

Hills Local Permaculture Group

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**H LPG ARE
GATHERING FOR A
BRUNCH IN
DECEMBER
&
WILL
RECONVENE IN
FEBRUARY 2011**

**We wish you
all a safe and
happy festive
season**

Survival tips for your garden this summer

Mulch, mulch, mulch

Use wetting agents – see below for information on bentonite.

Don't prune, over fertilise or over water stressed plants

Apply a foliar feed at half the recommended rate once a fortnight to avoid over-stimulating stressed plants – preferably in the cool of the morning. Benefit - plants produce robust growth at a steady rate and remain resistant to pests and diseases.

Apply sulphate of potash to fruit trees and roses. Mix approx. one heaped teaspoon into 2 litres of water and apply to the roots. Benefit - sweetens fruit and thickens cell walls, helping to protect leaves against fungal disease.

Place straw bales around the vegetable beds as a water saving measure which slows down the wind, reduces evaporation and requires less watering. The bales also provide a support structure for temporary shade cloth cover.

For pot plants put some sand into the saucer to keep the roots cool and boost the humidity around the plant and prevent mosquitoes from breeding in the water. Remember to mulch pot plants. If you need to keep the pots in the sun try putting the pot into a bigger pot and fill the gap between the two pots with mulch. This will insulate the plant's roots and conserve water.

What is bentonite?

Bentonite is a type of clay believed to be formed from decomposed volcanic ash – made from the minerals Montmorillonite and Beidellite (just in case you really wanted to know!). It is used in many industries for loads of different tasks – from sinking oil wells, to dam lining to kitty litter manufacture. Essentially, it is of interest to gardeners due to its water holding ability. It is useful in binding soil particles together to create a crumb structure, particularly when used with gypsum which keeps the bentonite from forming a putty when wet.

Bentonite replaces products like 'Wetta Soil'* when worked into the top 100mm of soil. Use at a rate of 1kg per 10m² on coarse sandy soils, and ½ kg per 10m² on finer soils or soils with a higher humus content.

*Note – we recommend 'Sand Remedy' as a pre-mixed product ready to use on your garden in place of soil wetting agents. It has gypsum and other minerals added for improved performance., and is much easier to use than bentonite on its own.

Bentonite information taken from Green Life Soil Co. website
<http://www.greenlifesoil.com.au/sandremedy.htm>

Sustainable Christmas Checklist

Travel

It's never been easier to get around the state, around the country, around the world. New and cheaper modes of transport allow us to get together as never before at Christmas time. But spare a thought for the planet as you set off.

1. Set off and offset

If you have to fly to the family rendezvous, buy some carbon offset credits involving investing in renewable energy or planting trees, or make a large donation to an environmental group.

2. Drive Right

If you're driving, try to car pool, and remember that if you're driving slowly, you should cool down by opening the windows; if you're driving fast, wind them up and turn on the airconditioning to avoid drag (and for a full set of ecodriving tips, go to <http://www.ecodrivingusa.com/#/ecodriving-practices/>)

Presents

Giving Christmas presents isn't simply a matter of giving people you like things they'd like. Christmas exchanges are often a highly complicated system for sending messages about affection, debt, relationships, status, and mutual obligation. There are other ways to build these relationships that don't involve buying the latest gizmos. How many of those presents are really apologies - "Sorry I couldn't spend more time with you, have this soap instead"? How many recipients wouldn't rather have the time?

3. If you can't cut it out, cut it down

Trim your present list. If you cut off the outliers, would they be annoyed or just relieved that they didn't have to reciprocate?

4. Lucky dip

If you're tired of the Christmas hassle, go for a Kris Kringle and cut down the choosing and buying and wrapping. Before the holiday season begins, ask Grandmother or some other trustworthy member of the family to put the names of all the adult family members on slips. Take turns picking one name per adult - the name you pick is your gift recipient. Keep your chosen pick a secret to help maintain an element of surprise. You can now focus on a special gift for the person whose name you picked, without the difficulty and expense of finding just the right gift for everyone. An agreed spending limit will help prevent everyone feeling they have to go overboard.

5. Make it work

The most wasteful present of all is the unwanted one - a recent Newspoll survey of 1200 Australians found more than half the people questioned received Christmas presents they didn't use. Cut down those figures by asking people what they'd like, or paying much more notice to hints throughout the year! Remember, it's the thought that really matters.

6. Doing, not buying

We all have too many possessions, and we keep building larger houses to put them in. This year don't add to them - instead, give your friend an activity or an experience: a mud spa, a ticket to a musical, or a balloon ride. You'll also save on wrapping costs.

7. Think global, buy local

Buy gifts from local craft stalls or shops. You'll be supporting local artists, rather than mass-produced objects made by offshore companies. Try Australian native foods like wild rosella jam or finger-lime marmalade. These support agriculture that's more suited to our climate.

8. Give green

Buy gifts that help someone else live sustainably, such as seedlings for a vegie patch (see <http://www.communitygarden.org.au/>) or a water-saving shower head.

9. Get green

If you don't already have one, put a composter or wormery on your Christmas present list. Many local councils offer these at reduced prices, as household composting reduces their waste bill.

10. Give recycled

Look for items made from recycled materials – stationery made from recycled paper, say.

11. Give fair

Avoid sweatshop goods. Buy Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolates that ensure a fair price for farmers in developing countries.

12. Give good

Get a present that appeals to the recipient's good side. Give a donation to a charity in their name. Give them a card telling them that you have made a donation. Donate to your favourite community group online at the [Australian Giving Centre](#). Over 1000 appeals have been listed using this commission-free service. You can browse the list, or search for a group or cause you support.

13. Do good

Cut out the middleman and do the good yourself: give a card promising that you'll participate in tree planting or volunteer on Clean up Australia Day, for example.

14. Buy good

Many charities such as [Oxfam](#) have their own shops – can you get your presents there? Check out all the great places to shop using the [2008 Good Gifts Guide](#).

15. Get good

Ask your friends not to give you a Christmas present this year but instead donate the money they would have spent on you to a nominated community group. It'll make for a more meaningful Christmas than another pair of novelty socks.

16. Give mine

Give away something you already own. We all have more possessions than we really need – that's what makes eBay sellers. What do you have that others would prize? If you find the right gift, it's a win/win – they get the present and you get the storage space. To get others on board, suggest that your friends and family put in place a gift exchange this Christmas.

17. Power up

Switch over to [Green Power](#) for your Christmas event. Green Power is an accredited program which guarantees electricity supplied from renewable sources, such as solar or wind-power. Everyone with an electricity supply can choose to source some or all of their electricity from Green Power through their electricity supplier all year round.

