

The Leaflet

Environment & Sustainability Newsletter

JUNE 2026

Green light for planting

We've now entered the most exciting time of the year, as our Natural Areas planting program officially gets underway. Planting sites across Chapman River Regional Park (CRRP) have been carefully prepared by contractors, including rip lining, targeted weed control, and the installation of pest-proof enclosures. Currently, 12,000 seedlings have been planted across our natural areas.

So far this month, students from Holland Street School, Geraldton Flexible School, and the City's Reshape program have joined us at St Georges Beach, Lion's Lookout, and the Chapman River Estuary, respectively. They've already planted approximately 410 seedlings, making a fantastic start to this year's program.



Upcoming EVENTS



11 July @ 9am - Birdlife planting day: Greenough River Estuary carpark

18 July @ 9am - Hillview Reserve Friends planting day: Drummond Cove, Boat Cove

25 July @ 9-12pm Community Nursery Sale

Do you have a local environmental initiative, success story, or sustainability tip you'd love to share with the community? The Environmental and Sustainability team would love to hear from you!

Send your stories to: environmentalplanning@cgg.wa.gov.au

Boxthorn control updates

On Saturday 13 June, the City hosted its first community boxthorn workshop where residents joined us to learn more about managing this invasive species. We were fortunate to have Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) lead scientist Dr Ben Gooden attend who demonstrated an exciting rust fungus biocontrol method. It was great to have Deputy Mayor Natasha Colliver supporting these important initiatives on the day.

Thank you for all the boxthorn workshop attendees for joining us at the workshops. Your efforts within in your private property or natural areas are valued.

Meanwhile, the City's weed contractors have been busy tackling African boxthorn across Drummond Cove beach areas, CRRP, and south of the Greenough River mouth, helping to restore these important coastal environments. TAFE Conservation and Ecosystem Management students also got involved, taking on boxthorn removal at Separation Point.



More information on the CSIRO biocontrol

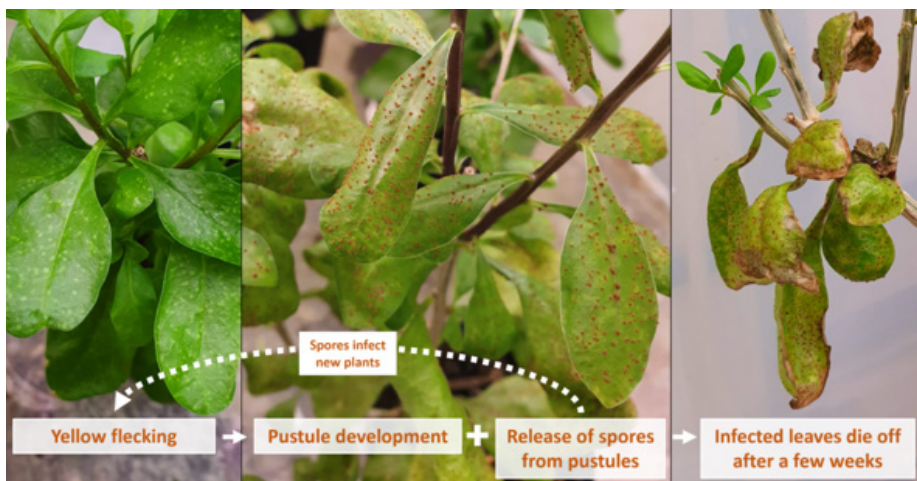
In June 2026, CSIRO, in partnership with the City of Greater Geraldton (CGG), released a biocontrol agent across monitored sites around Geraldton. The releases took place under carefully managed conditions, with ongoing monitoring in place to track how well the agent establishes, spreads, and reduces the impacts of African boxthorn over time.

This work forms part of a larger, national CSIRO-led African boxthorn biocontrol project, funded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund in partnership with the CSIRO—bringing cutting-edge, science-based solutions to help protect and restore our local landscapes.

Community members, landholders and organisations interested in participating in the African boxthorn biocontrol program can receive the biocontrol agent for release on their own land or sites they manage.

To register interest, please contact CSIRO Project Officer Caroline Delaisse at boxthornbiocontrol@csiro.au

For more information on the biocontrol visit [CSIRO](https://www.csiro.au).



Lifecycle of the rust fungus. Photo credit: CSIRO



Dr Gooden releasing biocontrol rust fungus on African Boxthorn at a trial site.

Feathers cause a frenzy

A black-headed gull has drifted off its usual course and landed in Geraldton, creating a lot of excitement for bird enthusiasts around the state and country. Black headed Gulls (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) are migratory, moving between Europe and Asia during the colder months, with a few rare vagrants occasionally reaching as far as Australia and South Africa. The last sighting of this bird species in Australia was back in 1991. The visitor has been seen hanging out with seagulls and crested terns around the town foreshore.

Keep up to date with the latest bird updates by joining the [Birdlife Midwest-Geraldton facebook](#) group.



Can you spot it?



