



Conservation News

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Judges praise MATES' national win

CALM's Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES) has won a national award for its employment and training of Indigenous people.

It is the third award for the MATES program, following the 2003 Premier's Leadership in Equity and Diversity Award and the 2003 Premier's Award for Excellence.

MATES—part of the Department's strategy to ensure Indigenous people are strongly represented in conservation and land management employment—won the prestigious Diversity@work award's Employment and Inclusion of Indigenous Australians category.

The award was accepted in Melbourne by CALM's Executive Director Keiran McNamara and Yanchep National Park Indigenous Trainee Wayne Dekker before 500 people, including senior representatives from Australia's leading community, public and private organisations.

Nominations came from organisations ranging from large corporations to small shire councils.

Judges described the MATES program as a multi-faceted employment and training program run in conjunction with non-government training providers and land management organisations.

"MATES is leading cultural change in the Department and throughout the Western Australian public sector," a statement from the judges said.

The scheme is part of a 10-year plan for Indigenous people to make up 10 to 15 per cent of CALM's full time workforce by providing mentors and traineeships.

During that time, training will cost \$12 million with up to \$2 million coming from Commonwealth programs.

Indigenous people are now working with CALM as trainee national park rangers, wildlife officers and Aboriginal heritage officers.

"The award highlights the strides CALM has taken to ensure its equal employment opportunity program is delivering workforce diversity," Environment Minister Judy Edwards said.

She added the scheme fostered greater understanding of Aboriginal culture and history.

"It provides mentoring and role-model programs for Aboriginal youth and provides Aboriginal people with opportunities to incorporate cultural values in nature-based tourism activities," she said.

Further information is available on www.naturebase.net.



Yanchep National Park Indigenous Trainee Wayne Dekker (left) and Executive Director Keiran McNamara (right) accept the Diversity@work Award from Rod McDonald, Group Manager of Australia Post's Corporate Human Resources. Photo courtesy Diversity@work.

Health survey coming up

CALM staff will be asked to take part in a national health survey next month. The survey, undertaken by the University of Queensland, involves answering a 15-minute questionnaire.

CALM People Services Branch Corporate Health Consultant Alicia Taylor said it was important staff take the time to complete the survey which will be mailed to them in early October.

"The Department is concerned for the health and well-being of all its staff and we would like to know where we can either improve or offer additional services," she said.

"The survey results will help give us that information."

Alicia said participation in the survey was voluntary and information was confidential.

"However, we would like as many people as possible to take part because it will help us to improve employee health and well-being."

Farmers learn feral pig trapping

TEACHING local farmers how to trap feral pigs was the main focus of a special field day held at Katanning.

CALM Katanning District Nature Conservation Officer Carl Beck said the day was organised because feral pigs had been discovered in Dongolocking Nature Reserve, north of Dumbleyung.

The day, attended by 14 local landowners, was conducted in conjunction with Department of Agriculture staff from Katanning and Dumbleyung with assistance from Donnelly District Nature Conservation Officer Brian Whitted.

"The objective of the project has been to

control pigs in the area, and to help strengthen positive working relationships with landowners who are neighbours to our reserves," Carl said.

"Training included trapping techniques, selecting the best sites for pig traps, trap designs and setting the traps."

Carl said apart from the training, CALM would also provide three additional pig traps and hoped that in future a Declared Species Group with representatives from local farmers, CALM, Department of Agriculture and the Local Government Association could be formed in the area so that control of the pigs could be more effective.



Kate Fitzgerald and Bebe in Cambodia.

Kate works to free bears

FOR many, hand raising a sun bear sounds like an exotic fantasy but for CALM's Marine Branch Officer, Kate Fitzgerald, it's a fond memory of her time spent in Cambodia.

Now, thanks to a fund-raising initiative, CALM staff can also play a part in helping the world's bears.

At the end of 2002, Kate spent three months in Phnom Penh acting as a surrogate mother to 'Bebe' at the Phnom Tamao Rescue Centre. Kate is now on the committee for the Free the Bears Fund.

The Free the Bears Fund was established in Western Australia about nine years ago by Mary Hutton after she watched a current affairs segment about Asiatic black bears in China that were confined to small metal cages while their gall-bladders were 'milked' for bile.

Since then, Mary and a group of volunteers have worked hard to raise money for their sanctuaries in Cambodia, India, Laos and Thailand as well as awareness to help save the bears of Asia.

Earlier this year, tins were placed in many CALM offices to raise money to save a 'dancing' sloth bear in India. Kate said that she had raised \$1200 but still needed \$800 to

By Rhianna Mooney

rescue a bear from the hands of a Kalandar gypsy.

"The Kalandar Rehabilitation Program offers the Kalanders 'seed money' of \$2000 or 50,000 rupees to begin an alternative income, which may include purchasing an auto-rickshaw (the equivalent of a taxi), learning a trade or setting up a shop for them. In return the Kalandar surrenders his bear and his license to the authorities," she said.

