



WICCNews

WICC Newsletter June - July 2021



Makuru

Season of fertility
More frequent gales and storms



Pelicans at Poddy Shot boat ramp Wilson inlet Denmark by Lee Murphy @imaginimage_photography

Farmers in focus





Dr Jeisane Accioly-Mcillree discussing rotational grazing.

Rotational grazing makes cents

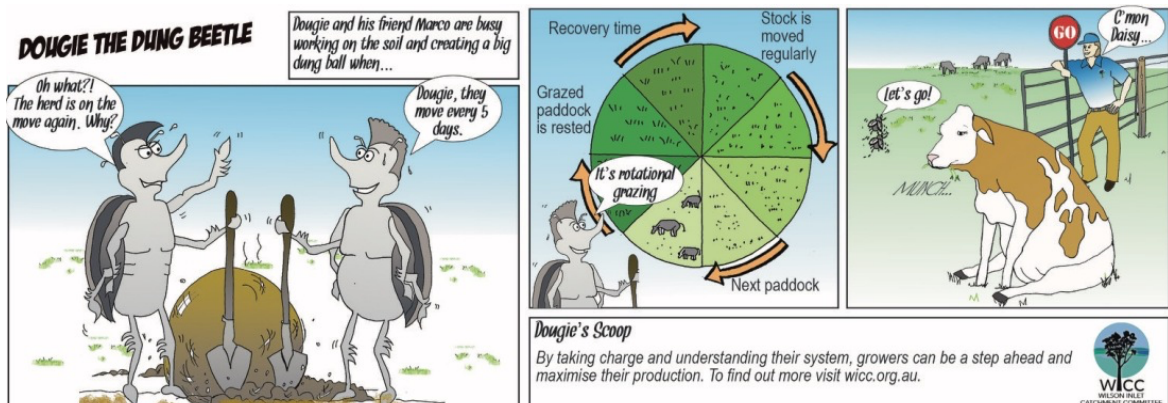
Around 40 farmers attended WICC's latest Wilson Inlet Grower Group (WIGG) meeting to learn about rotational grazing. The feed budget on farms can represent the largest on farm cost...and the cheapest feed is pasture. Making the most efficient use of this cheap feed is a science in itself.

Livestock vet, Dr Jeisane Accioly-Mcillree, demonstrated how growers can increase pasture production by 50% by optimising the rotation of their livestock. On rye grass in winter months, cattle should be rotated every 3 to 4 days to the next paddock leaving a pasture stubble of 4 to 6 cm. This maintains plant sugar reserves and adequate leaves which helps expedite the photosynthesis, thus ensuring pasture recovers quickly. Research has shown that resting pasture 30 days versus 10 days can yield nearly 3 x the dry matter. A basic rotational grazing plan for 11 paddocks would have stock rotated every 3 to 4 days, allowing the first paddock in the rotation to be rested for 5 weeks. This will vary depending on the season and soil fertility.

Rotational grazing also has the added benefit of leaving more root matter in the ground because the below ground biomass (the roots) is relative to the above ground biomass (the plant). The extra roots builds soil humus and sequesters more carbon from the atmosphere. This extra carbon improves the soil structure, water retention and vital nutrients. This healthier, more productive pasture allows farmers to increase their stocking rates which means that rotational grazing makes financial and environmental sense.

Jeisane acknowledged that this all may sound simple on paper, however it can be much more difficult to implement on ground given the variances in soil type, seasonal fluctuations, extra fencing costs and managing mixed grazing enterprises. These complexities can be overcome by farmers willing to make the extra effort and think a bit outside the box.

WIGG is supported in part by the Western Australian State Natural Resource Management program.



