

AVON DESCENT



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2026 SHORT COURSES

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WHERE
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Step into a dreamscape of wondrous events and embark on unforgettable adventures in Perth / Boorloo, the most relaxed and naturally adventurous capital city.

- Soar over the dreamlike Avon Valley in a hot air balloon or experience true awe paragliding.
- Sip your way through the award-winning Swan Valley, home to more than 40 wineries and 70 restaurants and cafes.
- Feel the thrill of powerboating, skiing, stand up paddle boarding and kayaking in the region's otherworldly 295km long Avon River.
- Watch Mother Nature paint a fiery sunset over the sparkling Indian Ocean at one of Perth's 19 beaches.
- Cycle or walk along the Swan River / Derbal Yerrigan and experience Perth's unique flora and fauna.
- Feel the thrill of Optus Stadium's Halo Rooftop Walk or Matagarup Zip+Climb.
- Discover Rottnest Island / Wadjemup, where you'll be greeted by 63 wondrous beaches and the world's happiest animal, the adorable quokka.
- Immerse yourself in Noongar culture on an Aboriginal tour — discover the cultural significance and ancient stories of this region.

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**WELCOME MESSAGE FROM
HON. ROGER COOK MLA
PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**Avon Descent
8-9 August 2026**

The Western Australian Government is a proud sponsor of the Avon Descent through the Metro Events Program.

The Metro Events Program was established in 2024 to support local event holders to expand their existing events, further activating the Perth region for locals, and drawing in visitors from outside Western Australia.

In its second year, 10 events, including the Avon Descent, have been awarded funding through the Metro Events Program. The Western Australian Government is proud to sponsor these events, which help bring vibrancy to the State, give visitors a time-sensitive reason to book a trip to Western Australia, and enhance the experience of tourists in the city.

The Western Australian Government also sponsors a range of sporting, cultural, arts and culinary events across the State, as we strive to populate an exciting, diverse and world-class calendar of events that is always on, year-round.

Tourism is a key part of the Western Australian Government's plan to diversify the economy, create jobs, and develop business opportunities. Events play an important role in this plan as we strive to achieve our vision for Perth and Western Australia to be the fastest growing events destination in the South East Asia region.

We hope everyone enjoys the Avon Descent and takes the time to explore all that the Perth region has to offer.

ROGER COOK MLA
PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



SHORT COURSE OPTIONS

Northam's Avon Descent Association offers short course options to accommodate a greater involvement by individuals and teams. All short course options come under the Avon Descent banner and are marketed as participation options and not specifically separate events.

2026 course options include:

- Day 1 Super50 (paddle and power craft)
- Day 2 SuperValley (open only to experienced paddle)
- Day 2 5km Bayswater Splash and Dash (paddle only)
- Day 2 14km Guildford Glide (paddle only)
- Day 2 17km Lilac Challenge (paddle only)



DAY 1 SUPER50

Day 1—Saturday 8 August 2026

Start at Northam Weir

End at Cobbler Pool, West Toodyay

This option is available on day 1 of the Avon Descent and provides access to the event from Northam to Cobbler Pool. The course is approximately 52km and participants have full access to the same support services (including timing and the Avon Descent Support Unit) as the 124km competitors. Paddlers and Power craft need to be scrutineered for the Super50, as the course contains white water. Competency is also required.



DAY 2 SUPERVALLEY

Day 2—Sunday 9 August 2026

Start at Cobbler Pool, end below Bells Rapids

This option is available on day 2 of the Avon Descent and provides access to the event from Cobbler Pool to Bells Rapids. The course is approximately 39km and participants have full access to the same support services down the Valley (including timing and the Avon Descent Support Unit) as the 124km competitors.

The Day 2 Valley Only race option is only available to solo, experienced paddlers, who have been approved through an Expression of Interest process by NADA.



IMPORTANT

This information relates to competitors participating in the Day 1 Super50 and Day 2 SuperValley categories.

Super50 & SuperValley Scrutineering

REQUIRED: Competitors are required to attend paddler scrutineering pre-race.

Super 50 Registration

Friday 7 August

Town Hall, Northam
83 Wellington Street East, Northam
Parking available behind the building

12noon-6:30pm

Someone from your team must attend Friday registration.

