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Welcome to our eNews! Oyster Harbour Catchment Group's Noongar seasonal newsletter will keep you up-to-date on the big stories affecting the catchment and what we are up to.

We acknowledge the Minang Bibbulmun people as the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respects to the Elders, past, present, and emerging and to the wider Bibbulmun community.

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Issued: 10/9//2020



Djilba E-Newsletter

First spring: August-September

Season of conception: Mixture of wet days with increasing number of clear, cold nights and pleasant warm days

What has been happening at OHCG?

July

Gate2Plate Award Night
Streamed

[Plantagenet Shire
Community Directory.](#)

Content:

- [It is Time to Better Control our Cats](#)
- [National Wattle Day Celebration](#)
- [Braving it to Inspect the Pasture](#)

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King River restoration re-vegetation day
National Tree Planting Day

August

Landcare Week

[Green Card training](#)

[Online: Aboriginal Cultural](#)

[Awareness and](#)

[Understanding](#)

[Workshop](#) Hosted

by [Auspire – Australia Day](#)

[Council WA](#)

[Science week](#)

-[Breathing Life into](#)

[Boodja](#) screening

-[Community Planting Day](#)

[at Yakamia Creek](#)

-[Science Cafe](#)

-[So you Want to Help](#)

[Wildlife!](#) King River

Workshop

-[Using iNaturalist for the](#)

[Great Southern BioBlitz](#)

-[Great Southern Great](#)

[Science Symposium 2020](#)

-[On Country: Oyster](#)

[Harbour Boodja](#) Fish

Trap talk and walk

September

National Wattle Day

[Building Fire Resilient](#)

[Communities](#) Workshop

Threatened Species Day

Up-coming Events

Tue Sep 15, 9:30am [Online:](#)

[Aboriginal Cultural](#)

[Awareness and](#)

[Understanding Workshop](#)

Mon Sep 21,

8:00am [Masterclass in](#)

[Saltland Management WA –](#)

[Jerramungup](#)

Thu Sep 24, 10:30pm [Great](#)

[Southern Bioblitz](#)

Mon Sep 28,

3:00pm [Scaling Up](#)

[Ecosystem Restoration](#)

It is Time to Better Control our Cats

"My cat can't roam, it's safe at home"



The City of Albany cat regulations have been updated

(<https://www.albany.wa.gov.au/services/animals-pets/cats.aspx>) and in turn we all need to update our understanding of best practice for our pets and wildlife alike. It is important for all residents everywhere to continue to learn how to best care for our pets and be aware of the state and local laws when it comes to cats.

The **Cat Act 2011** is the state law which the *City of Albany* and the *Shires of Cranbrook, Denmark and Plantagenet* are obligated to uphold. Within each of their jurisdictions they may impose further requirements for pet owners regarding fees and fines.

All domestic (pet) cats, six months and older, must:

1. **Be sterilised**
2. **Be microchipped**
3. **Be registered with the local government where the cat is normally kept and**
4. **Wear a registration tag issued by the local government where the cat is registered.**

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Wed Oct 7, 9:00am to Sat
Oct

10 [#CitSciOzOnline2020](#) Australian Citizen Science Association

Wed Oct 14, 21 and 28th
12:30–2:30 [Worms, Compost and Soil Fertility Workshop](#). King River Hall

22nd Sept 8am, Uptake trial field walk – Rochester's property Palmdale/Manypeaks

Sun 27th Dec 2020, to Jan 3rd, 2021. [FRIENDS OF THE PORONGURUP SUMMER EXHIBITION](#) email judykelly@westnet.com.au for more info

Welcome New and Old Members



Oyster Harbour Catchment Group (OHCG) has been an incorporated community-based, volunteer organisation that has now been operating for 28 years.

Initially sparked into action by the community's desire to protect and rehabilitate the Oyster Harbour through the Kalgan River. Since then we have expanded our activities, focusing on preserving all the catchments natural assets and environment, as well as supporting land managers to adopt best practice and farming.

species.

