



CALM News

COMO RESOURCE CENTRE

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

& LAND MANAGEMENT

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Unique wedding setting

EIGHT hundred metre high Dinnertime Hill, which offers panoramic views of the Hamersley Ranges and plains, with Mt Bruce towering in the background, was the unique bush setting chosen by Jim and Tilly Wolfenden for their wedding on September 7.

The bridal vehicle was adorned in CALM coloured ribbons, with a bouquet of local bush-flowers on the roof bar.

Tilly's flowergirl, Tina Wolfenden, was delightful in her fur coat and pretty pink bonnet.

Tina behaved perfectly during the wedding — skipping about, cleaning her paws and finally opting for the shade under the bridal Nissan. (Tina is a joey).

Jim, a Mobile Ranger, was in full Ranger uniform, as were the other Rangers attending.

Following the wedding, the bridal couple, with family and friends drove to 'Joffre Homestead', Jim and Tilly's mobile residence in the heart of the Hamersley Ranges, where the celebrations continued.

Best wishes to Jim and Tilly.



TILLY slips the ring on Jim's finger.

Forest rehabilitation EARTHMOVING OPERATIONS AT MINE SITES

BY Colleen Henry-Hall

Rehabilitating Alcoa's mine pits demands foresters in the Jarrahdale, Dwellingup and Harvey districts do their work following major earthmoving operations.

In bauxite mining, the jarrah forest is cleared and the topsoil and overburden scraped away to expose the bauxite ore.

While CALM officers are responsible for the rehabilitation, Alcoa pays most of the cost.

These three districts received \$620,000 in 1985

under the Forest Improvement Rehabilitation Scheme.

For Jarrahdale Forest Ranger Greg Standing the scheme is a challenging job.

Greg is responsible for rehabilitating about 110ha of mine sites a year, with a

further 90ha from shire gravel pits.

While he liaises with Alcoa's Environmental Scientist John Day, CALM and Alcoa undertake different phases of the operation.

After the mining is completed, Alcoa returns the overburden and covers the surface with topsoil before landscaping and establishing drainage.

The land is then ripped and seeded with an understorey scrub seed mix.

CALM's work, carried out by crews and supervised by Overseers Mick Golding and Bill Saunders, consists of a number of treatments, or rehabilitation prescriptions, which depend on the site.

A dry site, for example, which is resistant to dieback may be planted with a mix comprising yellow stringbark, marri, spotted gum and E. resinifera.

Rehabilitation also includes a number of treatments for dieback-infected forest, including the removal of salvageable timber and the clearing and replanting of the area.

Another treatment, especially for future mining areas, is the removal of banksias to promote a legume understorey which might increase the area's resistance to dieback.

Register of rare flora

For CALM to protect and manage the State's rare flora it's important to know the locations of the plants when planning operations.

Graham McCutcheon, Environmental Protection Officer at Bunbury, has recently completed a rare flora register for our forest regions.

A copy is available at each district and regional office in the South West.

The large, loose-leaf notebook lists each district's gazetted rare flora as of May 1986, and shows their locations.

It contains only declared rare flora, but species classified rare or geographically restricted will be added as a separate section.

The register was compiled for the forest regions first because of the forestry operations and the recreation facilities in those areas.

To compile the register, Graham started with Head Office wildlife files on each gazetted specimen.

He culled those to come up with species that occurred in the three forest regions, and then went through the files again to find more specific information in wildlife officers' reports.

His research also included talking with district officers.

The information in the register is not exhaustive, and Graham said he hoped district staff would add to the register any knowledge they have about rare flora in their districts.

According to Frank Batini, Manager Environmental Protection Branch, it is intended to complete a register of rare plants in the South Coast Region in the near future.

"We see this work as complimentary to what Greg Keighery and Stephen Hopper (CALM botanists) are doing," Frank said.

"This is a compilation of available information, while their work is in gathering that information."

Lane-Poole Award Winners

WINNERS of this year's Lane-Poole Award are Tony Brandis and Gerard van Didden.

Tony, a Training Officer at Dwellingup, will visit the Eastern States and New Zealand to study staff training and career development, which will help improve the current training system and career development for CALM staff.

Gerard, a Forester in the Fire Protection Branch at Como, will visit land management and bush fire authorities in the Eastern States, the NT and the ACT to gather information on aerial prescribed burning

equipment which will enable future planning and development of incendiary equipment on a national scale.

The Lane-Poole Award is made from a trust established by Mr Dennis Cullity as a tribute to Mr Lane-Poole, a close friend of his father, who founded Cullity Timbers.

