

2024-2025 Volunteer impact and recognition

DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service





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Opposite page:

Main BoorYul-Bah-Bilya Program volunteer. *Photo – BoorYul-Bah-Bilya Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association Inc.*

Top left Sue and Paul, Campground Hosts. *Photo – DBCA*

Top right Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park volunteers. *Photo – Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park volunteers*

Cover:

Marine Debris Program Volunteers, Jurien Bay beach clean up. *Photo – DBCA*

Foreword

Volunteers continue to play a vital role in delivering outcomes for the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) across regional, national and marine parks, and communities. Their time, skills, and commitment contribute to real, measurable impact to DBCA's work.

This report highlights some of that work; a snapshot of the contributions volunteers made in 2024-25, and an acknowledgment of the value they bring to DBCA.

DBCA's Volunteer Coordination Unit (VCU) supports volunteers' efforts through monitoring, reviewing and applying systems that help volunteers to be engaged safely and effectively. Staff across DBCA get practical advice and ongoing support, and training opportunities have grown to keep up with changing needs, focusing on building confidence and skills.

Volunteer recognition has grown to better reflect the diversity of roles and contributions. In addition to formal recognition events, VCU supports and encourages more personal, local and timely ways to acknowledge volunteer contributions. These approaches make recognition more meaningful and relevant, while also helping volunteers feel genuinely connected to DBCA.

Far right Campground host volunteers.

Photo – DBCA

Right Friends of Herdsman Lake Regional Park volunteers planting.

Photo – Friends of Herdsman Lake Regional Park

Main below Marine Science intertidal reef surveys.

Photo – Dr Ines Leal, DBCA

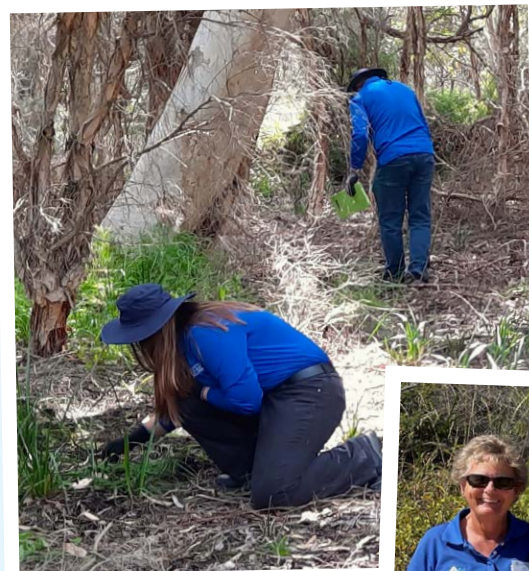
Volunteers' contributions to DBCA are invaluable in helping to ensure that Western Australia's environment is valued, protected and conserved, for its intrinsic value, and for the appreciation and benefit of present and future generations

Whether you've been involved for years or have recently joined, your contribution is valued. Thank you for being part of this work.

If you're reading this and thinking about getting involved, we'd love to hear from you. Visit

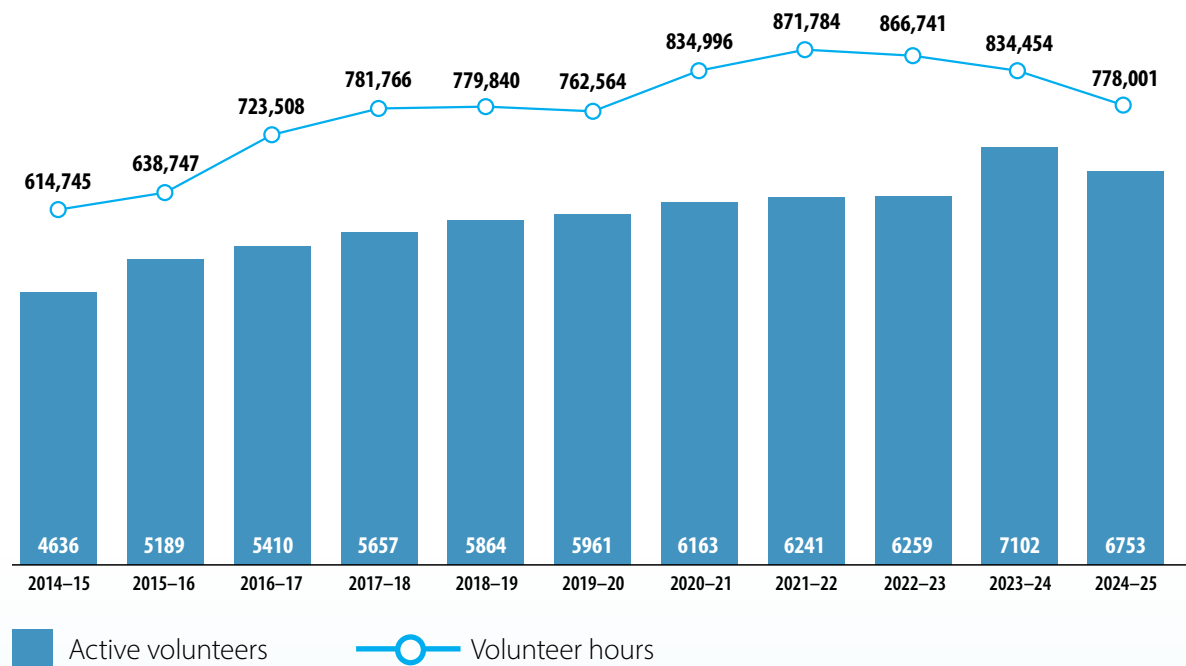
www.dbca.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteer or email PWSvolunteers@dbca.wa.gov.au

Volunteer Coordination Unit 2025



Volunteering at DBCA

Active volunteers and hours over 10 years



Key Facts

6,753
active volunteers

778,001
hours contributed

115
average hours per volunteer

2646
volunteer reward park
passes issued to volunteers
who contributed more than 50 hours

1,967
new volunteers registered

223
projects reported activity

Volunteer Impact

Swan Region

BoorYul-Bah-Bilya Program

The BoorYul-Bah-Bilya project has achieved several significant milestones this year. A new quokka population was discovered in the Perth Hills, marking an exciting development for local biodiversity. The team conducted water and sediment sampling at 12 sites, collecting the highest number of samples from the catchment in a single event. Cultural mapping and an access audit of the entire Mandoon Bilya (Helena River) catchment were also completed.

