

# 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
- Karri Forests Region
- South Coastal, Forest Hinterland & Wetlands Region

Kalamunda - Balingup  
Balingup - Northcliffe  
Northcliffe - Albany

You are currently in the

**Karri Forest Region**



## mammals



CC by Benjamt444

### Mardo

*Antechinus flavipes*

Also known as the yellow-footed antechinus, this species is a marsupial. It has variable fur colourings but is generally somewhat greyish. Other notable features include a white eye-ring, a black tip to the tail and a pointed muzzle. Head and body length is about 10–13cm and weight about 30gm. Trekkers should be aware that they may seek food from your packs and look for scraps left around the shelters. Please do not feed them.



### Quenda

*Isodon obesulus*

Also known as the southern brown bandicoot, the females are slightly smaller than males. The average male length is 330mm, with a tail of 120mm. Its weight is an average of 0.9kg. The fur of this marsupial is coarse and coloured a dark greyish to yellowish brown, with the undersides a creamy-white. It has short, round ears. These are omnivorous mammals and are sometimes mistaken for large rats.



GFDL fir0002

### Echidna

*Tachyglossus acanthion*

This peculiar species is covered in spines and fur, and has a distinctive snout with a specialised tongue which it uses to catch its prey (mainly termites) at a great speed. It lays eggs being the only group of mammals to do so. It has extremely strong front limbs and claws which allows it to burrow quickly. It has no weapons or fighting ability but repels predators by curling into a ball and deterring them with its spines.



Photo by Ern Mainka

### Brush-tailed Phascogale

*Phascogale tapoatafa*

This is a rat-sized carnivorous tree dwelling marsupial, with a tuft of black silky hair at the end of its tail. Due to habitat destruction and predation by foxes and feral cats they are believed to have disappeared from half of their former range. The species is considered very vulnerable to local extinction. It eats smaller mammals, birds, lizards, insects and spiders, and also drinks nectar from flowering trees.

# birds



**White-tailed Black  
Cockatoo or  
Baudins Cockatoo**  
*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*

This cockatoo is about 56cm long. It is mostly dark-grey with narrow vague light-grey scalloping. Its lateral tail feathers are white with black tips, and the central tail feathers are all black. Its beak is very strong and used to tear strong nuts apart. They can live to 40 years but are currently being threatened by a loss of habitat due to land clearing.



**Emu**  
*Dromaius novaehollandiae*

Common throughout mainland Australia, this is Australia's largest native bird. These soft-feathered, brown, flightless birds reach up to 1.9 metres, have long thin necks and legs and will travel great distances for food (plants and insects). They can sprint at 50km/h. They ingest stones to grind food in their digestive system. They drink infrequently, but take in copious fluids when the opportunity arises.



© by C Coverdale

**Tawny Frogmouth**  
*Podargus strigoides*

This curious bird is found throughout Australia. They are big-headed stocky birds often mistaken for owls due to their appearance, colouring and nocturnal habits. They belong to the Nightjar family. They are difficult to spot due to their camouflage skills as they appear like a broken tree branch or similar. They will raid other bird nests for their young and feed on small mammals which they swallow whole.



**Twenty-eight Parrot**  
*Barnardius zonarius semitorquatus*

This parrot has a dull black head, its back, rump and wings are brilliant green, and its throat and breast bluish-green. It has a prominent crimson frontal band. Its call, as it wags its tail, is strong and sharp. Its eats a wide range of foods that include nectar, insects, seeds, fruit, and bulbs. It will eat fruit and is sometimes regarded as a pest by farmers. They nest in tree hollows.

# flora: trees



**Karri**  
*Eucalyptus diversicolor*

Height: up to 90m  
Flowers: Sept-Dec

This enormous tree is a eucalypt native to the wetter regions of the south-west of Western Australia. It is one of the tallest trees in the world. Its white to cream bark turns brown as it matures and then sheds. Mature trees branch only from the top third of the trunk. The leaves are dark green on top and lighter underneath, and grow to a length of 90-120mm and 20-30mm broad. The cream-coloured flowers which occur in spring and summer, are in groups of seven, each measuring about 18-28mm across. The fruits (1cm long) are squat and barrel-shaped, with numerous small dry seeds. The species has been heavily logged as a commercial timber.



**Karri Sheoak**  
*Allocasuarina decussata*

Height: up to 15m  
Flowers: Aug-Nov

This is mainly an understory tree growing within the karri forest. It can grow tall, however in harsh, exposed places it may be a stunted shrub or poorly-formed tree. As with other members of the family Casuarinaceae, the foliage consists of wiry green branchlets called cladodes with rings of minute leaf scales. The branchlets of this species are about 14cm long and roughly square or X-shaped in cross section. Separate male and female flowers form on the same individual plant. The fruiting structure is a woody cone, shaped like a short cylinder with its diameter roughly equal to or slightly greater than its length. It has very rough cork-like bark.