"After the bear is taken from its 'owner' the rope is removed from its nose and the rehabilitation process begins in our sanctuary in Agra.

"My hope is that through the collections and the sale of merchandise, CALM can raise enough money to free a bear.

"If we're able to raise the \$2000, we'll have the naming rights of the bear."

'Shanti' is the Hindu word for 'calm or peace'.

"I think it would make a perfect name," she said.

To make a donation or purchase Free the Bears merchandise, please contact Kate Fitzgerald on 040 88 77 101 or by email katef@calm.wa.gov.au.

Working Together

Recently I attended the launch of a new strategy *Building and Sustaining Integrity – Integrating Ethics into Everyday Business*. The launch was jointly sponsored by the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner (OPSSC) and the Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC), with the recently appointed Commissioner of the WA Police Service as the guest speaker.

A strong ethical base and a commitment to ethical behaviour are essential to building and maintaining public trust in CALM and its employees. We are all aware that there have been some high profile examples of unethical behaviour in the corporate world that have ended up in the courts. If anything the standard that is expected in the public sector is higher than in the private sector, given our responsibility to administer laws fairly and serve the public interest.

Ethical behaviours such as honesty, integrity and treating people with courtesy and respect are embedded in the Department's Corporate Plan and our statement of values. But that is not enough – they need to be constantly reinforced and modelled by staff throughout the organisation.

It is a matter of public record that the CCC is currently investigating a case of alleged misconduct in CALM. While it is deeply regrettable that this has occurred, it is at the same time reassuring to know that it has come to light and is being properly addressed.

Both the OPSSC and the CCC have roles in assisting agencies to build and sustain organisational integrity. While I have every confidence that our staff behave overwhelmingly in an ethical manner, nevertheless we will be working with the OPSSC and the CCC to ensure that we are doing all that we can and should be.



Keiran McNamara, Executive Director

Saving John Forrest N.P.



CALM Research Scientist, Mike Stukely (above right), lent a hand to Morley Primary School Deputy Principal, Georgina Mitchell and Year 7 students to plant trees at John Forrest National Park as part of their work for the Biodiversity Conservation Campaigners.

The Biodiversity Conservation Campaigners, sponsored by Epic Energy and run by CALM's EcoEducation section, was open to schools throughout the State to encourage students to investigate values of, and threats to, a park or reserve and to take action to alleviate a threat to its conservation.

Morley Primary School identified the threat of dieback, a soil-borne fungal disease that seriously threatens our forests, in John Forrest National Park. Students planted dieback-resistant jarrah trees where dieback was present as part of a joint research project on dieback by CALM and Alcoa World Alumina.

By taking part in the challenge, schools had the opportunity to win an overnight wildlife

adventure and a share of \$8000 of prizes. The winners will be decided by the end of October. For more information contact Liz Moore on 9334 0387 or visit the 'For Schools' section of CALM's NatureBase website at www.naturebase.net.

Ningaloo World Heritage nomination a step closer

NOMINATION of Ningaloo Marine Park and Cape Range National Park for World Heritage Listing moves a step closer this month when the community consultative committee presents its report to Environment Minister Judy Edwards.

The committee—Doug Bathgate (chairperson), Sue Jones and Neil Blake—has met key stakeholders including conservation, community, and Indigenous groups and representatives from the mining, petroleum, tourism and fishing industries during the past three months.

The committee has worked hard and consulted widely, holding a public meeting in Exmouth in August which attracted about

by Tracy Peacock

120 local people. Work undertaken to date has collated technical and scientific information highlighting the value of the region.

A report from the committee to the Minister for the Environment will advise on boundaries for World Heritage nomination.

WA's other World Heritage listed areas are Purnululu National Park and Shark Bay.

Shark Bay, which was listed in 1991, is increasingly being recognised both within WA and overseas for its values, and now has about 250,000 visitors annually.

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Nature conservation leaders' meeting goes bush



Pictured at the meeting were (front row, left to right) Mark Cowan (Goldfields), Maria Lee (Midwest), Nigel Sercombe (Midwest), Tim Willing (Kimberley), Norm McKenzie (Science Division), Keith Claymore (Nature Conservation Division), Kim Williams (South West), Greg Keighery (Science Division), Dave Bebbington (GIS), Erica Shedley (Warren) and David Blood (Midwest) and (back row, left to right) Sarah Comer (South Coast), Anthony Desmond (Midwest), Stuart Halse (Science Division), Brad Barton (Goldfields), David Mitchell (Swan Region) and Alan Danks (South Coast). Photo by Mark Garkaklis, the Regional Ecologist for the Swan Region.

A former pastoral station in the Midwest Region played host to the latest Nature Conservation Output leaders' meeting in July.

Karara, in the southern rangelands, is part of a suite of stations, including Lochada, Kadji Kadji and Warriedar, purchased by CALM for addition to the conservation reserve system as part of the implementation of the Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy.