Inlet Update



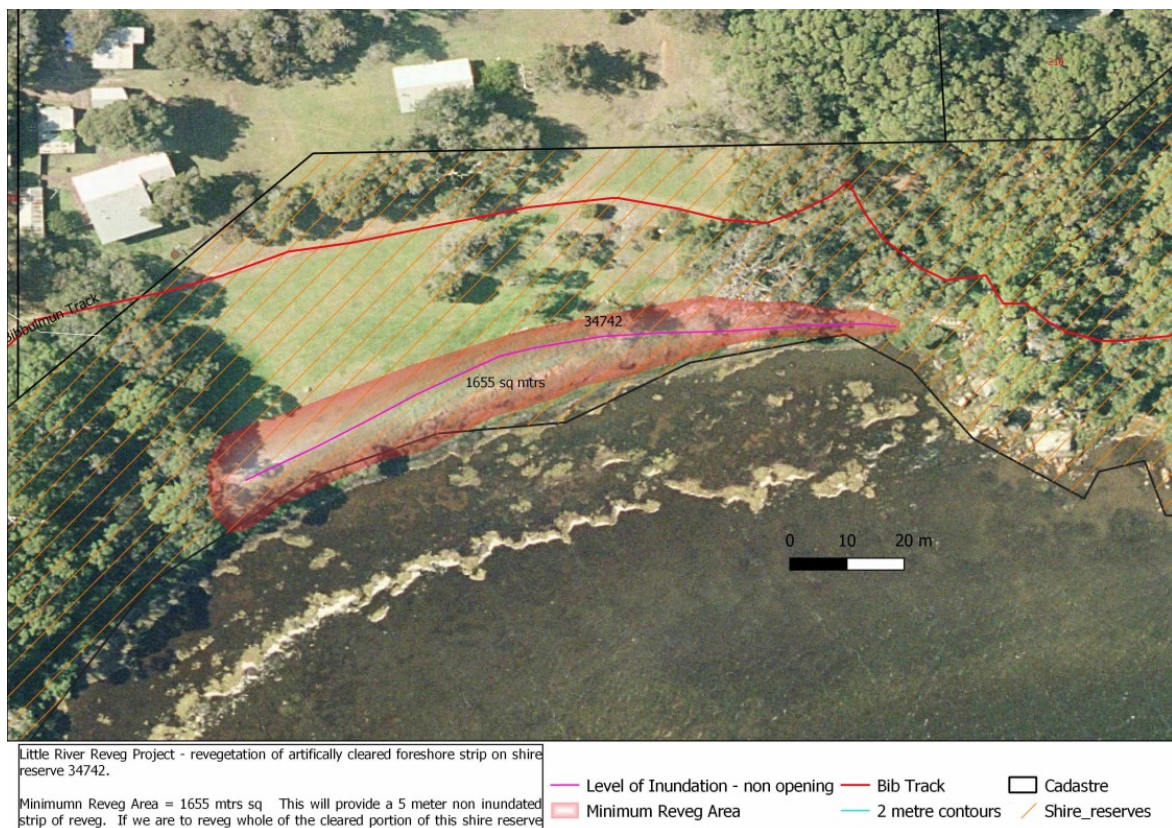
WICC Project Officer Matt Doble setting up a transect



