

# The Proposed Preston River to Ocean Regional Park

## Why is the proposed park so special?

Imagine you had a spectacular bushland area on your doorstep that was over twice the size of Perth's Kings Park...

### Well if you live in Bunbury, you do!

A first for Bunbury, the proposed Preston River to Ocean Regional Park covers 893ha of continuous public bushland reserves, and stretches from the airport in the east to the iconic Maidens Reserve in the west. It includes Manea Park, Loughton Park, Hay Park, Tuart Brook Reserve, Shearwater Tuart Forest and the Maidens.

This important and unique ecological linkage has state and national significance, due to its diversity of plants and animals. It is home to over 600 species of flora and 180 species of fauna, many of which are listed as endangered. It is unique in that it still includes four of the five vegetated landforms of the Swan Coastal Plain (Quindalup/Spearwood/Bassendean Dunes and Pinjarra Plain) in an almost unbroken corridor.

On a walk through these beautiful bushland areas visitors can see a range of stunning wildflowers like the Queen of Sheba orchid under the jarrah and marri trees, marvel at the towering majesty of the tuart trees, or hike through the rugged coastal dunes fields of the Maidens.

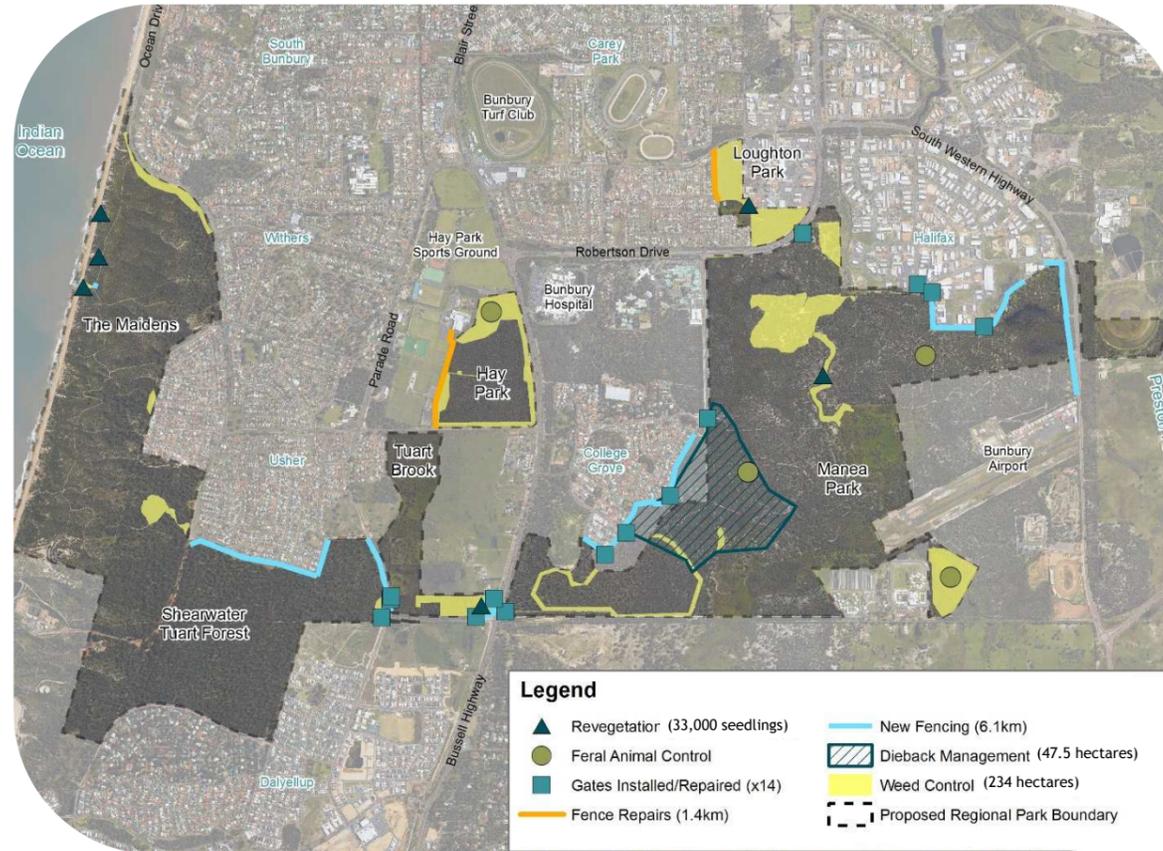
There's also a chance to get up and close with a Western Ringtail Possum, a Brush-tailed Phascogale or a Quenda (bandicoot) on a night-stalk! Or you might see the beautiful and endangered Black Cockatoos in the treetops during the day.

