

# FLORA & FAUNA

## along the Bibbulmun Track



There are thousands of native wildlife species that occur in the south-west of Western Australia. This region known as the South-West Botanic Province is one of the world's 34 terrestrial hotspots for conservation priority.

This document is a guide to some of the most common native flora and fauna you are likely to see when walking along the Bibbulmun Track.

In general terms the Track's environmental habitat and species diversity can be roughly divided into three eco-regions.

They are.....

- **Darling Range Jarrah/Marri Forest Region** Kalamunda - Balingup
- **Karri Forests Region** Balingup - Northcliffe
- **South Coastal, Forest Hinterland & Wetlands Region** Northcliffe - Albany

You are currently in the

### Darling Range Jarrah/Marri Forest Region



## mammals



© by wollombi

### Brushtail Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula*

This species has a bushy tail (hence its name) that has adapted to grasping branches. Its forefeet have sharp claws for climbing. It has a thick woolly coat that ranges in colour patterns including silver-grey, brown, black, red or cream, and has large pointed ears. It is nocturnal and feeds on a wide range of leaves and probably invertebrates. It also spends a good deal of time foraging on the forest floor.



Babs & Bert Wells/DPaw

### Chuditch *Dasyurus geoffroii*

This is a medium-sized strong predator also known as the western quoll or the western native cat. It has a white spotted brown coat and a long tail. This particular species is confined to the south-west of Western Australia. It is a solitary, nocturnal predator which is mostly terrestrial, although it does climb trees. It has a diet of small vertebrates, carrion, arthropods, and freshwater crayfish, among other things. The head and body are about 33cm long, with a tail of another 280mm. They can weigh up to 2kg, with males being slightly heavier.



Cape-to-Cape Catchments Group

### Western Brush Wallaby *Macropus irma*

This species is only found in the south-west of Western Australia. Its main threat is predation by the introduced red fox but is believed to have a fairly widespread stable population as a result of fox control programmes. It has a grey colour with distinctive white colouring around the face, arms and legs and has black "gloves". It mainly feeds on grass.



© by Miss.chelle.13

### Southwestern Pygmy Possum

#### *Cercartetus concinnus*

This is a tiny marsupial with cinnamon coloured fur and pure white underparts. It has large, oval ears, large eyes, and long whiskers. The tail is long and prehensile, and is covered with fine scales. Adults are 5.7-7.2cm long with a tail of 7.7-8.7cm. Adults weigh 8-21gm. The female has a well developed front opening pouch. Its tongue is unusually large & it feeds on nectar and pollen, especially from melaleuca & eucalyptus. It may play a role in flora pollination. It also eats insects. This tiny mammal easily falls prey to introduced carnivores such as red foxes and cats.

# birds



**Red-tailed Black Cockatoo**  
*Calyptorhynchus banksii*

This species is usually found in the eucalyptus woodlands and near water courses. In the more northerly parts of the Track they are commonly seen in large flocks. They are seed eaters and cavity nesters, and as such depend on trees with fairly large diameters. Populations are threatened by deforestation and other habitat alterations.



**Bronzewing Pigeon**  
*Phaps calcoptera*

This is a large, bulky pigeon with a small head. Its advertising call is an extraordinary mournful whooo repeated at regular intervals and for long periods. They are ground feeders but capable of very fast flight. They tend to browse quietly until disturbed, their earthy brown/grey blending into the earth and leaf litter. When an intruder approaches too close it takes off with an explosive burst of sudden wing clapping.



© by JJ Harrison

**Wedge-tailed Eagle**  
*Aquila audax*

This is the largest bird of prey in Australia. It has long, fairly broad wings, fully feathered legs and an unmistakable diamond-shaped tail. It can easily be identified at a glance as a "Wedgie" even by the non-expert. It is often seen "floating" on high air currents and although quite territorial it will travel several kilometres in search of food.