New requirements recently endorsed by the City of Albany, say, under their new **Wandering Cat Management Policy**, any cat picked up by the Ranger that is unidentified/unregistered and over 6 months of age could be classed as a feral cat.

Cat management is important because though cats may seem quite independent and responsible in comparison to their canine counterparts, they still need care and attention. There are many dangers that cats face when they roam; cars, dogs, other cats, diseases etc. in order to keep our cats safe they should always be contained to the owner's property, preferable in a cat enclosure (catio). Many people are under the assumption that their cats are happier outside and they are smart enough to avoid the risks but that's often not the case. RSPCA and many others ([conservation article](#)) have found that cats are just as happy if not more so inside, they become more socially interactive and live longer inside. See RSPCA's guide on how to keep your cat happy and safe here: rspca.org.au/adopt-pet/adopting-catkitten/safe-and-happy-cats

Southwestern WA including Albany and surrounds is a biodiversity hotspot with many endemic and endangered species such as; the Ring-tailed Possum, the Noisy Scrub-Bird, Southwestern Crevice-Skink, and the Dibbler, to name a few endangered species, all in decline, in part due to roaming cats. If a cat is allowed outside, they harass/hunt these animal. Even if they may not eat the prey they catch, research show that cats only bring back 20% of their kills, collars and bibs do not make a significant difference to most hunts.

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OHCG has attracted over \$1.6 million in project funds, which has then been matched at least dollar for dollar by the community, project participants and OHCG partners. We truly appreciate you showing your support for our actions by becoming/renewing your membership as it helps us draw more investment into our region.

We wish to reward our 2020 members new and old by entering them into a draw to win a brand-new Weber Baby Q™ Premium BBQ valued at \$329 and stainless-steel BBQ set. We also still have some farm bio-security signs as well as information packs that are available free for members on request.

We are currently running 5 [projects](#) in the catchment.

If you wish to be a part of the; Holistic Property Planning, REI's Healthy Estuaries Initiative, Farm Fertiliser uPtake trials, National Landcare Partnership Project and/or the Albany and Surrounds Feral Cat Working group please check our website ohcg.org.au or contact us to register your interest or check your eligibility

Other Help Available

\$3000 grant available for farmers needing drought relief in Albany/Plantagenet Shires. Primary producers are

wildlife zmescience.com/ecology/animals-ecology/cats-kill-up-10-times-more-wildlife-than-natural-predators-so-keep-them-indoors/

concludes otherwise. Most importantly, unless sterilized, a roaming cat has the potential to contribute significantly to the number of stray and feral cats.

We understand sometimes complying with best cat management practice needs some investment of time and money but we argue that our pet cats and wildlife are worth it. Let's all work together to improve the outcome for Australian native animals and keep our precious feline pet's alive for longer.

We have heard some people argue that their cats are "working cats" used to control rodent and "need" to hunt outside. However, it has been recorded that stray/domestic cats to kill an average of two prey animals per night, unfortunately because they are allowed outside they can choose from many different species contributing to the deaths of many native animals. Leading to the question what is the best way to address this issue? See this article to learn some different methods <https://kiltertermiteandpestcontrol.com/most-effective-rodent-control-methods/> In particular if you're in a rural area we recommend trying to encourage native predators like quolls or birds of prey such as owls through wildlife corridors, nesting boxes etc.

The Albany and Surrounds Feral Cat Working Group (ASFCWG) was formed to address some of the issues, stray, feral and owned cats are having in our region. We are a volunteer working group trying to address many of the issues feral cats and poor cat management can generate. We would

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is easy to apply and a quick turnaround to receive the grant.

https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/drought_assistance/

Mental

Health Assistance, R U OK? regional mental health <https://www.ruok.org.au/financialhelp>

You can find more grant and funding opportunities from the following

websites: Business.gov.au The Australian Government

Disaster Assist website provides

information on financial assistance available for current disasters and information on previous disasters.

