

SIX SEASONS

Environment and Sustainability News from Shire of Mundaring

Dreams Can Fly

In 2015, Year 6 students from Glen Forrest Primary joined the Millennium Kids Youth Environment Conference to learn about conservation.

As a result, they decided to help the Friends of Nyaania Creek group. Their dream was to help the group improve habitat for native animals along the creek in the Glen Forrest Superblock reserve.

The students met regularly to plant native shrubs for food and shelter for quenda and native birds, especially Black Cockatoos.

They also ran a school holiday workshop to make and install nest-boxes for native animals with local environmental scientist and educator, Simon Cherriman of The Re-Cyc-Ology Project.

The students regularly monitored the nest-boxes each year. Inside the nest-boxes they found ducks, possums, parrots, insects, spiders and even rare marsupials including the Brush-tailed phascogale and Mardo. Each new discovery was met with fascination and delight.

Recently, two members of the original Millenium Kids group accompanied Simon and Friends of Nyaania Creek group members to inspect one of the largest nest-boxes.

They were thrilled to find a healthy Carnaby's Cockatoo nestling inside and observe its parents feeding on seeds of nearby Hakea shrubs previously planted.

Thanks to the efforts of everyone involved, the appearance of the Carnaby's Cockatoo nesting is living proof that when children have dreams, they really can fly.



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Worth the wait - students discovered a ten week old Carnaby's Cockatoo nestling inside one of the nest boxes installed at the Glen Forrest Superblock Reserve. Photo courtesy of Simon Cherriman.

Djeran - April to May

The Noongar seasonal calendar includes six different seasons in a yearly cycle. Djeran (ant season) brings cooler nights and dew in the early mornings. Banksia flowers start to blossom, providing nectar for mammals, birds and insects.





Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is an organisation dedicated to promoting and inspiring responsible outdoor travel and recreation through education, research and partnerships.

The seven Principles of Leave No Trace provide minimum impact guidelines for anyone visiting the outdoors.

The principles can be applied anywhere, from remote wilderness areas, to local parks and even in your own backyard. They also apply to almost every recreational activity.

The Seven Principles include:

- Plan ahead and prepare - consider your goals
- Travelling and camping on firm ground - avoid fragile surfaces
- Dispose of waste correctly - take out what you take in
- Leave what you find - don't take souvenirs home
- Minimise the impact of campfires - only use them if necessary
- Respect wildlife - try not to disturb animals
- Be considerate of hosts and other visitors.

For more information, visit the Leave No Trace website at <https://lnt.org/why/>

Think before you stack!

In recent years, stone stacking has become an increasingly popular activity in natural parks and reserves. Stone stacking (or piling up stones to create ornamental structures) is considered by some a form of 'meditative art' and by others a competition to see who can build the highest stack.

But is stone stacking harmless fun or a form of environmental vandalism? Increasingly, ecologists around the world are concerned stone stacking disturbs, and in some cases, destroys, fragile ecosystems. They warn stone stacking can affect many endemic plant and animal species that rely on rocks and stones for food and shelter or to escape from predators.

For example, stone stacking can remove the stones that are home or shelter for insects, reptiles, and other small animals - which then affects more animals including birds by reducing food sources. Removing stones can also cause the soil underneath to dry out and erode. Removing rocks and stones from rivers and other water bodies can disrupt aquatic habitats and, in extreme cases, affect the natural flow of the water.

There is also the problem when one stone stack is built, people are tempted to build more until an area that was once appreciated for its naturalness, is altered (as shown in the photo below). Stone-stacking in the wrong place can also be dangerous if they mislead hikers relying on sanctioned stone stacks carefully placed by park managers to mark walking trails. Sites of cultural significance and traditional knowledge can also be damaged if stones placed by Aboriginal people are disturbed.

Rather than leaving our mark on the natural environment, we can try to do the opposite. We can follow the **Leave No Trace** principles and learn how to move across the landscape in a thoughtful way, leaving only footprints (on the trail!) and taking only memories.



Weeds and the bush

Autumn (Djeran) is a time when warm conditions and extra soil moisture causes weeds to start to germinate. For those undertaking revegetation and bush regeneration projects, effective weed control is vital. How can you ensure the time and effort spent weeding is successful?

The Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration is a helpful guide for weed control. The method was developed by two Australian pioneers of bush regeneration in the 1960's, Eileen and Joan Bradley. Avid bush lovers, the sisters were dedicated to restoring bushland in their home state of New South Wales.

In 1971 Joan wrote a book entitled 'Bringing Back the Bush: The Bradley method of Bush Regeneration.' The book describes the three principles of the Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration.

The three principles of bush regeneration are:

- 1. Weed from the least weed infested areas towards more seriously infested areas**
- 2. Minimize soil disturbance, and replace topsoil and litter when you are done**
- 3. Allow natural regeneration (or revegetation) to set the pace of the work. This means only remove those weeds that will be replaced with native plants (not weed regrowth).**

The book is available for purchase on-line and from most major bookstores.

Bringing Back the BUSH

THE BRADLEY METHOD
OF BUSH REGENERATION



JOAN BRADLEY

Decaying logs give life

To some, decaying tree logs in the bush looks unsightly. But to the plants and animals that live in, on and under them, they are essential for survival and form an important part of the bushland ecology.

When a tree or branch falls to the ground, it can continue to provide habitat and a source of food for a host of species. As they decay, logs give life by returning nutrients to the soil to feed a new generation of plants and animals. If the logs have hollows, they can be used by birds, reptiles, mammals and insects.

To preserve our life giving logs, this winter, instead of taking bush timber for the fireplace - consider wildlife friendly alternatives such as plantation timber or recycled paper or sawdust briquettes.





Farm dams boosting local biodiversity

Southwest WA's drying climate has led to the disappearance of many permanent rivers and wetlands, threatening species that depend on these freshwater ecosystems. By protecting and enhancing remaining freshwater ecosystems, we can provide critical habitat and refuge for native flora and fauna, especially during times of drought.

The Farm Dams Drought Refuge research project, led by Murdoch University, supported by the Shire and Perth NRM, found that farm dams in the Perth Hills play an important role in supporting native aquatic plants, frogs and waterbirds.

The project aims to test new methods for enhancing the capacity of farm dams to support important native freshwater species. The project is now seeking landowners and volunteers to take part in the project by enhancing their own farm dams to support threatened aquatic species.

If you have a dam on your property and would like to be involved in the project, or would like to volunteer to collect bird and frog data, email Rob Jones at robert.jones@perthnrm.com.

Landcare Calendar - Tips for Djeran



- Prepare for planting and revegetation by undertaking weed control where you are planning to establish native plants. You may need to do this more than once if weeds re-appear after more rain.
- For great tips on preparing the soil for planting, watch our 'Planting for Success' video, presented by landscape architect and radio personality Sue McDougall at www.mundaring.wa.gov.au.

Six Seasons has been prepared by the Environment and Sustainability team at Shire of Mundaring.
For comments, feedback or questions call 9290 6740.

What's On



Loam Wasn't Built in a Day **Wed 6 April 12 - 1.30pm**

Join Perth NRM and the Shire of Mundaring for this free online workshop to dig into the importance of soil in growing healthier food and creating a healthier environment. Learn about the breakdown of all things soil and compost, with tips to improve and look after the soil on your property. Presented by Ellen Walker and Bonnie Dunlop from Earthwhile.

To book visit www.trybooking.com and (search for 'Loam Wasn't Built in a Day.')

Improving Pasture Field Day **Sat 9 April 8.30 -11.30am or 1 - 4pm**

Join Perth NRM and the Shire of Mundaring for this free informative field day in Parkerville. Discover the secret of your soil, dealing with weeds and discover grazing systems that work. Visit local properties with presenter Belinda Taylor, who has a background in agriculture and land management.

To book visit www.trybooking.com (search for Improving Pasture for Grazing in the Perth Hills).

Seedlings for Landcare **Seedlings Handout Weekend** **Sat 28 & 29 May, 9 - 3pm**

Shire of Mundaring Depot

Seedlings will be available for collection on Saturday or Sunday. Residents will receive a letter in May informing them of their allocated collection day. Please remember to bring a box (or boxes) to place your seedlings in when you arrive.

For further information, please see the Seedlings for Landcare page on the Shire's website at www.mundaring.wa.gov.au or contact the seedlings coordinator at seedlings@mundaring.wa.gov.au