Volunteers contributed over 4,000 hours during FY 2024–2025, and more than 800 native plants were planted in reserves along the Mandoon Bilya, supporting ongoing habitat restoration efforts.

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"I love working on the BoorYul-Bah-Bilya program because it feels like we are doing good things for the river and our community. I especially love the Mandoon Bilya (Helena River) catchment because it is beautiful and has so many special places, from the jarrah forest to the wandoo woodlands, from the granite outcrops to the clayplan wetlands. The more time I spend out on the river, the more it reveals its magic, and there is always something new and beautiful to discover."

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Below main Volunteering in the Helena River Catchment.

Photo – BoorYul-Bah-Bilya Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association Inc.



Jane Brook Catchment Group

In the hills of Perth's eastern suburbs, the Jane Brook Catchment Group Inc. has been quietly working to protect and restore the natural beauty of the Jane Brook Catchment. With a strong focus on landcare, education, and community involvement, the group is helping ensure that local bushland and waterways remain healthy and vibrant for generations to come.

Their efforts range from applying for and managing landcare grants to delivering on-ground restoration projects. Volunteers also host community displays, lead bushwalks and site visits, and collaborate with other local groups to raise awareness and encourage environmental stewardship.



This past financial year was especially productive. The group led successful landcare initiatives in Mt Helena and Mundaring, including work along the Heritage Trail, and supported conservation efforts in John Forrest National Park through auspiced funding.

They also played a key role in bushcare networking events and partnered with Millennium Kids on the Nature Adventure project, engaging young people in hands-on conservation.

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"I love to see birds perched in trees and hiding in shrubs I planted years ago. I do the work to improve the habitat for wildlife."

Una Bell, volunteer

.....

If you would like to get involved contact janebrookcg@gmail.com

Left Volunteer enjoying a planting day.

Below Community Engagement at the Gidgegannup Small Farms Field Day.

Photos – Una Bell, volunteer



Friends of Piesse Brook

For over two decades, the Friends of Piesse Brook have been transforming the landscape of Kalamunda and Beelu National Parks, dedicating their time and energy to restoring native bushland and protecting local biodiversity. Since forming in 2000, the group has focused on removing invasive weeds and replanting native species across more than 475 hectares of natural habitat.

One of their earliest goals was to clear *Watsonia* from the park entrance near Hummerston Road all the way to the confluence of Piesse Brook and the Helena River, a stretch of over three kilometres. That goal has largely been achieved, with ongoing follow-up weeding to maintain the progress. The surrounding slopes and plateau have also seen major improvements, thanks to consistent volunteer efforts and large-scale native plantings.

Volunteers meet monthly from March to November for busy bees, tackling seasonal weed growth and working section by section along the brook. Many members also contribute outside of these sessions, continuing the work year-round to ensure the bushland remains healthy and resilient.

"I like to do my bit for the environment close to home. It is rewarding to see the benefits of our work (less weeds) and the impact it has on the bush. Also, I enjoy being out in nature with likeminded people and able to admire the variety of species in the bush."

Andrea Wernli, Treasurer Friends of Piesse Brook

This past financial year brought a major milestone. The group secured a Community Rivercare Grant to tackle a significant *Watsonia* infestation along the southern bank of the Helena River, upstream of the Pump Back Dam in Helena Valley.

In addition to this, the group has worked to control other invasive species such as Tall Fleabane, *Dittrichia* (Stinkwort), Cape Tulip, *Oxalis pes-caprae* (Soursop), and Cotton Bush, focusing efforts along the valley floor and surrounding slopes.

"The Friends of Piesse Brook are extremely thorough, working tirelessly to treat *watsonia* and remove their seed heads and bulbils by hand, plant local species and support the health of the river system. The health and habitat of Piesse Brook has been much improved by the efforts of this dedicated group."

Alison McGilvray, DBCA

If you would like to get involved contact bibbulman@outlook.com

Below Volunteer Clean up day.
Photo – Ken Patterson, volunteer



Susannah Wooroloo Catchment Group

The Susannah Wooroloo Catchment Group (SWCG) is a dedicated network of local volunteers working to restore bushland, improve water quality, and create habitat for native wildlife. Their goal is to connect fragmented vegetation, reduce erosion and nutrient runoff into the Swan River, and support endangered species through strategic conservation.

Recent efforts include a nesting box workshop led by wildlife expert Simon Cherriman, with boxes crafted by the Gidge Men's Shed and installed across three sites in partnership with Fulton Hogan. SWCG also joined forces with Millennium Kids and the City of Swan to host nature-based workshops for families, fostering community connection to the environment.

Restoration continues at the Burgess Road site, with volunteers collecting seeds from local endemic species to support future revegetation. These activities reflect SWCG's strategic focus on revegetation, weed control, habitat enhancement, and seed collection.

Right Nature-based family workshops led by volunteers.

Photo – Bronwyn Scallan, DBCA

Below Conservation at the Susannah Brook Catchment.

Photo – Mark Thornley, DBCA

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"Love learning from other committed and passionate locals who care deeply about the environment."

Group Volunteer
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"The group are amazing in broadening the range of conservation activities that benefit catchment health and contributing important data that will help us understand how the environment is changing."

Melissa Mykytiuk, DBCA Staff
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The Friends of Boya Quarry/Trail

Nestled in the hills, the John Herington Memorial Picnic Grounds is more than just a scenic spot, it's a living example of what long-term community care can achieve. For decades, the Friends of Boya Trail have been quietly working to preserve and enhance this special place, ensuring it remains safe, sustainable, and welcoming for both wildlife and people.

The group's vision is simple but powerful: to foster a harmonious balance between nature and community. Their work focuses on:

- Minimising fire risk
- Eradicating invasive weeds
- Protecting native habitats
- Educating the public about local ecology



Volunteers take on a range of hands-on tasks including weeding, planting, weed management, and general bush preservation. Their efforts help maintain the health of the landscape and support biodiversity in the area.

Whether it's pulling weeds, planting native species, or simply keeping the bushland in good shape, the Friends of Boya Trail are building a legacy of environmental stewardship, one that future generations will benefit from.

If you would like to get involved contact
admin@friendsofboyatrail.com.au



Above Volunteers in their new DBCA volunteer uniforms.

Left Diverse community of volunteers.

Below Volunteer planting day.