**Western Magpie**  
*Cracticus tibicen (dorsalis)*

This bird is common in the south-west of Western Australia. Mainly black, the adult male has a white back and the female has a scalloped black/brown mantle and back with feathers edged in white. With a wide variety of complex calls it is one of Australia's most highly regarded songbirds. It is omnivorous, eating invertebrates such as spiders, earthworms, millipedes, snails & scorpions as well as a wide variety of insects, grain, fruit and small animals.

# flora: trees



**Jarrah**  
*Eucalyptus marginata*

Height: up to 40m  
Flowers: Dec-April

Probably the most famous of our hard woods, the timber from the jarrah tree is highly sought after for its excellent building and magnificent furniture making qualities. Originally known as Swan River mahogany its dark red colour is a wonderful feature. It has long streaky grey coloured bark, its flowers are white and its nuts are 1cm across with three valves. Jarrah trees often fall victim to dieback disease. Before the area was intensely logged some jarrah trees had massive 2m thick trunks and were more than 400 years old. Today, most of the jarrah trees in the region are subsequent regrowth forest.



**Marri or Red Gum**  
*Corymbia calophylla*

Height: up to 60m  
Flowers: Feb-April

The marri is very common and the tallest of the tree species along the Darling Range. The bark is generally rough and segmented, and is often characterised by streaks of dark red gum. The flowers are cream and appear in big clusters. The nuts, known as honkey nuts, are 3-4cm across.





**Wandoo or White Gum**  
*Eucalyptus wandoo*

Height: up to 30m  
Flowers: April-May

Wandoo trees can appear huge and majestic but also stunted and contorted. Termites often attack the tree's softer woody core causing large limbs to shed. This provides many hollow nesting opportunities. On the ground the logs become very hard, termite resistant animal habitats. Vegetation beneath these trees is often sparse due to chemicals leached into the soil from its dead leaf litter. The bark has many appearances, smooth and often patchy with the colours from grey-white (old) to cream (new). The old rough bark sheds each year revealing smooth new surfaces. The flowers are creamy-white and nuts are only 4mm across. In the colonial era the timber was prized for its strength and durability.



**Spreading Snottygobble**  
*Persoonia elliptica*

Height: up to 8m  
Flowers: Oct-Feb

Despite its odd shapes the spreading snottygobble can sometimes grow to a reasonable height. It is easy to recognise with its bright green foliage which stands out amongst the duller greens, browns and greys of our bushlands. It is thought that when the small fleshy fruit falls to the ground animals such as emus, kangaroos and wallabies swallow it. The seed is eventually deposited in their droppings and subsequent germination occurs, ensuring a wide distribution of the species. This is probably the reason why snottygobble trees are often found without other snottygobblers close by. It is generally thought that its seeds need to pass through the gut of an animal to enable them to germinate.



**Forest Sheoak**  
*Allocasuarina fraseriana*

Height: up to 20m  
Flowers: March-Dec

These trees usually have a drooping appearance with needle-like branchlets which are not leaves. If you examine the nodes along the branchlets through a magnifying glass you will see miniature brown teeth-like scales. These scales are the leaves. With trunks to a diameter of up to 60cm or far larger forest sheoaks have a robust appearance. The bark has shades of grey and brown with a reddish tinge. It is a very common species growing mainly in gravel soils throughout the jarrah forests. These trees are male or female, not both.



**Bull Banksia**  
*Banksia grandis*

Height: up to 10m  
Flowers: Sept-Jan

There are several species of banksia growing throughout the Darling Range but this is the most common. It grows much more slowly under a heavy canopy than in the open. Its rounded and woody cones are typical of many other banksia tree species. The hundreds of small flowers in each cylindrical flower head are an excellent food source providing nectar for insects, birds and small possums. Its seeds are enjoyed by black cockatoos and red-capped parrots. Unfortunately it succumbs easily and quickly to dieback disease.