Photo credit: Bill Belson

Community Nursery

While the planting season starts, the busy propagation season comes to an end at the Community Nursery. This year our hardworking volunteers and Community Nursery Officer have produced 23,000 native seedlings which will go out across our natural areas.



Mayor Jerry Clune visit at the Community Nursery



Fun Facts

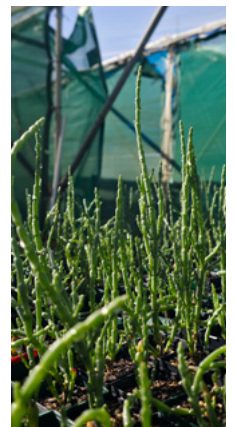
After some trials and errors since the beginning of the year, our Community Nursery Officer has finally cracked the code on Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) and Samphire (*Tecticornia*) germination.

Did you know? Quandong trees can handle drought and salinity well. The fleshy fruit is a form of bushtucker, and the leaves and bark are used by Aboriginal people for its medicinal properties.

Samphires is the most common saltmarsh plant in the area. These plants help protect our coastline, support wildlife, improve water quality, and store carbon, making them important to conserve



Quandong



Tecticornia



Greenough River

This month pruning works along the western side of the Greenough River trail were completed to improve accessibility and visibility for visitors.

The E&S team secured Coastwest funding to deliver several remediation projects across the Greenough River Reserve. These works included installing fencing and undertaking brushing within the estuary dune systems to protect sensitive habitats from off road vehicle impacts. Steel bollards were also installed at key access points along Devlin Road to better manage vehicle movement and safeguard local populations of coastal saltmarsh a local Threatened Ecological Community (TEC).

Contractors have also been undertaking ground stabilisation works on the southern side of the Greenough Estuary. This has included the removal of large volumes of asbestos remnants from the historic beach shack area, while additional measures have been implemented to reduce the creation of unofficial off-track vehicle routes.

This helps to protect fragile dune ecosystems and important wildlife, including shorebirds, migratory bird species, and ospreys.

Overall, the Greenough River area has seen significant activity in recent months with multiple projects improving access, safety and environmental protection across this important natural space.



Rabbit baiting

Our pest control contractor is wrapping up this year's rabbit control program across our natural areas. The integration of the R3 unit to assist with warren destruction has significantly improved efficiency, with approximately 600 rabbits culled through baiting and 55 warrens destroyed to date.

For more information, please visit our [European Rabbits webpage](#).

If you notice any rabbits or other feral species, we encourage you to record your sightings on [FeralScan](#) to support ongoing management efforts.



H5 Bird Flu warning

The H5 bird flu continues to be a rapidly evolving and concerning issue along the Western Australian coast. The current advice remains unchanged: **Avoid, Record, and Report** any suspected cases to the appropriate hotlines.

To keep up to date with the Federal Government's response to the H5 bird flu, please visit [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry](#), and for our State Government's response please visit [Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development](#).

If you observe a cluster of deceased or sick seabirds, shorebirds or other wildlife in a single area, this may indicate a potential H5 bird flu event.

For more information on H5 bird flu, including how you can help protect local wildlife, visit [BirdLife Australia](#).

Please report any concerning sightings immediately to the appropriate hotlines.

WHAT TO DO

Do not touch or pick up! Do the following



Avoid



Record



Report

WILD BIRDS

Sickness/deaths in **>5** wild birds or seabirds, waterbirds, shorebirds, birds of prey.

CALL EAD HOTLINE
188 675 888

Sickness/deaths in **<5** wild birds that are NOT seabirds, waterbirds, shorebirds, birds of prey.

CALL WILDCARE
HELPLINE
9474 9055

OTHER WILDLIFE including marine mammals

Unusual signs of disease or mass deaths.

CALL EAD HOTLINE
188 675 888

All other concerns such as sick, orphaned or injured wildlife.

CALL WILDCARE
HELPLINE
9474 9055

Owl Friendly City

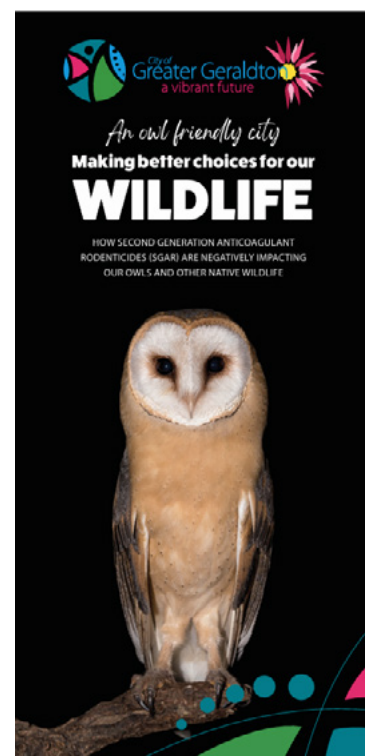
Due to the recent rodent infestations affecting parts of the Midwest and Wheatbelt, including Morawa and Northampton, the use of rodenticides has understandably increased. As this continues, the CGG, which is a declared Owl Friendly City, kindly reminds the community to help protect local birds of prey and wildlife by encouraging the use of First Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (FGARs).