The trust was established to commemorate the foresight of WA's first Conservator of Forests.

The award was first made in 1983 to Paul Marsh and Ray Fremlin.

Graeme Hutchinson was the recipient of the 1985 award.

TEAM EFFORT AT BUNBURY

A COMMITMENT to their work, their workmates and CALM might explain why 64 men and women in the Bunbury Region have gone four years without a lost time accident, the Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Barry Hodge, said recently at a Bunbury Safety Presentation.

He said: "Your Safety record shows that you are all contributing towards a common goal, according to your special abilities and your particular activities.

"The common denominator among you is commitment."

Also attending the Executive Director's Safety Award presentation were Executive Director Dr Syd Shea; MLA for Bunbury, Mr PJ Smith, and Safety Officer, Arthur Kesners.

The event was in recognition

of the Region's 12-month safety record.

Mr Hodge said the Government was taking steps to minimise the problems caused by industrial accidents.

"Currently we are working on the extension of the existing safety and health legislation to cover such areas as the employer's duty of care;

responsibilities of both employers and employees; consultation procedures between unions, employers and employees; and other related matters," he said.

He said the legislation may be introduced during the coming session of Parliament.

"The implementation of these measures may take some time, but in the long term, they will result in a reduction of the toll of accidental injuries in our community," Mr Hodge said.

The Minister also presented the Region with the Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention's Award of Merit for safety achievement.



BRUCE HARVEY (centre) accepts his award from Mr Hodge during the recent Safety Presentation at Bunbury.

Drew's on Bibbulmun track

THE realigned Bibbulmun Track is taking shape and should be ready for intrepid walkers soon.

Recreation Projects officer Drew Griffiths, who is in charge of the changes, is still waiting for information from some districts on the track's route before completing the new guidebook.

That information will go to mapping and the maps will go back to the districts for a final check.

It will then go to the policy directorate, before CALM officers walk

the track to check the information before the guidebook is published.

At the moment, maps are being drawn up and the track marked by district staff.

When all is ready to go, the new distinctive track markers will be put up and the old taken down all in one week to avoid confusing walkers.

The new guidebook will contain only maps, with no written description of the route.

"When you're walking you don't read the words, you look at the map, so the maps in the new-look guide-

book will contain all the information a walker needs," Drew said.

Drew has also nominated the new Bibbulmun track for inclusion in the Heritage Trails Network for the 1988 Bicentenary.

The \$27,000 grant, if approved, would provide money for establishing 10 interpretive sites along the track, describing areas of significant historical value.

Also in the pipeline is a walk along the entire realigned Bibbulmun track in 1988 as an official opening for the Heritage Trail.

Groundwater studies at Dwellingup

RESEARCH into how thinning the jarrah forest affects the production of water is continuing under the direction of Research Officer Geoff Stoneman.

Geoff recently presented an update on his work on streamflow and groundwater from Dwellingup's Yarragil 4L catchment at a research seminar at Como.

His studies show that the increase in the amount of water due to thinning is related to the effect of thinning on the leaf area of the trees.

Geoff's research into increasing the yield of water in the jarrah forest is important for a number of reasons.

Most of the Northern Jarrah Forest has a land use priority related to water quality and quantity.

As the population grows, there will be increasing conflict over the management of the area for water catchment as more people begin to use the jarrah forest for recreation.

And within as little as 50 years, Geoff said, all sources of water in the South-West will be committed for water supply, an estimated 70 percent of that supply coming from State Forest.

Geoff said thinning the jarrah forest has pay-offs in two areas.

The first is increased flow in catchment areas.

Geoff reported that the production of water with this method is likely to be much cheaper than other options for water supply that will have to be explored as demand increases.

The second is that thinning provides saleable material for saw mills.

Yarragil 4L, in the jarrah forest near Dwellingup, is the first research project in catch-

ment monitoring of this type.

Work at Yarragil started in 1976 when a number of rainfall, streamflow, and groundwater monitoring instruments were installed.

The catchment was logged and then thinned in 1983 to about one-third the density it was before.

Monitoring of streamflow showed very little response in the first two years following thinning, however groundwater levels have steadily risen in response to the thinning.

Geoff attributes the lack of a streamflow response to the large soil water storage capacity of jarrah forest soils.

The groundwater response observed is a reflection of increases in the soil water storage.

RESEARCH Officer Geoff Stoneman (left) answers questions from Graeme Simon (centre) and Greg Strelein following Geoff's seminar on water production in the jarrah forest.