# flora: wildflowers

Please note that the flowering months for wildflowers differ a great deal. Although the vast majority flower during the spring months of Aug to Nov, many flower at other times during the year. The weather, especially rain and temperature can also determine the flowering period.



**Blue Leschenaultia**  
*Lechenaultia biloba*

**Height:** 0.15-1.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

A spreading weak and woody stemmed shrub, with distinctive large corolla winged blue flowers. It grows mainly in gravel based soils on hills, outcrops and flat ground.



**(no common name)**  
*Bossiaea pulchella*

**Height:** 0.4-1.5 metres  
**Flowers:** August-September

A many branched shrub, with yellow and brown/red flowers. It grows mainly on gravel based soils. When in flower it displays a wonderful presentation over a large area.



**One-sided Bottlebrush**  
*Calothamnus quadrifidus*

**Height:** 0.9-2.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

Strictly speaking this is not a bottlebrush. It is an erect, compact or spreading shrub with red flowers and thin leaves. It grows on a wide variety of soils and habitats.



**Couch Honeypot**  
*Banksia dallanneyi*

**Height:** up to 30cm  
**Flowers:** June-October

This is a prostrate shrub. It displays yellow-brown/cream and sometimes red/pink flowers. It enjoys sandy and gravelly soils. Ants love to harvest the nectar.



**Cowslip Orchid**  
*Caladenia flava*

**Height:** 10-25cm  
**Flowers:** July-December

A tuberous, perennial orchid with yellow to white flowers often with red markings. It grows in a variety of soils & habitats including laterite, sand, open areas, forests, granite outcrops & sandplains. A member of the spider orchid genus of orchids.



**Lemon-scented Darwinia**  
*Darwinia citriodora*

**Height:** 0.2-2.0 metres  
**Flowers:** June-December

So named due to its citrus aroma when the leaves are crushed. It is an erect to prostrate shrub with yellow to green/red flowers. It grows on laterite or granite soils especially around rocky outcrops in the hills.



**Common Donkey Orchid**  
*Diuris brumalis*

**Height:** 20-50cm  
**Flowers:** July-August

This is a very common tuberous, perennial orchid with yellow and brown flowers that appear to have large "ears". It grows in gravelly loam, laterite soils.



**False Boronia**  
*Phyllanthus calycinus*

**Height:** 0.2-1.2 metres  
**Flowers:** July-January

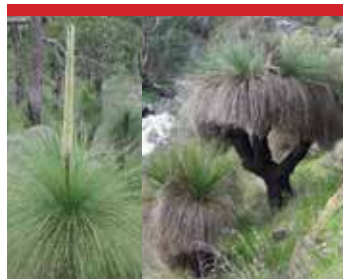
This shrub has separate male and female plants. Female flowers are twice the size of the male flowers. It is an erect shrub with white-cream /pink flowers. Often seen on sandy soils it grows equally well on loamy soils.



**Granite Featherflower**  
*Verticordia plumosa*

**Height:** 0.2-1.5 metres  
**Flowers:** August-January

Particularly located around the edges of granite outcrops this shrub has pink-blue-purple-red-white flowers. Sometimes spectacular masses of flowers are on show at one time.



**Balga, Grasstree, Blackboy**  
*Xanthorrhoea preissii*

**Height:** up to 5 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

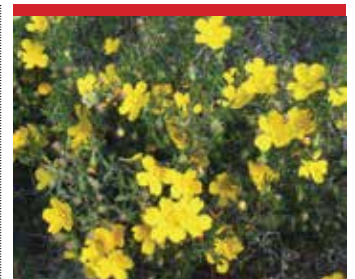
This is a perennial grasstree with a flower spike of 1.5-2.5 metres in length with white-cream flowers. It is versatile, growing in grey to black sands, grey-brown loam, brown gravelly sandy clay and laterite soils. It grows very slowly.



