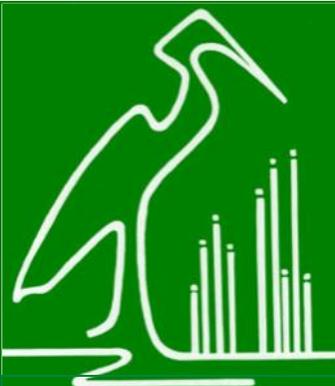


CRREPA NEWS

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 (0422 590 029) or email (CRREPA@gmail.com)
or postal address (CRREPA Members Officer: 16 Nearwater Way, Shelley 6148)
To see your CRREPA Newsletter in COLOUR view or download it from the SERCUL website.

www.sercul.org.au/crrepa

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

Busy year on the foreshore for everyone

Looking back over the last five years, it's not had to see the impact CRREPA has made on the foreshore. With help from the City of Canning, we have revegetated over 265 metres of mainly lawned areas in that period.



This year's revegetation was funded by a grant from the State Government's NRM (Natural Resource Management) Stewardship 2021, and was used to extend the current revegetated site at Grecian's Spit/Beatrice Avenue. On 13 June our volunteers planted 710 seedlings. The varieties included *Astartea scoparia*, which we found to have survived very well at our other sites in the recent summer heatwaves, *Eremaea pauciflora*, *Hakea varia*, *Melaleuca lateritia*, four varieties of sedges and our standard go-tos, *Conostylis candicans* and *Dianella revoluta*. As always, the City of Canning (CoC) helped immensely with site preparation, hole augering, fencing and watering the seedlings with a wetting agent after planting.

As well as the Beatrice Avenue extension we finished planting the Corinthian Road site with some of the 500 seedlings donated by CoC. We did the initial planting in 2020 but we had to wait for an area of erosion to be remediated before finishing the planting. The rest of the seedlings were planted as infill at our Wadjup, Central Road, Rob Bruce and Murray's Ditch sites.

Cont...



CRREPA member Grecian Sandwell brought to our attention a section of foreshore in front of Grecian's Spit that had sedges growing in amongst the lawn. Unfortunately, when the lawn was mowed the sedges were being damaged. We spoke to CoC and were told this lawn area was to be replaced by sedges in the Shelley Beach Master Plan. The easiest solution was to re-position the fence up to the path letting the sedges naturally propagate behind it. We thank CoC for their prompt response.

Another area CoC have fenced for us is the Central Road site opposite 51–63 Riverton Drive. This site has had ongoing problems with plants being stolen or poisoned and garden refuse being dumped on it. Hopefully the fence, and sign supplied by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, will make the public more aware of the value of this site.

You may have noticed a few more trees planted on the foreshore recently. CoC have finished planting 100 locally native trees between Central Road and Rob Bruce Park. This is part of the *Shelley Rossmoyne Foreshore Management Plan* and supports the City's *Local Biodiversity Strategy* and *Urban Forest Strategy*. The Management Plan identified a number of trees that had died or were ageing or deteriorating. These trees are part of the succession planning recommended by an independent consultant and arborist and will also increase shade and improve the environment along the foreshore.

The planning of tree placement was done with the co-operation of local residents.



COOTS CONGREGATING ON THE CANNING

One of the increasingly common sights along the Shelley-Rossmoyne stretch of the Canning River are the large numbers of Eurasian coots (*Fulica atra*) often forming rafts of more than a hundred birds.

Their distinctive markings are their white beaks and shields on their faces, but they are as often heard as they are seen with what Wikipedia describes as “a wide repertoire of crackling, explosive, or trumpeting calls, often given at night.”

Eurasian coots are found all over the world, with four sub-species ranging across Europe and north Africa to Japan, India, southeast Asia, Philippines, Borneo, New Guinea and New Zealand. Coots are omnivores but in Australia are mainly vegetarian, eating leaves, shoots, and stems of plants and using their strong diving ability - they can dive deeper than seven metres and often remain underwater for up to 15 seconds - to pull up underwater weeds.