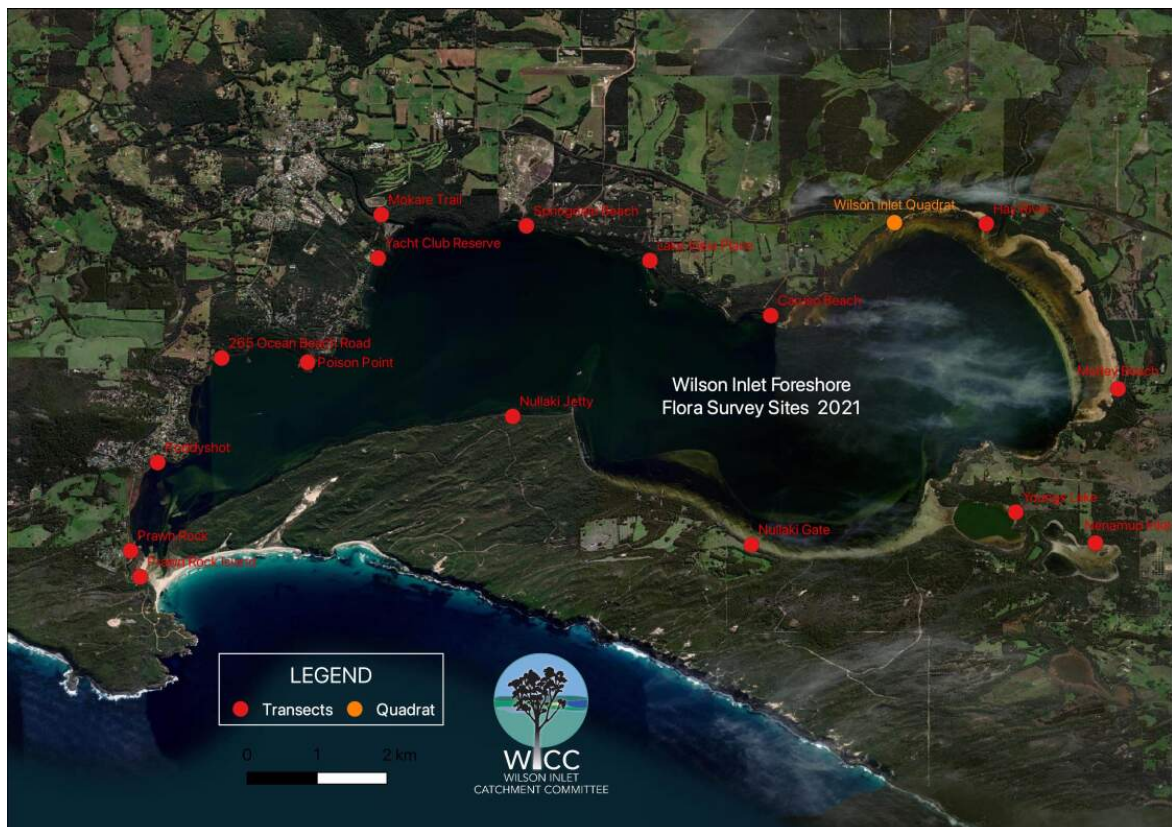
WICC Consultant Mark Parre surveying inlet flora

WICC recently carried out the 5 yearly Wilson Inlet Foreshore Flora Survey. These surveys were introduced in 2011 following the first non openings of the Wilson Inlet in order to monitor the effects of non- opening events on the health of the foreshore flora. When the inlet does not open in winter the water level stays above sea level for many months, inundating the foreshore species such as *Juncus kraussii* and *Melaleuca* species. The coverage by sea grass wrack and prolonged exposure to high salinity has an adverse effect on these species. WICC is working with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to ensure that this scenario is taken into consideration in the future bar opening protocols. These surveys also help us plan our foreshore

rehabilitation such as sites at Little River (see map below)



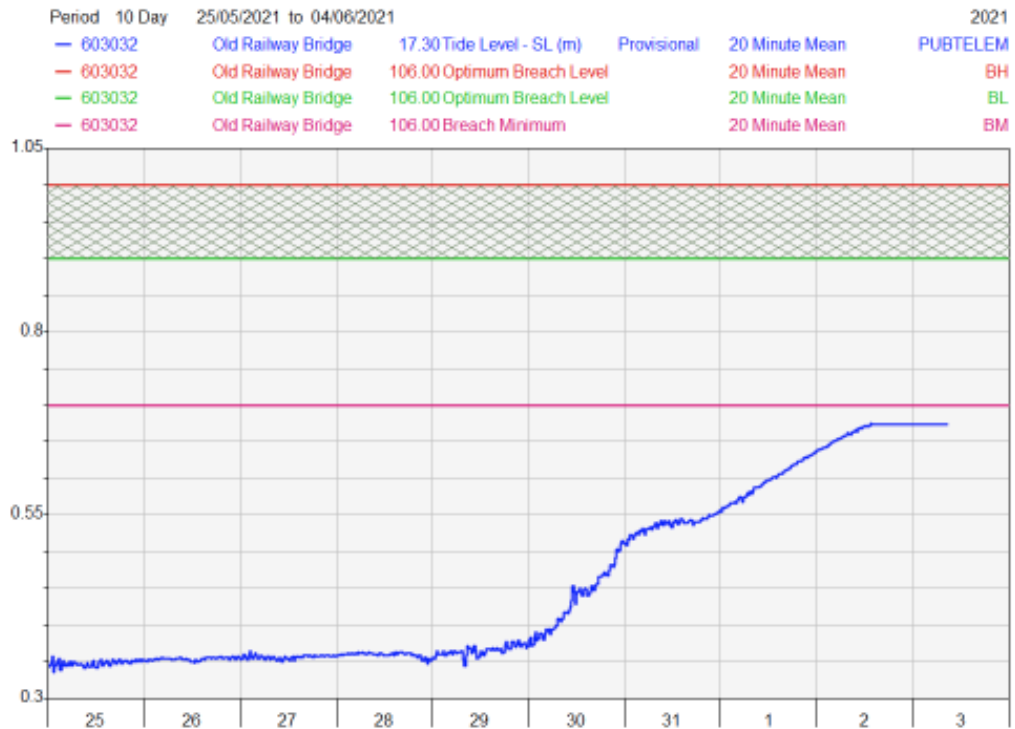
Shire of Denmark funded revegetation project at Little River



