bushland news

urban nature

Issue 133 **Autumn** 2025 *Time of Bunuru and Djeran in the Noongar calendar.*

BoorYul-Bah-Bilya

Photo – Emily Wilson

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**

PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Bushland News *is a quarterly newsletter of the Urban Nature program to support community involvement in bushland conservation.*

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This publication is available in alternative formats on request. Current and archived issues of *Bushland News* are available at https://dbca.wa.gov.au/bushlandnews.

Next issue

Winter *Bushland News*

Winter *Bushland News* contributions should be sent to Urban Nature by **Monday 12 May 2025**. *Bushland News* seeks original contributions. If your submission has been or may be published elsewhere please let us know. Compiled and edited by Julia Cullity.

BOORYUL BAH BILYA

BIBBUL NGARMA ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION INC.

BNAA team members, all Senior Elders, on the banks of the Mandoon Bilya in Guildford. Photo – Emily Wilson.

By Francesca Flynn

Less than one per cent of Western Australian rivers are in pristine or near-pristine condition, and despite the good work of many, river health is still declining. To have a realistic chance of restoring river health, new thinking and approaches are urgently needed.

BoorYul-Bah-Bilya, or BBB, is an exciting new initiative launched in 2024 by Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association (BNAA) that aims to address declining river health through creating a new type of community catchment plan.

BBB is the first program of its kind to consider environmental, social, cultural and economic factors in one integrated plan, allowing a better balance between the many values of rivers. Its grassroots approach ensures local knowledge is embedded throughout and enables government, residents, businesses, schools and community groups to contribute equally towards the future vision.

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Front cover: BNAA team members with the Mayors of Mundaring, Kalamunda and Swan on the banks of the Mandoon Bilya. Photo – Emily Wilson.

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The program's first plan focuses on the Mandoon Bilya, or Helena River, which flows from Ballardong Country near York and Beverley, through Mundaring and Kalamunda in the Perth Hills, and down into Whadjuk Country through Midland, before joining the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) in Guildford. However, BNAA hope to create widespread transformative change by creating a transferable model that can be applied to any river.

BNAA are busy developing the Mandoon Bilya Catchment Plan, including:

- a conservation audit to assess river health and inform actions to improve it
- mapping of significant cultural sites and places for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people
- a trails and access audit to build community connection with the river
- caring for Country and restoration along the river and major tributaries like Nyaania Creek.

A quokka photographed as part of the BoorYul-Bah-Bilya program. Photo – Tim Blake.

BNAA team members exploring Nyaania Creek Reserve in Darlington. Photo – Mark Thornley.

The first plan will be released to coincide with the 2029 Perth Bicentenary, an important milestone to consider the impact of colonisation on our waterways and how we collectively address the challenges of urbanisation and a drying climate.

BNAA Senior Elder, Greg Ugle, said "Looking after the health of rivers has important flow-on effects for the entire environment. Water quality is what determines the wildlife and all creatures that need water to survive.

As a Noongar Traditional Elder, my intention is to be sure to protect our rivers and the animals that live along them."

A major focus for the Mandoon Bilya plan is creating a large urban parkland along the river through Guildford, Midland, Bellevue, Hazelmere and Helena Valley within the City of Swan and Shire of Mundaring. The land is already reserved for parks and recreation but is degraded and difficult to access.

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The parkland will transform the area by rejuvenating the foreshore and providing enormous community amenity and much needed green space in Perth's eastern suburbs and aims to achieve:

- increased biodiversity and wildlife habitat
- tree canopy and urban cooling
- recreation and leisure opportunities
- alternative transport solutions
- cultural heritage protection.

BNAA recently announced the exciting discovery of a new quokka population in the Perth hills. This is the first time that quokkas have been photographed in the area by the general public and is an exciting discovery for conserving the species. BNAA are working closely with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to monitor and protect the quokkas and hope to see them thrive into the future.

BNAA values collaboration and inclusivity, and are working with many different community and government stakeholders to enable coordinated landscape-scale actions that far exceed boundaries on maps. BNAA Chairperson, Walter McGuire, said "Working together is the only way to get the best outcomes for Country. BoorYul-Bah-Bilya brings people together to understand that we're just one human race, with many cultures and many differences, but we need to come together as one to look after our planet Earth."

Continued next page ...

Permanent pool on the Mandoon Bilya downstream of Mundaring Weir. Photo – Francesca Flynn.

A granite boulder overlooking Nyaania Creek in Darlington. Photo – Francesca Flynn.

BBB also provides a shared journey that the whole community is invited to be part of. The more people provide input into BBB, the stronger and more representative the plan will be. We want everyone to contribute towards the future of this beautiful river and reconnect with its many values.

Free BBB community workshops will be held in March and April and feedback can be provided at any time via a community survey available on the BNAA website.

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Urban Nature update *By Julia Cullity*

Meet the editors

This issue I've asked my volunteer editors to introduce themselves —over to you, ladies.

Diana getting close to nature. It's easy to be awe-struck by Western Australia's natural beauty and want to give back by volunteering to protect our bushland. Photo – Rosa Biondini.

Diana

My name is Diana Biondini. Ever since I was a little girl, I've always had a passion for both writing and exploring the great outdoors. Growing up with two nature-loving parents in the 'land down under' has helped me to appreciate the raw and natural wilderness along with the beautiful wildlife that this remote country has to offer. It has also moved me to take a step and do all I can to protect our bushland, whether that's by assisting in revegetation projects, volunteering at wildlife centres or helping out in other forms.

Having recently become part of the Bushland News editorial team has helped me to expand my love for both writing and conservation. I hope that everyone who reads our issues are awestruck at the unique variety of flora and fauna out there, as well as grow in appreciation for what dedicated volunteer groups and other organisations are doing in order to conserve our local bushland.

I am happy to be called a Bushland News editor and be part of a vibrant team!

Jaimee along the East Mount Barren trail in the Fitzgerald River National Park. Photo – Dion Fleming.

Jaimee

While I've grown up surrounded by Perth's beautiful bushland, it took me some time and life experience to truly understand how lucky I am to live in this beautiful part of the world. A few years ago, I packed my life up into a car and drove around Australia for a year, taking in all the sights and scenes across the country. It was on this trip I grew to appreciate the diverse and distinctive landscape throughout Western Australia. Since returning to Perth, I've sought out ways to help protect and promote our backyard, including joining the WA Wildlife team and more recently, becoming a part of the Bushland News editorial team.

With a decade of experience in communications and marketing, I'm excited to use these skills to help tell the inspiring stories of individuals, volunteer groups and organisations doing incredible work to conserve and restore our native bushland and wetlands, and create positive change for the future.

Pippa handling a python at Discover Deadly. Photo – Casey Clifton.

Pippa

Hi everyone! Growing up in the Perth hills, I was lucky to be surrounded by beautiful bushland, which sparked my love for nature from an early age. This passion led me to study conservation and wildlife biology, where I got the chance to research urban quenda populations across Perth. I'm a big believer in the power of science communication—not just doing the research but turning it into engaging stories that inspire people to get involved in protecting our unique biodiversity.

I'm excited to join Bushland News and connect with others who also share a passion for urban conservation. I can't wait to help share stories that bring local communities together and inspire action to safeguard our natural heritage for future generations.

DBCA staff and the Friends of Paganoni Swamp at the WA Reference Herbarium identifying plant specimens from our spring surveys. We will use this data to determine whether Paganoni Swamp contains patches of the Melaleuca huegelii – M. systena shrublands of limestone ridges threatened ecological community. Anyone can use the Reference Herbarium to identify plants. It contains a selection of correctly identified dried plant specimens, reference books, computers and microscopes. Users just need to sign in, follow hygiene protocols when bringing your specimens in, and handle the reference collection with care. The Reference Herbarium is located at DBCA's headquarters 17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington. Photo – Grazyna Paczkowska.

Searching for threatened bees

Grazyna and I have spent a lot of summer collating our data and planning management actions for the coming winter and spring. But in a departure from the usual summer indoor pursuits, I have been in the field monitoring threatened native bees. It's been a steep learning curve for me.