18. Walk to the shops

When you go Christmas shopping, try to walk, or take the bus and a folding trolley. If you have to use the car, make only one big trip. This requires a lot of planning, and a shopping list the size of a senate ballot paper, but you'll soon get used to it.

19. Discourage plastic

Minimise your plastic bag use; use recyclable bags which you can also tie up with a ribbon and use for gift wrapping. Favour presents that aren't covered in five successive layers of plastic wrap.

20. They live again

Batteries contain toxic chemicals, don't biodegrade and are difficult to recycle. When you give a gift of battery-powered toys, throw in some rechargeable ones or try the new AA size USB rechargeable batteries. By opening the cap and plugging into a USB connector, you can recharge them pretty much anywhere there's a USB socket. You'll never have to search for a charger again.

21. Heavy metal

If you have to use non-rechargeable batteries, then buy the alkaline manganese variety rather than those that contain toxic heavy metals (cadmium and mercury). Get a battery charger – another item to add to the Xmas present list if you don't already have one!

22. Batteries not included

Better still, give 'battery-free' gifts – books or toys that require the child to use some imagination.

23. Making it

People really appreciate something handmade. What about whipping up a batch of kumquat marmalade, or home-made chutneys or cakes, or flavored olive oil with dried chillies, garlic or herbs, or vodka ditto? Break out your artistic talents and give a drawing or even a poem.

24. Green glean

If you want to go **really** green, do some gleaning (picking unwanted fruit or vegetables from public land or unused properties) and turn wasted fruit into jams or other presents.

25. Give health

Get the kids to appreciate the environment by getting them outside in it. Camping and sports gear, binoculars, and bugcatchers are popular gifts. Swimming and beach gear also get them out and about. Throw in a hat and some sunscreen for good measure.

26. Ageing them

Buy vintage; second-hand presents – anything from valuable antiques to garage sale or op-shop treasures. Take some time to find gifts you know your friends and family will appreciate.

27. Auntie Fay had the right idea ...

Go and get out the wrapping paper that you saved from last Christmas's presents. There's no point recycling if you don't reuse.

28. Coloured paper is coloured paper

You can wrap presents in newspapers with interesting headlines, or comics pages, or magazines.

29. Give n' wrap

How about making the wrapping part of your gift? Wrap crockery or kitchenware in dishtowels, and baby gifts in fluffy blankets. Or how about a wicker basket, a useful gift as well as a container?

30. String it out

Use ribbon or string instead of sticky tape to wrap presents. Sticky tape isn't biodegradable, and also prevents the wrapping paper being reused.

31. Unplugged

Better still, hide the presents in the house and garden and organise a treasure hunt so you can do away with wrapping altogether.

The Tree

32. Under the tree

Why not just hang the baubles on a tree or a shrub in your back yard? Most of them are water-resistant. Give your garden that extra sparkle.

33. They live again, Part 2

If you must have the tree in the house, you can still get a tree or a shrub in a pot and trolley it in and out each Christmas.

34. Scout it out

Failing that, buy a locally grown tree, preferably from a community group, and then recycle it afterwards.

Decoration

35. Lighting the Tree

Choose LED fairy lights - LED (Light Emitting Diode) holiday lights use up to 95% less energy than larger, traditional holiday bulbs and last up to 100,000 hours when used indoors. LED holiday lights use .04 watts per bulb, 10 times less than mini bulbs and 100 times less than traditional holiday bulbs. As an added bonus, if one of the LED lights burns out the rest of the strand will stay lit.

36. Cut the cards

Look over your Christmas card list and trim off anybody you can't remember at all. Make your own Christmas cards, or have the children do it.

Give a Green Christmas Giving Card, with a guaranteed dollar going to the community group or school of your choice.

37. Deck the halls with real holly

Instead of spending money on artificial Christmas decorations that won't biodegrade, make house decorations out of recycled and scrap materials. Try popcorn, dough, cinnamon sticks, bows, gingerbread, holly, pinecones, eucalyptus leaves, seasonal berries, ivy, dried flowers, and evergreen branches - and once you've finished with them, you can put them in the composter.

Eating

38. Enough, not too much

Most people buy too much food at Christmas, much of which goes to waste and much of which goes straight to the hips. This year plan your meals and only buy what you need to make the guests feel satisfied without actually being bloated.

39. Hang loose

Buy loose rather than pre-packed vegetables—it'll help cut down on waste packaging. Better still; grow your own next year.

40. Eat sustainables

If you eat meat, think about buying organic and free range. (But don't forget that many believe that the vegetarian diet is greenest of all.) If you eat fish, check out the Sustainable Seafood Guide.

41. Be a local yokel

Remember to buy local food (check the label – watch out for those grapes from California!) – it helps the local economy and is better for the environment because the produce hasn't needed to be transported long distances in carbon-emitting planes, ships or trucks to get to you. Support local shops. Even better, get to know your local food co-op.

42. And afterwards, Frisbees

If you really have to use disposable plates, choose the sturdy paper variety, not plastic, and reuse them. Even better, serve your food on a bread base.

43. Take a taxi home

Taxis count as public transport. And drinking and driving wastes valuable lives.

The 26th – and after**44. Washing up**

When you're doing the *enormous* amounts of post-Christmas washing up (paper plates or no paper plates), do it in a tub and pour that water onto the garden. Use green detergents that won't kill the plants.

45. Put it away

Save the present wrapping to use next year (see #27 above). Bubble wrap can be stored for reuse, or recycled (foam packing chips are not as easily recycled). Cardboard boxes should be opened flat and set out for recycling; storing and reusing them is even better, as no additional energy is used in remanufacturing.

46. What remains

Recycle your bottles and cans and plastics. Save the corks, too. Give them to a community group to use in their fundraising.

47. Two by Two

Recycle your Christmas cards with Planet Ark. From Boxing Day till the end of January, simply take your unwanted Christmas, birthday and other greeting cards and envelopes into any Australia Post outlet, pick up a free reply paid envelope, put your cards inside and drop it into your nearest street posting box.

48. Feed the earth

The worms need their Christmas blowout too; compost your leftovers.

49. Better to give

If you got things that you didn't want, give them to an op shop, pass them to a friend, or put them away to give next year.

50. Look ahead

A jar of your home-grown olives would make a nice present. Olive trees don't bear fruit for eight years, though, so you'd better buy one and plant it today.