**Warren River Cedar**  
*Taxandria juniperina*

Height: up to 27m  
Flowers: Feb-May

Also known as juniper myrtle this is a species of tree that only grows in the south-west corner of Western Australia. It occurs mostly as a tall erect tree, but sometimes grows to less than 10 metres as a dense shrub. It has fibrous brown bark that is a light red colour on the underside. When the leaves and young stems are bruised they release a spicy perfume from which the plant is recognised to be a member of the Myrtaceae family. It often grows in the dense understory that tends to follow river valleys.



**Jarrah**  
*Eucalyptus marginata*

Height: up to 40m  
Flowers: Dec-Apr

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.



© by Gordon Edwards

**Peppermint**  
*Agonis flexuosa*

Height: up to 10m  
Flowers: July-Dec

This is a very common species, and is one of the most recognisable local trees, being commonly grown in parks and on road verges in Perth and throughout the south-west of Western Australia. It occurs mainly as a small and robust tree, although it may grow to 15 metres. It has fibrous, brown bark, and has tightly clustered small, white flowers. It grows in a weeping habit with its dull green narrow leaves that reach a length of 150mm. It is most readily identified by the powerful smell of peppermint emitted when the leaves are crushed.



Photo by Roleystone Bushcare

**Blackbutt**  
*Eucalyptus patens*

Height: up to 25+m  
Flowers: July-Nov

Also known as yarri it has a somewhat similar appearance to the jarrah tree. It is endemic to the south-west of Western Australia and its natural distribution coincides closely with that of the jarrah. It is in short supply as a harvestable timber as significant areas of its distribution are now covered by conservation reserves. It is usually a tall tree with a diameter at breast height to 1.8 metres. On less favourable, particularly swampy sites, it is a smaller tree of poor form.



# 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.



**Heart-leaf Flame Pea**  
*Chorizema cordatum*

**Height:** 0.3-1.5 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

This is an erect, straggling or climbing shrub with yellow, orange and red/pink flowers. It grows near rocky outcrops, on hills, along streams and watercourses and winter-wet flats.



**Tassel Flower**  
*Leucopogon verticillatus*

**Height:** 0.8-4 metres  
**Flowers:** August-November

This is an erect, bamboo-like shrub with copious pink-red flowers. It is frequently found on gravelly or granite soils and often in wet locations.



**Old Man's Beard**  
*Clematis pubescens*

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

This is a prolific, strong, woody climber, with white-cream flowers. It readily climbs over any other plants in its vicinity. It grows in a variety of locations including coastal cliffs, coastal dunes, hills, and river banks.



**Crowea**  
*Crowea angustifolia*

**Height:** 0.3-3.5 metres  
**Flowers:** September-December

This is a large strong, woody shrub with pink and white tubular flowers. It grows in sandy soils, gravel, and along ridge tops, slopes and rocky outcrops.



**Cowslip Orchid**  
*Caladenia flava*

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

This is a tuberous, perennial orchid with yellow to white flowers often with red markings. It belongs to the spider orchid genus and grows in a variety of soils including laterite, sand, open areas, forests, granite outcrops and sand.



**Yellow Flags**  
*Patersonia umbrosa*

**Height:** 30-90cm  
**Flowers:** August-December

This is a rhizomatous, tufted, perennial plant with purses of yellow flowers which display more flowers as each delicate flower dies. It enjoys winter-wet areas, swampy areas and hillsides.



**Hooded Lily**  
*Johnsonia lupulina*

**Height:** 30-80cm  
**Flowers:** September-December

This is a rhizomatous, tufted, clump-forming perennial, grass-like plant. It has a distinctive hooded cream-white flower and is mainly found in damp locations.



**Milkwort**  
*Comesperma virgatum*

**Height:** 0.3-1.6 metres  
**Flowers:** September-March

Generally this is an erect, slender shrub, but as the flowers become heavy they tend to droop and sway. The flowers are pink and purple. They grow in sandy and laterite soils, sometimes near swamps.



**Karri Hazel**  
*Trymalium odoratissimum*

**Height:** up to 9 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

Grows in great abundance in the more southerly south-west areas of WA. With strong slender woody stems it reaches tree-like proportions. Tiny white-cream flowers that appear in great masses over the plant. It enjoys damp river hillsides.