Photos – Marcus Werrett, volunteer



WA Herbarium

At the heart of the Western Australian Herbarium, the Herbarium Mounting Program plays a vital role in preserving the State's rich biodiversity by preparing plant specimens for long-term storage and study.

Volunteers in the program are trained to carefully mount plant specimens to archival card, helping preserve them for future research and education.

These mounted specimens become part of the Herbarium's main collection, a vital resource for understanding and protecting Western Australia's biodiversity.

In the last financial year, volunteers contributed over 2,255 hours, mounting 6,459 specimens, an average of more than 500 each month.

Many have been involved for over a decade, with some volunteering for more than 20 years.

"I was lucky to find a place in the WA Herbarium. It's interesting, satisfying work, I've made many new friends as well, it's a welcoming environment and one feels something has been accomplished at the end of the day."

Margaret, volunteer

I find volunteering very relaxing, working amongst good company and doing my bit to maintain and preserve the flora of the State. And having worked at the Herbarium for some 25 years, I was happy to return and help out in the areas where there is always work to be done.

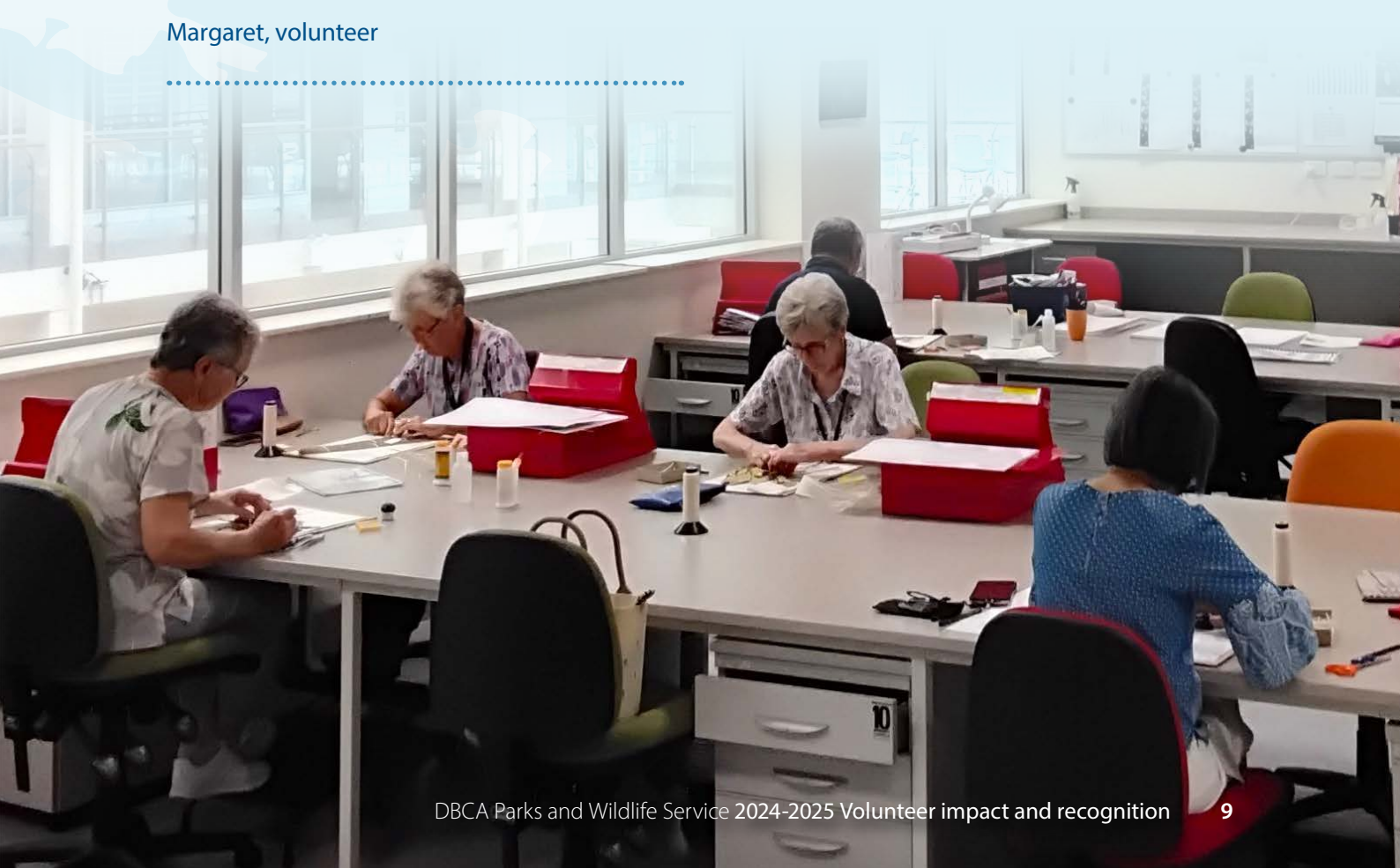
Phil, volunteer

Our diligent, careful and productive volunteers bring diversity and life experience to the Western Australian Herbarium, and provide help where we need it most - in the long-term preservation of our specimens"

Shelley James, Herbarium Collections Manager

Thanks to funding from the Volunteer Coordination Unit (VCU), the program hosted a special 'Thank You' lunch to celebrate the volunteers' contributions.

Below Mounting native plant specimens. Photo – WA Herbarium



Regional Parks

Friends of Point Peron

For the past four years, the Friends of Point Peron have been quietly transforming a Water Corporation reserve along Point Peron Road into a thriving patch of biodiverse native vegetation. This grassroots effort is part of the group's broader mission to support the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) in caring for Cape Peron, now saved from marina development and potentially on its way to becoming a Class A reserve.

With the support of Perth NRM and Green S Force, the group has planted over 5,000 locally endemic seedlings in the past three years. Despite challenges, including indiscriminate whipper snipping, herbicide spraying, and two harsh summers - species like tuarts, peppermint gums, cockies tongues, and melaleucas are showing strong growth. Volunteers water the young plants every three weeks during their first summer to give them the best chance of survival. Natural regrowth has also been impressive, with *Acacia rostellifera* flourishing across the site.

The group's new roadside signs have sparked community interest, with three new volunteers recently joining after stopping to chat and learn more.

To help fund their work, the group collects cans and bottles - ensuring they can purchase tools and supplies as needed. Volunteers also take on tasks like removing grass from around 2,000 seedlings to reduce competition and improve survival rates.