**Reduce, re-use, recycle and recover:
Have a very sustainable Christmas**

With thanks to Environment Victoria's Festive Season Guide, the Australian Conservation Foundation's The Hidden Cost of Christmas, Australian Ecosystems, EcoDriving USA, Go Greener! Australia, the Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network, Penrith City Council, The Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand, eartheasy, GreenPower, The Australian Marine Conservation Society, and Planet Ark.

www.givingweek.com.au

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS

Kanyana Wildlife

When you join the Adopt an Animal project you will receive:

- A personalised adoption certificate*
- A picture of your adopted species on the certificate*
- The quarterly Kanyana newsletter*
- * Please allow 10 days for delivery*



<http://www.kyanawildlife.org.au>

StreetDoctor Needs Your Help!

Your valuable donation will assist StreetDoctor to continue to provide medical assistance and support for Perth's homeless and marginalised populations.

Our greatest need is to purchase and fit out a new Van to carry out this vital work.

All donations are tax deductible, and Perth Primary Care Network is a Western Australian registered charity – licence 21078

100% of all donations go directly to StreetDoctor – no funds are used in administration.

Go to the website to donate or send your donation to:

StreetDoctor
PO Box 354, GUILDFORD WA 6935
Or call us direct on (08) 9376 9200

<http://ppcn.org.au/donations/>

Adopt an Animal from the Perth Zoo

Adopting an animal is a fun and rewarding way to support Perth Zoo's vital breeding and conservation programs annually!

Your animal will still live at the Zoo, but you'll go home knowing you're supporting the Zoo and its purpose – to secure long term populations of species in natural environments while engaging the community in global conservation.

Adoption fees help Perth Zoo take good care of the animals, protect endangered species, and pursue on-going conservation efforts.

Your 12-month adoption package includes:

- Personalised adoption certificate with a photo of your animal
- Subscription to News Paws, Perth Zoo's quarterly magazine

<http://www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au/Get-Involved/Adopt-an-Animal/>

Which is your favourite
Perth Zoo animal?

Adopt them today.
Call 9474 0350



Watch for signs of depression during the festive season

Watch out for the signs of depression over the festive period and reach out to people who might need help, says *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*.

beyondblue CEO, Leonie Young said today the festive season can be a stressful time, with the pressures of selecting gifts, preparing food and entertaining family members.

"Many people build up to this time of year with great expectations only to face an anticlimax if their hopes aren't fulfilled. Separation or divorce, or just being a long way from home, can bring back painful memories or create strong emotions.

beyondblue psychologist and Deputy CEO, Dr Nicole Highet said stress linked to Christmas and holidays should not be confused with the illness, depression. If the stress continues however, it can lead to distress, which may lead in some instances to depression.

"People with depression sometimes find that the holidays interfere with their regular routine and visits to health professionals may be disrupted because of the holidays. This means they rely more on their friends and family for support, which can create tension on both sides. We need to be aware of the feelings of people who aren't well, especially around the Christmas and New Year period."

"If you notice any changes in the behaviour of someone you care about, be there to offer support. If they don't seem to be coping, help the person to see a GP or other health professional. Keep in close contact with them and try not to leave them alone if they do have a problem," said Dr Highet.

A list of tips for how to help someone with depression is attached to this media release.

An interactive depression checklist and other information about depression, effective treatments and how to help someone can be found on the *beyondblue* website: www.beyondblue.org.au.

TOP TIPS: Practical ways to help someone with depression

People with depression often don't see the point of doing anything and may feel that no one can really help them. Helping someone who isn't ready to recognise they need assistance may be very difficult.

DO - you can help someone by:

- Spending time talking about their experiences
- Indicating that you've noticed a change in their behaviour
- Letting them know you're there to listen without being judgmental
- Suggesting they see a doctor or mental health professional
- Assisting them to make an appointment and/or going with them to see a doctor or mental health professional
- Asking how their appointment went
- Talking openly about depression and assisting them to find information

- Encouraging them to exercise, eat well and become involved in social activities
- Keeping in touch and encouraging close friends and family to do the same.

DON'T - it's unhelpful to:

- Pressure them to 'snap out of it', 'get their act together' or 'cheer up'
- Stay away or avoid them
- Tell them they just need to stay busy or get out more
- Pressure them to party more or wipe out how they're feeling with drugs or alcohol
- Assume the problem will just go away.

For more information about depression, the effective treatments available and how to help someone visit www.beyondblue.org.au

or call Lifeline's Just Ask information line on 1300 13 11 14.

For urgent assistance call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (local call).



Christmas volunteers needed

The Salvation Army is seeking volunteers over the Christmas season to help with gift wrapping, receiving donations and packing food hampers.

There are a variety of locations and shift times, including outside work hours.

If you can help with this please contact Amy McAllister on (08) 9260 9500 or email amy.mcallister@aus.salvationarmy.org



What can you do to help the wildlife after a bushfire?

The word 'fire' has been at the forefront of many of our minds this summer, after the Victorian bushfires and the more recent Toodyay fires. Many of us in the Perth Hills have had some experience of a bushfire close to home.

With this heightened awareness of the impact of bushfires comes an opportune time to provide some information about what we can do for wildlife after a bushfire has wiped out their protective cover, nesting and roosting sites, as well as their food sources. Remember that wildlife habitats may take up to a year to regenerate once a bushfire has occurred.

Wildlife affected by a bushfire are more than likely:

- In shock
- Suffering from burns and/or smoke inhalation
- Injured
- Dehydrated
- Highly stressed – native animals are especially susceptible to stress and this alone is enough to kill them
- Hungry
- Frightened and disorientated
- Orphaned
- Highly vulnerable to predators
- Suffering from burns or wounds that could become fly-blown due to the warm temperatures

Injured wildlife, other than orphans, will adopt the preservation reflex whereby they will mask their pain and injuries in order to appear normal.

Homes on the fringes of the fire will become a refuge for wildlife that may have been forced there by the fire.

If you find an injured native animal suffering burns, sick, injured or orphaned you can:

When dealing with injured or orphaned wildlife after bushfires, it is important not to frighten them. All wildlife should be treated with caution, especially when they are distressed and injured. Untrained members of the public should only tend to those animals that are severely injured or unlikely to be able to care for themselves.

Wildlife that may bite, or are otherwise dangerous (e.g. venomous snakes), should only be handled by trained wildlife carers or handlers.

The immediate and basic needs of injured wildlife are:

- Secure containment to prevent further injury
- Warmth
- Quiet
- Dark
- No food or water
- Urgent help from a qualified person, either a vet or a wildlife carer.



