous year when rain forced us to the shelter of the Rossmoyne Primary School, we had a lovely fine evening but with a fairly cool breeze.



## **THANK YOU MAX**

**After 15 years of leading the Bullcreek to Tuscan group, Max Risbey has retired.**

Prior to this, Max's longstanding efforts have included designing and making planting implements; collecting local seed and propagating 1000s of plants both for CRREPA's restoration work and for sale to the City of Canning (CoC) thus providing an income for CRREPA. Max's significant contributions have been acknowledged by a CRREPA Honorary Life Membership (December 2003) and CoC Honour Board at CREC for more than 20 years environmental volunteering (November 2013).

A full profile of Max will be in the next newsletter.

# GROWING INTEREST IN COUNTING THE BIRDS

## By Colma Keating

For the fifth year in a row, on the first weekend of February, CRREPA participated in the National Shorebirds 2020 count at Grecian's Spit opposite the Beatrice Avenue-Riverton Drive intersection to collect information on the health of shorebird populations and habitat. From 2013 to 2017 participation has increased from two to 16 CRREPA volunteers and friends (often overseas visitors with a keen interest in birds). During this time we have recorded 33 of our full list of 76 different bird species that have been observed along the length of our foreshore from Bull Creek to Shelley Bridge. As a comparison, Kings Park boasts around 80 birds.



In addition to contributing to the national database on shorebirds, this annual survey has provided an opportunity and a space for CRREPA volunteers and friends to enjoy our local birdlife, to share knowledge, company and to have some fun trying to work out the mystery birds. I hope you can join us next year.

It is also fabulous to see more locals observing the birds along the foreshore, in particular at Grecian's Spit where there is a great vantage point from the park bench opposite 237 Riverton Drive, Shelley. Grecian's Spit is a special area for CRREPA and the City of Canning. There is a great article in CRREPA News (No. 38, page 5 - which is on our website [www.sercul.org.au/crrepa.html](http://www.sercul.org.au/crrepa.html)) about the successful revegetation of the foreshore begun in 2005 that protects the spit's resting and foraging birds from detrimental disturbance by people and dogs.

There have also been lots of sharing of sightings, particularly recently with our new visitor the Great Crested Grebe. If you would like help identifying birds, check out our treasurer Bill Lambe's excellent website ([www.canningriverbirds.com](http://www.canningriverbirds.com)) or send your photos to CRREPA ([crrepa@gmail.com](mailto:crrepa@gmail.com)) and one of our resident 'birdos' will help you out. If you would like to go on a guided bird walk, please drop a note to our gmail.

For more information <http://birdlife.org.au/projects/shorebirds-2020>