**Tree Hovea**  
*Hovea elliptica*

**Height:** 0.4-3.0 metres  
**Flowers:** August-December

This is a slender, erect shrub or small tree with stunning displays of blue-purple and white flowers. It prefers gravel, clay loam and sandy soils. It grows on rocky slopes, granite outcrops, sand dunes, hillsides and ridges.



**Native Wisteria**  
*Hardenbergia comptoniana*

**Height:** climber  
**Flowers:** July-October

This is a twining plant that can climb to great heights smothering trees and other plants. It has beautiful blue-purple and white flowers. It mainly prefers sandy soils.



**Cutleaf Hibbertia**  
*Hibbertia cuneiformis*

**Height:** 0.5-3.0 metres  
**Flowers:** June-November

This can be either a tall erect or sprawling shrub with wedge shaped leaves. The bright yellow flowers are up to 3cm across. It has bright orange seeds that are eaten by possums, emus and birds. This species is often cultivated.





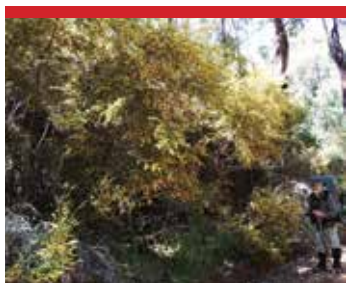
### Coral Vine

*Kennedia coccinea*

**Height:** climber

**Flowers:** August-November

This is a prolific and vigorous climber with leaves that divide into three distinct lobes. The attractive red, yellow, orange or pink flowers appear in clusters of up to 20 flower heads.



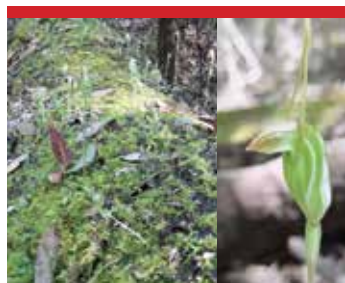
### Water Bush

*Bossiaea aquifolium*

**Height:** 0.6-8.0 metres

**Flowers:** July-November

This can be described as a prolific large shrub or a small tree. When in flower it is quite spectacular with its massive orange/yellow and red/brown displays.



### Snail Orchid

*Pterostylis pyramidalis*

**Height:** 10-35cm

**Flowers:** August-October

This is a very tiny tuberous, perennial orchid. It is various shades of green and often appears in large colonies such as the dozens on a mossy log in the photograph. It thrives in peaty sand and on the margins of swamps.



### Morning Iris

*Orthrosanthus laxus*

**Height:** 1.5-55cm

**Flowers:** August-November

This is a simple rhizomatous, perennial, plant with long weedy looking leaves. It tends to grow in clumps. Flowers are usually blue but can also be white.



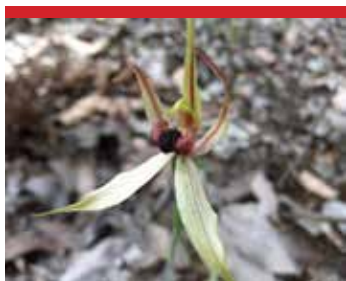
(no common name)

*Thomasia triphylla*

**Height:** 0.3-1.2 metres

**Flowers:** July-November

This is a multi-stemmed shrub with rough, scalloped leaves and masses of pink, purple and white flowers.



### Leaping Spider Orchid

*Caladenia macrostylis*

**Height:** 16-25cm

**Flowers:** August-November

A member of the spider orchid genus this is a spectacular flower when examined closely. It is a tuberous, perennial plant with shades of green and cream flowers with dark red markings. It thrives in sand and gravel/loam.



### Sedge species

There is a very wide variety of sedges throughout the south-west of Western Australia. Some have quite spectacular flowering displays. Generally they have long slender sword shaped leaves. Some species' leaves are razor sharp and will easily cut a hand or leg. They often enjoy damp areas.



### Karri Dampiera

*Dampiera hederacea*

**Height:** 0.2-1.0 metres

**Flowers:** August-December

Generally this is a spreading plant that can climb other shrubs. It has blue and sometimes white flowers. It generally grows in sandy and gravelly soils especially around swamps and creeks.



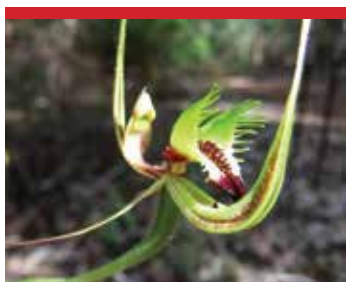
### Tall Banjine

*Pimelea longiflora*

**Height:** 0.3-1.3 metres

**Flowers:** August-December

Although appearing rather spindly this species can put on spectacular displays with its tall stems and large white/cream flowers. It grows in sand, sandy clay, quartzite and along stony ridges and winter-wet swampy flats.



