

SIX SEASONS

Environment and Sustainability News from Shire of Mundaring



Chuditch or Western Quoll. Image courtesy of Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

Spotting the elusive Chuditch

Have you seen this elusive spotty creature on your property? If so, you are lucky! This native marsupial, about the size of a domestic cat, is very rare. Also known as the 'Western Quoll' (*Dasyurus geoffroii*), Chuditch are the largest carnivorous marsupials in Western Australia.

Chuditch were once widespread around Australia but their numbers drastically declined following European settlement. Chuditch are now found mainly in the south-west of WA. They are protected wildlife but habitat loss, poisoning, and predation by feral cats and foxes continues to threaten their survival.

Jarrah forests are one of the preferred habitats for Chuditch.

They usually hunt at night and mostly eat small prey like crickets, scorpions and spiders. They may also eat birds and eggs (including chooks). During the day, they shelter in hollow logs or burrows.

Remember: if anyone accidentally traps a Chuditch, it is important to release the animal immediately to prevent disorientation, stress, or injury. Females may be caring for young and may not find their way back to the litter if released in a different place.



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Report Chuditch sightings to fauna@dbca.wa.gov.au or fill out a DBCA fauna report form.

Above: Chuditch release into bushland, image courtesy of Bec Campbell.



Djilba- August to September

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



The proud owner of a native bee hotel.

Native bee hotel workshop and book

Dr Kit Prendergast is a Perth based researcher dedicated to improving understanding of native bees.

On 6 July, Kit was a special guest at a Native Bee Hotel workshop in Wooroloo. Participants of all ages learned fascinating facts about native bees, such as how to identify them, their bee-behaviours and how we can help look after them. Bee hotels hung in Wooroloo can also contribute to a citizen science project monitoring native bees after bushfire.

Kit has also written a booklet 'Creating a Haven for Native Bees'. Shire of Mundaring residents can obtain a free copy of this booklet if requested from reception at the Shire Administration Building, or it can be bought from Kit as a book or e-book.

You can join Kit and find more information online by joining her Facebook Group, 'Bees in the Burbs'.

Youth Climate Forum

Millennium Kids is an award winning youth-led organisation for young Western Australians, although their projects sometimes extend nationwide.

Past initiatives driven by the Kids' concerns have focused on tree planting, waste and recycling, habitat for native animals, plastic pollution and services for youth.

During the past few years they have found that young people are becoming more worried about their future because of climate change and its local impacts such as increasing bushfire risks.

In 2020, Millennium Kids decided to work towards a Youth-led Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change in Western Australia.

Shire of Mundaring hosted the first regional event in Boya during the July school holidays. This will be followed by other regional events in the lead up to a Citizen's Assembly.

The Mundaring Deliberation took place on 14 July with 18 eager young people under the age of 21.

Participants came mainly from the Hills and foothills, supported by facilitators and members of Millennium Kids. The focus questions were "How can we, in Mundaring, collectively tackle climate change while supporting our places to thrive? What does this mean for the way we live and our environment?"

Facilitators helped ensure that all participants could share their knowledge and concerns, learn from the different perspectives and ideas of other young people and ask questions of guest environmental experts.

The suggestions have been compiled by Millennium Kids into a report called 'Shire of Mundaring Youth-Led Deliberation on Climate Change'. You can find out more about this project, and Millennium Kids, at www.millenniumkids.com.au



Some participants in the Millennium Kids 'Mundaring Deliberation' youth climate forum at Boya Community Centre. Image courtesy of Millennium Kids.

Weedy Woes: removing a bulb in time saves... hundreds!

Some pretty garden plants can cause serious issues when they spread into bushland or take over creeklines.

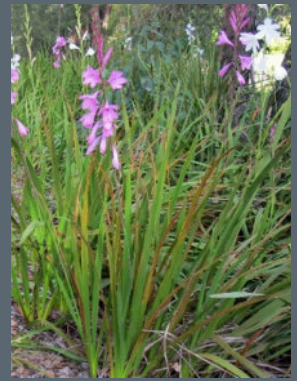
Many garden bulbs and corms were cultivated for hardiness and drought tolerance. When they spread into natural areas they crowd out local native plant species and disrupt local ecosystems, affecting habitat and food sources for native animals.

Some species, such as *Watsonia*, increase bushfire fuel loads as they die back annually producing large amounts of dry leaf material. Many bulbous weeds can also spread by seed and proliferate along waterways.