There are a few tips on how to be 'Owl Friendly':

- Avoid the purchase and use of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs)
- Use FGARs as per instructions. Keep out of reach of children and pets.
- Remove dead rodents immediately to prevent secondary poisoning
- Help educate friends and family about the negative impact of SGAR baits on our native wildlife.

Find more information on SGARs and FGARs click [here](#)

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has approved an emergency-use permit for double-strength mouse baits (zinc phosphide at 50 g/kg) for use in grain-growing regions until the end of the year. The permit aims to support more effective mouse management during periods of high mouse activity, while implementing strict controls and conditions to minimise risks to people, wildlife, and the environment. Currently, the APVMA is reviewing SGARs products to strengthen regulations, helping to reduce risks to native wildlife and ensure these rodenticides are used responsibly



Find this brochure [here](#).

Tree Festival

On the Geraldton Tree Festival Opening Day, the Community Nursery, along with some volunteers supported the event by hosting a stall, providing information and answering questions on the City's planting program. Some of the local provenance seedlings grown at the nursery were also sold.

The event was a fantastic community effort bringing together more than 15 organisations at Blue Heelers Square for a day celebrating trees, community, creativity, and culture. It was inspiring to see our community come together to grow connections, share ideas, and celebrate the many ways trees enrich and inspire our lives



Clean-up Day

A big thank you to everyone who attended the Chapman River Friends (CRF) and Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) group clean-up day at Spalding Park on Saturday 17 May. It was a productive morning, with 20 participants joining in to remove rubbish between Chapman Road bridge and the Northwest Coastal Highway. The event was supported by CGG and Keep Australia Beautiful.

For more information about AYCC [here](#).



Photo credit: CRF



Wildflower season

It's the Bunny Orchid's (*Eriochilus dilatatus*) time to shine! These delicate blooms have begun appearing along the Loop Trail, particularly around Fairfax Road and Tersonia Way. Keep an eye out on your walks for the many native wildflowers beginning to bloom.



Photo credit Bill Belson.

Osprey update

Post-repair works, our resident Point Moore osprey pair has begun mating again!

Four ospreys have been recently spotted at the southern end of the Greenough Estuary near the osprey pole. Two were seen perching and using the structure as a resting spot—fingers crossed one pair will claim it this season. The rehabilitation works around the area, including off-road vehicle management, will help minimise future disturbance to the osprey.



Whale spotted

A humpback whale was recently spotted off the coast of St Georges beach, an exciting reminder of the incredible marine life in our region. Please remember to follow the *Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching* (2017):

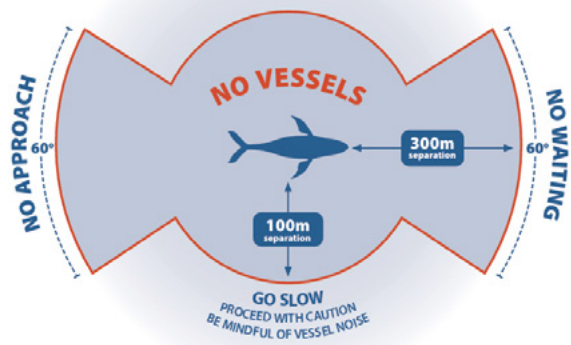
- do not attempt to feed or touch
- when in a vessel, maintain at least 50m from dolphins and 100m from whales
- avoid entering the water if they are nearby. If you are already in the water, do not disturb, chase or block their path.

Find more information visit the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water [here](#)

Photo credit Travis Petford.



Whale watching



PEOPLE ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SWIM WITH WHALES unless on a licensed tour.

DRONES are to be kept **60m** from any marine animal.

GIVE WHALES ROOM TO MOVE so they can behave naturally. Avoid chasing, crowding or blocking whales.

GO SLOW FOR THOSE BELOW reduce your speed and maintain a lookout.

BE COURTEOUS to other whale watchers.



Touching, disturbing, interfering with the natural movement of or breaching separation distances for whales in Western Australia is prohibited under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. Penalties of up to \$500,000 may apply.



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



Opened estuaries

Following recent heavy rainfall, both the Chapman River and Greenough River have experienced significant flows, filling and moving water downstream. This has led to the natural breaking of the sand bars at the river mouths, allowing accumulated water to discharge into the ocean.



Photo Credit: Micha Fuhrmann

Residents may notice sudden increases in muddy or discoloured water entering coastal areas. There is no cause for alarm—this is a natural process. The turbidity is due to soil and sediment being carried downstream during high flow events, which is typical after periods of heavy rain.

New to our local plants or want to brush off your plant ID skills?

Here are a few handy apps to help you out:



CRF wildflower



NACC coastal plants



WeedScan