

WESROC NEWS



Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils

July 2016



Councillor Jay Birnbrauer welcoming residents to the NPSS launch on 8 May 2016

“Planting native plants in our gardens will help conserve water for all of us and enhance local biodiversity”.

- Mayor Max Hipkins

Native Plants Remain Popular

Local Residents have embraced the Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils (WESROC) Native Plant Subsidy Scheme (NPSS) for another consecutive year.

Town of Cottesloe Councillor Jay Birnbrauer launched WESROC's 2016 NPSS at the Cottesloe Civic Centre on 8 May with an ambitious target of 13,270 native plant sales over four weeks.

Residents throughout the western suburbs responded with unprecedented support purchasing 13,595 subsidised plants – the highest annual amount since the scheme started.

This fantastic achievement by the residents, WESROC and APACE community nursery means that native plant sales have reached 100,327 in the western suburbs in just nine years.

The official launch was followed by a workshop led by Garry Heady from Beyond Gardens who discussed many gardening tips including soil preparation for Perth's sandy soils, transitioning from lawn to native plants, good bugs for pest control and growing bush food in residential gardens.

City of Nedlands Mayor Max Hipkins commended the western suburbs residents and said “planting native plants in our gardens will help conserve water for all of us and enhance local biodiversity”.

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Photo of Cat at Lake Claremont 9.45^{pm} 8 November 2015

Rats and Cats Outnumber Foxes and Rabbits

Brown rats and cats are in larger numbers throughout the western suburbs than rabbits and foxes according to a recent feral animal monitoring and control study. In August 2015, WESROC commissioned Greening Australia to undertake the study followed by control and recommendations.

The main objective of the study was to provide quantitative data on the distribution and relative abundance of foxes and rabbits by way of a baseline survey. The study commenced on 2 November with the installation of 38 motion sensor cameras in 26 parks and reserves across the area. Following a 4 week period, the cameras captured brown rats on 188 occasions, cats on 73, rabbits on 35 and foxes on only 5.

The subsequent targeted control of foxes and rabbits by the licensed feral animal contractor supported these low numbers with no foxes trapped although there was one killed crossing West Coast Highway during the study.

Rabbits were more prevalent along the coastal foreshore region and at sites within Bold Park. Since the majority of councils did not permit the use of pindone the main control for rabbits was warren fumigation.

The Towns of Cambridge, Claremont and Cottesloe have registered an expression of interest for the pending national release of [RHDV K5](#) which is a Korean strain of the calicivirus virus.

WESROC will discuss what, if anything, should be done to control cats preying on local fauna and threatened species in bushland, but will likely remind residents to register and sterilise their domestic pet cats, and ensure they are microchipped and wearing a tag in a public place as required under the *Cat Act 2011*.

Whadjuk Trails Steps Up Promotion

WESROC has been progressively implementing the 83 kilometre Whadjuk Trail Network. Three of the trails, Bush to Beach, Wardun Beelie Bidi and Yange Kep Bidi are operational with further information available on the [Whadjuk Trails Website](#). The website launched in November 2012 is popular among the community with over 26,500 views. The admirable 38 per cent of the viewing taking place in the last year demonstrates the growing popularity of the trails.

The Whadjuk Trail Network gained National Recognition on 1 September 2015 when selected for preservation by the National Library of Australia to archive on their [Pandora Website](#). Recently the trails took another step in highlighting the western suburbs recreational and bushland experience with a new [promotional video](#).

Apps and googlemaps can be downloaded for smart devices enabling people walking the trails to access maps, and heritage information. Brochures are available for download on the website, with stories by Noongar elders available to listen to by scanning QR codes on interpretive signs.

The planned joint launch of the Karda Bidi and Karak Bidi trails in late September 2016 is the next notable event to look forward to.

Groundwater Restoration Project

The groundwater restoration campaign project is progressing with studies into 2 of the 5 options underway. WESROC objectives for the groundwater restoration project are to:

- Secure non-potable water supply for irrigating public open space;
- Protect and enhance water quality (mainly reduce salinity levels);
- Reduce tree and vegetation stress; and
- Link future infiltration to groundwater allocations.

The Department of Water (DOW) engaged GHD to conduct a pre-feasibility study of managed aquifer recharge (MAR) using treated wastewater from the Subiaco wastewater treatment plant. The aims of this research is to identify and model options for MAR to recharge the superficial aquifer for non-potable water supply. The DOW is developing a local groundwater model to obtain an understanding of groundwater flows and to run various recharge scenarios.

WESROC has picked up on the previous [studies into stormwater](#) by engaging JDA Consultant Hydrologists to identify opportunities for enhanced stormwater infiltration in the western suburbs. The study will initially focus on two pilot catchments and some of the resulting data can be extrapolated to similar catchments in the other council areas.

