

CAMBRIDGE COASTCARE

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WINTER 2016 NEWSLETTER



Stuart Knott Memorial Scholarship



Sophie Cross, winner of the 2014 Stuart Knott Scholarship

In 2014, we established an annual scholarship for honours or masters students in memory of the late Stuart Knott, our inaugural chairperson when Cambridge Coastcare was formed in 1999, who died in 2013. The first scholarship was awarded to Sophie Cross, an Honours student at UWA, who studied the diversity of ant species in combination with an assessment of vegetation quality. Sophie spent over 200 hours in the field and about the same amount of time in the laboratory collecting and identifying nearly 6000 ants from pitfall traps at 30 different sites in the Cambridge dunes throughout the year and used the data to examine the relationship between habitat patch size, ecological condition, and biodiversity in the Cambridge dunes. Her thesis resulted in an article 'Biodiversity responses to vegetation structure in a fragmented landscape: ant communities in a peri-urban coastal dune system', which has been published in the Journal of Insect Conservation. A synopsis of the article is now on our website with a link to the article.

The scholarship will again be advertised to WA university students for 2017 after there were no applications for the 2016 award.

Town of Cambridge rejects BioLINC funding



Sadly the Town of Cambridge council decided at its meeting on 23 May 2016 not to match the \$150,000 grant offered by

Lotterywest for the BioLINC project stage 1 as it was not an appropriate use of council funds. Some south City Beach residents were opposed to Cambridge Coastcare's plan to convert the edge of Jubilee Park into native bush-land, preferring it to remain grassed as at present. The BioLINC project was approved by ToC council in 2013 on a conditional basis, and that approval remains in place, so we shall consider what alternative means of achieving and funding a biodiversity corridor remain available to us.

Meanwhile, our focus remains on current projects including:

- Improving the native flora in the southern end of Fred Burton Reserve, where we have conducted a busy-bee on 15 May and a planting day on 29 May
- Restoring the sand piled up behind the new shed at Floreat SLSC by matting the steep slopes and planting with dune arresting vegetation.
- Arresting the dune blow-outs along the Floreat Dog Beach around paths 14 and 16 in particular, for which we have a current application for a grant in conjunction with Town of Cambridge.

Volunteer days for 2016



We conducted a busy-bee on 16 May followed by planting days on 28 May and 12 June. Thanks to all those who contributed the hard work. We had planned to continue planting through the winter on a fortnightly basis, but we have run out of plants suitable for the areas we have in mind. We hope to resume plantings late in July or early August, but that will depend on plant availability and some good rainfall. We will alert members by an email followed by a text message nearer the date. In many cases, we already have members' mobile numbers on file, but if you haven't been getting SMS messages about planting days, please send your mobile number to us at cambridgecoastcare@gmail.com.

Interested in dune conservation?



Green Army volunteers behind our new base at Floreat SLSC

We would still like to find a small group of volunteers who would be prepared to dedicate a few hours on a given day each week to dune conservation – mainly weeding but also other tasks such as supervising contractors etc. The same request in the last newsletter generated a couple of offers, but we need a larger number than that to make a sustainable working group. How about it? If you are interested, please contact our secretary John Campbell on 0407 992 090 or (08) 9385 8895.

Plant of the day



Broom ballard (*Exocarpus sparteus*) is an example of a plant which is useful for increasing the biodiversity values of restored dunes. It grows up to 3 m high but often in our area it is less than a metre. Its strange foliage consists of pendulous, usually leafless branches of an easily-recognised shade of pale green. Its flowers are dull, but its fruit is a shiny red berry, which attracts native birds. It needs some protection from wind and is difficult to propagate and hemi-parasitic, relying on host plants such as cottontails, but without apparent harm to the host. There are a number of examples along both sides of the back-beach road north of Floreat SLSC.

National Resource Management WA (NRM)

NRM is a body set up by the Commonwealth Departments of the Environment and Agriculture, with a board comprising the ministers responsible for these departments. Its regional offices have local boards and administer programmes such as the National Landcare Programme and employs our Coastcare Coordinators. It publishes a regular newsletter to which the public may subscribe at <http://www.perthnrm.com>. The most recent newsletter contained items about many topics including planting dates in various locations, courses for social media use, establishing bird nesting boxes, a workshop on techniques in soil stabilisation using matting, etc.



Perhaps Ivo and John should have attended the matting workshop before the Green Army work at Floreat SLSC?

It is also advertising for positions on the WA Board of Management which are skills based; the board is made up of between 7 and 9 directors. They are seeking nominations from suitably qualified and/or experienced individuals willing to volunteer their time to fill one vacant board position for a three year term. Candidates can download the nomination form from the website.

Arresting Floreat dog beach blow-outs



We have applied for a Coastwest 2017 grant to remediate the areas around path 16 and between paths 13 and 14 at the Floreat dog beach. The above photo is of the area north of path 16 and there are similar large areas south of it and further along the beach. We plan to lay matting through these areas and then to plant them with hardy plants to withstand the strong winds.