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Department of Biodiversity,
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RECONCILIATION WEEK MESSAGE | 2025



While the communication you've received today is not a message stick, it carries the same intent – to draw your attention to important news ...

DG calls on DBCA staff to halt work

DBCA Director General Stuart Smith said National Reconciliation Week was being held between 27 May and 3 June 2025, providing an opportunity to reflect on past lessons and the importance of stepping forward together.

"We're extremely fortunate to work in partnership with Aboriginal peoples in the management of Country," he said.

"This year's Reconciliation Week theme, *Bridging Now to Next*, reminds us of the importance of expanding on the strong relationships we've forged and building bridges into the future."

Mr Smith said Reconciliation Week activities would be held for staff at both metropolitan and regional DBCA sites, and he also encouraged staff to attend external events, which are listed on Reconciliation Australia's website (www.reconciliation.org.au/calendar).

"I would like staff to take a few minutes out of their week to show their support for unity and consider how they can contribute to reconciliation in their daily lives."



www.reconciliation.org.au/calendar



7 at 12:00 am UTC+13
On display at Greenfield
Place Sydney are three
works by artist Chamae
Davis. About the artist
Chamae Davis is a proud
Gumbayngirr and



May 9 @ 9:00 pm - June 5
200 pm USD + 10
Best Moments in Course
Flexibility Competition
and Exhibition



16 A Guided Walk on
Visitors' country at Sidi
Lake, led by Cyril Yaron.
Learn about Neogene
culture, history and people.



10 KUKA returns with powerful stories, music, and visuals—celebrating stranger culture through art, tradition, and emerging First Nations talent.



5 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Coffee Crawl Up event for
National Reproductive
Week in Claymore.



210 @ 11:00 pm UTC + 10
Guguruma is an exhibition by 5 Story Players that pays homage to her family's Mianchi through painting, weaving and textiles.



25 Join us in celebrating National Reconciliation Week 2025 in Monash Free event, all welcome.



Join us for our annual **Join Day** comprising all the final Clinic Centre Yarning Circle



20 Students in Years 3 & 6 are invited to capture significant moments of reconnection in Australia's history.

RECONCILIATION

At the Perth Hills Discovery Centre in Mundaring, the PICA education team is delivering environmental programs on the importance of conserving biodiversity and natural places for the future.



MaOchre Gallery artists, Midland Brick representative and Bush Rangers cadets creating the forest seasons mural together.

Both its Bush Rangers WA and River Rangers cadet programs, and its Nearer to Nature community and schools programs, include cultural components that connect students and the community with Aboriginal culture.

Education programs Manager Marnie Giroud said the team actively seek out opportunities to connect with Traditional Owners and she attributed the success of the programs to strong partnerships and two-way knowledge sharing.

"Through Nearer to Nature community programs, our Aboriginal partners share Aboriginal culture and language at school holiday programs, Zipzy's Bush Kindy and early learning centre presentations," she said.

"Our Nearer to Nature schools program includes a collaboration with Djirillily Dreaming through the Djarlgarra Yarning program for students and Djarlgarra Yarning Professional Learning for teachers.

"We also have a brand new school program exploring the forest of the Beelu National Park with our Culture in the Forest Discovery Day, which is presented by an experienced Noongar educator."

Ms Giroud said her team was also looking at creative ways to immerse visitors to the discovery centre in Aboriginal culture.

"The recent creation of a stunning forest mural designed by artists Rod Hedlam and Warrajjirri-Yarra from MaOchre Gallery now greets visitors, providing a visual representation of the forest ecosystem and educating on how it changes throughout the six Noongar seasons," she said.

Other initiatives the education team has implemented include incorporating Noongar into lessons and resources – and onto outdoor spaces and shelters.

"This is a lovely story," Ms Giroud said. "I mentioned to a visiting Noongar artist that people were having trouble finding some sites surrounding the discovery centre.

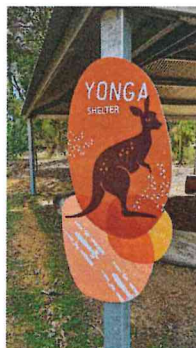
"Different animals are known to rest at different sites, so the artist pointed out that nature had already named the sites for us.

"So we are now making directional signage so people can not only find their way around the sites, but so that they can also learn about the wildlife that frequent the area – and learn the Noongar names for those animals.

"For example, we called one 'Yonga Shelter' – as Yonga means kangaroo in Noongar," Ms Giroud said.

Ms Giroud said her team was also putting together a list of Aboriginal suppliers to make it easier for cadet units to work with local providers when planning Bush Ranger WA camps around the state.

"Every little step forward is one we take together," she added.



They came from Balangarra, Bardi Jawi, Gooniyandi and Kija in the Kimberley, travelling to Boorloo (Perth) on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja to take part in an Aboriginal Ranger Program (ARP) flora exchange program.