**Fuchsia Grevillea**  
*Grevillea bipinnatifida*

**Height:** 0.2-1.0 metres  
**Flowers:** March-January

This is a spreading shrub with divided leaves and has spectacular orange-red flowers. It grows in granite soils, sand, loamy clay, laterite soils, rocky outcrops, hills and sometimes near winter-wet flats.



**Yellow Buttercup**  
*Hibbertia hypericoides*

**Height:** 0.2-1.0 metres  
**Flowers:** April-December

This plant is a prolific erect, twiggy, spreading shrub with bright yellow flowers. It grows in a variety of habitats.





**Drumsticks or Grasstree**  
*Kingia australis*

**Height:** 1.0-8.0 metres  
**Flowers:** November-March

A perennial grasstree which at first glance looks similar to the Blackboy (Balga), but is from a completely different botanic family. It has up to 100 yellow-green to brown-green flower heads on drumsticks. Found in sand, sandy loam and clayey loam, it grows very slowly.



**Orange Stars**  
*Hibbertia stellaris*

**Height:** 0.15-1.5 metres  
**Flowers:** August-December

An erect or prostrate, slender or bushy shrub with bright showy orange/yellow flowers. It grows in sandy soils, clay, swampy areas and winter-wet depressions.



**Parrot Bush**  
*Banksia sessilis*

**Height:** up to 5 metres  
**Flowers:** April-November

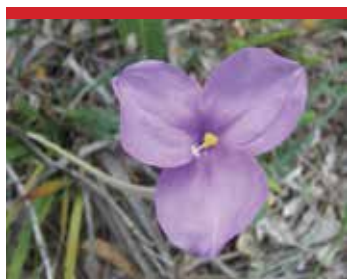
This is a prolific prickly shrub or tree that produces masses of seed. It is very important to the honey industry as it has a long flowering period. Provides food and protection for a wide range of animals, birds and insects. With cream-yellow flowers it grows widely in sandy, granite or gravelly soils.



**Prickly Moses**  
*Acacia pulchella*

**Height:** 0.15-1.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

A very spiky and mostly erect and woody shrub, it has masses of the typical yellow spherical wattle flowers. It grows in a wide variety of locations.



**Purple Flag**  
*Patersonia occidentalis*

**Height:** up to 1.0 metre  
**Flowers:** August-December

This is a rhizomatous, tufted perennial plant with flower purses that produce delicate purple flowers at regular intervals. In particular it enjoys winter-wet areas, dunes, and granite outcrops.



**Red & Green Kangaroo Paw**  
*Anigozanthos manglesii*

**Height:** 0.2-1.1 metres  
**Flowers:** August-November

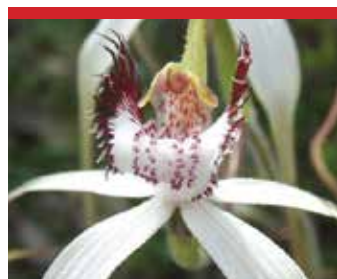
This plant is the Western Australian floral emblem. It is a rhizomatous, perennial plant with highly unusual and spectacular green and red flowers. It grows mainly on white, yellow or grey sand and sandy loam.



**White Myrtle**  
*Hypocalymma angustifolium*

**Height:** up to 1.5 metres  
**Flowers:** July-November

This is an erect, woody multi-stemmed shrub with white-cream flowers. Sometimes the flower buds appear to be pink. They are prolific, strong growers found in a wide variety of soils. They thrive in damp or hillside locations.



**White Spider Orchid**  
*Caladenia longicauda*

**Height:** 35-60cm  
**Flowers:** September-November

This is a spectacular tuberous, perennial orchid with white-cream-yellow-green flowers and dark red markings. It grows in sandy, clayey loam and gravelly soils. Found in forests, rock outcrops, hillsides, winter-wet areas, near swamps and lake margins.



**Zamia**  
*Macrozamia riedlei*

**Height:** up to 3 metres  
**Flowers:** February-April

This is one of the oldest flora species on Earth. It has separate male and female plants. Sometimes this Cycad builds up a heavy plump base not usually recognised as a trunk. It has long, glossy, pointed, openly keeled, narrow leaves.



