

SIX SEASONS

Environment and Sustainability News from Shire of Mundaring

International Owl Awareness Day



August 4 is International Owl Awareness Day, a global event to raise awareness of these beloved nocturnal hunters.

Owls hunt silently with their special feathers and have exceptional eyesight and hearing, making them formidable predators.

However, Australia's owls face threats from second-generation rodenticides (SGARs), which poison not only rodents (ie. mice and rats) but also any animals that consume them after - endangering owls, pets, and other wildlife. To protect owls, avoid using SGARs and opt for bird-friendly rodent control methods. Snap traps are a humane option but ensure they are out of reach of pets and children. If rodent poison is necessary, check the label for less risky active ingredients like Warfarin, Sodium Chloride, or Coumatetralyl. They break down faster so lower risk for secondary poisoning, but must still be placed up out of reach of pets and quenda! Visit the Shire website at www.mundaring.wa.gov.au to learn more (search for the [Local Native Birds](#) page).

Shire of
MUNDARING

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2025 Seedlings for Landcare Program

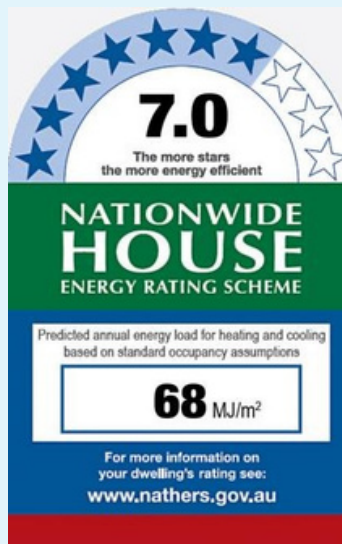
Expressions of Interest for 2025 seedlings open on Friday, 16 August 2024. Details and the EOI form will be available on the Shire's website at mundaring.wa.gov.au.



Djilba- August to September

The Noongar seasonal calendar includes six different seasons in a yearly cycle. Djilba is still cold, with less rain than Makuru. Flower stalks of balgas (grass trees) emerge and koolbardi (magpies) and djidi djidi (willy wagtails) may start swooping to protect their young.

What is NatHERS?



The Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) provides energy ratings for new homes, promoting energy-efficient, resilient, and comfortable living spaces that cost less to run.

Upgraded with advanced tools, NatHERS supports the building sector's move to net zero emissions by 2050. It now rates the entire home's energy performance, including appliances, solar panels, and batteries.

NatHERS offers an efficient way to meet or exceed the National Construction Code (NCC) 2022 standards. About 90% of new home designs use the scheme. NCC updates help new homeowners save an average of \$183 annually on power bills.

NatHERS also enhances energy grid reliability and supports green loan products. It encourages designing homes that exceed minimum standards, aiming for zero energy and carbon readiness.

The minimum energy efficiency rating for new homes has increased from 6 to 7 stars, with a new annual energy use budget covering major appliances and solar panels. For more information visit www.nathers.gov.au

Energy assessments for homes



A NatHERS energy assessment helps homeowners, designers, architects, and builders make informed design and appliance choices to ensure new or renovated homes use less energy and are more comfortable. Energy-efficient homes may also have higher resale values.

NatHERS assessments are used to meet minimum energy efficiency requirements in the National Construction Code (NCC), which have recently changed in several states and territories. A NatHERS Accredited Assessor can help design your home to meet NCC standards and reduce heating and cooling needs.

NatHERS ratings also guide the selection of energy-efficient appliances and provide information on the energy performance of advertised properties. From mid-2025, NatHERS will include ratings for existing homes, helping homeowners improve energy performance and save on bills. Until then, consider a Residential Efficiency Scorecard assessment, endorsed by NatHERS, for advice on property upgrades.

NatHERS star ratings, included in energy assessments for new homes, major renovations, or existing homes, provide information about a home's thermal performance. The star rating, out of 10, considers design, orientation, construction materials, and local climate.

The energy performance of appliances is not included in the star rating but is part of the NatHERS Whole of Home rating, which is out of 100. This rating, included in assessments for new homes, major renovations, or existing homes, covers all major energy use and generation, including hot water, heating and cooling systems, pool and spa equipment, lighting, plug-in appliances, solar energy, and battery storage.

The Whole of Home rating highlights the importance of energy performance in new builds and renovations, driving industry demand for skills focused on energy efficiency. For reliable energy ratings, use a NatHERS Accredited Assessor, who undergoes training and adheres to professional quality assurance and a code of conduct. For more information and how to obtain a Residential Efficiency Scorecard assessment visit www.nathers.gov.au/homeowners-and-builders.

Wild Orchid Watch



Wild Orchid Watch (WOW) is a national citizen science project designed to collect, record and share scientific information about Australian native orchids.

Australia has the world's most diverse terrestrial orchid flora. Their intriguing life-cycle involves partnerships with mycorrhizal fungi and fascinating pollination strategies such as species-specific insect mimicry.

However, many orchid species are threatened and highly susceptible to environmental change. They are often cryptic, population sizes vary seasonally and are widely distributed across Australia.

This makes it impossible for researchers alone to gather the necessary information to analyse distribution and abundance and assign conservation status.