Above Watering the new seedlings.

Below Volunteer planting day.

Photos – James Mumme, volunteer

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“We discovered that grass can help protect seedlings from drying out and too much sun. So once established, we carefully remove the grass around our precious babies,”

James Mumme, volunteer

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This dedicated team is playing a vital role in protecting and restoring the natural beauty of Point Peron, one seedling at a time.



South West Region

Friends of Cape to Cape – Tangaroa Blue Beach Clean Up Day

25 dedicated volunteers gathered at Moses Rock carpark on Friday 11th October for the Tangaroa Blue beach cleanup event, part of the “keep our beaches clean” weekend initiative. The group set off around 9am, walking north along the newly constructed boardwalk before descending onto the beach near Quinninup Creek.

The aim was to collect and catalogue marine debris from the section of beach between the creek and the Cape To Cape Track exit at the north. While much of the beach appeared rubbish free, one 850-metre section revealed a significant accumulation of waste – 15.5 kilograms in total. Among the debris were 2,720 pieces of broken hard plastic, 267 lids and tops, and 41 toothbrushes.

The collected data was submitted to the Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDI), a national program aimed at removing marine debris and identifying its sources. The initiative encourages public participation in both cleanup efforts and long-term solutions to prevent ocean pollution.

Volunteers noted how easily the debris blended in with natural beach elements like shells, sponges, and coral – highlighting the risk of ingestion by seabirds and marine life mistaking plastic for food.

In a heartwarming display of community spirit, members of the public assisted in carrying a large piece of debris back to the carpark. Afterwards some volunteers also took the opportunity to visit Quinninup Falls, which was flowing beautifully thanks to recent rains.

Events like these remind us all it doesn't take much, if everyone is able to collect a couple of pieces of rubbish on their way back from the beach and put them in their pocket or backpack we can all continue to enjoy our pristine beaches and help preserve the natural beauty of our coastline.

Special thanks go to Jenny Kikeros and her husband Mike for their outstanding organisation, and to all the volunteers who contributed to the success of the day.

More information about monitoring and source reduction can be found at:
tangaroablue.org/about-amdi/

Below Busy day of track maintenance. Photo – Friends of the Cape to Cape Track



Pilbara Region

West Pilbara Turtle Program

In the heart of the Pilbara, the West Pilbara Turtle Program (WPTP) is bringing people together to protect one of the region's most iconic marine animals. Each summer, volunteers rise early to walk the nesting beaches around Wickham and Karratha, counting turtle tracks and nests before the heat and flies set in.

From November to January, these morning walks help monitor nesting activity, while in the cooler months, volunteers run community events and education sessions, sharing their passion for turtle conservation with locals of all ages.

52 volunteers from across WA contributed a total of 905 hours this financial year, a huge effort, especially in the heat of the Pilbara summer. Families, individuals, and even visitors from Perth joined in, showing that turtle conservation is a cause that brings people together.

This year was a special year. Most likely due to the early warm weather, there were many turtle hatchlings emerging on the same nights as nesting females were coming out of the water. Quite a spectacular sight!

Below Nesting turtle in the Pilbara region

Photo – Sarah McDonald, DBCA

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"The best thing about the program is the beautiful turtles, amazing beaches you get to walk on and the love everyone has for protecting and monitoring turtles."

WPTP volunteer

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To celebrate the season's efforts, the group held a gathering at Port Walcott Yacht Club, supported by a grant from the Volunteer Coordination Unit (VCU). The event featured food platters and a presentation of the year's monitoring data, right next to the beaches where the turtles nest.

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"The passion and enthusiasm of our turtle volunteers is inspiring. They share this passion with their children, family and friends and that's how successful conservation efforts work. Our program couldn't happen without our volunteers."

Sarah McDonald, WPTP Coordinator

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If you'd like to be part of this rewarding work, get in touch with the WPTP Coordinator wptp@dbca.wa.gov.au

Statewide Projects

Marine Science Program

The Marine Science Program (MSP) continues to play a vital role in monitoring the health of Western Australia's temperate intertidal reef communities, thanks to the dedication of volunteers and researchers working together across the state's marine parks.

Over the past summer, 13 volunteers contributed to the program by surveying 18 long-term monitoring sites. Their efforts have helped build a clearer picture of the ecological health of these vital habitats, with all marine invertebrate species counted and recorded to support ongoing conservation efforts.

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"It was great to use in the real world what I have been learning at university and see how it is applied,"

Zak Dawson, MSP Volunteer

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This hands-on initiative gives volunteers the opportunity to work alongside marine scientists, sampling marine invertebrate fauna in both nearshore and offshore reef environments. These organisms serve as key performance indicators for the condition of our marine ecosystems.

Above Documenting the survey results.

Below Marine Science intertidal reef surveys.

Photos – Dr Ines Leal, DBCA



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"Community involvement through volunteering plays a huge role in the success of intertidal reef monitoring programs, and we thank all volunteers involved for helping us to manage and protect these reefs."

Dr Inês Leal, Research Scientist

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The provision of high-visibility uniforms from the Volunteer Coordination Unit has made a significant impact, not only by enhancing safety during fieldwork, but also by fostering a strong sense of team identity among volunteers. These uniforms helped clearly identify DBCA volunteers in the field, often prompting positive engagement from the public and raising awareness about the Marine Science Program.

The Marine Science Program is always looking for passionate individuals to join its volunteer team. If you're interested in contributing to marine conservation and gaining field experience, please contact Dr Inês Leal Ines.Leal@dbca.wa.gov.au





North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program

The North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program (NWSFTCP) is a 60-year initiative dedicated to protecting Western Australia's unique flatback turtles. Through research, monitoring, education, and collaboration, the program is working to secure a future for this long-lived and vulnerable species.

Each summer, volunteers play a vital role in the program's success. From November to December, they head to Delambre Island and Thevenard Island, walking the beaches at night to tag and identify turtles, measure them, excavate nests, and count tracks. It's hands-on, often physically demanding work, but it's also deeply rewarding.

During the 2024–2025 nesting season, 45 volunteers contributed an impressive 3,307 hours of monitoring. They were joined by 20 students from Onslow School and Roebourne District High School, who assisted over six nights. Their combined efforts led to the monitoring of 886 turtles and 424 nests at Delambre Island, and 316 turtles and 211 nests at Thevenard Island. In addition, 20 fresh nests were excavated during the season, with 48 more examined after hatching in February 2025.

