



York
BioBlitz
Information Pack

Saturday 14 to Sunday 15 October 2017
Oswald Sargent Reserve West York
Great Southern Highway Daliak WA 6302

**Printed copies will be provided
to all participants at the BioBlitz**

www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au/bioblitz17



This project is supported by Wheatbelt NRM through funding from the National Landcare Programme

Wheatbelt NRM are hosting the 2017 York Bioblitz. This BioBlitz is a community project aimed at bringing together professional and amateur biologists, ecologists and naturalists, and any community members interested in learning more about their natural environment.

This BioBlitz is being conducted on the beautiful Oswald Sargent Reserve and Wambyn and St Ronans Nature Reserves, with headquarters located at the York Golf Club. With more than 60 participants registered it is imperative that safety, respect for the environment considered and managed effectively.

Please ensure your vehicles attending the BioBlitz are clean and free of mud and soil (especially underneath) to ensure NO soil born diseases (dieback) are brought onto the reserves.

Thank you appreciate your help. Enjoy your weekend. I will be contactable on mobile and will be checking my emails.

These briefing notes and itinerary provide information on issues such as what to expect and what's expected of participants, what to bring, and the range of activities and protocols during the weekend.

THE BIOBLITZ

A BioBlitz is a 24 hour event involving rapid collection of data about the biological diversity of a particular site; enabling scientists and other experts to identify as many plant and animal species as can be found in this limited time frame. It doesn't provide a complete inventory of species, but rather a 'snapshot' of the species that occur in the area. A BioBlitz is a collaborative process, which brings together scientists, skilled amateurs, willing workers and interested 'others', with members of the local community, all working together to expand knowledge about the biodiversity of a particular location.

This year's BioBlitz is the eleventh to be organised in the Wheatbelt with the site falling within the Southwest Australia Ecoregion biodiversity hotspot and contains a high number of vegetation associations which help maintain numerous threatened flora fauna species.

These include, Malleefowl, Carnaby's Black Cockatoos, Baudin's Black Cockatoos and possibly Red-tailed Phascogales. The data obtained during the BioBlitz will be useful as an indicator of environmental quality, serve as a baseline for future monitoring, and aid in planning and management.

Who will be conducting the inventories?

Professional biologists and capable amateurs from the local area, Perth and throughout the Southwest - will lend their expertise to the finding and identifying of taxa within their respective field.

Team Leaders will be encouraged to bring along their own collecting and survey gear to assist in the surveys, but if you are a volunteer and have any books, binoculars or such, make sure you pack them!

We're expecting a small army of people who will be organised into smaller survey teams (based on their interest and expertise) to go out and collect data over the 24 hour BioBlitz session. These data will then be brought into a central 'BioBlitz HQ' where they will be further analysed before being incorporated into a final BioBlitz Report for interested parties. All participants' time, photography (if provided) and effort will be acknowledged in the Report.

THE SITE

In 2017 we will be surveying three sites located within 20km of York and establishing Headquarters at the York Golf Club clubrooms. This is where the BioBlitz will be officially opened, as well as being the campsite, wash area and First Aid Post. There is ample parking at the BioBlitz Headquarters, as well as space for campervans, caravans, tents and swags (for those of you who are brave enough!). There will be toilets available at the headquarters for the weekend.

HOW TO GET THERE

There are several means of getting to the BioBlitz headquarters via Midland, Northam and Beverley.

Location of the BioBlitz headquarters is the York Golf Club clubrooms 6.5 km west of York.

From Midland via Great Eastern and Great Southern Hwy, 56 min (71.3km)

- Head east on the Great Eastern Highway for 32km to the Lakes Roadhouse
- Turn right onto the Great Southern Highway
- Continue to follow the GS Highway for 39.3km
- Turn Left into Golf Course Rd and look out for the BioBlitz signs on the left hand side of the road.

From Northam via York via the Great Southern Hwy, 31 min (42.6km)

- Head South from Northam along the York – Northam Road for (34.1km) towards York
- Take a right hand turn into Balladong Rd and the Great Southern Highway
- Follow the GS Highway for 6.5km and turn right at the Golf Club Rd look out for the BioBlitz signs on the left hand side of the road.

From Beverley via Great Southern Highway Hwy, 29 min (39.5km)

- Travel North from Beverley on the Great Southern Highway 33km
- Take a left hand turn along the GS Highway for 6.3km and turn right at the Golf Club Rd look out for the BioBlitz signs on the left hand side of the road.