If the animal is small:

- Place it in a pillow case or cloth bag. If this is not possible place a thick cloth, such as a towel, at the bottom of the container to allow the animal to grip. The cloth should not have any loose threads in case the animal entangles its claws.
- Place this in a box a little larger than the animal, preferably not a cage, so that the animal does not do further damage to itself or its feathers. Ensure that the container is well fastened and has ventilation.
- Place the box in a shady/cool place that is quiet and dark if possible. Do not place water in the box as the animal will more than likely overturn the water container and end up getting wet and losing body heat.
- Contact a wildlife carer, Wildcare helpline or vet and make arrangements to bring the animal to the centre/carer.

Do not try to feed or give the animal a drink. Once the wildlife carer has made an assessment of the animal then the carer may wish to provide the animal with rehydrating liquid.

REMEMBER to note the exact location and time of day that the animal was found as all rehabilitators endeavour to return the animals to their own territories. This is critical in the case of extremely territorial birds such as magpies.

If the animal is large:

- Keep clear of the animal and attempt to leave it undisturbed (i.e. keep pets away and unnecessary vehicle traffic).
- Note its location and apparent difficulty.
- Contact a wildlife carer, Wildcare helpline or a vet and describe the situation. The carer/vet/helpline will then offer advice on how to proceed.

You can help the wildlife by:

- Placing water around your house both on and above the ground (see information below about providing water for wildlife).
- Keeping domestic animals restrained for a few weeks after the fire.
- Being careful of what food you leave out – seek advice first – in case you attract foxes, rats and predators.
- *Not* leaving food out for animals in natural bushland or burn-out areas.
- *Not* trying to catch or corner animals stranded in a small area in case they are frightened back towards the fire.
- *Not* attempting to catch kangaroos as you can cause myopathy (affects muscles) if chased. Kangaroos can also inflict serious injuries to humans.
- Taking care whilst driving in areas that have been affected by the fire as animals will be on the move in search of food and shelter.
- Planting trees and shrubs that provide shelter and food for wildlife after the fire has been through – or perhaps do this when the weather cools to create a wildlife habitat.
- Building bird nesting boxes to replace logs and hollows destroyed in the fires



Heat Stress and wildlife

The high temperatures impact not only on us, our gardens, our pets and livestock, but also on the wildlife. During the hottest months numerous animals are brought in to wildlife carers because of heat stress.

What you can do

Offering water is recommended particularly during hot days. Some simple guidelines when putting out water are:

- Place water containers at different heights and sizes for different species of animals: Ground level: skinks, lizards, echidnas, kangaroos, etc. Bird baths on pedestals: birds. Higher level/trees: possums, gliders, birds, etc.
- Place rocks or branches inside the water containers to help small animals that may fall into the water to get out and avoid drowning.
- Make sure the water container is properly secured so it does not tip over if the animals step on it in order to drink.
- Place the water containers in a shady and safe area, accessible for the wildlife, far from pets that may hurt or hunt the wildlife.
- Top up and change the water regularly to ensure a constant supply of fresh clean water.



Dehydration and burnt paws are very common during hot days. When encountering animals affected by hot weather, contact your local wildlife carer or Vet or call the Wildcare helpline for further assessment and treatment.

If you find an animal

- If you find any nocturnal animal, e.g possums, wandering around during the day, you need to ring for help immediately.
- If the animal is lethargic and does not try to get away from you, please call a wildlife carer, the Wildcare helpline or a Vet.
- In the case of a possum or bird and if you are confident enough to do so, try placing a cool, wet towel over the animal to pick it up and put it in a well ventilated box.
- Offer water in a bowl. Many animals that are suffering from heat stress will not drink on their own. You need to get this animal to an experienced carer as soon as possible so they can start rehydrating the animal.
- Please note down the location of where you found the animal. This is really important so that carers can release the animal back to its home when it has recovered.
- Please remember, as a member of public there are penalties for holding onto wildlife without the relevant permit. It is in the best interests of the animal's health to get them to an experienced carer as soon as possible.



If you find a sick or injured native animal, use this 24-hour emergency number:



WILDCARE (08) 9474 9055

The WILDCARE Helpline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, diverting to after hours numbers at nights and weekends, to provide immediate assistance.

Volunteers handle telephone inquiries and refer callers to one of 340 registered wildlife rehabilitators who take care of the animal before releasing it back into its native habitat.

DEC Wildlife Rehabilitators' Course

DEC provides a comprehensive [Wildlife Rehabilitators' Course](#) for people interested in helping our increasingly beleaguered wildlife.

References:

Glove Box Guide: Sick, Injured or Orphaned Wildlife. Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre. <http://www.kanyanawildlife.org.au/contact.php>

Graeme Eggleston *Caring for native animals after bushfires.* Primefact 404, November 2006. NSW Department of Primary Industries. <http://new.dpi.vic.gov.au/home>

Wildlife Rescuers www.wildliferescuers.org.au

Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia. www.dec.wa.gov.au



Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide

Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide Online - the first online sustainability guide for seafood consumers in Australia. It was developed in response to growing public concern about overfishing and its impact on our oceans and their wildlife. It is designed to help you make informed seafood choices and play a part in swelling the tide for sustainable seafood in Australia.

The fish we choose today will directly affect the health of our oceans tomorrow. Overfishing, destructive fishing gear and poor aquaculture practices impact significantly on our seas, marine wildlife and habitats. An incredible 80% of the world's fish stocks are now over-exploited or fished right up to their limit. Once considered inexhaustible, our oceans are now in a state of global crisis, and they need our help.

http://www.amcs.org.au/Sustainable-Seafood-Guide-Australia.asp?active_page_id=695



Expanding ocean dead zones raise mass extinction fears

A dramatic increase in the number and size of oxygen starved lifeless areas of ocean during recent decades has Australian scientists worried the globe is facing an imminent mass extinction event. Oceanographers have charted over 400 of these dead zones since the year 2000, a more than 3.5 fold increase over 1980s data.

Scientists from the University of Queensland say declining oxygen levels in the ocean is likely to have been a major factor in at least four of the five mass extinctions. This time though, the likely cause is directly and indirectly human driven (climate changes and massive fertiliser run off from agriculture), as opposed to volcanic. While acknowledging already high extinction rates caused by rapid human population growth and development at the cost of the natural environment, scientists are now warning that up to 90% of life on the planet could be threatened if our oceans cannot breathe.

Eco Media
Posted: 01 Dec 2010

Water increasingly expensive for some

Although Australians have cut their water usage by approximately 25% over the past five years, water prices have almost doubled and are expected to keep rising. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics also show that farmers pay just a fraction (around 5%) of the price domestic consumers are charged, and that water use by mining and manufacturing industries is increasing.