Caring for our Country Department of Agriculture

What's in Your Backyard



Red-eared

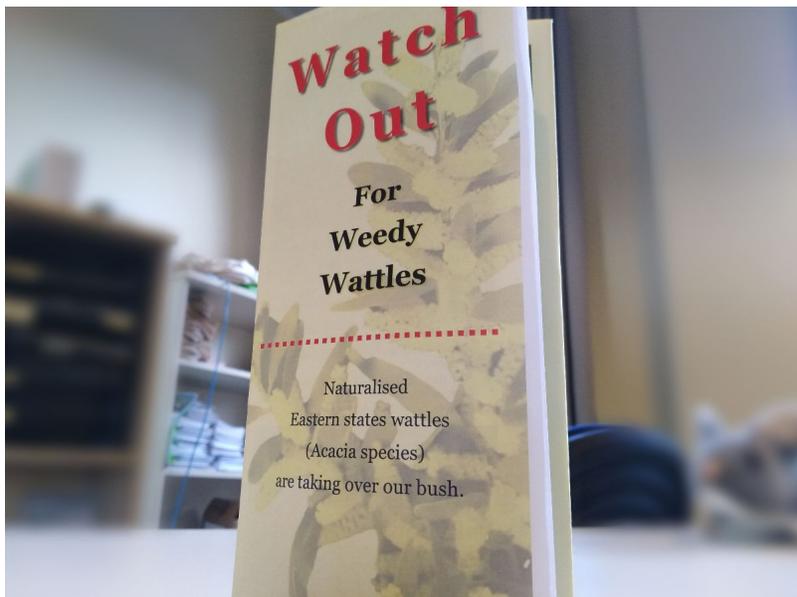
Firetail (*Stagonopleura oculata*) is a plump, tiny, mainly brown bird with fine black barring (called vermiculations), but punctured with splashes of colour: At first glance the Red-eared Firetail may appear a bit drab, but when it takes flight, its bright-red rump becomes obvious. A little closer observation reveals that it also has a

more links to research

here <http://www.ohcg.org.au/cats-feral-stray-and-domestic.html> or follow the group's [facebook](#) or [twitter](#).



National Wattle Day Celebration



As the weather starts to warm up all our stunning native flowers are coming out and giving our eyes an amazing sight to see. One of the most prevalent colours in our Australian bush is the amazing yellow of our numerous Wattle species (*Acacia spp*). The colour is so vibrant and can be seen from miles away. We love this plant so much that we have it as our national emblem and we celebrate our very own National Wattle Day on September the 1st.

National Wattle Day is the perfect time to learn more about our wattle species and have a look at

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black-and-white spotted belly.

This species is endemic to the southwestern WA but are relatively stable in population, inhabiting dense vegetation beside streams and other water bodies. They are much less gregarious than other species of finches, usually occurring singly, and they are generally shy, quiet, and rather unobtrusive.

If you see something interesting, plant and/or animal please upload a photo onto inaturalist.org.

The Team

[Bruce Radys](#)

Senior Project Officer:
Regional Estuaries
Initiative

Bruce works part-time, oversees, and helps the other staff and works on the Regional Estuaries Initiative, funded by Royalties for Regions. He aims to improve the quality of water entering the Oyster Harbour through the implementation of fencing and revegetation of riparian vegetation, and working with farmers to implement best practice management, including soil testing in high rainfall areas.

