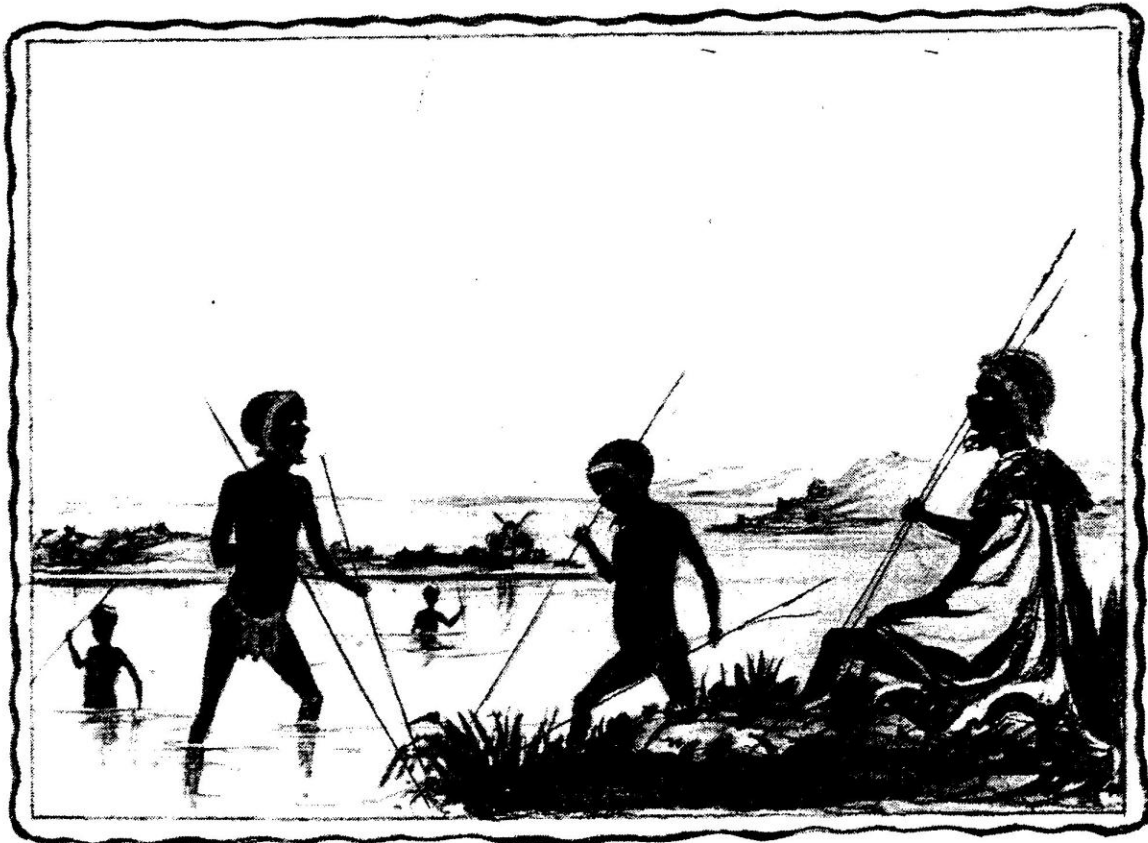


State Water Planning

# Report on an Investigation into Aboriginal Significance of Wetlands and Rivers in the Perth–Bunbury Region

Rory O'Connor, Gary Quartermaine  
and Corrie Bodney



Western Australian  
Water Resources Council



The fish increase site was near Pelican Point (also Point Currie) and was centred on a prominent cluster of limestone rocks. These rocks have apparently been moved, perhaps during construction of the nearby buildings.

### **3.3.12 Nedlands Foreshore (Nedlands/Dalkeith)**

Oral history records that traditional Aboriginal wells tapped a freshwater supply in the vicinity of the present Nedlands/Dalkeith foreshore. The limestone cliffs above the foreshore in this area lend credence to the tradition. The amount of land-movement and reclamation that has been carried out in this area renders exact location of these sites impossible.

### **3.3.13 Blackwall Reach (Bicton and Mosman Park)**

A similar record exists of traditional freshwater sources in the vicinity of limestone cliffs on both sides of Blackwall Reach. Again, however, the exact location of the Aboriginal sites is not known.

### **3.3.14 North Lake and Bibra Lake (Coolbellup and Bibra Lake)**

**Location and dimensions:** Bounded by Bibra Drive to the south and east, by Farrington Road to the north and Gilbertson Road to the west; these two large lakes cover an area of 3.1 kilometres (north–south axis) by 1.2 kilometres at the widest point.

**Discussion:** The chain of freshwater lakes joining Perth to Yanchep National Park is replicated in the southern region by a similar chain joining the Swan River to the Murray River. Unlike the northern region of this survey, little ethnographic evidence exists for what Hammond (*op. cit.*:17) referred to as:

‘...a native pad...to where North Fremantle is today. There was very shallow water for more than halfway across the River and only a short distance to swim. The pad continued from this crossing to Bibra lake, and through Rockingham to Mandurah and then pads led up both sides of the Murray River to the ford over the River, above the present site of Pinjarra.’

Bibra Lake and North Lake, however, were the exception to this disappointing lack of data. The legend that a Waugal inhabits these Lakes and maintains the flow of the springs that feed them is widely known. One informant, in 1985, suggested that the spectacular limestone pinnacles, which have been recently exposed during the construction of the Adventure World Playground beside Forrest Road, are a secret-sacred rainmaking site. This story was related to him by old initiated men who were visiting Perth from the Western Desert region and is based upon a similarity between the limestone formations and certain Desert rainmaking *sacra*.

Recent Aboriginal camping areas were situated on the southern side of Hope Road, close to the north–eastern edge of Bibra Lake and also along its southern shore. Christine Coomer, Peter Jackson and Freddy Jackson lived in this latter camp.

Along with their mythological status and use as a camping ground, the Lakes were also a widely–known source of turtle and wildfowl. Aborigines from Pinjarra, Mandurah and Armadale reported that they and their parents occasionally camped there for extended periods to harvest these resources.

### **3.3.15 Gosnells Golf Club Site (Canning Vale)**

**Location and dimensions:** Gosnells Golf Club is located between Ranford and Warton Roads in Canning Vale. The area of current significance is a landscaped pool immediately south–west of the Club–House.

**Discussion:** The existing pool has resulted from the draining and landscaping of the golf course. It is built on the site of a swamp which was fed by a perennial spring.