



Annual Report for 2019

Summary

During the year the Society was involved in a wide range of activities, connected with wetland appreciation, education, monitoring, management and revegetation. The main focus of our work was through the Wetlands Centre Cockburn, where the Society is based.

Highlights

- The 15th Wetlands Management Conference was held at the Centre on 1 February 2019 and was attended by 180 delegates.
- Revegetation work continued on the land damaged by the previous Government for the Roe Highway extension (Roe 8).
- The State Government introduced a Bill to amend the MRS to remove the Roe 8 reservation through the Beeliar wetlands.
- The City of Cockburn completed the planning for the extensions to the wetlands precinct at Bibra Lake. Work is planned to commence in February 2020.
- The Alfred Cove Wave Park proposal was rejected by the State Government.
- The Government announced two new regional parks in the Bunbury area.
- The WA Planning Commission announced that the draft wetland buffer guidelines will be released for public comment in 2020.
- Two important coastal wetlands in the Becher suite were acquired and added to the conservation estate.

Disappointments

- The State Government failed to complete any new Ramsar nominations and the updated State Wetlands Conservation Policy was not released.
- The EPA approved of potash mining at Lake Disappointment, which is a major breeding site for the black-winged stilt. We have lodged an appeal.
- The Water Corporation has installed a sewerage main through the Anstey-Keane Wetland.
- No decision has been made about the future of the Strategic Assessment of the biodiversity and land use in the Perth and Peel Regions that was commenced by the previous government.

Activities

Amongst the many activities that members were involved in this year were:

- The Beeliar and Jandakot Regional Park Community Advisory Committees.
- The Jandakot Groundwater Community Advisory Committee, the Roe 8 Rehabilitation Committee, Rethink the Link and the Bibra Lake Wetlands Precinct Committee.
- The Wetlands Coordinating Committee, the Australian Wetlands Network and the TEC19 and TEC33 Recovery Plan Committee.
- The WCS assisted with the planning and running of the 15th Wetlands Management Conference held at TWC on World Wetlands Day, 1 February 2019.
- One General meeting and three Committee Meetings were held.
- Submissions were made on the proposed new harbour in Cockburn Sound, possible extensions to the Beeliar Regional Park, the proposal to mine potash in Lake Disappointment, proposals for new regional parks, including the proposed Yule Brook Regional Park, and the proposed Ramsar nominations.
- The memorial seat for our former Vice-President, Norm Godfrey, was redesigned and placed in the wildflower garden at TWC.
- An excursion was held to the Anstey-Keane wetland in September 2019.
- Work continued, in collaboration with the City of Cockburn on the upgrading of the Woodland to Wetland Trail at Bibra Lake.
- The WCS supported the proposal by Darryl James and Malcolm King to establish a special conservation precinct at Bibra Lake to be called Southbank.

Ongoing Issues

Some of the unfinished business that the Society will be working on in 2020 includes:

- Updating of the State Wetlands Conservation Policy
- Further Ramsar nominations of WA wetlands (Lake McLeod, tributaries of the lower Blackwood, Fortescue Marsh, Lake Carnegie, Brixton Street Wetlands)
- Proposals to expand the Regional Parks System (Lower Serpentine, Gngangara, Peel and Yule Brook)
- Completion of the wetland buffer guidelines
- Clarification of the future of the Government's proposed Green Growth Plan (SAPPR)
- Planning for the new harbour in Cockburn Sound
- Implementation of the Beeliar Regional Park Management Plan
- Deletion of Stage 8 of the Roe Highway from the MRS and revegetation of the damaged areas
- Further revegetation work at North and Bibra Lakes
- Enhancements to the Wetlands Centre and the local precinct

Acknowledgements

- I would like to thank all members for their support last year. Once again it was a very productive year and a good team effort.
- The Committee Members for 2019 were Philip Jennings (President), Denise Crosbie (Vice President), Felicity Bairstow (Secretary), Rex Sallur (Treasurer), David James, Jeff Mengler, Robyn Pickering, Mark Hutchison, Doug McColl.
- Special thanks to Denise Crosbie and Rex Sallur for their outstanding work in coordinating the landcare and environmental education programs at the Wetlands Education Centre.

Philip Jennings
 President
 April 2020