



# Conservation News

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NOVEMBER 2005

## Five-year Pilbara survey at halfway point

**WORK** on CALM's multi-million dollar Pilbara Biological Survey has reached an important milestone.

As one of the State's most extensive biological surveys, it has now reached its halfway mark with encouraging results.

CALM Science Division Zoologist, Norm McKenzie, described the survey as "progressing well".

"We've got the traps in and the sampling we've done has yielded good results in all cases," he said.

"We're learning a lot about the distribution of plants and animals including birds, stygofauna and aquatic vertebrates and invertebrates.

"We've also had general support from the community and industry, both mining and pastoral.

"This is a four to five year project and we'll end up with 5000 or more species recorded and identified during the sampling program, including spiders, scorpions, insects, small mammals, lizards, birds, shrubs, trees, herbs, grasses, and aquatic invertebrates including subterranean crustacea.

"It will give us a reasonable fingerprint of patterns in the Pilbara's biodiversity."

The Pilbara Biological Survey, which started in 2002 and is scheduled for completion in 2007, focuses on the biodiversity of about 180,000 sq km of the region's wetlands, rivers, grassland savannas, mountain ranges, gorges and tropical woodlands.

There are several components to the survey including flora, waterways and subterranean creatures. All

by Tracy Peacock

are progressing well.

During the past four months CALM staff commenced the second phase of the sampling program by selecting the sampling sites for the second phase of the survey, installing the pit traps on these sites, then sampling them for terrestrial vertebrates. The installation was led by CALM Science Division Senior Technical Officer, Jim Rolfe.

Norm said that 150 sites were sampled during the survey's first phase, last financial year, with the second 150 set up between late June to mid September this year.

"The recent sampling will be repeated next April-May and that will complete the vertebrate animal component of our field survey," he said.

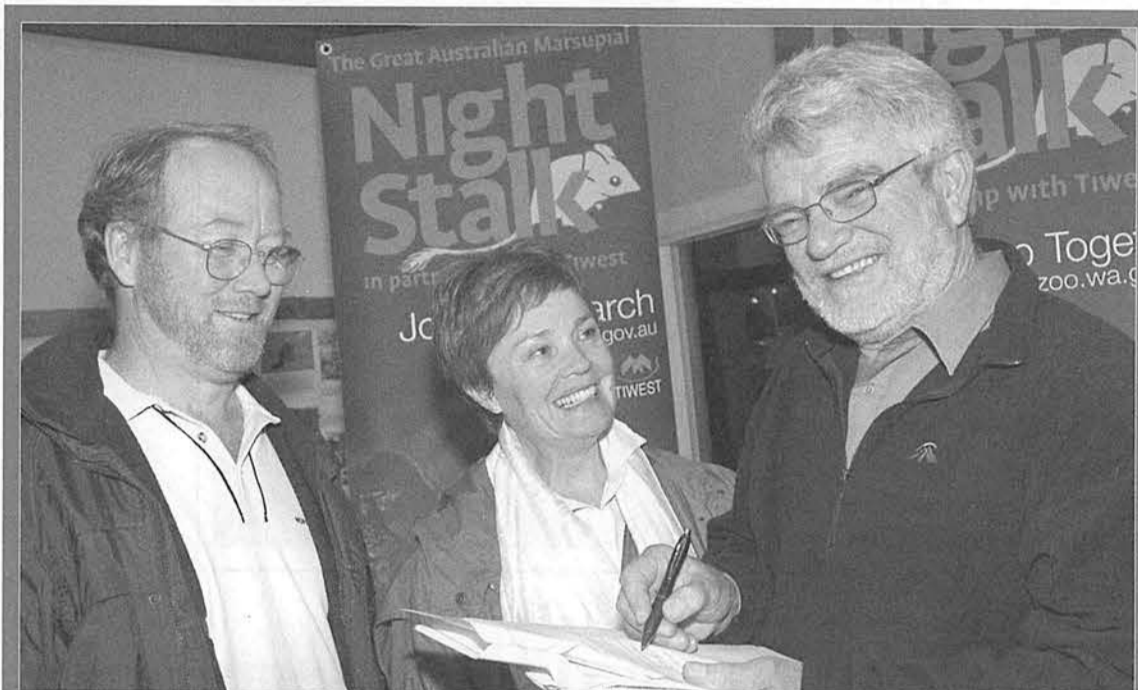
"During the process of selecting, installing and sampling the traps we've liaised with the landholders.

"They need to know where we are on their property so that our sampling activity didn't interfere with station musters and other activities.

"If there are children on the nearby station we take time to show them what we've taken out of the pit traps that day."

Norm said one of the biggest hurdles the survey still faced was adequate rain in the Pilbara during the wet season. Last summer was unusually dry in many parts of the region, which gave the botanists a few headaches.

"If we don't get a good season we may still be sampling in early 2007," he said.



TIWEST Chief Executive Officer, David Charles (right) was delighted to sponsor CALM's wildlife program, Western Shield, and was pictured chatting to Environment Minister, Dr Judy Edwards and CALM Executive Director, Keiran McNamara at a recent event at Karakamia Animal Sanctuary, Gidgegannup. Photo - Ron D'Raine.

## TIWEST continues to support Western Shield

WESTERN Australia's acclaimed wildlife recovery program - *Western Shield* - has received a further \$300,000 five-year sponsorship from the mining company, Tiwest.

The sponsorship will help recover rare and threatened animal species on CALM lands, vacant Crown land and selected private lands in the Jurien to Lancelin area.

The target area extends from the TIWEST Cooljarloo site to include selected sites between Jurien and Lancelin on the coast and Brand Highway in the east.

The area had a greatly reduced mammal fauna before *Western Shield* baiting began, with no mamma

species in the medium-size category.