The area is representative of the transition from the agricultural zone, where Kadji Kadji straddles the 'clearing line', east through York gum woodlands to the acacia-dominated shrublands and low woodlands of the pastoral zone.

This mix of properties includes a diverse array of land systems and supports a particularly rich flora and geology.

The meeting considered management issues and future options for this spectacular area. One of the aims was to consider suitable techniques for a cost-effective monitoring program to determine changes in ecosystem condition.

The meeting was an excellent forum for regional nature conservation leaders and senior Departmental officers to exchange views on contemporary conservation management issues.

During the past six years, 3.9 million ha of pastoral land has been purchased for the conservation reserve system in the Gascoyne-Murchison strategy area. This land will significantly contribute to the comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness of the State's conservation reserve system, and provide protection for WA's rich biodiversity.

Privileges and drawbacks in isolated park lifestyles

LIVING and working in some of Western Australia's most beautiful national parks may not always be easy, but it is a privilege.

That's the view of senior rangers Geoff Passmore from Cape Le Grand National Park in the State's south, Paul Udinga from Karijini National Park in the Pilbara and Russell Asplund from Millstream-Chichester National Park, also in the Pilbara.

"I would describe it (my job) as a privileged lifestyle," says 37-year-old Geoff, of the park he has managed for eight years which attracts about 105,000 visitors a year.

Fifty km south-east of Esperance, Cape Le Grand National Park boasts wild coastal scenery with attractive bays and sandy beaches.

"While it has some drawbacks it has big pluses... It's a lovely lifestyle for the whole family," he says.

"I enjoy the variety of work you get to do dealing with so many different people and looking after these beautiful areas."

Paul Udinga from Karijini says: "Living in a place that everyone else has to take holidays to see and experience is one of the big advantages."

Unique lifestyle

It's a sentiment echoed by Russell (41), a former city-dweller, who moved to Millstream three years ago, providing his young family with a unique lifestyle.

Describing the 200,000 ha national park as WA's most isolated full time staffed national park, Russell maintains his job has no comparison.

The park, 150 km from Roebourne or about four hours' travelling time from Port Hedland,

by Tracy Peacock

features rolling hills, spectacular escarpments and winding tree-lined watercourses. It attracts about 20,000 visitors a year.

"Being a park ranger is a lifestyle," he says.

"If money was an issue you wouldn't do it."

"This work gives me the opportunity to work on the land and in conservation. It's also what we wanted to do as a family."

"There are times when I say to myself, I can't believe that I'm being paid to do this."

Russell says his job is a family commitment.

"If we weren't such a close family unit it wouldn't be possible," he says of living at Millstream with partner Helen and children Daniel (9) and Tayla (7).

"The children get involved in park life and learn to be self-sufficient."

Life is busy, particularly for Helen, who teaches both children at home through School of the Air.

Helen also undertakes other park-related roles such as operating the radio, cleaning accommodation and catering.

"Helen's another member of the team—an invaluable member," Russell says.

"If an emergency comes up, then she helps out."

Family involvement

Geoff describes a similar role for his wife Justine and children Nathan (10), Hayden (6) and Hollie (5).

"Justine plays a big part," he says of his wife, who has worked as park gate attendant.



Daniel, Helen and Tayla Asplund.

"This can be a daunting job and a lot of pressure on busy days," he said.

Geoff also describes Justine's role as a backup to the work he undertakes at Cape Le Grand with fellow ranger Peter Masters.

She also provides valuable support in times of emergency.

"A national park is like running a farm—everyone pitches in," says Geoff.

Self sufficient

Being self-sufficient is another factor about living in a remote area, says Paul.

"Being remote means being self sufficient, which is another challenge. In a district, jobs fall into a number of portfolios managed by different staff... Out here, these jobs have to be achieved by one or two people."

"During an incident, Noelene becomes the communications centre liaising with outside resources and being a point of contact."

School

On the hardships related to living on a national park, Geoff points to schooling.

"The children have to go 12 km to a bus stop and then travel in every day by bus to Esperance. Their time after school and before school is taken up," he says.

At the other end of the State, Karijini is the second largest national park in WA. It is about 310 km from Roebourne and 1400 km (or a two to three day trip) from Perth.

Noelene Udinga from Karijini teaches the children at home.

"Ben (Year 7) and Elise (Year 1) are enrolled through Port Hedland School of the Air for their

primary education and I supervise their education full time—they have teacher contact for half an hour each day," she says.

"Schooling is difficult. We do not have a dedicated school room, using the office that is off the kitchen in the house as our school room, which is also used by Paul as a home office. We get a lot of interruptions throughout the day, as our home phone number is quoted as an after hours emergency number."

Paul says schooling, especially for Ben, is proving another hardship about living remote.

"On balance I think for us the pluses of living where we do outweigh the negatives with the exception of the need to make the decision to split the family and send Ben to Perth for secondary school," he says.

"That's going to be the hardship that will affect our decision to stay or to move. That is difficult in itself, as to move one must wait for a suitable opening to present itself."

"Remote area service does not get you any special treatment."

