

Landcare and Photo-Monitoring

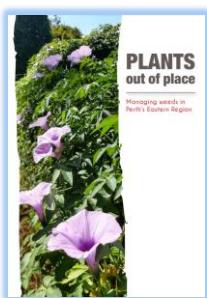
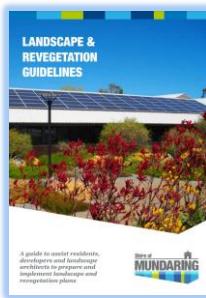
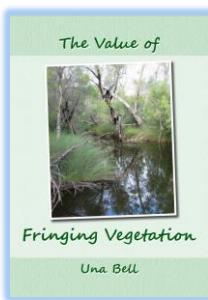


Environmental landcare projects can include weed and erosion control, strategic fencing, and planting seedlings. People often find landcare projects very rewarding, whether restoring natural areas on their own land or joining a 'Friends of' Group for a Shire reserve.

For a watercourse restoration project you might want to start around an area that is at risk of erosion, or at the point where it enters the property. After a fire you might just control weeds for the first year and see how much natural regrowth comes up from seeds in the soil.

Landcare projects will often use the 'Bradley Method for bush regeneration'. This follows the principles of protecting and restoring the area on your site that is in the best condition first then working out from there, controlling weeds and encouraging natural regeneration.

However if you have an area with significant weeds that are a fire hazard (especially invasive wattles or Watsonia) you might consider that the highest priority and start there. The Shire has free booklets and information that can help plan your project, identify weeds to target and choose local native plants to replace them. These are available in print, or online from the Environment Service section of the Shire website at www.mundaring.wa.gov.au



If your plans include any earthworks or disturbance to the bed or banks of a watercourse you may need to get a permit before you start. Contact the Shire's Planning and Environment Service on 9290 6740 for advice. If it is within an Aboriginal heritage site, you will also need to contact the WA Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

Choosing your photo monitoring point

Look for a photo location that will be easily accessible in all seasons. It should provide a clear view across the environmental restoration area and ideally have some reference points like prominent trees, rocks or posts that help you line up the photo. You may want to choose more than one photo point for a larger or longer project area.

Being able to find your monitoring point again in the future is essential. Is there a landmark, path or culvert nearby, or a tree you can tie tape on, or can you put in a marker post? If you have a GPS (or smartphone app) make sure to write down the coordinates. Making a map will help - you can print aerial imagery from the Shire's [Online Maps](#) or other map services.

How often will you take photos?

It depends on your project and what you want to monitor. Use the table below as a guide.

Project type	Monitoring interval	Useful notes
Fencing or earthworks	Before and after installation	Stand 5m – 10m back from a strainer post, wall or gate for perspective
Revegetation plantings	First year: every 3 – 6 months Subsequent years: Autumn and Spring	Consider how plants will grow and leave space in your first photo for future years growth
Waterway projects	Every six months; and after significant rainfall events	Photos of your waterway after rain helps identify wet zones for planting and high-water erosion points
Dieback monitoring	Annually in summer	Monitoring in dry periods is essential to avoid spreading Dieback

Taking photos around the same height and same time of day will make it easier to compare. Choose a time that will avoid sun glare and long shadows. Photo monitoring in autumn is great for capturing plant survival after summer, and deciding which weeds need to be targeted next. Spring photo monitoring allows you to record your site in its full glory, and pictures of blooming wildflowers can provide a real sense of achievement.

Sharing your story

Local examples of environmental restoration can help inspire more people to take on landcare projects. Even if it didn't quite work as planned, others can learn from your efforts so keeping a project diary is useful. You could email an update of your work to the Shire, share a brief story on social media, or use it to report on grant funded work (or apply for it).



The above images were taken at 6 month intervals before, during and after installing a riffle in a watercourse to slow water flow, as part of a restoration project. The pipe in the foreground provides a clear reference point for comparison, as does the tree on the right.

An excellent smartphone app that has been developed in WA specifically for monitoring Landcare projects is 'Photomon'. For more information see the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) at www.nacc.com.au or search for Photomon in your app store. Some other useful web resources include:

Parks and Wildlife (DBCA) - [Photographic Monitoring of Vegetation](#)

State NRM Program - [Photo Monitoring](#)

Gondwana Link - [Monitoring Guide](#)