

Wednesday Walk Report

16/3/2016

Belvoir Park Loop

Leader Anne Stelling, WULN

Section 1

Walking clockwise on path around lake from car park

Right hand side

Willows (basket?) colonising edge of lake and island. These establish themselves very easily and quickly become a weed. Some are well established but many young seedlings could easily be removed by cut-and-paint method. There are many grassy weeds including thistles, fleabane, purple top, dock and introduced pasture grasses such as paspalum and kikuyu.

Closer to the water there is good coverage of native wetland species including Water Milfoil (pic) and Water Primrose (pic below), and clumps reeds (Juncus) and sedge (Carex).

There is rubbish evident in the water here including black plastic and a pallet. Garry retrieved a railway light from the water, which would include a battery – not good in the lake!



To improve: This area could be carefully hand sprayed and replanted with native grasses and groups of low growing shrubs and trees allowing access and views of the lake.

Around the corner the blue green algae bloom is evident in the water to your right. Noogoora Burr (pic) is growing where the water has receded. This needs to be removed before it seeds. A couple of plants here become quite an infestation further along.



We noted a good stand of Phragmites which will be helping clean the water and housing many native species and a retained standing dead tree which is a good perching spot for birds.

Looking to the island blackberries, willow seedlings and Noogoora burr are evident. This will require a boat to access but need to be removed.



Left hand side

Several large old eucalypts in reasonable health, in mown grassland. Mulching the eucalypts and planting with native grasses and flowering understory species for nectar, and providing some logs would bring back the insects, lizards and small birds like blue wrens.

Rows of European trees providing good shade.

Previous planting of native grevilleas by FoBP doing well, although these are not indigenous. **To improve:** hand remove kikuyu creeping up into the grevilleas. Infill plant in the gap in the centre of this planting – use different native groundcovers. Re-mulch.

Section 2 – continuing around the lake, turning left (west) at the dog park

This section includes a wide variety of European and non-indigenous native specimen trees which give a very pleasant ambience for people and would provide a variety of flowers supporting native wildlife. Near the dog park are some magnificent old River red gums with mature hollows which would be home to many different birds, possums and lizards. **To improve:** These could be supported by planting understorey especially flowering shrubs.



The ephemeral wetland (pic) was empty at the time of our walk but we noted it's lack of woody weeds. This could be monitored regularly and any seedlings pulled by hand before they get away. **To improve:** The surrounding trees are quite monocultural and variety could be introduced by adding understorey.

Section 3 - gravel track heading south towards the horse paddock

Past plantings by FoBP and more recent native plantings by Council in this area are doing very well. This area is a great example of how an urban park can be improved by bring the flowering (nectar producing) understorey layer back and adding habitat for insects. Nectar and insects then provide food for frogs, lizards and small bird, with shrubs providing places for nests. In one area a huge fallen tree has been retained – this is fantastic habitat as it breaks down.



Needs doing: Woody weeds are rapidly growing amongst these plantings but still small enough to pull up by hand. White cedar, Chinese tallow and the occasional willow need removing. Tree guards could be removed from the larger shrubs to prevent damage later.

One planting in particular (see section 4) has nasty weeds – Bathurst burr in particular. These need to be removed immediately before they seed!

To improve: These groups of plantings could be re-mulched and gaps planted out. Nest boxes in younger trees would provide further habitat for parrots and possums.



Up near the bike path some beautiful old Eucalypts are providing great homes. This photo shows the amazing crevasses in the bark which would house a range of insects – evidenced by the spider who lives here!

To improve: Further 'island' plantings could be done around these large old Eucalypts. Plant with a variety of flowering shrubs and native grasses.

The waters edge is well covered with Juncus and bulrushes (pic), with some willow and poplar seedlings creeping in. These could be removed.



Section 4

This section is being colonised by weeds from the adjoining leased paddock – some very nasty ones including Bathurst Burr (pic) and Caltrop – both of which have sharp spines (Caltrop is the one that punctures tyres). A few people on 'emu parade' could spot and hand remove the Caltrop.

Council should be notified of the weeds spreading from the paddock and requested to take action.



Bathurst burr (*Xanthium spinosum*)



Followed by morning tea!