

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'

Community Rivercare Grant site complete

July 10th started out as a very wet and windy morning but thankfully it moderated in time for the volunteers to plant all 515 seedlings at Halophila Bay and opposite 131 Riverton Drive, Rossmoyne.

This is the latest of the Community Rivercare Grant sites we have planted out over the years and it completes 250 metres of revegetation along this stretch of the foreshore.

By improving the moisture holding content of the soil and choosing plants that should survive at this site like *Hakea prostrata*, *Astartia scoporia*, *Facinia nodosa* and *Conostylis candicans*, we hope it will be as successful as the Corinthian site we planted in 2020.



Stanley



Stanley



Stanley



Stanley

WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP THE THREATENED BLACK COCKATOOS

CRREPA members and friends are invited to a presentation on Thursday 5 September 2024 by Sam Clarke, who is the Education Officer and Tour Coordinator at Kaarakin Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre.



Sam will speak about the threats to our black cockatoos and what we can do to help them. Kaarakin is the only sanctuary of its kind in Australia purely dedicated to black cockatoos. Its mission includes rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing WA's injured black cockatoos, public education, protecting and increasing areas of natural habitat for them and rehabilitating degraded disused land.

The presentation will commence at **6.30pm** at the **Canning River Eco Education Centre (CRREC)** on the corner of Kent Street and Queens Park Road, Wilson. We hope to see many members and their friends there.

After Sam's presentation the CRREPA annual general meeting will be held with reports from the president, treasurer, membership officer and foreshore coordinator and election of

the committee for 2024-25. The following office-bearer positions are open for nominations from members: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and foreshore coordinator. Three general committee positions are also open for nomination. Nominations for any of these positions should be sent to the CRREPA mailbox by **Saturday 31 August 2024**.

Special Resolution - Change of name

During the AGM the following special resolution will be put to the members attending for consideration and adoption: *That the name of this organisation be changed from the Canning River Residents Environment Protection Association Inc. – otherwise known as CRREPA - to the Friends of the Shelley Rossmoyne Foreshore Inc. and that the Association's constitution be amended accordingly.*

Supper will be provided by the City of Canning at the end of the meeting. To assist with catering, **please advise Liz Moore by Saturday 31 August 2024** through the CRREPA mailbox CRREPA@gmail.com if you will be attending the presentation and meeting.

Please join us for your **30th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

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

WHEN: Thursday 5th September 2024, 6.15pm for 6.30pm start

RSVP Thursday 29th August - 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 2024/25 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

MAJOR FORESHORE REVEGETATION PROJECTS PLANNED OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS

The City of Canning will next year embark on the biggest Shelley Rossmoyne foreshore revegetation project for many years in collaboration with CRREPA and with support from the community. It is one of a range of projects across the Canning, Gosnells and Armadale municipalities that will be funded by a \$10 million allocation from the Commonwealth Government's Urban Rivers and Catchment Program.

Four sites along the foreshore have been targeted for planting, two in 2025 and two in 2027, totalling about 1280 square metres. CRREPA committee members have already been consulted by the City in relation to plant selection and community involvement.

One of the two areas scheduled for next year is a long narrow stretch comprising 330 square metres on the river side of the path in what we refer to as the Central Road area, opposite 51-59 Riverton Drive, Rossmoyne. This has been by far the most problematic site despite being subject to many plantings and hundreds of hours of weeding, watering and planting work by volunteers and the City's Natural Areas staff. As a result of soil deficiencies and vegetation vandalism, there have been at best mixed results from all this work. It is hoped that the planting next year might see the vegetation cover extend to the edge of the footpath as it has before.



The other area scheduled for next year is opposite Rob Bruce Park, Shelley, extending over 600 square metres from east of the connecting path from the road, through to the tree-line opposite 199 Riverton Drive. It will be the single largest area of the foreshore to be revegetated for many years and was the subject of a specific recommendation in the foreshore management plan: "Link Rob Bruce Park to the foreshore with low height native shrubs, groundcovers and herbs planted either side of the existing path that connects the path to the foreshore".