THE BLITZ

Over the course of 24 hours spread over two days on October 14 and 15, specific teams will conduct targeted, rapid, and detailed field inventories in areas likely to support high quality plant and animal populations, exemplary natural communities, and their associated ecological processes. We will focus on specific areas within the sites that have been prioritized for field work through map and aerial photograph landscape analysis.

We are counting on all participants to help collect field data for the BioBlitz Report, including species lists, site descriptions, and natural resource data.

We will provide field data forms and protocols, but we will also be relying on your expertise to help us in this regard.

There will be quite a lot of walking around forested areas and other patches of bush involved in the activities, although not over large distances, the longest walk being about two or three kilometres. Most of the field activities will be in small groups and will involve periods of observing listening, collecting and recording.

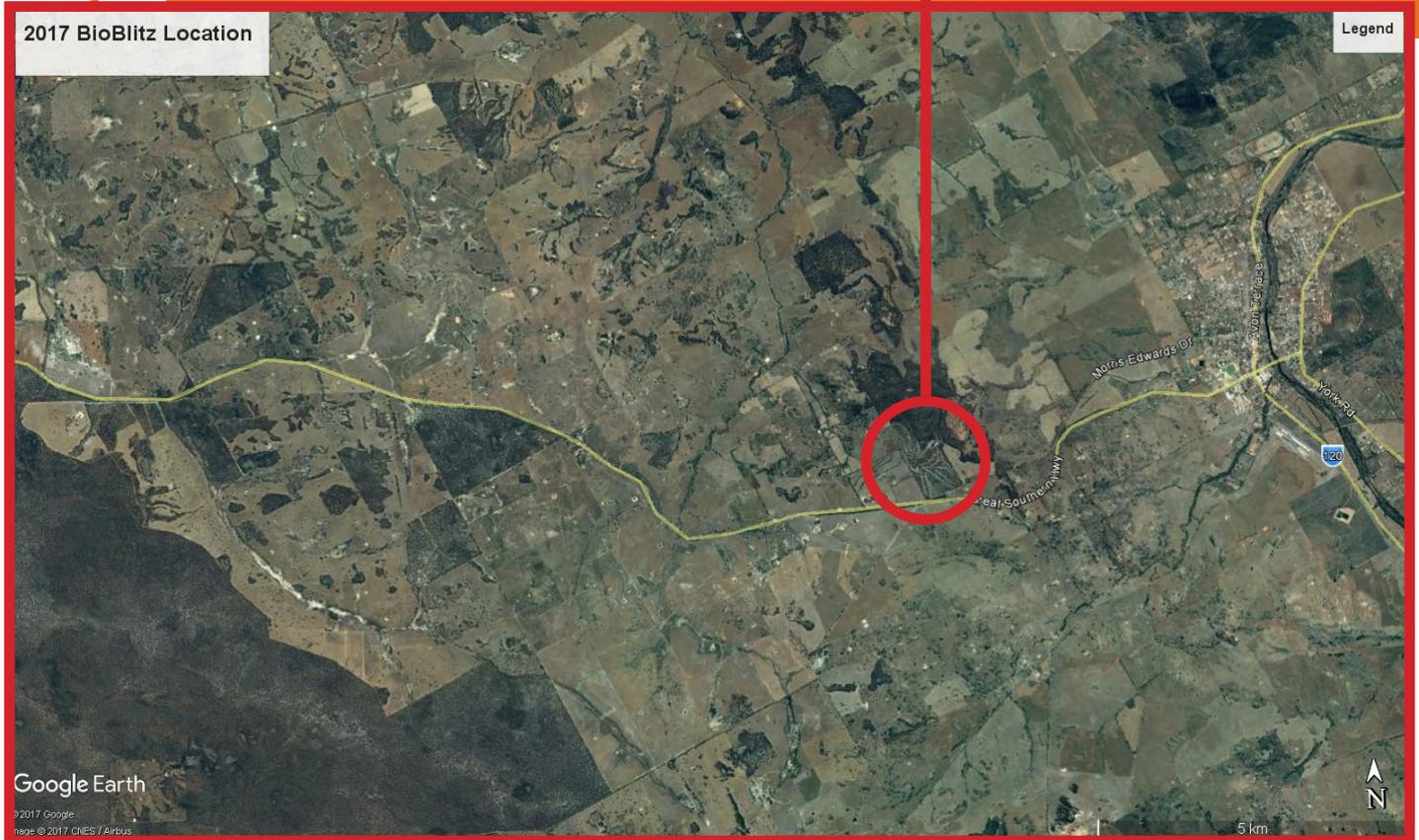
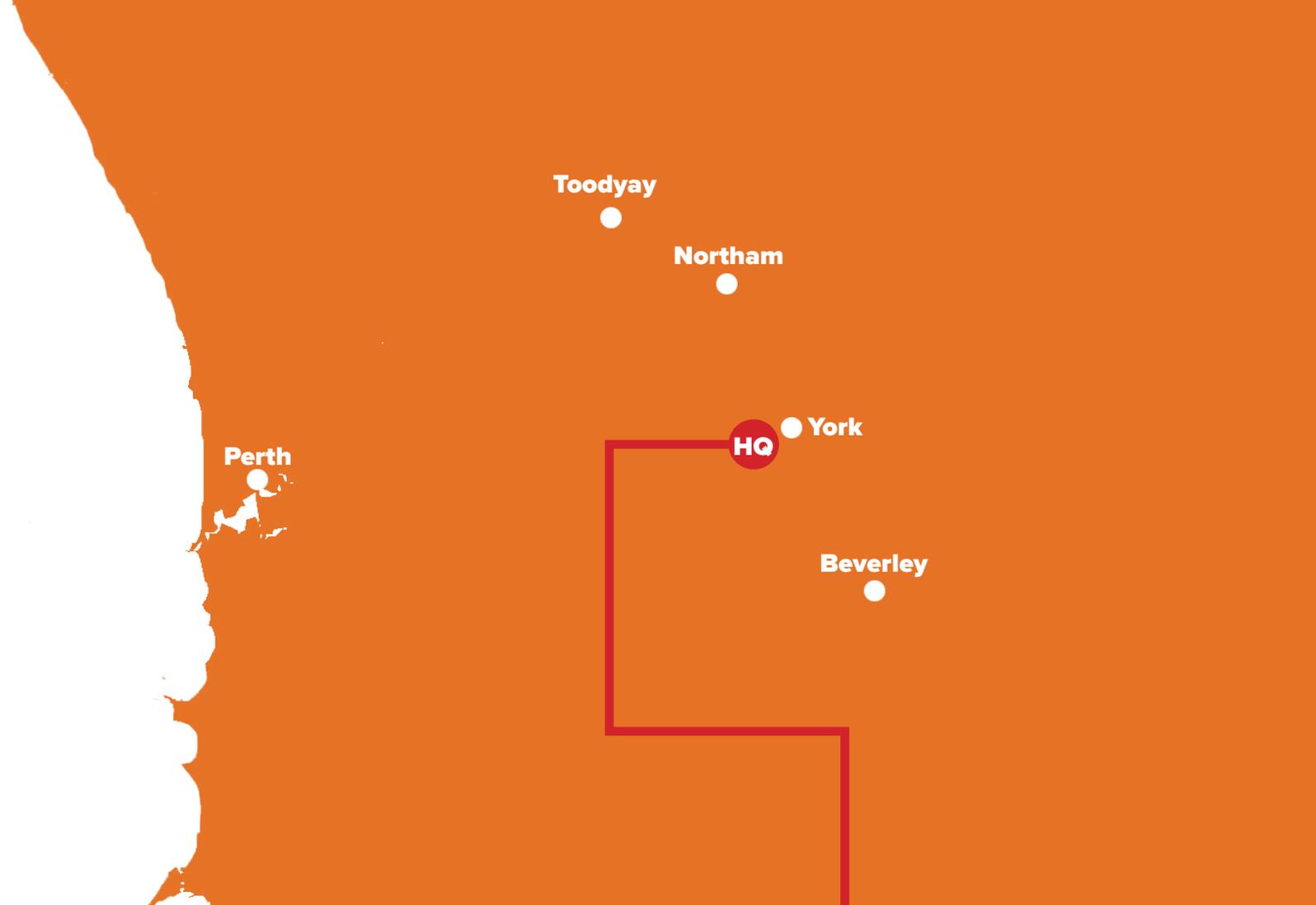
Goals and Purpose

Among the goals of the BioBlitz are the following:

- To gain an insight into the biodiversity values of the York area;
- To help the community become more aware of the biodiversity values of the area, and why and how they can enhance and protect this local environmental asset; and
- To provide an exciting outdoor event, filled with fun and learning for families and friends with an interest in biodiversity education and their environment.

