



FRIENDS OF PERRY LAKES ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023



Photo credit: Olly Berry

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Photo credit: Clive Addison. June planting day

Our Purpose

To participate in and advocate for the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the Perry Lakes and Alderbury Reserve natural environment, infrastructure and cultural heritage for the enjoyment of current and future generations

Our Objectives

- Provide support, advice and an independent voice to the Town of Cambridge (ToC) on matters relating to the conservation, restoration and enhancement of Perry Lakes and Alderbury Reserve.
- Provide resources (volunteer time, funding, equipment) to complement and assist the ToC in the monitoring, maintaining and improving Perry Lakes and Alderbury Reserve.
- Provide an opportunity for like-minded community members to enhance their health and wellbeing through participation and social interaction on activities relating to the management of the site.
- Raise awareness of the natural and cultural significance and history of the area to residents and users so they can support its conservation.

Our History

In 2021, the Town of Cambridge published its ten year management plan and masterplan for Perry Lakes Reserve for 2021-2031. The plans were endorsed by Council in November 2021 and included an objective to 'Encourage community stewardship of the site through the establishment of a Friends of Perry Lakes group¹'.

In October and November 2021, the Town hosted two community meetings to seek interest in forming the group. Around 30 people attended each meeting and on 10 November 2021 an acting committee was appointed to consider what steps needed to be taken to formalise the group. An Annual General Meeting was held on 15 February 2022 where it was agreed the group should become incorporated and voting for a new committee took place.

On February 18, 2022 the Friends of Perry Lakes became incorporated.

This 2022-23 Annual Report covers our first full financial year of operation.

We look forward to continuing this momentum over the coming years and growing the group into a friendly, active, effective and respected community organisation.

¹ Members of Friends Groups share the common goal of conserving and protecting a natural area. The type of activities undertaken by a group depends on the level of expertise of its members, the goals of the group and the management requirements of a reserve. Further information on the purpose and management of Friends groups within the Town of Cambridge is available [here](#).

Our Members

At the end of the 2022-23 financial year we had 64 members comprising 16 family memberships and 21 individual memberships (down from 74 members at the same time last year). Memberships peaked at 87 on December 31, 2022 (the end of the prior membership year). At the time of writing (September 2023) memberships had increased to 95.

To align memberships with the financial year, membership fees were set at \$60 for families and \$40 for individuals for the 18 months to June 30, 2024. Reduced fees for 12 month and 6 month memberships will be offered from July 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024.

Our Strategic Plan

In 2022, the Committee worked together to develop our first strategic plan for 2023-2025. A draft of the plan was shared with members and their feedback incorporated. The plan now guides the Committee's decisions and priorities.

Friends of Perry Lakes Strategic Plan

2030 Vision: *Perry Lakes is a healthy and thriving natural environment that is a sanctuary for wildlife and the community*



Strategic Priorities and Objectives: 2023-2025



Enhance Habitats for Native Species

- Participate in the control and elimination of **targeted weeds**
- Participate in **native vegetation** re-establishment
- Advocate for enhanced native vegetation planting increasing **habitat establishment** and community enjoyment



Support Healthy Water Quality and Levels

- Understand impact of **water levels** on flora and fauna and advocate to maintain levels that support wildlife year round
- Influence water level and quality **monitoring** actions and broad communication of results
- Engage the community to identify and prevent **pollution**



Enhance Fauna Populations and Diversity

- Understand current **fauna populations** and their dynamics and monitor indicators of ecosystem health
- Understand **habitat needs** of fauna occupying Perry lakes and surrounding parklands to inform advocacy efforts
- **Enable the community** to increase their knowledge, appreciation and guardianship of native fauna



Connect People

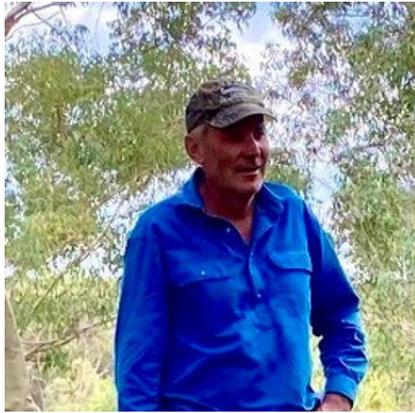
- Establish a sustainable, interesting and meaningful **membership offering**
- Establish sustainable **management committee** processes that actively engage members and utilise their skills
- Develop **effective relationships** and trust with key stakeholders including the Town of Cambridge



Photo credit: Clive Addison

Our Management Committee

The following individuals were elected to the management committee at the 2022 AGM. All committee position terms expire automatically at the next AGM and existing committee members may be re-elected. Management committee member backgrounds, our constitution and terms of reference are available on our website (<https://friendsofperrylakes.org>).