**Prickly Hakea**  
*Hakea amplexicaulis*

**Height:** 1.0-3.0 metres  
**Flowers:** August-October

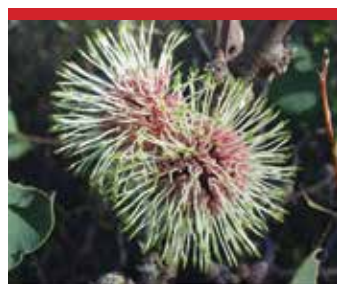
The leaves on this species wrap around the stem. It is an erect, woody, straggly, slender shrub with very prickly leaves and intricate white, cream-pink flowers. It thrives in clay, loam and gravelly soils.



**Wavy-leaved Hakea**  
*Hakea undulata*

**Height:** 1.0-2.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-October

This is an erect, quite strong shrub with white flowers. Its leaves are wavy with sharp points. It grows in a wide variety of locations.



**Sea Urchin Hakea**  
*Hakea petiolaris*

**Height:** up to 3.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-August

This erect shrub or small tree has a very curious pink and cream flower resembling a sea urchin. In particular it enjoys the surrounds of granite outcrops.





**Pincushion Coneflower**  
*Isopogon dubius*

**Height:** 0.3-1.5 metres

**Flowers:** July-October

This is a compact, bushy and woody shrub with sharp narrow leaves and has impressive pink/red spreading flowers. It is found in sandy, sandy loam, clayey and gravelly soils.



**Bracken Fern**  
*Pteridium esculentum*

**Height:** 0.5-2.0 metres

**Flowers:** no flower

This prolific species is found in many countries. It is an ancient, rhizomatous and perennial fern with large divided fronds. Being a fern it does not have flowers. In particular it thrives in winter-wet areas such as creeks in eucalypt forests.



**Basket Flower**  
*Adenanthos obovatus*

**Height:** 0.3-1.5 metres

**Flowers:** May-December

This is an erect shrub with very interesting red and orange flowers. It is found in sandy, gravelly and loamy areas. Sand dunes, swamps, winter-wet depressions and hillsides are favoured areas.

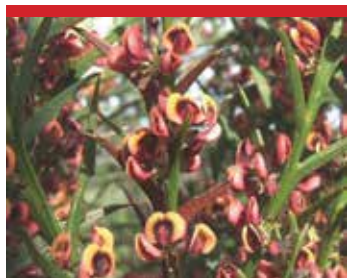


**Scented Banjine**  
*Pimelea suaveolens*

**Height:** 0.2-1.5 metres

**Flowers:** July-October

This erect, spindly shrub has spectacular drooping, yellow-green flowers which seem to be too heavy for the plant. It grows in sand, sandy clay and gravelly soils. Undulating plains, flats, ridges and roadsides are favoured.

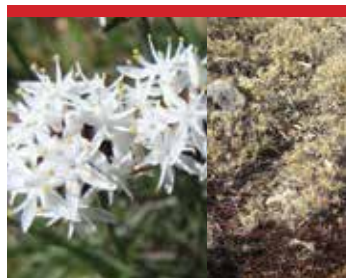


**Prickly Bitter Pea**  
*Daviesia decurrens*

**Height:** up to 1 metre

**Flowers:** June-September

This very sharply needled plant is an erect, small branched shrub with orange, red or pink flowers. It thrives in loam over clay and gravel. Well-drained slopes, adjacent to creeks are sometimes favoured.

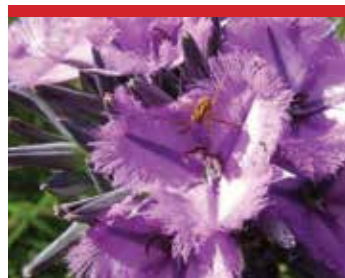


**Pin Cushions**  
*Borya sphaerocephala*

**Height:** 2-20cm

**Flowers:** July-October

This is a tufted, perennial plant that dries up in summer and comes back to life after the first rains. It is often called resurrection plant. It has small white flowers and mainly grows on shallow soils on top of granite outcrops.



