

JULIE FIRTH - Drylands Permaculture Designer

Email: yilgarn@midwest.com.au Tel.: ++61 (0)8 9938 1628 Geraldton, Western Australia

Permaculture Design Experience

Involved in Permaculture since 1988, a former electrician Julie pursued her passion by embedding her lifestyle and career in the development of a working demonstration research farm located in the semi-arid Mediterranean climate of Geraldton, Western Australia. Julie has pursued her knowledge of permaculture in Dryland climates through self-directed and on-the-ground experiential learning that she has applied on own farm and extended to design experience overseas in similar dryland climates.

- 1991 onwards **The Drylands Permaculture Nursery.** Geraldton, Western Australia
Designer, Builder and Manager
Wholesale Propagation Nursery producing 30,000 trees annually.
- 1989 onwards **Dryland Permaculture Research Farm.** Geraldton, Western Australia
Designer, Principal Teacher, Manager and Builder.
A working demonstration farm and educational centre showcasing commercial organic seed gardens and tree crops, alternative building techniques and dryland strategies.
- 1993 onwards **Yilgarn Traders' Chemical-Free Seeds.** Geraldton, Western Australia
Owner and Manager
Seed company producing organic non-hybrid and traditional varieties of herbs and vegetable seed for the home gardener.
- 2003 to 2004 **Aldinga Arts Ecovillage,** Aldinga, South Australia
Strategic planning and budgeting of common-land landscaping works.
- 2000 to 2002 **Eco-tourism venture 'Riverside Sanctuary',** Ajana, Western Australia
Consultancy, workshop facilitation and permaculture design.
- 1998 to 1999 **Wongatha Wonganarra Aboriginal Community - Housing Upgrade and Landscape Design Project,** Laverton, Western Australia
Sub-consultant to GHD project management.
Landscape, security, rehabilitation and greywater reuse design, community consultation, specifications and site works supervisor.
- 1995 to 1997 **Forrester Park,** Geraldton, Western Australia
Site analysis, community consultancy, design and staged implementation and management schedule.
- 1996 **Iona Lodge,** Dongara, Western Australia
Site analysis, design and implementation planning and management.
- 1994 **Morapoi Station - Aboriginal Community Farm,** Western Australia
Permaculture Design Advisor.
- 1993 to 1994 **Ecological Village Design of Permaculture Dryland Projects**
West Bank and Gaza Strip in the Middle East
Community surveys, consultation, training, design and implementation management with extension of initiatives through workshops to surrounding villages.
- 1994 **Fambidzanii Education Farm and Centre,** Zimbabwe
Design Consultant.
Modifying design by reviewing production management, cultural expectations and problems.
- 1992 onwards Small Scale Permaculture Landscape/Garden designs in the Geraldton, Western Australia
- 1992 onwards Permaculture Farm Designs in the Geraldton Region, Western Australia

Teaching Experience

Julie has worked with Christian, Muslim & Aboriginal groups of people from all levels of society and of different age groups. Assembling and teaching innovative participative learning 'culturally appropriate' courses in all facets of Permaculture specialising Landcare and Food Security.

- 2008 and 2009 **Seed Collection Workshop.** Geraldton Western Australia.
Delivered participative workshops on practical seed collection, drying and storage and identifying local native plants for community members. Conducted for the Northern Agricultural Catchment Council (NACC).
- 2007 **Coastcare Native Plant and Coastal Garden Workshops.** Dongara and Geraldton, WA.
Workshops in native plants for front line coastal gardens with an emphasis on local plants and growing them in a waterwise garden.
- 2007 **Leaning Tree Community School.** Geraldton, Western Australia.
Teaching school children ecology using experiential learning techniques, held at the Drylands Permaculture Nursery.
- 2003 to 2005 **Greencorps Programme.** Geraldton, Western Australia.
Project Agent and Project Partner for five Greencorps teams of ten 17 to 20 year old participants on six month activity base teaching and work experience in Natural Area Conservation training.
- 1996 to 1997 **Permaculture and Landcare Programme.** Geraldton, Western Australia.
Delivery of courses and tree-growing skills to school children.
- 1992 onwards **Permaculture Design and Management.** Geraldton, Western Australia.
Provide internships and work experience and Diplomas in Permaculture for students at the Dryland Permaculture Research Farm.
- 1996 onwards **Horticulture, Central West College of TAFE,** Geraldton, Western Australia.
Leading students in on-site nursery operation and plant propagation.
- 1995 **Arid land Rehabilitation Course.** Golden Grove Mine in Goldfields, Western Australia.
Created and delivered a specialist Natural Area Conservation with plant identification, seed collecting, rehabilitation techniques and plant propagation.
- 1994 **Cultural Awareness in Permaculture Course.** Perth, Western Australia.
Delivered Cultural awareness training to Permaculture Designers.
- 1993 to 1994 **Permaculture Design Certificate Course and workshops.** Palestine - West Bank.
Conducted design course and permaculture related workshops over 1 year.
- 1992 to 2002 **Permaculture Design Certificate Courses.** Various locations including at the Technical and Further Education college in Geraldton, Western Australia and International Institute of Permaculture in New South Wales, Australia and within various other communities and education centres within Australia.
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Professional and Industry Experience

