



## WELCOME TO THE CHAPMAN ESTUARY TIMES

Welcome to the third edition of the Chapman Estuary Times Newsletter. This newsletter provides the community with an update on the status of the recommended actions identified in the Chapman River Estuary Reserve Action Plan 2022-25. The newsletter will be uploaded to the City's website every second month.

### What's been happening in the Estuary?

Chapman River Friends (CRF) and Dr Mic Payne from NACC presented a wetland walk at the Chapman River Estuary early Sunday morning on the 4th of February to celebrate World Wetlands Day. Despite a windy morning, many joined in for the walk to learn more about our local estuary. Birdwatching participants were offered binoculars and monocular telescopes with running commentary about local bird species thanks to Alice from Birdlife Midwest-Geraldton.

A wetland walk was also held the day before at the Greenough River estuary thanks to Dr Mic Payne, Greenough River Friends, and Birdlife Midwest-Geraldton.



Photo credit: CRF – Chapman River Estuary Wetland Walk

The Chapman River Regional Park feral rabbit control program, under a licenced pest control contractor, commenced on January 29th. Rabbit warren fumigation and in-filling will be undertaken at the Chapman River estuary, including the parkland around the toilet block.

### What's been happening at the Chapman River Regional Park?

The Chapman River Regional Park feral rabbit control program commenced on January 29th. This involves pindone baiting followed by warren deconstruction. The City licenced contractor will commence laying poisoned oat baits at night after a period of free feeding. The contractor will monitor the areas and dispose of any dead rabbits found in the area.

We continue to advocate to the community that the responsibility for biosecurity is shared by everyone. The City encourages neighbours to work together to implement rabbit control measures across multiple properties which has greater effectiveness.

Unfortunately, there is no simple solution to this complex rabbit problem. We encourage landowners to commit to ongoing control activities using different management strategies. Check out our website [here](#) for more information.

Fence and gate vandalism is an ongoing issue in the Park. The latest vandalism repair has been to the boom gate at the Fairfax Drive entrance.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



- World Wetlands Day Photo Exhibition – 2nd February to 31st March @ Geraldton Regional Library. This exhibition is brought to you by Birdlife-Midwest, Chapman River Friends, and Greenough River Friends.
- Coastal Birds ID Workshop – 24th February @ Museum of Geraldton. Bookings essential via [birdlifemidwest@gmail.com](mailto:birdlifemidwest@gmail.com)
- SeaWeek 2nd to 10th March – Australia's major national public awareness campaign to focus community awareness, provide information and encourage an appreciation of the sea.
- Clean Up Australia Day 3rd March – [Check out Clean Up Australia](#) : Join a Clean Up to find an event near you.
- Ocean Film Festival World Tour 2024 16th March – Check out [Events » City of Greater Geraldton \(cgg.wa.gov.au\)](#) to buy tickets.

## BREAKING NEWS

Congratulations to Chapman River Friends on being awarded the 2024 Community Citizen of the Year Award in the Active Citizenship category. Well-done to all CRF volunteers- your dedication to the Chapman River Regional Park has been duly recognised and this award is very much deserved.

**WATCH OUT FOR WILDLIFE!** Now that the warm weather is here, please be mindful of wildlife on the move.



CRF volunteers receiving the award

## PARK TRAIL BROCHURE

Chapman River Regional Park Trail Network brochure. Download the brochure [here](#). It is also available on the City's website.



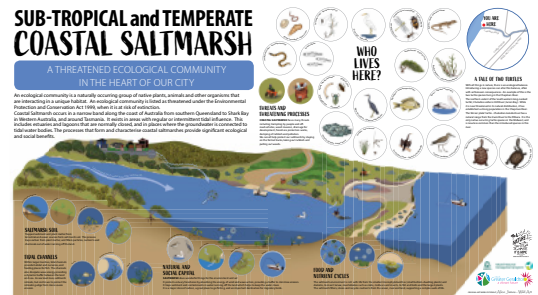
## DID YOU KNOW?

The Chapman River Estuary contains a subtropical and temperate coastal saltmarsh. This important Threatened Ecological Community provides a breeding and nursery habitat for fish, birds, and crustaceans. Other important values include erosion control, nutrient filtering, and carbon storage.

A major threat to the coastal saltmarsh at the Chapman River Estuary is foot and bike traffic. If visiting the estuary, please stick to paths and trails.



This area contains a  
**THREATENED  
ECOLOGICAL  
COMMUNITY**  
Please stay on designated trail



## WETLAND FAST FACTS

- Wetlands can refer to estuaries, rivers, swamps, marshes, billabongs, lakes, salt marshes, mudflats, mangroves, coral reefs, fens and peatlands.
- They provide protection from extreme weather events such as strong storm surges and flooding. Wetlands also filter the water from pollutants, sediment, and nutrients.
- A wetland is an important habitat for many native fauna species including migratory birds, water birds, frogs, fish, freshwater turtles, lizards, snakes and invertebrates. Important flora includes saltmarshes, mangroves, shrubs, rushes, and riparian vegetation.
- A highly biodiverse wetland equals a healthy wetland!
- Wetlands hold strong cultural value to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## MANAGEMENT ACTIONS UPDATE

### E1 Rabbit Control

**Recommended Action:** Rabbit control.

**Action to Date:** The Chapman River Regional Park feral rabbit control program commenced on 29th January. The City has engaged a licenced pest control contractor to undertake these works. This includes Pindone baiting followed by warren deconstruction in the Chapman River Regional Park, Tom Muir Arboretum and land adjacent to the Community Nursery compound. Rabbit warren fumigation and in-filling will take place at the Chapman River estuary in the coming weeks.

### E2 Weed Control

**Recommended Action:** Weed Control

**Action to Date:** Prickly Pear removal in areas along Chapman River on either side the North West Coastal Highway was undertaken by contractors on the week beginning 12th February.

### E5 Monitoring of Threatened Ecological Community

**Recommended Action:** Continue long-term monitoring by stakeholders

**Action to Date:** In December 2023 Environmental Monitoring and Technology students from Central Regional TAFE submitted health assessment reports of the Chapman River estuary following site visits in September and October. Water quality, macroinvertebrate sweeps, and vegetation surveys were undertaken. Student reports indicated the Chapman River estuary to be of fair health in the September assessment. However, there was a notable difference in water quality results in the October survey as their assessment was not long after the strong storm surge and artificial sand bar opening that contributed to the fish kill. Higher salinity, higher conductivity and lower dissolved oxygen concentrations were observed. The City and TAFE are continuing to work together for future monitoring activities within the Estuary.

Chapman River Friends continue to be an “eyes on the ground” at the Estuary and promptly report any issues to the City.

### S5 Install/ Renew Seating

**Recommended Action:** Install and renew bench seating.

**Action to Date:** The Environmental team is waiting on a Regulation 10 approval through the revised ACH Act 1972 to replace the recreational seat by Nazareth House.



Photo credit: Bill Belson – Sacred Kingfisher



Photo credit: CRF – Bobtail

## WILD RABBIT CONTROL WORKSHOP

Are you struggling with wild rabbits on your property and not sure where to start? Come along to a free Wild Rabbit Control Workshop on Friday, 23 February 2024 from 5.00pm to 6.00pm Waggrakine Community Hall on Hackett Road. Light refreshments provided Please RSVP to [environmentalplanning@cgg.wa.gov.au](mailto:environmentalplanning@cgg.wa.gov.au)