### Forest Mantis Orchid

*Caladenia attingens*

**Height:** 20-45cm

**Flowers:** October-November

This is another member of the spider orchid genus. It has an intricate and quite spectacular flower head with green and yellow colourings and red markings. It is a tuberous, perennial plant that grows in sand, gravelly loam, shallow soils and around granite outcrops.



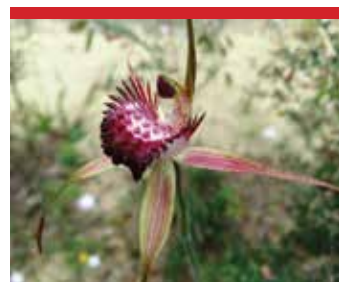
### Southern Diplolaena

*Diplolaena dampieri*

**Height:** 0.5-2.0 metres

**Flowers:** July-November

This is a rounded, erect, bushy shrub with elliptic shaped leaves. It has spectacular masses of red-orange flowers.



### Broad-lipped Spider Orchid

*Caladenia applanata*

**Height:** 25-50cm

**Flowers:** September-October

One of the many different species of spider orchid this has very curious red, green and dark pink colourings and a peculiar shape. It is a tuberous, perennial plant that grows on shallow soils, sand, sandy loam. It appears quickly in summer burnt areas.





**Scented Sun Orchid**  
*Thelymitra macrophylla*

**Height:** 30-65cm  
**Flowers:** August-November

This is robust tuberous, perennial plant with large ovate leaves. It is a multi-flowered blue/purple orchid with a large post-anther lobe and short hair tufts.



**Pink Fairies**  
*Caladenia latifolia*

**Height:** 20-45cm  
**Flowers:** August-October

Prolific orchid species found in many areas throughout the south-west of Western Australia. It is a tuberous, perennial plant with shades of pink and white flowers. Dozens can be found growing in colonies. It thrives in sand and loam and is often found around rocky outcrops.



**Scented Boronia**  
*Boronia megastigma*

**Height:** 0.2-2.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-October

This species was heavily sought for its scent and was often sold in the streets of Perth. It is an erect, slender, scented shrub with less than spectacular brown and yellow/green flowers. It enjoys peaty sand and winter-wet swamps.



**Karri Wattle**  
*Acacia pentadenia*

**Height:** 2.0-5.0 metres  
**Flowers:** July-December

This plant often appears as a slender, willowy shrub or small tree with greatly divided leaves. It has typical yellow-cream spherical wattle flower heads. It grows in a variety of soils and often in swampy areas. It is found mostly in karri forest areas.



**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.



**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 and displays white-cream flowers that mainly grow on the sun side of the flower spike. It is versatile, growing in grey to black sands, grey-brown loam, brown sandy clay and gravelly soils.



**Jug Orchid**  
*Pterostylis recurva*

**Height:** 30-60cm  
**Flowers:** August-October

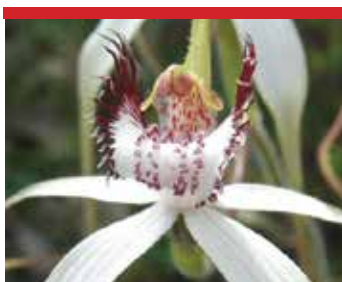
The striped flower head of this species is very peculiar indeed. Similar to all other orchids from the south-west of Western Australian it is a terrestrial, tuberous, perennial herb. It has green and white colouring, usually striped. It thrives in sand, clay and gravelly soils.



**Silky Blue Orchid**  
*Cyanicula sericea*

**Height:** 1.5-40cm  
**Flowers:** August-October

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



**White Spider Orchid**  
*Caladenia longicauda*

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

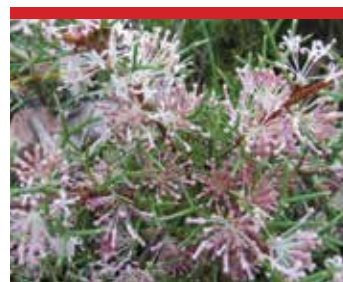
This is a spectacular tuberous, perennial orchid with white-cream-yellow-green flowers and dark red markings. It grows in sandy, clayey loam and gravelly soils. It is found in forests, rock outcrops, hillsides, winter-wet areas, near swamps and lake margins.



