

CASE STUDY

Northern Agricultural Catchments Council



Koobabbie – Alison Doley

Profile

Alison is the owner of a 7,200ha farm near Coorow, about 200kms south east of Geraldton. The farm lies on the western edge of 'Koobabbie' a naturally saline wetland system which includes a gypsum lake. Alison is also on the steering committee of the Buntine Marchagee Natural Diversity Recovery Catchment program that aimed to help recover and protect significant biological communities, particularly wetlands, from salinity at a catchment scale within south west Western Australia region.

Alison story

Alison's commitment to preserving the environment grew from the relatively large amount of original native vegetation that still remains on her farm. About 60% of the property is arable and the remainder comprise uncleared salt lakes and belts of remnant woodland fenced off from livestock and reserved for natural flora and fauna.

Alison has been an active conservationist for more than 25 years and has made many personal contributions to natural resource management at Koobabbie. In 1987 she started planting salmon gums from seed collected on her farm and later constructed the first 50kms of fencing of remnant vegetation in the catchment through NACC's Salinity Rehabilitation and Extension Project.



Alison Betty Doley at her property in Koobabbie. Photo courtesy by DEC

Her early fencing activities were well rewarded in 2007 when the Critically Endangered flora *Eremophila koobabbiensis* regenerated in remnant vegetation she had fenced off 20 years ago.

This rare flora is only known to occur in small populations on Alison's farm and grows in association with the Priority Two declared rare species *Eremophila sargentii* in salmon gum and gimlet woodland.

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In 2008, Alison propagated cuttings from these species and set aside an area on her farm where they were planted to ensure their preservation.

These same salmon gum and gimlet woodlands have also been classified as an important breeding ground for the Carnaby's Black Cockatoos as they provide suitable nesting hollows for this currently threatened species.

Nesting hollows only occur in trees older than 130 years and are in short supply since agricultural clearing took place and are often invaded by Corella and Galah birds.



Woodlands with *Eremophila sargentii* in the foreground.

Alison was one of the first landholders to supplement existing hollows with artificial nests as part of a trial to establish their acceptance by these iconic birds.

In order to improve the likelihood of successful Carnaby's Black Cockatoo breeding in her woodlands she also undertakes shooting and the removal of the eggs of these plague species from cockatoo nesting hollows.

Alison's take home message

"Revegetating and protecting native vegetation has paid me some pretty large dividends over the years, not only is my farm more productive, but I get to see some of the most beautiful plants and animals found in WA every day."

For more information

For more information about Alison Doley case study, please contact Stanley Yokwe, NACC Regional Landcare Facilitator at NACC on (08) 9938 0105 or Stanley.Yokwe@nacc.com.au



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