

Snakes alive for volunteer

by Tracy Peacock

IT'S that time of the year when things start hotting up for Bruce George.

The 43-year-old is a volunteer reptile rescuer with the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

He's already receiving about five calls per day from people in the metropolitan area who may have a reptile in their backyard.

At the peak of summer he can get up to eight calls a day.

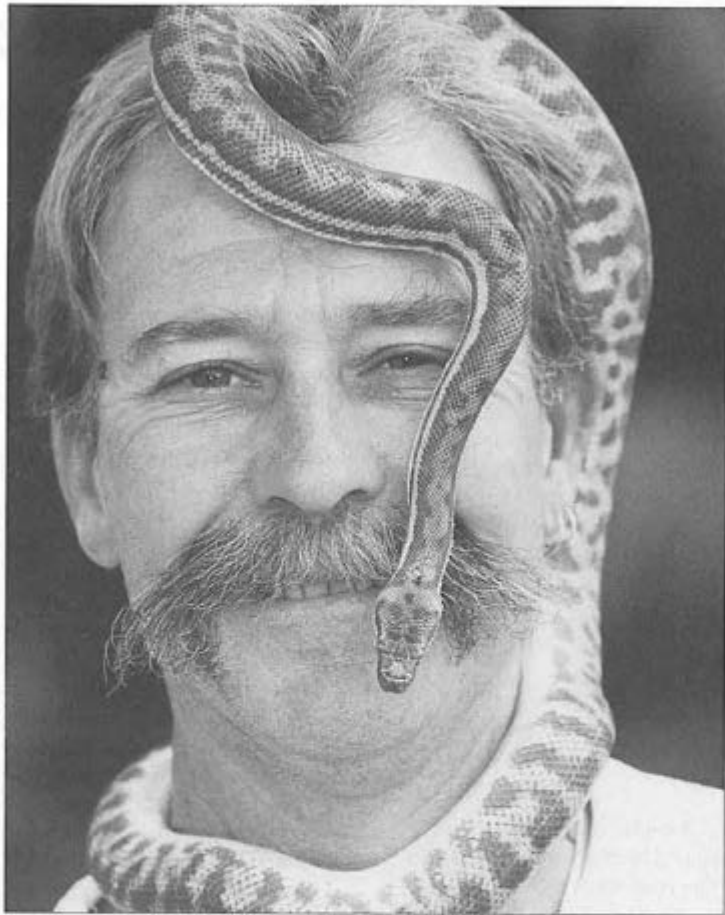
But it's all good fun for Bruce, a night-shift worker who has been fascinated with reptiles, he says, since childhood, and has been a reptile rescuer with the Department since 1989.

He recalls a case last year when he received a call from the police at 2.30am because a dugite had made its way from Kings Park to the steps of the Federal Police headquarters.

Being a volunteer has provided an enormous amount of pleasure for Bruce.

"I get so much satisfaction that knowing in my heart that I've saved

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Snake man Bruce George. Photo by Ernie McLintock

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this animal and it's going to live on," he says.

"It's like an ego trip—I feel so good after the rescue when I see it take off into the bush."

Bruce also cares for injured reptiles.

Last year he nursed a bobtail for about four weeks after having one of its rear limbs severed by a lawnmower.

He also volunteers his time to take part in departmental surveys concerning reptiles and is doing some volunteer research for the WA Museum looking at the feeding habits and growth rates of death adders.

So much of Bruce's time is dedicated to reptiles that he's built a "mini-hospital" in his backyard specially to look after them.















Bruce George and a
Stimpson's Python.

P3- reptiles (snake man
Stero)

pic - Ernie McLintock