The first catchment is CL 21 in the Town of Claremont with a focus on the Water Corporation's main drain outlet to the Swan River along Bayview Terrace. The second is MP 30 in the Town of Mosman Park, which will enable JDA to measure volumetric flows from local stormwater river outfalls.

Foreshore Management Plan Delivered

Seashore Engineering successfully delivered a *Foreshore Management Plan for the Swan River Estuary in the Western Suburbs of Perth*. The study and subsequent report was funded by a riverbank grant administered by the then Swan River Trust and 5 WESROC councils on a dollar for dollar basis.

The plan canvasses engineering considerations for the 16.1km of river foreshore managed by the Cities of Subiaco and Nedlands, the Towns of Claremont and Mosman Park and the Shire of Peppermint Grove. Notably, from 1 July the area of foreshore reserve managed by the City of Subiaco during this study will become the responsibility of the City of Perth.

The plan contains a historical review, detailed technical information, sections on foreshore resilience, future planning timeframes, and works to be avoided. The plan will assist the local governments to protect and enhance riverbanks with monitoring requirements, plan for foreshore structure maintenance, renewal and capital over a range of timescales, and help forecast funding needed to undertake the works.

It also contains broader issues and recommendations that are difficult to address at a local level, but may have potential for better or more efficient management with the involvement of State Government agencies.



Whadjuk Trails interpretive sign at Royal Freshwater Bay along the Swan River Foreshore

Urban Forest Strategy in Subiaco

The City of Subiaco is among the leaders in local government when it comes to the management of its urban forest.

In 2012 ArborCarbon Pty Ltd was engaged by the City to determine a baseline cover of vegetation within the City for both public and private property. The aims of the project were to measure baseline vegetation and canopy cover; vegetation condition; determine the height range of vegetation cover and identify heat and cool islands within the City.

Vegetation cover was measured from ground level up (turf, small shrubs) and canopy cover was measured from anything above 3 meters.

This data was then compared in 2014 and 2015 to determine if there had been an increase or decrease in the vegetation and canopy cover.

The data acquired can be compared against the different suburbs and land use categories throughout the City. The City is approximately 6.97 square kilometres or 697 Hectares in size.

In summary some of the key findings of the project are:

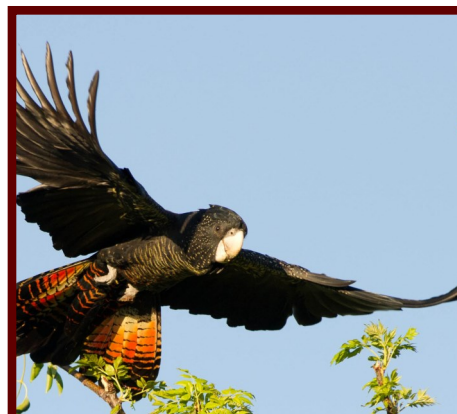
- The baseline vegetation cover in 2012 was 250.4 hectares (35.9%), in 2014 it increased to 254.8 hectares (36.5%) and remained reasonably static in 2015 at 255 hectares (36.6%);
- There was an increase of 4.6 hectares in vegetation cover from 250.4 hectares in 2012 to 255 hectares in 2015;
- The baseline canopy cover (3m+) in 2012 was 148.4 hectares (21.3%) decreasing slightly to 143.2 hectares in 2014 and remaining stable at 143.3 hectares in 2015.
- Road reserve canopy cover showed the greatest increase over this period.
- In 2015 commercial residential had the lowest vegetation cover (6.3%) whilst parks and reserves had the highest (56.7%).
- Satellite thermal data showed the main business district in the northern part of the City, west of the Subiaco Oval is the hottest region, whilst the residential area east of the railway line is collectively the coolest.

These results are overwhelmingly positive and indicate that the City's Urban Forest Management Strategies have been effective with no large decrease in both vegetation and canopy cover over the last four years. This can be attributed to the dedicated work by the entire Operations and Environment Department, and innovative and effective policies and management guidelines, that protect the City's Urban Forest from the increasing pressures and demands on our limited green space.

The City has a well-resourced planting and replacement program that ensures a large range of diverse species of tree stock are installed in the City's streetscapes and reserves every year.

This project has provided the City with precise baseline data of vegetation cover, condition and change over time, which will enable the City to establish Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for the ongoing management of the City's Urban Forest.

In its recent submission on the draft Perth and Peel Growth Plan for 3.5 million, WESROC called for the State Government to develop a Metropolitan Urban Forest Strategy with specific targets for increased canopy cover.



Red Tailed (female) Black Cockatoo



Tree lined—Cuthbert Street Subiaco



2016 Planting Stock at Subiaco

Contact Us

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