Extensive site preparation will be required including removal of the existing mix of compacted, gritty soil and road rubble and replacement with new soil. A new path in line with the bollards beside Riverton Drive will be established in place of the existing north-south path.

The two areas scheduled for revegetation in 2027 are a narrow stretch of 205 square metres running towards Wadjup Point from opposite 347 Riverton Drive, Shelley and due east of this site, 145 square metres of turf between established trees opposite 357 Riverton Drive.

Community consultation will be critical to the success of the whole project to reduce community resistance, prevent loss of plants from vandalism and assure residents that revegetation areas that do not have existing canopy species and have good sightlines along the River will be planted predominantly with shrubs and groundcovers. At least one community planting event will be organised for the Rob Bruce site.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

River Guardians

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

Birds of the Canning River

<http://www.canningriverbirds.com>

Friends of Queens Park Bushland

<https://www.friendsofqueensparkbushland.org.au>

Urban Bush Council

<https://www.bushlandperth.org.au>

MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS FLOW AT CRREPA'S 30TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

About 30 CRREPA members were joined by the Mayor of Canning, Cr Patrick Hall; the State member for Cannington, the Hon Bill Johnston; our local councillors Amanda Spencer-Teo and Ben Kunze; and past long-serving City environment managers, Mary Ross and Steve Atwell, at an afternoon tea organised by the City at CREC to celebrate CRREPA's 30th birthday.

In her speech to the function, Diane Matthews, life member and past president of CRREPA, wistfully recalled Shelley and Rossmoyne when she and her husband, Gary, moved into their house in 1965. Diane said that as Shelley was mainly land-fill from the dredging of the Canning River channel there were "large, sandy, disconnected sections of foreshore, acres of weedy Veldt Grass between properties, with some scattered remnant damp areas with paperbark trees. Leach Highway wasn't there; Beatrice Ave was a gravel track coming down from High Road. There were few fences and we could walk through vacant blocks to the river."

Some residents began ad hoc weeding sessions removing Dock from the sedges, Fleabane and thistles while Diane lobbied the City to stop mowing into the sedge bank and to erect log fences along Riverton Drive to protect the reserve from vehicle damage. In what today would be inconceivable grant applications, CRREPA applied successfully to Greening Australia for 15,000 Juncus plants, and to the City for 2000 paperbarks, 500 River Gums and 500 sheoak seedlings. Quantities of seed had been collected from local trees and the City agreed to provide its plant nursery to propagate the seeds.



The biggest single project then was Yagan Wetland Reserve, clearing a tangled jungle of climbing Lantana (*Lantana camara*), Ipomea (*Ipomoea carica*), and Dolichos Pea which were smothering all the trees, "while Arum Lilies (*Zantedeschia aethiopica*) and weedy Paspalum grasses smothered everything else." Diane recalled the large stands of bullrushes that have long since been removed from the River foreshore and the "one-or-two-full day planting sessions that targeted large sandy gaps in the foreshore vegetation that were at risk of erosion. These involved sourcing plants, displays, inviting other community volunteering groups, sausage sizzles, mobile toilets, and much organisation. Also, the excellent initiative by the City to shift the path in Rossmoyne to increase the foreshore buffer area ready for more plants. Locals now wouldn't realise the amount of plants and work that have gone into all these improvements."

Mary Ross, who started working with the City in 1996, said the foreshore reserve was one of the most challenging in Canning because of 'the edge effect' where changes are most pronounced at the boundary between one space and another and 'fragmentation' which creates more and more edges for ecological areas – favouring weeds and other 'generalists' threatening the 'specialists'.

"The foreshore comprises so many edges in a very narrow space; the moving tidal water edge, the hard fixed road edge, the fence which limits parking, the path (both sides), the turf areas and the precious slither of remnant and restored vegetation... it is that slither which gives the place much of its character, helps reduce erosion, shades walkers, supports fauna, provides a native corridor and so many other benefits.