The program's reach extends beyond the beaches. At Kensington, retired DBCA scientist Dr Bob Prince continues to volunteer thousands of hours curating turtle data and sharing his expertise. His dedication is mirrored by many others, including long-time volunteer Jillian Rodgers, who shared:

“This is my fourth year returning to Thevenard Island, and I keep coming back because it's a fabulous reset for a busy life—but most of all to connect with the turtles, because it's such a lovely thing. I just love the whole experience of being part of the research to help look after them.”

The program's success is built on this kind of passion and commitment. As James Gee, Senior Technical Officer for the NWSFTCP, explains:

“Without the assistance of our dedicated team of volunteers, monitoring the huge number of turtles at our field sites would not be possible. The thousands of hours of time they volunteer, and countless kilometres of beach they patrol, is invaluable to the NWSFTCP, DBCA and the future of flatback turtle populations of Western Australia”

If you're inspired to get involved, visit flatbacks.dbca.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering to learn more and submit your expression of interest.

Above Turtle monitoring volunteers at Delambre Island.
Photo – Tristan Simpson, DBCA

Perth Observatory

At Perth Observatory, heritage isn't just preserved, it's brought back to life. One shining example is the extraordinary restoration of the 125-year-old Howard Grubb Astrographic Telescope, a project driven almost entirely by dedicated volunteers, whose passion and skill gave this rare instrument a second chance at stargazing.

Installed in 1900 at the original Mount Eliza site and moved to Bickley in the 1960s, the Perth Astrograph is the only remaining Grubb-manufactured Astrograph in the world still operating with its original tubes, mount and dome. But time had taken its toll: lead-based paint was flaking, rust was setting in, and delicate mechanical parts needed urgent care.

In 2019, POVG formed the Astrograph Restoration Taskforce, a team of passionate volunteers who took on the challenge. Over 1,500 hours of volunteer labour, supported by just 20 paid staff hours, went into the project. The team stripped and repainted the telescope and mount using heritage-safe methods, cleaned and polished brass fittings, balanced the telescope, and cleared decades of dust and cobwebs from the dome.

Volunteer Lloyd Robinson was one of the key contributors and played a pivotal role in project planning, research, and restoration, working alongside a dedicated team of volunteers who each brought valuable skills and effort to the project's success. In 2025, his dedication was recognised with a DBCA Lifetime National Parks Pass, a well-earned nod to years of quiet, expert service. Lloyd continues to volunteer with the Observatory, contributing to our tour-based roles.

The telescope is now fully operational and regularly featured in night sky tours and education programs. Its presence is not only a reminder of our astronomical past but a living tribute to the skills and commitment of our volunteers.

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"The passion and skill of our volunteers brought this telescope back to life. They're not just helping out they're making history."

Perth Observatory

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Right Volunteers restoring an Astrograph Telescope.

Photo – Perth Observatory





Celebrating volunteers and growing skills

2024 DBCA Volunteer Awards

The 2024 DBCA Volunteer Awards were held on December 5 (International Volunteer Day) to acknowledge and recognise the significant contribution that volunteers make to support DBCA in their work.

The ceremony began with a Welcome to Country by Ingrid Cumming, Traditional Owner of Noongar Boodjar followed by a number of awards presented by the Hon. Reece Whitby, MLA, Minister for Energy; Environment; Climate Action and DBCA Director General Stuart Smith.

Over a comparatively short duration of service, they have made a prominent (but often behind-the-scenes) contribution to the work of the Foundation. Chris is notable for his attention to detail, methodical work style and can-do attitude. Sue's friendly, commonsense nature is complemented by her extensive knowledge of local flora and fauna.

Helen Grimm, Bibbulmun Track Foundation



Above main The Toyota Landcruiser Club of Western Australia were recognised with an Outstanding Service Award.

Top The 2024 Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Chris and Sue Lee for their significant contribution to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation over the last eight years, including their exceptional efforts to support the Track's 25th anniversary End-to-End walk.

Above Indigo Sorensen from Kaarakin and Keisha Desmond a Marine Science Volunteer were both presented with the Young Volunteer Award.

Photos – Lauren Mazzucato

Outstanding Service recipients

11 individuals received Outstanding Service awards along with three community groups; The Toyota Landcruiser Club of Western Australia, Track Care WA and The Winnit Club of Wadjemup / Rottnest Island.

Recipient

Ms Claire Pragnell

Jurgen Kahlfeld

Pamela Ghirardi

Carol Biddulph

Kathy Reynolds

Glen and Gerry Scot

Graham Weber

Chris and Sue Lee

Francesca Flynn

Tony Christou

Ben Kunze

Helen Winter



Above Francesca Flynn.

Left Ben Kunze.

Photos – Lauren Mazzucato



Long Service (20 years) recipients

There were also 11 volunteers presented with Long Service Awards for more than 20 years' volunteer service with DBCA.

Recipient

Pam Agar

Carlene Edwards

Kevin Fletcher

Sandra Fussell

Ce Kealley

Mark Mansfield

Colleen Michel

Kelvey Pearson

Lynda Tomlinson

Patrica Wenham

Jan White



Above Pam Agar.

Left Mark Mansfield.

Photos – Lauren Mazzucato



Volunteer recognition

Over 22 projects enjoyed National Volunteer Week by celebrating their outstanding achievements and ongoing involvement with DBCA over morning/afternoon tea events around the state.

The following groups were provided recognition funding from the VCU for these events:



Friends of Herdsman Lake

The Friends of Herdsman Lake held two activity days, where we focused on weeding around the seedlings we planted back in June 2024. After each working bee, the group enjoyed a relaxing and social morning tea. It was a lovely way to wind down and connect after all the hard work.

Thanks again for providing the funds, it really helped make these gatherings possible.

Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc

We had the pleasure of enjoying two lovely morning teas with our two different groups of volunteers to celebrate Volunteer Week at Easter time.

Taking the time to sit down together over morning tea really helps our volunteers feel the impact of their contributions. It gives us a chance to reflect on the significance of the area we care for, and we love sharing before-and-after photos that show just how much of a difference our volunteers are making to the health of the river foreshores.