With TIWEST's sponsored operations between 2000 and 2005, there was an increase in the numbers of a range of species.

There were also re-introductions of woylies, tamar wallabies and quenda. Phase two of this sponsorship will aim at consolidation and increases in the real population sizes of the reintroduced species and the proposed additional reintroductions of western barred bandicoots, bilbies and banded hare-wallabies.

Additional species may also be considered, depending on field conditions and feral animal control successes.

## Still loving it after 20 years

**HENRY** Corpus - a familiar face in CALM's Kimberley Region - has reached a significant milestone in his career with CALM.

The 39-year-old is based at the Broome District Office as a Reserves Officer and recently notched up 20 years with the Department and, in doing so, has become the first Indigenous employee in the Kimberley to achieve this length of service.

Henry started as a nursery hand in 1985 and has undertaken many jobs throughout the Kimberley.

CALM's Acting Kimberley Training Officer, Kevin Lockyer, said Henry was a valued staff member because he was so multi-skilled.

"He carries out all the welding tasks for the Department in the West Kimberley District and was involved in the construction of all building sites at Silent Grove when it was first established as a national park," he said.



Henry Corpus (centre) with colleagues Anthony Aitken and Kevin Lockyer. Photo - CALM.

"Henry's also helped with the extensions to the new office complex in Broome and has been involved in mammal trapping and surveys, fire fighting, relocating dangerous animals, relieving national park rangers, sign manufacturing, machinery operating and weed control.

"He's a fantastic worker and a great role model for our trainees. He's dedicated to his

job and takes great pride in his work.

"Henry has great practical skills and is not satisfied unless the job is completed to perfection.

"When other staff undertake construction work in the parks, he often grabs the spirit level and checks out if the uprights are spot on and even if they are only a few millimetres out he

lets them know about it with a big grin on his face!"

Henry said that he had thoroughly enjoyed his 20 years with CALM.

"I've loved every minute of it, and hopefully I will still be enjoying it after another 20 years," he said.

Highlights included crocodile spotlighting, and getting out of Broome to Winjana Gorge, Silent Grove (Bell Gorge) and Geikie Gorge, and working on building projects at Purnululu National Park (the Bungle Bungles).

"I enjoy the CALM regional meetings that we have once or twice a year, where we catch up with each other and pass on good wishes," he said.

He is about to start work on the wet season's works program that will be carried out by himself and Indigenous trainees, Jonathon Corpus and Dylan McKenzie, who have been working with him for 18 months.

## Leave No Trace

**CALM** has teamed with Leave No Trace Australia (LNT) to encourage and inspire responsible outdoor recreation and travel throughout the State's conservation lands.

CALM's Executive Director, Keiran McNamara, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the national non-profit organisation as part of its strategy to increase public awareness of how to minimise the impacts of visiting conservation areas.

The MOU formalises an ongoing partnership between CALM and LNT.

LNT provides a program for the education of visitors to natural and cultural heritage areas and its use by CALM will complement the range of interpretive programs and education experiences already developed by the Department.

The MOU will further assist CALM and LNT identify common areas of interest and collaboration in promoting the minimal impact message throughout WA.

Staff already undertake professional training to develop their skills and ethics in LNT and this will be further expanded under the MOU.

CALM will also provide opportunities for LNT to distribute information at CALM outlets and visitor centres.

continued page 3

# Working Together

In the May 2005 *Conservation News* I announced that a highlight of the Government's budget for CALM for 2005/06 was the allocation of funds for the first stage of a new biodiversity conservation science centre, including a new Herbarium, to be built at Kensington.

Key groups of staff have been working "behind the scenes" on design requirements. The project has now reached the stage where, during November, I took part in the selection process for the appointment of an architect for the project.

The project will now move into the detailed design phase, involving extensive consultation with affected staff, with construction expected to begin early in 2007. This will be an exciting project and an important step in improving CALM's internal cohesion, our service to the community, our scientific research performance and the proper curation of the State's primary flora collection. I look forward to a strong contribution from all those who will be involved, so that we end up with a building that meets our needs in every way.

Recent weeks have also seen a great deal of activity in prescribed burning and preparing for the summer wildfire season, following a slow start in the south-west due to spring rains. Everyone will remember that last summer's wildfire season was particularly demanding. I am confident that we are well trained and prepared for the summer, and as always the safety of our staff and those we work alongside is of paramount importance in fighting wildfires.

Keiran McNamara, Executive Director



## Tip of the iceberg for insects

DESPITE having identified an estimated two million insects, Tom Burbidge says he's only seen the 'tip of the iceberg' of the bug world.

"You have to remember that 75 per cent of the biodiversity of the world is made up of insects. People tend to forget this," he said.

Tom retired last month as Senior Technical Officer with CALM's Science Division, after 41 years with the WA Public Service.

He said he had thoroughly enjoyed his 19 years at CALM.

"I found CALM a very interesting place to work," he said.

Tom (61) leaves the Department with lots of friends and memories and is looking forward to retirement.

"I've already volunteered with Melville City Council to develop their wildflower walks at Piney Lakes two days a week," he said.



Tom Burbidge (second from right) with (from left) Alan Wills, Janet Farr and Ian Abbott.

by Tracy Peacock

He's planning two walks in the area – a wetlands and a woodlands walk.

"It's quite a challenge and I'm finding it very interesting," he said.

Tom said his new volunteer work also allowed him to follow another interest – wildflowers and native orchids.

"I'm now a member of the WA Native Orchid Society and Conservation Group. I've been interested in native orchids from childhood, but have never had the time to do anything about it until now," he said.

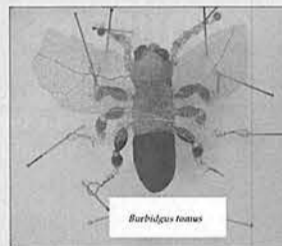
His fascination with insects started as a teenager and Tom remembers his early collections.

