

Cottesloe Coastcare celebrating 20 years

Sue Freeth, Cottesloe Coastcare Association

Cottesloe is well known as one of the top tourist destinations in Perth for its beaches, eating places and expansive coastal views. It is the natural areas that frame these famous coastal views that have been the concern of Cottesloe Coastcare Association, for the past 20 years.

These natural areas cover only 15 hectares and are concentrated mostly along the foredune with two small but special sites on the secondary dunes. After more than 100 years of settlement they have survived, somewhat wounded, despite enormous pressure. The value of native vegetation was little understood, so sand dunes were bulldozed and exotics such as marram grass and Victorian tea tree planted to prevent sand drift onto roads.

It was not until 1995 when a group of locals banded together with the aim of achieving a more robust and diverse ecosystem for the Cottesloe foreshore that a start was made on rectifying this damage. Since then there has been a coordinated approach to restoring local species and removing invasive weeds by Cottesloe Coastcare volunteers.

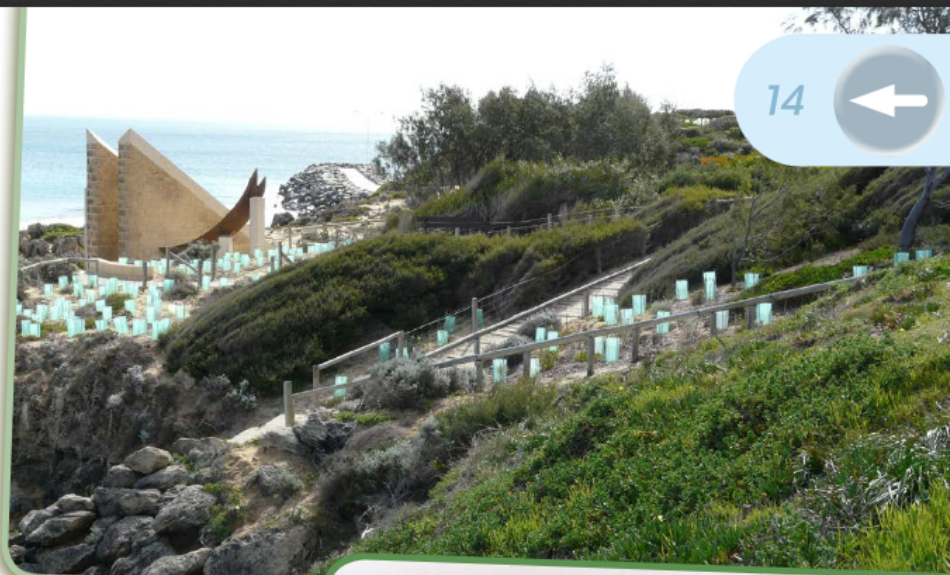
Since 2008, the work of the volunteers has been guided by the Natural Areas Management Plan that was endorsed by the Town of Cottesloe, the local land manager. This year the plan was reviewed and an extensive survey of the natural areas carried out by Syrinx. The detailed vegetation mapping highlighted the success achieved by the group and the areas where Cottesloe Coastcare has worked are conspicuous as the most successfully revegetated areas.

The review of the Natural Areas Management Plan also highlighted the work that needs to be done.

The Cottesloe Coastcare Association's next target is the most visited part of Cottesloe – the stretch from main beach to North Cottesloe beach. Work on this area has been ongoing since 2012 and great success achieved with the help of some of our corporate volunteers. The high visibility of this area provides a good opportunity to demonstrate the work of Coastcare groups. Sunday morning working bees attract attention from both local and overseas visitors and many stop to ask what is going on.

Much has been learnt over the last twenty years. The strong core of volunteers and help from corporate groups has added some extra muscle power from time to time and is greatly appreciated. Partnerships with the Town of Cottesloe, our Coastcare officer from Perth NRM and specialist native nurseries such as Apace WA and Nuts about Natives are also vital.

An important legacy of working on these dunes for the past 20 years is the detailed knowledge that Cottesloe Coastcare has of what works in this particular location. Trial and error have shown when is the best time to plant, how to plant and how and where to collect seed. Passing on this knowledge and enthusiasm to the next generation will be the challenge.



*Mudurup Rocks, Cottesloe in 2015.
Photo by Robyn Benken*



*Mudurup Rocks in the 1970s.
Photo courtesy The Grove Library*

For further information please visit our website at www.cottesloecoastcare.org or email info@cottesloecoastcare.org