TO THESE THREE WE PAY TRIBUTE

Three people – Mary Ross, Steve Atwell and Max Box - who together have given more than 50 years of outstanding service to conservation for the City of Canning and been instrumental in guiding restoration of the Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore, were recognised at an afternoon tea on 19 June 2022.

The principal purpose of the function at the Canning River Eco Education Centre was to celebrate the contribution of Mary Ross following the City's decision to make redundant her position as Manager Conservation. She will resume employment with the City later this year as a technical officer in Parks and City Greening.



Mary first joined Canning in 1996, and with the establishment of the first Natural Areas Team on the initiative of Steve Atwell, Mary focused on building relationships with volunteer environment groups. She developed close relationships with CRREPA including life member and then president, Di Matthews, particularly as she prepared the first management plan in 2000 for the Shelley-Rossmoyne foreshore. Exemplifying her remarkable record of continuous service, 18 years later she oversaw preparation and publication of the second foreshore management plan.

In between, Mary had risen from technical officer through various managerial roles including Manager of Parks and Streetscape Services and Manager Parks and Environment. She reached the highest level as acting Director Canning Environment for five months in 2017 and since then has been involved in the non-operational side of parks management and the strategic and project aspects of conservation.

Mary's longest serving colleague, Steve Atwell, said Mary had all the important traits of a natural and educated leader including high levels of integrity, intelligence and insight. "She sets a really high example for all the people who work with her; she has empathy for her community and empathy for her staff."

Steve left Canning in 2016 after 24 years' service, starting as Manager of Parks and Gardens and finishing as Director of Infrastructure and Environment. He played a key role in many important initiatives including the first and only management plan for Yagan Wetland Reserve in 1995; the *Management Policy for City of Canning Foreshore Reserves* in 1997 which set out the key principles for foreshore management we follow to this day; the first Natural Areas Team in Perth; the Lower Canning foreshore interpretation consultancy with Susan Harris that resulted in the Wadjup-Gabbilju Trail; and the development of CREEC between 2005-08.

In her tribute to Steve, CRREPA life member, Colma Keating, said that aside from all he achieved, it was his whole approach that won him so much admiration, "working collaboratively with local community friends groups, enabling community to have input via structured advisory groups and being the gentle and supportive mediator and facilitator between councillors, City officers, State Government, community groups and local residents."



Max Box left Canning last year after 11 years as leader of the Natural Areas Team. Max was very supportive of CRREPA, and all the City's community conservation groups, his strong collegiate approach exemplified by working alongside them on-ground, participating in restoration site tours where we could learn together, co-presenting at conferences and bringing his expertise and practical lived experience to half-day site tours for South Metropolitan TAFE Conservation and Land Management students.

Colma said Max also introduced two of the regeneration and rehabilitation techniques that had been so effective and continue to be appreciated by CRREPA: applying herbicide to create a barrier strip along the inner edge of the foreshore sedge line into which the sedges can then spread and augering of holes for planting.

CRREPA'S DONATION FUNDS PROVIDE NEW HOMES FOR BATS

The great generosity of CRREPA's members and supporters has enabled the construction and installation by Simon Cherriman of eight microbat boxes – four on the eastern boundary of Yagan Wetland Reserve, two in the woodland/playground area on the foreshore between Tuscan Street and Corinthian Road West, Rossmoyne and two east of Rob Bruce Park, Shelley.



It is hoped that microbats will eventually establish themselves in the specially designed, bottom entry boxes, which could start with the boxes in Yagan where there are already bats, and then possibly extend to the boxes along the foreshore. If this can be achieved it would be a wonderful enrichment of the foreshore biodiversity, similar to what has been achieved with bat boxes on the other side of the Canning in Bodkin Park, Waterford.

Studies have shown that urban wetlands are critical habitat for microbats that contribute to the environment through insect suppression. They measure from about four to 16 centimetres, weigh between three and 150 grams. While they have sight, they also use echolocation to detect objects – a high frequency sound pulses through their nose or mouth with the returning echoes directed by a flap of skin in front of their ears to make a 'sound

picture'. There are about 60 species of microbats and a number have adapted well to urban environments with three of the most common being Gould's wattled bat (*Chalinolobus gouldii*), the White striped freetail bat (*Austronomus australis*) and Lesser Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus geoffroyi*).