Eco Media
Posted: 29 Nov 2010

Source: *From the Soil Up*

Medicinal Herbs to Become Illegal

In less than a year, virtually all medicinal herbs will be illegal in the European Union and then no doubt around the world. The secret weapon used by drug companies is trade law. The European Directive on Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products (THMPD) was enacted back in March 2004, and will become law as of April 1, 2011. Traditional Chinese Medicine and Ayurvedic formulas that contain a number of herbs will have to license each herb separately at an estimated cost per nutrient or herb ranging from £80,000 to £120,000. Of course, this has not, is likely not to occur.

Cancer Treatment Affects Others

There are about 40,000 new cases of thyroid cancer a year, and most patients are treated with radiation, which makes them potentially dangerous to people around them for up to a week. The question of where they should spend that time is drawing new concern from doctors, public health officials and regulators. It is known that relatives and strangers would get a radiation dose from such patients, but it assumed that the doses to people like hotel clerks and chambermaids would be random and that no one was likely to be exposed repeatedly.

Livestock Methane Calculator

A new calculator shows that with only small changes to management, cattle producers can completely offset the global warming effect of methane from their animals. The man behind the calculator, author and founder of the carbon grazing principle, Alan Lauder, has worked with some of Australia's leading scientists to tackle the issue of livestock emissions and offsets from a practical and previously unconsidered approach.

Monsanto's Fortunes Waning

How did Monsanto go from Wall Street hero to Wall Street doormat? Monsanto "has been buffeted by setbacks this year." The most famous one is the rise of Roundup-resistant "superweeds," first in the south and then in the Corn Belt, that has forced thousands of farmers to reconsider the merits of Monsanto's flagship Roundup Ready crop varieties. And their SmartStax corn is "providing yields no higher than the company's less expensive corn, which contains only three foreign genes." As a result, the company is having to slash prices on both SmartStax and its new soybean seed, cleverly called Roundup Ready 2 Yield.

Wiping Out Seed Diversity

A single company peddling a patent-protected, ecologically dodgy product can effectively wipe out non-GM alternatives in just two years. In 2008, the USDA approved planting of Monsanto's Roundup Ready sugar beet, and they rapidly conquered the market. By this year's spring planting, Monsanto's patented GM seeds covered a jaw-dropping 95% of sugar beet fields. But back in August, a federal judge effectively nixed the USDA's approval of GM sugar beets, and as a result it is estimated that the ban on GM sugar beet seeds would cut U.S. total sugar production by 20% in 2011, due to the the "limited availability of conventional seed."

Emu absence could affect seed dispersal

SCIENTISTS will collaborate and discover how the decline of a key seed disperser, the emu, affects the long distance movement of seeds from the South-West Australian forest plant species.

They will examine the effect on these plant populations in the longer term if their primary disperser starts to disappear from the landscape.

The Australian Research Council has injected \$420,000 into the three year project, which puts the impact of climate change and land clearance leading to habitat fragmentation under the spotlight.

Plant ecologist and Murdoch University Professor Neal Enright says the research shows long distance dispersal of plants is essential for successful colonisation of new habitat.

“Using molecular markers, we’ve found that some plant species in the high diversity shrub lands of the northern sand plains region around Eneabba are able to successfully move quite long distances,” he says.

“Even though they might have large seeds not readily moved by wind, or are ant dispersed.

“This suggests there may be a range of mechanisms involved in dispersal that are facilitating longer distance movement of seeds than we might otherwise expect, and we believe the emu is important here.

“So we want to explore this for the south west Jarrah forest region using the genetic molecular marker approach we used previously in the northern shrub lands.”

The study will compare forest areas with reasonably intact emu populations with those where emu populations have declined.

In areas where there are intact Emu populations and extensive areas of forest, researchers expect to see more natural patterns of distribution, including long-distance dispersal events.

However where forest areas are fragmented and Emu numbers are low, there may be shifts in the pattern of the genetic structure of some plant populations with most plants recruiting close to parents.

Prof Enright says if results show seeds in declining Emu populated areas are not being dispersed over long distances it would indicate there might be problems for the species to be able to respond to global change issues.

“It appears climate change isn’t representing the sort of barrier to plants getting around the landscape we feared it might but that’s still very uncertain at this stage.”

He says the results of the study will help inform managers about the risks and threats to many native plant species and ascertain if scientists have to help them.



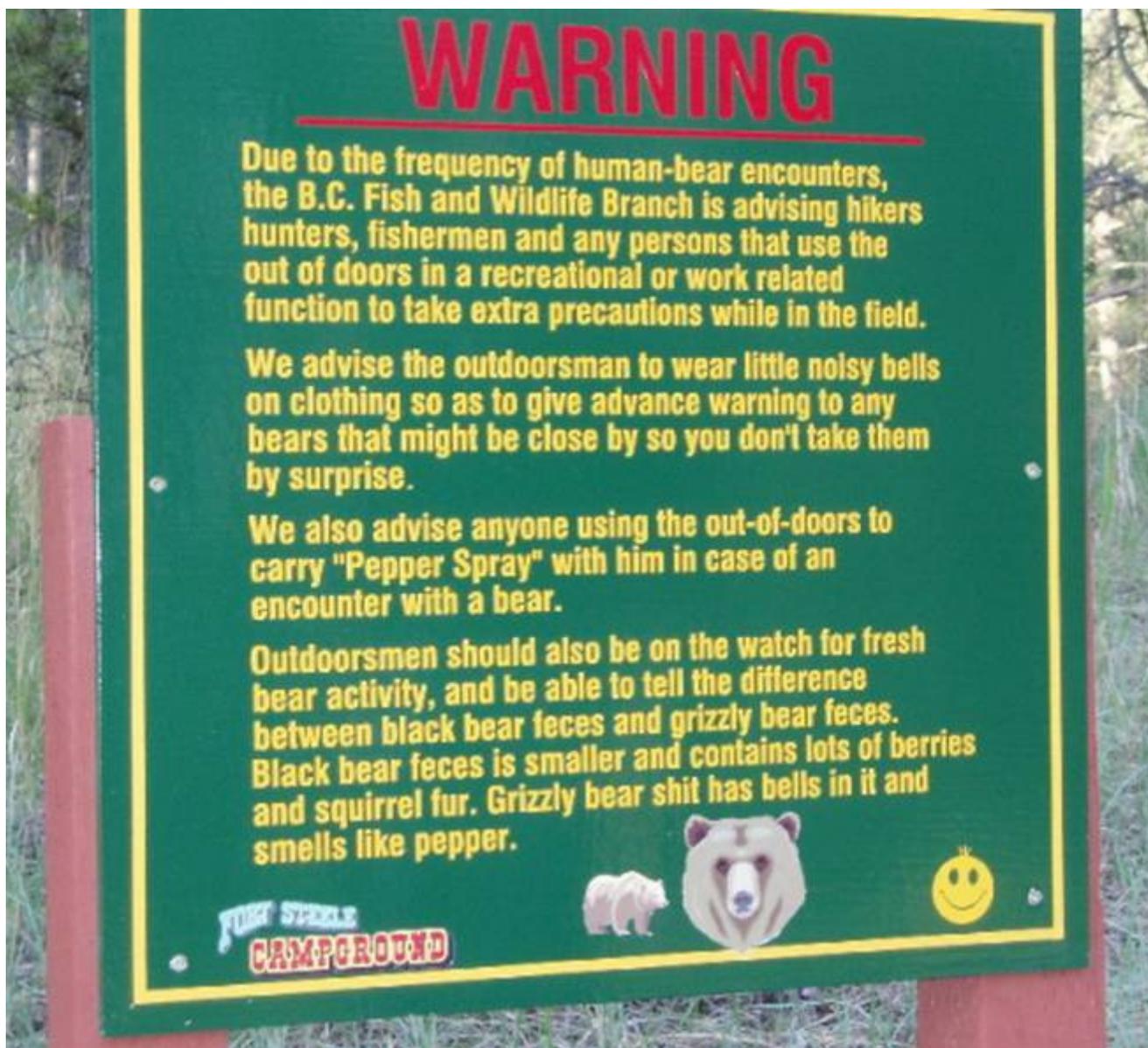
The decline of emu populations could have a disastrous knock-on effect for local flora.
Image: Istockphoto

