

# CREEK LINES

## NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 14 MAR 2025



*We care for the falls*

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## From the Chair

Thanks again for your interest in reading about FOULF's activities - we take great pleasure in looking after our small patch of nature, benefiting from great fellowship, the wonderful outdoors and the many people we meet along the way. Telling our story is part of our passion and I hope you enjoy this first newsletter of 2025.

I'd like to thank everyone who's contributed to FOULF's success over the years; without your hard work, commitment and interest in enhancing the Falls, it would be a very different picture. As you read through this newsletter, I hope you enjoy our stories, photos and information.



***Very much a family activity, volunteering at the Falls imbues in coming generations a real sense of stewardship for the bush.***



Since the November newsletter we have continued to make great progress on our goals and even won another award recognising our value to the local and extended community (see article in this issue).

A lot of work has gone into our storage facilities at our headquarters at Sanderson Road and we are now able to store everything there that we use for general purposes. Propagation equipment will continue to be stored at KMS. Dick Parker has led this work and also done the lion's share himself – for which we are extremely grateful. The sea container is now up to the City of Kalamunda's specifications and we are just awaiting their sign off.

We also thank Nick Underwood for additional tool and shelving donations. In the event that anyone has tools that they may no longer need, and may wish to donate, please get in touch. Not everything will be suitable but these donations can make a big difference to what can be achieved at Busy Bees.



***Dick, Mike M and Hayden brought our 20 footer up to speed with a paved approach ramp.***

The Propagation Group is still doing wonderful things producing plants for our winter program and may have around 3,000 seedlings and cuttings to go into the ground.

Steph Bewick's weeding helpers have made big inroads into getting rid of our problem weeds and the eastern third of our site (the first area we started to work on way back in 2013/14) is now really close to eliminating some species and real progress is happening over a wide range of weedy species across the entire site.

So I think you can see that a lot has been accomplished by our many volunteers. Well done everyone.

This year we are taking the time to consolidate our progress, assess what has been achieved and plan for the future. FOULF has a big vision for Upper Lesmurdie Falls, one that includes you and all the people who will come and visit our special place.

Over the next three months and beyond we will continue with the propagation work – it is a year round enterprise and this period will see the finishing off of plants for this year's planting and some of the first of next year's planting stock kicking off.

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We will continue the weeding drive, concentrating on the perennials. Blackberry is getting away from us a little, so that will need to be a priority and taro and bulrushes are also a high priority. The latter will require help from contractors with us mopping up the survivors. Both these species represent a major threat to our wet areas and we absolutely must bring them under control urgently. Then there are the feral wattles, wonga wonga vine, blue broom, pavonia, watsonia, etc. etc. The list is a long one but our progress in eliminating them is obvious to everyone and we just need to maintain the momentum. We would like to establish a weeding group to learn more about how to recognise and remove these species, so please let us know if you think you might be interested in joining in.

As autumn morphs into winter, we have a final chance to get more maintenance work out of the way before we start concentrating on planting and other winter based activities.



***Tackling the Taro***

So, as you can see, there is plenty to keep us occupied.

As managers of one of the premier natural tourist locations in the Perth Hills, FOULF is lucky to have good relations with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions, other local groups and the City of Kalamunda. Working together we have made the Falls a great place to visit.

Together we have tackled weeding, planting, path making, building a seedling nursery and even identifying heritage values around the Falls, all of which has led to many more people visiting the area to enjoy it with us. Increased amounts of litter and some parking challenges during peak times have become some of our other challenges

While the hot weather continues for now, our team is busy planning activities for busy bees once the rain comes. We hope to see you soon up at the Falls.

Mick Davis  
Chairperson, FOULF



# Busy Bee - 10 November

Report from Nick Underwood

A cool morning on a bright spring day heralded the start of our November busy bee down at the creek. While the numbers weren't as big as our October effort, a group of FOULF stalwarts gathered to give their all to the cause. The tasks on this day were fourfold. Carmel, Terry and Kathy headed off to the shadehouses to continue their work weeding and preparing their stock for next season's planting period. They potted up 110 *Acacia pulchella*, re-potted the last of the *Xanthorrhoea* and sterilised pots and trays. Two of our shade houses are now full of new plants and it looks like they'll be bursting at the seams by the time our next planting season comes along.

The rest of us split into three groups.

Dick took Mike M and Erik to the north side of the main weir to install a set of steps from the pathway down to the water's edge while Nick led Mark and Nan out to put a second coat on the five bench seats dotted around the creek.



***New steps will take the scrabble out of descending from the path to the weir.***

Meanwhile Steph and Mike R headed up to the 'hockey stick' to root out an infestation of *watsonia* and Andrew Mitchell did his disappearing act off into the bush to seek and destroy any feral flora brazen enough to defy his grubber.

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While all this was going on, Joanna held the fort at base. With walkie talkie and first aid kit at hand she was ready to wrap the wounded and chat to passers by about our aims and ambitions. Angie once again created a feast fit for a hungry horde of vollies when our labours were over. Truly worth skipping breakfast for.

Once all appetites were sated Michael and Rachel led us up the garden path to seek out our avian residents of note and to add to their survey list - a beautiful sacred kingfisher.

A huge vote of thanks to everyone who came along to make our morning on the creek so successful.

*Steph introduced some feral watsonia to our new weed cart.....*



*.....while Mark and Nan put the finishing touches on our bespoke bench seats.*



# Bird observations around the Brook Loop



We've had a few surprises as we wander around the brook looking for birds recently. One surprise has been that there are not more bird species. Here is a wonderful location with running water and tall, majestic trees and bushes but fewer bird species than we expected. As of the 11th January 2025 we have only noted 39 bird species, and that is after sixteen visits.

