

WA Wilderness Update

The Great Western Woodlands

The Great Western Woodlands (GWW) is located east of the Rabbit Proof Fence, through to the Nullarbor Plain, and is the largest and most intact temperate woodland and shrubland left on Earth.

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Introducing the GWW team members

The Wilderness Society WA has grown considerably over the last few months. The Great Western Woodlands team, led by Dr Alexander Watson, now has a dedicated community campaigner and project manager.

- Jessica Chapman has joined us as Community Campaigner. Jessica has a degree in Conservation Biology and has previously been involved with TWS fundraising
- Keith Wood joins us as Project Manager for the Great Western Woodlands. Keith has worked for The Wilderness Society for 5 years, his last role being Regional Manager for the Wilderness Defenders program in WA

Together with Peter Robertson as our State Coordinator, the GWW team is proving to be a passionate and effective force.

About the Great Western Woodlands

The Great Western Woodlands is home to an amazing 30% of Australia's Eucalypt species and more than 20% of all Australia's flora species. Hundreds of species of native birds, mammals and reptiles are found in the area, and it is possible that near extinct native species like the numbat, bilby, and scarlet-chested parrot still survive in this intact landscape.



GWW is a massive carbon store, holding between 1 and 2 billion tonnes of 'green carbon' in its vegetation and soils. That's the equivalent of twice Australia's annual greenhouse emissions. It is

imperative in our fight against climate change that massive natural carbon stores such as these are recognised and protected.

This amazing area is under threat from the cumulative impacts of feral animals, weeds, fire, fragmentation, and an overall lack of management.

The incredible biodiversity found in the Great Western Woodlands was summarised in a report and publicly launched on World Environment Day 2008, at Kings Park in Perth. ("*The Extraordinary Nature of the Great Western Woodlands*"; please visit www.gww.net.au for a pdf. copy)

The State Government's Commitment

The Wilderness Society is calling on the State Government to work with Traditional Owners, resource companies, local communities and conservation groups to develop a plan to protect this globally significant area.

In the lead up to the recent WA State Election, Premier Colin Barnett committed to providing \$3.8 million over 4 years, to create a biodiversity conservation strategy for GWW.

We are now working to ensure that an adequate management plan is created with appropriate funding. The protection and management of GWW must recognise the area's Traditional Owners and include their cultural and land management knowledge into the management plan.

Volunteers needed for outreach activities and events!

The Great Western Woodlands has grown quickly, into a high profile campaign. We need help to continue to keep it on the Liberal Party agenda, and ensure that all Western Australians are kept informed. The following are examples of what we need assistance with -

- Events assistant
- Banner drops
- Community stalls
- Letterboxing
- Letter signing, and on-ground campaigning

The Wilderness Society is committed to campaigning to protect this area - but we can't do it without the support of our wonderful members and volunteers. If you have a half day to spare, once a month - it will really help. Contact Jessica to offer your help today! jessica.chapman@wilderness.org.au or call 0400 339 439

Thank you
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