

Wetlands in the Shire

Our wetland environments are extensive and unique. Wetland systems in the Shire of Denmark include, Parry Inlet, Irwin Inlet, Owingup Swamp and Wilson Inlet.

Wilson Inlet

Wilson Inlet is a seasonally open body of water covering over 48 square kilometres located in the Great Southern region of Western Australia. It is a broad, shallow flat-bottomed lagoon that stretches from the rivermouth into Genulup, which is at the opening of the Hay River.



Collaborative Partnerships

We acknowledge the importance of rivers, inlets and coastline to residents, visitors and the local economy, and the Shire implements and advocates for plans and policies with other relevant authorities and organisations to ensure the on-going health of our waterways:

- Wilson Inlet Foreshore Reserves Management Plan
- Wilson Inlet Cultural Heritage Plan
- Wilson Inlet Management Strategy
- Wilson Inlet Sandbar Opening Protocol

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- Head to **denmark.wa.gov.au**
- Send us an enquiry by contacting our Sustainability Officer
enquiries@denmark.wa.gov.au
- To find out more, please visit:
<https://www.denmark.wa.gov.au/our-shire/environment/biodiversity/waterways.aspx>

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MARJIT / WILSON INLET



Inlet Biodiversity Values

The inlet is home to various species of flora and fauna and has significant cultural indigenous heritage.

The inlet has an abundance of flourishing vegetation ranging from paperbark (*Melaleuca*) trees lining the foreshore bank to seagrass (*Ruppia*) blooming in the nutrient-dense water. Seagrass meadows are extremely valuable by providing a role in reducing climate change by trapping carbon-rich sediments, absorbing nutrients and pathogens.

Frogs, reptiles and birds that live in these areas rely on wetlands for survival. The inlet has a recorded 73 species of water bird inhabiting the water body, where they are a main feature of the inlet.

Foreshore Fringing Vegetation

Foreshore fringing vegetation plays several critical roles in the ecosystem's health by:

- acting as a buffer
- filtering pollutants and nutrients
- helping reduce bank erosion
- providing habitat for native fauna
- and adding value to the visual amenity of the inlets landscape.

Cultural Significance

In 2011, the Wilson Inlet was listed as a heritage site for exceptional significance. The inlet is considered essential to the heritage of locality.

The cultural significance of the inlet dates back 12,000 years, where the Traditional Owners utilised the land for various purposes. Fish and lizard traps, burials, stone artefacts and ceremonial sites can still be found today.

The Wilson Inlet has been referred to by many Aboriginal names at different sites along the inlet. It has been collectively determined by the indigenous community to refer to the whole of the inlet with a dual name of 'Marjit' meaning 'water-snake'.

Illegal Vegetation Clearing

Native vegetation along the Wilson Inlet foreshore has suffered years of illegal clearing to facilitate residential views and access to the inlet.

Introduced weed species such as kikuyu grass have also become a major issue in the area and uncontrolled access to remaining healthy vegetation is also placing pressure on the foreshore vegetation.

Revegetation Efforts

The Shire in collaboration with Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee has been undertaking revegetation activities using locally sourced plant material along the Wilson inlet foreshore in an effort to re-establish disturbed sites.

Revegetation activities involve community engagement of local volunteers, College of Agriculture, and TAFE students through a long-term program of site preparation, weed control activities, seed collection, plant propagation, direct seeding and planting of native plant species.

