

Cambridge Coastcare – Volunteer Days for 2007

There is a busy schedule of exciting volunteer days planned for the year focused around plantings, weed control, fencing and seed collection. So make a note and come along if you have a free morning. Work days are generally a Sunday morning from 9-11am.

The exact dates for work days are subject to rainfall however note the following months in your diary (press announcements will be made closer to the time as to date, meeting time and meeting place):

DATE	WORKS	WHERE
May	Woody weeding – white broom	Fred Burton Dunes – between Challenger Drive and West Coast Highway
May/June	Woody weeding – Victorian tea tree and Rottneist Island tea tree	South City Beach Dunes – south of Falmouth Street and Challenger Drive
June/July	Planting of dune species	Fred Burton Dunes; Boardwalk Dunes; South City Beach Dunes; South Groyne Dunes
August	Clean-up day	TBA
December	Seed collection	Northern Dunes, south of Peasholm Street along West Coast Highway



You may have noticed those 'green bags' popping up along the Cambridge coastline. They are specially designed UV stable grow bags that provide protection from high winds, salt and importantly rabbit grazing for the young planted seedlings. They also indicate to passerby's where restoration is underway.

\$8.6 Million to Address Environmental Problems in the Swan

The Swan Region Strategy for Natural Resource Management Investment Plan has received final endorsement from the Australian and State Governments. In a joint announcement on the 8th January by the Federal Minister for the Environment, the Hon Senator Ian Campbell and State Environment Minister, the Hon Tony McRae, guaranteed funding of over \$8.6 million from the Australian and State Governments investment through the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) in the Swan region for two years.

Swan Catchment Council Chairman, Mr Colin Heinzman said "The Swan Catchment Council works together with multiple partners to implement the Strategy. Apart from managing and administering the distribution of NHT funding in the Swan region, the Council actively ensures that projects are meeting the Strategy objectives."

"32 projects across four programs will share the investment", Mr Heinzman said.

"They range from assessing the foreshores of the Swan-Canning river system to gauge the condition and prioritising opportunities for restoration, to working with light industrial enterprises to guide practical solutions for eliminating or reducing environmental emissions from this often overlooked group of businesses, to a project that integrates Indigenous knowledge into on-ground actions for restoring and protecting wetlands and a coastal seed propagation project."

"The Swan Catchment Council acts as a facilitator between State and Local Government, community and industry. Our membership is wide-ranging and this gives us the opportunity to identify the gaps that exist in managing our natural resources and the ability to invest in projects that address those gaps," Mr Heinzman explained.

A full list of projects can be seen opposite. The Swan Catchment Council is a community-based regional group involved in the coordination and delivery of natural resource management activities in the Swan Region. One of 56 groups from around Australia, the Swan Catchment Council is helping to achieve a nation-wide approach to management and restoration of our environment.

The Strategy and its associated Investment Plan is available online at www.swancatchmentcouncil.org or contact the Swan Catchment Council on (08) 9374 3333 for more information.



Integrated Water Management Program

- Swan-Canning Foreshore Assessment
- Swan-Canning Tributary System
- Water Quality Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- Water Quality Partnership
- Superficial Aquifer Health
- Avon Upper Swan Salinity and Nutrient Management
- Canning Environmental Flows
- Wetland Watch
- Wetlands Indigenous Project
- Sustainable Landscaping Strategy
- Ribbons of Blue/Waterwatch WA

Natural Diversity Program

- Stop Dieback - The Biological Bulldozer
- Ecological Corridors
- Invasive Species
- Behavior Change for Natural Diversity
- Private Landowner Incentive Package
- Biodiversity Action Learning Project
- Skills for Nature Conservation
- Perth Biodiversity Project
- Threatened Species Program

Sustainable Production Program

- Salinity Management in Wooroloo
- Waterwise on the Farm
- Linking BMPs with Vegetable Growers
- Linking BMPs with Grape Growers and Orchardists
- SME Sustainability Project
- Bellevue Sustainable Industry Project

Coast and Marine Program

- Developing indicators to support sustainable use of marine assets
- Assessment of invertebrate populations on intertidal platforms in the Perth metropolitan area
- Coastal Planning Incentive Scheme
- Coastcare Program
- Coastal Seed Program
- Coastal Indigenous Project

Caring for our Coast

<http://www.cambridgecoastcare.com.au>



Welcome...

to the Summer / Autumn 2007 edition of the Cambridge Coastcare Newsletter



"Your Community Coastcare Group"



New Plant Discovery in City Beach Dunes

Kingsley Dixon



The glistening white flowers of the alba variety of the coastal fan flower, *Scaevola crassifolia* only recently discovered growing in the dunes at City Beach.

