



Jane House

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Jane House has always had an appreciation for nature, but it wasn't until migrating to Australia from England at 21 that she noticed how much the natural world positively affected her.

“The biodiversity here really opened my eyes and I started to look at things in different ways,” said Jane. “I started noticing what was around me and I saw what a wonderland country this really is.”

Her appreciation for the Australian bushland persisted but it wasn't until her 40s that it kicked into overdrive. Jane said the big turning point was meeting Greens MLC Chrissy Sharp, who was a prominent activist in the forest movement. “During that time they were going hell for leather on logging, and it was really bad back then,” she said. “They were getting stuck into old growth forests.”

Their advocacy made waves and resulted in the Regional Forest Agreement for the South West Forest Region of Western Australia, which is a blueprint for forest management and aims to protect environmental values. It was signed in March 1999, marking a major win for the forests.



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These days, Jane is less involved at the coalface but remains dedicated to the environment. Her focus has now shifted to her own property, which she has gradually been working on for more than a decade.

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About 12 years ago, Jane received funding for tree planting and fencing her creek line to improve water quality. Her next step was to recruit Nature Conservation (then Cape-to-Cape Catchments Group) for advice and contractors to carry out the work. It wasn’t all smooth sailing, with a storm clearing out the contractors before the job could be completed, but a determined Jane donned her boots and gloves, to finish the job.

Looking back on all her work, Jane said she felt a sense of accomplishment. “I put so much work into it,” she said. “I don’t even know how many trees I ended up planting, but now they feel like my babies – or teenagers now I guess.”



The property has seen a huge improvement in biodiversity and is now home to wildlife like bandicoots and native birds. Jane said she loves listening to the blue wrens in the morning. Even with trees taking off, the understorey brimming with life and the creek’s water quality improving, Jane said her work was not yet done. Her next step is to create a few more corridors and connect them to the Margaret River.

She’s also passing on her passion for conservation by teaching her grandchildren everything she’s learned. “We need to talk about the big picture so I talk to them about it every chance I get,” she said. “I think if everybody does that and everybody does a little bit, we’ll have a wonderful world to live in.”