Wilson Inlet Foreshore Flora Monitoring Sites

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

HyPLOT V134 Output 03/06/2021



Internet browser last refresh: Thu Jun 03 2021 09:18:00 GMT+0800 (AWST)

Inlet height as of 3rd of June 2021

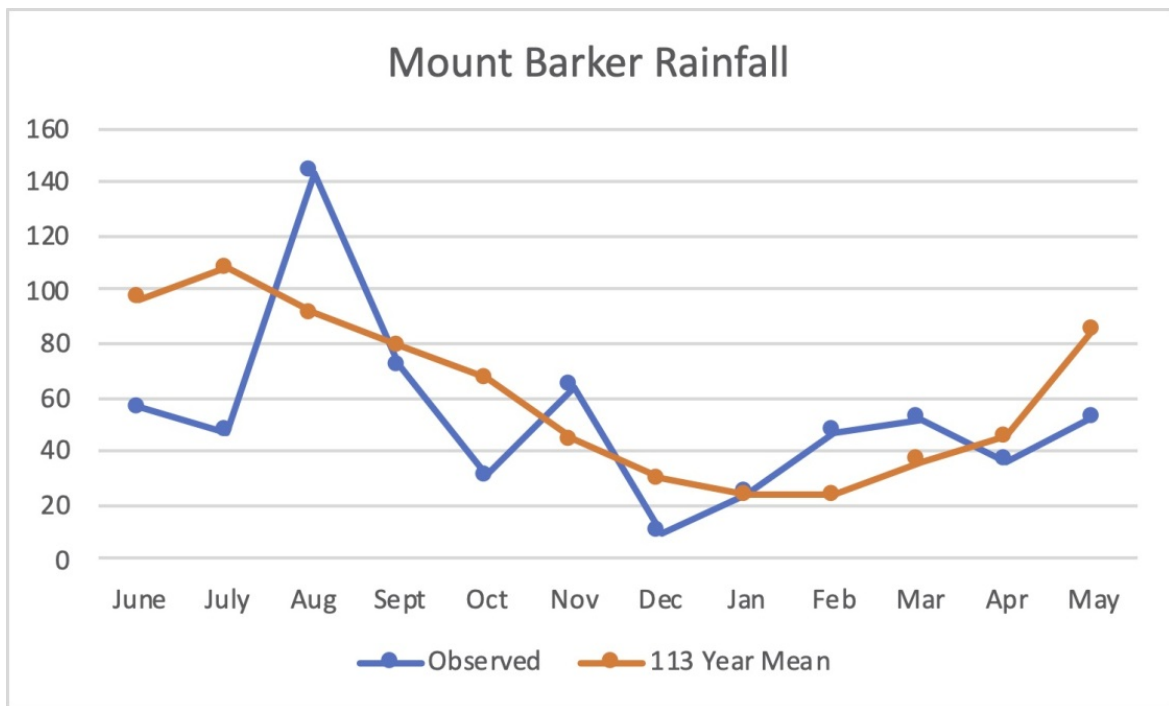
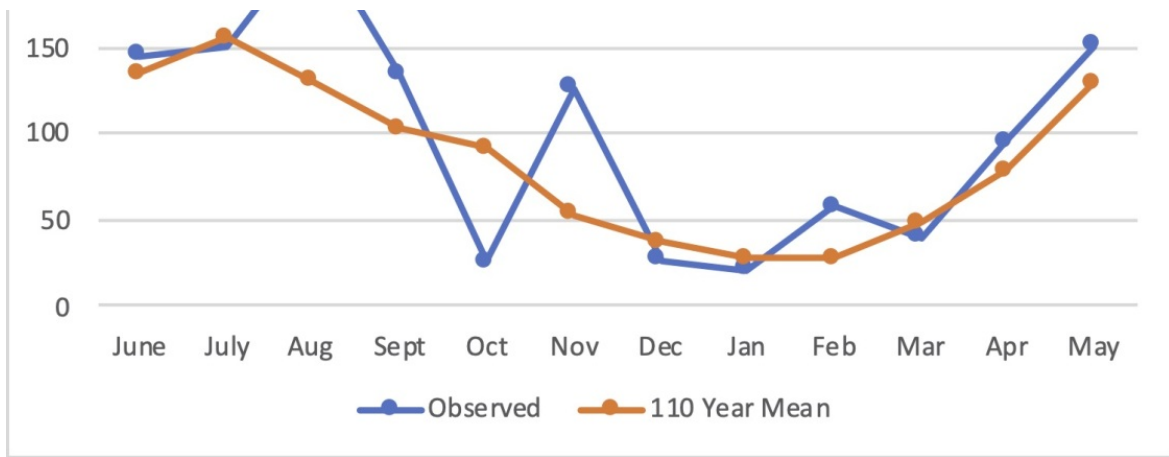
[View Latest Inlet Physical Profiles HERE](#)

