

WESROC News

August 2021



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WHAT'S WITH THIS WILD WEATHER?

Rain and hail and flooding, oh my! It was an incredibly wet July and there's been plenty of rain in August as well. It's possibly not over yet as increased high tides and summer storms are predicted for the latter part of this year. So, the question remains, what is causing this wild, wet weather? Especially considering our last few winters have been comparatively mild and dry. There are a few factors in play:

Climate Change – an increase in the frequency of extreme weather is no longer considered uncommon, and extreme weather events are predicted to increase. The consequences of climate change are now being felt globally and Perth is no exception to the impact.

La Nina – Currently the El Nino Oscillation (ENSO) is neutral, however the sea surface temperatures have been slowly cooling over the past two months, which suggests a La Nina event. This cooling of the tropical Pacific can contribute to wetter than average conditions in Australia. For more information, the **Bureau of Meteorology** has recently released a more detailed **ENSO update**.

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IPCC Climate Change Report

The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. They provide reports that address climatic condition, changes, impacts, current and future risk, and recommendations for adaptation and mitigation.

Recently the IPCC released their **Working Group 1 Sixth Assessment Report (AR6 Report)** and the information is essential reading. The report collates scientific data from over 14,000 peer-reviewed studies from around the world and paints a clear picture of the state of the climate, influences on climate change, rate of change, and impacts felt. The AR6 Report offers regional information on climate impacts for risk assessment and modelling.

GET READY TO FIGHT THE BITE!

As COVID continues to pose a threat to our wellbeing, there is hope in vaccination allowing us to protect ourselves and the vulnerable in our community. However, there is no cure or vaccine to protect against mosquito-borne diseases in Australia and the only way to avoid infection is to avoid being bitten.

2020-2021 had higher incidences of Ross River virus cases than previous years and, due to the climatic conditions experienced already in 2021-2022, it is likely that this trend will continue if not increase as conditions for mosquito breeding are very favourable.

It is time to Fight the Bite! Prepare early to reduce mosquito breeding areas around your home, school, and workplace.

Peak mosquito season for the Perth region is September to March, however mosquitoes breed year round so it's important to follow these simple steps from the Department of Health and stay protected:

Step 1: *Cover up – cover as much of your body as you can in loose-fitting, light coloured clothing.*

Step 2: *Repel – when outdoors, apply insect repellent to exposed skin. Repellent containing diethyltoluamide (DEET) or picaridin is recommended.*

Step 3: *Clean up – remove, empty, or cover water-holding containers that could act as breeding grounds for mosquitos.*

For more information and resources, visit the **Fight the Bite** campaign website.



WESTERN SUBURBS GREENING PLAN

The Western Suburbs Greening Plan 2020-2025 (Greening Plan) has been submitted to the WESROC member and partner local government associations (LGAs). It will be up to the individual LGAs how they wish to utilise the 87 page document, which covers the history of the WESROC area, biophysical context, landscape characters, innovative greening approaches, recommendations, and suggestions for implementation.

The Greening Plan is a guiding document that considers the aspects and balances between environmental sustainability, social wellbeing, and economic prosperity. It looks at integrated approaches to conserving biodiversity in the WESROC area and the efforts each LGA has already made to achieve greater sustainability.

Each WESROC LGA will consider the Greening Plan in conjunction with its current policies and strategies, and take advantage of what the Greening Plan has to offer as they best see fit.

What's with this Wild Weather?

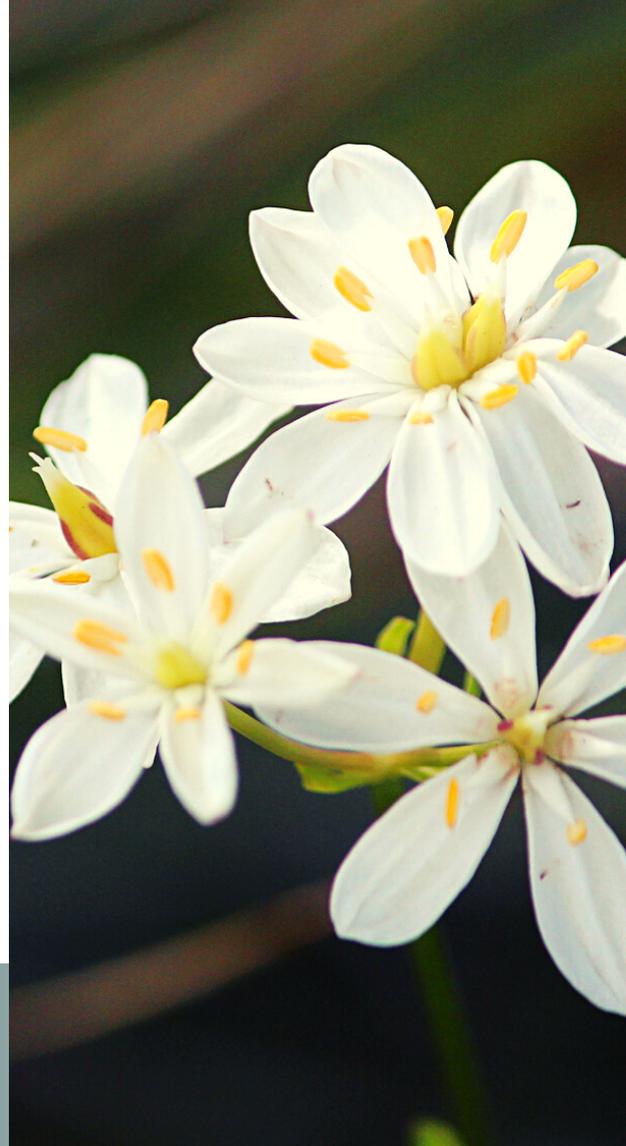
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Indian Ocean Dipole – While El Nino and La Nina effect the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) impacts on the Indian Ocean and influences rainfall for that area, including Australia. This year, the Bureau of Meteorology declared a negative IOD, meaning wetter weather along WA's coast. A negative IOD is caused by warmer surface temperature waters in the eastern Indian Ocean while the western Indian ocean experiences cooler surface temperature waters than normal. For more information, try this [article by The Conversation](#).