Work and private

Noelene said it was hard to draw the line between work and private.

"Work walks in our gate at all times of the day and night, whether it's a tourist who has lost his or her wallet, the alarm going off at the visitor centre or staff who need help."

They like living in the bush and away from suburbia, but point to things like being away from parents and family and having to home school as being a hardship.

Continued page 4



Paul Udinga (left) and Noelene Udinga and their children Alise and Ben.



Geoff and Justine Passmore with their children Haydan, Nathan and Hollie.

Right on track – remarkable ranger roles

Right On Track is a monthly series of Conservation News articles sponsored by Corporate Executive, designed to illustrate CALM's strategic directions and corporate values.

Many of the features in this edition of Conservation News focus on staff and volunteers who work in the more remote areas of our state.

This month's On Track differs from the usual format of a single article, to a collection of stories that illustrate the diverse nature of a regionally based and remote work culture, one that is flexible and responsive in the approach to management and operations while maintaining a commitment to professionalism and teamwork.

Regional Services Director Alan Walker contributes his observations about the diverse nature of park rangers across the State, and the article on campground hosts in Cape Range emphasises the importance of the social side when working in isolation, in this case involving a celebration barbecue by Park Ranger Terry Harrington and his wife Donna and daughter Teneka.

"As our biodiversity conservation initiatives grow, it is likely that more resources and staff will be based in

regional and remote areas of WA... a strategic direction for CALM.

"During my regular visits to CALM's regions and districts across the length and breadth of WA, I am constantly reminded of the diverse roles undertaken by national park rangers, ranger's assistants and trainee rangers."

"In the Kimberley Region Senior Ranger Lindsay Brown at Purnululu National Park is working with Aboriginal traditional owners to develop joint management arrangements, living areas, tourism opportunities and park infrastructure."

"At Millstream-Chichester National Park in the Pilbara Region, Acting Senior Ranger Russell Asplund and Trainee Ranger Patricia Parker have been working with a group of prisoners based at a Ministry of Justice camp adjoining CALM's depot. The prisoners and the rangers have been progressively removing date palms from the Millstream wetland over many years. At nearby Karijini National

Park, senior rangers Maitland Parker and Paul Udinga regularly participate in cliff rescues involving recovery of injured visitors from the deep gorges.

"At Coral Bay, Ningaloo Marine Park, Ranger Kris Hall patrols the beaches where turtles are nesting to control predators and prevent visitors from disturbing the nests, while at Kalbarri National Park Senior Ranger Mike Paxman is implementing a fire management plan for the park to prevent a repeat of the spate of large intense fires in the park in recent years."

"In Yanchep National Park, Senior Ranger Gerald Drummond is responsible for grounds maintenance that involves 10 ha of turf management, irrigation systems plus numerous barbecues, shelters, picnic tables and walk trails. Senior Ranger John Wheeler is in charge of the koala program at Yanchep including animal husbandry and feeding regimes."

"During the Avon Descent each year senior rangers Steve Strachan (Walyunga National Park) and Jim

Maher (Avon Valley National Park) have a huge job planning and implementing crowd control, camping and visitor safety issues for this iconic sporting event."

"Further south the rangers in Wellington District (Peter Morris, Allison Driscoll and Christina Gilbert) have been closely involved in the construction of major new visitor facilities and roadworks in the Leschenault Peninsula Conservation Park and the newly established Wellington National Park. Similar major constructions in 'new parks' are being supervised by rangers in Blackwood, Donnelly and Frankland Districts."

"In the South Coast Region Senior Ranger Luke Coney has been closely involved in the development of new initiatives to reduce the risk of injury and drowning of rock fishers in CALM-managed parks and reserves around Albany."

"These examples illustrate just a few of the immense variety of tasks currently being performed by the

dedicated group of rangers working for CALM.

"Many people would envisage a typical ranger's role as mostly involving maintenance of visitor facilities, cleaning dunnies, collecting camping fees, rubbish collection and providing information to visitors. It's clear from the above, however, that for many rangers there are plenty of other unique and fascinating duties."



Alan Walker.

Big wheels keep on turning for campground hosts

NATIONAL park rangers aren't the only people who live in national parks.

This year, Norm and Gwen Cole chalk up 15 years of continuous service as volunteer campground hosts.

They are two of the 230 volunteer campground hosts registered with CALM's community involvement program.

Each year Norm and Gwen leave their Perth home to head to 'Ned's Camp' near the northern boundary of Cape Range National Park near Exmouth to spend six months welcoming campers, collecting camp fees and acting as hosts for visitors.

During the last 15 years Norm and Gwen have noticed many changes.

Their observations?

- Every year gets busier.
- The age of visitors is changing to a younger demographic.
- There are more camper trailers.
- Visitors often return annually.

By Michelle Goodlet

- There are more international tourists, particularly Europeans.
- Although they don't catch as many fish as in the early days, they can still catch enough for a feed.