Which birds would we hope to see? Given the magnificent collection of thick reeds in different sections of the brook, with water beside them, we expect to hear Reed Warblers singing, for example. We haven't, well not yet anyway. We have seen them in several other places such as Ollie Worrell Reserve, Victoria Dam and Gillings Parade Wetland.

The second surprise we had was unexpectedly seeing a bird that we did not anticipate being here. It can be a bit difficult to tell apart from some other honeyeaters but we clearly saw a Yellow-plumed Honeyeater in the tree canopy. They are not common and are more often seen in Wandoo country east of the Scarp, but it does come Westward sometimes. It is about the size of a Singing Honeyeater but looks quite different. It has yellow tufts of feathers (plumes) on either side of its head, around where the head and neck join.



*Yellow-plumed Honeyeater*

Our dream is to see, and get a perfect photograph of, a Red-eared Firetail here. It is ideal territory for them. We have teamed up with Steph to go on a Red-eared Firetail hunt but not seen them yet.

Here is the list of birds we've seen as of 11th January 2025: 28 Parrot (Australian Ringneck), Australian Magpie, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Brown Goshawk, Brown Honeyeater, Common Bronzewing, Galah, Grey Butcherbird, Grey Fantail, Inland Thornbill, Laughing (Senegal) Dove, Laughing Kookaburra, Little Corella, Little Pied Cormorant, New Holland Honeyeater, Pacific Black Duck, Rainbow Bird, Rainbow Lorikeet, Raven, Red-capped Parrot, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, Red Wattlebird, Rock Pigeon, Sacred Kingfisher, Silvereye, Splendid Fairy Wren, Spotted Dove, Spotted Scrub Wren, Square-tailed Kite, Striated Pardalote, Weebill, Western Gerygone, Western Spinebill, White-cheeked Honeyeater, White-Tailed Black Cockatoos – Baudin's?, White-tailed Black Cockatoos – Carnaby's, Wood Duck, Yellow Plumed Honeyeater, and Yellow-rumped Thornbill. There will be more that have not yet made it to our list, so we will continue to come each fortnight, life and the heat permitting.

Happy birding.  
Rachel and Mike.

If you want help in learning how to identify the birds, the City of Kalamunda has organised for Mike to present a couple of **bird identification workshops**. One still to come:

- High Wycombe library Mon 24 Mar 5:30 pm - 7:15 pm.

Bookings essential on

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1331992>

Both libraries will also host a second series of workshops on identifying waterbirds. They will be in April and May 2025.

Hope to see you there.

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# Busy Bee - 8 December

Report from Nick Underwood

For a Sunday so close to the busy festive season, our last busy bee of the year was well attended by 17 volunteers keen to do their bit and so all activities on our Christmas wish list were completed. Following our meet and greet at the weir car park Dick, Mike M and Dick's grandsons Matt and Hayden took themselves up to HQ on Sanderson Rd to work on our new storage container.



So far Dick has built on a new roof with skylight and added a sensor light, so for the busy bee the boys completed a concrete slab ramp up to the front of the container while Dick and Mike cut out a section of steel on the side and installed a personnel door. Once the 20 footer is fitted out we will have an absolute shedload of space to muster all our equipment onto the one site.







**Zoe and Tayla came to grips with the bridge handrails....**

Meanwhile back down the creek Mark, Tayla and Zoe completed restoration of the timber bridge handrails, followed up by some riffle dam re-building next to the weir car park, while Mike R attacked vagrant watsonia at the east end of the park. Andrew Mitchell meanwhile, focused on weeding out African daisy and olive trees and scoping out a new infestation of periwinkle north of the dam. For the future, wonga vine is going ballistic along the eastern firebreak and will need a concerted effort over summer.



**....then got wet rebuilding riffles.**

Down at the orchard, Nick took to a second growth spurt of wild radish and long grass with the whipper snipper.



**Nick gave the orchard a haircut.**

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Up at the propagation centre Terry, Carmel, Marie and Kathy had plenty to do potting on, pricking out, sterilising pots and cleaning up some of the failed seed plantings. Fortunately there was no weeding to be done as this task was completed prior to the busy bee by Marie's French visitors.



***Shade houses are filling up with this year's planting.***

Holding the fort at base was Margaret and even though we were all in touch by UHF radio, no first aid calls came in. (Although someone did hear a yelp when Tayla placed a finger nail between two moving rocks during a riffle repair).

To finish off the day and 2024, Angie and Sophie made a most welcome entrance around 10.30 with their trademark feast for the masses and while we all munched on, Carol Hall, a local, dropped in with a bucket of (motorbike frog) tadpoles.

A great effort from all involved and an apology to all those who followed our wrong date to the creek a week later.

It just remains now to send a heartfelt "Thank you" to everybody who selflessly contributed their time to our cause throughout 2024.



Featured this issue -

## **Pithocarpa corymbulosa Lindl.**

### **Common name: Corymbose Pithocarpa**

#### **Small, spindly, but oh, so significant**

Now is the Nyoongar season of Bunuru, February and March, marking the hottest part of the year when there is little to no rain. Despite the conditions, the Jarrah and Marri trees are flowering and, if you are lucky to be in the right location and have your eyes peeled, in their understory you may spot a rare, small, spindly, white plant with clusters of winsome daisy-like flowers - *Pithocarpa corymbulosa*. It is an erect to scrambling perennial herb with few leaves that are scattered primarily on the lower parts of the stem.