Rainfall Update

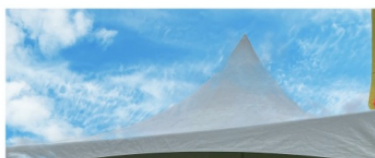
April rainfall was above average in western parts of WA, largely due to the passage of severe tropical cyclone Seroja and a cold front at the end of April. May proved to be quite wet for Denmark which got a thumping 70 mm on the last day of May to push us above our May average.

Looking ahead our main climate driver, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), is neutral with some models predicting a negative IOD meaning a wetter winter/spring for our region.





A message from our Elders





Photos from the Gathering of the Tribes

Around 220 community members attended a gathering of the Menang and Pibbulman Wadandi tribes on 19 May at Kwoorabup Park, Denmark. Elders from both Noongar tribes shared stories and answered questions from the community. The event was opened by dual welcome to country addresses by Wayne 'Wonitji' Webb (Pibbulman Wadandi) and Vernice Gillies (Menang).

The Wilson Inlet has been a traditional gathering place of these two tribal groups for several thousand years. Wilson Inlet is the location where they would periodically meet, share the resources of the inlet, marry across tribal groups to strengthen relations and mix DNA. The extensive network of fish traps (many of which are submerged) across Wilson Inlet shows that our estuary had the capacity to feed large groups.

Vernice Gillies spoke about the water serpent (Mardjit) which formed our wetlands and lakes as it came to the surface to breathe. These wetlands and waterways are sacred to the Noongar people and should not be disturbed.

Listen to some of Elder Vernice Gillies
welcome to country **HERE**



Elders Meeting.m4a

[Download File](#)

Several of the Elders expressed concern in regards to the large scale burning in our region which is placing enormous pressure on our natural biodiversity. Elder Wayne Webb spoke the need to move back to traditional burns, referred to as 'walking burns' which leave a mosaic of unburnt pockets to allow refuge for our native animals and insects. Wayne said the Noongar people burned to live, rather than lived to burn.

WICC would like to thank the Noongar Community, the Western Australian State Natural Resource Management Organisation, The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Shire of Denmark for their financial support. WICC would also like to thank Green Skills for their on ground

Denmark for their financial support. We would also like to thank Green Skills for their on ground work and collaboration to help deliver this event.

