

THE GECKO



Edition 29
October 2020

Welcome to the October 2020 edition of The Gecko.

We had all of the good things in life this quarter – planting, weeding and nature walks. The wildflowers put on a good display and the birds came out singing with their finest voice.

But life isn't all roses. We also saw an application lodged by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries to clear some of our bushland for the construction of the State Football Centre. Public comment is being sought regarding the clearing application so see page 3 for details.

July to September 2020

5 July 2020

This first group activity held since the lifting of COVID-19 gathering restrictions was a small affair with seven of us meeting to plant 79 seedlings. Once the seedlings were in we took a tour of the area to show three of our group, who hadn't been with us before, where the State Football Centre is to be built and some of our other revegetation areas.



Planting.

26 July 2020

Five of us met to remove weeds from around some of our seedlings. Our experimental lupin crop, to build the nitrogen content of the soil, was just starting to flower. As we don't want them to set seed, all of the flowers were nipped off ready for the plants to be pruned down to the ground at a later date.



Weeding amongst the lupins.

30 August 2020

Thirteen of us met for a nature walk through the bushland. There were many Pansy Orchids (*Diuris magnifica*) to be seen, and a few Dark Banded Greenhood orchids (*Pterostylis sanguinea*) were still in flower, but we were too early for the spider orchids (*Caladenia* sp). Many of the other native herbaceous plants were also in flower, like the Purple Tassels (*Sowerbaea laxiflora*) and Milkmaids (*Burchardia congesta*).

A Shining-bronze Cuckoo could be heard calling and a Bobtail was found basking in the late-winter sun. We also saw six species of bird on the lakes.



Many Pansy Orchids, *Diuris magnifica*, were seen on the walk. Photo courtesy of Kerry.

Many thanks go to Rosemary, Ronnie and Kade for bringing morning tea. And thanks to everyone else for bringing their curiosity and good company to the outing.



Looking at a Bobtail, *Tiliqua rugosa*.

27 September 2020

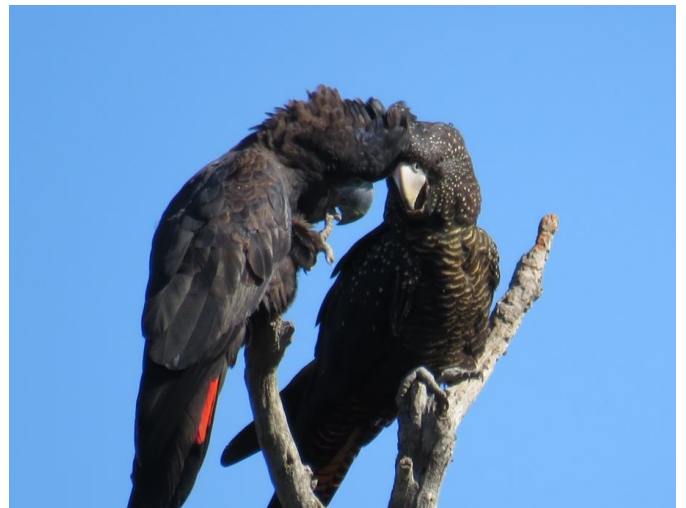
There was a huge turnout for the bird watching walk with 37 people attending. The day was perfectly timed as it had rained the previous day and was forecast to rain the next.

We walked from Station St through the bushland to Wharf St and back again, identifying birds as we went. At morning tea we compiled a list of the birds seen and were very satisfied with a total of 48 species. But then, as always happens on these walks, another three species flew over us just as we were packing up – taking the grand total to 51 bird species for the morning.



Bird watching.

While most of the birds didn't allow us good views, and some didn't allow us to see them at all (they were identified by their calls), a few were very obliging. The Australian Reed-warbler sat on a reed in the full sun singing to its heart's content and the Red-tailed Black Cockatoos, while high in a tree, allowed us to get very close and take many photographs.



Red-tailed Black Cockatoos, *Calyptorhynchus banksii naso* – male on the left, female on the right. Photo courtesy of Addy.

There were many wildflowers in bloom, too, which added another level of interest to the walk.

A special thank you must go to Katrina and Kade who brought homemade lemon cheesecake and brownies to share for morning tea.



A Splendid Spider Orchid, *Caladenia splendens*, was seen on the bird watching walk. Photo courtesy of Kade.

A big THANK YOU goes to Addy, Barbara, Bob, Cruz, David, Evan, Frank, Ian, Jackie, Jelena, Kade, Katrina, Kerry, Koda, Mavis, Niamh, Patrick, Ronnie, Rosemary, Sara, Shirley, Sian, Sue and the City of Canning's Natural Areas Team for helping out with these, and other, activities in the bushland.

Upcoming events

25 October – Weeding
 November – To be confirmed
 December – To be confirmed

Details of some of our activities are yet to be finalised but will be distributed by email and advertised on our website.

Also this quarter

Incorporating the feedback provided last quarter, new plans for the areas surrounding the State Football Centre were out for public consultation.



Two walks through the study area were held so that respondents could get a better feel for the design and feedback could be given straight to the designers.



One of the feedback walks.

This was followed by an application to clear the land which went out for public comment on 23 September. Disappointingly, the application to clear includes some areas that we have been nurturing for nearly 30 years.

You are encouraged to look at the plans - <http://ftp.dwer.wa.gov.au/permit/9049/> - and comment on the clearing. Submissions are open until 14 October.