*Pithocarpa corymbulosa* Lindl. Common name: Corymbose Pithocarpa is from the family Asteraceae, one of the world's largest, most widespread and successful families of flowering plants. However, *Pithocarpa corymbulosa* is not so widespread. Growing to 0.5 to 1m in gravelly or sandy loam amongst granite outcrops, it has been found in what appears to be small numbers and specific locations on the Geraldton sandplains, in Jarrah Forests and on the Swan Coastal Plain, and has been described as rarely collected.



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As to how successful *Pithocarpa corymbulosa* is, its categorisation as a Priority 3 plant; a poorly-known species – known from several locations, may give us a clue and at the very least highlights its significance to the local Falls area and alerts us to the importance of caring for its habitat. Botanists doing a revision of *Pithocarpa* found some in the lower Lesmurdie Falls area and commented that they were being threatened by an encroaching patch of *Watsonia meriana*. A Priority 3 categorisation means that it is a species that may possibly be threatened but does not meet the criteria for listing under the BC Act (Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016) because of insufficient survey or is otherwise data deficient. So, there is more to be researched and learnt about this shy little shrub.



*Pithocarpa corymbulosa*

Photos: A. Cawley

While Djilba (August- September) sees the excitement of hunting for orchids along the Falls bush trails, perhaps *Pithocarpa corymbulosa* could be one of the holy grails of Bunuru. Hint: You can find it on our project site and all the way down to Palm Terrace below the Falls, but you could also look for it on the Lewis Rd Walktrail and Lion's Lookout. Please let us know how successful you are!

#### References:

- Amanda Spooner, *Descriptive Catalogue*, 22 May 1997
- N.G., Marchant, Wheeler J.R., et al, *Flora Of The Perth Region (Part Two)*, Western Australian Herbarium, Department of Agriculture. Western Australia, (1987)
- DBCA



# Busy Bee - 9 February

Report from Mike Robinson

The Busy Bee last Sunday morning once again was a great success with just under twenty people turning out in near perfect conditions. A big welcome to first time attendee Geoff. We hope you enjoyed your first outing and will be back for many more. We certainly appreciated having you join us.

Carmel, Terry, Jackie, Coralie and Sally carried on with the wonderful work at the shade houses. They started by weeding all three shade houses before potting up 101 seedlings (45 *Calothamnus quadrifidus*, 50 *Melaleuca radula* and 6 stray *Corymbia calophylla*). Thanks to their efforts, our tally of seedlings for planting out this winter (already impressive) is steadily growing.

Steph and Margaret headed west from the Weir carpark and started weeding along the edge of the path from the stone bridge near the Little Dam toward the Cascades and then along the Cascades toward its lowest point. Initially, the focus was on fleabane and stinkwort then *Watsonia* (being careful to collect all the cormils developed on the flowering stems), black berry nightshade, and narrow leafed cotton bush of which there were a few large specimens in full flower and seeding ominously. Along the way we discovered a couple of well-established blackberry vines and some smaller plants, some embedded in the creek bed. Max joined them in locating the bases of the plants and treating them (cut and paint) with glyphosate.



***Blackberry is coming back but we're onto it.***



Dick brought his little digger down and set to work on moving the pile of silt on the southern side of the weir to fill the gully there and leave the area flat, tidy and ready for planting later in the year.

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While he was beavering away Max and Dan loaded up Steph's trailer with the Paspalum cut back by Nick earlier in the week – there was a vast quantity of this rampant weed which had to be removed before Dick could fill the area with silt. Later on Carl and Geoff arrived and helped Dan with the Paspalum removal. A big thank you to Steph's family for taking all that weed away to the Transfer Station later that afternoon. We hadn't realised how much valuable granite rock was buried in the silt and so I scurried about stockpiling those for later use as Dick uncovered them.



***A new vista on the weir is opened up.***

Mark and Paul went to work on repairing riffles between the lower flowdam and the Cascades. It is just a fact of life that repairs will be an ongoing activity as removing rocks to produce a sudden flush of water (or building walls up to create a bigger pond) are attractive pursuits for the young and some not so young. Eight riffles were restored, some in what are now quite awkward locations due to the success of our planting programs over the years. They also reported back on areas they encountered where more rock work for erosion control is required.



***Call that a riffle!***





For a while it seemed we wouldn't have enough people to tackle the pruning of the pathways but John valiantly set off into the wilderness armed with his weapons and cleared all the pathways from the Falls through to the eastern end. All prunings were discretely placed in the bush so as to minimise any unsightly, soon to be dry and dead, material. John also added in some weeding along the way. He removed the fleabane on the north bank of the stream in the area near the Falls where we planted over the last couple of years.

***Even the kookaburras love Angie's cooking.***

At 10:30 Angie called us in for a well deserved rest and some refreshments. As usual she had a formidable range of treats to tempt our palates and we all settled down for a delightful morning tea and a natter. A cheeky kookaburra stalked proceedings and finally swooped down to snatch a biscuit. Not sure if he liked what he got as I don't think it would be his usual fare.

A big thanks to Dick for bringing down the new equipment trailer that he and grandson, Hayden, built for us. It is custom designed for the range of equipment we require each Busy Bee – and elsewhere – and it is a very fine piece of work.