The park is highly significant to Noongar people. It forms part of a number of Dreaming stories, it is part of an historical travel and hunting route, and it contains some very special cultural sites.

It also provides important areas for passive recreation like bushwalking and birdwatching, education, cultural heritage and conservation research.

This park holds a special place in the hearts and minds of many Bunbury locals.

**It really is the people's park.**



## Community action has got us to where we are today...

- 1972 - Bunbury City Council recognises Manea Park as worthy of protection and enhancement for conservation.
- 1976 - Dr Bernhard Bischoff begins advocating for the protection of Bunbury's natural heritage.
- 1980s - Dr Bischoff actively campaigns to protect the natural heritage of Bunbury, and in 1983 proposes the 'Bunbury Diagonal', a greenbelt from Glen Padden (now Maidens and Usher) to the Collye River. In 1988 this evolved into a 7km nature corridor linking Maidens to Manea Park.
- 1992 - The notion of having a park linking the ocean to the Preston River south of Bunbury to include the Tuart Woodlands is given in-principle government endorsement, with the release of the draft Bunbury-Wellington Region Plan.
- 1995 - An environmental link from the Preston River to the ocean was recommended in the Greater Bunbury Structure Plan adopted by the WAPC under the Bunbury-Wellington Region Plan in November.
- 1999 - The City of Bunbury, through the Manea Park Management Committee, engages consultants to prepare a management plan for the park.
- 2000 - Minister for Planning decides not to develop the Shearwater tuart forest owned by Homeswest, but rather to set it aside for conservation purposes.
- 2000s - Department of Planning Regional Park planning commences.
- 2002 - Usher-Dalyellup Regional Park Management Plan is prepared.
- 2007 - Greater Bunbury Regional Scheme is introduced.
- 2008 - Draft Ocean to Preston River Establishment Plan is released for public comment.
- 2011 - Preston River to Ocean Regional Park Establishment Plan Proposal released in February.
- 2011 - Colin Barnett visits the Maidens Reserve on 1 April to announce that the Preston River to Ocean would become the South West's first Regional Park.
- 2013 - SWCC secures over \$1 million to help protect the proposed park. In partnership with the City of Bunbury, dedicated funding will be available to protect ecological, cultural and social values.
- 2017 - SWCC and City of Bunbury partnership project ends on 30 June. Interim management has returned to City of Bunbury and other landholders.

Beyond 2017.... - SWCC and the City of Bunbury welcome the formalisation of the regional park.

## What was the project all about?

The Preston River to Ocean Project aimed to protect and enhance the incredible environmental, cultural and social values of the proposed Preston River to Ocean Regional Park into the future, for the benefit of our environment and the Bunbury community.

SWCC and the City of Bunbury worked together over a four year with the Bunbury community on this project between 2013–2017, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and the City of Bunbury.

Over this time, a lot of work was undertaken, including 234ha of weed treatment, the installation of 6.1km of new fencing and 11 gates, and fox and rabbit control. Dieback management over a 47.5ha area, the installation of signage across the park, and rubbish clean-ups were also completed. 33,000 seedlings have been planted to rehabilitate 2.9ha of bushland and coastal areas, and together with Department of Parks and Wildlife, unique and nationally threatened plant communities have also been uncovered.

This has all been achieved with the help of local school students, Noongar people, community groups and other dedicated community volunteers. 1,748 people have been engaged in the project through 55 events, including planting days, wildflower walks, cultural educational events, night stalks, bird watching, dieback workshops, weed control days, rubbish clean-ups, and a range of educational activities with schools.

In recognition of its cultural and heritage significance, local Noongar people have been actively involved throughout the project to ensure cultural values are respected and included in management.

The project finished in June 2017, when interim management returned to the landholders. The project partners consider the proposed regional park to be a wonderful asset for the South West and welcome its formalisation.

The success of the project is a tribute to the dedication of the project partners and the Bunbury community.

**For more information on the proposed park and the project, check out the SWCC website at [www.swccnrm.org.au](http://www.swccnrm.org.au), or contact the City of Bunbury at (08) 9792 7000.**



The proposed park is a community asset for the future and we are working together to protect it