“Do we have to start moving plants around the landscape because they’re not going to be able to do it themselves?”

“Or in fact, are they quite resilient and adaptable and are they going to be able to move about the landscape without that sort of help.”

“These are fairly important issues that need to be resolved.”

Written by Rashelle Predovnik
Thursday, 02 December 2010
Science Network WA



Twenty Simple Things - Some easy ways you can help our native wild birds

With 100 of Australia's 800 native bird species under threat, and the very real possibility that that figure could double this century, we should all be mindful of the impact we have on our environment. Important bird habitat does not just exist in wilderness and bush however; our own backyards can provide valuable breeding and feeding grounds for some of our precious native birds. Birds Australia, our country's native bird conservation group, has compiled a list of twenty things you can do to help secure the future of our native birds.



1. Plant natives from local seed in your garden; ask your local nursery to stock local native seed or propagate your own and give extras to the neighbours.
2. If your garden contains medium to large trees without hollows, erect nesting boxes designed for the species you wish to encourage and evict unwelcome visitors such as Rainbow Lorikeets, Corellas and feral honeybees.
3. Plant prickly native shrubs in clumps so small birds can nest safely away from cats and dogs.
4. Be careful about feeding birds in your garden. Try not to let native birds become too dependent on the food supply. For the long-term, plant native shrubs and trees to provide the birds with natural food.
5. Utilise your local City Council's free trees program (if one exists).
6. If you live on the land, work towards the development of a bird-friendly farm by maintaining and enlarging areas of remnant vegetation to cover at least 10 percent, preferably 30 percent, of your property.
7. Where dams exist create a bird-friendly environment with a shallow, reedy area as well as a deep area to encourage a mix of wading and diving birds. An island will provide refuge from predators and breeding areas for a range of birds.
8. Purchase a field guide for your home or give one to a friend. You will soon enjoy identifying regular garden visitors and birds you see when bushwalking or on holidays.
 - *The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* by Graham Pizzey,
 - *The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds* by Peter Slater et al
 - *Field Guide to Australian Birds* by Michael Morcombe.
9. Save hair and beard trimmings to spread on the lawn for birds – they make great nesting materials and are gratefully received by local native birds.
10. Encourage recycling in your home and workplace. Involve the kids at home by introducing fun activities such as papermaking.
11. Be a responsible cat owner. In Victoria alone, over 200 million wild creatures – many of them native birds – are killed each year by our pets, stray and feral cats. Keep your cat inside at night and, when outside, confine them to a fenced or caged area. They do get used to it, and it also protects them from disease, dogs and cars. It's the least that you can do for the birds!
12. When you come across sizable road kill, move it well away from the road so birds of prey can

feed on it safely (taking care not to become road kill yourself!).

13. Don't tidy up your yard too much! Birds use undergrowth, leaf litter and dead branches for protection, shelter and feeding.
14. Get your workplace involved in sponsoring a threatened species or project through Birds Australia and enjoy following its progress together.
15. Help change longstanding attitudes that native vegetation is unattractive; give gifts of books featuring native landscapes, potted plants or seedlings and native floral arrangements. Learn to tell the difference between the local native plants and the introduced ones.
16. It is estimated that billions of birds may be killed each year in window strikes around the world. If birds continually crash into particular windows or sliding doors, plant screening vegetation, install an awning or allow the window to build up an external film of dust.
17. Cut through the rings around plastic drink and food containers and six-pack holders as birds and other animals often choke on them. When you find fishing line on the beach burn it into a solid blob before disposing of it.
18. Provide a year-around water supply in your garden, but place a bird-bath away from windows (to prevent birds attacking their reflections in the glass) and out of reach of domestic pets.
19. Replace Jarrah firewood with plantation-grown timber, or install natural gas heating. In Australia, as much firewood is used each year as is consumed by the woodchip industry.
20. Join Birds Australia to support research and conservation of Australian native birds and their habitats, to enjoy the benefits of membership including quarterly magazine *Wingspan*, to be eligible for free entry to reserves and observatories and to become involved in activities Australia wide.



Article by Birds Australia
<http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au>

Birds Australia WA Inc
 08 9383 7749
<http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au/the-organisation/western-australia.html>

WINGSPAN Summer 2010 out now



WA's conservation laws labelled "behind the times"

WESTERN Australia's wildlife conservation laws are behind the times and in dire need of an overhaul, according to Murdoch University's Dean of Environmental Science Professor John Bailey.

On the 15th anniversary of the United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity last month, Professor Bailey said WA's current biodiversity legislation lacks the proactive or comprehensive approach needed to protect an increasing number of threatened species of flora and fauna.