All helmets must be brought to registration for stickers to be adhered. Grid positions for Day 1 will be posted at registration. Participants will not be registered until their equipment has passed scrutineering and will not be permitted to start until registration is complete.

Once participants have registered, they must drop their craft off at the Start Marshalling Area, Broome Tce (opposite riverbank to Start Tower).

- For relay teams, this is the starting person's craft only.
- The start marshalling area will be open from 11am-7pm on Friday 7 August.
- The start marshalling area is near the main traffic bridge. Follow the instructions of the Start Marshall.
- Craft not in the start marshalling area by 7pm on Friday 7 August will not be permitted to start.

Be aware there will be fireworks in Northam on Friday 7 August from 8.30pm. There will be NO admittance in the pit area from 8pm. This will be strictly enforced by the Shire of Northam.

Event security will be present in the craft assembly area, however participants are encouraged to remove any loose or unsecured items which could be lost or fall out if craft have to be moved to allow for additional craft.

Day 2 SuperValley paddle competitors are not required to attend registration in Northam on Friday 7 August. Competitors are required to be at Cobbler Pool on Sunday 9 August by 6.30am (see next page).

Valley Only: Registration & craft drop off Sunday 9 August

Day 2 Valley Only competitors do not need to attend Northam registration, as long as they have passed scrutineering.

If craft or equipment requires re-scrutineering, they must attend Northam registrations.

Craft must be brought to Cobbler Pool on Sunday morning before the Day 2 paddler start. Paddlers are encouraged to be at the Cobbler Pool startline by 6.00am.

CRAFT ID Numbers

Paddle Craft: Your official CRAFT Race ID Number sticker will be given to you at scrutineering. Craft stickers may vary in colour between certain categories for easy identification by Marshalls.

HELMET ID STICKERS

Paddle and Power: Helmet stickers will be given to all participants at Northam Registrations.

Participants must have their helmets clear for the race ID number—please ensure any old numbers are removed.

There are two stickers for individual participants. Stickers must be placed one on each side of the helmet, so be sure to bring all helmets to registration.

SPONSOR STICKERS

If sponsor stickers are provided, they are required to be displayed on craft by all competitors, where reasonably able. Stickers will be provided at scrutineering and Northam registrations.



DAY 2 SHORT COURSES

Day 2 short courses start and end at Riverside Gardens, Bayswater.

Participants

Participation in the Day 2 Course Options is open to paddle craft only. This course option suits recreational paddlers and is less restricted than the Avon Descent—competitive craft specifications do not apply.

Likely craft involved in the optional events includes (but not limited to):

- Single, double, fours, six and multiple considerations
- Recreational kayaks
- Surf skis
- Ocean paddle craft
- Stand up paddle boards
- Outriggers
- Dragon boats
- Surf boats
- Rowing shells



DAY 2 TIMING

Participants are encouraged to arrive one hour before the start of their event.

- 09:00 am start the 17km Lilac Challenge.
- 09:30am start the 14km Guildford Glide.
- 10:00am start the 5km Bayswater Splash and Dash.



DAY 2 START

- The condition of the craft or the choice of suitable craft used will be the responsibility of the competitor and it is expected that all paddlers will have the ability to self-rescue in flat water conditions.
- As a result of the river width from bank to bank the race is a timed race from start to finish without a stop with the fastest winning craft in the selected division taking out the win.
- All craft will start in waves with a short interval between each wave.
- All craft will take up a single file formation to negotiate all bridges with narrow access.
- At the West Swan Road—Barkers Bridge all craft are to negotiate a passage under the bridge in single file. No overtaking is permitted from 200m approaching a bridge and all craft are to negotiate the bridge with extreme caution and safety.
- Craft may overtake at any time other than on an approach to a bridge. If approaching a craft in front, the overtaking manoeuvre must be on the left of the craft in front.
- An announcement is to be made in the tighter sections of the river that overtaking is about to happen and the boat in front must give up their position and move over to the right if possible.
- Clear communication will avoid collision, damage and injury.
- Overtaking is on for all once passed the bridges. Communicate the passing manoeuvre once again.
- Single file formation again around Fishmarket Reserve – Guildford Boat Ramp and before the rail and traffic bridges ahead.
- The island at Garvey Park approximately 2.5km upstream of the start/finish line and adjacent to the Ascot Kayak Club is to be negotiated with the island always on the left and passing it with care when the river narrows.
- When passing under the Redcliff Bridge – Tonkin Highway, use care when negotiating the bridge that is not a single file passage.
- The finish for all craft will be through a finish line located near the beach just past the jetty at Riverside Gardens in Bayswater.
- Craft operators will then take instruction from marshals.

