

# CALM News

Official newspaper of the Department of Conservation and Land Management

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## Lightening our load

# PROJECT OUTLINES POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS



PILED high with old mattresses, beds and other rubbish, CALM vehicles are loaded aboard an Army pontoon and shipped back to the mainland to deposit their cargo at the local tip.

# Army called in for operation clean-up

**LITTLE PENGUINS and the Army Reserve formed an unusual alliance at Metropolitan Region's Penguin Island early last month.**

At CALM's request, more than 30 reserve soldiers from the 13th Field Squadron in Victoria Park stormed the island one weekend to take part in a massive clean-up operation.

As a result, the tiny penguins will now have a bigger — and cleaner — breeding ground.

The clean-up, part of a \$65,000 operation including the demolition of holiday shacks and the removal of dangerous asbestos, is part of a programme to develop the island as a recreation site for day-trippers.

"In the past, the island's penguins and birds have had to compete with humans for space," said Leon Griffiths, Operations Officer for CALM's Metropolitan Region.

"Now when the penguins wander ashore at night to breed, they will have extra space previously occupied by the holiday shacks."

However, removal of the shacks created another problem: how to rid the island of rubbish accumulated over many years.

Leon, an Army Reserve Officer himself, decided to call on the troops.

Major Andy Lang, Officer Commanding of the 13th Field Squadron, was happy to help.

Treating the clean-up as a military training exercise, he despatched his soldiers and truckloads of equipment to the island.

The soldiers generously gave up

their weekend, working tirelessly for two days before returning to their civilian jobs on Monday.

Happy with a job well done, Leon paid tribute to the soldiers and the many CALM staff who took part in the operation.

"CALM's General Manager Roger Underwood and Director of National Parks Chris Haynes inspected the island after the clean-up and were most impressed with what they saw," said Leon.

"They acknowledged the efforts of Reserve Management assistants Glyn Hughes, Terry Bloomer, Ray Underwood, Colin Griffiths and Graeme Hobson, and Rangers Jim Maher, Rick Allison and Charlie Salomon, who all played an important role in this project.

"A gang from Wanneroo District also helped demolish the shacks."

WHEN it comes to volunteers, it is often a case of "the more the merrier".

And while CALM has no shortage of people willing to help out with a wide variety of tasks, it does need a more coordinated approach to recruiting and managing volunteers.

So says Ian Herford, Planning Officer in South Coast Region.

And Ian should know: he has just finished an intense six-month secondment to CALM's volunteer assistance project.

The project had three main aims: to formulate a specific policy for volunteer management, to outline strategies for implementing that policy, and to provide operational guidelines for the management of volunteer activities.

The key to success will be the appointment of a person to coordinate CALM's involvement with volunteers and to provide guidance to regions, districts and branches.

"The coordinator's role will be a vital one," says Ian.

"The community — either groups or individuals — has a tremendous desire to take part in useful and valuable activities.

"There is a growing volunteer movement in WA which is here to stay and although CALM has traditionally enjoyed a high level of support from these people, it is important that we now take a more systematic approach to volunteers."

For example, says Ian, there are two types of volunteers: those who work directly with CALM and those whose independent activities, such as naturalist clubs and wildflower societies, are in line with CALM's objectives.

These different types of volunteers will be recruited either formally (a limited number of people with special skills for a specific purpose), or informally (a large number of people with no special skills, such as whale rescue helpers).

"Because of this diversity, there is a need to coordinate volunteers — to recruit them and channel them into areas of interest," said Ian.

"Volunteers perform valuable work which, due to funding restraints, would not otherwise be done.

"At the same time, their involvement provides an opportunity to build community awareness, understanding and commitment to CALM's objectives."

Three pilot projects, designed as volunteer experiments, are being planned for Yanchep, Lane Poole Reserve and Penguin Island.

It is hoped the experience from these projects, together with that already gained in volunteer programmes in places like Albany, will point the way to more extensive involvement of volunteers in CALM activities throughout the State.



IAN HERFORD

## Signs of the times

IT'S a healthy sign: CALM's new sign manual has been produced and is now being distributed.

Many staff are pleased that the manual has finally hit their desks, but none more so than Steve Csaba and Rae Burrows.

Steve, from Recreation, Landscape and Community Education Branch, and Rae, who has returned from leave to join Metropolitan Region, had the unenviable task of compiling the manual.