DBCA have begun a research study to investigate new methods using eDNA to survey for two critically endangered short-tongue bee species, *Leioproctus douglasiellus* and *Neopasiphae simplicior*. Both species have very restricted geographic ranges and are strongly associated with the clay-based seasonally inundated wetlands of the Swan Coastal Plain. *Neopasiphae simplicior* is known from Perth and Peel, and one disjunct population in the lower south-west, whereas *Leioproctus douglasiellus* is known from Perth, with two outlier collections from the mid-west and Great Southern regions of WA. Developing a non-destructive, sensitive and cost-effective eDNA survey technique will greatly assist in monitoring the known populations of these bees and searching for additional locations.

The adult bees become active after the claypans dry out in late spring and early summer when their preferred food plants are in flower. In the first year of this study, flowers, spiderwebs and air (using filter paper) were sampled for eDNA analysis alongside traditional sweep netting surveys at two known populations. My role was to coordinate the sweep net survey across the flowering period, and I must give special thanks to subject experts Terry Houston and Kit Prendergast. Kit assisted us with field sampling and identification. Terry assisted us with identification. This even included real- time identification via SMS of photos of specimens from the field. Your help was invaluable.

Ecosystem Genomics Research Scientist Kristen Fernandes is sampling flowers from the plant that Regional Ecologist Nicole Willers has caught a native bee in a sweep net. Kristen also took samples from spiderwebs and the air using filter paper. If successful, the eDNA study will detect general bee biodiversity as well as our targeted threatened bees. Photo – Julia Cullity.

We located specimens of *Leioproctus douglasiellus* but didn't detect any *Neopasiphae simplicior* using sweep nets. It will be fascinating to compare physical survey data with eDNA analysis and see what traces of DNA have been left behind on flowers, spider webs and even in the air.

Welcome funding

Early in December we were delighted to hear that the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands had received a $1.5 million funding boost from the State Government. This additional funding will assist local community groups and employ a DBCA officer to oversee the area, undertake weed control, restoration, biodiversity monitoring, rubbish removal, and improve local signage. It's a very welcome addition and will greatly increase our ability to continue to protect and restore the biodiversity powerhouse that is the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands.

Benson Todd, Grazyna Paczkowska, former Environment Minister Reece Whitby, Forrestfield MLA Stephen Price and Renee Evans at the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands. Photo – Office of the former Environment Minister.

Gazania a sleeper weed, slowly waking

By Jaimee Nobbs

Gazania (*Gazania linearis* and related species) is a fast-growing and drought-tolerant plant originating from southern Africa and is commonly known as 'treasure flower.'

Part of the Asteraceae family the gazania plant is known for its colourful flower heads that vary in shades of yellows to oranges and reds, and tiny, tubular yellow florets inside. Gazania is a perennial daisy that grows between 5–30cm high and forms as a clump up to 10cm across. These clumps form together to produce groundcover several metres long. The Gazania plant also produces small one-seeded fruits called achenes, which are covered by narrow scales and hairs.

The most notable characteristic that sets gazania apart from most other daisies is its white-hairy underside of basal leaves. The tuft of basal leaves are dark green on top and can vary in both shape (from narrowly elliptic to deeply lobed) and size, (between 5–10cm long and 3–20mm wide).

Due to the vibrant colour of the flowers that bloom through spring to early summer, and its resilience to dry conditions, the gazania was first introduced into Western Australia as an ornamental plant for garden beds and landscaping projects. Now it can be commonly found invading roadsides and bushland in coastal areas and agricultural areas, notably across the Perth metropolitan area as far north as Geraldton and south to Augusta, the southern wheatbelt and goldfields.

Gazania is considered an emerging or potential environmental weed in Western Australia, which requires control measures. When established, it forms a dense mat which impacts plant communities by suppressing and replacing native flora.

How it spreads

Favouring coastal habitats as well as cultivated and irrigated agricultural grasslands, gazania predominantly spreads its seed through wind or water. It can spread clonally, shooting new stems from its root system. Seeds can also be dispersed on vehicles, dumped garden waste, and by slashing and grading maintenance activities along roadsides.

As the popularity of waterwise garden beds has increased, so too has gazania. Gazania produces an abundance of seed with one flowerhead producing more than 60 seeds, and wind can spread seeds up to a kilometre away. This method of reproduction, its tolerance of sandy soils and low rainfall, and its ability to 'jump the fence' makes gazania a successful invasive weed.

Hybridisation in Western Australia

The Gazania genus is made up of 19 species and one hybrid taxon, that can freely hybridise amongst themselves which makes it harder to identify. Our weedy plants might be known by more than one name and with hybridization and horticultural hybridization our weeds can differ from the South African natives. Common names are Gazania linearis, Gazania rigens or Gazania x splendens.

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Unidentified gazania cultivar. Like many daisies the flowerhead contains tiny, yellow, tubular florets in the centre of the flower head, which are surrounded by the showy ray florets. Photo – JJ Harrison.

Right: A notable characteristic that sets gazania apart from most other daisies is the white and hairy underside of leaves. Photo – Julia Cullity.

The impact on native biodiversity

Due to its adaptability, and ability to grow well in most soil types, gazania can readily establish into a dense monoculture that demands high levels of nutrients and moisture. This can change the soil composition and moisture levels which makes it especially difficult for native flora and other plants to survive and regenerate. As a result, native insects and pollinators that prefer indigenous plants are also impacted through depleting food sources.

While once thought to be useful for stabilising sand dunes, we know now its shallow root systems are also less effective than native coastal plants. This means areas with established gazania plants are more susceptible to erosion risks over time, as well as impacting dune ecology.

Because gazania thrives in calcareous soils and open understories, it has the potential to become a much worse weed in the wheatbelt and goldfields of WA than in eastern Australia where it seems to be largely coastal. This means that gazanias could seriously impact the federally-listed critically endangered Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt threatened ecological community, especially with invasion after fire. Many wheatbelt towns have naturalised roadside populations and mowing road verges has spread gazania where it is invading salmon gum, morrell and wandoo woodlands on the outskirts of Narrogin, Wagin and Quairading.

DBCA's weed prioritisation identifies gazanias as a priority alert weed for the Goldfields and South West regions. The Swan, Wheatbelt, South Coast, and Midwest regions rank it with high ecological impact and as rapidly invasive. The wetter Warren Region ranked it with high ecological impact and as moderately invasive.

Gazania infestation of low York gum woodland threatened ecological community in the wheatbelt. The colour variation seen here is due to selection and hybridisation in cultivation. This means that many of our gazania populations are not a single species and differ from their ancestors, the South African natives. Photo – Bronwen Keighery.

What you can do to help prevent the spread

Gazanias flower all year round but mostly in spring and summer and are quick to regenerate.

Landcare groups and environmental organisations are actively working to control its spread, however, everyone can play an active role in removing this invasive weed.

The most effective control for small infestations of gazania is manual removal methods either hand pulling or digging out prior to flowering, ensuring the entirety of the root and plant fragments are removed. This prevents the seeds from developing and plants reshooting.

In agricultural areas, grazing animals can also help control the invasion of gazania.

There are selective herbicides that can be used for larger infestations in bushland areas. Use 4g of Lontrel®750 plus 25ml Pulse® in 10L water, or for areas where there will be no damage to other plants, Roundup Biactive (glyphosate (360g/L) at a rate of 100ml to 10L of water can also be used. Replacing gazania with indigenous plants gives local biodiversity the best chance to restore the ecological balance and prevent the chance of reinfestation.

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Scent detection dogs to sniff out Phytophthora dieback

By Shanika Harshani and Kylie Ireland

Photo – Avery Keller.

An exciting new initiative exploring the use of scent detection dogs to detect phytophthora dieback is underway in WA!

Phytophthora dieback is the greatest threat to the flora in the Southwest Bioregion of Western Australia, with more than 40 per cent of species susceptible! Caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi,* this microscopic water mould lives in the soil and attacks the root system of native plants, causing plant dieback and death. Unfortunately, the disease is widely spread across the south-west of WA and many native species in the Proteaceae (banksias and hakeas), Ericaceae (heaths), Myrtaceae (eucalypts) and Xanthorrhoeaceae (grass trees) families are highly susceptible to the pathogen. There is no cure for Phytophthora dieback, making early detection and mapping crucial when planning efforts to stop the spread of this devastating disease.