Murdoch University Dean of Environmental Science Professor John Bailey described current legislation as being more in line with 1970s attitudes to conservation.

"At the time that our fauna conservation laws were first introduced in the 1950s and then the flora laws in the mid-1970s, society was not talking about ecological communities or the idea of a threatened community," he says.

"Today of course, these terms are well-used and those laws really just need to catch up.

"The legislation as it stands is very species-focused and quite silent on the wider ecological context – it allows for the identification of threatened species but there is very little examination of the bigger picture after that.

"We have definitely fallen behind the rest of the country in this area."

Professor Bailey believes the updating process is "possibly in the too hard basket" for the State government.

"Since the mid-1990s, there have been a number of attempts by different political parties to move towards the replacement or revamp of current conservation legislation to bring it into the 21st century but nothing has yet been delivered," he says.

"I think it is probably safe to assume that in a very resource-focused state like WA, the difficulties in terms of consequences for industry are such that any changes would be hard to push through.

"That said, I do not think government should shy away from its responsibilities towards biodiversity just because it is a difficult task."

His solution comprises a holistic approach from community, stakeholders and government.

"We need legislation that achieves a raft of objectives to prevent species from becoming threatened and which puts in place positive mechanisms requiring some level of government response and additional input from the private sector," he says.

"We also need legislation which deals not just with our national parks and nature reserves, but also with plant and animal biodiversity across the State and addresses significant threats such as changing fire regimes, climate change, dieback disease and cane toads.



Image: Istockphoto

“Australia has a significant portion of the world’s biodiversity, particularly when it comes to plants and some groups of animals, and as a State, we really need to do our share of what is necessary to protect that.”

Written by Imelda Cotton Thursday, 11 November 2010 15:36
Science Network WA



Deputy Director General Robert Atkins, Regional Manager of Westfield Western Australia Malcolm Reed, and Director of Corporate Affairs, Coca-Cola Amatil and chair of the Australian Packaging Covenant Alec Wagstaff, at the launch of Westfield’s in-store recycling depot program.

Recycling encouraged at WA shopping centres

A NEW in-store recycling depot program focusing on beverage containers has begun in three major Westfield shopping centres in WA—Carousel, Whitford City and Innaloo—thanks to funding from the Waste Authority.

This initiative, in partnership with the Australian Packaging Covenant, the Australian Food and Grocery Council Packaging Stewardship Forum, Coca-Cola and the Government of Western Australia, is an Australian first and supports the WA government’s Public Place Recycling Campaign.

DEC Deputy Director General, Environment Robert Atkins represented the Minister for Environment at the official launch and said that the infrastructure, which is being rolled out nationally, will divert more than 675 tonnes of beverage containers from landfill each year.

“That is enough containers to fill nine Olympic-sized swimming pools with recyclable material each year,” Robert said.

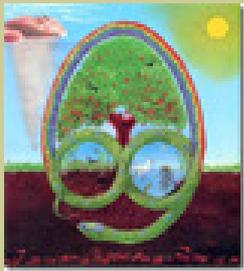
“Bottles and cans are some of the easiest items to recycle and represent packaging that required significant investment in their creation, both in terms of energy consumed and greenhouse emissions.

“They can also remain in the environment for extremely long periods without breaking down. Anything that reclaims these items for re-use is to be encouraged,” he said.

The national Public Place Recycling initiative is aimed at educating and encouraging shoppers to help the environment, one can or bottle at a time. Westfield have also established an engaging consumer promotion to accompany the recycling roll-out, to demonstrate the environmental impact that recycling even a single PET, aluminium can or glass bottle has on the environment. Shoppers are being asked to ‘do the right thing’ and use the right bin.

For more information on this program and the Australian Packaging Covenant, visit the Waste Authority’s website www.zerowastewa.com.au.

What's the buzz, tell me what's a'happening?



WAPermies.freeforums.org
where WA Permaculture Educators network

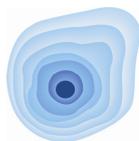
At PIWA's recent COW/CALF last month it was decided that an online forum where educators and other Permies could network was required. Meg Howe was charged with getting it up, and she is happy to announce that it can now be found at

<http://wapermies.freeforums.org>

However, the forum's scope is larger than just Permie education, and Meg hopes that all Permies will find it an ideal place for networking and sharing upcoming events, thoughts and experiences.

Any suggestions or folks interested in helping to moderate the forum would be most welcome.

Please pass this on!

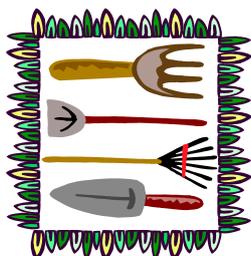


**POLYTECHNIC
WEST**

Short Courses

Horticulture

This course will cover basic horticulture including plant growth habits- shrubs, trees, herbaceous, perennials etc. Soil fertility, mulches, fertiliser's pH. Plant propagation- seeds and cuttings. Lawns- preparation and maintenance. Vegetable growing, roses, pests, diseases and weeds.



When: Term 1 2011

Where: Midland

Time: 18:30 – 20:30

Weeks: 6 Weeks

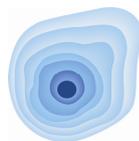
Cost: \$145.00 / \$108.75 conc.

(Price is subject to change)

Polytechnic West Short Courses

9267 7888

www.shortcourseswa.com.au



**POLYTECHNIC
WEST**

Short Courses

Horticulture

Propagation and Pruning WS

In this course you will learn how to create new plants from your own garden saving you money and creating a lush garden that is the envy of friends. Learn grafting, plant division and stem cutting. You will also be shown pruning techniques. You will be encouraged to participate and learn in a hands on environment.



When: Term 1 2011

Where: Midland

Time: 9:00 – 14.00

Weeks: 2 Weeks

Cost: \$145.00 / \$108.75 conc.