Nullaki Update



Brush-tailed Phascogale (Phascogale tapoatafa)



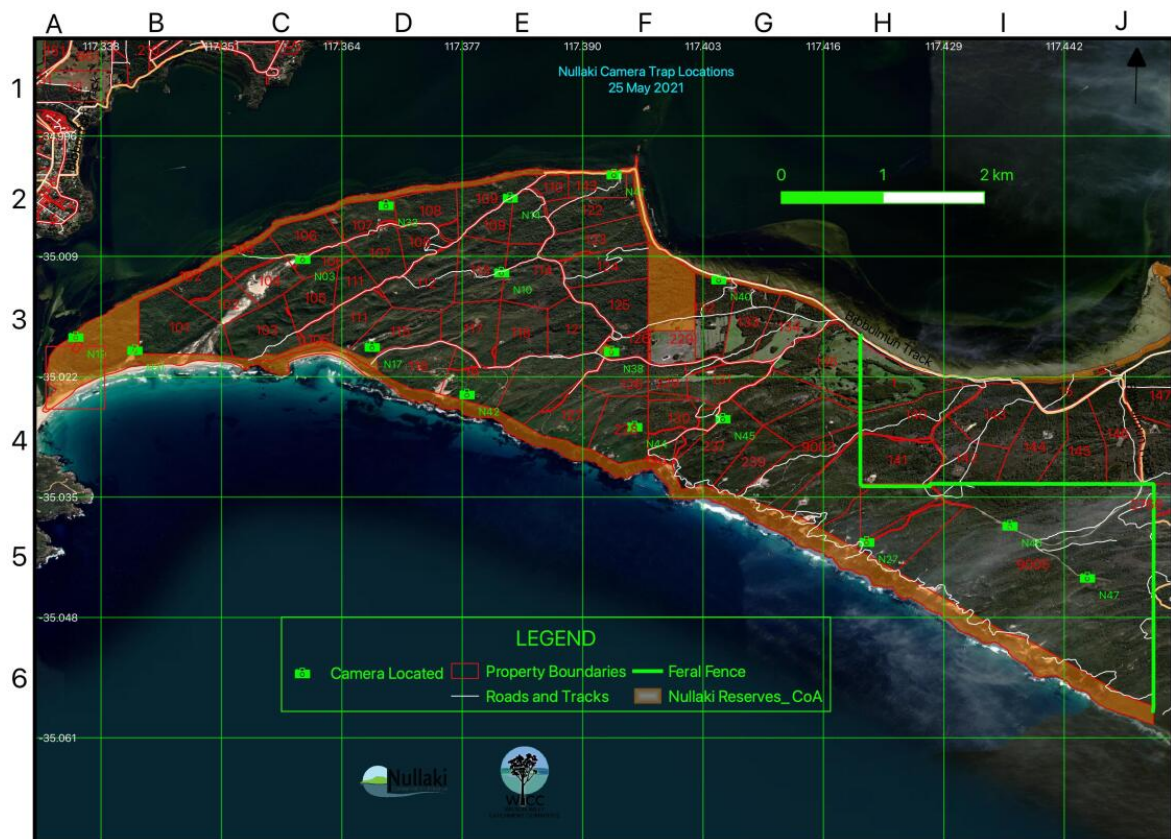
Brush-tailed Phascogale caught on Nullaki camera trap

Recent findings of western ringtail possums (a head with a devoured carcass discovered by an astute landowner), and Brush-tailed Phascogales on the Nullaki have heightened the urgency to protect this amazing asset.

Following several years of baiting and trapping there seems to be less foxes. While we have dispatched of more feral cats there are still plenty of photos of cats and foxes with native animals in their mouths. How do we know if we're making a difference? Can we estimate how many feral cats are out there? Was the ringtail taken from the peninsula or from somewhere else and dropped by an eagle?

We've divided the peninsula into 18 geographical grids and have placed cameras in 15 of these to

date. The cameras are serviced every six weeks, analysed and loaded into an image database. Do we try and ID individual animals? Is there a standard time between images to say that's a different fox or cat (lots of striped tabbies out there...)?



Nullaki Camera Monitoring Grid

We've bought four new cat cages and had a trapping workshop to learn best practice. Over the Easter holiday two part time residents caught two cats! We're baiting for foxes, released calicivirus for the rabbits, and the floppy top is (finally) going on. We're seeing lots more brushtail possums on the ground. Does that mean we're making a difference?