Every Busy Bee we need someone to man the marquee and fulfil the role of First Aid Officer. Joanna does that for us every month except for rare absences. It is vital to the success of our Busy Bees and includes talking to visitors and helping late arrivals to find where we are working.

Thank you Joanna – we are truly grateful.

Our next Busy Bee will be on the 9th of March and we look forward to seeing you there.

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# Bits 'n' Bobs

## Beavering away.

What possible lessons could beavers have for us at Upper Lesmurdie Falls?

Eurasian beavers used to occur across much of Europe but, for a range of reasons, became locally extinct in many places and across whole countries there. In recent times they have been widely reintroduced and have now increased to very healthy levels across most of Eurasia.

Their value for the environment includes the creation of wetlands and their dams trap sediment, improve water quality and recharge water tables.

When you reflect on what we have done on the section of Lesmurdie Brook we work on, the results are very similar. We too have created wetlands, trapped sediment, improved water quality and perhaps recharged water tables. As the saying goes, we have been busy little beavers.



*Not as hairy but busy none-the-less*



# THEN AND NOW



***Jan 2014. The area upstream of the dam and adjacent to the Terraces Car Park was a jungle of weeds and windrows.***



***Now a vibrant parkland of native bush and pathways. Note the old terraced gardens in the foreground.***

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# WEED WARRIORS

By Steph Bewick and Mike Robinson

## *Vinca major* (blue periwinkle)

Part of the Apocynaceae family, the blue periwinkle has established itself in three shady areas on our site. One patch is near the bathtub, north of the Dam. Another is close to the stream north of the Dam. The last is on the track heading down from Falls Road to the Little Dam. It is native to the Mediterranean region, so quite happy settling in at Mundy Regional Park after having established from the gardens surrounding the original homes on the site. It is a low-growing perennial with arched prostrate stems that bear green or variegated leaves in opposite pairs and solitary, large blue or purple flowers some 3-5cm in diameter. It flowers in winter and spring. Stems take root where in contact with the ground..



To eradicate this weed, all the stems (both above ground and below ground) must be removed. Most roots will descend from above ground nodes and are easily severed but older sections may produce stems below ground which may require quite deep digging. It can easily re-establish if even the tiniest piece of stem is left attached to roots in the ground. Given the areas of periwinkle are quite localised and it is very difficult to kill using herbicide, manual removal is the best option - along with close monitoring and immediate removal of any small plants that subsequently appear. As stems strike very easily, the removed sections of the plant must be collected and disposed of in the bins. It is a weed that we have a very good chance of permanently eradicating. The periwinkle family is generally poisonous because they contain alkaloids and other compounds



## **Bulrush Family (Typhaceae)**

In Western Australia, there are two species from this family, one native and one naturalised. Both are tall, stiffly-upright aquatic perennials, growing from a rhizome and flowering early in summer. The inflorescence or flower is a dense spike, male flowers on top and female below.



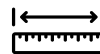
14mm



***T. orientalis* (bulrush, cumbungi)** is native to eastern Australia but not WA and has a leaf blade up to 14mm wide. It is an aggressive coloniser of disturbed wetlands. It is this bulrush that can be seen starting to flourish in some localised sections of the Flowdams. As it grows in water, it needs to be dealt with before winter to prevent rapid spread and carpeting of the brook. It is likely plants will continue to emerge as there are populations upstream. Like Taro and Century plant, it develops rhizomes which often break if one tries to dig it out. Isolated plants can sometimes be dug out if great care is taken to get all the rhizome. Otherwise, engaging specialist contractors to paint the leaves with glyphosate is effective.



8 mm



***T. domingensis* (yanget)** is native to all Australian states and is scattered throughout WA. It is a much more delicate plant than *T. orientalis* (bulrush, cumbungi) and its leaf blade does not exceed 8mm in width.

Reference: *Western Weeds 2nd Ed. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia* by Hussey, Keighery, Dodd, Lloyd and Cousens

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# Volunteer Profile

Stalwarts from FOULF's early days, Terry and Carmel Ballinger are the driving force behind our propagation team and contribute a wealth of local knowledge both botanical and historical. Here's how they got here.

## Terry and Carmel Ballinger

We were both born and educated in Queensland but have been in WA since 1978, when we came here when Terry accepted a job as an exploration geologist. Surprisingly, for us, we have lived in the same house (much modified over the years) all this time. Terry's then boss lived in Kalamunda and we were impressed by the big blocks and the semi-rural feel of the area. We chose our house because the block backs onto Lesmurdie Brook and is adjacent to a local council dam.



Neither of us was brought up in suburbia – Terry's family always lived on the coast and my childhood was on a mixed farm; gardening was in our genes. Our backgrounds are quite different. I was a teacher librarian and Terry a geologist. Our interests (other than gardening) overlapped when I did a Horticulture certificate at TAFE and was fascinated with the plants of the Darling Range. At this time, Terry bought his first digital camera and we began identifying and photographing local plants. Terry subsequently did a Grad. Dip. in Computing, and created a database of our photographs, which now is the plant finder on our FOULF webpage, [Flora Finder](#).





In January 2013, we saw an article in The Kalamunda Reporter introducing FOULF. We had noticed some weeding work around the weir, revealing the stonework that had been hidden amongst the weeds and wondered who was responsible. We signed up to the fledgling FOULF immediately. Our interests were chiefly in the flora and the water quality of the brook but we soon found ourselves in the weeding program, initially subduing tagaste, Acacia iteaphylla and South African feather grass. As time has gone on, we've been involved in researching the history of the area and in coordinating the plant propagation group; Terry was initially working with the planning of the paths. Of course, we participate in the Busy Bees.