"I started collecting when I was about 18, back in the early 60s in Mandurah," he recalled.

"I had all sorts of things – grasshoppers, butterflies, bees, flies and beetles."

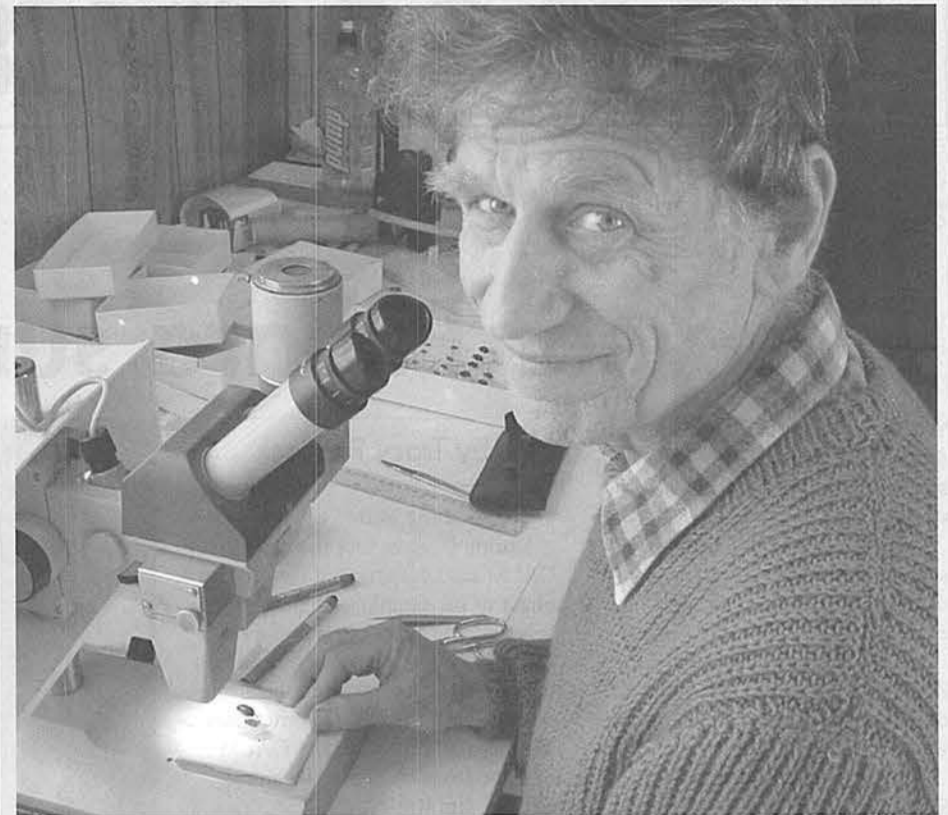
And why is he fascinated by bugs?

"It's everything. It's where you find them and what they look like and what they live on."



*Burbidgus tomus.*

## Distinguished scientist retires



Tom Burbidge at work. Photo – Rhianna King

TOM Burbidge retired from the WA Public Service in October 2005, after 41 years.

He started as a technical officer at the Department of Agriculture's Entomology Branch in 1964, working on pasture pests, grain pests, medfly and budworm.

In 1968 Steve Curry was appointed forest entomologist, and Tom worked with him on jarrah leafminer, pin hole and other tree borers, Ips bark beetle, leaf blister sawfly, and clearfelling impacts on forest invertebrates until 1984.

During this time, Tom identified nearly 520,000 insects.

Forest entomological research was transferred to me in 1984, and Tom joined CALM in 1986 as a technical officer.

He worked on quantifying damage to jarrah foliage by insect herbivores (often using a cherrypicker), and also became adept at identifying spring beetles, especially *Liparetrus* species (sometimes a significant pest of blue gum and oil mallee seedlings). Tom also identified the invertebrates col-

by Ian Abbott

lected in the Kingston study, which assessed the impact of various logging treatments on fauna in jarrah forest, near Bridgetown.

During the past five years, Tom identified many of the invertebrates collected in FORESTCHECK and the Walpole Fine Grain Fire Mosaic, ongoing programs to monitor logging and fire impacts across the forests.

He also played a lead role in developing BugBase, the database of CALM's terrestrial invertebrate collection.

At a well-attended farewell function, Tom was presented with several gifts.

One was a collection box with a number of strange insect specimens modelled by Dr Janet Farr, one of Tom's FORESTCHECK co-workers based at the Manjimup research centre.

The most interesting specimen was of *Burbidgus tomus*, belonging to a newly erected order of insects known as Calmoptera.

## Letter

The Head Ranger  
CALM  
Exmouth

Dear Sir/Madam,

We have recently returned to our home in Geelong after a fantastic holiday in Western Australia. While there we had the pleasure of staying at Cape Range National Park during the two weeks of the school holidays in July.

My purpose in writing is to tell you what wonderful camp hosts Mary and Don Johns were at Mesa Camp. On our arrival, Don made us very welcome, offered us a selection of sites, and gave advice on prevailing wind directions. Mary came across to our camp and introduced herself, and the warmth of their welcome was genuine. While we were there we had trouble with the computer in our vehicle, and Don very willingly drove my husband down to the Visitor's Centre so he could ring the Ford people and make arrangements for it to be collected and repaired. That was certainly much quicker than walking to the centre!

Don and Mary kept an eye out to see that all was in order at the camp, and whenever they went to town, they always enquired if we needed anything. Mary was very kind in sharing fish she had caught with others in the camp and we were grateful recipients on several occasions as we didn't have much luck fishing. Everything they said and did went to create a wonderful family feeling in the camp, and it was with real sadness that

we left to continue our travels. Looking back over our holidays, that is the longest we have ever stayed in one place for a holiday since we were children. CALM is indeed fortunate to have their services, and campers are very fortunate to have them as hosts.