"All those edges aid the incursion into the very narrow remnant and restored areas by people, dogs, boats, weeds, litter and so on. Apart from funding, it takes a continuing input of time, effort, commitment and care to tip the imbalance enough to protect, restore and support the 'precious slither', way beyond what a local authority could provide. CRREPA should be so proud of what it has achieved by hard work, persuasion, lobbying, arguing, cooperating, and celebrating this place, which has not just survived but improved over the 30 years."



CITY AGREES TO REIMBURSE CRREPA's LARGEST GENERAL EXPENSE

Thanks to sustained lobbying by CRREPA, the initiative of local Bannister ward councillor, Amanda Spencer-Teo and strong support by our other Bannister ward councillor, Ben Kunze, Canning Council resolved at its July meeting to reimburse the Association's volunteer and public liability insurance premiums for last year and this year.

The funding decision also extends to two of the three other incorporated Canning community environment groups – Friends of Queens Park Bushland and the Bannister Creek Catchment Group. Insurance for the third group, Canning River Regional Park Volunteers, who work predominantly on land managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, is covered by the Department.

Council also resolved to prepare a draft policy that will provide appropriate guidance around future reimbursement of the groups' insurance premiums. This policy is due to be ready for consideration at the September Council meeting.

The reimbursement of two years of premiums and possible future reimbursement, pending the outcome of the September meeting, will be of enormous assistance in ensuring CRREPA's financial sustainability. From our inception we have had to find the funds from a mix of our small membership income, administrative allocations from grants and other sources. Last year the premiums constituted 75 per cent of CRREPA's general expenses and, of course, premiums increase each year.

The long-term underlying issue for CRREPA, and indeed all community environment groups working on council land, is that the councils' public liability and volunteer/personal accident insurance policies only cover groups that are *not* incorporated, if they fulfill certain accountability requirements. The reason for this is that the *unincorporated* groups' volunteers are regarded by the insurers as being under the cities' control and actively managed by the cities.

That theory does not accord with reality, and in practice, incorporated community landcare groups will generally be expected by the cities to fulfill the same or similar accountability requirements as the unincorporated. But, from the Insurance companies' perspective, incorporated status alone denotes groups as being independent entities whose volunteers cannot be under the "control" or "direct management" of the cities and cannot therefore be eligible for the cities' insurance cover.

There are multiple reasons why it is prudent for community organisations to become incorporated, not least in providing individual members with legal and financial protection and enabling the groups to apply for grants and enter into grant contracts. But the price of prudence has been very high in insurance premiums totalling thousands of dollars over our 30 years.

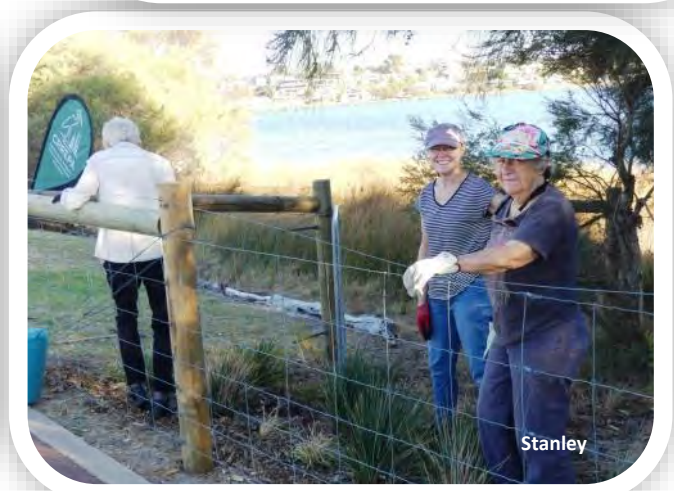
As I emphasised in a deputation to the Canning Council's briefing meeting in July, CRREPA volunteers form the principal labour force for the protection and restoration of the Shelley Rossmoyne foreshore to help fulfill the City's environmental objectives. Having to pay our insurance premiums to enable us to do the City's job is ridiculous, unfair and inequitable as it's an impost only on the incorporated groups. Against the \$1.5 million allocated in the City's budget for insurance next year, the additional cost of the three Canning incorporated community environment groups' premiums is miniscule.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS and THANK YOUs