Chair
Greg Harrison



Deputy Chair
Erin Musk



Secretary
John McCann



Treasurer
Cathy Wallace



Works Coordinator
Paul Brown



Education Officer
Don McFarlane

Vacancies: Promotions Officer, Wildlife Coordinator, Projects Coordinator

Chairperson's Report



Welcome to our second Annual Report.

As many of you know, most of the committee agreed to continue in their positions for a second year to help bed down the organisation. They all deserve a special thanks for their dedication and commitment to FoPL.

We've had an exceptionally productive year and I'm very proud of what we have achieved in such a short space of time. I'm particularly proud of our members and volunteers who have supported our efforts and are building a very friendly, welcoming and community spirited group.

In our second year of operation we have:

- Developed our Strategic Plan to guide the organisation
- Held planting days in July and June involving 78 volunteers planting 3850 plants
- Held eight weeding days contributing 228 volunteer hours to improving the reserve
- Hosted eight educational talks/walks on various topics
- Continued to build up our inventory of gardening equipment
- Applied for a LotteryWest grant for \$15,000 to develop an ecological plan for the reserve to inform future plantings and improvements (part of our strategic plan)
- Seen water being pumped into the lakes from the Herdsman Main Drain for the first time
- Initiated an annual FoPL Photography Competition with support from Floreat Forum, the Town of Cambridge and Camera Electronic

The Town of Cambridge has again been very generous in its support both financially, through donation of plants and services, as well as through their ongoing guidance and support. We're very grateful for their contributions and continued support.

The 2023/24 year ahead will see us continue our regular weeding and planting days and progress projects and funding opportunities to grow our understanding of this important wetland area.

We plan to also continue to work with ToC to:

- Establish pumping metrics to monitor the water delivered to the lakes,
- Develop plans and locations for wildlife corridors between Reabold Park and Perry Lakes, and in between the two lakes to create protected habitat for animal movements
- Develop a path strategy and location plan, and
- Research animal movements to better understand critical areas for planting for habitat

Membership growth remains a key focus area for us to ensure our long term viability. We encourage all members to spread the word about our important work and recruit new members whenever possible. We're looking at creative marketing opportunities as well as engagement of the local schools, families and other community groups to provide ongoing and sustainable growth.

Thank you for your continued support. See you around the Lakes.

Greg Harrison

Chair - Friends of Perry Lakes

Works Coordinator's Report



FoPL Strategy: Participate in the control and elimination of targeted weeds.

GROUP WEEDING

There are very few indigenous native species on the reserves. In the 2019 flora and fauna survey, 38 introduced weeds were recorded and as of April 2022 the FOPL have identified 94 weed species.

Completed Works 2022-23

In 2022-23 there were eight Sunday morning Weeding Days with volunteers contributing 228 volunteer hours (excluding committee time to coordinate).

Volunteers have focused on the three 2022 planting areas, the Eastern State's casuarina in West Lake, the north-east side of East Lake and along the edge of both lakes. Major weeds include:

- **Spear Thistle** probably nastiest of the local weeds needing a spade to dig out and two sets of gloves to handle. Many plants removed in 2022-23 and seedlings are patchy but widespread.
- **Blackberry Nightshade** is a very poisonous disturbance loving plant in small numbers but widespread around both lakes and in all gardens;
- **Nasturtium** on two major drains on the east side of East Lake and north side of West Lake;
- Eastern State's **Casuarina** (Sheoak) in West Lake where volunteers pulled and dug out about 2,500 plants from 30cm to 1.4 metres in height (more work to do yet); and
- **Narrow-leafed Cottonbush** (declared Weed in WA) is uncommon in West Lake.