We were also very pleased to be in Mesa camp because of the tamarisk trees that provided shelter and shade. It would be a very barren spot without them. As well as providing us with shade and shelter, they also provided homes for the little finches, and it gave us a great deal of pleasure watching these delightful birds as they went about their business.

Kay Preston  
Highton, Victoria

## Kalgoorlie display success

by Brett Lewis

KALGOORLIE locals and visitors were pleasantly surprised to find out what CALM was doing in the region when they visited its display at the recent Kalgoorlie Caravan and Camping Show.

About 3700 people attended the show with most visiting the CALM marquee.

All regional staff were involved with the organisation of the display, which focused on parks and visitor services, but also highlighted the diverse range of biodiversity values across the region.

Staff handed out the recently published *Goldfields Land of Surprises* magazine and answered hundreds of questions in relation to CALM's activities.

WA Customs, another exhibitor at the show, was next door to the CALM marquee which provided a great networking opportunity for staff from the two departments.

The visiting public was surprised to learn from both agencies that wildlife smuggling operations had been detected in the region in the past.

Pamphlets on protecting wildlife – outlining how to report procedures if wildlife smuggling was suspected – were distributed over the two days.

## Conservation News November 2005

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Managing Editor: Sue McKenna

Journalist: Tracy Peacock

Contributing Editor: Rhianna King

Design and Production: Natalie Jolakoski

Telephone: (08) 9389 8644

Facsimile: (08) 9389 8296

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Twenty years ago this month. . . November 1985



# CALM News

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## Feeding time for Dibbler



A JUVENILE male Dibbler, one of Australia's rarest and most elusive mammals, feeding on nectar from a bell-fruited mallee flower. The photograph was taken by Andrew Chapman who is carrying out a flora and fauna survey of the Fitzgerald River National Park. The survey is being funded by the Heritage Committee.

## HON. ROYAL COMMISSION . . .

# Report tabled in Parliament

The Honorary Royal Commission into the Conservation and Land Management Act tabled its report in the Legislative Council recently.

The Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Ron Davies, said the Commission had approached their task with enthusiasm and their report was a comprehensive review of the functions of the Act.

A public participation exercise had recently started in the Mundaring Region, and more than 10 major land management plans, including three regional plans for the South West, were being undertaken.

Mr Davies welcomed the Commission's endorsement of the concept of an integrated land management agency, but said the Government would not formally respond to the recommendations contained in the report until the public had had an opportunity to respond to them.

The review would be completed and available for public comment by the end of the year.

The report recommends that the Department of Conservation and Land Management remains largely unchanged.

Any changes should only be implemented after five years, which would allow the Department time to establish itself.

The Commission, however, emphasised the need for the Department to be given greater resources.

The Commission sprang from a Select Committee established late in 1984 when the Conservation and Land Management Act was before the Council.

The Commission's members were Hon. A.A. Lewis, M.L.C., Hon. V.J. Ferry, M.L.C. and Hon. F.E. McKenzie, K.L.C.

The Commission's visited all States of Australia, New Zealand, and

Province of Ontario, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, and received numerous submissions.

Presentation of such evidence gave the Commission a greater understanding of the problems faced by land managers and ways in which such problems may be resolved.

The Report makes 85 recommendations, a number of which propose more resources for the Department.

The Commission was concerned at CALM's inability to adequately prepare management plans for the lands and waters it has responsibility for, as prescribed in the Conservation and Land Management Act.

The Commission also recommends that greater resources be made available for creating and improving recreational facilities.

The Commission recommends the adoption of the land-use classifica-

tion scheme proposed by the International Union for Nature Conservation and Natural Resources, allowing for multiple-use of lands and waters managed by CALM.

The Commission considers that acceptance of such a scheme will allow for more rational land-use planning.

The Commission makes a number of recommendations that it says would allow the Department to operate more efficiently.



SOME of CALM's Blackwood Marathon team members pause for a well-earned beer. They are (from left to right) back row: Kevin Keally, Lachlan McCaw, John McGrath, Jim Maher and Greg Strelina. Front row: John Wray and Cliff Winfield.

# SOFTWOOD SCHEME LAUNCHED

MORE than 90 people attended the launching of a Softwood Sharefarming Scheme at a seminar at Manjimup on November 14.

The Scheme was launched by the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Ron Davies.

Mr Davies said the Scheme involved joint ventures between private landowners and the State Government.

He said it was important that the Scheme be managed as a community project for the benefit of the community rather than have the community perceive pine plantations as owned by the Department.

The Department's Principal Economics officer, Dr George Malaczuk, the Regional Manager, Central Region, Don Spriggins and the Senior Liaison Officer, Ross Young, outlined the economic and management aspects of the Scheme.

The Scheme aims to help the State achieve sawlog new self-sufficiency and to compensate for future cuts in hardwood production.

It is designed to encourage on-farm forestry

by making annual payments to farmers.

This will overcome the long waiting time for returns — up to 30 years — and the uncertain cash flow.

Under the terms of the Scheme, landowners will be paid a predetermined annuity indexed for inflation and a predetermined proportion of the final cutting revenue.

A landowner offering 100 ha of above average quality land for pine planting could expect an annual return of between \$6,000 and \$7,000 and a payment of \$30,000 at clearfelling.

In addition to the annuity and the clearfelling payment, the landowner could also be paid to maintain the plantation on his property.

Mr Davies said the Government was committed to improving the productivity of the hardwood forest, but it was essential to reduce the hardwood cut to a sustainable level.

Mr Davies said this year's CALM \$3 million had been allocated for land purchases.