Following successful proof of concept trials by New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Tate Animal Enterprises (TATE) in 2022, DBCA has partnered with TATE to bring dieback detector dogs to WA. Two detection dogs, Alice (springer spaniel) and Echo (Brittany spaniel), along with their handlers, visited WA in June and October 2024 and showcased their ability to detect *P. cinnamomi*.

Progressing this initiative, DBCA successfully secured a $1.3 million grant from the Australian Government Saving Native Species Program to develop dieback detection dog capacity in WA, NSW and Tasmania.

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*Alice investigating a grass tree in the Cataby Region. The team surveyed the area to help protect populations of the threatened Foote's Grevillea (*Grevillea calliantha*). Dead vegetation like that in the foreground can be a good indicator that something isn't right and dieback may be in the area. Photo - DBCA.*

This exciting new project is led by DBCA, with leadership in animal handling from TATE, NSW leadership from NPWS, and Tasmanian leadership from enviro-dynamics. The project aims to assess the efficacy of dieback detector dogs under various laboratory and field conditions, as well as develop a policy framework to support commercialisation.

A case study conducted in October 2024 tested the dogs in the lab and the field to see how they can best be used in WA. The dogs sniffed field-collected soil samples in the lab to detect the presence of *P. cinnamomi*. Results showed that both dogs are highly sensitive and proficient in detecting the pathogen in the soil samples. In the future, detection dogs can serve as a diagnostic tool alongside traditional laboratory diagnostic methods.

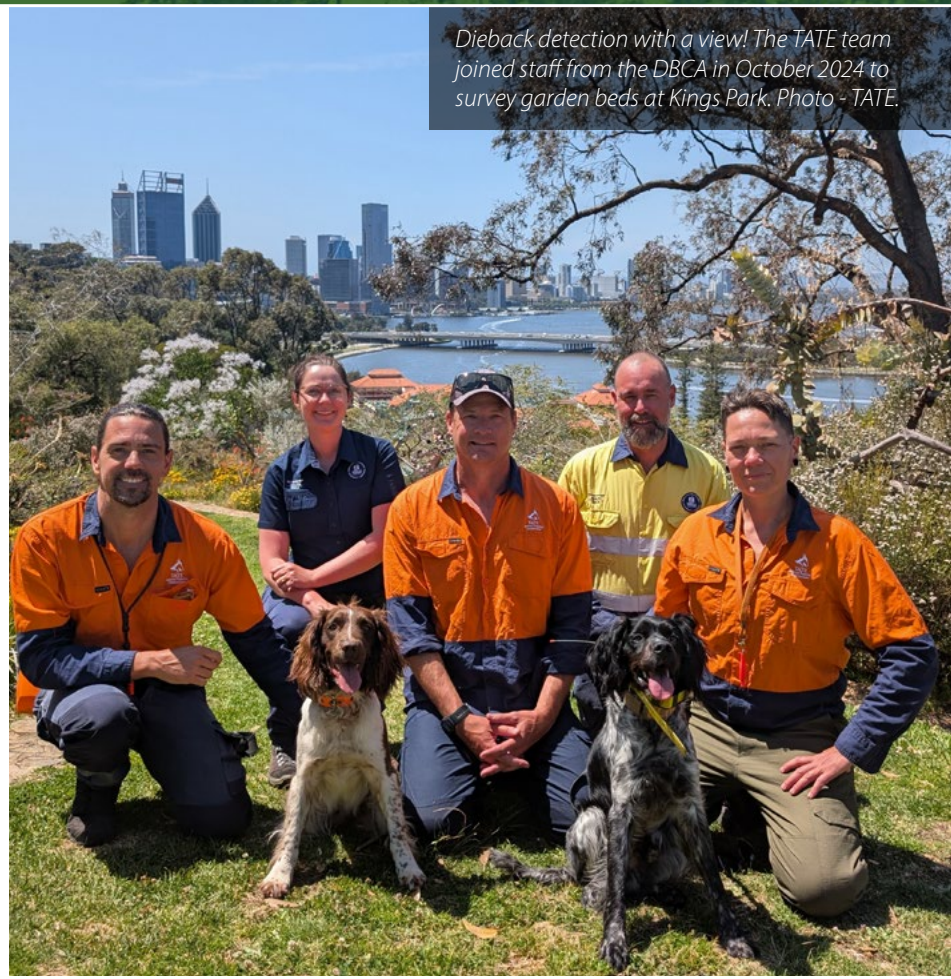
Echo detecting Phytophthora cinnamomi *in soil samples at the lab. Both dogs are highly sensitive and proficient in detecting the pathogen. Photo – DBCA.*

Field studies focused on surveying Kings Park and wild and translocated populations of the threatened Foote's grevillea (*Grevillea calliantha*). Knowing where dieback is in these areas helps us to plan for and protect the future of our stunning parks and gardens and threatened species.

We plan to conduct additional testing with detector dogs in WA this year. This testing will assess their effectiveness in mapping 'uninterpretable' sites, where traditional mapping cannot be undertaken due to a lack of susceptible plants, and in identifying dieback occurrence in threatened species translocation sites for giant Andersonia, small-flowered snottygobble and Stirling Range dryandra in the Fitz-Stirlings. We will also evaluate using dogs for inspecting dieback in machinery and basic raw materials such as soil and gravel at key points in the field.

The tests we have conducted so far have proven that the detector dogs offer a cost-effective, time-efficient diagnostic method that delivers accurate results. We are excited to welcome two new detector dogs by the end of the year with the puppies currently being trained by TATE in NSW. DBCA is seeking two suitable dog handlers in WA and will award these dogs to businesses with capacity to develop commercial dieback detector dog services in WA. Applications close 8 April 2025.

While we are developing new detection tools to detect dieback early and manage it effectively, it is important to note that human activities are the primary source of disease spread. Therefore, we can play a significant role in preventing the disease spread by cleaning boots and equipment before entering and leaving bushland areas, sticking to designated paths, and washing vehicles that have driven through muddy tracks before entering new sites. These simple actions can prevent the spread of this deadly plant disease to our precious national parks, urban reserves and botanic gardens.



Dieback detection with a view! The TATE team joined staff from the DBCA in October 2024 to survey garden beds at Kings Park. Photo - TATE.

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A win for the woodland birds! *By Sophie McHutchinson*

Birders will know that spring and summer in Western Australia mean one thing… BREEDING SEASON!

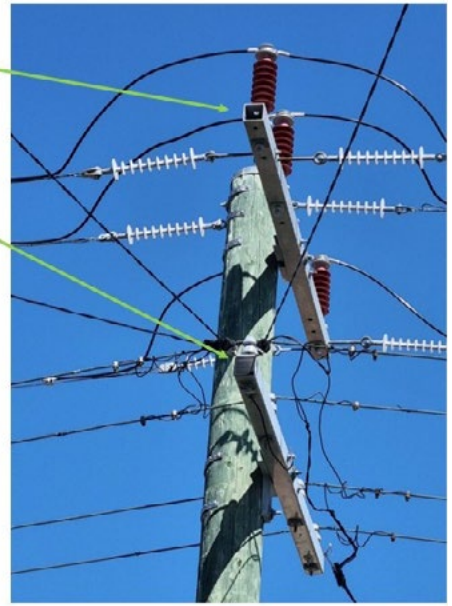
Between September 2024 and January 2025, the dedicated volunteers at Wirambi Landcare undertook a tree martin (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) survey to investigate the importance of street power poles to their roosting and nesting habits within urban areas.

Throughout the months, 852 poles were surveyed and 204 were identified as usable nesting sites. Tree martins were sighted flying within the vicinity of 116 of the appropriate poles. Of the 33 tree martin nests discovered, 30 were observed in the metal crossbeams of power poles. Two on the other hand were seen in streetlights, and one cheeky pair had made their nest in a roof structure. This means that 94% of urban tree martin nests occurred in street power poles! Most of these nests were found in housing areas with remnant vegetation or within 500m of a wetland.

