

Chapman River corridor the focus of revegetation efforts

September 22 2014, by Steven White



Natural areas officer Wendy Payne and APEX volunteer Hadyn Broun discuss next year's planting schedule in the Geraldton Community Nursery shadehouse. Credit: Steven White

The Geraldton Community Nursery is working to regenerate and revegetate critical areas of denuded natural growth, including the Chapman River wildlife corridor.

"There are sections of the Chapman River bushland that have been undermined by off-road vehicle traffic, erosion and [invasive weeds](#)," according to Wendy Payne, Natural Areas Officer for the City of

Greater Geraldton and coordinator of the community nursery. "[In these areas] the bush needs assistance to generate".

Ms Payne says local provenance is key to restoring natural reserves.

"The seed [we are using] has been collected locally and grown locally, so that the plant that you are putting back into the natural environment is the correct plant for that area," Ms Payne says.

"For instance, the *Acacia rostellifera* we have here in Geraldton occurs over a very wide distribution.

"It will grow naturally here in Geraldton and will also grow naturally much further south.

"The difference is that the *Acacia rostellifera* up here are used to hotter and drier conditions."

"If we were to go to a nursery in Perth and say we would like 150 *Acacia rostellifera*, the seed was most likely collected in Perth and been grown there, so when you plant them in bushland up here, they're much less likely to survive."

Community backs nursery

There are community nurseries across Australia, all growing local provenance plants for regeneration and revegetation, but until 2004, there wasn't a nursery in Geraldton.

Geraldton's community nursery is in Waggrakine, in what was no more than an open paddock last year, Ms Payne says.

The nursery has just completed its first season, growing thousands of

trees and shrubs with the help of community volunteers as well donations and hands-on practical help from groups including APEX, the Geraldton Masonic Lodge and the Water Corporation.

"Together we grew about 13,000 plants in 2014, which is an incredible number considering the nursery was still in construction phase at the beginning of the year," Ms Payne says.

"Whilst we're still building the nursery, it's now at the stage where we have what we need to really start growing a lot of plants for next year," she says.

Provided by Science Network WA

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