PETER Collins receives the infamous "Golden Arrow" Award from Albany District Manager Terry Passmore.

SOUTH COAST SEMINAR

THE Fourth Annual South Coast Regional Seminar, held in Esperance, was highly successful.

Wildlife Officers, Foresters, National Park Rangers, and staff from the Albany and Esperance offices spent four days hearing updates on major regional issues and participating in syndicate exercises.

The themes for this year's seminar were: trees on farms, dieback disease and seven-way tests, and interim management programmes.

Field excursions were made to Helms Arboretum and to Cape Le Grand National Park.

The syndicate exercises comprised a (theoretical) road development at Cape Le

Grand and the writing of an interim management programme for the park.

Visitors to the seminar included Roger Underwood, General Manager; John Humphries, Narrogin; Frank Batini, Environmental Protection; John Smart, Fire Protection; Neil Burrows, Fire Research.

Social highlights were a round robin indoor cricket match in which the Albany Office beat the Albany District and Esperance District, and the Annual Dinner at which the Albany District Wildlife Officers received the infamous "Golden Arrow" Award (most fires of the season — this year on nature reserves), and at which Ian Solomon from Cape Le Grand National Park received the 1986 South Coast Region Meritorious Award.

— JOHN WATSON.



MANJIMUP high school students learn the mysteries of radio tracking at the Perup Management Priority Area.

Bush excursions popular

CALM'S Research Officers at Manjimup have been sent back to school — to help out with the local high schools' science programmes.

Since May, Research Officers have been giving regular classroom lectures on a range of topics including general forest biology, population dynamics, forest fires and forest management.

However, the most popular exercise

with the students has been day excursions into the forests near Manjimup.

Apart from getting a break from the classroom, the students are eager to touch, see and learn about our famous animals such as the Numbat, Tamar and Woylie.

Many of the students have lived in and around Manjimup all their lives but until recently had never seen these rare and shy animals.

The field excursions have also enabled the students to see forest operations first-hand and to gain a better knowledge of how and why local forests are managed.

Teachers and students from both Kearnan College and Manjimup Senior High School have responded enthusiastically to the newly-discovered tutorial talents of CALM Research Officers.

RESEARCH BRANCH MERGER

MAJOR changes have been made to the structure and organisation of research in CALM.

The two previous branches, Production and Protection Research and Wildlife Research, have been merged into one Research Division.

The new division will be led by a corporate team under the direction of a Chief of Research, which replaces the former position of Director of Research and Planning.

The Chief of Research has not been appointed yet.

Research studies have been reorganised on a programme basis that will see one person, called a programme leader, in charge of the research in a certain area.

Programmes and their leaders are:

Biogeography, Norm McKenzie; Fauna Conservation, Bob Prince; Fire, Gordon Friend; Flora Conservation, Steve Hopper; Jarrah, Ian Abbott; Karri, Lachlan McCaw; Pine, John McGrath; Plant Diseases and Pests, Joanna Tippett; Rehabilitation, John Bartle; Wetlands and Waterbirds, Jim Lane.

The duties of the programme leaders will be to coordinate and direct research within the programme, prepare the programme budget and allocate finance within the programme, coordinate contact between the programme and regional, service and administrative staff and coor-

dinate research with external scientists and institutions.

There will also be two service programmes: computing, led by Mike Choo; and administration, led by John Dorland.

The Department's five research centres will be under the control of Research Centre Managers.

They are: Busselton, Richard Moore; Como, John McGrath; Dwellingup, Brian Shearer; Manjimup, Neil Burrows, and Woodvale, Jim Lane.

Standards of scientific excellence in research and research publications and extension will

be the responsibility for two Senior Principal Research Officers.

These positions are currently held by Dr Andrew Burbidge and Dr Per Christensen.

They will also help the Chief of Research to produce a five-year rolling research plan clearly defining departmental priorities for research, showing how these priorities are to be met and providing details of funding for each research programme.

The first plan will be completed by Autumn 1987.

An annual research conference will be held for senior staff and programme leaders to present the year's achievements and discuss the following year's programme.

There will also be programme meetings throughout the year and workshops at a programme and sub-programme level.

A feature of the new arrangement will be the involvement of operations staff in programme meetings and decisions about research priorities.

Admin Officers discuss duties

THEY'RE the people behind the scenes, the ones responsible for keeping the office running and making sure things get done.

