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Department of Biodiversity,  
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photo: Bert Wells ©



Quokka

# F Foresters at work

**Animals,** birds, reptiles and insects are part of the life of the forests in our south-west.

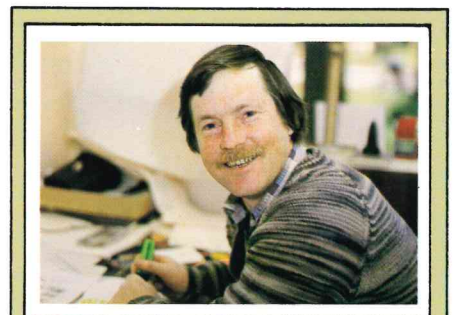
Foresters study the effects of fire, of logging, and of other human activity on the native fauna. From these studies insights are gained on how best to manage the forests to preserve rare fauna within timber production areas.

Quokkas, the second species of kangaroo to be recorded in Australia, are commonly associated with Rottnest Island where they were discovered by the Dutch navigator Volckersen in 1685.

The quokka is a very secretive animal on the mainland inhabiting very densely vegetated creek systems.

Our foresters make very careful study of the habits of quokkas and the animal itself has contributed much to medical researchers' knowledge of muscular dystrophy as some strains of quokka inherit a similar disease which results in the degeneration of muscle fibres.

Further information on life in the forest can be obtained from the Information Branches of the Forests Department at Como, Bunbury or Manjimup.



Graham "Tub" Liddelow has been engaged in ecological work for the Forests Department since 1971. His research has been mainly concerned with the bird life of the forests and with quokkas.

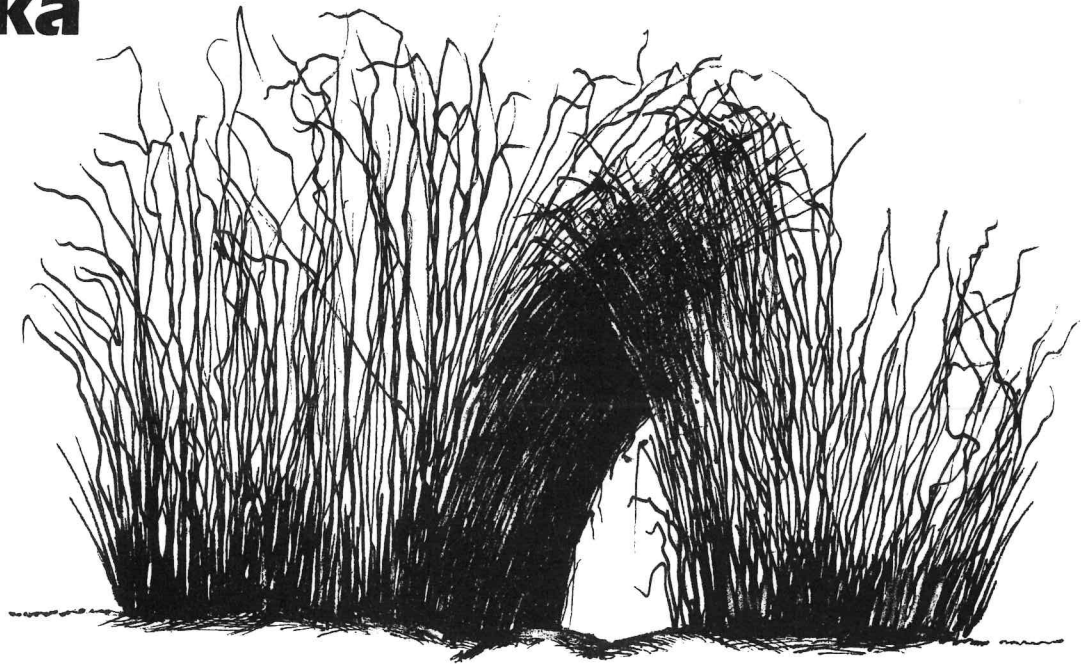
Tub comes from a Manjimup family and his hobbies reflect his south-west background – fishing, farming and golf.



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# How to spot your Quokka

The mainland quokka is much wilder and more secretive than its Rottnest cousin. In spite of this, with careful observation, you can quite easily tell if there are quokkas in an area. They live in densely vegetated swamps in the jarrah and karri forests. In order to move about in these swamps quokkas make tunnels or runways through the dense vegetation. They look like this:



These tunnels are about 15cm wide and up to 20cm high. The floor of the tunnel might be bare or heavily trampled and flattened vegetation. You can look for them on the edges of swamps where the vegetation begins to thin out.

The short-nosed bandicoot makes similar tunnels to the quokka. However, for clearer identification, look for quokka droppings, these are very similar in size and shape to those of a kangaroo.