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Yarning Time



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



**PARKS AND
WILDLIFE
SERVICE**

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions acknowledges all Aboriginal peoples as the Traditional Owners of the land and waters it manages, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples are advised that this newsletter may contain images, vision or names of people who are deceased.

Yarning is a term used by Aboriginal peoples that means talking and sharing stories. We are pleased to share news about Aboriginal engagement across Western Australia that showcases some of the important work being undertaken in partnership between the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and Traditional Owners.

Aboriginal engagement involves almost every aspect of the department's work, including reserve creation, science, recreation, tourism operations, conservation land management, fire management, wildlife management and heritage protection – much of which is enabled through formal and informal joint management and partnership initiatives.

IN THIS ISSUE:

This issue of Yarning Time focuses on how the department has been working together with Traditional Owners in the spirit of reconciliation. It also includes the addition of regular segments that will appear in future issues.

- [Aboriginal Ranger Program working together on cultural burning](#)
- [Spotlight on a region - MIDWEST](#)
- [A yarn with a team member!](#)
- [Connecting kids to Country through turtle conservation](#)
- [Bushfood recipe](#)
- [In other news](#)

Aboriginal Ranger Program working together on cultural burning

DBCA staff from the department's Aboriginal Ranger Program recently took part in a cultural burn at [Nowanup](#), a former sheep farm in the Great Southern region that is now in the care of Noongar Elders and rangers. Nowanup is being revegetated to restore cleared land and is rebuilding Noongar culture by sharing intergenerational cultural and ecological knowledge on Country.

This inspirational video shows Noongar Elders and rangers working together with research, government and non-government organisations including the University of Western Australia, Gondwana Link and Bush Heritage Australia, to share knowledge about kaarl (fire).



Spotlight on a region - MIDWEST

In each issue of Yarning Time, we will share some of the impressive work being undertaken in DBCA's regions. **This issue takes a look at collaboration and joint management in action in the Midwest ...**

An overview of joint management in the Midwest, *submitted by Ross Kermode, Regional Leader Joint Management ...*

DBCA's Midwest Region extends from just north of Lancelin to above Carnarvon and out east past Burringurrah (Mt Augustus National Park) and Gulali (Collier Range National Park), back down around Meekatharra, and Perenjori, and then back to the coast. It is a diverse landscape with deep cultural importance to multiple Traditional Owner groups who are connected to this Country.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owner groups we are now partnered with in Joint

Management, understanding many have spent decades and generations to achieve determinations through Native Title processes. The Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA's) reflect the strength of recent negotiation processes with real outcomes for capacity building, On Country activities and employment and training for Traditional Owners over the next 10 years and beyond.

The Traditional Owner groups have said that one of their key drivers for partnering with DBCA is the [Read More](#)

Yued Cooperative Management Committee gets to work on the Turquoise Coast

The Midwest's first Cooperative Management Committee (CMC) is the Yued CMC. It has made significant progress since the implementation of the DBCA and Yued Cooperative Management Agreement, holding two successful meetings and preparing for its third, which will feature the first On-Country trip. [Read More](#)



Celebrating the achievements of our Yued school-based trainee

DBCA's Midwest region also works closely with school-based trainees, such as Naomi Headland.

From a well-known local Yued family, Naomi started with DBCA as a school-based trainee in 2022. She quickly earned a permanent Ranger's Assistant position in 2023 and progressed to a permanent Ranger position in 2025. Naomi is now finalising her Certificate III in Conservation and Ecosystems Management and plans to pursue a Certificate IV. She credits her journey to invaluable learning experiences, mentorship, and a deepening commitment to preserving Indigenous culture and the natural environment. Looking ahead, Naomi remains eager to embrace new challenges and contribute to DBCA's essential conservation efforts and is especially interested in fire operations, saying "the opportunities are

endless, and I am eager to embrace each challenge with dedication and enthusiasm.”