Norm and Gwen love and appreciate the Cape Range environment, meeting new people and developing friendships with the other hosts in the park.

When asked what made a good host, they replied: "Friendly people who like camping."

Future plans include coming back to Cape Range as long as they're able.

Sixteen campground hosts live in the Cape Range National Park, occupying eight sites.

Ranger Terry Harrington, his wife Donna and daughter Tanika hosted an evening with a spit roast to acknowledge the hosts, and to celebrate Norm and Gwen's birthdays.

Terry said campground hosts were dedicated people who enjoyed interacting with others and who liked to help others appreciate and value the beauty of Cape Range National Park and Ningaloo Marine Park.

CALM's Campground Host Program covers a wide range of environments, with about 40 sites requiring hosts.

Campground hosts supply their own accommodation such as a caravan or tent, and drive a vehicle suited to the terrain as some sites may be remote.

An information day will be held at CALM's Kensington office on 11 November followed up by training in basic fire awareness, radio operation and senior first aid.

Becoming involved as a volunteer campground host requires an interview with CALM's Volunteer Program's Community Involvement Coordinator in Perth, Marg Buckland (phone 9334 0333) or a local national park ranger.

CALM's host program is integrated with the SA national parks system and NT's Finke Gorge National Park. It now offers a circuitous trail for campground hosts.

National park rangers, trainee rangers and ranger's assistants

Kimberley

Kununurra	Ross McGill, Paul Hyndes, Stephen Vigilante (Seasonal)
Purnululu	Lindsay Brown, Brendan Jelley (Seasonal)
Mitchell Plateau	Lindsay Baker, John Hayward (Seasonal), Mark Goodje (Aboriginal Trainee), Vernon Wright (Aboriginal Trainee)
Broome	Kevin Lockyer, Dave Chadwick, Mitch Hunter, Henry Corpus (Ranger's Assistant)
Geikie Gorge	Renaë Dingo (Seasonal), Pam Jennings (Seasonal), Glenn Claybrook (Seasonal)
Windjana Gorge	Rod O'Donnell, Lyndon Quaipe

Pilbara

Karratha	Geoff Kregor
Karijini	Maitland Parker, Paul Udinga, Mick Sermon, Kevin Cameron (Ranger's Assistant)
	Cecelia Parker (Trainee), Leon Taylor (Trainee)
Millstream-Chichester	Russell Asplund, Ashley Millar (Contract), Patricia Parker (Trainee), Ken Sandy (Trainee), Kingsley Woodley (Trainee)
Cape Range	Steve Owen, Terry Harrington, Chris Davies (Ranger's Assistant), Brad Rowe (Ranger's Assistant - contract)
Coral Bay	Kris Hall

Midwest

Francois Peron	Mark True, Isaac Hatch, Gary Desmond (Ranger's Assistant)
Gascoyne	Keith Moon (Contract)
Kalbarri	Mike Paxman, Greg Tapley (Ranger's Assistant)
Nambung	Rick France, Mal Court, Mark Moore, Ken Howes (Ranger's Assistant)

Swan

Yanchep	Gerald Drummond, John Wheeler, Brad Johnson (Contract)
Garden Island	Trevor Smith
Matilda Bay Reserve	Luke Bouwman
Marine	Chris Mather, Murray Banks, Ben Tannock, Britt Anderson (Contract)
Shoalwater Islands	Terry Goodlich, Wayne Taylor
Yalgorup	Steve Dutton, Dennis Hancock (Ranger's Assistant)
John Forrest	Keith Tresidder, David Briggs, Shawn Thomas (part time)
Mundaring	Michael Phillips, Kevin Hill (Contract), Sam Hurd, Doug Giles, Paul Tholen, Ed Greenway
Walyunga	Steve Strachan
Avon Valley	Jim Maher
Lane Poole	Alex Bowlay, Ingrid Hunt, Wendy Birmingham (Seasonal)
Serpentine	Phil Bastian

South West

Wellington	Peter Morris, Allison Driscoll, Christina Gilbert (Contract)
Blackwood	Clare Forward, Brian O'Hehir, Ken Ninnette, Shawn Debono
Leeuwin-Naturaliste	Glenn Wilmott, Rory Neal, Bill Taplin, Rob Klok, Peter Simmond

Warren

Donnelly	Jeff Kimpton, Jeff Daubney, John Hanel, John Jackway, Yvette Caruso, Julia Northin, Katherine Hargreaves, Syd Sepkus (Ranger's Assistant)
Frankland	Mark Virgo, Hardy Derschow, Darren Stevens, Chris Goodsell, Andrea Bidwell (Seasonal Ranger)

South Coast

Stirling Range	Geoff Harnett
Porongurup	Charlie Salamon
Albany	Luke Coney, Kath White, Mark Roddy
Two Peoples Bay	Neil Scott
Fitzgerald River	Peter Wilkins, Stephen Mills, Garry Carr
Stokes	Ian Hughes
Cape Le Grand	Geoff Passmore, Peter Masters
Cape Arid	Allan Rose

Mobile

Ron Shimon

From page 3

"Living remote means it is difficult to invite friends to dinner because you can't expect them to drive home after dinner," she said.