Under the Softwood Sharefarming Scheme an equivalent area of pine plantation could be established for less than \$300,000.

The Scheme initially aims to establish 500 ha of radiata pine annually in the Manjimup region.

If this proves successful it will be expanded to annual plantings of 2,500 ha throughout the South West.

The initial response to the Scheme has been excellent, with Ross Young reporting that landowners have requested CALM to evaluate more than 1,000 ha of land for pine plantation establishment.

## Cadet wins award

BRADLEY FISHER, a recipient of the recently-awarded Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award, is a first-year Field Officer Cadet at CALM.

Bradley is currently completing his year at the College of the Southwest at Bunbury.

The award candidates had to complete an expedition, engage in community service and prove their ability in a particular skill and sporting activity.

His expedition was a three-day, 300km cycle around the Porongorups via Mt Barker and Denmark.

He also built a 1.5m model of an Australia II-type yacht, complete with winged keel.

Bradley also helped build the Albany Athletics Club Building, and had a successful cross-country and athletics season, including winning a WA Cross-country title.

He was one of 21 young men and women who were presented with the award by the Premier, Brian Burke, in October.

## MARATHON

THREE teams from CALM competed in this year's Blackwood Marathon Relay.

However, speed is not everything and teams "CALM Ones" and "Too CALM" (101 and 102), despite finishing 24th and 23rd respectively, were disqualified when their horses' pulse rates failed to return to normal within the prescribed time.

"Still CALM" (103) maintained a slower, but steadier, pace and finished without disqualification in 64th place — quite a creditable performance in a field of 277.

"Still CALM" team members were Alan Sands, Manjimup; Per Christensen, Como; Quintin Radomiljac, Manjimup; Kevin Keally, (from outside CALM) and Jim Maher, Crawley.

"CALM Ones" team members were Colin Greene, Harvey; John McGrath, Como; Rae Burrows, Manjimup; Robert Radomiljac, Manjimup; and Ray Lawrie, Manjimup.

"Too CALM" members were Greg Strelina, Manjimup; John Wray (WA Water Authority); Cliff Winfield, Como; Peter Giadresco, Manjimup; and Lachlan McCaw, Manjimup.

A number of CALM officers competed in the event on other teams.

They were Tammie Reid, Como; Ian Rotheram, Jarrahdale; Tony Friend, Woodvale; Sue Moore, Murdoch House; and Ian Darragh, Como.

Twenty years ago this month... November 1985



**From my Desk**

MANY species of animals define their territory and defend it vigorously. The "territorial imperative" is a well known biological phenomenon which humans do not escape. In any organisation of reasonable size, the opportunities for defining and vigorously defending a territory are considerable. Obviously, the propensity to define and defend territories is even greater in an organisation formed by an amalgamation. While a territorial strategy confers short term advantages on the individual, history shows that organisations that achieve the most in the long term are those that have cohesion. In general, CALM staff have achieved a remarkable degree of cohesion in the short period since the Department has been formed. This is not surprising because the business we are in is a worthwhile and exciting one which attracts people who are dedicated to their job. There have been some exceptions to this. These exceptions, I am sure, have arisen because individuals and/or groups feel threatened. Change is threatening, but I am confident that the changes that are occurring and will continue to occur as CALM develops will provide greater opportunities for everybody. Over time, we hope to develop a system whereby any person in the Department can aspire to any position in the Department by providing training opportunities and links between different groups. We are also working with the Public Service Board and the Industrial Commission to improve the career opportunities within specialised groups within the Department. We have already removed the constraint on field staff moving to senior management positions and I hope that the training policy will be in place early in the New Year. It will take time to sort out differences in employment conditions between different groups which have developed over time. In the interim, I hope all members of the Department will resist the temptation to establish "territories".

**SYD SHEA**  
Executive Director



COLIN BARNS gets the... his man, John Atkins

**FITNESS TESTS PROVE POPULAR**

By LIANA CHRISTENSEN

Free fitness tests for CALM staff proved so popular that it was necessary to organize a second day of testing. The fitness tests, which normally cost upwards of \$30, were part of the second stage of CALMFIT. Twenty-five people took part in the pilot programme, and Colin Barns from U.W.A. was appointed on a part-time basis to coordinate the follow-up. Participants in the fitness testing gained a comprehensive picture of their general health. Blood pressure, flexibility, weight, heart and lung function, as well as general lifestyle, were examined. It proved to be a relatively painless procedure. Even on the exercise bike there was little danger of working up a sweat. Colin Barns was pleased with the enthusiastic response to the tests, and has all sorts of plans for future events. Swimming groups, volleyball and netball, cycling and running have all been suggested. Any further ideas are welcome, because Colin is hoping to cover as wide a range of staff recreational interests as possible. Fitness fanatics can be catered for, on an individual or group basis: programmes can be devised in consultation with Colin.

**Fire school for officers**

SEVENTY-EIGHT officers attended two four day intermediate level Fire Schools in early October at the Geographe Motel, Busselton. Course participants were drawn from a wide range of sectors within CALM, including Operations Foresters, Wildlife Park Rangers, Reserve Officers, Research, Planning Officers, Pilots and Administrative Officers. Protection Branch officers and other invited guests on a range of topics, including Fire Policy and Planning, Environmental Impacts of Fire, Fire Prevention Procedures, Fire Suppression Responsibilities, Roles on Fire Organizations, and Fire Safety and Fire Weather Forecasts. A half-day field excursion was held in the near vicinity of Jarrah Forests to demonstrate the latest developments in fire including