Tree martins nesting birds that would naturally use the hollows of trees, but the progressive clearing of native bushland and black rat (*Rattus rattus*) predation has seen them uniquely adapt to the urban setting. Since power poles are isolated from surrounding trees and shrubbery, the urban martin nests are better protected against the invasive black rats, which are expert climbers known to prey on small bird nests. We are hopeful that the findings of this study will promote the construction of street power poles with hollow crossbeams so that tree martins, and other small woodland birds, can continue to use them as a roosting and nesting location.

Join us next spring and summer to see the best of breeding season and help gather more supporting data!

Tree martin at nest location in street power pole. Photo – Ian Wallace.



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The power of YOUR story

By Colma Keating, Christine Richardson and Rhiannon Hardwick

Expressing personal reasons for your efforts, your passion for nature—sharing 'your story' as you highlight your concerns for your patch can be a powerful way to bring others on board. Marshall Ganz developed the story of Self-Us-Now (S.U.N.) to provide a flexible yet strong framework that brings your connection with nature into the conversation as a potent way to inform, encourage and inspire. It works on building connections, thus building relationships, building power and ultimately expanding your 'circle of influence'.

This S.U.N. framework can be used to:

- inspire people to volunteer or take action with your group
- build even better connections/relationships with decision makers and stakeholders.

A classic story structure is made up of three elements: a plot or storyline, a character and a moral or value. But a story comes alive when the character (you) faces a challenge, makes a choice, and experiences the outcome. Watch and use your emotions effectively. They can both inhibit and motivate your actions—and those of others.

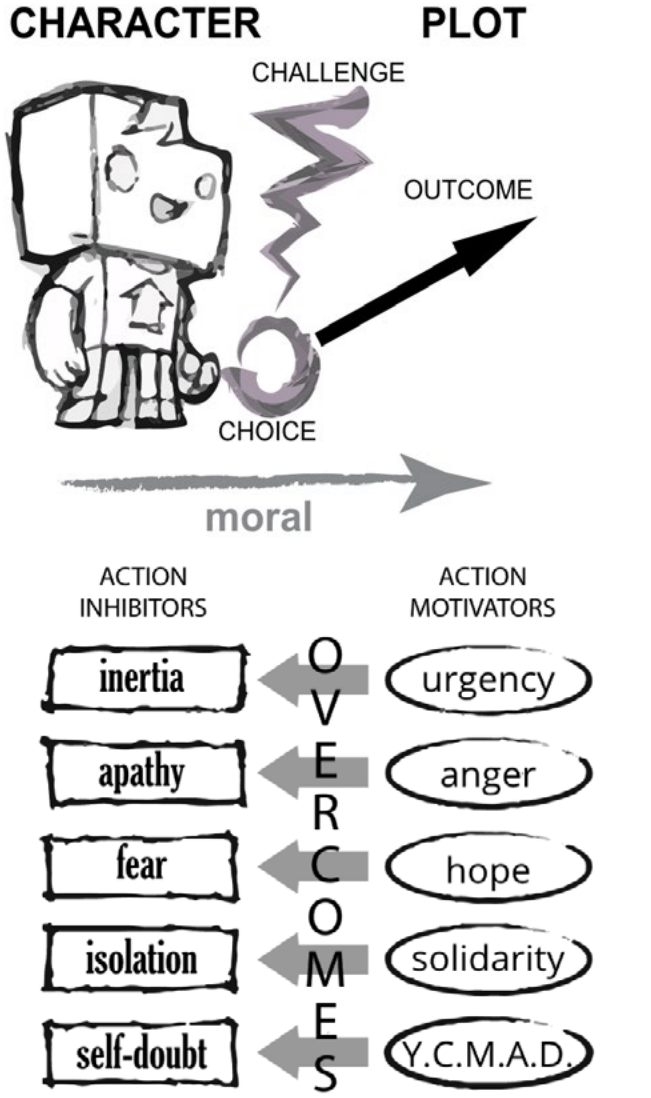
The Self-Us-Now framework

1) Who do you wish to have a conversation with – start small, practice
2) Determine what your 'ask' will be
3) Consider your key story points. Bring your notes.
4) S.U.N. story of SELF
   Thinking about your patch and your passion for our environment...
   - Why do I do what I do? This is powerful.
   - What personal values drive what I do for our environment?
5) S.U.N. story of US
   Thinking about your audience
   - What are our shared values?
   - What collective challenges do we face?
6) S.U.N. story of NOW
   Move to the future, and linking your ask to that future
   - What will the future look like if we do not act?
   - What changes do we need and what does success look like?
   - What are you asking the audience to do?
7) Get comfortable for a conversation – remember your notes.

As he explains, James Mumme OAM, convenor of Friends of Point Peron, re-framed his story this way: "In the past I've dropped in words like 'I am doing this for my grandchildren' ... 'I want them to be able to enjoy a natural world as I have'... 'I fear they will not be able to.'

"I will now start by saying something like: 'I've noticed that my grandchildren don't know the bush, don't know trees, don't know bird calls.' So, in my retirement I'm making a difference rescuing my patch of Point Peron, helping others do the same for their patches, and getting decision-makers to care about the future."

Best wishes. Keep introducing your story.



You can make a difference

Contact

Conservation Council WA
email nature@ccwa.org.au

Urban Bushland Council
web www.bushlandperth.org.au

FeralScan offers free rabbit disease testing kits

By Grace Proudfoot

Did you know that RabbitScan (part of the national FeralScan program), in partnership with the CSIRO and Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS), is offering a free rabbit disease testing service nationwide?

Feral rabbits are one of the most destructive invasive pest animals in Australia, estimated to cost around $239 million per year to the agricultural industry alone. Rabbits eat pasture and crops, compete with native animals, cause soil erosion and prevent regeneration of native vegetation.

Rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus (RHDV), also known as rabbit calicivirus, is used as a biocontrol agent to manage rabbit populations across Australia. RHDV only infects rabbits and hares and is highly contagious with high mortality rates for infected animals (the Foundation for Rabbit-Free Australia has released new advice for optimising the benefits from RHDV-K5). RHDV affects the liver, so it is most easily detected by testing liver samples—and this is where disease sampling and citizen science comes in.

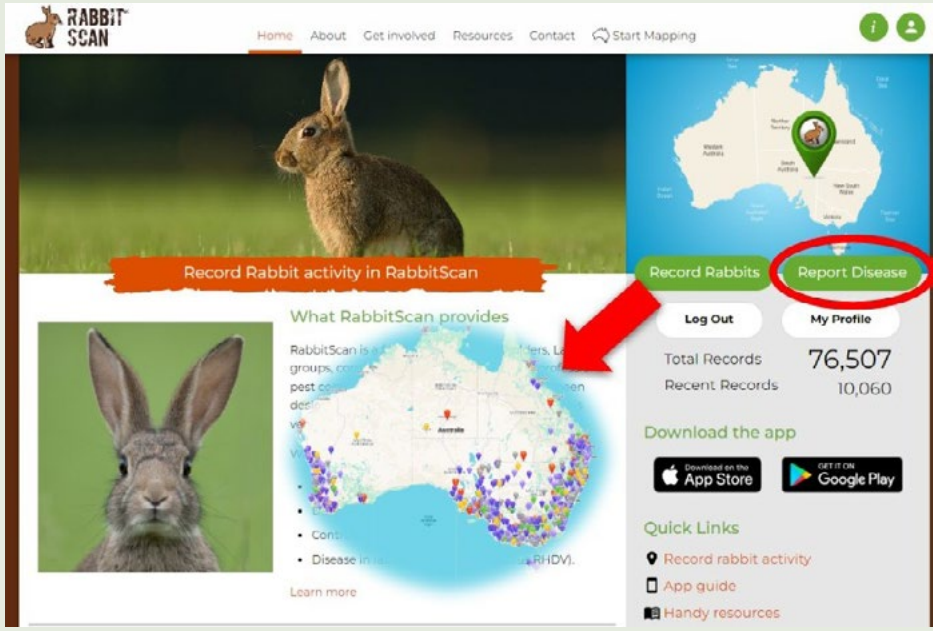
The role of citizen scientists is invaluable to understand how diseases behave in rabbit populations and optimise the use of rabbit diseases to reduce rabbits and the damage they cause. You can assist by reporting dead rabbits in your local area or submitting rabbit samples for testing. If you find dead rabbits in your local area (where you suspect disease might be the cause of mortality) and are willing to collect a sample for analysis, please request a free sample kit from RabbitScan.