They're CALM's Administrative and Clerical Officers, and 36 of them met recently for a three-day seminar on their Departmental duties.

Alex Errington, Divisional Manager Finance and Administration, opened the meeting. "You are one of the major sources of people who can get things done in this Department," he said.

"Things don't just happen when someone says we have to do it — it comes down to the Administrative Officers and Clerical Officers who must put those words into action."

The emphasis of the seminar was on finance and industrial matters, with information sessions given by various Departmental officers.

Eric Jenkins, Deputy Regional Manager of the Northern Region, gave an overall view of the role of the Administrative Officer in the Department.

Those duties touch almost all areas, including personnel, systems, finance, library, industrial, public relations,

office upkeep and fire control, Eric said.

Seminar organiser, Frank Townsend said: "This gathering was absolutely essential in enabling Administrative Officers to keep up to date with the

latest trends."

The seminar was the first one held since 1980, and Frank said he "can see the need to have them every year because things change at such a great rate."

GRAPE DEAL

VIGNERONS of the Swan Valley will bulk order their trellising materials under new arrangements between CALM and the Swan Valley Grape Growers Association.

Northern Forest Regional Manager, George Peet, said the Department will issue the association with a forest produce licence to remove the trellising materials from some areas of the northern jarrah forest.

The Swan Valley Grape Growers Association will take orders for the materials from their members then allocate the available timber to them.

The new arrangements have streamlined the yearly process of finding poles and posts for the wine growers, George said. "It's much easier dealing with one group than with many individuals," he said.

In the past, each vigneron has harvested the posts and poles needed for trellises from parts of State forest scheduled to be mined.

George said that area is about half what it was last year, and other parts of the community are competing for the timber. Mr Gavan Troy, MLA for Mundaring, played an integral part in developing the arrangements with the two groups.

SURPLUS HOUSES ARE SOLD

CALM is selling off a number of surplus houses in a move to rationalise its housing estate.

Alex Errington, Divisional Manager Finance and Administration, said selling the houses will reduce the Department's costs for maintenance, insurance and rates.

He said current tenants of houses identified as surplus will be given the first option to buy, but employees who do

not want to purchase will not be evicted.

So far, 35 houses have been sold by tender for removal from their sites and it is anticipated more will become available as they are vacated.

Prices received ranged from \$450 to \$7300.

These houses were at Gnar-gara, Grimwade, Hamel, Mar-

garet River, Ludlow, and Mundaring.

One vacant house in Nannup has been sold on the open market for \$23,000 and others will be offered for sale as individual titles are created.

In many instances, subdivision and zoning changes are necessary before the houses can be sold.

Expedition locates a sea of birds

By JOHN BLYTH

THE 1986 Remote Wetland Expedition, conducted for CALM by the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union (RAOU), took place in August 1986; and what an expedition it was — to Lakes Argyle and Gregory in the State's far north, and yielding an estimated half a million waterbirds of 66 species.

The 183,000 waterfowl (ducks and their allies) is more than 50 percent greater than that for the entire South West, recorded during the 1986 RAOU Great Duck Count.

On Monday, August 18, 12 people, with four 4-wheel drive vehicles and three boats, met at Kununurra for the first part of the survey at Lake Argyle.

They were led by Roger Jaensch, the RAOU's Waterbird Officer.

"Dapper Don" Munro from Woodvale counted birds, looked after the equipment, skippered the CALM runabout and generally provided essential practical skills.

The group spent six days at two different campsites on the north-eastern and eastern sides of the Lake.

A small plane was used on the first day to locate the position of big flocks of birds.

After that, the boats were used to cover as much of the Lake as possible, to estimate numbers of the various species.

Patrols on foot were also conducted around the Lake's edge to count waders and other shorebirds.

Although only about 40 percent of the wetland area was actually covered, almost 145,000 birds, representing 59 species, were counted.

These numbers included 657 Rajah Shelduck and 296 Comb-crested Jacanas, both gazetted as "rare or otherwise in need of special protection", and 51,000 Hardhead ducks — more than three times greater than the previous maximum reported for this species anywhere in WA.

My own part in the expedition started at Lake Gregory when I joined Roger and Don and their team of volunteers.

After a free trip for two to Broome (courtesy of a Princess Margaret Children's Hospital raffle won by my wife!)

I was fortunate to get a lift from Broome to Lake Gregory (about 1,000 kms) with Bryce Wells, a bird enthusiast who lives in Broome.

To while away the time spent travelling we counted birds of prey along the road as part of the Bird of Prey Watch, another programme co-ordinated by the RAOU.