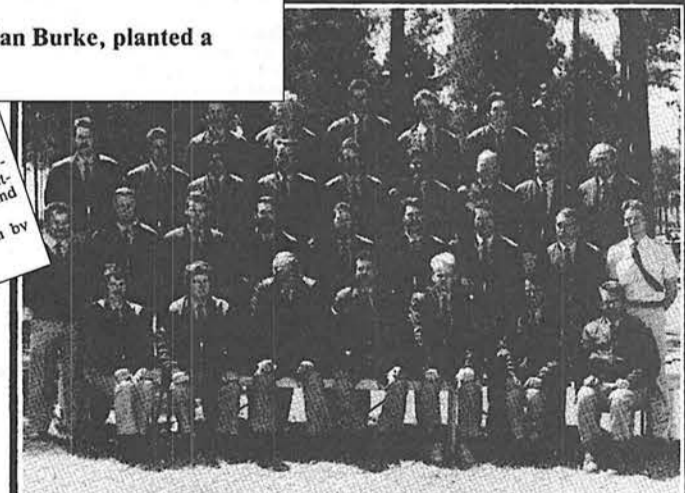
Herford tries his hand at spraying foam, one of a practical demonstrations at the Busselton Fire School.



CHRIS DONE holds a plaque identifying the Carpenteria palm planted by Premier Brian Burke at Kununurra's Celebrity Tree Park. Chris' son Warwick watches.

**Premier plants tree at Park**

DURING a recent visit to Kununurra, the Premier, Brian Burke, planted a tree at our Kununurra Celebrity Tree Park. He planted a *Carpenteria acuminata* (Carpenteria palm) from CALM's Broome nursery. Mr Burke was the most recent of several celebrities to show faith in the future of Kununurra and surroundings by planting a tree. Other celebrity tree planters include WA Governor, Professor Reid, singer entertainer (and politician) Ernie Bridge, singer entertainer Eric Bogle, Sir Charles Court and Mary Durack. The park was officially opened by the Governor General Sir Ninian Stephen in July 1984 when he planted a *Melaleuca leucodendron* that is now more than two metres tall. Almost all the trees planted are endemic to northern Australia, with emphasis on Kimberley trees. Mr Burke agreed to provide funds to assist with the reticulation of the park. The offer pleased two people on the park management committee who have watered the trees twice a week since the park opened. Even more pleased will be my wife, who until recently has had to water the trees during my frequent trips away from Kununurra — Chris Done, Regional Manager, Kimberley.



**WILDLIFE OFFICERS GATHER IN PERTH**

CALM Wildlife Officers gathered in Perth in October to meet CALM's management. The two-day seminar gave each group a chance to exchange information on responsibilities and priorities. "It was an opportunity to put forward to senior management what to do," said Doug Coughran, Wildlife Officer at Perth. "It's good to get down to Perth and put faces to the names," Kevin Marshall, Wildlife Officer at Karratha. Peter Pennings, Senior Wildlife Officer at Perth, said: "A seminar like this goes a long way in bringing the department together into one department rather than three."

# Rare ground parrot walks into history books

**A CRITICALLY endangered western ground parrot has astonished a threatened species research scientist by walking right up to him and calling out on cue for the camera.**

Western Ground Parrot Recovery Project team leader Brent Barrett was able to snap the first ever quality photographs of an adult bird in the wild before it disappeared into underbrush.

Brent was based at CALM's Albany office and had been searching for the elusive ground parrot for almost two years. He took the photo on the last day of his contract, which made the project "extra special".

"Our team was able to locate and photograph an adult that had recently been nesting in the study site," he said.

Brent, with Technical Support Officer, David Chemello, and field assistant, Karl Edwards, conducted the latest expedition in the Fitzgerald River National Park.

A number of ground breaking

results were obtained during the two month epic, with the highlight being the parrot's sighting. The historic photograph was taken during the



*The first photograph of the western ground parrot. Photo – Brent Barrett*

last days of the trip.

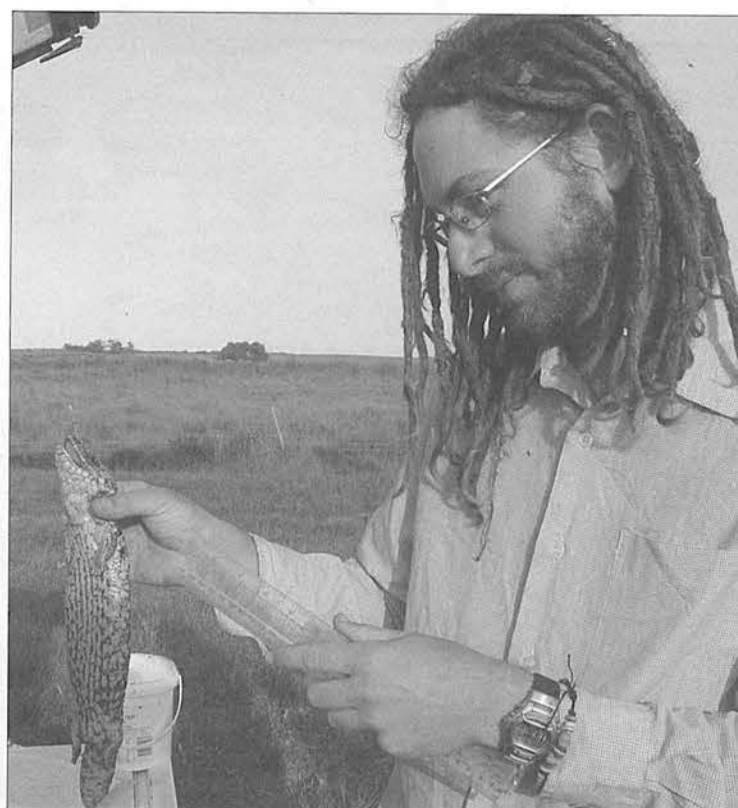
"The first photograph shows just how stunning this parrot really is, and because it was taken in natural light, the iridescence of the feathers is shown," Brett said.

