

THE GECKO



Edition 41
October 2023

Welcome to the October 2023 edition of The Gecko.

Spring is definitely here and so are the wildflowers. It is a great time of year to get out and look at

nature. It's also the last chance to get on top of the winter weeds before they drop their seed.

We did a bit of both this quarter and hope you have the opportunity to do likewise.

July to September 2023

30 July 2023

We were lucky with the weather this day. For the 30 minutes preceding our activity there was a constant heavy drizzle. The early birds contemplated going home if nobody else arrived. Luckily for us, others did arrive and we were treated to the only 2-hour fine window of the day for our activity.

Six volunteers cleared the weeds from a patch of Running Postman, *Kennedia prostrata*, in a naturally revegetating area. Running Postman does not stand up well to having nearby weeds chemically controlled so the only way to protect it is to remove the weeds by hand.

While slow, hand-weeding gives us a better chance of seeing what else lives in the area. Growing through the Running Postman were two species of orchid, the Dark Banded Greenhood, *Pterostylis sanguinea*, and the Common Mignonette Orchid, *Microtis media* ssp. *media*.



27 August 2023

Seven volunteers met to dig out some of the last remaining patches of *Watsonia* in our area. This bulb can form large clumps and reduce the amount of space available for native species.

We had some of the team digging the plants up while others cut off the leaves and bagged the bulbs. It was hard work but very rewarding to look back and see open ground where there was once nothing but weeds. Hopefully the native plants will quickly reclaim the space.



Some of the weeds required a team effort to get them up.

During a rest break we took a look at the nearby nesting site of some native bees, *Leioproctus* sp. (these were previously discussed in more depth in our October 2022 newsletter). There were many nest sites

constructed and many parasitoid wasps, *Pseudofoenus* sp., could be seen hovering around the nests. It wasn't until a few minutes of searching that we came across the bees. They were warming up in the sun at the edge of the nesting area. If you didn't know they were native bees you would swear there were a lot of flies buzzing around.

24 September 2023

We had perfect weather to accompany 11 participants on a nature walk. The sun was shining and it wasn't too hot or too cold, which combined to make for a pleasant stroll through the bushland.



Photo: Ian Hanlon

Joining us and enjoying the wildflowers were two prospective councillors. Both showed interest in hearing about the bushland and learning how they could help protect the environment should they be elected to council.

Discussions dominated the walk so, unfortunately, several points of interest in the bushland were missed. However, we saw many plants in flower and discussed the equally many ways that species can be lost. We also spoke about revegetation, the work needed to make it successful and its limitations.

The walk was enjoyed by all and it was a good way to share our love of the bushland with our councillor candidates.

A big THANK YOU goes to Barbara, Ian, Jackie, Kade, Kathryn, Michelle, Ronnie, Rosemary, Sian, Susan, Trevor and the City of Canning's Natural Areas Team for helping out with these, and other, activities in the bushland.

Also this quarter

Two of our members were honoured to be added to the City of Canning's environmental honour board.

Rosemary and Ronnie have each been with the Friends of Queens Park Bushland for 15 years, during which time they have regularly participated in many of our activities. Together they have voluntarily contributed over 800 hours of their time and effort. They have each had formative roles in our group, which would not be where it is today without their work.

Congratulations Rosemary and Ronnie!



Photo: City of Canning