In terms of medical treatment, they live 100 km from Tom Price via a bitumen road.

"Tom Price has a hospital and visiting specialists, but you still need to fly to Perth for specialist treatments.

"There are two doctors in town but fortunately our children are healthy and,

not having regular contact with other people, tend not to get the bugs that are transmitted through schools or towns."

Weather isolation

Russell recounts an incident earlier this year when Cyclone Monty swept through the area and isolated his family at Millstream for a month. Luckily they had eight weeks of supplies on hand to ensure they were well fed.

"It's difficult at times, but it's a unique lifestyle," he reflects.

Royal Flying Doctor Service in Karijini National Park

SAFETY in and around Karijini National Park's gorges was brought to public attention in April this year when an SES worker lost his life and a massive operation was undertaken to save tourists and rescue personnel, including CALM's Paul Udinga.

Public safety was again on show in the national park recently, but this time, in an effort to raise awareness.

The 'Pilbara Partnership Project', a joint initiative between CALM and the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia with support from BHP Billiton, resulted in a mobile van being stationed in the national park during the July school holidays, one of the busiest times for visitors.

The van's on-board registered flight nurse, Andrew Christopherson, spoke with visitors about safety and even helped with several rescues and administered first aid and paramedic support to casualties in the gorges.

CALM's Parks and Visitor Services

By Rhianna Mooney

Officer, David Whitelaw, said the Pilbara Partnership Project was a great success.

"Having the mobile unit at a popular recreation site meant lots of people stopped to meet with staff from the Royal Flying Doctors Service and CALM before entering the Karijini gorges," David said. "After the school holidays, I met with the Pilbara Partnership Project Manager, Tricia Slee, and Andrew to discuss the outcomes of the project and ways it could be improved for future years.

"We agreed that the public response was positive and some big forward steps had been made in addressing the goals of both organisations."

Safety messages are also being given to visitors as part of presentations at the Karijini Visitor Centre and campgrounds, as part of the 'Caring for Country' interpretive activities program.



Pictured with the mobile van in Karijini National Park were Paul Udinga (left), Andrew Christopherson (centre) and Dave Whitelaw (right). Photo courtesy of Karijini National Park.

New Director for Conservation Commission

A love of nature and a scientific mind have seen Bill Carr apply his environmental management skills to private industry and government over the past 30 years.

Now Mr Carr has been appointed as Director of the Conservation Commission of WA—a job he is greeting with great enthusiasm.

"Future challenges will be in the management of forests and in engaging Aboriginal people in joint management," he said.

Mr Carr's expertise in scientific research, exploration, analysis, assessment and policy puts him in a unique position to understand and liaise with both private industry and government agencies.

He graduated as a geologist from The University of Western Australia, working as an exploration geologist before going to Monash University to study for a Masters of Environmental Science degree.

He then worked as a soil scientist, mapping soils west of Melbourne and along the Murray River before "escaping Victoria" and joining BHP as an environmental scientist at Newman and Port Hedland. He carried out mosquito surveys as part of his research into the virus vectors for the Newman community, and studied mangroves.

He later joined the State Government working as a project manager, and environmental and Aboriginal issues consultant for the Environmental Protection Authority, the Department of Minerals and



Bill Carr: the Conservation Commission's new Director. Photo by Rhianna Mooney.

by Sue McKenna

Energy and the Department of Industry and Resources during a time of major industrial activity including offshore oil and gas developments and mineral exploration and development. These often involved the conservation estate in some way.

"We knew the community was concerned, particularly about the offshore developments, so whatever was done had to have the most appropriate environmental policies," he said.

"I looked at community concern, trying to see what was best for the entire community of WA, which is a great challenge.

"Often, a project is situated in an area where the local community has a particular

point of view but this needs to be considered with the broader community benefit."

Mr Carr helped to draft the legislation and regulations for the *Rottneest Island Authority Act 1987*—the first marine regulations in the State.

"Rottneest Island is a major cultural icon for WA and everyone 'knew' how it should be best managed, so I had wide ranging discussions with a range of people before drafting the legislation," he said.

In the past couple of years he has worked on a project that he describes as "fascinating" and which is close to his heart—ascertaining whether the industrial emissions at Burrup Peninsula have affected the important Aboriginal engravings that occur there.

"There was a suggestion that there was a loss of contrast caused by the industrial emissions and there was the possibility of this loss increasing. Monitoring sites have been set up near industry and on distant islands to see how normal weathering is affecting the engravings and also what the situation is close to industry.

"It is both a national and international issue," he said, adding that he intended to remain on the Rock Art Monitoring Management Committee for the four-year study.

He is looking forward to supporting the Commission Chair, Dr John Bailey, and to working with other Commissioners and Commission and CALM staff.