In April 2022, FOPL purchased their own field tools with two wheelbarrows, five spades, two shovels, 12 trowels, three secateurs, a mattock and pruning shears bought. A good quality first aid kit and two snake bite kits were also purchased. In 2023 further field equipment was bought and used by FOPL volunteers.

Special mention this year to Clive Addison and Trish McGarry who are always on the lookout for wicked weeds as they walk the reserve daily. They then remove any Deadly Nightshade and Bridle Thistle they find. Great work.

ADOPT A SPOT

Completed Actions 2022-23

The FOPL Committee has not advertised or pushed the 'Adopt a Spot' concept to date due to other group establishment priorities. However, two teams have 'Adopted a Spot' in the first half of 2022:

- In April 2022 Tony and Jackie Harding with Neil and Caroline Mitchell adopted a 120-metre section of the north-east bank of West Lake east of the new water pipeline;
- Olly Berry has started manual control on woody weeds around the lakes, including Brazilian Pepper, Weeping Willow and any other species identified.

FoPL Strategy: Participate in native vegetation reestablishment

Planting in 2022

The Town of Cambridge had completed planning of the 2022 native plant plantings prior to FoPL getting fully established. Species selections, sites to plant, ordering seedlings and site preparation were all done by the Town.

The Town's contractors planted 10,000 reeds in May-June 2022 in the lake floor and banks in the northern half of West Lake and a section on the west side of East Lake. These plantings were done to aid filtering of nutrients from water coming into the lakes from the new Herdsman Lake drain (West Lake) and the linkage pipe between the two lakes.

The Town had also ordered 5,000 dryland plants in 2022 and FoPL planted 2,000 on the north-west area of West Lake on Sunday 3 July 2022. The Town's contractors planted the other 3,000 plants on the west side of East Lake and the east side of West Lake. The latter area was not pre-sprayed, mulched or flagged off, resulting in ongoing weed invasion problems.

In May and June 2023, we completed a 'survival count' for our 2022 planting area (2,000 plants). Survival varied by species with low survival for Prickly Mosses (21%), Kangaroo Paws (26%) and Kennedia (25%). Good survival of 60% plus were recorded for White-stemmed Acacia, Parrot Bush, Snakebush, Coastal Honey-myrtle, Marno and yellow Leschenaultia.

It wasn't possible to determine survival rates by species for the 3,000 plants planted by ToC contractors, however, overall survival for the 2022 dryland plantings was 37% (1,867 surviving 12 months of 5,000 planted).

Completed Actions 2022-23

The Town again provided 4,000 seedlings across 14 species in 2023. However, in 2023 the Friends nominated the four planting areas around the two lakes. Prior to planting the TOC sprayed the sites twice for weeds, spread mulch over the sites and drilled 4,000 planting holes. The FOPL volunteers completed the planting of most of the seedlings on the morning of 25th June where 20 volunteers and afternoon of 16th July 2023 where 28 FOPL volunteers planted 3,650 plants in total. A June BBQ and July tea with biscuits was held afterwards. Great result!

The final 350 plants were planted by some 25 young, enthusiastic Cambridge Cubs on the evening of 24 July 2023 on the bank of East Lake west of the dog exercise area, close to the scout hall. Thanks to Jenne Brammer and Scout Leader Brett Chivers for organising the work with FoPL and ToC. It is hoped FoPL and ToC can continue our relationship with the Cambridge Scouts.

Paul H Brown

Works Coordinator - Friends of Perry Lakes



Photo credits: Clive Addison and Paul Brown. June planting day

Education Officer's Report



The Friends of Perry Lakes aim to raise awareness of the values of the Perry Lakes and Alderbury reserves, and increase our knowledge by identifying and integrating existing studies, reports and data. Over time we will add additional knowledge and connect with surrounding areas, especially Bold Park.

We've had a busy year with many well attended walks and talks as well as kicking off important work to better understand the interrelationships between plants, wildlife, lake levels and water quality.