- All competitors under the age of 15 must wear a life jacket. Competitors over the age of 16 have life jackets as an option but strongly recommended. Helmets are not required. Carrying drinking water is strongly recommended.
- These course option suits craft with under rudders, who cannot participate in the Avon Descent because of the rapids but want a challenge and be part of a bigger event rather than a casual weekend paddle.
- The turning point of each course may be a challenge for the longer craft with multiple paddlers and curtesy will be required when a number of craft are in the turning zone at the same time.

DAY 2 FINISH

Participation medals

All Avon Descent participants receive a medal at the Rievrside Gardens finish line. Stick around for photos!

First Aid and General Recovery

Those participating in the Day 1, Super 50 will be supported by the Avon Descent Support Unit and contract Medical Services Provider.

Participants in the Day 2, short courses are required to self-rescue. If first aid is required, contact can be made with metro first aid providers located at:

- The City of Swan festival, Lilac Hill
- Ascot Kayak Club, Garvey Park
- The City of Bayswater festival, Riverside Gardens

Withdrawals

Event Rules Section 10 requires competitors to inform an Official should they withdraw (fatigue, injury, disqualification, damage).

This may be done face to face or via text to the Withdrawal Phone Number. The Race Number and "Withdrawn" is sent to this phone number. A "Confirmed" response must be received.



BAYSWATER ACCESS

Key:

-  Variable Message Board (Speed Limit Notice)
-  Site Access Gate – Entry
-  Site Access Gate – Exit
-  Pedestrian Barrier
-  CCB Fencing

**NOTE: NO VEHICLE'S PERMITTED ON SITE
BETWEEN 10:30am – 5:15pm**

2026 City of Bayswater

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Bayswater Avon Descent Finish Line Festival | Parking Plan

Riverside Gardens (West), Bayswater WA 6053

V1.0 - Updated 17.07.2026





DAY 2 LILAC CHALLENGE

Day 2—Sunday 9 August 2026

Start/end at Riverside Gardens, Bayswater

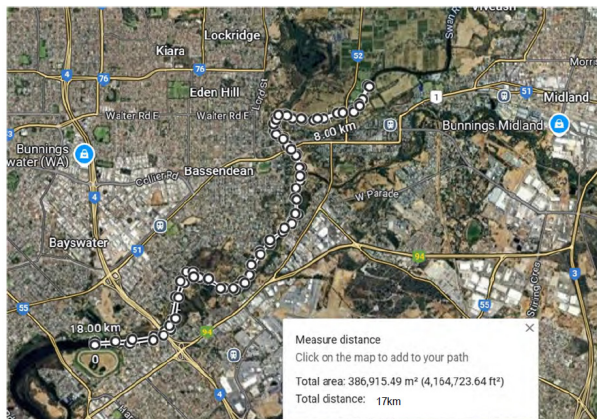
0900am Start	Length: 17km • Start at Riverside Gardens • Upstream to Lilac Hill Park—City Swan • Turn around • Return to Riverside Gardens
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Lilac Challenge participants launch from Riverside Gardens, travelling upstream along the right bank to a 180 degree, left hand buoy turn at Lilac Hill Park (adjacent to the family fun day in the park) then travelling back down stream and on to Riverside Gardens, Bayswater. This 17km flat water course is perfect for those wanting a little more of a challenge and also support the activity at the Lilac Hill Park and an event sponsor, the City of Swan.

Paddlers under the age of 15 must paddle with a paddle partner and must wear a life jacket.