We recorded hundreds of Black Kites, scores of Kestrels, Brown Falcons and Whistling Kites, and even the occasion-

al Black-breasted Buzzard and Black Falcon — the Kimberley is a great place for birds of prey.

Lake Gregory is a large lake about 250kms south of Halls Creek on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert. Usually saline, and about 250 square kms in size, it received flood-flows from Sturt Creek in 1983, which at least doubled the lake's surface area and inundated large tracts of desert and scrub.

Although receding now, it is still larger than its "usual size", and its water is still virtually fresh.



Most of the small trees inundated in 1983 are now dead, and stand starkly around the margins and shallows of the lake.

However, much of this vegetation would have provided excellent breeding conditions for water birds when first flooded.

Even now, species such as Cormorants and Darters are breeding profusely in the flooded, dead trees.

The sheer number of birds was awe-inspiring.

Rafts of more than 10,000 Eurasian Coots, and similar numbers of pink-eared Ducks and Hardheads were common on the water, while many thousands of Little Black Cormorants flapped and circled above any disturbing boat.

Numbers of this sort made counting extremely difficult, but comparison between up to five different observers indicated that estimates were probably within 10 to 20 percent of the correct figure.

The total estimate, over five days, covering about 80 percent of the Lake and using the same methods, as at Lake Argyle, excluding the use of the aircraft, was about 240,000 birds in 57 species.

This figure included about 75,000 Eurasian Coots and 60,000 little Black Cor-

morants. Perhaps the most exciting record was the count of nearly 900 Freckled Duck, a species on the gazetted rare list, and not usually associated with northern parts of Australia.

One needed only to walk out of the dead timber and across the first sand dune to be, apparently, in the middle of the Great Sandy Desert.

The contrast between the vast, productive lake, with its profusion of birds and other life, and the forbidding *Triodia* clad plains and sand dunes was a reminder of the whole essence of much of arid Australia — times of plenty interspersed with long periods of drought.

From the point of view of water birds, the results of the first Remote Wetland Expedition have two important implications.

First, Lake Argyle, with its huge body of clear, permanent water, has clearly become one of Australia's most important refuges and breeding grounds for many species of water birds.

Secondly, the great productivity of Lake Gregory suggests that it, and other remote wetlands, many of which may only fill occasionally, may be very important in allowing occasional massive expansion of the populations of many species.

These local "population explosion", may then, as the remote wetlands recede and dry up, and birds are forced to leave, provide large pulses of birds to other parts of Australia.

Thus, isolated, little studied wetlands of the north and centre birds, in national terms, previously little recognised.

The Remote Wetland Expeditions are part of a three-year programme of studies currently being conducted by the RAOU for CALM, and including several other aspects of water bird distribution.

The involvement of large numbers of volunteers that the RAOU can mobilise, and their expertise in this sort of work, promises to yield other exciting results which will be invaluable to this Department in its management of wetlands and water birds.



EUCALYPTUS flocktoniae (merrit) on the left and *Eucalyptus salmonophloia (salmon gum)* on the right, line Addis Street in Kalgoorlie.

TWIN TOWNS' TREES A FORESTERS' LEGACY

By IAN KEALLEY

RECENT research of the Kalgoorlie office archives have produced information on tree planting in Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

The information indicated the unique nature and history of the street trees in the twin mining towns.

The trees, which seem to be most noticed when they are pruned or removed, are often taken for granted.

But these trees are unique for several reasons, including:

- * The number of species planted. The 50 species include 43 species of eucalypts and seven other species. Of the eucalypts, 23 are Goldfields species, 15 are other WA species mainly from the adjacent Wheatbelt, and five are Eastern States species.

- * The trees are all adapted to the dry climate, which means lower maintenance and establishment costs and trees that fit into the surrounding landscape.

- * Very few towns, and even fewer with a history such as Kalgoorlie's, have such well planned, selected and managed amenity plantings.

The nature and uniqueness of the street trees was no accident, but a legacy of hard work and foresight by local foresters and gardeners.

Old records show that early in Kalgoorlie's history, efforts were made to plant trees.

An article in the "Kalgoorlie Miner", on July 23, 1898 said that 900 trees had been planted that year mainly kurrajong, tamarisk, pepper trees, Moreton Bay figs and sugar gums.

In the 1930s and 1940s, Forest Department records show tree species available or suitable for local conditions were limited.

Plantings were mainly sugar gums, pepper trees, kurrajong, jacaranda and some eucalypts.