Targets for inventories will include high quality vegetation and areas that are most likely to have high biodiversity and wildlife habitat values.

Although we are interested in locating populations of rare or threatened species, we are very interested in documenting as many species as possible from all taxonomic groups.



The long-range purpose for the BioBlitz is to provide much-needed baseline data on the natural biodiversity of this site so that the BioBlitz Report can advise and assist the surrounding landholders in managing their lands to benefit biodiversity and to provide a reflection on the results of long term land management practices.

The data collected will be collated in a report to the participants and community. This will, later be published with all participants acknowledged and made freely available as a resource for further managerial and research proposals in the district.

PROGRAM

Oswald Sargent Reserve West York BioBlitz

Saturday 14 October

9.00am - Participants begin arriving at BioBlitz HQ: Site and camp setup

10.30am - Registration opens: Resource distribution begins

11.30am - Final Briefing: BioBlitz role affirmation or assignment

12.00pm - Lunch (BYO)

1.00pm - BioBlitz surveys begin – various locations

5.30pm - Teams return to BioBlitz HQ

6:00pm - Evening roundup & discussion at BioBlitz HQ camping area

6.30pm - BBQ dinner (provided)

8:00pm - Evening Activities

Sunday 15 October

6.00am - Dawn bird walk

7.00am - Breakfast (provided)

8:00am - Surveys resume

12:00pm - Surveys end

12.15pm - Lunch (BYO)

12:30pm - BioBlitz wrap up - significant findings highlighted by each of the leaders and discussions with the whole group

1.30pm - Head for home

COLLECTING LICENSES

The focus of the BioBlitz is on identification, NOT collection. Participants are asked to not collect specimens and identify in situ. The Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW), who manage all flora and fauna collecting activities in Western Australia, will license key personnel to collect specimens. You are not permitted to collect specimens for your own use without first having obtained the appropriate licence from DBCA (formerly DPaW).

None of the material, collected by authorised personnel, will be used for commercial purposes.

ACCOMMODATION

There are a number of accommodation options available to participants including:

- The designated BioBlitz campsite is at the BioBlitz Headquarters at the York Golf Course, 6.5km East of York. There is no cost to camping here, but campers will need to be self-sufficient with regards to food, camping gear etc. There will be a barbecue and toilets on site. This is the roughest of the options - but with lots of stars, campfire yarns, bunyips, drop bears etc it may be the most interesting option.
- There are numerous accommodation options available in the Lake Grace area. These can be viewed and booked if needed at <http://www.avonvalleywa.com.au/accommodation>.
- Staying with locals - If you have friends or family in the area, feel free to spend the night with them. Hope they can join us for the Blitz and the night-stalk, etc.

WHAT TO BRING

BioBlitz participants are responsible for bringing all of their own equipment. Make sure it contains:

- Enough fuel for the trip (if you are driving your vehicle). Perth to York is about 100km with plenty of fuel stops along the way.
- Tent (preferably one that is easy to put up and pull down and is waterproof);
- Swag, or sleeping bag and camping mattress.
- Suitable for cold conditions;
- 10 litres of water per person; Water will be available on site

- Your own food in an esky. Food that is easy and quick to prepare for breakfast and lunches especially if you have any specific dietary requirements e.g. UHT milk, cereal, sandwich ingredients, fruit, snacks, tea and coffee etc;
- Any required cooking utensils, pots, frypan etc;
- Cutlery and an indestructible mug, plate and bowl;
- A plastic basin for washing, washing dishes etc
- A folding chair;
- Field clobber - including loose fitting long sleeved shirts, broad-brimmed hat and warmer gear for the evening;
- Comfortable worn in walking boots or shoes;
- Sunglasses and Sunscreen lotion;
- Raincoat;
- Any personal medical requirements you need;
- First aid kit;
- Whistle (for field safety);
- Torch and spare batteries, a head torch is also great for spotlighting;
- Toilet paper and shovel/trowel for field use (toilets at BioBlitz HQ only);
- Small day pack to carry your gear when walking;
- Personal insect repellent;
- Water bottle;

Optional Equipment:

- Camera and batteries;
- GPS or Compass;
- Binoculars;
- Plastic rubbish bags;
- Field journal;
- Clipboard;
- Pens, pencils; and
- Flora and fauna ID books (well labelled - in a storage box).

Note: If carpooling, try to keep your kit as small as possible - Pack light, in a convenient box/bag, to assist transport and ease of use.

