



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

Nearer to Nature

Providing opportunities for schools, families, community groups, overseas and interstate visitors to take part in fun, hands-on activities in the natural environment.

Issue 19 - June 2026



Get Nearer to Nature this Winter

Welcome to our Winter edition of the **Nearer to Nature** Newsletter. In the Southwest, we've entered the Noongar season of Makuru, the fourth of the six Noongar seasons, bringing the coldest and wettest time of the year. As the school term draws to a close, we're excited to share that our winter school holiday program has arrived.

This edition,

- **Winter July School Holiday Program**

- Zippy's Bush Kindy - July-Sept
- Perth Metro School Program Updates
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Winter School Holiday Program

Looking for something different these July school holidays?

Head out on one of our Frog Forages, try camp cooking and take part in cultural activities, or discover the habitats of waterbirds, dolphins or native bees. Celebrate NAIDOC Week, meet real scientists, learn about plastic with purpose, and connect with culture through hands-on interactive experiences.

For older kids, Pathways to Conservation offers a glimpse into real careers protecting our environment.

Rug up and join the adventure!

PARKS AND WILDLIFE WESTERN AUSTRALIA **NEARER TO NATURE**

For more information or online bookings limited spots!

PERTH WINTER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 2026

*An asterisk indicates this is a drop-off activity

Frog Forage Lightning Swamp Ages: Families 6yrs When: 6-8pm Friday 3 July Where: Lightning Swamp Bayswater	Little Bee Explorers Meet the Scientist Ages: 3-6yrs When: 9:30-11am Monday 6 July Where: Perth Hills Discovery Centre Mundaring	Camp Cooking and Culture Ages: 12-17yrs * When: 10am-12pm Tuesday 7 July Where: Perth Hills Discovery Centre Mundaring	Calling Kooyar Ages: 4-7yrs When: 1-2:30pm Wednesday 8 July Where: City of Melville Ecohub Winthrop	Frog Forage: Meet the Scientist @ CHEEC Ages: Families 8yrs When: 6-8pm Thursday 9 July Where: Canning River Eco Education Centre Wilson	NAIDOC EVENT Ages: All ages When: 11am-2pm Sunday 12 July Where: Yanchep National Park Activities are FREE National Park Entry Fees apply
Wonderful Waterbirds Ages: 4-7yrs When: 10-11:30am Monday 13 July Where: Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary Bayswater	Dolphin Discovery Ages: 4-7yrs When: 10-11:30am Tuesday 14 July Where: Canning River Eco Education Centre Wilson	Plastic with Purpose: Intro to Plastics Ages: 12-17yrs * When: 10-11:30am Wednesday 14 July Where: City of Melville Ecohub Winthrop	Plastics with Purpose: Start a Project Ages: 12-17yrs When: 12:30-2pm Wednesday 14 July Where: City of Melville Ecohub Winthrop	Pathways to Conservation: Marine and Wetlands Ages: 14-25yrs When: 10-11:30am Thursday 16 July Where: WA Maritime Museum Fremantle	Dolphin Discovery Ages: 4-7yrs When: 10-11:30am Friday 17 July Where: Sandy Beach Reserve Bassendean

Winter Program
2026

Zippy's Bush Kindy - Perth Hills Term 3



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RioTinto

We had so much fun adventuring, exploring and learning all about our bushland friends with our Zippy's Bush Kindy families this term. We can't wait to jump back into the forest with all our little explorer's for term 3 'Caring for the Land we Play On'.

You and your little ones can join Zippy the Dragonfly on our early learning adventures at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre this July. With one-hour sessions each week across an 8-week term, this interactive program sparks curiosity, encourages exploration and helps children strengthen their connection with nature.

Term 3 - 'Caring for the Land I Play On' - 21st July - 8th September

Term 4 - 'I am a Bushland Superhero' - Coming soon

Bookings for term 3 - Perth Hills Discovery Centre available [HERE](#)

For more information about Zippy's Bush Kindy please visit the website on the button below.

Brought to you by Kings Park and Botanic Garden and DBCA Parks and Wildlife's Nearer to Nature education teams. **Supported by Rio Tinto.**

Zippy's Bush Kindy

Perth Metro School Program Updates

It's hard to believe we're nearly halfway through the school year already! The Nearer to Nature Perth Metro Schools team has enjoyed a fantastic year so far. To date, more than 3,000 students from 75 schools have taken part in over 25 different programs. We're grateful for the ongoing support from the education community and feel privileged to share our time, passion, knowledge and love of the environment with students from across the state.

We've recently been developing a number of new programs and modules in response to valuable feedback from teachers. We'd love to hear from schools or educators interested in getting involved in these or other programs in the second half of the year.



Forests for our Future - Land cover change and responding to Climate Change **Suitable for Year 10-12 Biology and Geography**

Climate change is placing increasing pressure on ecosystems across Australia, presenting new challenges for forest management. In this program, students explore the history of forest management in the southwest and examine how human activity over the past 150 years has led to lasting changes in forest ecosystems and land cover.