Contact:

bruce.radys@ohcg.org.au
0428 994 408 | 9851 2703

[Jenni Loveland](#)

Project Officer: Ferals

West WA. Unfortunately, we have many “weedy wattles” in the region that are wreaking havoc on our local species of wattles as well as other native plant species. Wattles from the Eastern states were originally planted in gardens, shelter belts and plantations and have since become major weeds. Their populations have exploded in our bushland due to a lack of natural control mechanisms found in the Eastern State habitat, such as seed eating insects and diseases, which are not common in Western Australia and threaten locally native plants by out-competing them. They can be beautiful trees and shrubs however they grow quickly and within 2-5 years produce masses of seed which are spread by birds, animals, insects, and flowing water to other areas.

Their seed can remain dormant for decades. Fire then stimulates mass germination of seeds producing thickets of wattles. Wattles are able to fix nitrogen in the soil, increasing fertility which favours exotic grasses. This results in the area being more fire prone, setting in motion a destructive cycle. They compete aggressively with native vegetation. Some Wattles are even able to create impenetrable thickets threatening native plants. The loss of native plants has a follow-on impact on the native animals, birds and insects that depend upon the local native flora, resulting in the decline of biodiversity.

Many organisations such as Landcare groups, “friends of” groups and Shires have been working towards reducing these weedy wattles.

In celebration of weedy wattle day, the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group (OHCG) has updated a [Weedy Wattles pamphlet](#) originally written by Dr

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and works part-time facilitating a Feral Cat Project and running the Albany and Surround Feral Cat Working Group (ASFCWG). This group concentrates on the issues that we have in and around the catchment with feral cats

Contact:

jenni.loveland@ohcg.org.au
0409 572 240 | 9851 2703

[Sayah Drummond](#)

Communications Officer

Sayah works part time to ensure landholders and the wider community are aware of and can be involved in, the many exciting projects that the OHCG is up to.

This includes the maintenance of our [website](#), [instagram](#), [twitter](#), [facebook](#) and [email](#) list.

While also trying to make sure our community/membership interests are reflected in all upcoming works.

Contact:

communications@ohcg.org.au
au
0467 955 317 | 9851 2703

originally partially funded through South Coast NRM.

We have added a few new problem wattles to this pamphlet as over time more and more weedy wattles have managed to get their foot in the door and are happily establishing here in our region. We would love you all to have a look at what you have growing on your property and see if you have the dreaded “weedy wattles” or a local native species.

It can be tricky to identify which are local and which are not so we invite you to come and get a free copy of the Watch Out For Weedy Wattles pamphlet from the Shire of Plantagenet, Green Skills Albany, or the OHCG office- The Plantagenet Landcare Centre. This pamphlet will not only give you a much better understanding of differentiating between the species, it will also give you some hints on controlling them if you discover this is what you have.

Please contact Jenni.loveland@ohcg.org.au or communications@ohcg.org.au for more information.

[Braving it to Inspect the Pasture](#)



Howling winds and rain didn't stop over 60 farmers attending the Southern Beef Elders Pasture Field Walk on 11th August at Carroll's Clover Downs property near the Albany Airport. Driza-bones were out in force and gum boots were the footwear of choice to inspect a demonstration trial of 10 different pasture mixes planted side by side in large scale plots. Pasture mixes included different varieties of oats, rye-grass, clover and even turnips! Farmers were able to view the pasture growth prior to grazing and results of pasture cuts/dry weights were presented by James Bee along with a description of characteristics and suitability of the different pasture mixes. If you would like a copy of the weights or to discuss the trial results, contact James Bee, Elders Albany.

Back at the shed, fires were lit, and information was presented on St Vinnies grants, REI soil testing/uPtake trials and a bit more from James on Rhapsno forage brassica. Russell Ferry and the Elders team cooked up some nice burgers while farmers had a chance for a social catch up. The good turnout showed that Southern Beef is on the right track in developing a forum specific to beef growers in the South Coast high rainfall zone to share production information.

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hear some farmer experiences of some of our projects see our new youtube channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkzgWRY0sLPdagV_KfmQTqw?view_as=subscriber



natural resource management program



Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development



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Our mailing address is:

PO Box 118, Mount Barker, W.A., 6324

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