Just when we thought we knew everything about the biodiversity of the Cambridge dunes along comes a complete surprise. While surveying for a major new weed control program (see article in this issue on White Broom control) in the Fred Burton Drive dunes (just over the road from Oceanus restaurant) Dr David Merritt and I spotted a glistening white flowered small shrub. What a surprise when we realised that we had discovered the alba (meaning white) variety of the common blue coastal fan flower, *Scaevola crassifolia*.

Only once before has a white form been found near

Kalbarri with this plant being the first discovery in the metropolitan region and a highly significant find for the Town of Cambridge. Growing to 30cm tall to 50cm wide and with glossy, light green, paddle-like leaves the spreading habit of the plant indicates that it could form an attractive ground cover with time. The white flowers appear to be produced over a 3-4 month period from late spring and into summer. A bonus is that the blooms have a delicate fragrance.

Like the common blue form, the alba variety is expected to be hardy, growing in full sun to partial shade with the plant requiring very little water during summer. This variety will make a worthy addition to any garden in the Town.

Cambridge Coastcare is arranging for propagation of the plant using a noted native propagation specialist.

The Fred Burton Dunes where this remarkable new discovery was made is also the only home for two of the Town's rarest plants – the coastal sea berry, *Acrotriche cordata* and the rare white-flowered form of the common cookies tongue (*Templetonia retusa*) showing just how important it is to protect and conserve our remnant coastal dunes.

Some of the native flora of the Cambridge coastal dunes





Cambridge Coastcare provides important community support to aid the Council in maintaining the biodiversity and natural values of the natural areas on the Town of Cambridge coastline. The Council values and acknowledges with thanks the continuing contribution of Cambridge Coastcare.

It is with great pleasure to announce that the Council endorsed the "Coastal Natural Areas Management Plan 2006-2010". The production of this plan is a collaborative effort between Cambridge Coastcare and the Town, with funding assistance from the Australian Government Envirofund.

The Plan, aimed at improving the environmental qualities of the coastal reserve, provides for a strategic approach in undertaking works and allows for a better coordinated approach of on-ground works. It will assist the Town, with the support from Cambridge Coastcare, to better communicate and undertake rehabilitation works within the coastal reserves.

Cambridge Coastcare and the Town have been awarded two grants:

Coastwest Grants 2006 – Undertake weed control on the east side of Challenger Parade north of Oceanic Drive. Amount sought \$8,900;

Envirofund Round 8 2006/07 – Enhance biodiversity values west side of Challenger Parade and south of Boscombe Avenue. Trust funding sought \$22,400.

The success of these grant applications will assist in implementing the various recommendations of the Coastal Natural Areas Management Plan.

Cambridge Coastcare recently assisted Council with revegetation works, following road works on the east side of Challenger Parade and north of Oceanic Drive. Cambridge Coastcare have also been undertaking maintenance works in previous rehabilitated areas. Cambridge Coastcare's assistance in enhancing the Towns' Coastal reserve is very much appreciated and valued by the Council.

Cr Pauline O'Connor

Council Representative to Cambridge Coastcare
Deputy Mayor

Building Ecological Connections Along the Coast

Dave Merritt

One of the longer-term objectives of Cambridge Coastcare is to improve the ecological functioning and connectivity of the coastal vegetation within the Town. A major and exciting step towards this goal will be the completion of two new major dune rehabilitation projects.

The first, to be completed this year, is funded by the Federal Government's Envirofund program and will focus on the vegetation immediately adjacent to previous Cambridge Coastcare works sites surrounding the South City Beach carparks.

The second project, funded by the State Government through the Coastwest grant scheme, will be undertaken over the next 18 months in partnership with the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, on land managed by the Authority along the southern parts of Challenger Drive to the largely undisturbed and very high quality native vegetation within the Department of Defence land at Campbell Barracks.