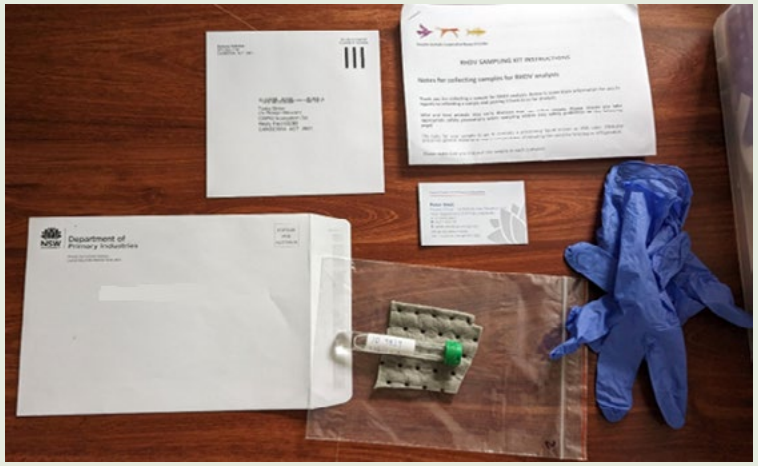
If possible, place the dead rabbit in a sealed and labelled plastic bag in the freezer until your kit arrives. If the entire rabbit cannot be stored, retaining only the liver or a hind-leg will be sufficient. Requesting a kit is easy! Simply head to the RabbitScan website (or download the FeralScan free app).

Using the rabbit disease map (accessible on the RabbitScan homepage), click 'Record Data' on the top left-hand side. Then click on the map to pinpoint your location, answer the questions and select the option to 'Request a sample kit'. Then 'Submit' your request. The FeralScan team will send you a sampling kit (with instructions) and a reply-paid envelope to submit your sample. Once the sample has been tested by CSIRO, the FeralScan team will notify you of the results via email and display them on the RabbitScan rabbit disease map.

With almost 10 years of data, making it the longest running citizen science survey of rabbit disease in the world, samples submitted by the public have been key to tracking rabbit viruses across Australia.

If you have any questions, the FeralScan team are here to help!





Contents of the free Rabbit Sampling Kit provided by FeralScan – G. Proudfoot

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Please send us your regional report (400 words) and one or two photos by Monday 12 May 2025. Text may be edited in response to volume of submitted reports.

Forest Festival celebrates urban forests

By Mick Davis

The Eco-Faeries ran kids activities in the forest. Photo – Mick Davis

Kalamunda's Nature Reserve Preservation Group (NRPG) were delighted by the success of their third annual Forest Festival held in October 2024. This free community event, supported by State NRM's Community Stewardship Grants, City of Kalamunda and Community Bank Forrestfield, was a celebration of nature, trees, community and music and saw more than a thousand people come together to listen, learn and enjoy forest-themed activities.

The theme of the 2024 festival was 'Understanding and protecting our urban forests.' More than 15 community conservation groups came together with local bands, food vendors and even a handful of Eco-Faeries to highlight the importance of planting trees to provide habitat for birds and local wildlife, including cockatoos, quendas and native bees!

Bringing the Forest Festival to the community for its third year, it was wonderful to see how popular it was, considering how important forests are for our communities' future, to cool our urban areas and provide recreational opportunities. Beyond this, forests are critical for Western Australia's unique wildlife, and we believe raising awareness is the first step in managing them better, for everyone's future.

NRPG member Clive Stubbington at the NRPG stall. Photo – Mick Davis

NRPG is excited to bring the Forest Festival back in October 2025, so if you are keen to have your local group join, would like to be a sponsor or just want to know more, please get in touch.

Contact

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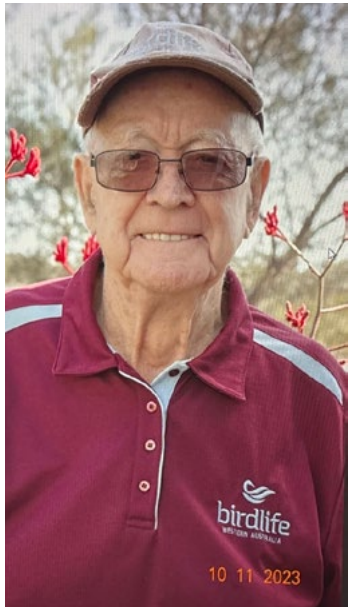
Celebrating the legacy of Bill King, founder of NRPG

It is with sadness that the Nature Reserves Preservation Group (NRPG) of Kalamunda announces the passing of its founder, Bill King, on 10 December 2024.

Bill's vision and dedication laid the foundation for NRPG in 1989, a group that remains active and dedicated to protecting the natural environment. His passion for conservation was sparked by the Kalamunda Shire's controversial proposal to sell 40 bush reserves for housing. This inspired him to rally like-minded residents, resulting in the first group meeting at his Lesmurdie home. Under Bill's leadership, the group galvanised the local community, gathering signatures against the proposal. The overwhelming support from the community led to significant outcomes, including the Shire appointing its first environmental officer and embedding environmental sensitivity into its strategic planning.

NRPG's legacy of action and advocacy has continued for decades, thanks to the groundwork Bill helped establish. From funding bushland restoration projects to contributing to major environmental policies, the group has left an indelible mark on Kalamunda and beyond.



NRPG founder Bill King's dedication to conservation has had a lasting impact on the hills community. Photo – courtesy of Nature Reserves Preservation Group.

Bill King's contributions were not limited to his time with NRPG. A bird enthusiast and tireless advocate for conservation, he remained dedicated to environmental causes throughout his life.

Tony Fowler, a founding member and past president of NRPG, reflected on Bill's incredible energy and drive. "Bill was a person who would get things done. Even in retirement, he had a drive that was the envy of many younger NRPG members. His move to Albany was a loss to the hills community, but he continued his environmental work there and later in Mandurah."

Bill's legacy serves as an inspiration to all who value and strive to protect our natural world, and his impact will endure through the ongoing efforts of NRPG and the countless lives he inspired to take action for nature.

Contact

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Vale John Dell *By Julia Cullity*

Our heartfelt wishes go out to the family and friends of John Dell who passed away in February. John Dell had a font of knowledge about, and deeply cared for, the fauna of the Swan Coastal Plain and of Western Australia. He started his career at the Western Australian Museum in the 1970s and finished it with the Department of the Environment including working on Bush Forever. John was a longstanding member of the WA Naturalists' and spent time in roles as the president and journal editor.

We warmly remember John Dell, here leading the walk at a Skills for Nature workshop, Understanding Ecosystems at Bibra Lake. Photo – DBCA.

John's service and contribution to the environment was recognised most recently when he was awarded the Public Service Medal of Australia in 2011 and much earlier in 1988 when he was awarded the Australian Natural History Medallion. In 1974 *Ctenotus dellii*, the Darling Range heath ctenotus was named in honour of John.

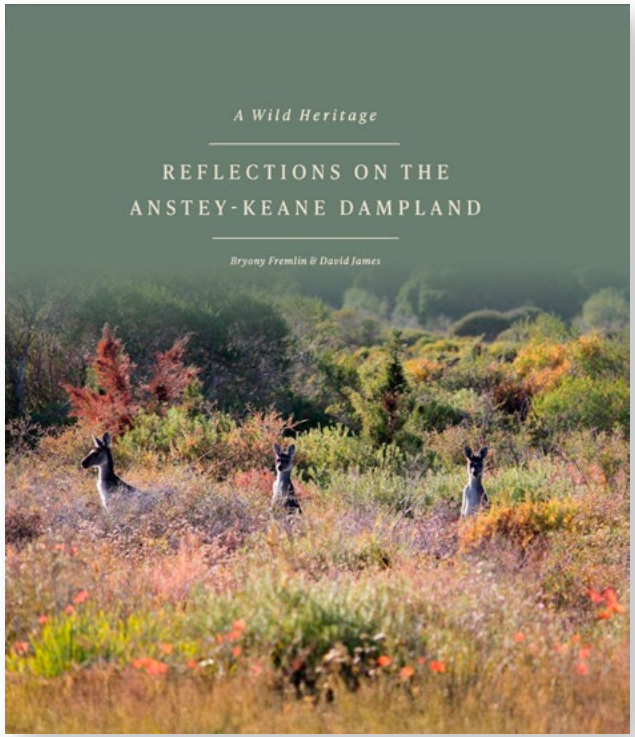
The Urban Nature team will remember John as extremely generous with his time and sharing his expertise and love of learning about the natural environment. He was our go-to presenter with the Skills for Nature program when we needed someone to talk about fauna values. He was a natural educator and mentor, warm, friendly and funny.