Most importantly, these gatherings give everyone the opportunity to connect, chat, and build friendships. It fosters a real sense of belonging among a group of like-minded people who care deeply about the same things. Thank you for supporting our volunteers, it truly means a lot to all of us.



Nearer to Nature

To thank our wonderful Nearer to Nature volunteers for their support throughout the year we hosted a special celebration in December 2024.

We have a great team of volunteers that assist with delivering our school holiday and community programs.

We also have camp hosts that stay on site at the Perth Hills Discovery centre in Mundaring, throughout the year who assist with gardening and maintenance around the centre, maintain the campground and assist us with schools and public enquiries.

We really appreciate the time and work our volunteers commit to our centre and our programs. Thank you to the volunteer unit for providing funding support that allowed us to provide our volunteers with a lunch and some fun activities to say thank you.



Above top Nearer to Nature volunteers. Photo – Nearer to Nature

Above left Friends of Herdsman Lake volunteers. Photo – Friends of Herdsman Lake

Above Swan Estuary volunteers. Photo – Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc

Crooked Brook Forest

To celebrate the incredible efforts of our volunteers, we held a "Thank You" barbecue and social evening at Crooked Brook Forest on 9th March 2025. It was a wonderful night and a great success, everyone really appreciated being recognised for their commitment and dedication to making this forest what it is today.

The Crooked Brook Forest Community Group of Dardanup has been working in partnership with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions since 1994 to develop "A Forest for All People." It's been a long and rewarding journey, and none of it would be possible without our amazing volunteers.

During the evening, our Chairperson, Brian Barrett, gave a heartfelt speech acknowledging not only those who attended but also those who couldn't be there, as well as members who have passed away. Their contributions were warmly remembered and deeply appreciated.

A big thank you to DBCA for making the Volunteer Recognition Funding available, it allowed us to host this special event and show our gratitude in a meaningful way.

Above right Anne and John, Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara National Park Caretakers. Photo – Tiana Jones, DBCA

Below Crooked Brook Forest volunteers. Photo – Crooked Brook Forest



Matuwa Kurrara Caretakers

Our wonderful caretakers with their gift boxes, which were made possible thanks to the 2024/25 financial year funding provided.

The boxes were a small gesture, but they really went a long way in showing our appreciation for all the hard work and dedication our caretakers put in throughout the year.

It was such a joy to see their reactions. It's a simple but meaningful way to say thank you and keep morale high. Thanks again for your support, it truly makes a difference.



WA Malleefowl Recovery Group

A thank you brunch was held at the Canning River Environment Education Centre to celebrate the dedicated volunteers who contributed to the 2024 Malleefowl monitoring season. Volunteers received an overview of the 2024 monitoring activities, along with updates on the active Malleefowl mounds identified during the season.

“Many thanks to DBCA for enabling us to thank our volunteers”.

Harriet, WA Malleefowl Recovery Group

Friends of Yellagongal Regional Park

On a cold and sunny Saturday morning volunteers from Friends of Yellagonga gathered next to Lake Joondalup on Scenic Drive Wanneroo to plant over 1000 native trees and shrubs and then enjoyed a lovely morning tea under the trees to celebrate and recognise our hard-working volunteers.

The Chairperson thanked our regular volunteers for all their efforts of the previous year and acknowledged the valuable and ongoing support from the Volunteer Unit at DBCA.

Penguin Island Volunteers

A delightful morning tea was held to celebrate the incredible efforts of the volunteers, coinciding with the completion of the Penguin Island facility upgrades. The event provided a wonderful opportunity to gather in the newly improved space and show appreciation for the volunteers' ongoing dedication.

The event served as a perfect moment for volunteers to reconnect, share stories, and enjoy each other's company in a relaxed setting. It was a heartfelt thank-you to those who continue to contribute their time and energy to conservation efforts on Penguin Island.

Far left WA Malleefowl Recovery Group.
Photo – WA Malleefowl Recovery Group

Left Penguin Island Volunteers.
Photo – Penguin Island Volunteers

Below: Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park.
Photo – Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park





BoorYul-Bah-Bilya

BoorYul-Bah-Bilya enjoyed time out on the river during their volunteer recognition event which provided a relaxed and meaningful opportunity for volunteers to connect, reflect, and celebrate the hard work and dedication shown throughout the year.

“Working together is the only way to get the best outcomes for Country. BoorYul-Bah-Bilya brings people together to understand that we’re just one human race, with many cultures and many differences, but we need to come together as one to look after our planet Earth.”

Walter McGuire, BNAA Chairperson

Above BoorYul-Bah-Bilya volunteers.
Photo – Emily Wilson

The following groups across the state also hosted events to recognise and thank their volunteers

- Albany volunteers and Camp Hosts
- Fauna Monitoring
- Friends of Boya Trail
- Friends of Manea Park
- Friends of Samphire Cove
- Friends of the Vines
- Herdsman Lake Bird Banding Group
- Southwest Regional Herbarium
- Swan Canning Riverpark Seagrass monitoring
- WA Gould League Volunteers
- WA Herbarium
- Yanchep National Park Volunteers



Long Service recognition event

To celebrate the start of National Volunteer Week 2025, DBCA's Volunteer Coordination Unit hosted a high tea at Frasers in Kings Park, celebrating the remarkable contributions of some of its longest-serving volunteers.

DBCA Director General Stuart Smith presented Lifetime National Park Passes to 90 eligible volunteers in recognition of their exceptional service of more than 20 years of continuous involvement and over 1,000 volunteer hours.

These volunteers have supported over 20 diverse projects, including wildlife rehabilitation, flora and fauna monitoring, trail maintenance, and work with the Perth Observatory, demonstrating the breadth of DBCA's volunteer programs.

Collectively, they've contributed more than 500,000 hours of service, making a lasting impact on conservation and the community.

Above main Celebrating our long-serving volunteers.

Above top Enjoying morning tea at Fraser's Kings Park.

Left top Glenda Olesen and Michelle Hazelwood.

Left centre Kim Spence and Joan Start.

Left Luke Bentley, Executive Director Parks and Visitor Services meeting with volunteers.

Photos – Gemma Vesely

Volunteer recognition: Tools and equipment

Friends of Beenyup Channel

The Stihl BT 45 Drill, along with planting auger attachments, is a valuable tool in the group's planting efforts. Each year, they plant over 2,000 wetland and 2,000 dryland plants, and the auger significantly speeds up the process by efficiently preparing holes for planting.

