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Bush Heritage breaks ground on 1 million tree project

National conservation not-for-profit Bush Heritage Australia has launched a groundbreaking project in Western Australia to plant 1 million trees, plants & shrubs over the course of ten years.

The initial phase of the project in 2019 aims to plant seedlings across 200 hectares at the project site – Eurardy Reserve, an ex-pastoral property turned nature refuge approximately two hours from Geraldton, on Nanda country.

In total, 1350 hectares, the size of 762 MCGs, will be restored over the next ten years.

Bush Heritage’s planting partner at the site, Perth-based Carbon Neutral Charitable Fund, predicts this one project will offset a staggering 90,000+ tonnes of carbon emissions, the equivalent of removing more than 21,000 cars from Australia’s roads for a year.

Tree species such as York gums, melaleucas and acacias will be the key focus initially; then Bush Heritage plans to plant other species like herbs, grasses and wildflowers to ensure a diversity of vegetation.

Bush Heritage ecologists believe that learning how to revegetate wildflowers could inform the success of the Midwest’s famous wildflower season – an annual tourist event critical to the regional economy.

“By planting a variety of plant species in this project we’re ensuring that the cleared area is restored holistically and as similarly to the intact remnant vegetation as possible,” said Tina Schroeder, the ecologist leading the project.

“Revegetation is the first step in the restoration process; improvements in soil quality and the diversity of microorganisms are also essential to the health of the landscape.

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Images

[Click here for hi-res images of Eurardy Reserve.](#)

All these elements are needed to create healthy habitats for the native species that call Eurardy home.”

“We’ve tried natural regeneration at Eurardy Reserve for almost 15 years, but it just hasn’t happened,” added Ben Parkhurst, Bush Heritage ecologist for the Western Rangelands.

“Fertiliser residue in the soil from Eurardy’s pastoral station days makes it unsuitable for native species, the seed bank is really low, and native plants can’t compete with introduced weeds. Active revegetation is our only option.”

Bush Heritage CEO Heather Campbell said the 1 million tree project at Eurardy will restore native habitats for threatened flora and fauna, resulting in a thriving, self-sustaining ecosystem.

“This groundbreaking project gives us a real opportunity to protect the species that call Eurardy home, and provide lasting refuge for the future,” Heather said.

“Through this landmark restoration project, we are proud to demonstrate our commitment to conservation as we work towards our vision of healthy country, protected forever.”

The rehabilitation of this site and carbon offsets are being undertaken by CNCF, a not-for-profit that specialises in high-quality, biodiverse revegetation. In turn, CNCF provides its customers with carbon credits to help offset their environmental impact.

Eurardy quick facts:

- Located in the Southwest Botanical Province – one of just 34 recognised biodiversity hot spots worldwide.
- Purchased by Bush Heritage in 2005
- 33,050 hectares in size
- Home to 650+ plant species
- The diversity of plant life at Eurardy is greater than that of Australia’s tropical rainforests.

Bush Heritage is calling for donations to support its restoration work at Eurardy. To find out more visit www.bushheritage.org.au

About Bush Heritage Australia

The Australian bush is a place of outback wonders and rugged beauty. Founded by Dr Bob Brown in 1991, Bush Heritage is an independent not-for-profit that buys and manages land, and partners with Aboriginal people, to protect our irreplaceable landscapes and magnificent native species. Together with our partners, we protect 8.86 million hectares – that’s more than all of Tasmania.

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