Our involvement in FOULF is very fulfilling and the ability of the group to make a difference to the area and the community is undisputed.

The other regulars and volunteers at Busy Bees are a pleasure to work with and that makes what could be onerous, an enjoyable time.

LES MURDIE



Tony Eddleston, Luke McMillan, Mike Robinson, Ria Brabham, Will Stewart and Graeme Abbey at Lesmurdie Falls. d393904a

## War on weeds for place of beauty

A GROUP of Hills residents is on a mission to eradicate three weed species from Mundy Regional Park near Lesmurdie Falls.

The nine banded together to form the Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls Group late last year.

The group will work with the Department of Environment and Conservation and Perth Region Natural Resource Management to target AFG, Blackberry and Watsonia weeds.

The introduced weeds have damaged both sides of a stream, killing off native plant species.

Group member Mike Robinson said the weeds would not always be the focus, with long-term plans to fully rehabilitate the area.

"Once a reasonable level of weed control has been achieved, rehabilitation planting will start," he said.

"We will be planting species endemic to the area using nursery raised stock, as well as engaging in direct seeding projects."

Mr Robinson said the group was working on creating a new path to connect to the existing route near the falls.

He added the group was seeking more members to take on a variety of roles.

"People that aren't actually able to get out there and help with the weeds can help us research the history of the place from their own living rooms," he said.

"The information gathered would be used in future information panels."

For more information, or to join, call Mike Robinson on 9291 9929 or email [mhlerob@gmail.com](mailto:mhlerob@gmail.com).

Julian Wright

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# Propagation

From Carmel Ballinger

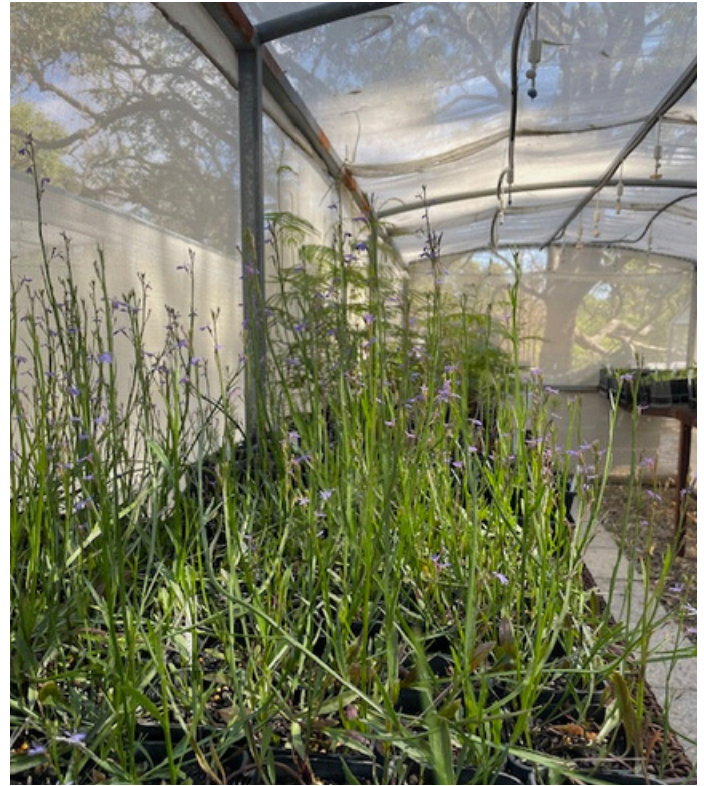
Our propagation team can be justly proud of the shade houses full of local plants, healthy and ready for planting out when the rains arrive. We have many different genera, all targeting specific roles, coming in at a grand total of 2400 plants. We are fortunate to have so many Hakea species native to the area. They tend to be easy to propagate from locally collected seed, are attractive and many are of medium height and can be used as an overstory of more delicate small plants.

We have *Acacia pulchella* (Prickly Moses) ready to plant; it is a specifically targeted plant, because it is resistant to the dieback fungus, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. *Lechenaultia biloba* is the low growing beautiful understory plant which is almost synonymous with hills gardens – we have 144 available for planting that we have grown these from cuttings. The Swan River myrtle is another characteristic plant, also relatively easy to propagate from cuttings, that we have awaiting the rain.

Last year's rainfall was 150mm short of the average for this area; there were significant losses of plants, ranging from small shrubs to large trees. Some would have been plants we propagated and planted but others would have been naturally seeded. We will be working on propagating stock to replace those that didn't survive. *Eucalyptus wandoo* is one such targeted species. Some of the *Corymbia calophylla* (Marri) are regenerating via lignotubers and epicormic shoots, which is a hopeful sign.

We will endeavour to get our seed planting schedule better suited to our late rains – instead of planting seeds in April/May, we could try for July/August. Our enthusiastic team should be encouraged by our successful work. Besides propagation by seed and cuttings, an important responsibility of the group is to sterilise all the equipment and be vigilant in the removal of weeds such as Flick Weed, which thrives in shade houses.

It is a pleasure to be part of the group.



**Above: *Lobelia anceps*. Below: *Paraserianthes lophantha* - awaiting their time in the big soil.**





# Our Friends in the Shed

In an inspiring collaboration, the Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls (FOULF) has partnered with the local Kalamunda Men's Shed (KMS) to create a propagation team dedicated to growing native plants. This initiative aims to support conservation efforts and restore native habitats in the region.

