

# 'Give river back to swans'

by ANDREI BUTERS

GIVE Perth's riverfront back to its black swans and native plants says a conservation group that's submitted a telling report to Perth council.

The Claisebrook Catchment Group looked at the ecosystems of the city's reserves and parks as part of a study aimed at protecting native flora and fauna.

"A strategy should be developed to ensure current plans for foreshore development do not relegate the black swan to other parts of the Swan River, leaving the swan to be remembered in the city's emblem alone," group head Warren McGrath said.

Sally Lake was coordinator of the group and a principal author of the study: "We want to restore the river foreshore particularly. The City of Perth has two sides, a lot of it is quite



• Sally Lake, Rada Tomanovic and Warren McGrath want more native plants. *Photo by Donna Swan*

degraded, the old walls are falling apart, there is rubble and that, but in points where it has been restored such as Point Fraser with its natural edge treatment you can really see it's had a big impact on naturalising the area and providing habitats for birds' nesting," she said.

Mr McGrath said giving the foreshore back to nature would

be challenging but achievable.

"I would support that personally, but I only have one vote and it'd have to go through the committee process," Perth lord mayor Lisa Scaffidi said.

"The importance of this work cannot be overstated in this time of rapid growth and change in our city," mayor Scaffidi said, adding it would be "seriously considered".

The Local Biodiversity Study was put together by 35 people and involved 18 months of work as well as cooperation from the council's environmental officers, WA Herbarium staff and the Perth Biodiversity Project.

The project aimed to find links between the city's green space to assist fauna, such as the threatened Carnaby's black cockatoo that nests in King's Park. It found introduced plants in artificial gardens fed native fauna, such as introduced pines in East Perth cemetery providing food to birds.