

The latest news from your friendly *Nearer to Nature* team.

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Hi Lisa Wright

Issue No. 11

Wanju (welcome)

Monday, 18 November 2019

Late spring is here after a slow start - we had a few very crisp mornings for a while there! Now we are well into the spring prescribed burn season, to be followed soon by the bushfire season. The patterns of life!

2020 is just around the corner. The [N2N high school brochure is now available online](#) with a great range of excursions and incursion as well as a geographic spread of locations across the Perth metropolitan area. Check it out and please book as early as possible; Terms 1 and 2 get very busy with high school bookings. When booking online let us know other preferred dates just in case your first date is already booked up.

On **Thursday 21 November** we are partnering with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) to present a professional learning opportunity for teachers – **Bushfires: Hot topics**. This PL for primary and secondary teachers will provide you with information, resources and activities to run a teaching program on preparation, mitigation and responding to bushfire. [Find out more information and book.](#)



We hope you're having a great Term 4.
Mr C!



Nearer to Nature
Schools



Bushfire: Hot topics

Free Teacher Professional Learning Workshop

Thursday 21 November 2019

Introducing our new Indigenous leaders

Nearer to Nature is very pleased to welcome three new Indigenous leaders to our team.



Karan Hayward is the daughter of Aboriginal Elder Denis Hayward. Karan and her father were honoured at the 2018 Volunteer Service Awards for their dedication to community service organisations in Western Australia. Karan is passionate about teaching her Nyoongar culture and sharing Nyoongar ways. She especially enjoys being with children and is loving her work with *Nearer to Nature*.



Bobbi Henry is a Nyoongar of the Wadjuk Clan from the south-west of WA. She has a background in film and theatre and has worked in both Indigenous and other theatre projects. Bobbi has an enthusiasm for communicating her culture and is now turning her presenting skills to engaging young people in learning about her culture with *Nearer to Nature*.

Rhys Paddick is an advocate of cultural leadership. Having worked extensively with Aboriginal peoples, communities and cultures, Rhys feels that the culture of our First Nations peoples can enhance many facets of the wider Australian community. His focus is to bring a modern adaptation of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to connect Australians with “our common culture – people



holding that Aboriginal people walk in two worlds, one traditional, one modern, and if we all step into our traditional roots we'll see that we all aren't that different to one another.

Fire and our plants

Many of our plant species arose in a fire-prone environment 90 millions years ago, and by 81 million years ago, fire-adapted traits began to appear. Some plants hold their fruits in a woody capsule until released by fire heat (serotiny), others produce single-seeded fruits able to lay dormant in the soil until cued to germinate by smoke. Some produce seeds coated with a sticky substance (elaiosomes) attracting ants which bury them to await the heat/smoke cue that stimulates germination. The hard, cutinised seed coats of legumes protect the seeds from digestion by seed-eaters and protect the embryo from drying out. Heat from fire is required to crack the covering allowing water to enter and stimulate germination.

Traits such as re-sprouting from protected buds under the bark (epicormic buds) or from underground structures (lignotubers, rhizomes), heat stimulated release of canopy stored seed, and post-fire stimulated flowering are also common in our flora. Why do our plants utilise fire as a stimulation to grow? Fire creates an ideal opportunity for growth because there is less competition with other plants, reduced canopy cover allows more light to penetrate, and the ashbed holds an abundance of nutrients.

Our continent remains fire-prone and our native plants rely on fire adaptations to survive. Regrowth is dependent on fire intensity (amount of heat energy release). More intense fires are more severe in damage potential and suppression difficulty. Today, intense summer bushfires threaten human life, destroy property and increase plant/tree deaths and vegetation recovery time. *Nearer to Nature's* fire programs explore a range of themes related to bushfire and the [Parks and Wildlife Service website has a wealth of information](#).





Lush green shoots seen on the branches and stems of trees following a fire are called epicormic shoots. This is a Macrozamia resprouting after fire.

Catchments Corridors and Coasts 2020: A snapshot of environmental education in WA

Presented by the Australian Association for Environmental Education (WA) Catchments Corridors and Coasts (CCC) is a three-day, professional development course suitable for environmental educators, teachers, tertiary students and community groups.

The program is presented in January every year, and in 2020 will be held from 21-23 January. CCC provides a snapshot of environmental education in WA from catchments, through corridors to the coast. It provides a rich experience, facilitating the development of networks with and between practitioners, and an awareness of the resources and support across WA to help address core environmental and sustainability issues in the State.

The program focuses on learning through experience and provides a wealth of take-home resources. All program content can be linked to the current Western Australian Curriculum, along with links to the Australian Curriculum.

In conjunction with CCC, *Nearer to Nature* will be showcasing our programs at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre on Tuesday 21 January and at the Canning River Eco Education Centre on Wednesday 22 January.

Past participants have said; 'Engaging and informative experience with a plethora of ideas.'

[More information and registration.](#)



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



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