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"The tools and equipment we have received via the tools fund has had and continues to have a significant effect on our work efficiency and therefore the volume and quality of the work we undertake"

Bryan Saunders

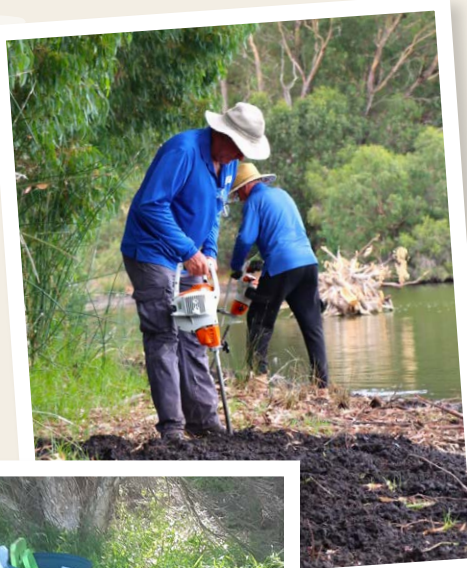
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Friends of Herdsman Lake

The equipment has been a great help to the Friends of Herdsman, making their work much easier and more efficient. The tools are especially useful for hand weeding, and the cart comes in handy for moving tools around the site. On planting days, it's also perfect for transporting trays of seedlings where they're needed most.

Friends of Banyowla Regional Park

The wheelbarrows have greatly assisted the Friends of Banyowla in managing the removal of *Watsonia meriana*, which can be particularly heavy. They support safer manual handling and enhance labour efficiency by accelerating the process of transporting the weed from the removal site to the disposal area.



Above top New tools help volunteers work more efficiently.
Photo – Gemma Vesely.

Above New volunteer equipment funded by DBCA.
Photo – Friends of Herdsman Lake Regional Park

Right New wheelbarrows for the Friends of Banyowla Regional Park. *Photos – Friends of Banyowla Regional Park*



Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park

A recent planting session to return Zuvela Dam to its natural condition at Lake Goollelal saw a major productivity leap, with 400 seedlings planted into the steep bank all thanks to a new petrol-powered auger.

This upgrade has enabled Friends of Yellagonga volunteers to increase their output by 50%, completing significantly more work in the same amount of time.



Friends of Cape to Cape Track

Thanks to support from the Tools and Equipment Fund, the Friends of the Cape to Cape Track acquired three lightweight electric hedge trimmers, which have quickly become a favourite among volunteers. Their compact design and ease of use make them ideal for small working groups maintaining short sections of the track. Along with pocket saws, hedging shears, loppers and rakes these trimmers have proven to be surprisingly versatile and are now an essential part of the group's track maintenance equipment.

Herdsmen Lake Bird Banding Group

The equipment is a great help to the bird banding group to continue the on-ground work. From clearing net rides to supporting hygiene and safety, each tool plays a part in making the job easier and more efficient.



Above left Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park.
Photo – Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park

Above Herdsmen Lake Bird Banding Group.
Photo – Herdsmen Lake Bird Banding Group

Left Friends of the Cape to Cape Track.
Photo – Friends of the Cape to Cape Track



Friends of John Forrest National Park

Volunteers at the park are now equipped with a range of essential tools and safety gear that significantly improve the accuracy and safety of herbicide application.

AusChem-qualified volunteers use scales, measuring cylinders, funnels, PVC gloves, respirators, and 10L plastic bottles to ensure herbicides are mixed precisely and handled safely. All containers are clearly labelled with appropriate chemical warnings using the sharpie pens, and the herbicides are transferred into small spray bottles for use in the field.

Large storage containers have proven invaluable in preventing leaks and contamination, keeping both the environment and volunteers safe.

Above main John Forest National Park. Photo – Jamie Wright, DBCA

Below New safety equipment for volunteers. Photo – Friends of John Forrest National Park

Right Friends of John Forrest National Park volunteer. Photo – Friends of John Forrest National Park



To tackle woody weeds, secateurs and pruning saws are used to cut back the plants. Herbicide is then applied directly to the base using the small spray bottles, enhancing the effectiveness of the treatment, and the large screw drivers are marvellous for digging out stubborn deep bulbs of Watsonia.

Communication during fieldwork has also improved, with lanyards helping to keep radios securely attached, allowing volunteers to stay in contact while out surveying and weeding.

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"Thank you for funding this equipment.
It is much appreciated by our members!"

Val English, Friends of John Forrest National Park
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Volunteer training opportunities

The Volunteer Coordination Unit (VCU) has continued to offer a variety of training opportunities to active DBCA volunteers, enhancing their knowledge and skills to assist them in their current volunteering roles.

This year we facilitated more than 800 training placements to volunteers in the following subjects.

Essential First Aid

The four-hour Essential First Aid courses were delivered in a relaxed and engaging format by experienced instructors from St John WA. Using a combination of videos, photos, open discussions, and hands-on practice, the sessions provided a well-rounded and accessible learning experience.

Training was conducted at several locations including Kelmscott, Osborne Park, Yanchep National Park, Bunbury, and multiple sessions at the DBCA Kensington Headquarters.

Participants had the opportunity to practice key first aid skills such as the recovery position, CPR, and the use of defibrillators. The course has been very well received, with over 180 volunteers participating and providing extremely positive feedback.

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"Appreciated the opportunity to practice CPR and applying a Defibrillator and to learn about the First Responder app. Thank you!"
.....



Above Essential First Aid training. *Photo – Gemma Vesely*



Above Wildlife and Snake Awareness training. *Photo – Gemma Vesely*

Wildlife and Snake Awareness

Many DBCA volunteers have shown a strong interest in learning how to respond when encountering snakes during their volunteer work. To support this, the Wildlife and Snake Awareness workshops delivered by Animal Ark have continued to provide valuable education to over 280 volunteers, helping to build both knowledge and confidence when working in bushland environments.

Before attending, some participants admitted to feeling uneasy or fearful around snakes. However, by the end of the session, many were not only more informed but also willing to get up close or even handle a snake.

Each participant also received a snake bandage as part of the training, giving them a practical tool to take with them into the field and reinforcing the importance of being prepared.

These workshops are always delivered in a calm and supportive environment by experienced presenters who blend factual information with personal stories. This approach helps volunteers feel more at ease and better prepared for any future reptile encounters.

