

FRIENDS OF MAYLANDS LAKES

AUGUST 2021

This edition of our bi-annual newsletter has unfortunately been delayed due to the difficulty in obtaining updated information on progress with initiatives outlined at the community information sessions in October 2020 and March this year. However, it is otherwise timely, as commencement dates for some of the works have recently been amended and a new initiative (installation of ultrasonic equipment for algae control) has just been approved. This relatively inexpensive pilot project will be outlined in more detail later in the newsletter.

I'm delighted to report that the revegetation project between on the Lake Brearley shoreline (between Sopwith Avenue and the Swan Bank Road dual use path) which belatedly took place over two planting days (6th and 13th December) was a huge success, with a heartening turnout of volunteers and the planting of several thousand trees and shrubs. A further infill planting day was held in May. The additional 1500 plants installed at this event will establish a higher density of understorey, ensuring a more attractive and safer habitat for native fauna.

We reiterate our thanks to all volunteers who attended these planting days, as well as:

- The City of Bayswater, for the extensive preparatory work undertaken, particularly the reactivation of the reticulation in that area and planting of a few thousand mature sedges in the shallows, as well as the support, equipment and refreshments provided on the day. The sedges will assist in reducing the prevalence of blue-green algae and midge populations. They will also provide a sustainable habitat for the birds, turtles, fish and frogs.
- Patrick Gorman, Federal Member for Perth, for his support in securing the \$20k *Community Environment Funding* granted to the Friends of Maylands Lakes to contribute to the project.
- The small group of intrepid volunteers who on a daily roster basis, replanted thousands of sedges unearthed by the Purple Swamp Hens during late December and mid-January, pending the installation of protective netting.

Another highly successful planting day took place on the 7th August, along the foreshore of the streamlet connecting the Brickworks and Bungana lakes. Fortunately, the weather was perfect and 32 hard-working volunteers installed around 2,500 native plants. It was encouraging to see some new faces, including a few enthusiastic young children, who toiled away very conscientiously. A huge thanks to all who participated, including the City of Bayswater officers/councillors, and to those who brought along the delicious refreshments.

The FOML was recently granted \$30k from the State Government for further revegetation work. Our sincere thanks to Lisa Baker for her unwavering support and advocacy on our behalf.

The ongoing replacement of exotic vegetation with native species on the perimeter of our lakes, will vastly increase the biodiversity of both flora and fauna in the area, eventually creating a beautiful and enduring amenity for our community.

The following is to the best of our knowledge, the current timetable for commencement of pending remediation works:

Mixers

One mixer per lake is to be installed in the deepest part of the Brearley and Bungana lakes in September this year. These are designed to prevent algae growth via destratification - continuously mixing the water (deep with shallow) throughout the entire water body. The concrete plinths on which the electrical cabinets (to provide power to the mixers) will sit, were installed last week.

Dredging

The project commencement date for the dredging of Lake Brearley, which was originally scheduled for 2018/19 has slipped yet again and at this stage the earliest it will commence is November this year. If the contract is not awarded in the immediate future the start date will almost certainly be delayed further.

Considering Lake Bungana is no longer green with algae, does not have an algae stench and has not had a midge problem since being dredged in late 2019, the FOML is very concerned at the low priority accorded to the dredging of Brearley, particularly as it is the largest of the three lakes and has by far the worst water quality. With this in mind, the FOML will continue to do its utmost, to ensure dredging occurs as soon as possible.

Ultrasound System

Comprises floating solar powered units (product name - *Envirosonic*) which emit ultrasonic waves to destroy blue-green algae cells (harmless to invertebrates, fish animals and plants). The units will be trialled for 12 months commencing in September (two on each of the lakes to give full coverage) and if successful, will remain in-situ as a permanent algae growth inhibitor.

Rain Gardens

These are designed to receive storm water which enters our lakes via road drains. The first rain garden is currently being installed on Tourer Court. FOML is awaiting details of when and where the others are to be installed (not all road drains can be diverted into rain gardens).

Midges

The CoB treated Lake Brearley last week as predictably, the midge population is already problematic, albeit the warmer months are yet to come. Based on our experience with Lake Bungana, it seems highly unlikely the midge problem on Lake Brearley will be finally resolved until it too is dredged.

It is more than five years since the first public meeting was convened to emphasise to the CoB, the need for urgent remediation of our precious Lakes. The results of three monitoring studies have since been published along with their respective recommendations. However, tangible progress has been frustratingly slow. Project deadlines have been continually pushed back and no significant remedial action has been implemented on Lake Brearley since it was established 22 years ago. Clearly the health of this already languishing lake will continue to deteriorate until the sediment build up is removed via dredging. Hopefully then the mixers and other measures being implemented will eventually help to further improve the water quality. We look to the CoB to accord more urgency to remediating our Lakes and especially the dredging of Lake Brearley.

In closing, I extend our sincere thanks to those in the community who have contributed to the rehabilitation of the Maylands lakes. Thank you too for your continued support of the FOML committee. It has been an arduous journey thus far and progress has been slow. Nonetheless, we remain committed to restoring the health of our lakes and their environs.

Geoff Trott
Chairman
Friends of Maylands Lakes

P.S. We encourage you to continue following our website at www.friendsofmaylandslakes.org.au for up-to-date information regarding the Maylands Lakes. You are also welcome to contact us via the website with any questions you may have or information you wish to convey to FOML.