Suitable craft for this event:

- Recreational touring kayaks
- Any plastic craft
- Surf skis—life saving ski
- Ocean paddle craft
- Stand up paddle boards
- Outriggers
- Surf boats
- Dragon boats





DAY 2 GUILDFORD GLIDE

Day 2—Sunday 9 August 2026

Start/end at Riverside Gardens, Bayswater

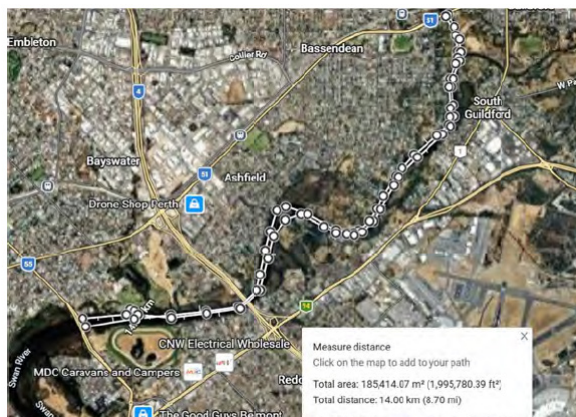
0930am Start	Length: 14km • Start at Riverside Gardens • Upstream to Guildford Road Bridge • Turn around before the bridge • Return to Riverside Gardens
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Guildford Glide participants launch from Riverside Gardens, travelling upstream along the right bank to a 180 degree, left hand buoy turn before the Guildford Road Bridge, then travelling back down stream and on to Riverside Gardens, Bayswater. This 14km flat water course is an excellent race option for those wanting a little more than the 5km, but less than the 17km.

Paddlers under the age of 15 must paddle with a paddle partner and must wear a life jacket.

Suitable craft for this event:

- Recreational touring kayaks
- Any plastic craft
- Surf skis—life saving ski
- Ocean paddle craft
- Stand up paddle boards
- Outriggers
- Surf boats
- Dragon boats





BAYSWATER SPLASH & DASH

Day 2—Sunday 9 August 2026

Start/end at Riverside Gardens, Bayswater

1000am Start	Length: 5km • Start at Riverside Gardens • Upstream to Garvey Park • Turn around Ron Courtney Island • Return to Riverside Gardens
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The Bayswater Splash and Dash participants launch from Riverside Gardens, travelling upstream along the right bank to Ron Courtney Island adjacent to Garvey Park and Ascot Kayak Club. Paddlers are to circumnavigate the island with the island remaining on the paddlers left and then make their way back to the finish line at Riverside Garden.

Paddlers are to paddle upstream with the right bank on their right and downstream also with the right bank on their right.

This 5km flat water paddle is to give anyone with a paddle craft in their backyard the opportunity to then take part in the Avon Descent Experience.

Paddlers under the age of 15 must paddle with a paddle partner and must wear a life jacket.

Suitable Craft can include any craft that floats and is propelled by paddling.





GENERAL TIPS

- Get fit!—make sure you're fit enough to participate.
- Be prepared—assess the weather and river conditions and prepare yourself accordingly. ***Do not take risks and if in doubt, do not do it.***
- Prevent hypothermia—be aware of the warning signs (shivering, muscle weakness, abdominal cramps, lethargy, hallucinations, aggressive behaviour and euphoria). Change into dry/warm clothes immediately following racing or training. Seek medical help if symptoms persist.
- Drink plenty of fluids—thirst is not a good indicator of hydration. Cool water is a good fluid replacement drink.
- Fuel up—keep your energy levels up by eating high carbohydrate and low fat foods before, during and after the race.

Clothing/ Safety equipment

Remember to wear weather appropriate clothing. Thermal clothing (tops and bottoms) and a CAG (windproof/waterproof top) are also recommended. Protect yourself against sunburn and windburn on all exposed areas.

All competitors under the age of 15 must wear a PFD. Competitors over the age of 16 have PFD's as an option but strongly recommended. Helmets are not required. Carrying drinking water is strongly recommended.

General public access to river not permitted

Please ensure your support crew, friends and family are aware that they (and the general public) are not permitted on the water, along the event course, during the Avon Descent. Our Emergency Services and volunteer rescue and recovery must be focused on event participants and do not need the distraction.



Avon Descent FESTIVALS



FREE EVENTS!

7 to 9 AUGUST

FRI **NORTHAM Bilya Festival**

SUN **CITY OF SWAN Avon Descent Festival**

SUN **CITY OF BAYSWATER Finish Line Festival**

avondescent.com.au/festivals