They took a mountain of information and years of debate on sign design and combined it into a manageable text.

Writing, editing and re-writing the document was a complex and time-consuming task which had to be slotted in between their normal duties.

"We would like to thank all staff who helped develop the manual and for being patient when other priorities have delayed the project," Steve said.

The new manual covers the principles of good sign design and answers questions relating to how, why and when to erect signs.

"Flexibility is the main feature of the manual," says Steve.

"Future interaction between regional staff and the Recreation, Landscape and Community Education Branch will provide material for updates so the manual can keep pace with CALM's future operations."

Steve anticipates that sale of the manual to other authorities and organisations will help cover its production costs.

## CADETS' BRIDGE SMOOTHS WATERS

TEN Conservation and Land Management Department second year cadets have constructed a bridge over the Tone River at Chindalup Pool, east of Manjimup.

The work was part of their training programme and was carried out under the guidance of overseer Bob Radomiljac. Half the group worked on the bridge at any one time while the other half worked with Manjimup District staff.

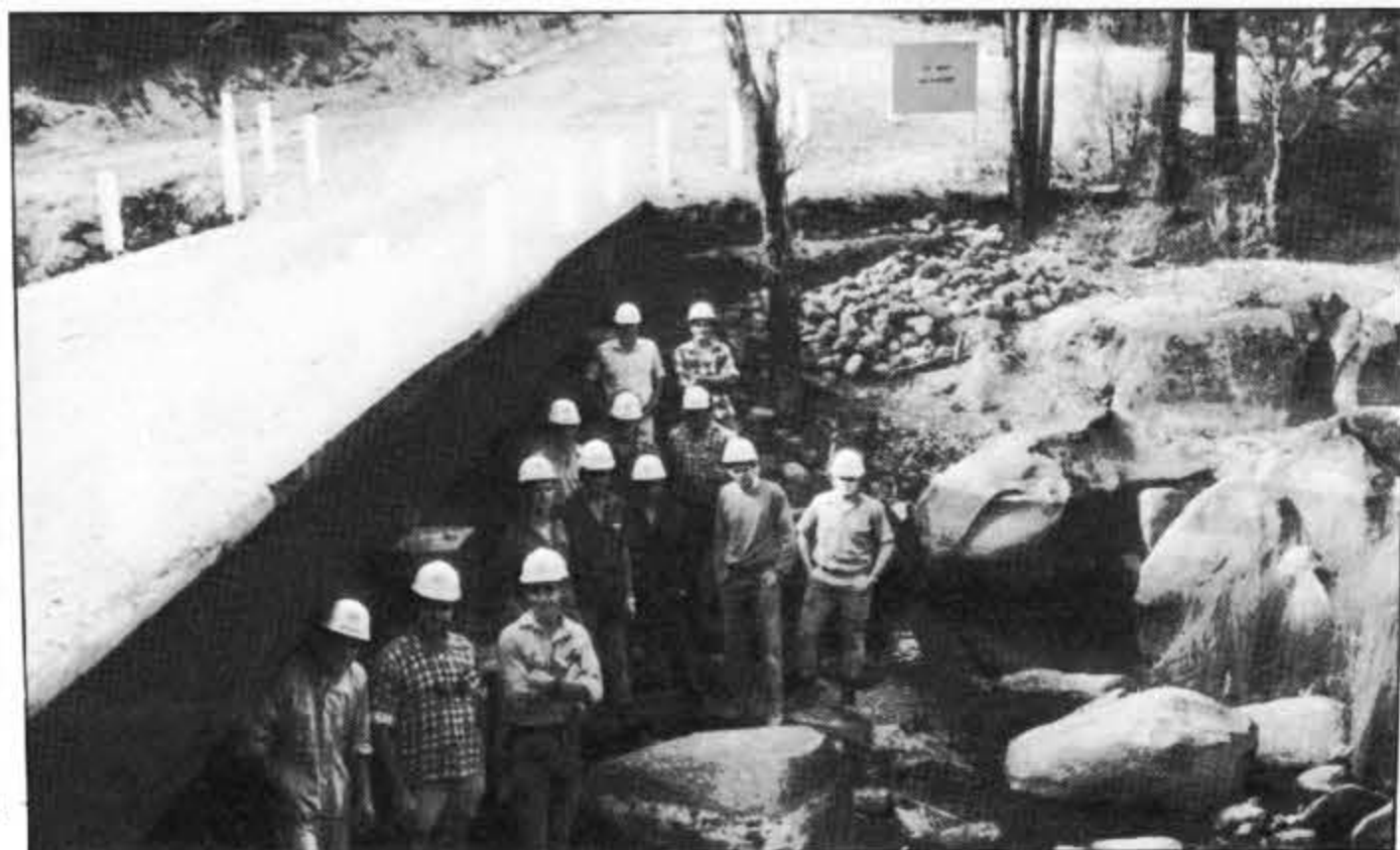
The bridge replaces a crossing, which could only be used in summer, and the footbridge that was destroyed during winter 1988.