A research project in Canning River Regional Park by Dr Joanna Burgar, Yvette Hitchen and Jim Prince found only Gould's wattled bat using the Park's bat boxes. The researchers said the boxes could play an important role in promoting bat conservation through public education. Bats have been recorded consuming between 25 and more than 100 per cent of their body mass in insects each night. Much has been made of microbats' value in suppressing mosquitoes but the researchers found through analysis of faeces in the bat boxes that 40 per cent of their prey was moths and butterflies with mosquitoes accounting for only 11 per cent.

Vale Sandy Potter

by Dianne Matthews

We sadly note the recent death of Sandy Potter. The Potters, Terry who died in 2020, and Sandy, were part of the inaugural team of CRREPA. As mentioned by Colma Keating *Vale to Terry* in CRREPA News No.57 April 2020, Sandy helped initiate the first community meeting at her workplace at the All Saints' College library in early 1990s from which CRREPA was formed.

Both Sandy and Terry were very involved in meetings and hands-on sessions and both will be remembered as generous, committed and kind folk who contributed greatly to the formation of CRREPA.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS and THANK YOUs

We are very grateful for the support provided by DBCA, State NRM, Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources and:



AUSTRALIA'S FAUNA WITHOUT FUR NEED GREATER PROTECTION

It's the sort of question that might leave many people struggling for an answer: What are the least recognised, least visible, least understood but most plentiful fauna in Australia?

They are the invertebrates, they constitute 97 per cent of Australian fauna and most are insects. As the Australian Museum says: "invertebrate animals are the dominant life on earth. The number of invertebrate species is staggering and new species are being discovered all the time. To date scientists have only documented 1.7 million invertebrate species but they estimate numbers could range from 5 to 30 million. At this rate it will take scientists over a thousand years to identify all invertebrate species. Unfortunately, species numbers are declining faster than we can record their existence."

David Knowles has committed his working life to the study and the championing of invertebrates and will be the guest speaker at the CRREPA annual general meeting on Thursday 29 September 2022 at the Canning River Eco Education Centre. His passion for insects, insect-plant relationships, scorpions and spiders as well as reptiles was fired by his childhood experiences in the rainforest gully behind his grandparents' home in Brisbane. In 1998 he and his wife Fleur established Spineless Wonders, a macroinvertebrate education and survey consultancy. He has more than 40 years of biosurvey experience in Australia, Vietnam, Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and New Guinea and his photographic library contains the largest private collection of WA macroinvertebrate images.



One of Mr Knowles' surveys, which he will refer to in his talk at the AGM, was of macroinvertebrates and reptiles at five sites in the Canning River valley, including Canning River Regional Park and Bannister Creek. His three day-three night survey in October-November 2011 commissioned by the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL), found 321 species of insects which he said suggested high levels of remnant biodiversity, especially at a site in Maddington near Bickley Brook.

However, Mr Knowles found that introduced Honeybees and Argentine Ants posed major threats, the former because they compete for limited nectar, pollen and hollow resources and the Argentine Ants because they degrade the ecologies they infest. He said light pollution was another "erosive force cyclically sucking a significant group of insect fauna to their doom at industrial, residential and recreational margins to conservation estate."

Please join us for your **28th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

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

WHEN: Thursday 29th September 2022 6.45pm for 7pm start

RSVP Tuesday 20th September - essential to let us know if you are coming and for catering.

Please ring Liz on 9457-8656 or email crrepa@gmail.com

Nominations are open for CRREPA's 2022/23 Committee. We are always keen to have new members on the committee. The roles are not demanding and enable you to have an even more direct involvement in the protection and restoration of the Shelley-Rossmoyne- Foreshore. If you are interested in finding out more about what the committee does, please call Stephen Johnston on 0447 273 727 or e-mail him at crrepa@gmail.com