



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) or postal address (PO Box 3079 Shelley 6148)
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www.sercul.org.au/crrepa.html

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From the Editors

We would like to thank Ken Keesing for his hard work and dedication in producing the CRREPA Newsletter since 2009. We will try and follow his example by including informative articles that we hope you will find interesting.

VIEW FROM THE POINT - Sue Stanley

As I stand here preparing for my first watering shift at Wadjup Point, the noise of traffic on Shelley Bridge fades into the distance. I am surrounded by the sounds of spring on the river - the rustle of leaves from a strong sea breeze, the splash of the water as a duck comes in to land, a pair of pelicans chasing their dinner and the laughter of children playing on the lawn while their parents fish off the beach.

We are truly blessed to have this environment at our front door. I'm sure, with the dedication of the volunteers in CRREPA in repairing and improving the quality of the river foreshore and, in turn, improving the quality of the river for all its inhabitants, the generations to come will be able to share the same experiences that we enjoy today.



I wonder if those people chattering away to a friend as they walk past, or those running determinedly with their head phones on, do truly realise what an amazing and diverse landscape they are passing through.

Blessing of the River

Event Details **Sunday 29th November 2015**
Time **11am—3pm**
Venue **Shelley Beach Foreshore Park, Riverton Drive, Shelley**
Cost **Free**
Other Information **Free parking/ food and drink available for purchase/ public toilets/footpaths for disabled access / BYO seating & picnic blankets**

drop in for a chat at the CRREPA display

An eco-conservation event co-sponsored by the City of Canning and the Department of Parks and Wildlife to draw attention to the fragility and beauty of the Swan Canning River Park. Enjoy healthy food options, children's activities, live music, eco stalls and an exciting display of Dragon Boat racing along with local organizations showing off their canoes, kayaks and paddleboards!

FAREWELL TO GIZMO - Sue Stanley



Photo: courtesy [Murdoch Independent]

We are sad to hear that the well-known river dolphin, *Gizmo*, has died.

The River Guardians Team sent an e-mail out on 27th October reporting that a dead dolphin had been seen floating in the river near the Belmont Racetrack on 24th October.

Staff from the Department of Parks and Wildlife retrieved the dolphin and it was confirmed as *Gizmo* by the scientists at Murdoch University. Although the cause of death is still unknown the post mortem examination suggests he may have been suffering from septicaemia caused by a long term infection. It also indicated he had not fed recently.

You may remember in 2012 *Gizmo*, then a three year old dolphin calf, was sighted with a fishing line that had become so tightly wrapped around his dorsal fin it was slowly slicing through it. He was also dragging an increasingly large load of seaweed and debris that had attached to the line and the fear was he would not survive.

Three police officers from the Water Police division came to the rescue. They followed mother and calf for some distance before they could dive in and catch *Gizmo* in their arms and set him free. The rescue was constantly thwarted by his protective mother *Tupac* who repeatedly grabbed him by the tail to pull him out of their hands.



Photo: courtesy [Swan River Trust]

The officers were presented with a 'Caring For River Dolphins' award to thank them for their efforts.

Your Sundowner Invitation

- WHEN:** *Sunday 6th December at 5.30pm*
- WHERE:** *Shelley Beach Reserve (near Beatrice Avenue roundabout)
A shady spot with a beautiful view*
- CRREPA PROVIDES:** *Roast Chickens and glasses*
- BYO:** *Salad or nibbles to share
As well as your drinks, picnic utensils, chairs, rugs etc*

RSVP for catering by November 27th: Roslyn 9457 4590
CRREPA@gmail.com

AUSTRALIAN WHITE IBIS – BLESSING OR BURDEN? - Bill Lambe

Australian White Ibis were once rare visitors to the south west of WA. They were not recorded in the Perth Metropolitan area prior to 1946. The observation of 12 birds in 1962 in Wattle Grove was the most recorded at one site in the south west up until 1967.

