

12.35 pm

**Wetland biodiversity patterning along the middle to upper Fortescue valley  
(Pilbara: Western Australia) to inform conservation planning**

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The Pilbara region's Fortescue Valley (upstream and downstream of Fortescue Marsh) has an especially high number and diversity of floodplain wetlands. These support distinct flora and fauna communities but are poorly represented in the region's formal conservation estate, so off-reserve management of these wetlands is important. Wetlands of this area have been identified as priority assets in several planning processes and listings, but there is relatively little information on their biological values and how these are distributed along the valley.

To address this, a survey of wetland biodiversity was undertaken to describe geographic patterning of wetland biodiversity along the middle reaches of the Fortescue Valley. The survey was part of the Pilbara Corridors Project; a collaboration between Rangelands Natural Resource Management WA, Greening Australia and Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

From the 47 wetland sites sampled for this project and some additional sites sampled during an earlier Pilbara-wide survey, we collected 590 aquatic invertebrate taxa and 284 riparian plant species. Broad geographic areas capturing differing components of the flora and fauna included Fortescue Marsh, the Jigalong-Fortescue floodplain, Roy Hill south of Fortescue Marsh (small ephemeral pans), river pools on Ethel Creek, Eriachne grasslands and floodplain wetlands of Mulga Downs, the large morphologically complex claypans of Mulga Downs and Coondiner Pool.

Patterns in the distribution of wetland flora and fauna revealed during this project were used to derive a number of principals to guide the geographic spread of wetland management programs.

**12.40 pm to 1.30 pm**

**LUNCH**



# **PROGRAM**

## **14<sup>th</sup> Annual WA Wetland Management Conference 2018**

Celebrating World Wetlands Day  
Friday 2nd February 2018  
9am to 4pm



*Lake Monger, Wembley, Western Australia*

**Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre,  
184 Hope Road,  
Bibra Lake, Western Australia**