It is constructed from marri timber and the original marri bed logs had been retained.

Training Officer Alan Byrne said Manjimup District personnel had contributed to the cadets' overall training programme mainly through the coordination of Senior Forester Rod Simmonds.

Rod said bridge building would be one of the many jobs the cadets would need to have a knowledge of future Field Officers or Rangers.

The field work at Manjimup is part of a two-year course in Conservation and Land Management.



CADETS and the newly completed bridge.



## FROM MY DESK

OVER recent weeks I have had the opportunity to speak to six different Shire Councils in the south-west, spent a weekend with the Planning Advisory Group for the Fitzgerald River National Park and attended a very successful "tree farming" field day at Bridgetown.

As usual, at each of these meetings I was extremely impressed and proud of the technical excellence that CALM staff exhibit no matter what area they are working in.

We have an unusual Department in that we have not only a high degree of technical expertise, but our expertise covers a huge range of fields.

But my overwhelming conclusion from these series of meetings was that no matter how professionally expert we are in our field, our success will depend on our ability to interact positively with members of the community.

The fact is we can have the most brilliant tree planting programme, the most innovative fire management scheme, or a spectacular national park management plan, but without community cooperation in the implementation of our projects all this expertise will be worth nought.

How to deal with people is not something that most of us have been trained to do, but it is the most important skill of all.

During my visits, I was heartened by the fact that we are learning to do this much better than in the past.

In particular, Sue Moore's efforts in marshalling the support of the local community in the development of the Fitzgerald River National Park management programme have been outstanding.

But frankly, we have a long way to go.

I am confident this year will see us making major advancements in developing better relationships with the community.

SYD SHEA  
Executive Director

CALM personnel get themselves into all sorts of situations.

They could be out fighting a bushfire one day and addressing a group of school students the next.

Then again, they could be out in a boat patrolling the islands off WA's coast or in the office planning the coming year's forestry or park operations.

While such diverse activities make work life interesting, they present a major challenge for CALM's uniform committee members.

Those people — drawn from different sections of the Department — have the unenviable task of coming

## Uniform takes shape

up with a uniform to suit all CALM personnel.

"The job is not as easy as it sounds," says committee chairperson Gil Field.

"All the committee members have consulted staff in their area and the list of conditions which the uniform must satisfy just keeps on growing.

"For example, it must suit male and female staff; it must suit wet, hot, humid, cold and windy conditions; it must suit marine conditions; and it must be safe, comfortable and durable.

"And that's just the tip of the iceberg: for example, we also need to provide maternity wear.

"Like I said, it's not an easy job."

Once the design brief is finalised, the committee will hire a designer to start work on the uniform.

The final designs will be reviewed by CALM staff, who can submit comments via the uniform committee members.

"By preparing the design

brief and finalising design in consultation with staff, we hope to satisfy most people while at the same time, develop a uniform which will be functional and which will convey the right image for CALM," Gil said.

The one-uniform proposal has been on the drawing board for some time.

The Policy Directorate has favoured the idea since CALM's inception, when the different uniforms of wildlife officers, forestry

officers and park rangers were inherited.

A single uniform would, it argues, minimise public confusion and maximise a sense of shared identity and comradeship among CALM staff.

Any comments on the uniform proposal should be directed to committee members Roger Banks (Nannup), Bob Cooper (Human Resources Branch), Judith Harvey (Woodvale), David Lamont (Serpentine National Park), Alan Lush (Manjimup), Dave Mell (Wildlife Protection), Tammie Reid (Manjimup), Jill Southgate (Mundaring), or Gerard van Didden (Fire Protection).