Local foresters were frustrated in their efforts to plant more suitable species.

In 1945, the Officer in Charge of the Department at Kalgoorlie, George Brockway, proposed growing seeds of local eucalypts for dry area use, and an experimental nursery was established, which grew quickly to satisfy local and outside orders.

It was this nursery, subsequently managed by Phil Barrett, Bob Donovan and Bill Brennan, that led to the production and planting of suitable local trees throughout

the streets of Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

In 1949, the nursery grew 63 species, including 38 local eucalypts and two Eastern State's eucalypts; in 1951, 14,500 plants of 43 eucalypt species and 11 others were produced; in 1953, 18,000 trees of 43 species were produced.

The nursery was closed in 1954 and transferred to Dryandra near Narrogin.

Most of the street trees were planted from 1947 to 1970, firstly by the local foresters and then by Jim Wallace, Kalgoorlie Town Council's head gardener.

The foresight and hard work of these men have given the residents of Kalgoorlie and Boulder a beautiful town.

Today's residents have much to thank George Brockway for, for starting the nursery, and Jim Wallace and other foresters for continuing the planting.

Street tree planting continues today, using the early experience and keeping to local species that are well adapted and maintain the character of the town.

Vanessa likes team approach

CALM's new Planning Officer Vanessa Smith (who just made it in before the freeze on new appointments) likes working in the team atmosphere at Murdoch House.

Formerly the Environmental Officer with the City of Melville, Vanessa is responsible for everything environmental.

"At Melville, I was it," she said.

"I'm really looking forward to being part of the team here.

"It's good training to do it all on your own, but it's a good feeling now to have people I can relate to and learn from."

Vanessa, who will prepare the draft management plan for Yanchep National Park. Vanessa has been doing background work and is well-prepared to start the plan.

She said: "This way I am able to take my time meeting people here and I'm getting lots of ideas and information."

"I'm coming from a totally different system of doing management plans in terms of the process, the setup, how to get information."

Vanessa has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology and Environmental Science from Murdoch University.



Vanessa Smith

Burning update

A TWO-DAY refresher course in aerial prescribed burning reinforced the skills of CALM navigators and incendiary machine operators recently.

The course, a follow up to the Department's first formal training course in aerial prescribed burning last year, was held at Dwellingup for the Northern and Central regions and at Manjimup for the Southern and Central regions.

The first day of the course was theory, with participants reviewing aircraft and incendiary equipment, air navigation regulations, use of the navigation computer, preparing aerial burn flight plans, pre-planning operations, communications and administration requirements.

The second day was practical, with the participants running through the whole aerial burning operation.

Divided into air crews, each did a number of flight lines and learned beacon operation and the use of very pistols.

An extra benefit for the Dwellingup participants was a flight in a helicopter to expose them to the use of the craft in aerial burning.

Participants' comments on the course afterward showed organiser Gerard van Didden that the strongest part of the course was the practical work.

BUSY WEEK FOR WILDLIFE OFFICERS

Enforcing the Wildlife Conservation Act and Regulations and "policing" the plants and animals in his district are a large part of the CALM Wildlife Officer's duties.

So for the 30 Wildlife Officers attending their annual gathering at Como recently, the two days spent at the Police Academy Training Centre were especially valuable in learning law enforcement techniques from police trainers.

Metropolitan Wildlife Officer Matt Warnock said of the week-long seminar: "It's the one time of the year when you get to see all the wildlife officers in one place, to exchange ideas and get a current view of the situation throughout the State."

The Wildlife Officers also attended a one-day seminar with Professor Joseph Geraci, a Canadian expert on cetaceans.

The week included a visit to the Wildlife Research Centre at Woodvale and even sessions on photography and dealing with the media.

The extensive programme included talks by experts in the field of wildlife: reptile identification by Laurie Smith; the life cycle, habits and characteristics of the crocodile by Andrew Burbidge; how to identify bird species by Roger Jaensch; bird banding schemes and identifying migratory waders by Doug Watkins; flora identification by Steve Hopper; use of the WA Herbarium by Neville Marchant; and the effects of dieback on flora by Greg Keighery.

A memorable session was one given by Herpetologist Gayne Doyle, who spoke on the handling and keeping of snakes, and used live tiger snakes, dugites and pythons to illustrate.



DR NEVILLE MARCHANT, botanist with the Department of Agriculture, (left) shows Wildlife Officers Laurie Anderson (centre) and Rob Coughran his method of using a phone book to preserve wildflowers.