Since then the White Ibis have increased in both numbers and distribution in the south west to the extent that they are sometimes seen as a pest. They have been given the derogatory names of Tip Turkey, Bin Chicken and Flying Rat because of their habit of feeding from human refuse, including from rubbish tips. On the other hand the Australian White Ibis has also been called the Farmers' Friend because flocks of them can consume vast quantities of locust and other pest insects. The White Ibis' mixed reputation is exemplified by them being featured in one of

the former WA Department of Environment and Conservation's *Pest Notes* which however recognise that the bird is protected under the provisions of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*.



Probably the biggest breeding site close to Rossmoyne and Shelley is Lake Boora-goon. The Lake Reserve Management Plan of 2012 noted that the White Ibis had replaced Darters and Cormorants as the dominant species breeding around the Lake. The Plan said this shift was probably associated with changing water levels. Darters and Cormorants dive to the bottom of the lake for food. The drop in water levels affected their ability to feed, with shallower water levels creating ideal habitats for wading birds such as the Ibis.

The White Ibis is closely related to an African species of Ibis – the Sacred Ibis. The Sacred Ibis was so revered in early Egyptian culture that millions of them have been found mummified in Egyptian catacombs.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder!

VALE JUDITH VELLA BONAVIDA

CRREPA's thoughts are with Roger on the passing of his wife Judith whom many of you will have known from the Rossmoyne/Shelley community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS and THANK YOUs

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

We thank BUNNINGS Willetton for their generous donation of wetting agent, weeding tools and flagging tape.

WATERING

Thanks to 38 CRREPA members for committing to join our watering roster to keep our new plantings at five sites along the foreshore alive through the long hot summer. Also thanks to CRREPA members, the Hitchmans, Reids and Galvins, as well as the City of Canning for providing the water. The plants will need every drop of it.

MANY HANDS MAKE WEEDS GO - Stephen Johnston

The concerted efforts of volunteers from CRREPA, the Lions Club of Booragoon and Conservation Volunteers Australia, complemented by the City of Canning Bushcrew have enabled the removal of hundreds of bags of weeds over the winter and spring months.

CRREPA members have been involved in about 25 weeding sessions from Yagan Wetlands to Wadjup Point. These have included particular focus on areas such as the end of Central Avenue and opposite Rob Bruce Park.

CRREPA's Foreshore Groups Coordinator, Grecian Sandwell, says that while the target areas and the weeds vary, the objective remains the same: "To remove weeds that will compete with our native plants for nutrients, light, space and water, to bag the weeds and remove them before their seeds ripen and disperse. If we don't continue to do that every year the weeds' seed bank will continue to grow. It takes five years before a newly planted area matures to the point of being able to look after itself."

While the ideal is total removal of weed species with their sustained absence from an area, the more practical objective is simply minimising their spread and impact. Grecian recalls that weeds like Dock were rife when she moved to Shelley in 1991 but after much work by volunteers it was rarely seen until its recent comeback. "So we have to maintain the effort to ensure we keep it at least under control," she said.

In addition, the City of Canning Bushcrew maintains a barrier strip by poisoning the weeds between the sedge line and the grass. "This has two effects: it firstly ensures there is a



clear boundary line to guide the Council contractors so they don't mow into the sedges; and it also creates a weed-free strip where the sedge can grow in from the river bank," explained Grecian.

Among the various weed species we've attacked over the last five months have been:

- *Cretan* weed; a native of the Mediterranean region and neighbouring areas that is related to dandelions and sunflowers;
- numerous grass species;
- *Geraldton carnation* weed; a smooth leaved erect plant that is native to the Mediterranean with a yellow-green flower; and
- an extensive variety of annual weeds including *Wild radish*, *Cape weed*, *Fleabane*, *Storkbill*, *Flatweed*, *Oxalis*, *Vetch*, *Freesias* and *Fumitory*.

We should continue to remove and report *Caltrop*, a summer-growing weed that is widespread in WA and has fern-like leaves and sharp burrs which can be painful to humans and animals alike (refer to CRREPA News No. 42 for photos).