# FLORA CHALLENGE

**JIM ARMSTRONG, the new Curator of the Western Australian Herbarium, sees his new position as an exciting challenge.**

"While it was part of the Department of Agriculture, the Herbarium had a research role, but its main brief was to service farm enquiries," he said.

However, as part of CALM, Jim sees the Herbarium having a new and very important contribution to make to the management of WA's unique flora.

"The Herbarium is a fantastic resource to enable the floral heritage of this great State to be understood; you can't manage the land until you know what's out there," Jim said.

In his previous position as Assistant Director of the Australian National Botanical Garden Jim was in charge of research on rare and endangered flora.

"Research has a vital role to play in the management of endangered species in reserves," he said.

One of his major projects concerned the rarest plant in the world, the Phillip Island hibiscus, found on Phillip Island, 12km from Norfolk Island.

The species is confined to Phillip Island, and only 32 plants remain there, but tests revealed that they are genetically identical.

Even the hundred or so plants in cultivation were found to be genetically identical to those on the island.

The hibiscus was thought to be pollinated by the Norfolk Island Kaka, a bird that became extinct in 1851, and the plant's ability to reproduce itself asexually was the only reason it survived.

Jim is keen to encourage greater access to the Herbarium's vast botanical resource, and increase its public profile.



PETER KEPPEL and Len Talbot inspect an information panel at the Kattamorda Heritage Trail. Picture: JOHN GREEN

## Trail to the past

A new Heritage Trail in the Mundaring District has attracted much interest from older people around the area.

CALM staff in Mundaring have even been contacted by descendants of some of the people central to the trail's history.

The Kattamorda Heritage Trail is a 27km walktrail through forests and farmland of the Darling Range, from Mundaring Weir Road to Bickley Reservoir.

It was officially opened in February by Roger Underwood, CALM's General Manager.

Part of a statewide network of Heritage Trails, it passes through historically significant sites related to the timber and tourist industries, and the Goldfields' water scheme.

The area is also rich in natural history.

A brochure which outlines the area's history, has also been produced. It was written by Mundaring Project Officer Len Talbot with help from Gil Field and John Goodlad.

Len Talbot said that the trail would be well-used.

## STAFF NEWS

These staff joined the Department — Irene McPharlin, Officer, Walpole; Janet Gardner, Technical Officer, Woodvale; Sue Sylvester, Research Officer, Manjimup; Roman Rokita, Forest Ranger (Tech), Communications, Como; Phillip Poole, Project Leader, Land Information, Como; Mark Pittavino, District Manager (Bungle Bungle), Kununurra; Doug Myers, District Manager, Exmouth; Alan Grosse, District Manager, Broome; Terry Jones, Marketing Liaison Officer, Timber Production, Como.

### Promotions

Theresa Hughes to Computer Systems Officer, Como; Larry Nicholl (from Building Management Authority) to Financial Systems Officer, Como; Dave Marshall to Computer Systems Officer with Crown Law Department; Rod Clifton to Reserves Officer, Pingelly; John Carter to Reserves Officer at Merredin; Garry Kravainis to Forester Grade 2 (Tech), Fire Protection, Bunbury; Michael Lyons to Technical Officer, Woodvale.

### Transfers

Martin Scantlebury, Forester to Harvey; Brendan Peet, Forest Ranger, Nannup; Dave Pearson, Research Scientist, Woodvale; Andrew Norris, Forest Ranger, Bunbury; Russell Gueho, District Wildlife Officer, Kununurra; Carol Dymond, ADFO, Pemberton; Dennis Hilder, District Manager, Narrogin; Ian Herford, Planning Officer, Albany; Andrew Hill, ADFO, Dwellingup; Gary Brennan, Research Scientist, Harvey; Larry Hantler, Forest Ranger, Jarrahdale; Paul Brennan, ADFO, Busselton.

### Retirements

Harry Russell, Forester, Kelmscott; has retired after 15 years of administrative work in the Northern Forest Region.

## Papers published

The following scientific and technical papers have recently been published:

Coates, D.J., D.E. Yen and P.M. Gaffey. Chromosome Variation in Taro, *Colocasia esculenta*: Implications for origin in the Pacific. *Cytologia* 53: 1988, 551-60.

Coates, D.J. Genetic Diversity and Population Genetic Structure in the Rare Chattering Grass Wattle, *Acacia anomala* Court. *Aust. J. Bot.* 1988, 273-86.