**Winged Wattle**  
*Acacia alata*

**Height:** 0.3-2.0 metres  
**Flowers:** April-December

This species usually has flattened and sometimes hairy "leaves" (not true leaves but called phyllodes). It can be an erect but also a sprawling, spindly shrub. It has cream or yellow spherical flowers and is found throughout the south-west of Western Australia.



**Honey Bush**  
*Hakea lissocarpa*

**Height:** 0.4-1.5 metres  
**Flowers:** June-October

Usually this is a dense erect, woody and spiky shrub. When in flower it can have a powerful, sweet scent as you walk past it. Its flowers are usually cream but can often have a pink/purple shade. It grows in sand, loam or granite soils.



**Candle Hakea**  
*Hakea ruscifolia*

**Height:** 0.5-3.0 metres  
**Flowers:** December-February

This is a very prickly, woody, erect shrub. The massed white flowers grow on thick long tentacles and at times will droop with its heavy weight. It grows in sand, loam, clay and gravelly soils throughout the south-west of Western Australia.



# reptiles



## Dugite

*Pseudonaja affinis*

This is a venomous snake and is potentially lethal. It is coloured grey, green, or brown. The colours vary widely between individuals and are an unreliable means of identifying the species. The most distinguishing characteristic is the shape of the head, which is small compared to the neck, which grades imperceptibly into the body. A dugite can grow up to 2 metres in length.



## Gould's Monitor

*Varanus gouldii*

This is a ground-dwelling reptile that excavates large burrows for shelter. Rock escarpments and tree hollows are also suitable. It reaches an average length of 1.4 metres and can weigh as much as 6kg. It is a relentless forager mainly during the day. Anything smaller than itself such as mice, birds, insects, lizards, snakes, and carrion will be eagerly swallowed. They are seemingly immune to snake venom. The monitor in the photograph is swallowing a tiger snake.



CC by Simon J. Tonge

## South Western Snake-necked Turtle or Oblong Turtle

*Chelodina (Macrodiemys) colliei*

This species of turtle is endemic to the south-west of Western Australia. It is a very peculiar turtle as it has a remarkably long neck, which in some cases may be even longer than its body. It is very vulnerable in the wild. The destruction of natural habitat, many road kills of turtles searching for a nesting site or a permanent water body, and the prevalence of predators are the main causes of a decrease in numbers. Its carapace length is up to 40cm.



[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marbled\\_Gecko.jpg#/media/File:Marbled\\_Gecko.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marbled_Gecko.jpg#/media/File:Marbled_Gecko.jpg)

## Marbled Gecko

*Christinus marmoratus*

This little species is about 50-70mm long and weighs only 2.5gm. They have fat reserves in their tails which can be disconnected from their body when threatened, to aid in escape. Tails take about 8 months to regenerate. It has large finger and toe pads which spread out to grasp slippery or soft surfaces. They are Australia's most southerly gecko occurring from north-eastern NSW to the south-west of WA and live in a variety of habitats including open shrubland, forests, riverine woodland and urban regions. Their diet consists of insects including crickets and flies.

# 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

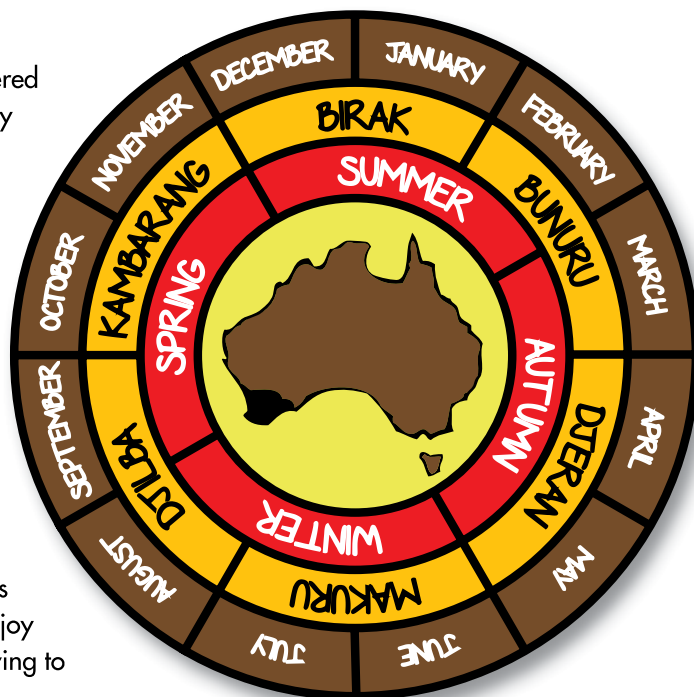
The Noongar people of south-western Australia had a very ordered way of life. Their hunting and gathering patterns were guided by six weather-based seasons.

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

