

Cleaning Lake Monger in order to reduce Bumblefoot and Photosensitisation occurring in Swans

A COMBINED EFFORT of wildlife carers and the general public,
WITH THE COUNCIL ENCOURAGING
THIS PROJECT TO COME TO FRUITION



May 2007
Edge of Lake Monger the morning of the
clean up. Strewn with rocks, bitumen and
cement.



The clean up finally finished mid
afternoon. The outcome was unbelievable
and so rewarding. It proved that a group
of dedicated people could really make a
difference.

A real sense of achievement was felt by
all who participated.



Swan suffering from Bumblefoot. This is caused by having to walk over rough surfaces.

Rubble removed from edge of the Lake will now allow the birds to walk from the water without hurting their feet. It is anticipated this will gradually reduce the number of birds with this condition, or at least reduce the severity.



Swan suffering from photosensitisation. This affects beak, eyes etc. caused by contamination of water. Contaminates yet to be clarified. A Research program needs to be undertaken in order to pinpoint exact cause of this condition, in order to rectify the problem.

Note: The condition of Photosensitisation can also depend on the water level of the Lake. Swans are more at risk when the water level is low as their body structure (long necks) allows them to feed deeper than other water birds, hence bringing them closer to the contamination, which is suspected to lay close to the bottom of the lake.

Since 2005, 40 Swans have come into Malubillai's care, 21 of which suffered from Photosensitisation.



First group of Swans to be released that had recovered from Photosensitisation (2005). Feathers coloured for identification purposes. Due to the poor condition of Lake Monger at the time of release, Swans were taken to Bibra Lake. However most flew back to Lake Monger a little while after release.

In 2007 a group of 16 Swans with Photosensitisation were rehabilitated, all being released back to Lake Monger. Permission was granted from Canberra to have these Swans banded in order to identify and process data of any swans that may come into care in the future.



On the day of the clean-up many volunteers helped over the course of the day. From Malubillai members, to Council employees, local school children and residents, parents with small children and other stakeholders. Even people who were out doing their daily walks, stopped to enquire what was happening and joined in to help. A sausage sizzle was organized at the lunch break for all volunteers to partake.



After several years of Malubillai Carers rescuing sick water birds at the Lake, and many emails, phone calls and meetings, this project finally came to fruition and certainly brought the community together, and residents have become, very protective of the Lake.

It is envisaged that the next clean up may entail the removal of boulders, which were too heavy for people power to remove.