Jakupovic, J., A. Schuster, F. Bohlmann, R.M. King and N.S. Lander. Sesquiterpene Lactones from *Gnaphosia* Species. *Phytochemistry* 1988, 27, 10, 3181-5.

Keighery, G.K. A new species of *Samolus* (Primulaceae) from Western Australia. *Nord J. Bot.* 8: 329-30, Copenhagen issn 0107-055X.

Kenneally, K.F. (1988). *Grevillea donaldiana* (Proteaceae), a new plant species from the Kimberley Division of Western Australia. *WA Naturalist* 17, 5: 111-7.

Kenneally, K.F. (1988). Obituary: Ken Newbey (1936-88). *WA Naturalist* 17, 5: 127-8.

Forbes, S.J., K.F. Kenneally and J.M. Aldrick (1988). A botanical survey of Vansittart Bay and Napier Broome Bay, Northern Kimberley, Western Australia. *WA Naturalist* 17, 6-7: 129-200 (plus map).

Clarkson, J.R. and K.F. Kenneally (1988). The flora of Cape York and the Kimberley: A preliminary comparative

analysis. *Proceedings Ecol Soc Aust* 15: 259-66.

Lane, J.A.K., and A.J. McComb. Western Australian Wetlands. *The Conservation of Australian Wetlands* 6: 127-46.

Halse, S.A. and R.W. Rose. Variations in the basal body temperature of the common brushtail possum, (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) in Tasmania. *Mammalia* 52: 225-31.

Milewski, A.V. and G.J. Keighery. Vegetation and Flora — Edjudina-Menzies Study Area. Records of the Western Australian Museum. Supplement No 31. *The Biological Survey of the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia* Part 5 pp 11-37, 76-106.

Keighery, G.K. Breeding systems of the Western Australian flora III: Aizoaceae. *The Western Australian Naturalist* Vol 17 No. 5, October 1988 pp 121-125.

Siemon, G.R., K.J. White, A.B. Thomson. Sawmilling trial of agroforestry and conventionally grown radiata pine. *WURC Report No. 8* February 1989.

Burbidge, A.H. and L.J. Boscacci. A spring reconnaissance survey of the flora and fauna of the southern Beekeepers Reserve. *CALM Technical Report No. 22*, March 1989.

Challis, D.J. Survey of solid wood sizes used by the furniture industry in Western Australia. *WURC Report No. 9* March 1989.

*If you think life's tough, spare a thought for the forest workers of old. When a bushfire broke out, they had to ride to the scene on horseback and, on arrival, use a tomahawk (with which each man was equipped) to cut a sapling handle for the fire-rake head — the only other piece of firefighting equipment supplied.*



LEE receives a shrub from Albany receptionist Marian Hickson. Picture: JOHN WATSON.

**WHEATBELT** Regional Manager Ken Wallace has been awarded an \$18,000 grant to study environmental change to Wheatbelt wetlands. "The wetlands of southwestern Australia have changed dramatically in the last 150 years," said Ken. "However, evidence of that change is very poor-

## WETLANDS STUDY

ly documented, and most of the information can only be obtained orally. "Unless it is recovered now it will be lost forever." For example, Ken has interviewed Neville Beeck, who worked for

the former WA Wildlife Authority. "Neville remembers Lake Ewlyamartup, now a salt lake with patches of gaunt, grey dead stem, when it was filled with fresh water and large paperbarks grew

throughout," said Ken. "In the mid-1930s the lake provided nesting habitat for the musk duck which requires relatively fresh water for breeding."

The grant was made by the WA Heritage Committee under its National Estate Programme.

## LEE'S GOING INTO PRINT

**WILLIAM Bay National Park's Ranger-in-Charge Lee Rogers is going into print.**

That's not to say he plans to tell all about his life in a book — rather, that he's resigned from CALM to become a printer.

Lee worked at Yanchep and Walpole before becoming William Bay's first resident ranger in 1981.

He and wife Jeannie have established a magnificent garden at their new home adjacent to the national park.

Albany regional staff gave the couple some shrubs for their garden as a farewell gift.



# SANDALWOOD ATTRACTS WA VISITORS

FOR centuries, forestry has been vitally important to the economy of Timor.

By CAROLYN THOMSON

The sandalwood tree has immense cultural significance; it is often called Timor's "tree of fate", since it has drawn people to Timor to harvest its aromatic timber for more than 1500 years.