The main educational activities for the year have been:

- Engaged and mentored 26 'Science in Practice' UWA Masters students researching various aspects of Perry Lakes and surrounding environment
- Co-hosted a walk at Lake Claremont to learn from the well established Friends of Lake Claremont group
- Presented a talk on the Hydrogeology of the region
- Conducted a night frog walk led by Nicki Mitchell, Associate Professor UWA
- Conducted a Perry Lakes walk and talk for the WA Naturalists Club
- Held 3 bird identification walks in conjunction with Birdlife WA. In December we combined a bird identification walk with a BBQ while listening to a jazz band led by Ron Banks, a FoPL member.
- Hosted a talk by Rob Woodbury, President of the Perth Camera Club on bird photography. Rob brought his cameras and accessories for people to study. We launched a photographic competition at the event.

Additionally, FoPL members and the general public often ask us about lake water recovery efforts. FoPL is liaising with the Town to get real-time monitoring of rainfall, pump volumes and lake water levels. Combining this information with other data would allow the calculation of water balances that will tell us how much water is coming from road runoff versus drain diversion, how much is being lost because of evaporation versus drainage through the wetland base, and how much higher water levels are as a result of the \$3.5m investment in the diversion. In the future we're considering various 'citizen science' activities to link lake water level with use of the lakes by birds, turtles, frogs and macroinvertebrates.

Finally, as part of our strategic plan, we identified a need to better understand the plants and wildlife within the reserve, how they interact with each other, their connection to lake water levels and how to better connect Perry Lakes with Bold Park. In June we applied to LotteryWest for a \$15,000 grant to progress an ecological study to help us develop a revegetation plan to identify which plants should go where and for what purpose. It will also help us to balance wildlife needs with recreational demands. At the time of writing we had just been informed that our request was successful - a great achievement for the group.

Don McFarlane

Education Officer - Friends of Perry Lakes



Top: Pump construction to deliver water from Herdsman Main Drain to Perry Lakes (Photo: Andrew Head, Town of Cambridge)
Bottom: Bird Photography talk by Robert Woodbury (Photo: Paul Brown)

Promotions Report



The objective of the promotions portfolio is to maintain a strong connection with our members and raise community awareness of the group and its activities.

In 2022 we established our website and Facebook page and established links with several related websites including the Town of Cambridge and Urban Bushland Council. We continued to use these platforms in 2022/23 to inform the public of our activities and grow community awareness.

We have also sought to publicise the group through local newspapers, in particular The Post. We have found that this has been an effective way to inform the local community of upcoming events and attract new members to the group. A special thanks to our members Ron Banks and Clive Addison, who have been instrumental in assisting with editing and publication.

We had two opportunities to advertise our group to the public by hosting stalls at Birdfest in Perry Lakes in October 2022 at the Floreat Forum with the Town of Cambridge to celebrate Volunteers Week in May 2023. Many thanks to the members who volunteered for these events.

Our primary communication with members and other interested parties remains our regular email updates. In July 2022 we started using the email marketing functionality within our website to send more professional looking emails to our distribution list. During the year we published 20 emails to a distribution list that currently includes 170 email addresses.

We continue to update our calendar of activities on our website, add videos from talks and store important governance documents. Website traffic has grown significantly through the year with over 3000 visitors in the past 12 months. Our Facebook page is also growing with 188 members at the time of writing.

We continue to look at advertising and merchandise opportunities to build brand awareness. Our work shirts (ordered in 2022) have been very popular and are a great opportunity to get our logo seen. The committee will be considering additional branded merchandise for members over the coming year. We've also invested in signage to display in Perry Lakes during weeding and planting activities and for our stalls and are working on a permanent sign for our storage shed.

Finally, we launched the inaugural Perry Lakes Photography Awards in June with an objective to increase public awareness of our group as well as get more people out into the reserve. Floreat Forum, the Town of Cambridge and Camera Electronic generously donated prizes. Entries close September 30, 2023 with over 40 exceptional entries received at the time of writing.

We look forward to continuing to engage our members in meaningful and satisfying ways and encouraging new members to join us. Thanks to all our members and supporters who continue to share our activities and successes with their networks and encourage more people to get actively involved with the reserve.

John McCann

Acting Promotions Coordinator - Friends of Perry Lakes



Top: Ron Banks (centre) and Cathy Wallace (right) with other volunteer groups at the Volunteer Week stall at Floreat Forum
 Bottom left: Clive Addison and our new FoPL sign
 Bottom right: Trish McGarry with ToC Community Development Officer Tom Gosling

CONTACT US

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