



Annual Report for 2023

Summary

The Wetlands Conservation Society continued to maintain a high level of activity in 2023. There was some progress on several long-standing objectives but there is still a lot of work ahead of us to raise awareness about the need to conserve our remaining wetlands.

Highlights

- The 19th Wetlands Management Conference was held at the Wetlands Centre Cockburn on 1-3 February 2023 and was attended by more than 200 delegates. It was a great success and delegates enjoyed the upgraded facilities and the longer format.
- Revegetation work continued on the land damaged by the previous Government for the Roe Highway extension (Roe 8).
- During the State Election campaign, the Government promised \$3 million for infrastructure in the North and Bibra Lake reserves. A plan for the use of these funds was prepared by DBCA and WCS provided comments. Some improvements were completed in 2023.
- The WCS provided comments to the WA Planning Commission on its proposals for rezoning the land in the remainder of the Roe 8 and Roe 9 reserves.
- Two booklets, one on Bushwalks in the Beeliar Regional Park and the other on Experiencing Perth's Biodiversity were produced and were launched at the Wetlands Centre during its 30th anniversary celebrations in September 2023.
- Our vice-President, Robyn Pickering, prepared and maintained our web site and uploaded relevant images and documents. This site is located at <https://wetlandswa.org.au/>
- The Wetlands Centre Cockburn celebrated its 30th anniversary in September 2023. Six members of the WCS were made life members in recognition of their formative contributions to the Wetlands Centre.
- The City of Melville announced plans to restore the lower land at Goolugatup (Heathcote) and to establish the Melville Bird Sanctuary on the Attadale and Alfred Cove foreshore.
- The State Government created a new national park in the arid zone including the important waterbird habitat at Lake Carnegie.

Disappointments

- The State Government failed to complete any new Ramsar nominations and the updated State Wetlands Conservation Policy was not released.
- The WA Planning Commission has deferred the release of the draft wetland buffer guidelines until after the SPP2.9 is finalised.
- The State Government has now abandoned 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; the Westport Terrestrial Impacts Advisory Committee; 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 19th Wetlands Management Conference held at the Wetlands Centre Cockburn on 1-3 February 2023.
- One General meeting and three Committee Meetings were held.
- Submissions were made on the North Lake rehabilitation plan; the proposed rezoning of the remaining Roe 8 and Roe 9 reserves; the development of the Tramway reserve trail.
- An excursion was held to Alison Baird Reserve on 16 September 2023. It was well attended with over 20 participants.
- The WCS supported the Friends of Southbank with their conservation project at Bibra Lake.
- The WCS donated and supported the Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee with its effort to purchase and manage Lake Saide (Eungedup) near Denmark.
- Work was done to digitise our records at the Wetlands Centre.
- Two new books and two educational slide shows were prepared and will be launched in 2024.

Ongoing Issues

Some of the unfinished business that the Society will be working on in 2023 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, Greater Brixton Street Wetlands)
- Proposals to expand the Regional Parks System (Lower Serpentine, Gngangara, Peel and Yule Brook)
- Completion of the wetland buffer guidelines
- Planning for the new harbour in Cockburn Sound (Westport)
- Assisting the Wetlands Centre with education and landcare work.
- Revegetation of the Roe 8 reserve and future land use for the Roe 9 reserve.

Acknowledgements

- I would like to thank all members for their support last year. It was a busy year and we maintained a high level of activity and achieved some success, due to a good team effort.
- The Committee Members for 2023 were Philip Jennings (President), Robyn Pickering (Vice President), Felicity Bairstow (Secretary), Rex Sallur, David James, Jeff Mengler, Mark Hutchison.

Philip Jennings
President
April 2024