So when two Indonesian foresters recently visited WA on a month-long study tour, a visit to the sandalwood industry in Kalgoorlie was high on their agenda.

Their visit was part of a three-year research project managed by CALM for the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

In Indonesia today, sandalwood is under such intense pressure that the tree's natural regeneration is unable to keep pace with its exploitation.

Should this continue, the tree could be wiped out in 15-20 years, and the Indonesian Government is keen to reverse this trend

through a sandalwood regeneration programme.

A population explosion has also led to severe land shortage and great pressure to make more land available for agriculture.

Under a system of shifting cultivation in parts of West Timor, an area of forest is cleared and used for crops for 3-5 years.

When the soil's fertility is exhausted the forest regenerates naturally and the area is not cleared for another 30 years.

However, the demand for land means that the interval between land clearing is now as short as seven years in some areas, and soil fertility has declined rapidly as a result and can only be used for a year.

Thus one of the major objectives of the ACIAR

project is to help select and grow a range of trees useful for fuel and fodder to help overcome this problem.

During their visit the two men inspected forestry operations and research at Wanneroo, CALM's Narrogin and Broome tree nurseries and seed handling at the Como seed store.

One of them, Udi Tiyastoto, also spent some time at the WA Government Chemistry Centre learning sandalwood extraction and analysis techniques.

Both foresters spent some time improving their computer skills; ACIAR has provided the Timor forest research station with computer software to improve its efficiency and research capability.

CALM's Dr Frank McKinnell and Peter White visit Timor several times a year as part of the project.



Harisetiono and Udi Tiyastoto, from Kupang in West Timor, get some tips on statistical analysis from CALM's Dave Ward.

# Legacy from Cup washout

THERE'S an old adage that says "when it rains, it pours".

Then, of course, there is Murphy's Law: "If something can go wrong, it will."

And, after the washed out King's Cup rowing event at Wellington Dam early this month, staff at CALM's Bunbury and Colliie offices wish they had never heard either.

They are not alone. Their sentiments are echoed by hundreds of disappointed rowers and rowing officials — not to mention representatives from the many

government and non-government organisations who helped develop the site for the event.

Months of careful planning and organising were literally washed away when the rain began bucketing down midway through the Australian Rowing Championships — a five-day programme of events culminating in the prestigious King's Cup race.

Races had to be cancelled when waves on the dam

rose to a height suitable for a surfing contest.

But the news is not all bad, says CALM's Neil Taylor, Parks and Reserves Officer for Central Forest Region.

He says the site development for the rowing event has heralded the birth of a new recreation playground, which may eventually extend into the surrounding areas and Lower Colliie Valley.

"It was also a remarkable cooperative effort from the local community, shire and many government and non-government organisations," he said.

"The Ministry for Sport and Recreation spent more than \$400,000 developing the site and this was complemented by donations totalling about \$100,000.

"Enormous contributions were made by CALM, the South-West Development Authority, the WA Water Authority, the Colliie Shire Council, the rowing association and many individuals.

"Special credit should go to the Ministry of Sport and Recreation's Senior Regional Officer Jeff Toy, and Glyn Yates from CALM's Colliie office, whose personal efforts ensured the site was ready in time."

The site development included providing one permanent and five temporary carparks to accommodate up to 3000 cars; building an ablution block with hot showers able to cater for disabled people; establishing lawn with underground reticulation; providing power, water, telephone and on-site information facilities; extensive landscaping; and spreading 3000 square metres of white sand at the dam edge to form a "beach".



# Libby's heritage book a jewel

WHEN Libby Sandiford, a botanist and keen bushwalker, was offered the opportunity to write a comprehensive guide to the South Coast's heritage trails she naturally jumped at the chance.

"Rugged Mountains, Jewelled Sea" was the result of her efforts.

"Rugged Mountains, Jewelled Sea" is more than a heritage trail guide," said Terry Passmore, the Region's Parks and Reserves Officer.

"It highlights the thoughts of many pioneers and is rich with anecdotes of the past."

Libby was employed to research the history and development of the region's national parks.

She undertook extensive field work and research, conducted many interviews throughout the region, and delved into the records of the Battye Library in Perth.

Libby also designed six heritage trail pamphlets, and illustrated them with delicate line drawings of the region's flora.

The idea of a regional trail network and guide book was conceived by South Coast Regional Manager, John Watson, in 1985.