South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT) chair, Garry English, said Brent and his team had received a front row glimpse into the life of a western ground parrot.

"Details of plumage, method of calling, mode of travel and the extreme camouflage ability of the bird were revealed in this one-hour event.

"This detail will aid the project to better understand habitat selection and predator avoidance techniques of this critically endangered bird," he said.

For more information about the Western Ground Parrot Recovery Team project, contact Sarah Comer by email sarahc@calm.wa.gov.au or phone 08 9842 4513. Funding for the project was allocated by SCRIPT.



*Brent Barrett at Fitzgerald River National Park. Photo – CALM*

## Leave No Trace (from page 1)



*CALM Executive Director, Keiran McNamara, and Leave No Trace Managing Director, Cameron Crowe, with the signed MOU at the Tom Fricker Cottage in Allen Park, Swanbourne, which was officially opened as the LNT office by the Mayor of Nedlands, Laurie Taylor.*

LNT Managing Director, Cameron Crowe, said LNT Australia greatly appreciated the support received from CALM in assisting to implement LNT.

"The support for a national minimal impact public education program from State and Federal governments, and the tourism industry is essential for biodiversity protection," he said.

## Dibbler jackpot

**ONE hundred and fifty-six dibblers were trapped and marked in four days during a field trip by CALM staff to Boullanger and Whitlock islands off Jurien Bay last month.**

It was part of an ongoing study to track dibbler population numbers on the islands from year to year and to provide information to determine long-term demographic trends.

CALM Principal Research Scientist, Tony Friend, led the trip and said that it was important to keep tabs on dibbler numbers as there had been evidence of decline in the Boullanger Island population over the last decade.

The trip continued a monitoring program that has been carried out by CALM and The University of Western Australia researchers since the discovery of the island dibbler populations by Phil Fuller and Andrew Burbidge of CALM in 1985.

Tony said that the high numbers of dibblers caught indicated that the population was recovering and may reflect the good rains over the last two winters.

The scientists also observed that the coastline of Boullanger Island had retreated in one area and that sections of two traplines established in coastal vegetation during the 1990s were now offshore.

Tony's team of Technical Officer Tim Button and Albany volunteer Neil Houghton also surveyed potential dibbler habitat on the mainland around Jurien Bay, with the future possibility of reintroducing captive-bred dibblers.

"There may be good country for reintroductions of dibblers to the west coast, in sites such as Lesueur National Park," Tony said.

Funding to monitor Jurien Bay's island dibbler populations has been provided by the Natural Heritage Trust as part of its \$330,000 funding of the Dibbler Recovery Program for the next three years. This funding is delivered through a partnership between CALM, the South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT) and the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council.

## New person to protect flora

**DURING the next three years, Ben Bayliss will be working hard to protect and conserve WA flora.**

The ecologist has recently joined CALM to work on the State-wide seed conservation strategy for threatened species, threatened communities and biodiversity hotspots.

Ben has worked for CALM before on short-term contracts and was a technical officer with the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage Supervising Scientist Division working on revegetation research and wetland ecology studies in the Alligator Rivers Region of the Northern Territory.

"Through my work with CALM, I look forward to making a contribution to the understanding and conservation of WA's unique flora," Ben said.

CALM's Threatened Flora Seed Centre Manager, Anne Cochrane, said Ben's goals over the next three years would include the collection and conservation of seed of 300 rare, threatened or poorly known species from throughout WA.

"He will aim to involve, where possible, community members from across different NRM regions in seed collection activities and will

by Tracy Peacock

promote seed collection as a vital component of a flora conservation strategy," Anne said.

"In the laboratory he will assist in the determination of the viability of the collections through seed germination studies and in the monitoring of collections over time.

"Seedlings will be used by CALM scientists to determine species susceptibility to the dieback disease, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, providing important information for on-ground management of the species in areas at risk of disease infestation."

Anne said the seed conserved through the project would be duplicated at the Millennium Seed Bank at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in the UK, as a safeguard, and material would be kept secure for future recovery needs and as insurance against species decline or extinction in the wild.

Ben's position is funded by the Commonwealth Natural Heritage Trust through the South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT) and administered by CALM.



*New CALM employee Ben Bayliss collecting seed. Photo – Anne Cochrane*

# Kids enjoy the spring festival



Nearer to Nature guide David Pettitt shows Faith Reid of Currabine how to handle a falcon. Photo – N2N

## NEARER to Nature's recent festival for kids attracted big numbers at events at Matilda Bay Reserve and Yanchep National Park.

CALM's Nearer to Nature manager, Steve Altham, said more than 200 children and a similar number of parents attended the N2N Kids Spring Festivals. "The experiences provided for the children included searching for macro-invertebrates in the water, hearing about the lives of Australian marsupials, experiencing the ingenuity of Nyoongar culture by making rope from

natural materials and close encounters with native raptors," he said.

"Both Matilda Bay and Yanchep National Park are quite new locations for the Nearer to Nature program and have proved to be popular with the community.

"We have already met with staff from Yanchep National Park to plan exciting new events for summer and autumn."

A short video clip of the N2N Kids Spring Festival at Yanchep National Park is available on NatureBase at [www.naturebase.net/nearer-tonature](http://www.naturebase.net/nearer-tonature).

## Conservation briefs

### Moves to protect Busselton possums

Environment Minister Dr Judy Edwards has initiated a strategic review of western ringtail possum habitat in the Busselton area.

The review by CALM will involve consultation with local authorities, relevant government agencies and the community.

It will identify areas for consolidating habitat and maintaining ecological linkages, along with opportunities for educating the community about the importance of maintaining habitat values.

Although possums are abundant in the area because of the amount of peppermint trees and other suitable habitat, they are under continuing pressure as Busselton and the surrounding regions continue to grow.