Manual removal can be done at any time of the year, however it is better to remove weedy bulbs while the leafy top parts of the plant are green and identifiable.

If you choose to use chemical treatment, this is best done at the point of bulb exhaustion, usually just before or at flowering time. If seed, cormels or bulbils are present they should be cut off, bagged and binned to make sure they don't spread while being moved, or through green waste.

For more info on controlling weeds visit www.mundaring.wa.gov.au and click on Environment Services, then Policies and Publications.



Watsonia species.



Gladiolus bulb.

A very fishy affair at Lake Broz



Murdoch University researchers use electrofishing as a technique to capture non-native fish in the lake.

In February 2021 the Shire of Mundaring, supported by funding from the Western Australian Government's State Natural Resource Management Program, engaged Murdoch University to help improve the water quality of the Broz Park lake. This was undertaken with four days of electro-fishing in an effort to remove introduced fish species that contribute to algal blooms.

Over four days 161 feral fish were removed with a total weight of approximately 315kg.

A large number of these fish were either European Carp (some as big as 60cm) and Giant Goldfish up to 40cm in length. Since the removal of these fish, there has already been a noticeable improvement in water clarity. Residents can help by discouraging feeding of ducks or fish around the lake, and never tipping any aquarium fish or plants into it.

In addition to removal of the fish, one hundred metres of revegetation has been undertaken along the western bank of the lake. This will help provide habitat as well as absorb nutrients. The next step is planned installation of an aeration system in the lake, to improve oxygenation of the water.

For more information about the project contact David O'Brien at DavidO'Brien@mundaring.wa.gov.au.

New Natural Areas Officer

Shire of Mundaring's Parks and Environmental Operations Service is pleased to welcome their newest team member, Kathryn Johnson, in a new position of Natural Areas Project Officer.

She may be a familiar face for environmental volunteers due to her past role at Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC). Kathryn will be assisting with a range of projects including preparing grant applications, coordinating on-ground projects, and providing assistance to our many Friends and Catchment groups.



David O'Brien (Supervisor of Environment and Horticulture) and Kathryn Johnson.

Seedlings for Landcare program



Almost 20,000 free native seedlings were distributed through the Shire's annual Seedlings for Landcare Program in June. This will provide for landcare and creek restoration planting by rural residents, Friends Groups volunteers and local schools. Applications for the next Seedlings program will re-open in early 2022.

Landcare Calendar - tips for Djilba

- We just had an old-fashioned winter with the wettest July in decades! For heavily waterlogged sites, it may be wise to delay planting for a few more weeks.
- Protect young seedlings from rabbits and kangaroos using tree guards and stakes. You can cut the top and bottom from 2L bottles to make your own guards.
- If spraying weeds with chemicals, ensure spraying is done on a clear day with no rain and low winds. Extra care should be taken when spraying anywhere near waterways.
- Protect seedlings from frost using a bucket or container placed over the seedling for the night (don't forget to remove it the next day).



Six Seasons has been prepared by the Environment and Sustainability team at Shire of Mundaring. For feedback, questions or to subscribe, email environment@mundaring.wa.gov.au

Simple Solutions for Firewise Landscapes, with Sue McDougall and Lesley Corbett, at Shire Administration Building

Saturday 21 August, 1pm to 3pm

This firewise gardens and landscapes forum will help answer your questions about plants and landscaping features that can help make your property more firewise. Register online via www.eventbrite.com.au (search Simple Solutions for Firewise Landscapes).

Winter Burning Program, Shire of Mundaring (winter months)

Winter Burning Workshops are held by Shire officers and local brigade members between April and September each year, subject to favourable weather conditions. To be notified about upcoming workshops, register your interest via email at BFCO@mundaring.wa.gov.au

Dieback Working Group's DIG Conference

**Thursday 26 August 9am to 3pm
Friday 27 August 8.30am to 4.15pm
Dodd Street, Wembley**

Over two days, expert speakers provide key insights into current research, land management and innovation within the theme "United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration: Phytophthora Dieback and Protecting Biodiversity". To register, visit trybooking.com.au and type in the search box 'Dieback Information Group conference.'

Have your say in Green Spot survey

Complete a short survey online and nominate sign locations to alert drivers to wildlife crossing points within the Shire. The survey is open until 30 September at engage.mundaring.wa.gov.au