The Nullaki Conservation Initiative volunteers have lots of questions. To help get some answers, we've established a Technical Advisory Group. Four scientists (they all have PhD's!) have agreed to help. Two are from the University of Western Australia, one is a senior ecologist from the Australian Wildlife Conservancy, and another from the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions. With their advice, we're hopeful good science will provide some answers.

To keep the project going we've applied for further funding in a collaboration grant with Oyster Harbour Catchment Group and Torbay Catchment Group utilising services from the Southern Aboriginal Corporation's Ranger team. The goal is to extend feral control methods, camera monitoring, and image database collection along the southern coast. This will enable us to compare data from inside and outside the feral management fence.

If you'd like to get involved in ongoing works give us a call. Or, to show your support, make a tax deductible donation to WICC's Biodiversity Initiative. We could really use a few more cameras and our current grant runs out soon...

Weeds in focus



***Bridal creeper** (*Asparagus asparagoides*)*

Bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) is a declared pest in WA and is on the list of Weeds of National Significance. It is a highly invasive climbing herb or vine arising from a rhizome attached to tuberous roots. It has white flowers with six petals. In spring it produces a berry which contains three to four seeds. Being an early season food source, birds, rabbits and foxes disperse it widely over immense areas. Biological rusts have been used to limited success.

Manual control can be used for small plants and infestation. The rhizomes (main growing points at the top of the soil where the stem emerge) should be removed when hand pulling. If the plant breaks leaving any or all the rhizome, plants will immediately regrow if conditions allow.

The best time to chemically control bridal creeper is coming up (June - late August). Metsulforun can be used with a wetting agent (surfactant) such as pulse. If using in bushland it is recommended to use no more than .02g / 10L water to minimise damage to native vegetation which it will be climbing (DPIRD). Use a mister or hand held spray equipment. Be cautious of your proximity to waterways and frogs when using surfactants.

Whats on?

Planting Day on the 13th June at 670 Scotsdale Rd. from 10am-3pm



WICC IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR UPCOMING PLANTING DAYS



WICC
WILSON INLET
CATCHMENT COMMITTEE

COME FOR THE DAY, HALF A DAY OR A COUPLE OF HOURS

We will be revegetating six farms across the catchment from mid June with native seedlings in order to restore biodiversity & help strip nutrients from entering our inlet.

we would love you to help. Please register your interest and we will contact you with dates and locations and **we will even feed you!**

RSVP at <https://www.wicc.org.au/rsvp-community-planting-day-2021.html>

Planting Day on the 13th June at 670 Scotsdale Rd. from 10am-3pm

Express your interest **HERE**

Look after your own patch! **PROTECT REMNANT VEGETATION**

We are calling for expressions of interest from landholders to protect and enhance their remnant vegetation.

✓ FENCING ✓ REVEGETATION ✓ WEED CONTROL

All expressions of interest will be assessed with the plan of submitting a group application to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation Environmental Revegetation and Rehabilitation Fund grants 2021-2022

Unlike our Healthy Estuaries WA riparian revegetation funding, works under this program require covenants to protect your patch in perpetuity.

Visit: <https://www.wicc.org.au/errf-eoi.html>



[Learn more HERE](#)



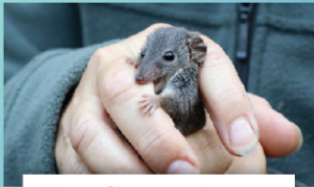
Soil testing to support better fertiliser decisions

Expressions of interest now open!

The expression of interest to participate in the next round of the soil testing is now open. The program aims to support farmers to make informed fertiliser decisions to ensure nutrients stay on the farm and out of waterways and estuaries.

[Click HERE to apply](#)

Do you like what WICC is doing?
Please consider supporting us because we
need your help across these vital initiatives



Biodiversity Initiative

Work with landowners to restore and maintain the natural biodiversity in the catchment through invasive species controls, preservation of remnant native revegetation and weed control.



Waterways Initiative

We implement work programs in coastal waterways to further establish native vegetation, minimise erosion and strip nutrients.



Sustainable Agriculture Initiative

We source and distribute funds and expertise to assist landowners to implement environmentally sustainable practices that reduce nutrient loads in the catchment.

DONATE 