The seeds (pun intended) of the partnership were sown in late 2015 when long-time Kalamunda Men's Shed member Morris Pavlinovich (Pav) inquired about the progress of the Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls group. In response, Mike Robinson, then President of the Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls group shared a pressing challenge—they needed a nursery to plant native seeds. Recognizing an opportunity to help, Pav raised the possibility that the Men's Shed might be able to help. He took the idea to their committee and arranged a meeting between Mike and the Chair of the Men's Shed – Graeme Bradley. Graeme and his committee were open to the idea on the proviso that a Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up between the two groups. That was completed and ratified by both organisations in February 2017 and the first shade house was ready for plants by the end of July that year. The second followed shortly after and a third in 2020. In 2018 we installed a garden shed and early in 2023 we added two green houses built for us by Jim Maslin from KMS. So you can see that we have quite a large footprint up at the Men's Shed and have forged strong bonds between both organisations.



**With a shared vision:- L to R Graeme Bradley, Mike Robinson, Morris Pavlinovich and Joanne Anderson.**

*"Our group has always focused on conservation and restoring native habitats," said Mike Robinson. "We were looking for ways to expand our impact, particularly in propagating native plants. The Men's Shed members, were eager to help out another local community group and contribute to a worthy environmental project."*



**FOULF's Joanne Anderson and Men's Shed's Jim Maslin put together two glass houses for our propagation efforts.**

With the space provided by the Men's Shed, members of FOULF have been able to construct the shade houses, propagation tables, seedling trays, and protective structures. In a further demonstration of their support, the Men's Shed have recently constructed two green houses for us at nominal cost. So we now have all the facilities necessary to ensure that our plants thrive. The propagation project has fostered a strong sense of community and shared purpose between our two organisations.

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Rotary Club of Kalamunda





"It's a win-win situation," said one of the volunteers. "The Kalamunda Men's Shed supports a meaningful project that fosters social connection and purpose, while our environmental group benefits from their expertise and resources. Plus, more native plants mean more food and shelter for local wildlife."

Looking ahead, both groups hope to expand the program by involving more community members and schools. Plans are in place to create signage, bat boxes, and other conservation tools to further support the local Upper Lesmurdie Falls wildlife.



***Our footprint now incorporates three shades house, two glasshouses, two sheds and a work area.***

This partnership is an example of how different community groups can come together to make a positive environmental impact. We hope it inspires others to collaborate and contribute to conservation in creative ways.

With the continued dedication of both the Kalamunda Men's Shed and the FOULF environmental group, this project is set to make a lasting difference in the preservation and restoration of native plant life in the region.



***Our propagation centre is now producing the bulk of our plants.***



# Men's Sheds Embrace Inclusivity: Opening Doors for Women members

Across Australia, Men's Sheds are expanding their community outreach by welcoming women into their workshops, even if just for one afternoon a week. These sessions provide an opportunity for women to learn valuable skills in woodwork, metalwork, and silversmithing from experienced volunteers. Among the pioneers in this initiative is Joanna Anderson, who was one of the first group of women to participate in the Men's Shed openings. Over nearly two years, she has not only learned how to weld metal but has also played a key role in fostering this welcoming environment.



Kalamunda Men's Shed have at least four members now who are both regular FOULF volunteers and Men's Shed members. This collaborative spirit not only helps preserve and share traditional crafts but also highlights the positive impact of shared learning and community support.



*Joanna really enjoys her metalwork as you can tell from her creations.*

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# An outstanding award from the Kalamunda Chamber of Commerce



**Mike Robinson accepts the award on our behalf from Jasmin representing the Chamber of Commerce.**

In early September 2024 we were delighted to be informed by Tania Both, Manager of the Kalamunda Chamber of Commerce, that we had been nominated in the Outstanding Not For profit category of their annual awards. Tania asked us to submit an application supporting the nomination which we were only too happy to do.

In early November the chamber held their annual Gala Dinner where winners in all categories were announced and we found that our application had been successful.

We would like to thank the Kalamunda Chamber of Commerce for recognising the work that our volunteers do. It is very special to be recognised within our own patch and it means a lot to us.

As we were unable to attend the Gala presentation, arrangements were made for Jasmin Harley to meet the committee and make the presentation on behalf of the Chamber. Jasmin met with us on Saturday the 23rd of November and presented us with a beautiful trophy, an award certificate and a copy of the letter of commendation. A lively and entertaining speaker, Jasmin was kind enough to lavish praise upon the group and the work we have done. A copy of the letter of commendation follows.

It was particularly pleasing to see that the sponsors of this award were our old friends the Forresterfield Community Bank. You will remember that they funded our Aboriginal Cultural Trail project which we completed in 2022. It was great to see our long and successful association continuing with this award.





KALAMUNDA  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

DATE: 23 NOV 2024

RE: WINNER OF 2024 OUTSTANDING ENTERPRISE AWARDS – NON-PROFIT CATEGORY –  
FRIENDS OF UPPER LESMURDIE FALLS

Dear Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls,

The efforts of your group exemplify the power of community to create a lasting environmental and social legacy and your application for the 2024 Outstanding Enterprise Awards demonstrated an impressive expert consultation and community engagement process.

Your work has transformed the top of Lesmurdie Falls from a weed-infested drain into a flourishing habitat abundant with native wildlife and vegetation and has made a direct and tangible impact, helping turn the area into one of our region's premier tourist attractions.

We also noted your focus on safety and volunteer enjoyment, ensuring their work is both impactful and rewarding for all involved.

