



Media Release

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Welcoming spaces a drawcard for nature lovers in search of hidden gems in City of Cockburn

Creating a welcoming space for people of all ages, especially families with young children who need shade and toilet facilities, has enabled more than 700 people to interact with Cockburn's abundant natural hidden gems.

The City of Cockburn has about 100 conservation reserves and the city's Sustainability and Climate Change Team has created a way to share them with the community, hosting five unique Nature Discovery Days since July 2023.

City of Cockburn Acting Sustainability and Climate Change Coordinator Rafeena Boyle said the secret to the events' success was listening and responding to the community's needs and aspirations for accessing nature by removing barriers, such as a lack of practical facilities like toilets.

"We strive to create a fun, accessible pop-up atmosphere with welcoming spaces for storytime and other nature-related activities. These are made more meaningful by providing portable toilets, shade, marquees and even a food and coffee van, which can be important for families with young children," Ms Boyle said.

Held during the school holidays, the events are tailored to the unique features of each site and pitched at various age brackets including activities for adults, under 5s, school age children, and the whole family so they can get to know their local patch.

"We initially hosted some guided wildflower bushwalks which were full of people telling us they wanted to explore their local parks and reserves with the guidance of City staff so they could learn more about the ecosystems in their suburbs," she said.

"We are lucky to have an abundance of parks and reserves in Cockburn, including bushland, wetlands and coastal areas and kicked-off our first Nature Discovery Day at Yangebup Lake during the 2023 winter school holidays.



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“We were pleasantly surprised by how many families took advantage of the opportunity to bring their children to an outdoorsy day in nature, where they could put on some gumboots and a warm jacket to see how alive the bush is during Makuru. We haven’t looked back since and more are planned for 2025.

“We invite experts, including local First Nations custodians to share traditional stories and botanical knowledge, for storytimes, guided nature walks and workshops.

“We provide information about endemic animals like turtles and quenda and the huge variety of plants and trees in these diverse natural areas, and talk about how each reserve is affected by the changing seasons and weather patterns.”

The free or low-cost experiences have also been held at Boodjar Mooliny Reserve in Lake Coogee, Bloodwood Park in South Lake, Banksia Eucalypt Woodland in Aubin Grove, and Frankland Park in Hammond Park.

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said the events increased public awareness and appreciation of local ecosystems by providing hands-on activities to foster a deeper understanding of the environment.

“In this way we are inspiring new and future environmental stewards,” Mayor Howlett said.

“We are also supporting the City’s commitment to environmental education by providing opportunities to learn about climate risks and resilience, and sustainable management of local natural areas and resources.”

The Nature Discovery Days are a collaboration opportunity for the City’s various business units including Sustainability & Environment, Environmental Operations, Cockburn Libraries and Community Development to partner with local environmental and community groups.

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