

# Whadjuk Noongar Country

Pronounced Wod-juk noo-garr



## Location

Whadjuk country covers around 5,580 km<sup>2</sup> of land in the greater Perth region and includes the cities and towns of Perth, Fremantle, Joondalup, Armadale, Toodyay, Wundowie, Bullsbrook and Chidlow.



## Language

The Whadjuk people form part of the Noongar language group, with their own distinctive dialect. 'Kaya' means 'hello', 'moort' means 'family' and 'boodja' means country.



## Cultural Facts

- The Whadjuk tell many stories of the Wagyl, a rainbow serpent believed to be responsible for creating most of the water features around Perth.
- The Whadjuk divided the year into six seasons, which were roughly divided rather than by specific date using environmental signals such as the spring call of the motorbike frog and the flowering of the Western Australian Christmas tree.
- They used high quality red ochre in ceremonies and for colouring hair, which they obtained from the site now occupied by Perth Railway Station. They traded this with people to the east as well as quartz from the Darling Scarp, which was used for making spears.



## Places of Significance

### Goonininup

On the site of the current Swan Brewery, together with the nearby site of Goodinup, marked the place where coastal and inland Whadjuk people met for trade, ritual purposes and male initiations.

### Wanneroo

Meaning 'the place where women dig yams' had a number of Whadjuk camp sites. Orchestra Shell Cave in Wanneroo has many traditional paintings on the roof and walls.

## About Traditional Owner Country

Country is the term often used by First Nations peoples to describe the concept of belonging to land. This includes the lands, waterways, people, animals, plants and dreamings. Each country may also have its own ideas and beliefs about law, custom, language, spiritual belief, cultural practice, family and identity.

## For More Information

WA Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage  
08 6551 8002 or [www.dplh.wa.gov.au](http://www.dplh.wa.gov.au)

Glen Ella, EVT First Nations advisor  
0416 051 419 or [glen@spiritgroup.co](mailto:glen@spiritgroup.co)