SAFETY & DUTY OF CARE

Although this is largely a 'transport and provide for yourself' activity, you will be led by capable and experienced leaders. Your safety is of concern to everyone else, and it is expected that everyone will act in a safe and responsible manner and to look out for your fellow participants.

Take special care of the bush - remember we're there to enjoy the natural environment. It is there for everyone's benefit and ultimate enjoyment. Wherever possible *"take only photographs, leave only footprints."*

As a basic rule, **DON'T GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT TELLING SOMEONE!** Avoiding getting lost is easy if you adhere to the following:

- While travelling, maintain contact with your travelling group and look out for each other;
- In the bushland, adopt a partner or buddy, or stay in your team, and make sure they know where you are at all times;
- Stay together as a group and make sure you are not out of sight,
- Ideally you will have used the ablutions prior to setting out into the bush... However, if the situation arises... for your safety and to prevent false alarms you should tell your buddy or someone in the group where you're going.
- If you do become lost, disoriented or are anxious:

- 1. STOP** and blow your whistle three times.
- 2. LISTEN** for a single whistle answer and then move towards it.

If you don't hear anything, wait and then blow three times at regular intervals.

You will be found but it is better if you stay where you are rather than travel any distance, unless you can see help.

PLEASE - DON'T blow your whistle unnecessarily.

WATER

Water is always limited in the bush. Bring at least 10 litres per person as well as a plastic basin or similar tub in which to wash/wash-up and cleaning equipment etc.. There will water available at the BioBlitz HQ.

MEDICAL PROBLEMS

If you have any condition that you think the organizers should know about, please indicate it on your registration sheet and personally advise the First Aid coordinator at BioBlitz Headquarters.

Sunburn, insect bites and blisters from walking are the most likely medical problems that may arise and you should guard against them. Loose-fitting close-weave long sleeved shirts, a broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen lotion (including lip balm) are recommended and good comfortable shoes/boots for walking.

You will need to take plenty of fluids - so don't forget a water bottle.

A first aid kit will be available. Please advise a team leader of any medical problems that arise.

COOKING AND CAMP ETIQUETTE

A catering area will be established consisting of trestle tables under a marquee or in the Golf Club. Be prepared to take all rubbish back home with you so please minimise any food that has the potential to smell or have adequate sealable bags for disposal. We need to leave the area looking as though we weren't there and respect the logs and branches which are habitat for the multitude of species in the area.

FIELD LOGISTICS & COMMUNICATIONS

Although there will be a small library of field identification books, etc. at the BioBlitz Headquarters, it would be greatly appreciated if you could bring along some of your own identification resources (bird books etc). Those participants whose expertise requires specific equipment (nets, traps, gloves, secateurs, microscopes etc) are asked to please bring these with you. Mobile Phone coverage is reasonable but patchy over the site and in the case of emergencies move to a higher position to get reception.

Please contact one of the coordinators if you need to make a call. Please also ensure you are able to charge your phone from your car battery.

TOILET ARRANGEMENTS

There will be portable toilets at BioBlitz Headquarters. If you 'need to go' in the bush, it is essential that it is done appropriately - at least 100 metres away from the activity areas - and that waste must be buried as deeply as possible. Make sure you bring a shovel or trowel and toilet paper. A basin with disinfectant will be available to wash hands at BioBlitz Headquarters. Ensure you have some means of washing your hands if you need to in the bush. The issue of waste management is important and we will need to ensure that hygiene and environmental issues are well managed.

INSURANCE

As a BioBlitz participant you will be considered a Wheatbelt NRM Volunteer and will be covered by Wheatbelt NRM's public liability and personal accident insurance policy. This is for the period during which participants are actually involved in the BioBlitz but does not cover travel to and from the site. Please fill in a Volunteer Registration Form as soon as you arrive at BioBlitz HQ.

If you are not registered, you are NOT covered by Wheatbelt NRM's public liability and personal accident insurance!

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information, contact:

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Chris David - Program Manager, Productive Relationships

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Your Say: **Shaping NRM in the Wheatbelt**

We encourage you to visit our NRM Strategy for the Avon River Basin, view our past projects and have YOUR SAY. Is there something we need to add? Does the whole approach need a re-think? What have we learnt? How would you create a vibrant environment and livelihood in the Avon River Basin?

To submit ideas people can log on to oursay.org/wheatbelt with submissions closing Friday 1 December.