X-treme cycle adventure in Kalbarri National Park



Kalbarri Ranger Mike Paxman (second from left) with members of the French team who borrowed two of his road bikes for a cycling section. They came second in the road cycling leg and fifth overall. Photo courtesy Sue Hancock.

KALBARRI National Park was the venue for last month's X-Adventure Raid Series and the 96 competitors who came from across the globe to take part in the gruelling, adrenalin-charged, two-day event.

The event involved running, bike riding, canoeing, abseiling and climbing, throughout the park, in particular the Murchison River gorge. It covered a total distance of 200 kilometres.

The event attracted WA, national and international publicity and will be the subject of a French documentary with a projected target audience of 95 million.

CALM's Midwest Regional Leader, Parks and Visitor Services, Sue Hancock, said they had received very positive feedback from the athletes, organisers and film crew.

"They were blown away by the setting in the national park and, in particular, the Murchison River gorge," she said.

by Rhianna Mooney

"It was unlike the places the event had been held in the past and the different natural features offered many different challenges."

Thanks to sponsorship by Eventscorp, a division of Tourism WA, Western Australia will hold the event for the next two years.

"Next year's event will be held in the Albany area," Sue said.

Before the event, CALM staff were involved in logistical planning for the sections held in the national park.

In particular, Senior Ranger Mike Paxman was involved in much of the ground work to plan the event routes and coordinate visitor access to ensure public safety.

There's no business like show business



Juliet Wege photographing *Stylidium validum* Wege n.s.—a new trigger plant with conservation priority from east of Hyden.

RAISING the public profile of conservation projects can be difficult but, after attending a Fresh Science media training course in Melbourne, CALM botanist Juliet Wege is ready to face the cameras.

Fifteen people from around Australia attended the training, aimed at giving young scientists the confidence and skills to approach the media about their research projects and bring their work to public attention.

Juliet researches trigger plants and, over the past two years, has discovered more than 20 new species in the State's South West.

"Trigger plants are an extraordinary and diverse native plant group, largely

unheard of outside the botanical community despite their remarkable pollen catapults," says Juliet.

Juliet is hoping to raise the profile of both trigger plants and taxonomy, the science of naming new species.

"The course gave us practical experience in writing media releases and doing television and radio interviews," she said.

"I had never done any media training before so, while it was a little daunting at first, I got a lot out of it."

Juliet said that raising the public profile of projects can increase the chance of obtaining research funding.

"It is important that we communicate our results not only to our fellow scientists, but to members of the general public as well," she said.

Conservation briefs

Walpole marine milestone

The Walpole-Nornalup Inlets Community Advisory Focus Group held its final meeting in September, culminating a series of meetings to discuss the creation of a marine conservation reserve in the region.

The group, working with CALM's Marine Planning Officer Alan Kendrick, has worked together to formulate a draft Indicative Management Plan for the Walpole-Nornalup Marine Conservation Reserve.

The plan has been sent to the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority.

Walk to Cure Diabetes

The annual seven km Walk to Cure Diabetes is on again to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. The main walk will be held around Burswood Park on Sunday 17 October and regional walks will be held around the State. Please contact Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs' Rhianna Mooney on 9389 8644 or by email (rhiannam@calm.wa.gov.au) for more information.

Newdegate Field Day success

The Newdegate Field Day was a big success for CALM's Katanning District.

Displays featuring *Western Shield*, rare flora management and the Lake Bryde Recovery Catchment Project attracted many people over the two-day event in September.

"We got a lot of interest from the public as part of our attempt to educate and engage with the community about environmental management," said Carl Beck, CALM's District Nature Conservation Officer from Katanning.

"Inquiries from the public covered a range of issues such as reserve management, native fauna and flora, the Lake Bryde project, fire management, opportunities for community involvement and weed management."

Other CALM staff involved in the field day displays were Lake Bryde Recovery Catchment Conservation Officer Darren Coulson, Lake Bryde Assistant Conservation Officer Natalie Clark and Reserves Officer Nicole Weber.

Carl said they hoped to have a bigger display at the Newdegate Field Day next year.

Big Brook relay

The annual Big Brook relay is on again at Big Brook Dam, Pemberton, on Saturday 13 November.

Get your cycling, running, canoeing and swimming legs into action for a 12 km cycle, a 7.5 km run, a three km canoe and an 800 m swim, as well as getting your arms into action for the cross cut sawing event.

There are seven people per team, and nominations should be sent to David Meehan at the Pemberton office by 29 October.

Nomination forms and information can be found on the CALMweb's *New on the server* section.

Exmouth firearms training course

By John Rooney

ELEVEN CALM staff recently took part in a firearms training course at Exmouth.

The two-day course, conducted by two staff members from the Department of Agriculture, comprised theoretical and practical components.

Topics covered included legislation, policy, firearms description, ballistics, firearms safety, practical handling, maintenance and ethics.

The practical component was held at the Exmouth Rifle Range and participants were instructed in the safe use of .22 low-powered rifles, high-powered rifles and instruction was given on the use of 12 gauge shotguns.