**Many-flowered Fringed Lily**  
*Thysanotus multiflorus*

**Height:** 10-50cm

**Flowers:** August-January

This perennial species grows in large tufts. It has very attractive purple flowers that have a tendency to open mid morning after some direct sunlight and close early afternoon when it has had enough sun exposure.



**Silky Blue Orchid**  
*Cyanicula sericea*

**Height:** 15-40cm

**Flowers:** August-October

This is a relatively small flowering, tuberous, perennial orchid. It has blue-purple flowers and grows in colonies on gravelly soils.



**Lesser Bottlebrush**  
*Callistemon phoeniceus*

**Height:** up to 6 metres

**Flowers:** October-December

This species is one of only two true bottlebrush species (Callistemon) growing in Western Australia, the other being the Albany bottlebrush. It is a tall shrub or small tree with spectacular bright crimson flowers and is often found along watercourses.



**Bridal Sundew**  
*Drosera macrantha*

**Height:** 0.2-1.5 metres

**Flowers:** July-November

This is an erect climber, often with a very long stem climbing to more than 1.5 metres. It is a perennial plant usually with pretty white flowers. It enjoys sandy soils, loam and gravel. Like most sundews it is a carnivorous plant with sticky leaves which catch insects.



**Bookleaf Pea**  
*Daviesia cordata*

**Height:** 0.5-2.0 metres

**Flowers:** July-January

This unusual and very attractive, erect, slender shrub has a tendency to enclose its new flower buds with its leaves. It grows in gravelly and granite soils, along undulating plains, hillsides and ridges.



**Albiza**  
*Paraserianthes lophantha*

**Height:** up to 10 metres

**Flowers:** July-August

This tall graceful tree-like plant belongs to the same family as wattles. Common in some coastal areas it enjoys growing alongside many rivers in the Darling Scarp. It has cream coloured bottlebrush shaped flowers.



# reptiles



**Bobtail Lizard**  
*Tiliqua rugosa*

This species has a heavily armoured body and can be found with various colours, ranging from dark brown to cream. Its length varies from 260-310mm but it is a very heavy-bodied lizard for its length. It has a triangular head and a bright blue tongue which it will display with a hiss when threatened. Its short, stumpy tail contains fat reserves, which it lives on during winter hibernation. It can inflict a nasty bite.



**Ornate Crevice Lizard**  
*Ctenophorus ornatus*

This species is a member of a diverse genus that can be distinguished from other lizards by its greatly flattened body. It has a length of around 95mm, and a distinctly banded tail. It is common on granite outcrops, where it shelters under slabs and boulders, especially in undisturbed areas. When out in the open, often basking on warm rocks, it displays a head-bobbing characteristic.



GFDL Tharg 12345

**Barking Gecko**  
*Underwoodisaurus milii*

Thick-tailed geckos are reddish-brown with bands of white and yellow spots and a paler underbelly. It usually grows to 120-140mm in length. Their tail, which is sometimes lost when attacked, is black with several pale bands. When threatened, it will arch their backs and "bark". They are nocturnal, and shelter underneath rocks or in burrows during the day. They feed on invertebrates.



Photo: Jordan Vos

**Common South-west Ctenotus**  
*Ctenotus labillardieri*

Sometimes called red-legged ctenotus, this little species varies in colour and pattern, but is generally from olive-brown to dark brown. It has a narrow white stripe from above the eye to the tip of its tail. Its distribution is widespread throughout much of the south-west of Western Australia. It is usually found around and under rocks and rocky outcrops in heathlands and eucalypt forests. It often hides under decaying logs and bark.