Both projects will employ similar methods that have been developed and successfully applied by Cambridge Coastcare over the last few years to enhance the coastal vegetation within the Town. These works programs generally comprise of a number of steps. Firstly, any necessary stabilization of bare sand and blowouts is undertaken using strategic fencing to reduce wind speeds and jute matting to minimise erosion.

The next task is weed control, both of large woody-weeds and herbaceous annual and perennial weeds. The woody weeds have to be removed by hand, with the bulk of this work often undertaken by contractors, with support from Cambridge Coastcare's volunteers. Herbaceous weeds on the site are controlled by herbicide spot-spraying and hand removal. Once site stabilization and weed control activities are completed it is time to plant the native vegetation using locally-derived material.

Each summer Cambridge Coastcare holds seed collection days, generally in the high-quality coastal vegetation in the northern regions of the Town. This seed, along with cuttings taken from species that are difficult to germinate is passed to commercial nurseries to propagate new plants. The exact mix of species is tailored to the particular works site, and generally includes 10 – 12 species and up to 10 000 plants.

By systematically approaching adjacent dunes, and targeting those that are particularly degraded (identified in the Town's Coastal Natural Areas Management Plan) Cambridge Coastcare will establish a corridor of high-quality native vegetation along the 4.5km of coastline.



Before: Dune along Challenger Parade prior to removal of invasive Victorian Tea Tree in 2002 and replanting of dune with local native species.



After: 2007 of the same dune area showing the remarkable growth of local native species resulting in the return of many native bird species and improving the biodiversity conservation values of the Town of Cambridge dunes.



Victorian Tea Tree has been designated by Cambridge Coastcare as one of the key woody weeds along the coast. A major outbreak of the weed has been found in the south City Beach dunes managed by Kings Park and with the awarding of a significant grant from Coastwest, a Tea Tree removal program and native species planting program has been instigated for this winter.



Coastal pea flower (*Oxylobium reticulatum*) is a highly prized species in the Cambridge dunes now restricted due to disturbance by weeds and rabbit activity to just a few locations. Collecting of seed in conjunction with Apace nursery in Fremantle will see the first propagations of this species for replanting into focus dune restoration sites near the south groyne at City Beach.



Although a dry year in 2006 Cambridge Coastcare was very successful in collecting good quantities of seed from a wide variety of species in the Cambridge dunes to be used in the 2007 planting season. Seed collection included good quantities of the distinctive coastal wattle (*Acacia cyclops* - note red aril used to attract insects).



Some species of the dunes have highly distinctive seeds. Travellers joy (*Clematis linearifolia*) is an attractive white flowered climber found in abundance in the dunes along West Coast Highway. The plumed seeds are easily collected and Cambridge Coastcare is planting a number of plants of travellers joy in the 2007 restoration plantings.

New Threat to Cambridge Dunes

Dave Merritt

This year Cambridge Coastcare has the Fred Burton dune in its sights for a number of reasons, but most attention is being focused on the silent and rapid invasion of the pernicious woody weed, White Broom (*Retama raetam*). White Broom is an attractive ornamental plant, with a weeping habit and attractive pea-like flowers, and has been widely planted in gardens in Australia since the early 1900's.

Unfortunately, adaptations these plants have developed to survive in their native habitat, the desert regions of northern Africa and the Middle East, make them perfectly suited to dry, nutrient-poor coastal areas. As a result, the plants have escaped from local gardens and are thriving in places they are not wanted. In fact, White Broom is now such a problem in Australia that the species is one of 28 listed on the Federal Government's Alert list for Environmental Weeds.

A survey of the Fred Burton dune by Cambridge Coastcare has identified at least 300 – 400 mature plants representing the largest outbreak along the Perth coastline. Without control the weed is likely to move quickly, as it has done in other countries and threaten the biological integrity of all coastal wilderness areas.

Although the species has already been sighted moving through roadside dunes towards Scarborough Beach, the scale and extent of the outbreak is containable giving the Town of Cambridge and Cambridge Coastcare a window of opportunity to eradicate the species from the Town.

To help in the fight to rid the coast of White Broom, Cambridge Coastcare has recently received funding from the State Government Coastwest initiative to remove all White Broom plants from the Fred Burton dune and replace them with native vegetation, ensuring protection of the remarkable and unique diversity (see New Plant Discovery in City Beach Dunes) tucked away in this system.



White Broom in the City Beach dunes. Without control this new pest plant could become a major environmental weed threat in coastal areas.