TURTLES MOVING EARLY

The turtles have been spotted out and about nesting early, and there have even been reports of sighting of hatchlings already. The long-necked turtles in the WESROC area play an important role in the local ecosystem. They are actually an apex predator, helping to control insect populations and are a great indicator of wetland health.

As females can move up to a kilometre from their watery homes to lay eggs, and then the hatchlings need to make the journey as well, they are particularly vulnerable during this time to cars. Be vigilant while out and about, and avoid driving through puddles on the sides of the road where turtles may be sheltering during their travels.



2021 NATIVE PLANT SUBSIDY SCHEME

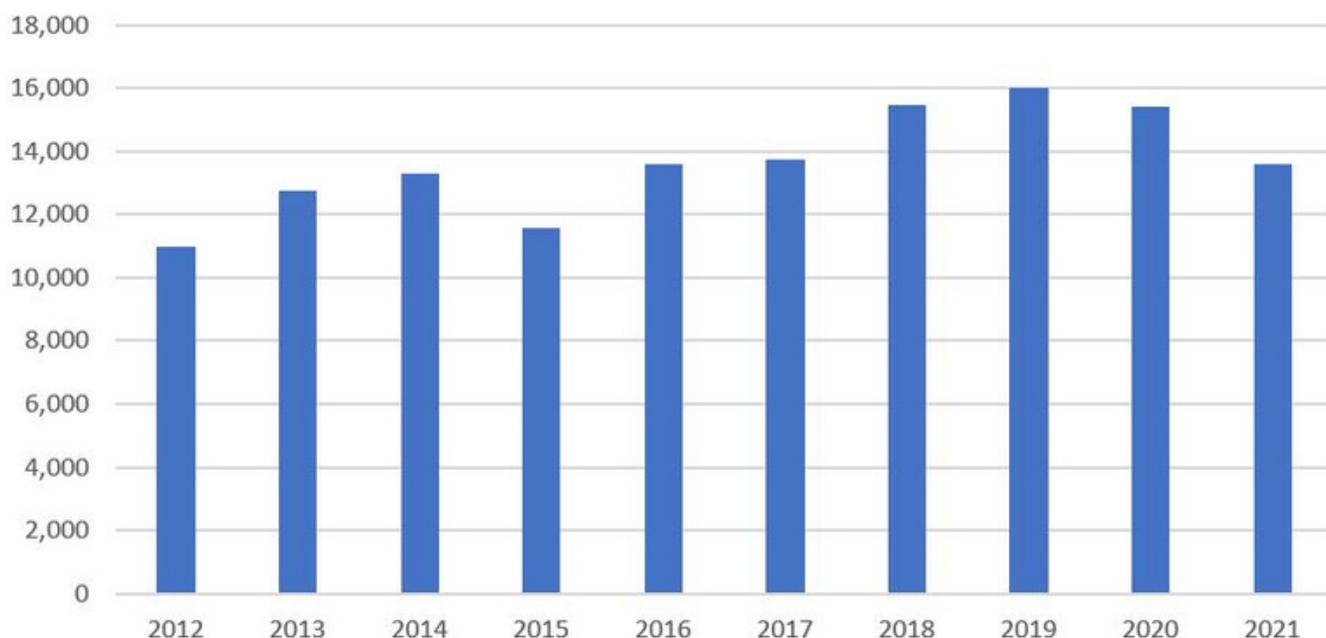
The WESROC community continues to show great enthusiasm for greening their homes with local natives. The 2021 Native Plant Subsidy Scheme (NPSS) ran through May with an extension period into June where plants were available at the subsidised cost of \$1.75 each (half price).

This year saw a return to being able to browse through the plant selection at APACE Community Nursery in North Fremantle and personally choose the desired species and numbers. Residences were welcome to 80 plants each until stocks ran out.

The NPSS has been running since 2008 and this year, 13,616 plants were sold. That brings the total of native plants that have been planted in the WESROC community since 2008 to an incredible 174,525!

WESROC thanks everyone involved. The NPSS supports green corridor initiatives for conserving endemic biodiversity in the western suburbs, increasing canopy cover, reducing urban heat, and saving water within homes and the community.

NPSS Plant Sales over 10 years



Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils



In partnership with  Town of Cambridge