The 13 women rangers participated in hands-on nursery operations including seeding and propagation and exchanged knowledge with science teams at Kaarta Koomba (Kings Park) and the University of Western Australia, before heading to Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) for a cultural tour with Uncle Walter, where they talked more flora business and observed quokka trapping with Thomas Traps.

More recently in April this year, nine Wilinggin rangers attended an ARP exchange program on fauna in conjunction with Animal Ark and Perth Zoo.

Animal Ark provided training in snake handling, which involved live venomous snakes. Rangers learnt about hazardous wildlife behaviour, with an emphasis placed on site awareness and invasion prevention, as well as legal and moral responsibilities, and first aid.

An ARP spokesperson said the Animal Ark training also encompassed fauna handling.

"Rangers received training in fauna identification and handling methods, safe practice tools and equipment and recognising tracks, scats and nests," she said.

"The training also covered fauna translocation techniques and assessing injured wildlife for release or rehabilitation."

During the Perth Zoo exchange, rangers gained an understanding of conservation projects, engaged with conservation scientists and animal handlers and met Clontarf Aboriginal school students undertaking traineeships at the Zoo.

"These exchange programs are reconciliation in action," the spokesperson said.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2025

Bridging Now to Next

27 MAY – 3 JUNE

#NRW2025

RECONCILIATION.ORG.AU

NRW2025 theme artwork unveiled

The artist behind the National Reconciliation Week artwork has been announced as Kalkadoun woman Bree Buttenshaw.

It features native plants – known for regenerating after fire and thriving through adversity – to symbolise our collective strength and the possibilities of renewal and serve as a reminder that Reconciliation Week is a time for growth, reflection and commitment to walking together.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and waters upon which Western Australians live and work, and pays its respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. It recognises the practice of intergenerational caring for Country and its importance to the land management the department undertakes. The department seeks to listen, learn, build and maintain strong partnerships. It aims to provide genuine, sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal peoples within all areas of its business and through its work activities.



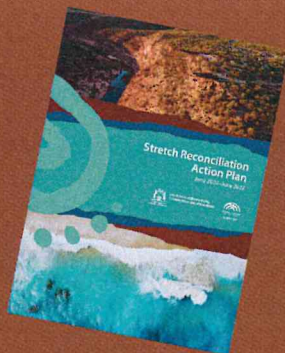
Landmark ceremony held for healing and reconciliation

Historically, Wadjemup / Rottnest Island was a place of incarceration, segregation and forced labour for Aboriginal men and boys who were forcibly taken from regions across Western Australia. State records indicate 3,700 Aboriginal men and boys were imprisoned on the island, and that at least 373 of those prisoners died in custody and are buried on Wadjemup.

From 4–9 November last year, Aboriginal people from communities across Western Australia converged on Wadjemup for Wadjemup Wirin Bidi (Spirit Trail in Noongar), a ceremonial week to carry out Sorry Business and commemorate the Aboriginal men and boys who were imprisoned on the island between 1838 and 1931.

Approximately 200 Aboriginal men and women from across the State attended private cultural ceremonies on Wadjemup and at Manjaree, Walyalup / Bathers Beach, Fremantle, between 4–8 November, to facilitate healing for Aboriginal people, and to allow them to lay to rest the bodies of those men and boys who are buried on Wadjemup and free their spirits.

On 9 November, a public Commemoration Ceremony was held with people from across the State attending to pay their respects and walk the reconciliation journey. The ceremony included truth-telling from Traditional Owners and Elders, presentations from Aboriginal communities, Yarning Circles, cultural activities, and an apology from WA Premier Roger Cook for past injustices committed against Aboriginal people on Wadjemup.



Spotlight on RAPs

The department is proud to be delivering on its second Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan, for 2024 to 2027. We lift the lid on what this means for reconciliation and staff's day-to-day business.

'A RAP is not just words on paper. It provides a structured, tangible approach to advancing reconciliation.'

Reconciliation Australia awards four different levels of RAPs – and each reflects the stage an organisation is at in its reconciliation journey.

A 'Stretch' RAP applies to organisations that have established a strong approach to advancing reconciliation, by building reconciliation actions into their business strategies, along with measurable targets.

The department's RAP outlines how we will engage with Aboriginal peoples to deliver meaningful change and create opportunities for advancement – as part of our everyday business practices. For example, by developing cultural protocols, delivering education programs, setting employment targets, supporting significant Aboriginal events and working together in joint management.

Actions such as these help protect Aboriginal culture and heritage, while also providing employment, social and economic opportunities for Aboriginal communities.

'All staff are encouraged to take the time to read our RAP – which is available on our website – and consider how you can make a genuine contribution to delivering improved outcomes for Aboriginal peoples in the course of your work.'

Change is an ongoing process. It can't be achieved overnight. But the department is taking significant strides to achieve reconciliation, and all of us play a role in that journey.