### Shark Bay World Heritage appointments

Appointments have been made to the Shark Bay World Heritage Property Community Consultative Committee and the Scientific Advisory Committee.

Carnarvon businessman Richard Patty has been reappointed for a further term, while tourism expert Bart Boelen is a new member of the community consultative committee.

Lindsay Joll, Greg Keighery and Per Christensen have been reappointed to the Shark Bay World Heritage Property Scientific Advisory Committee.

### New map for Karijini

Karijini National Park has been re-mapped using state-of-the-art technology that will prove invaluable for emergency management planning and the tourism sector.

The new map and digital data CD incorporate the latest technology and high-resolution satellite imagery to highlight features such as buildings, roads, mining infrastructure, dams and bores, terrain, major tourist sites, areas of risk and emergency response information.

They also provide important information related to vegetation density to assist with fire management.

Copies of the map are available for \$10 from the Karijini Visitor Centre, Karratha Newsagency and CALM offices.

# Bushland advocate joins Urban Nature

by Tracy Peacock

KAREN Sanders simply describes her new job in two words – protecting bushland.

She recently joined CALM as Urban Nature's new coordinator.

Karen was previously with the Department for Planning and Infrastructure where she was Senior Environmental Planner with the Bush Forever Office.

An environmental science graduate from Murdoch University, she has also worked for the Department of Environment, and with the Department of Environment and Heritage in Canberra.

Karen hopes to create a stronger identity for the Urban Nature program.

"I would like to improve people's understanding of the great work that Urban Nature is doing. I'll be looking more at communicating both across and outside the agency about the Urban Nature program and how we can help to better manage bushland," she said.

As part of this process, the Urban Nature team plans to run more extension activities for CALM staff

and local government officers in the form of field days and workshops at bushland sites.

CALM's Urban Nature program aims to support conservation groups, organisations and individuals striving to help protect, conserve and manage natural bushland and wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain.



Karen Sanders at work. Photo – CALM

# CALM Bush Rangers project wins award

A coastal rehabilitation project undertaken by Geographe Bush Rangers – part of CALM's popular Bush Rangers program – has won an award.

The cadets, from the Geographe Education Support Centre, won GeoCatch's Catchment Care Education Award for work at Busselton's West Street Reserve.

Geographe Bush Rangers Instructor, Sheree Hepworth, said the 22 cadets involved were thrilled with the award which recognised their commitment to environmental education and coastal rehabilitation.

She said the cadets had been working on the project since their Bush Rangers Unit started two years ago.

"They've removed bridal creeper, collected seeds for planting in the area, cleaned the area, made possum boxes and now they are waiting for funding to do some fencing for



Leaders of the Geographe Bush Rangers Unit were (from left) Nicholas Carroll, Paris Kaeding and Sean Strong. Photo – Geographe CALM Bush Rangers Unit

the access ways," Sheree said.

She said the cadets had benefited by being involved in the CALM Bush Rangers program.

"It has provided opportunities for students to develop leadership and team building skills and has

increased their confidence and self-esteem," Sheree said.

The CALM Bush Rangers program is a voluntary program for young Western Australians, part of a broader program known as Cadets WA.

## Staff changes . . . Staff changes . . . Staff changes . . . Staff changes . . .

### Contracts

Liz McGuire, Programs Officer, Perth Hills, Mundaring; Fiona Kirkpatrick, Field Officer, Kirup; Craig Douglas, Project Officer, Nature Conservation Division; Kevin Geraty, Technical Assistant, Midwest Region, Denham; Murray Baker, Parks and Visitor Services Project Leader, Swan Region, Kensington; Samuel Tonkin, Reserves Officer (graduate recruit), Midwest Region, Regional Services Division, Denham.

### Promotions

Alice Reaveley, Nature Conservation Officer, Perth Hills District, Mundaring; Beth McKernan, Coordinator, Traineeship and Cadet Program, Dwellingup; John McKenzie, Fire Operations Officer, Pemberton.

### Temporary deployments

Chery Ehlers, Assistant Fire Operations Officer, Walpole to Pemberton District; Nicole Willers, Conservation

Officer (Flora), Swan Region, Kensington.

### Leave without pay

Marc Barendrecht, Fire Operations Officer, Central Forest Region, Bunbury; Amanda Rasmussen, Research Officer, CALM Science Division, Kensington.

### Transfers

Brett Lewis, District Wildlife Officer, from Goldfields to Karratha; Caz Stonier, Customer Services Officer, from Fire Management, Kensington, to Corporate Headquarters, Crawley.

### Temporary transfer

Michelle Reid, Ranger, Geikie Gorge National Park, West Kimberley District, to Cape Range National Park, Pilbara District.

### Permanent appointments

Sienna Kitson, Clerical Officer, Pemberton; Rumen

Grigoroff, Manager, Employee Relations, People Services Branch, Kensington; John Fishwick, Assistant District Fire Coordinator, Manjimup; Raquel Carter, Regional Commercial Leasing and Licensing Officer, Pilbara Region, Exmouth.

### Resignations

Leon Jacky, Technical Officer, Kununurra; Jason Barrow, Visitor Services Officer, Yanchep National Park; Kate Jackson, Technical Officer, Wildlife Administration; Christine Rumley, Project Officer, Forest Management, Bunbury; Terry Harrington, Ranger, Exmouth; Tom Burbidge, Senior Technical Officer, Science Division; Philip Kindleysides, Marine Conservation Officer, Marine Conservation Branch; Andrew Rumley, Project Officer, Forest Management, Bunbury.

### Contract ceased

Kerry Jankowski, Clerical Support Officer, Karratha; Neale Bougher, Senior Research Scientist, WA Herbarium.