Men's On-Country Trip to Jilgu National Park on Nharnuwangga Wajarri Ngarlawangga Country

Submitted by James Piper (Nature Conservation Operations Officer) and Ashley Cull (Joint Management Operations Officer)

Jilgu National Park and Gulali [pronounced 'Boo-lar-lie'] (Collier Range) National Park, sit within Nharnuwangga Wajarri Ngarlawangga (NWN) Country and are jointly managed by Jidi Jidi Aboriginal Corporation (JJAC) and DBCA. Jilgu National Park is an ex-pastoral lease and Gulali National Park has had minimal access and management since 1978 when it became national park. Both areas are of high cultural significance to NWN people. [Read More](#)



Skipjack Point restoration project at Wulyibidi

Submitted by Johnny Prefumo (Shark Bay Ranger) and Ashley Cull (Joint Management Operations Officer)

Francois Peron National Park, known as Wulyibidi in the Malgana language, is a popular tourist destination in Gathaagudu (Shark Bay), and is one of eight reserves being jointly managed between Malgana Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) and DBCA.

In December last year, Shark Bay Ranger Johnny Prefumo lead a collaborative restoration effort at Skipjack Point in Wulyibidi, a popular tourist site, addressing coastal dune erosion. [Read More](#)



Jointly managing Yinggarda Country

Submitted by Ashley Cull (Joint Management Operations Officer)

Conservation Estate in Yinggarda Country (around Canarvon) includes Pimbee and Kennedy Range National Parks, and One Tree Point and Chinaman's Pool Nature Reserves, which are jointly managed by Yinggarda Aboriginal Corporation and DBCA. Joint Management Body meetings for Yinggarda estate began in March 2023 and the JMB has been working well together to make important decisions for Country. [Read More](#)



Sharing nature conservation knowledge in Burringurrah National Park at Wajarri Yamaji - Burringurrah / Milly Milly Country

Submitted by Tegan Payne (Nature Conservation Operations Officer) and Ashley Cull (Joint Management Operations Officer)

The two national parks located in the Northern Wajarri Yamaji Conservation Estate (in the Gascoyne District) – the existing Mount Augustus National Park and the newly created Burringurrah National Park, are jointly managed by the Burringurrah Joint Management Body (JMB) which is made up of Burringurrah/Milly Milly Traditional Owner representatives and DBCA staff. [Read More](#)



If you'd like your region to feature in a future 'Spotlight on a region' and showcase your team's work, email yarning.time@dbca.wa.gov.au

A yarn with a team member!

Introducing **Curtis Robinson**, a Joint Management Project Officer for the Yamatji Nation.

Curtis is a Kariyarra/Yamatji man who currently works for DCBA on his Mother's Country, in the Midwest region of Western Australia. He has a strong commitment to joint management and the protection of Country.



Where were you born/did you grow up?

I was born in Port Hedland, and grew up mostly in Broome, but lived and schooled in Darwin, Derby, Geraldton, Perth and Esperance. Mum, being a Yamatji Nyarlu (Woman) from the Midwest and the youngest female in a large family of seven brothers and five sisters, meant that our house in Broome was always busy, and welcomed all. Most of the families travelled far to visit our family, and they came to Broome for the Shinju Matsuri and the Aboriginal Music festival 'Stompen Ground'. During my years growing up I heard a lot of old yarns from multiple families and stories from across the land as they were discussed at my mum's dining table or around a fire in the backyard. I attended boarding school in Esperance and the original Clontarf in Perth. Both schools had students from across the nation, and this gave me an understanding that even though our People are the same, in other ways we are also very different.

What is most important to you about your culture?

We do not inherit the land, we borrow it from our children, thus ensuring our next

generation is given an opportunity to have a healthy wellbeing and a sustainable lifestyle. We are at a crossroads with all our people across our land. No matter what colour and ethnicity, language group, or culture, the next generation is our future, and we have an obligation to provide a place good enough for them to live it.

What was your first job with DBCA?

