

FQPB News



Edition 1
October 2013

Welcome to the first edition of the FQPB News - the quarterly newsletter of the Friends of Queens Park Bushland.

The newsletter will contain reviews of the activities held in the previous quarter and notification of the upcoming events. Plus, we'll aim to include an interesting article on an aspect of the bushland.

We would also like your input. Have you taken a photo or seen something in the bush that you'd like to share with the group? Send it in to fqpbushland@gmail.com and we'll include it in the next newsletter.

July to September 2013

We've been very busy in the last three months with a couple of activities including the First Forrestfield Scouts and our first public nature walk.

28 July

Seventeen people, including seven scouts, pulled up *Fumaria* in Black Creek Reserve. This was an easy task to introduce the scouts to the importance of removing weeds from the bush. We will be holding more activities, specifically for the scouts, to help them earn their environment badge.

26 August

Eight members met to do a final clean-up of the route taken on the nature walk. We were pleased to find that there wasn't a great deal of rubbish and we spent most of the time pulling up *Fumaria*.

7 September

The day started with thundery rain that didn't ease up until well after the advertised 9.00am start. However, that didn't stop eleven members and six visitors enjoy our first public nature walk through Black Creek Reserve. Collette did a wonderful job of leading the group into the bush and talking about some of the wonders to be found. That's Collette pointing to a nest box in the photo. Thanks Collette!



28 September

Six members met with five scouts to move logs, cut from a fallen branch, across a sand track in Black Creek Reserve. This track is not a formal track and it is regularly used by contractors as they work in the bush (even though they are told not to use it!). The logs will stop vehicles using this track and discourage pedestrians. After the logs were moved we cut the flowers off pink gladioli to stop them setting seed.

6 October

Twentysix FQPB and BirdLife Australia members went birdwatching through the Queens Park Regional Open Space. This was a 2.5 hour, 4 km walk through Black Creek Reserve, Gibbs St Reserve and Gill Brennan Reserve (and back again). The birds seen were tallied at the end as we all sat around having a well-earned break. A total of 50 bird species was seen by the group.

Also during the quarter, Sian arranged a noticeboard for the group in CREEC (Canning River Eco Education Centre) to promote the group and we had our very first brochure printed.

A big THANK YOU goes to Ash, Barbara, Cheryl, Colette, Collette, Florian, Jelena, Karen, Louisa, Marion, Peter, Ronnie, Rose, Rosemary, Sian, Stephanie, Sue, Ursula and the scouts for helping out with these activities.

Upcoming events

- 27 October – Cutting pink gladioli seed pods
- 10 November – Bird survey and water sampling with scouts
- 23 November – Night stalk (date to be confirmed)
- 30 November – Promotional activity (see below)
- 8 December – Seed collecting and propagation with scouts
- 22 December – Seed collecting (date to be confirmed)
- 29 December – Propagation workshop (date to be confirmed)

Promotional activity

Several months ago the City of Canning called for nominations for names to be placed on an environmental volunteer honour board at CREEC. The criteria were that you had to have been volunteering in the environmental field, in the City of Canning, for more than 15 years. Sue nominated Sian to be placed on the board.

We have been informed that Sue's nomination of Sian has been successful and there will be an official unveiling of the board on 30 November. As part of the Blessing of the River events on the day, the Friends of Queens Park Bushland have been invited to promote their activities with an exhibit. The City of Canning will help by providing a 3m x 3m marquee, trestle table and chairs for us to use. It is expected that 4,000 people will attend the events.

The events will be held from 12noon to 5.00pm on Saturday 30 November. The unveiling of the honour board is scheduled to take place at 12.30pm. Other attractions at the Blessing of the River event include international guests, the Thang Long Water Puppet Theatre from Hanoi, Vietnam to help draw attention to the spiritual beauty and fragility of the Swan Canning River Park. This 1,000 year old art will be performed in the Canning River, accompanied by Vietnamese musicians, sharing the day with Aboriginal artists' interpretations of the River. In addition, there will be lots of children's activities, delicious Vietnamese food, coffee and ecological themed stalls to entertain and inform visitors.

We are currently planning how best we can use this opportunity to promote our group and the activities we hold. We will have our brochures to give away and we are printing some more greeting cards to sell. We would like to have lots of pictures to view, so we're trying to get a display board (or two). Other ideas are welcome.

We'll need your help too. If you have an hour or two to spare during the afternoon we'd appreciate your help staffing the exhibit. You don't need to know lots about the bush; you just need to talk about why you like volunteering to protect the environment. It may be that you find it satisfying to help the bush, you might enjoy the company of like-minded people who are willing to share their knowledge or that you

just want to be part of a group that makes a difference. Whatever your reason for volunteering, that is what we need you to share with the visitors to the exhibit. It is your enthusiasm that will get others involved, not what you know about the plants and animals.

Red-tailed black Cockatoo

One of the birds seen during the birdwatching walk on 6 October was Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos. We first saw a male and female sitting quietly together in a Marri tree. This gave us a chance to see the differences in plumage between the sexes – glossy black head and body, with solid red markings on the tail of the male, compared to the cream spots and barring on the head and body with black-barred markings in an orange-yellow panel on the tail of the female.

As we moved closer, we saw another two birds on a different branch near the first pair. These were younger birds and appeared to be a male and a female. The presumed female had the plumage of an adult female. However, the young male had the completely black head of an adult male bird, but had the shadow of barring on the underparts and black-barred markings in an orange-yellow panel on the tail. The Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds (HANZAB) tells us that a male Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo doesn't attain full adult plumage until it is four years old, but starts to lose the female spots and body barring in its third year.

We'd like to believe that this was a family group of mum, dad and two kids. HANZAB tells us that adults can breed every year and have been known to raise two broods in one year. While they can lay two eggs, it's usually only one at a time. So perhaps this is mum and dad with a three year old male child and a sex-yet-to-be-determined 1-2 year old child. Or it could be two couples, with one of the females being a cradle snatcher. Or it could be a single mother with her young son. Next time we see them we'll remember to look for the pale eye ring to separate a young Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo from an adult female.

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos can live for 50 years and are currently listed as a vulnerable species due to habitat destruction. Their natural diet consists of seeds from Marri, Jarrah, Blackbutt, Karri, Sheoak and Snottygobble. However, as their habitat is being destroyed, they have been forced to expand their choice of foods. In the last 10 years or so they have moved from the forests onto the Swan Coastal Plain and found ornamental eucalypts and the introduced Cape Lilac to their liking. They have even bred in artificial hollows in Bentley.



The solid red tail panels show this bird as being male.



The black-barring in this tail indicate this bird is either young or female.



The speckled face and dark eye-ring show this bird to be an adult female.