We are very grateful for the support provided by DBCA, State NRM and:



Out and About



Vale John Mitchell (24/2/2024) By Colma Keating

Margaret & John Mitchell have been long-time CRREPA members – since the 1990s. Many of you will know them from their consistent contributions to ‘hands-on-foreshore care’ with the Yagan-Tuscan Sub-group as well working alongside them at our key planting and weeding sessions on other parts of the foreshore. In more recent years you will have been able to have a chat with John as he walked the foreshore and/or maintained community links at coffee mornings at Flames.

Special thoughts and thanks are extended to Margaret and family.

A FRENETIC START AND A FINE SET OF MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

This time 30 years ago CRREPA was engaged in its frenetic initial first six months of activity following the Association's founding in May 1994. Under the driving leadership of the late Margot Ross, CRREPA members identified seven priority areas for revegetation work, commenced bird and vegetation surveys, collected and propagated seeds from locally endemic plants, and identified really high levels of pollution though their water quality monitoring of drains and streams flowing into the Canning River.

CRREPA had forged a very strong working relationship with the City of Canning and in December 1994, seven CRREPA members briefed Canning councillors on their long-term plans for the River and foreshore. In 1997 the City and the Swan River Trust set up a Canning Foreshore Community Advisory Committee, which included Margot Ross and one of our life members, Diane Matthews. The Committee produced what has been a seminal report – a *Management Policy for Canning Foreshore Reserves* – which provided the guiding principles for the 2000 and 2019 foreshore management plans and for CRREPA'S work ever since

The first of these principles is replacing the turf between the dual use path and the River with endemic vegetation "wherever practicable and appropriate". More than 20 years later the Canning Local Biodiversity Strategy and the Fore-Shore Management Plan highlighted the importance of a continuous strip of native vegetation – trees, shrubs and understorey – as an ecological link between Canning River Regional Park and the bushland reserves of Bull Creek.

The second principle is re-designing drainage outfalls to flow into swales planted with endemic plants to filter the pollutants and increase the native vegetation cover. In 1996-7 the City's Engineering Department identified 48 drainage outlets along the foreshore reserve. CRREPA has collaborated with the City in the treatment of six of these with a mix of methods including sedge revegetation around the outlet (Beatrice Avenue), filtration swales (Pleasant Place and Murray's Ditch - opposite 235 Riverton Drive), drain cutback from near the River's edge and revegetation at the mouth of its new outlet (Nearwater Way, Zenith Street and Pleasant Place) and a bubble up drain with surrounding revegetation (Wadjup Point).

The third principle is to protect and enhance all riparian vegetation and, working with local community groups, to reintroduce local vegetation for wildlife habitat. This has been the biggest single focus for CRREPA since its inception. The fourth – and most contentious principle for some people – is restricting "public access to key areas of remnant vegetation, rehabilitation and wildlife breeding areas identified in the relevant management plan" so as "to minimise the detrimental impact of human activities". In other words, fencing, which has proven to be the simplest, most effective and economic means of vegetation protection.

Today, thanks to the many thousands of hours of work over the past 30 years by volunteers, principally CRREPA, but also Lions Club of Booragoon, local school children, the former Green Army, along with the City of Canning Natural Areas Team, the foreshore environment has been greatly enhanced with considerably more coverage of local native plants, shrubs and trees and a more robust line of sedges to protect the river banks from erosion, filter nutrients and provide wildlife with protective habitat.