Orchid observations collected using the WOW app are identified, managed and stored by iNaturalist.

To find out more and download the app, visit the WOW website at wildorchidwatch.org.

TurtleSAT helping freshwater turtles



Australia's freshwater turtles are facing threats that could push them to the brink. Drought, fox predation, and human activities are causing many species to decline.

But there's hope, and you can be part of the solution. TurtleSAT is a dynamic citizen science initiative that empowers you to make a difference.

By gathering vital information, you help scientists pinpoint, study, and protect our precious freshwater turtles across Australia. Here's what you can contribute to:

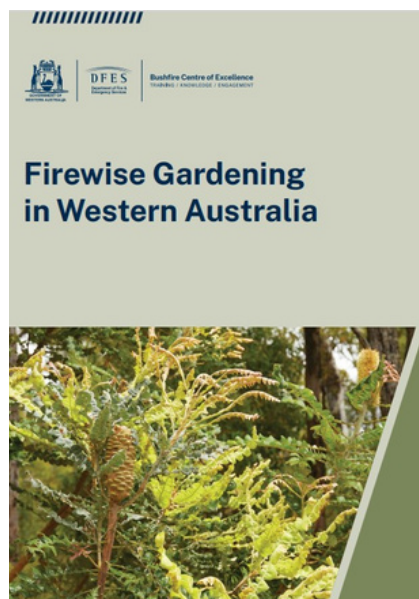
- Mapping turtle habitats
- Identifying breeding locations and hotspots
- Understanding major causes of decline
- Analysing regional differences in decline causes
- Tracking dispersal distances
- Finding important 'source' populations

In the Shire of Mundaring, the Oblong Turtle, also known as the South-western Snake-necked Tortoise (*Chelodonia oblonga*), is classified as 'near threatened.' While its decline isn't yet alarming, proactive efforts are essential to ensure its future.

Your turtle sightings, nest discoveries, and even skeletal remains are invaluable. This data helps protect and conserve Australia's freshwater turtles. If you encounter an injured turtle, call the Wildcare Helpline at 9474 9055 for assistance.

To find out how you can record your turtle sightings and become a guardian of Australia's freshwater turtles, visit the TurtleSAT website at turtlesat.org.au.

New Firewise Gardening Guide



Developed by the Bushfire Centre of Excellence (Department of Fire and Emergency Services), 'Firewise Gardening in Western Australia' is designed to help people living in bushfire prone areas of WA create gardens that reduce the risk of house and garden loss in a bushfire.

This guide is your key to minimising fire risk in both new and established gardens. While any plant can burn under the right conditions, there are steps you can take to reduce the fire intensity from your garden plants.

Designed for owners of new or existing approved properties, this guide helps you plan, design, select plants, and maintain a firewise garden. A firewise garden is one that's crafted and cared for to minimise the risk of bushfire impact on your life, home, and garden.

A firewise garden ensures clear access and defensible space, with areas immediately around the house and structures, such as carports, kept free of plants and other flammable materials.

Discover how to create a safer garden by viewing or downloading the guide at publications.dfes.wa.gov.au/publications/firewise-gardening-in-western-australia.

Landcare Calendar - Tips for Djilba



- Protect newly planted seedlings from rabbits and kangaroos using tree guards and stakes. You can cut the top and bottom from 2 litre plastic bottles to make your own guards.
- Try to slash, spray or remove weeds before they have a chance to grow seeds.
- Only spray with chemicals on clear days with no rain and low winds, and following directions including protective clothes, gloves etc.

Six Seasons has been prepared by the Environment and Sustainability team at Shire of Mundaring. To subscribe email the team at environment@mundaring.wa.gov.au

What's On

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Night Calling - The Movie

Sun 4 Aug, 6pm to 8pm

Luna Palace Cinema, Leederville

In celebration of International Owl Awareness Day, BirdLife WA will be hosting the first Perth screening of Night Calling. This film highlights the urgent need to protect owls by banning harmful rodenticides. Learn how Yornitj, the Masked Owl inspired Australia's first Owl Friendly community in Margaret River. A panel discussion will follow the screening. Tickets are available at events.humanitix.com/night-calling-at-luna-leederville-hosted-by-birdlife-wa.

Decluttering: Living Better with Less! (FREE workshop)

Wed 21 Aug, 1pm to 2.30pm

Boya Community Centre

Are you tired of feeling overwhelmed by clutter? Have you been dreaming of a simpler, more organised lifestyle? Join sustainability educator Laura Monisse for an engaging session on the art of decluttering and learn practical strategies you can use to live a better life with less. To register, visit eventbrite.com.au and search for 'Decluttering: Living Better with Less'.

Dieback Information Group Conference (DIG)

Tue 20, Wed 21 Aug

**Boola Katijin Building
Murdoch University**

Registrations are open for the Dieback Information Group (DIG) Conference. This year's conference theme is "Seeing the Forest for the Trees" – selected to recognise the importance of holistic management for Australia's forest ecosystems, and the pivotal role that environmental biosecurity and disease hygiene play in the health of these landscapes. Tickets available for in-person or online attendance at Trybooking at www.trybooking.com (search for DIG Conference).