It was as a trainee Ranger in Yawuru (Broome) Joint Management, delivering Yawuru cultural values and DBCA directions across the Yawuru JM determination for many years, during which time I gained my Certificates III and IV in Conservation and Land Management and Level 2 Fire Fighter competency. I would like to mention and thank the Yawuru people for giving me the opportunity and for trusting me in that role as I am not of Yawuru blood.

What has been the highlight so far?

Being able to [Read More](#)

If you'd like to nominate someone for a future 'Yarn with a team member', email yarning.time@dbca.wa.gov.au

Connecting kids to Country through turtle conservation

Submitted by Clodagh Guildea, Science Communication and Education Project Officer

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Sea Country where this work has been conducted –the Thalanyji, Nhuwala and Ngarluma people. We pay our respects to their Elders; past, present and emerging.

As the boat pulls up to the floating jetty at Thevenard Island, giggles and shouts can be heard from the shore. Excitedly jumping from the boat are a dozen young Aboriginal kids, proudly wearing their Waalitj Foundation shirts and ready for the

beach in flip flops and boardies.

Suzanne Wilson, manager of the Waalitj Foundation's Onslow team, and the other carers and mentors organise backpacks and eskies full of food off the boat, while the kids point excitedly at turtles popping their heads up for breath at the surface of the turquoise waters. [Read More](#)



Above images, top, left to right: *Waalitj Foundation kids arriving at Thevenard Island in November 2024, photo – Clodagh Guildea, DBCA; Waalitj Foundation youngster Ryder Elliott measures the length of a flatback turtle carapace (shell) with DBCA staff member Clodagh Guildea in 2023, photo – DBCA; Roebourne District High*

Bushfood recipe

In each issue of Yarning Time we'll share a recipe that uses bushfood. This issue's recipe comes from delicious.com.au, however, **we'd love to share your favourite recipes, so if you have one you'd like featured, please email it to Yarning.Time@dbca.wa.gov.au** Thank you!

Lemon Myrtle Cake

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (140g) whole macadamias
- 180g unsalted butter, softened
- 150g caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 300g plain wholegrain stone-ground flour (from health food stores or specialty grocers)
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp bicarb soda
- 185ml buttermilk
- 2 tsp ground lemon myrtle (from speciality grocers or online)
- Edible flower petals, to decorate

Icing

- 3 egg whites
- 210g caster sugar
- 210g unsalted butter, softened, chopped

- 2 tsp ground lemon myrtle

METHOD: [Read More](#)





DBCA staff have showcased their baking skills at Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week morning teas over the years, whipping up delicious treats that include bushfoods.

In other news

Reconciliation Week 2025

Reconciliation Week was held from 27 May to 3 June, and the department's reconciliation news was communicated a little differently this year.

With the 2025 theme being '*Bridging Now to Next*', 'Bridging Sticks' were delivered at DBCA work sites to share what reconciliation looks like within the department.

The Bridging Sticks carried a similar intent as traditional Message Sticks – to relay important news – and they consisted of individual sticks with a special Reconciliation Week 2025 edition newsletter wrapped around them. They were handed out in person and passed onto colleagues, in a bid to attract greater attention than a standard newsletter or email.

A large Bridging Stick was also displayed at DBCA's Kensington headquarters, for

staff and visitors to attach personal messages about what reconciliation means to them and how they have contributed to the spirit of reconciliation in the course of their work.

Other departmental Reconciliation Week events included morning teas, film screenings, displays, Noongar-led tours of Kaarta Koomba (Kings Park) and Yarning Circles at Wadjemup / Rottnest Island. The department also sponsored a banner in the National Reconciliation Week Street Banner Program and also tickets for staff to take part in Reconciliation WA's Walk for Reconciliation (which is now happening later, in Spring, due to adverse weather during Reconciliation Week).



NAIDOC Week 2025

While Reconciliation Week is a time to focus on coming together and building respectful relationships, NAIDOC Week is an opportunity to celebrate and enhance awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's culture and achievements.

NAIDOC Week 2025 is coming up from 6 – 13 July, with the theme '*The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy.*' Visit the [NAIDOC Website](#) for resources to help plan celebrations.

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