(Price is subject to change)

Polytechnic West Short Courses

9267 7888

www.shortcourseswa.com.au

Links

Biodynamic

Biodynamics2024—biodynamic farming and gardening in Australia
<http://biodynamics2024.com.au/>

Eden Valley Biodynamic Farm Dumbleyung in southern Western Australia
<http://www.edenvalleybiodynamic.com.au/>

Highvale Biodynamic Orchard – Pickering Brook
<http://www.highvale.com/home.html>

Bushtucker

Bush Food Network
<http://www.bushfood.net>

Bush Tucker Plants
<http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/bushtucker/>

Yelakitj Moort Nyungar Association
<http://www.nyungar.com.au/bushtucker.html>



Community Gardens

Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network
<http://communitygarden.org.au/>

Glen Forrest Community Garden
<http://groups.google.com/group/glenforrestcomgarden?hl=en>

Growing Communities WA
<http://www.wacgn.asn.au/>

Compost and Soils

Eureka Organic Compost
Address: 4040 West Swan Rd, West Swan, WA, 6055
Phone number: (08) 92745526

From the Soil Up
<http://www.fromthesoilup.com.au/>

Green Life Soil Co.
Family business promoting the practical use of Permaculture and Organic Gardening. They have developed several specialist soil mixes designed for improving Perth's impoverished soils

<http://www.greenlifesoil.com.au/index.htm>

178 Farrall Road, Midvale WA
Trading hours: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. Closed Wednesday.
Ph: 9250 4575

GroundGrocer.com Earth Supplies

NEW

Online shop for composting products, compost tea brewers, monitoring equipment, microscopes and bioactive soil additives - everything you need to put the life back in your soils.

<http://www.groundgrocer.com>

Herbs

Dipaunka Macrides—Living as a Herbalist

www.theherbalist.com.au

www.groveofpan.com.au

Mobile: 0412180796

Plants for a Future – edible, medicinal and useful plants for a healthier world

<http://www.pfaf.org/index.php>

The Amazon Plants – Tropical Plant Database

<http://www.rain-tree.com/plants.htm>

Nurseries

Tass1Trees – specialising in fruiting plants – Fruit Trees

<http://www.tass1trees.com.au/>

Zanthorrea Nursery

<http://www.zanthorrea.com/>

Organics

Aussie Organic Gardening – a gardening blog by Lyn Bagnall

<http://aussieorganicgardening.com/>

Mundaring Organic Growers

<http://www.mundaringorganicgrowers.net/>

Nutritech Solutions – products for organic gardening

<http://www.nutri-tech.com.au>

The Green House Organic – provides organic seedlings

www.thegreenhouseorganic.com

The Organic Growers Association of WA – some good links and information

www.ogawa.org.au

Vital Organics

NEW

WA distributor of Natrakelp, located in Darlington. Natrakelp is a liquid seaweed for plants, animals and soil conditioner.

<http://www.vitalorganics.net.au/>

Permaculture / Living simply

City Farm

www.cityfarmperth.org.au



Links (cont.)

Down to Earth—preparing for the future by relying on the past
<http://down---to---earth.blogspot.com/>

Fremantle Environmental Resources Network (FERN)
www.fern.org.au

Hills Local Permaculture Group
<http://permaculturewest.org.au/hlpg>

Peacetree Permaculture & Edible Landscapes (PPAEL)
<http://www.peacetreepermaculture.com.au/>

Permablitz Melbourne
<http://www.permablitz.net/>

Permaculture Design – Pathways to Sustainable Living
<http://www.permaculturepathways.blogspot.com/>

Permaculture Power – spreading the permaculture word
<http://permaculturepower.wordpress.com/>

Permaculture Research Institute of Australia
www.permaculture.org.au

Dr Ross Mars - permaculture Designer, Teacher, Author, Consultant.
Candlelight Farm and Candlelight Trust
www.cfpermaculture.com / www.redplanetplants.com

Water Installations and Greywater Reuse Systems - greywater and rainwater
tank installations, manufacturer and consultant.
www.waterinstallations.com / www.greywaterreuse.com.au

Sustainable Agriculture Research Institute – Jeff Nugent
www.permacultureplants.net

Sustainable Alternatives – Bernie and Rose Elsner's web site
www.sustainablealternatives.com.au

The Worm Shed – information about worms and worm farms
www.wormshed.com.au

Recycling

There is an email list for locals to pass on unwanted items or to find items all for free – Mundaring Shire Freecycle. You have to join the yahoo group to be able to post and receive notices.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FreecycleMundaringShire/>

Seed Savers

Diggers Club—heritage seeds
www.diggers.com.au

Seed Savers' Network

<http://www.seedsavers.net/>

The Drylands Permaculture Nursery and Research Farm

<http://www.permaculturenursery.com.au/>

Yilgarn seeds in Geraldton
Part of Seed Savers Network

Suppliers

Greenway Enterprises

Horticultural, landscape and landcare tools and equipment
21 Tacoma Ct, Canning Vale WA 6155 (08) 6258 0333

Landmark – wide range of products, including multigrow

32 Farrall Road, Midvale WA

<http://www.landmark.com.au/>

Sustainability

Environment House—Bayswater

<http://environmenthouse.org.au/index.php>

Perth Solar City

www.perthsolarcity.com.au

Miscellaneous

A Frog Pond

<http://afrogpond.com/>

Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council

[www/emrc.org.au](http://www.emrc.org.au)

Ecological Agriculture Australia Association

<http://www.ecoag.org.au/www/>

Silver Tree Steiner School

http://silvertree.wa.edu.au/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Slow Food - WA

<http://slowfoodperth.org.au>

Soul Tree Organic Store and Café

Shop 6, 3-5 Railway Parade, Glen Forrest

<http://www.thesoultree.com.au/index.html>

Swan Hills LETS System— Local Exchange Trading System

<http://swanhillslets.org/public/>



H LPG

Contact us

Silvia and Rosemary

Email:
silviarose88@yahoo.com.au

Phone:
(08) 9252 1237

Subscription to mailing list

If you wish to **subscribe** to the H LPG mailing list please send an email to us with the word “*subscribe to newsletter*” in the subject heading, and provide your full name and brief message.

If you wish to **be removed** from this email list, please send an email to us with “*unsubscribe*” in the subject heading

Permaculture West

Permaculture Association of Western Australia (PAWA)

<http://permaculturewest.org.au/home>

Hills Local Permaculture Group (H LPG)

The Hills Local Permaculture Group meets on the 3rd Saturday of the month, 9:30 for 10:00 start and finishing at 12:00.

The H LPG meets at the Silver Tree Steiner School in Parkerville.

Please bring a small plate of goodies for morning tea and a spare mug if you have one.

If you are interested in joining in, or have questions or suggestions, please contact Silvia or Rosemary by e-mail silviarose88@yahoo.com.au or phone (08) 9252 1237.

Web: <http://permaculturewest.org.au/hlpg>

The H LPG meets at the
Silver Tree Steiner School in Parkerville

The school is at **69 Beacon Road in Parkerville.**

If you are coming via **Great Eastern Highway** then turn into Seaborne Street (which becomes Byfield St and then Roland Rd).

If you are coming via **Toodyay Road** then turn into Roland Road.