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"Excellent, the presenters were knowledgeable and very engaging, encouraging questions, during the main talk and after when handling the reptiles".
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Snake Handling

Eight dedicated DBCA volunteers recently took part in a hands-on Snake Handling Training Course, designed to enhance safety and awareness when working in environments where snakes may be present. A snake catching kit was also purchased for their respective volunteer group.

This one-day course offered a comprehensive mix of theory and practical experience. Participants explored a range of topics including:

- An Overview of hazardous wildlife,
- Understanding the natural fear response to snakes
- Reptile behaviour and snake awareness
- Site Safety and invasion prevention
- Legal and moral responsibilities
- First aid for bites and stings
- Live, supervised snake catch and release practice with venomous snake.

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“The snake relocation course was excellent, well presented with lots of useful info. I’ve always respected snakes, but the course really helped me feel more at ease around them, especially with the great relocation kit we now have. Thank you”

.....

Below left Marc and Guy. Photo – Friends of Yellagonga

Below right Bryan Saunders. Photo – Friends of Beenyup Channel



Above Polyphagous shot-hole borer information session.

Photo – Gemma Vesely

De-escalating Conflict and Aggression

The highly regarded De-escalating Conflict and Aggression workshop, delivered by Evolve WA, continues to equip DBCA volunteers with essential skills for managing challenging situations in the field. This year’s sessions focused on practical strategies for responding to aggressive, threatening, or inappropriate behaviour with confidence and professionalism.

Through a dynamic mix of technical insights, real-life examples, and interactive role-playing scenarios, volunteers gained valuable tools to stay calm, assess situations, and respond effectively. The workshops were once again met with enthusiastic feedback, with over 250 volunteers participating across the program.

Polyphagous shot-hole borer information session

43 volunteers attended an informative session focused on the invasive beetle pest. The session covered key topics including the beetle’s biology, lifecycle, potential impacts, vulnerable tree species, and how to identify signs of infestation. Experts from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) also shared current control efforts and guided attendees on how to report suspected borer activity.

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“A fantastic session, the presenter was incredibly good. Answered all questions thoroughly and was clearly across this serious matter”

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Campground Hosts

Training and culture at Yanchep National Park

On 5 May, DBCA's Volunteer Coordination Unit hosted a special event at Gloucester Lodge in Yanchep National Park for campground hosts who joined the program before 2023.

The day opened with a Welcome to Country, smoking ceremony, and cultural storytelling by Derek Nannup, offering a deep connection to the Aboriginal heritage of the area.

Senior Ranger Pip followed with insights into the park's more recent history and the evolution of campground hosting at Yanchep.

Attendees received updates on the host program, health and safety briefings, and took part in a Q&A session.

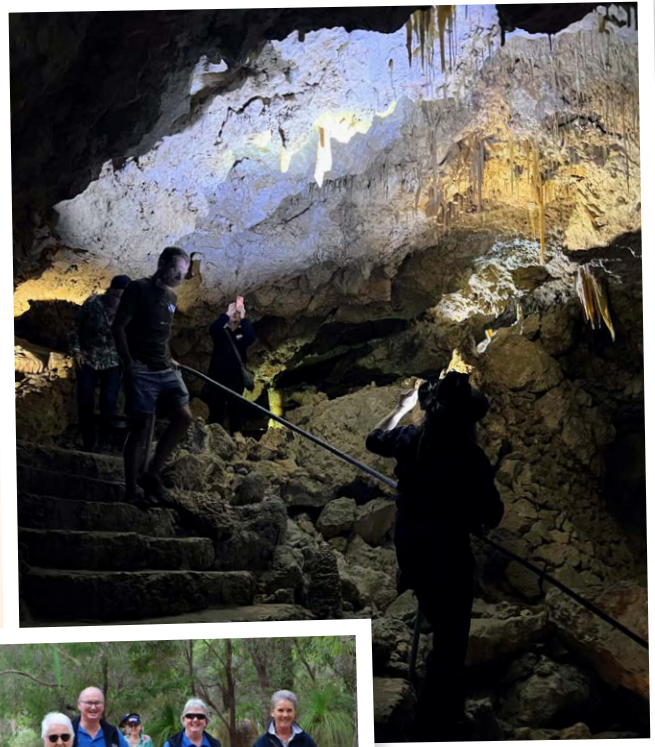
In the afternoon, 23 hosts completed a De-escalation, Conflict and Aggression workshop, aligning their training with current program standards.

The event concluded with cultural experiences at Wangi Mia, a guided tour of Crystal Cave, and a walk along the Koala Boardwalk—providing hosts with new knowledge, practical skills, and a renewed sense of purpose in their role.

Photos above top down Tour of Crystal caves. Volunteers enjoying a walk. Cultural experience. Koala walk and talk

Below Campground Hosts.

Photos – Gemma Vesely





Connecting with volunteers

The Volunteer Coordination Unit (VCU) has been out and about, meeting with DBCA volunteers to gain a deeper understanding of what's happening on the ground and how we can better support the amazing people who give their time and energy to our parks and conservation efforts.

On Penguin Island, we met Brian from the Penguin Island Volunteers. His deep knowledge of the island and its wildlife was impressive, and he was right there on the jetty, ready to welcome and inform visitors as they arrived.

We also spent time with Geoff, one of our dedicated campground host volunteers, who generously walked us through his daily duties and gave us a behind-the-scenes look at life as a host.

At Beenyup Channel in Yellagonga Regional Park, Bryan from the Friends of Beenyup Channel invited us to see the incredible work their group is doing to care for this special area. We even got our hands dirty helping with some weeding—and were treated to delicious homemade soup and cake with the team afterwards. It was a heartwarming reminder of the community spirit that drives so much of what our volunteers do.

We've thoroughly enjoyed these visits and are continually inspired by the passion, knowledge, and generosity of our volunteers.

If you'd like a visit from VCU to share your work and explore ways we can support you, please feel free to get in touch via email: pwsvolunteers@dbca.wa.gov.au

Above main The Friends of Beenyup Channel.

Far right Volunteer Geoff giving DBCA staff member Roxanne a tour of Penguin Island.

Right Volunteer Brian sharing his local knowledge with Roxanne, DBCA staff.

Photos – Gemma Vasely



For more information about volunteering with DBCA, please visit
dbca.wa.gov.au/volunteering or email **pwsvolunteers@dbca.wa.gov.au**

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