All participants came away with a very good understanding of firearms, particularly in regards to safety.

This knowledge will enable them all to undertake their work where firearms are required in a safe, ethical and efficient manner.



Pictured at the firearms training course were (front, kneeling) Kris Hall and Pam Parker and (standing, left to right) John Rooney, Chris Davis, Roland Mau, Gary Farrelly, Dave Lund, Steve Owen, Terry Harrington, Ben Fitzpatrick, Brad Rowe and Kris Narducci.

Kids protect the Giants



SETTING up a monitoring transect in the tingle forest and measuring and weighing native mammals were some of the activities undertaken by a group of Walpole Primary School students.

The year 7 pupils recently took part in *Western Shield* fauna monitoring in the Valley of the Giants Forest.

All final year students at the school will complete a five-day exercise which is conducted bi-annually under the supervision of teachers and CALM staff from Walpole.

CALM District Nature Conservation Program Leader

by Tracy Peacock

Karlene Bain said the exercise was an excellent example of cooperative partnerships between CALM and the local community.

"This is an important long-term project which has been ongoing since 1996," she said.

"In addition to completing CALM's operational objectives the project exposes the children to the realities of nature conservation field work and gives them a close look at some of our unique mammal fauna."

Students acquire skills in

the methods of establishing the transect, mixing and fixing baits to traps, processing captured animals and the interpretation of capture results.

Although primarily set up to monitor populations of small to medium-sized mammals, the traps have also caught reptiles, avian fauna and various feral species.

The native fauna list includes bush rats, brushtail possums, quendas, woylies, mardos, brushtail phascogales, currawongs and tiger snakes, which are caught in both Sheffield wire cage traps and Elliot aluminium folding traps.

New flora training program

ONE of CALM's newest training programs has equipped staff with the knowledge of how to manage threatened flora and ecological communities.

Sixteen CALM staff participated in the week-long program at Busselton.

The course was developed to enhance the knowledge and skills of participants in flora conservation and management strategies.

Course Coordinator, Beth McKernan said: "As a pilot program, the course achieved the objectives of determining what training is required for Departmental staff in nature conservation roles, in order to carry out effective flora recovery and conservation."

The course covered legislation, plant identification, genetics, population biology, seed collection, surveying and monitoring, translocations, *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (dieback) management through the use of phosphite, and Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs).

Anyone interested in the next flora management training program should submit a completed CALM 90 form (located on the CALM intranet - People Services) to the Department's Training Centre, Dwellingup, WA 6213.

Staff changes . . . Staff changes . . . Staff changes . . . Staff changes . . .

Contract

Tania Jackson, Planning Officer, Parks and Visitor Services; John Brent, Infrastructure Manager, Information Services Section; Suzanne Sayers, Reserves Officer (Graduate Recruit), Shark Bay District, Midwest Region; Josie Dean, Project Officer, Property and Policy Unit, Kensington; Naomi Batchelor, Officer, South Coast Region, Albany; Amanda Rukuwai, Leasing Officer, Property and Policy Unit, Kensington; Owen Massenbauer, Reserves Officer, Shark Bay District.

Permanent

Mark Spice, Senior Disease Hygiene Officer, Sustainable Forest Management, Bunbury; Carolyn Thomson-Dans, Senior Project Officer, Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs; Joel Collins, Conservation Officer (Flora), Merredin District; John Abbott, Senior Ranger, West Kimberley District, Geikie Gorge National Park; Ian Anderson, Reserves

Officer, Shark Bay District, Midwest Region.

Promotion

Colin Hooper, Senior Disease Hygiene Officer, Forest Management Branch, Manjimup; Peter Blankendaal, Disease Standards Officer, Sustainable Forest Management, Bunbury; Cameron Hennessy, Ranger, Stirling Ranges National Park; David Rawet, Senior Development and Education Officer, Fire Management Services, South West Region, Bunbury; Emma Fiorentino, Finance and Administration Coordinator, Perth Hills District, Mundaring.

Secondment

Robert Brazell, Forest Ranger, Department of Agriculture, Forrestfield.

Reclassification

Mark Cowan, Regional Ecologist, Goldfields Region; David Gough, Electronic Media Manager, Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs.

Transfer

Craig Letica, Finance and Administration Officer, Wellington District; John Carter, Nature Conservation Coordinator, Busselton.

Temporary deployment

Jodie Watts, Recovery Catchment Officer, Midwest Region, Geraldton; Tracy Shea, Regional and Corporate Services Coordinator, Parks, Policy and Tourism, Kensington; Caitlin Prowse, Acting Operations Officer, South West Region, Busselton; Roger Syme, Operations Officer, Wheatbelt Region, Merredin.

Contract ceased

Jon Kaub, Biodiversity Coordinator, Swan Region.

Resignation

Heather Fiona Taylor, Project Officer, Threatened Species Unit, Wildlife Research Centre, Woodvale; Trevor Smales, Cartographic Officer, Information Management Branch.