On behalf of the Kalamunda Chamber of Commerce and our award judges, we congratulate the Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls for your remarkable contributions and also hope recognition of your efforts helps toward securing ongoing support and funding to continue your critical work. Your group provides inspiration for others about what's achievable when people come together to take action and we thank you all for your dedication to preserving and enhancing our beautiful region.

With very best wishes,

**TANIA BOTH | MANAGER**

0487 431 361

[Tania@kalamundachamber.com](mailto:Tania@kalamundachamber.com)



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# Meeting with the new CEO of the City of Kalamunda.



***New CEO Anthony Vuletta grabs a selfie with Nick Underwood, John Giardina, Mike Robinson and Mike Mansfield.***

On the 25th of November 2024 Councillor John Giardina brought the new CEO of the City of Kalamunda, Anthony Vuletta, down to our site to meet with our Vice Chair, Nick Underwood, Secretary, Mike Mansfield and I as part of his program of getting to know what is happening in the local community. Nick brought down some of our display boards showing the range of activities we engage in and some of the before and after photos to demonstrate our progress. These were set up on the side of Nick's vehicle and enabled us to discuss FOULF's vision for the area in some depth. This was no tick a box exercise for Anthony as he showed with his many questions and obvious interest in our work. After spending about an hour discussing our work with the help of the panels, he then joined us for a walk up to the flow dams and back to see the actual results of some of our work. We raised the stalled extra parking project (along Falls Road) with him and he undertook to look into what was holding it up and to get back to us. Anthony seemed very impressed with what we have all achieved and he offered to keep in touch and to help us where he could.





# Looking Forward

From Mike Robinson

This issue of the Newsletter marks the end of summer and we can now look forward to a gradual cooling of conditions and eventually some useful rain. Despite the changing weather, autumn will still be largely dry and our winter planting program is at least three to four months away. So we still have time to push on with our propagation, maintenance and summer weed control programs.

As you know, our propagation team (led by Terry and Carmel) work tirelessly 12 months of the year to ensure we have a good stock of local plants for our winter planting work. At this time of year many of the young plants are starting to really flourish and some will even need repotting into larger containers. Conditions have been tough with high temperatures but that will start getting much kinder shortly. So plenty of hands required at the shade houses.



***Above: Apart from regulating and aerating water flow, riffles allow access for pot rinsing after planting. Below: Back in 2014 riffles were a big part of our plan.***



Over the summer we have made a big effort to catch up on maintenance issues both on site and at FOULFHQ (Sanderson Road). In the last week, the stream flow has dropped away to a small trickle and, as sad as the temporary loss of water is, it does allow us to undertake certain activities which are difficult when the water levels are higher.

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One of those activities is the construction and maintenance of riffles. Riffles are a vitally important part of the stream structure. They create ponds, aerate the water as it flows over and through the riffles, help reduce erosion and provide shelter for many fauna – especially invertebrates. Visitors interacting with the brook often move the rocks forming the riffles and, particularly for children, that is all part of their outdoor experience. So we have to accept that repairing riffles is an ongoing job and an important one. Before winter rains increase the flow, we need to check all our riffles and make repairs as required. There is still scope to add additional riffles at strategic points and this is the best time of year to get that completed.



***Our flow dams need regular structural maintenance.***



***In the lower flow dam, bulrushes (LHS of pic) and taro (centre background) need urgent removal.***

At a larger scale, the loss of rocks from the flowdams is huge and we will be undertaking some major repairs and renovations on those in the coming months. We have sourced the rock and will soon be bringing it onsite ready for use. The small dam just above the Cascades loses water from the base and consequently drains away to near empty as soon as the flow rate in the stream drops below a certain point. This greatly reduces its value environmentally as well as aesthetically, so we may need to seal the base once the flow ceases. Unless we get another long dry spell similar to last year, the window for doing this may be very small.

Weed control is one of our most important activities as it is vital in maintaining the vegetation in its natural condition and as an overall healthy ecosystem. Unfortunately we don't have the people, time or funding to control most annual weeds but we are making a huge impact on a wide range of perennial weeds, including some bulbs. So there will be an ongoing requirement to stay on top of those weeds that we can control. Two particularly damaging weeds are taro and bulrush and late summer into autumn is the best time to work on getting rid of both of them. They grow in and adjacent to water and thus they are much more accessible now that water levels are at their lowest point. They will therefore be a top priority for us over the coming months. This all points to the fact that we need as much help as we can get, so if you are on the cusp of dipping your toe in the volunteer pond, please join us on the second Sunday of every month to help us towards our goals.



# SPONSORS

Once again I would like to express our deep gratitude to our major sponsors, State NRM, Perth Region NRM, the Rivers and Estuaries section of DBCA, the Rotary Club of Kalamunda, the City of Kalamunda, Lotterywest, Community Bank, Forrestfield and High Wycombe (Bendigo Bank), SG Enviro, Tree and Palm Solutions and Magic Garden Supplies.

Our project is located within the Lesmurdie National Park and Mundy Regional Park, which come under the control of the Parks and Wildlife section of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. The Department was the catalyst for our formation in 2012 and has strongly supported us ever since. We really value that support and particularly the trust that they have shown in us for the last 11 years.

The Lesmurdie and Districts Community Association (LDCA) was a wonderful partner for many years and enabled us to raise considerable funding for improvements that weren't covered by the NRM grants. Paths, bridges, earthworks, car parks, children's climbing frames and more – the Up the Creek (UTC) project.