The launch of *Reflections on the Anstey-Keane Dampland*

By Bryony Fremlin

Reflections on the Anstey-Keane Dampland, a visually stunning and informative book by Bryony Fremlin and David James, showcases the amazing biodiversity that occurs in bushland on the Swan Coastal Plain, with a special emphasis on the unique Anstey-Keane Dampland.

Launched on 6 February at the Wetlands Centre Cockburn during the 21st Annual WA Wetlands Conference 2025, this voluntary project aims to raise awareness of the area's rich flora and fauna.



The cover offers a preview of the stunning bushland photography within. Photo – Bryony Fremlin

Situated in Perth's southeastern suburb of Forrestdale, Anstey-Keane Dampland (Bush Forever site 342), part of the Jandakot Regional Park, is a 308ha oasis of heathland, dampland and banksia woodland, bounded on all sides by major roads, housing estates and industry.

The reserve has had a chequered history. Many decades ago, sections were cleared for farming and the entire parcel of land was once earmarked for industry. It has suffered abuse from joyriding and rubbish dumping, and in recent years was threatened with a road extension through its centre—a proposal finally stopped thanks to a dedicated campaign launched by Friends of Forrestdale.

David James with a copy of Reflections on the Anstey-Keane Dampland. *Photo – Bryony Fremlin*

Despite these challenges, Anstey-Keane Dampland remains the most floristically rich part of Jandakot Regional Park, as well as the second most floristically rich Bush Forever site on the Swan Coastal Plain. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of conservationists and two key botanical surveys conducted in the early 1990s, which documented the reserve's floristic values, the conservation status of Anstey-Keane Dampland is now secure. To ensure the long-term preservation of the reserve, the government has gradually acquired all the privately owned blocks that comprised this parcel of land, and it is now managed by DBCA and the WA Planning Commission.

As with so many of our nature reserves, Anstey-Keane Dampland contains a rich diversity of plants and wildlife.

By producing the book, it is hoped that people will see, as they flick through the pages, the wealth of natural treasures to be found in our precious bushland areas—bushland that to the casual observer is so often overlooked as worthless scrub.

Reflections on the Anstey-Keane Dampland is available now as a free e-book through the Wetlands Conservation Society WA. In addition, sixty case bound copies have been printed and are available for purchase at the Wetlands Centre Cockburn.

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From the depths

By Emily Fenner Wilson, with contributions from Dr Lisa Kirkendale

The only way to solve the climate and biodiversity crises we face is for humans to feel more connection with the natural world around them and to challenge the perception that we are separate to nature. Rather, we are part of and entirely dependent on a complex web of life.

I have been working on learning this myself in my local area. Taking time to observe changes in my environment, paying attention to the little details and trying to learn about the wildlife and ecosystems I share this place with. Not only does this kind of noticing and learning foster empathy and a sense of responsibility for our environment but it also creates a sense of place and belonging, a feeling that you really know where you live, not just the human community but the ecological one too. It is a lifelong process, and I have a lot to learn.

As an artist and photographer, I enjoy exploring some of these ideas through my work. I found these abandoned and seemingly obsolete items near the banks of the Swan River, Derbarl Yerrigan, under the bridge that connects Guildford to Bassendean. They had obviously spent some time in the river before being pulled out and dumped on the bank.

The marine invertebrates that have colonized these discarded items require hard substrates for settlement, habitat that is often rare in muddy estuarine environments.

I was immediately fascinated by the way aquatic creatures had colonised the objects, creating these intricate, wild structures, transforming them into living artworks. I decided photography was the best way to capture these hybrid creations—part trash and part organism—and shot them in situ, around the area where I first spotted them. Apart from being visually striking, these objects speak to me about the relationship humans have with the rest of the living world; the way we often litter and pollute our environment, but also the resilience and ingenuity of wild lifeforms and the way that both co-exist in beneficial as well as detrimental ways.

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Dr Andrew Hosie
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Abandoned pram from the banks of Derbarl Yerrigan in Guildford. Artwork title – Pram 1, 2024.

LEFT: Pram encrusted with mussels in the family Mytilidae, and worms in the family Serpulidae. Artwork title – Pram 4, 2024. RIGHT: The remnants of this computer serve as a scaffold for these aquatic species. Artwork title - Computer 1, 2024. Photos – Emily Fenner Wilson.

Friends of Mosman Park Bushland update

By Alizanne Cheetham and Joy Boothman

Friends of Mosman Park Bushland has recently been awarded a $100,000 Rivercare grant from DBCA to restore some of our most fragile and critical riverine environments.

Established in 2008, the Friends of Mosman Park Bushland has successfully revegetated and maintained areas of Buckland Hill, Minim Cove, Roe Point and Garangup Park, including planting and protecting a fenced-in remnant bush block at Minim Cove. Additionally, we have successfully campaigned to prevent the rezoning of coastal foreshore reserve adjacent to the Beehive Montessori, securing and strengthening the nature link from river to sea. Preserving this bushland has seen the return of purple-backed fairy-wrens and harlequin beetles, and we are hopeful that quendas will also return.

Restoring Mosman Park's bushland, especially along the steep cliffs of the Swan River, presents unique challenges. These areas require significant bank stabilisation and regeneration efforts, which are difficult to achieve with volunteers alone. To address this, we sought funding through DBCA's Rivercare grant program.

We have identified four key areas along the Swan River for revegetation. Each site has been assessed to determine the specific needs for weeding, bank stabilisation, preparation, planting, and watering. Two of these areas will be supported mainly by volunteers and the Town of Mosman Park's contributions. However, the steep riverbanks require specialised work that the funding allows us to carry out with expert contractors. Additionally, the grant enables us to collaborate with Traditional Owners, ensuring culturally informed restoration practices.

Example of self-sewn woody weeds to be removed at Garangup Park as part of the grant activity. Photo – Sue Conlan.

The Rivercare grant will support work across three planting seasons (2025, 2026, and 2027). Throughout this period, the Friends will engage local schools, universities, corporate volunteers, and community members, fostering a deep connection to nature and nurturing a shared commitment to preserving our beautiful bushland.

Securing this funding would not have been possible without the contribution and expertise of the Town of Mosman Park. Their support, combined with our core group of dedicated volunteers and wider network of occasional helpers, gave us the capacity needed to undertake this project.

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Ospreys in the Peel-Harvey Estuary: insights from the 2024 breeding season

By Lisa Wray and Marcus Singor

The Peel-Harvey Estuary in Western Australia is a vital haven for ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*), hosting the highest concentration of breeding pairs in the south-west of the state. During 2024, the Mandurah Environment and Heritage Group partnered with DBCA to survey these remarkable birds.

Based on the occupancy rate of territories at the start of the breeding season, the population of breeding pairs in the estuary and surrounds was estimated to be at least 30 pairs, though only 26 of these were noted to have an active nest. A total of 86 ospreys were observed, including these breeding and non-breeding adults, as well as juveniles returning to their birthplace to establish new territories. The breeding season spanned from July 2024 to January 2025, with the earliest eggs laid in late July, and the latest clutches appearing in November, with fledging extending into February 2025.

Of the 26 active nests monitored, nine pairs successfully fledged 13 juveniles, resulting in an average productivity rate of 1.4 fledglings per nest. However, challenges were evident—four cases of chick mortality were documented, equating to a loss of 18.75 per cent of chicks. Suspected causes included a heatwave and competition among siblings, with larger chicks outcompeting smaller ones. Abandoned nests and those still under construction were also recorded, paving the way for future studies to track the dynamics of this population.