Through a holistic investigation of a local forest, students will assess biodiversity using transect methods and take part in hands-on fieldwork to measure key indicators of forest health. They will also be guided through a discussion about one current forest management practice such as ecological thinning and consider how these approaches can support resilience and sustainability in a changing climate.

The program concludes by challenging students to reflect on their learning and consider their own ideas for managing **"forests for our future."**



Forest/Aquatic Discovery Days

(Sampling, Monitoring, Abiotic and Biotic factors, Ecological monitoring)

Suitable for Year 7-10 Science understanding

Why not bring your whole year group along for a Forest or Aquatic Discovery Day? These flexible, budget-friendly experiences are perfect for larger groups, with capacity for up to 120 students and a choice of up to four activities. Our team can tailor the day to suit your group size and needs.

Alongside popular activities like Animal Encounters, Investigating Animal Evidence, Western Shield program, Forest Walks and Water Catchment investigations, we also offer hands-on programs using real monitoring and sampling techniques—ideal for students collecting data and exploring local ecosystems.

- **Habitat or Fire Site Assessment** – Students examine field sites using a range of equipment to record abiotic and biotic factors, comparing how forests respond to fire and disturbance, and assessing suitability for local wildlife.
- **Forest Habitat Sampling** - Use field techniques and equipment to measure abiotic factors (e.g. moisture, canopy cover, leaf litter) and biotic factors (plants and invertebrates) along a transect. Students collect and compare biodiversity data from two forest sites (e.g. high vs low disturbance or recent vs long unburnt) and can take their data back to school for further analysis.
- **Biodiversity Observation (measuring biodiversity index)** - using transects students can use their observation skills to observe and record different plants and calculate the biodiversity of a site.
- **Capture Recapture Population Estimates** - learn how Western Shield scientists record fauna data in the field using our life sized “native fauna toys”. Then estimate population size using capture recapture techniques.

- **Aquatic Investigations** - can sample biotic (macroinvertebrates) and abiotic (water quality, pH, salinity, temperature) factors in a river or water location.

Contact us

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ttw@dbca.wa.gov.au / www.treetopwalk.com.au

Nearer to Nature

Perth Hills Discovery Centre Updates

Nearer to Nature Volunteers



We're incredibly grateful for the amazing work our volunteers do to support Nearer to Nature in delivering programs to families, schools and the wider community. They also play a vital role in helping manage our facilities and campground, we couldn't do it without them!

Pictured above, is one of our volunteers sewing a pouch onto a toy possum used in our Western Shield education programs, not something you see every day!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with Nearer to Nature at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre Campground, enquire by email to n2n@dbca.wa.gov.au

Facility Hire

Did you know the Perth Hills Discovery Centre offers venue hire for its facilities? Hire options include two amphitheater's, three meeting rooms, two outdoor shelters, a campground with camp kitchen, and a large outdoor pavilion, ideal for corporate or community events. For enquiries, please email n2n@dbca.wa.gov.au

Dieback Detector Dogs



We don't typically see dogs in our National Parks, as they're not permitted, but earlier this month was a special exception! The Dieback Detector Dogs and their trainers visited staff and rangers from **BoorYul Bah Bilya** alongside DBCA staff for training in this new technique to sniff out dieback.

Phytophthora cinnamomi (dieback) is a plant disease caused by a pathogen that threatens native ecosystems.

Under optimal conditions (moist and warm) *Phytophthora* produces zoospores in large numbers. Zoospores swim toward plant roots, as they are attracted to the chemicals that the roots release. Zoospores adhere to and infect the roots, producing mycelium. The *Phytophthora* mycelium draws nutrients from plant cells, fueling further growth and reproduction of the pathogen but killing the plant cells in the process. The entire plant dies if the root system becomes extensively infected or if *Phytophthora* reaches the collar (stem/trunk base) of the plant, cutting off water and nutrients to the crown (leaves and branches).

The dieback detector dogs are the latest tool being used to detect dieback

quickly by sniffing it out.

Dieback Detector Dogs

Campground Hosting at Perth Hills Discovery Centre in Mundaring



Volunteering as a Campground Host is a great way to explore the beauty and diversity of Western Australia's national and marine parks while helping others to also enjoy spending time in nature. The program is perfect for self-reliant experienced campers, who enjoy meeting people and love being outdoors. It is not suitable for pet owners as most campsites are located in national parks.

The Perth Hills Discovery Centre is located in the Jarrah forest in the **Beelu National Park** in Mundaring. Our small campground (12 tent campsites only) is close to the Mundaring Weir and is open for **public camping Friday to Sunday** nights and during the Western Australia public school holidays.

Many families use the campground as a practice camping space to trial the experience before they head out into more wild places. We also have hot showers.

The centre is also an environmental education facility where school and community groups visit regularly for programs and camp during the week.

We are looking for some new camp hosts to fill some gaps in our calendar this year. You must have, or be willing to apply for a **Working with Children Check**. Experience engaging with children and families preferred.

Please express your interest by contacting n2n@dbca.wa.gov.au

Wishing you all a safe and happy holiday season.



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Nearer to Nature in the Perth Hills and surrounds is generously supported by Alcoa and the *Western Shield* program.

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