The Kalamunda Men's Shed partnered with us to build shade houses where we could raise our own plants and where we could hold plants grown for us by nurseries – prior to planting out. We greatly value our association with KMS and hope it will continue and deepen for many years. More recently they have also helped us acquire two green houses to further enhance our plant propagation work. Recently, we formed a partnership with the Kalamunda Youth Swing Band, sharing our premises to foster collaboration and community engagement.



*If you are keen to know more about Kalamunda Mens Shed phone 08 9291 7172 on weekdays between 8am and noon.*

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# ABOUT US

Formed in Dec 2012 by a few like-minded people, the Friends of Upper Lesmurdie Falls Inc. have committed themselves to helping to rehabilitate, improve the amenity and record the history of the area – which initially was badly degraded by large infestations of weeds that had taken over and suffocated the native flora.

# BUSY BEES

Busy bees mornings are held on the 2nd Sunday of every month - tackling weeding, stone work, propagating, planting, rubbish clearing, exotic tree removal and maintenance work. We make sure there is always something for all ages and abilities.

Everyone is always very welcome to join in - no experience or tools needed.



**And we always finish with a well catered morning tea thanks to Angie Parker!**

*Want a fun morning at a busy bee for you or your family? Contact us to find out the details.*

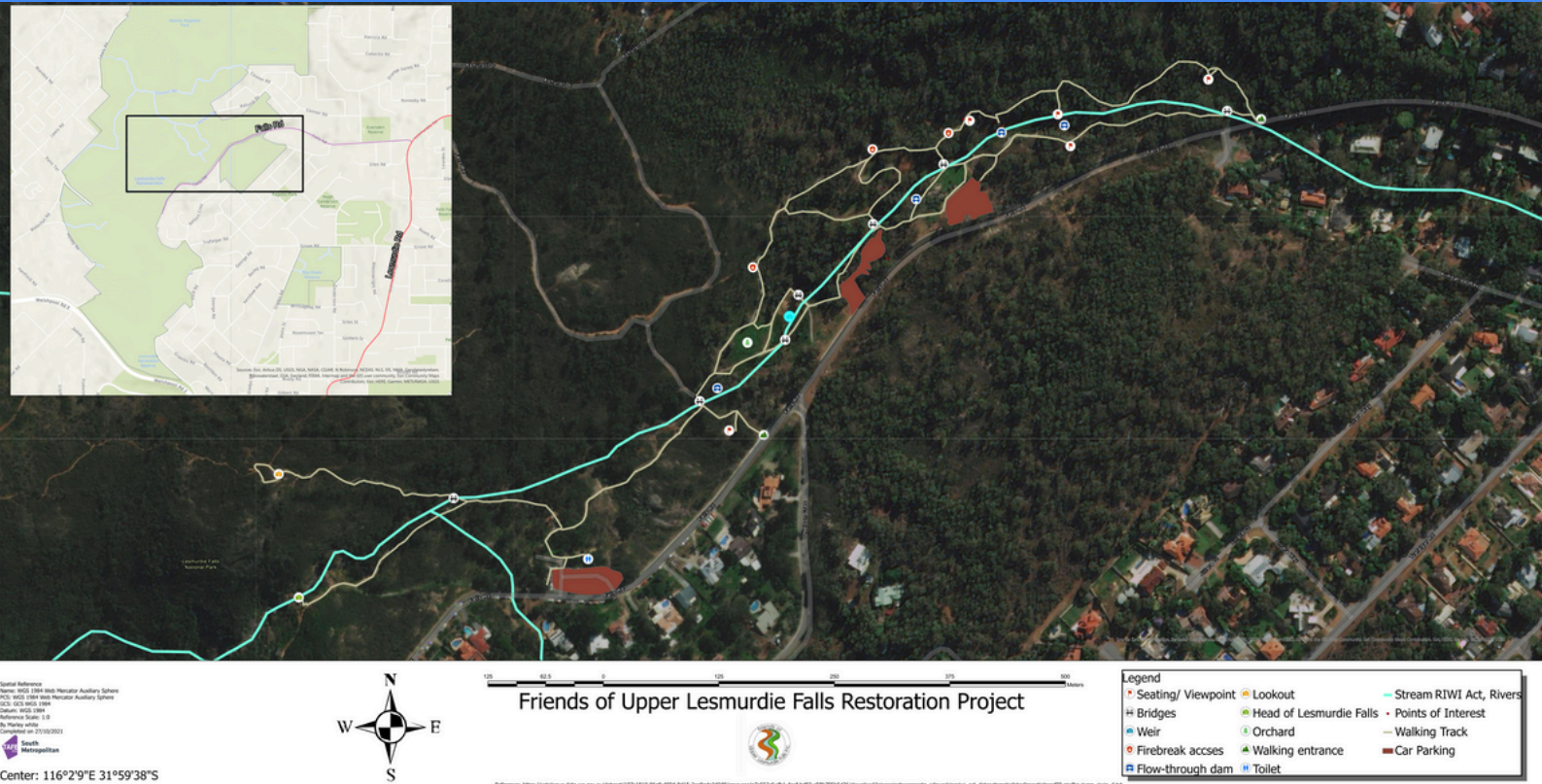
# CONTACT US



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- For latest events: Facebook and Instagram @**friendsofupperlesmurdiefalls**

More info visit our website: [www.friendsofupperlesmurdiefalls.com.au](http://www.friendsofupperlesmurdiefalls.com.au)

# MAP - LESMURDIE BROOK TRAILS AND FEATURES



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