Ospreys around the estuary show a strong preference for nesting in dead tree crowns, which offer excellent visibility. While these spots are prime real estate for raising young as they provide unimpeded views, they also come with risks, as the nests may be vulnerable to storm damage or collapsing branches.

This survey highlights the resilience and adaptability of ospreys in the Peel-Harvey Estuary, but it also underscores the importance of ongoing monitoring to protect their habitats and ensure their continued success.

The success of this survey would not have been possible without the contribution of our observers from the region. Monitoring these extraordinary birds is an ongoing mission, so if you'd like to contribute, consider adopting a nest for future observation and become part of this important conservation effort.

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Osprey and nestling at Island Point nesting site in December 2024. Photo - John Clarke.

Friends of Jirdarup Bushland

By Lesley van Schoubroeck

Jirdarup Bushland Precinct is Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar in Kensington. Jirdarup means 'place of birds' in the Noongar language.

The precinct comprises 18ha managed by the Town of Victoria Park including:

- Kensington Bushland (Bush Forever site 48)
- George Street Reserve under revegetation since 2014
- Kent Street sand pit, scheduled for restoration.

This rare slice of remnant banksia-jarrah woodland is home to a wealth of native flora, fauna and fungi. It was formally designated as a single bushland precinct in 2015 and over 70 bird species, 16 reptiles and numerous invertebrates have been recorded. In the last two years, four bat species have also been detected. Approximately 230 native plants reside in the area, including more than 25 orchid species, however, unfortunately, some have not been sighted for more than 20 years.

When the condition of Kensington Bushland was assessed prior to being included in Perth's 1998 Bushplan, more than 79% of bushland was considered 'very good to excellent'. The precinct has a path that is open to visitors and takes approximately 45 minutes to cover. And the addition of the town's famous cockitroughs have made it a mecca for birds and bird lovers alike.

A Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo drinking from the cockitrough in the Town of Victoria Park. A welcomed addition to the area for both birds and birdwatchers alike. Photo – Veronica McPhail.

A crackle of seven Carnaby's Black Cockatoos enjoying banksias. Photo – Shaun Fearn.

New Holland Honeyeater enjoying Banksia attenuata. Photo – Shaun Fearn.

Friends of Jirdarup Bushland is a community group dedicated to the protection, preservation and promotion of the Jirdarup Bushland Precinct operating solely on a volunteer basis. The group celebrated 25 years of caring for nature on 1 December 2024.

Persuaded largely by Councillor Cathy Taylor, the late Gwynth Schlipalius led the establishment of a Friends of Kensington Bushland group at the end of 1999. In 2020, the group rebranded as the Friends of Jirdarup Bushland. Today our mailing list is more than 400 with 1,700 Facebook followers.

The Friends focus on advocacy, landcare and community education.

Advocacy to save the sand pit from redevelopment has been on the agenda since 2000. Mayor, Karen Vernon, credits the Friends' strong advocacy for the Council's 2023 decision for a 5-star ecological restoration of the sand pit being undertaken in partnership with Curtin University. The old Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development site which borders Jirdarup is now scheduled for redevelopment by the State Government. Advocating for a development that is sympathetic to the bushland is a priority. The Friends speak out on all opportunities that can enhance the natural corridors outwards from Jirdarup—as they say, birds do not understand local government boundaries.

Landcare started with 'gladdy grabs' in 2000. Now, the Friends work in partnership with the Town of Victoria Park in a more integrated approach to weed management. The group has been awarded a second State NRM grant that includes funding for professional hand weeding services to supplement the work of the volunteers. Weeders are proud to see regenerating native seedlings thriving in areas once covered by weeds.

Friends of Jirdarup Bushland in the Kensington bushland during weeding season. Photo – Harley Taylor.

Friends of Jirdarup Bushland committee and councillors celebrating 25 years of caring for nature. Back row (left to right): Julie Bain, Helen Brown, Cathy Taylor, Vicki Caulfield, Lesley van Schoubroeck, Klaus Backheuer. Front row (left to right): Helen Carter, Emily Harvey, Clare Caldeira, Dan Carter, Karen Vernon. Photo – courtesy of Friends of Jirdarup Bushland.

Community education began with a walk and talk program and this remains popular. Friends held nature photography competitions in 2020 and 2021 leading to a substantial increase in appreciation of Jirdarup in the wider community. It also laid the foundation for a series of publications that now underpin this program. Two books have been published, *Jirdarup Bushland and the Friends who care for it* (2023) and *Birds of Jirdarup: your garden can help them thrive* (2024) with *Orchids of Jirdarup* planned for 2026. These publications, illustrated with amazing photographs, are in libraries and for sale from our website.

Friends of Jirdarup Bushland will continue to foster a strong community, strengthening partnerships with local government and other community groups to reinforce our foundations and allow the group to flourish. This success depends on the recruitment of the next generation of leaders. To have a vision is vital, so too is the capacity to deliver on that vision. If you would like to contribute to our vision, contact the Friends at any time.

Contact

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Celebrate urban bushland restoration at Heads Healing the Land Conference

By Adam Peck

Bush carers keen to learn more about urban restoration are invited to Heads Healing the Land/Kaat Koyingkeriny Boodja-k, the third biennial urban restoration conference. The event will be hosted by Rehabilitating Roe 8, coordinated by the City of Cockburn. Rehabilitating Roe 8 has worked with the community for the past seven years to transform cleared bushland in the former Roe 8 corridor into a thriving ecological corridor.

The 7 May 2025 conference will be tailored to inform and support urban bushland volunteers, practitioners, researchers, Traditional Owners and students in the field of ecological restoration and community building. The focus will be the application of knowledge and technology to guide our hearts and hands as we care for Country.

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said the informative conference is always well attended, with about 100 people attending the 2023 event.

Speakers from the successful 2023 conference shared their wisdom and passion, highlighting the collaborative nature of this ongoing restoration project. Photo – City of Cockburn.

"Successful urban restoration is a collaborative effort, and the Roe 8 corridor is testament to that" Mayor Howlett said. "Due to a successful partnership between the Rehabilitating Roe 8 Advisory Committee and our passionate community groups, the bushland looks incredible. The conference is a great opportunity to share in the wisdom of our dedicated bushland carers."

Rehabilitating Roe 8 will be joined by guest speakers including Professor Kingsley Dixon (Curtin University), Rita Lusted and David Broun (Ngaparrtj Ngaparrtji Two-way Science Program), and Dr Renee Young (WA Biodiversity Science Institute Program Director of Conservation and Restoration). After a bush tucker lunch, activities will include a Noongar cultural guided walk, a Rehabilitating Roe 8 guided walk, WA Wildlife tour and plant propagation workshop. At the end of the day enjoy a sundowner with fellow bush carers, overlooking the banksia woodlands.

The conference will be held at The Wetlands Centre Cockburn in Bibra Lake on Wednesday 7 May, 9am-4.30pm. The cost is $20/$10, with tickets available now.

Urban restoration devotees are also encouraged to participate in the conference by giving a five-minute talk related to urban landcare. Traditional Owners, members of Friends groups, urban ecological restoration students and anyone else with a passion for environmental conservation are encouraged to register their interest online now.

Contact

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From threats to solutions: advancing biosecurity

The 5th International Congress on Biological Invasions is being held at the Pan Pacific in Boorloo, Perth from 21–24 September 2025. With the overarching theme 'From Threats to Solutions: Advancing Biosecurity' this event is an opportunity for scientists, land managers and policymakers to explore both current efforts to address global biosecurity issues and ways to advance biosecurity research and management into the future.

The key areas of this year's program include enhancing global biosecurity policies, tackling climate change's role in invasive species threats, involving First Nations peoples in management efforts, promoting citizen science for effective control, and strategies for recovering from biological invasions.

Stay informed by registering your interest today. Don't miss these key dates: abstract submissions close Friday 14 March and early bird registrations close on Sunday 22 June.