- 1989 onwards Nursery Management, The Permaculture Nursery, Geraldton WA
- 1989 onwards Small Business Proprietor, Yilgarn Traders, Geraldton WA
- 2008-2009 Survey Botanist, Vegetation Community Survey, Golden Grove WA
- 1989 onwards Manager of Yilgarn Traders Chemical-Free Heirloom Seeds and Seed Gardens
- 1989 onwards Permaculture Design Consultancy, specialising in dryland climates
- 1989 onwards Organic Food Production Manager, Drylands Permaculture Research Farm
- 1993 onwards Willing Worker on Organic Farm (WWOOF), Host and Manager of WWOOFers
- 2003 - 2005 Greencorps Programme Partner facilitating work experience and project work for Greencorps participants in partnership with Greening Australia, Geraldton
- 2003 onwards Registered Bee Keeper and producer of 'Garden Honey'

Publications

- 2001 **"The Dryland Challenge"** - Issue Spring 2001 of Organic Gardener, Gardening Australia. FPC Magazines, NSW, Australia.
- 1996 **Permaculture Garden Guidelines - Dryland Coastal Regions**, self-published.
- 1995 **Field Manual for Rehabilitation in the Arid Shrub Lands**, self-published.
- 1995 **"Permaculture Oasis"**. Traditional agriculture in Egypt. Article in the Permaculture International Journal
- 1995 **Yilgarn Traders Seed Saving Catalogue**, self-published.

Honorary and Community Participation

- 2000 onwards **Geraldton Regional Herbarium**. Current Chairperson.
Assisted in set up the data and specimen collection of local native plants and ran community workshops.
- 1996 **Nominee for the John Tonkin 'Greening Australia' Community Award**
- 1996 **Sixth International Permaculture Conference** in Perth, Western Australia. "Arid land strategies and Rehabilitation" Main speaker. Organiser and Main speaker of the Dryland Field Study Trip prior to the conference at the Permaculture Dryland Research Farm.
- 1995 to 1999 **Greenough Landcare District Committee**, Western Australia.
An Australian Community Group working towards sustainable farm land management
- 1994 **"Low Cost Production of Agro-forestry Trees"**. Preparation and compilation of research data for publication on behalf of John Maurice, Israel.
- 1990 to 2001 **Seed Curator of Traditional Food Plants for Seed Savers' Network**, Byron Bay, 2481 NSW, Australia.

Field Research

Conducted at the Drylands Permaculture Research Farm.

- 1993 onwards **New Tree Crops Research and Plant cultivar development for Dryland Climates.** Stone Pine, Apple Cactus, Marula, Pomegranate.
- 2003 **Native Plant Propagation Trials.** Local endemic native plants.
- 2002 **"Honey as a rooting hormone"** project. Trialling local honey varieties in comparison to commercial rooting hormones and controls on soft-woodcuttings of *Olearia axillaris*. Telford Polytechnic Apiculture Certificate course.
- 2002 **"Year Round Bee Forage Systems"** – Herbarium of Exotic and Native Bee Fodder Plants on the Drylands Permaculture Research Farm. Recording of pollen and nectar flow times. Formulation of Annual Bee Forage System. Telford Polytechnic Apiculture Certificate course.
- 1994 to 1999 **New Propagation Systems for seedling production.** Design and construction of commercial scale bare-root tree seedling infrastructures. Follow up operational analysis and fine tuning.

Conducted at Golden Grove, Yalgoo-Paynes Find

- 2008 to 2009 **Botanical Plant Community Mapping.** Survey and mapping of plant communities through vegetation surveys and plant searches for rare and priority flora through un-exploited mining leases in the Murchison Region
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