# frogs, insects, fungi and spiders

Along with the species of mammals, birds, trees, wildflowers and reptiles there are many thousands of other species of native wildlife in the south west of Western Australia. Frogs, insects, fungi and spiders are an extremely important and integral part of the total eco-system that keeps the wildlife in balance. **Some species include:**

## FROGS



motorbike, squelching, moaning, quacking, slender tree, western banjo, whooping

## INSECTS



ants and termites, butterflies, wasps, dragonflies, cicadas, crusader bugs, preying mantis

## FUNGI



mushrooms, coral, shelf, beefsteak, bracket, jelly, puffballs, earth tongues

## SPIDERS



orb weaver, huntsman, red back, daddy long legs, jewel, garden, mouse, trap door

# bush tucker

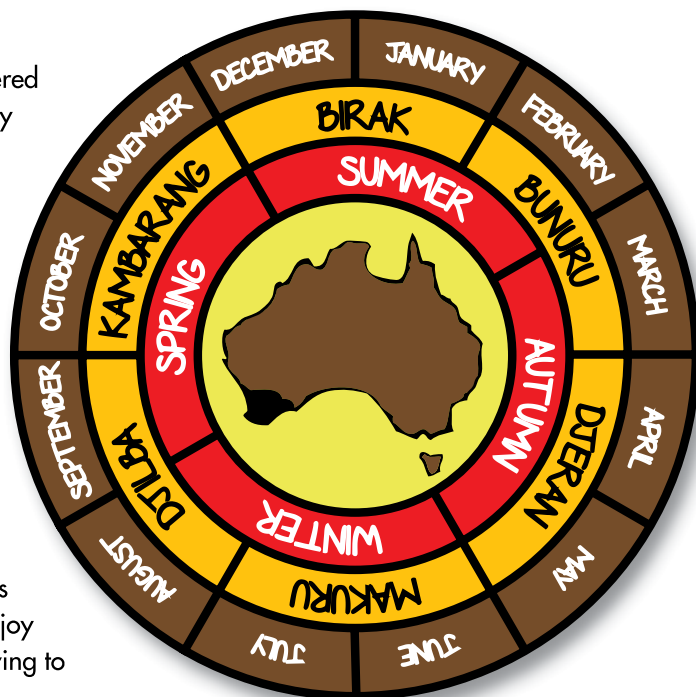
The Noongar people of south-western Australia had a very ordered way of life. Their hunting and gathering patterns were guided by six weather-based seasons.

Although Noongar men were the main suppliers of meat such as yonga (kangaroo), possum and bettongs (woylie), the women were responsible for maintaining the good nutrition of the community. They provided up to 90 per cent of the food, by collecting roots, tubers, corms, bulbs and fruits.

## Word of caution:

Please be aware that some plants are poisonous and require extensive treatment to make them edible. Tasting, therefore, should be carried out only under expert guidance. All native plants are protected by law and sampling some traditional foods would also result in the destruction of the plant. Therefore, enjoy reading and learning about the plants, but please refrain from trying to eat them.

***For more information see the Bush Tucker Plants of the South West bush book produced by the Department of Parks and Wildlife.***



Noongar Seasons Wheel image kindly provided by the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare.

Various books are available from the Bibbulmun Track website including the Wildflowers of the Northern Bibbulmun Track & Jarrah Forests by Anne Ireland and Kim Macey, and a wide range of bush books produced by the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

Visit our shop online at [bibbulmuntrack.org.au](http://bibbulmuntrack.org.au)

## Thank you...

The Foundation thanks volunteers Cliff and Sharron Burns, authors of "Local Flora and Bushlands", for researching and collating the content of this document. Cliff and Sharron also acknowledge the assistance of Stephen Crane from the Department of Parks and Wildlife. All three are Bibbulmun Track end-to-enders.

Unless otherwise noted the photography is by Cliff and Sharron Burns.

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**NEWMONT.**  
BODDINGTON GOLD