Contact

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Registration Enquiries
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The Biodiversity Conference 2025
NATURE POSITIVE

The Biodiversity Conference is back in Boorloo, Perth for 2025. Running from 28–30 October, this event will bring together custodians, researchers, and practitioners from diverse sectors to share knowledge aimed at protecting and enhancing biodiversity. This year's theme is 'Nature Positive' with a focus on Indigenous stewardship, terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity assets, innovation and emerging trends, as well as strategies for managing impacts to achieve a nature positive future. Jointly supported by all five Western Australian universities, DBCA, and the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute, the conference has a strong Western Australian focus.

The conference aims to create an inclusive environment, inviting participation from individuals of all backgrounds. It's an excellent opportunity for those passionate about conservation to engage with experts and contribute to discussions on achieving a Nature Positive future.

Don't miss these key dates: abstract submissions close Friday 21 March 2025, registrations are now open, closing Friday 19 September 2025.

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The National Feral Pig Conference 2025 is taking place March 24–26 in Surfers Paradise, Queensland. This event offers a unique opportunity for land managers, community groups, government agencies, and researchers to network and collaborate across sectors to strengthen partnerships, gain knowledge and improve the effectiveness of feral pig management initiatives nationally.

The conference theme 'Getting the fundamentals right' will foster a focus on effective regional coordination and collaboration, harnessing community power, reducing risk, and optimising management by using new and available technology.

For those passionate about conservation and mitigating the impacts of feral pigs, the conference program is available online. Late registrations open Saturday 8 March. .

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Serventy Memorial Lecture 2025: Byron Lamont

Photo – Willy Dadour.

Biotic interactions-the essence of nature conservation by Byron Lamont will be the presentation for The WA Naturalists' Club's 2025 Serventy Memorial Lecture. This will be held at UWA's Social Science Lecture Theatre on Wednesday 16 April at 7.30pm.

Byron Lamont AM is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus in plant ecology at Curtin University. His expertise is adaptations of mediterranean floras to fire, poor soils, drought, herbivores and pollinators. He has published 420 papers since 1972.

During his presentation Professor Lamont will outline some of the complex interactions between plants, animals and fungi that are unique to southwestern Australia. Using the Albany pitcher plant, orchid mimicry, the woylie, and black cockatoos as examples, he will explain how these interactions and associated cycles form an essential part of the environment.

The Serventy Memorial Fund is a memorial to the contribution by the Serventy family to the Western Australian Naturalists' Club and to natural history throughout Australia. It was established with the aim of assisting and encouraging young people in the study of natural history. Since commencing in 1989, the Serventy Memorial Lecture has been the main source of funding for the Serventy Memorial Prizes awarded annually to students at WA's four public universities.

Prior booking is preferred (to assist with catering) but door sales will be available. Cost is $20 per person.

Funding opportunities

State NRM Community Stewardship Grants offer up to $50,000 for small grants and $450,000 for large grants towards rehabilitating and protecting WA biodiversity and coastal habitats. Applications **close 7 April**.

Swan Alcoa Landcare Program funding the community to enhance and restore critcal habitat and ecological linkages within the Swan Region. Applications **close 5 May**.

Coastwest grants offer between $5000 and $60,000 to support coastal land managers and community organisations to undertake projects to rehabilitate, restore and enhance coastal sites. Applications **close 14 April**.

Feral Cat Management Grants offer from $10,000 to $250,000 for landscape scale, community-based projects that reduce feral cat impact in priority areas and improve the conservation outcomes for native fauna. Applications **close 24 March**.

Australian Wildlife Society Conservation Group Grants fund up to three groups yearly, specialising in wildlife conservation and the preservation of wildlife habitats. Applications **accepted year-round**.

The Emergency Actions for Threatened Species Grant offers funding towards preventing new extinctions of native plants and animals. Grant proposals are **open now**.

PHCC fencing and revegetation of rural drains and waterways is available for property owners in the Peel-Harvey Catchment to aid with fencing (up to $4,500/km) and revegetation (up to $15,000/ha) to improve the water quality of the Peel-Harvey Estuary. Expressions of interest **open now**.

Purves Environmental Fund offers up to $50,000 for projects addressing the focus areas of habitat degradation, unsustainable management of natural resources and pollution. Applications are **accepted year-round**.

Canon Oceania provides sponsorship opportunities for charities and organisation working in sustainability and environment **year-round**.

Wettenhall Environment Trust Small Environmental Grant Scheme offers funding between $2,000 to $15,000 towards positive changes to biodiversity conservation in Australia. Applications **open 24 March.**

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation funds land acquisition or management projects that deliver benefits to Indigenous Australians through the **Our Country Our Future** Program. This includes on-ground activities to maintain or improve the condition of Country (land, water, biodiversity, and cultural heritage). Applications **accepted year-round**.

Riverbank Program grants are available for local and state government agencies for revegetation, weed control and foreshore erosion control projects in the Swan Canning Riverpark. Expressions of interest **close 18 April**.

The Department of Transport **Coastal Adaption and Protection grants** offer financial assistance to local projects that identify and manage coastal hazards. **The H-CAP Major Project Fund** provides grants to assist in the design and implementation of coastal adaptation works at WA's coastal erosion hotspots. Applications for both grants **close 14 April.**

The Coastal Management Plan Assistance Program funds coastal land managers including local governments, and Aboriginal corporations, up to $200,000 towards planning and managing Western Australia's iconic coastline. Applications **close 14 April**.

Holsworth Wildlife Research Endowment is available for post-graduate student research support in ecology, wildlife management and natural history studies. Applications **close 31 March**.

Birdlife Australia's Student Research and Travel Grants offer $15,000 per year in funding to support postgraduate fieldwork and travel to scientific conferences. Applications **close 31 March**.

Lotterywest Grassroots Community-Led Grants fund community efforts to care for, sustain and enhance local biodiversity. Applications are **open year-round**.

Local government and place-based community grants. These local governments and groups provide small grants to their communities which may fund environmental management and restoration projects. Eligibility varies. Albany Community Foundation **open year-round**, Armadale Community Grants **opens 10 March and close 14 April**, Armadale Habitat Links expression of interest **open year-round**, Bayswater Community Grants **open year-round**, City of Belmont Community Contribution Fund **closes 28 March 2025**, Broome Quick Response Grants **open year-round** and Broome Community Development Fund **closes 20 March**, Cockburn Sustainability Grants **closes 31 July**, Shire of Derby/West Kimberley Community Grants Program **open year-round**, Fremantle Community Grants **closes 31 March**, Greater Geraldton's Community Project Support Program round 2 grant **closes 21 March**, Gosnells Community Funding **open year-round**, Harvey Water sponsorship **open year-round**, Kwinana Community Event and Placemaking grant funding **close 31 May**, Sustainable Melville Grant **closes 31 March**, Rockingham major grants round one funding **closes 4 April,** South Perth Community Funding **available year-round** until funds are exhausted, Swan Community Grants **close 30 June**, Synergy's Collie Small Grants **close 15 April**, Toodyay Community Funding **close 4 April**, Vincent Environmental Grants **close 7 April**, Wanneroo Community Funding **open year-round**.

Carnaby's cockatoos

By Merryn Pryor

Photo – Nathan Yaschenko

Now is the perfect time to spot Carnaby's cockatoos, as flocks have returned from their inland breeding grounds to forage in banksia woodlands, pine plantations, and suburban backyards on the Swan Coastal Plain.

These large, long-lived birds, with striking black and white tail feathers, contrasting white cheek patches, and distinctive, echoing calls, are endemic to southwest WA. They form strong pair bonds and migrate inland during the breeding season to nest in large eucalypt hollows, usually near the female's birthplace. During the non-breeding season from February to June, these cockatoos migrate to coastal areas, where they gather in large flocks to forage and roost.

Carnaby's primarily eat seeds from proteaceous, eucalypts, and *Corymbia* species but also consume flowers, nectar, insect larvae, and seeds from introduced plants such as pines, nut trees, and canola. They also play an important ecological role through dispersing seeds through the landscape and trimming branches, promoting future growth and flowering.

Unfortunately, habitat loss and other threats have resulted in Carnaby's being listed as endangered under both state and federal legislation. You can help Carnaby's in your own backyard by providing water in birdbaths and planting native food sources such as banksias, hakea, eucalypt, grevillea, and *Corymbia*. You can also keep an eye out for black cockatoo roost sites and get involved in the annual citizen-science survey, the Great Cocky Count.

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