He is delighted that all the research and hard work has paid off with the opening of nine trails and the printing of the new guidebook.

The book is sold for only \$6.95 from all CALM outlets and is selling particularly

well in Albany and Esperance. The pamphlets are obtained on site.

Although Libby has now finished her contract with CALM and is enjoying a well-earned holiday in Victoria, Two People's Bay Nature Reserve and most national parks in the South Coast Region will benefit from the comprehensive historical dossier she compiled on them.



LIBBY SANDIFORD perusing 'Rugged Mountains, Jewelled Sea'. Picture courtesy of ALBANY ADVERTISER.

# REGISTER OF AUTHORS

HELP! Are you an author? Do you publish scientific or technical articles, or have you ever done so?

If the answer is "yes", then Jeanette Gilmour at Woodvale wants to hear from you.

Jeanette is compiling a

register of scientific and technical papers and articles published, both internally and externally, by CALM staff.

To keep the register current, she needs to be informed when these are published.

A list of these publica-

tions will appear periodically in CALM news.

At the same time, authors are asked to prepare a synopsis of their paper suitable for non-specialists and send it to Marianne Lewis at Como Research.

Authors should also ensure that a copy of the

reprint, with full reference details, is sent to Jeanette and Marianne and that three reprints are sent to the library.

Your support and cooperation with this request will ensure your work receives the credit it deserves.

# Training schemes in NW

CALM had a busy training schedule in the Kimberley last year.

Debbie Fairhead and Michelle Tickner completed office traineeships under the Training for Aboriginals and Office Traineeships schemes respectively.

Michelle is now employed in the private sec-

tor while Debbie is still with CALM.

Six trainee rangers for Purnululu Bungle National Park are in the second phase of their training after spending most of last year on work experience and formal training programmes.

These men all have traditional affiliations with the Purnululu area and

hope to eventually work for CALM in the area.

Community ranger training schemes are also operating at Kalumburu and on the Dampier Peninsula.

Training for these groups is largely organised by community staff and several sessions have been run by CALM regional staff.

VAL STOREY



THE Kimberley trainees (from left): Gordon Carrington, Vincent Edwards, David Drill, Neil McGinty, Paul Butters, Alex Rogers, Michelle Tickner and (front) Debbie Fairhead.

Move over Dr Doolittle — there's a Perth woman who can talk to the birds. She rang CALM Wildlife Officers to tell them she was able to translate bird calls into English — and then gave them a lesson over the phone.

There's a pair of elderly Perth women who don't enjoy the wild life — or should we say 'wildlife'. They called CALM's Wildlife Officers in a panic when their neighbour's pet python went missing. The slippery customer still hasn't been found.



## Having a whale of a time!

By CAROLYN THOMSON

### Should children be allowed to participate in whale rescues?

At the dolphin stranding at Augusta on the Australia Day long weekend, CALM's Peter Lambert and Greg Pobar noticed a young girl in a wheelchair among hordes of people on the bank of the safe holding area at Colour Patch.

On the spur of the moment, they carried her into the water so that she could touch one of the dolphins. The 10 or 11-year-old was thrilled. Touching a stranded whale or dol-

phin could influence a child for the rest of his or her life.

However, children and the heavy machinery that is often used in these rescues just don't mix.

Exposure to the elements can also be quite severe. And whales and dolphins can be dangerous at times.

The question is, how does CALM tread the fine line between child safety and the obvious benefits of having children involved in such operations?

"There is a definite role for children of 12 years and over in a whale rescue," said David Mell, Chief Wildlife Officer.

"But it must be in a safe and controlled area, they must have a wet-suit and be able to swim and they

must be under the watchful eyes of adults.

"CALM is keen to have children involved in maintaining animals in safe holding areas.

"In this situation it will be possible to have one or two adults responsible for child supervision."

Childcare facilities for the younger children are very important, to keep them safe and well supervised while their parents are out with the whales.

Westwhales, a group formed to respond to strandings of whales and other marine mammals, has appointed a committee member to draw up childcare contingency plans for rescues.

# FITZGERALD VISIT

An official party visited the Fitzgerald River National Park in the South Coast Region last month.

The group comprised members of the NPNCA, CALM's Policy Directorate, the FRNP Advisory Committee, several CALM branch officers, local park rangers and South Coast regional staff.

The visit aimed to give the participants a first-hand look at various proposals made in the park's draft management plan and enable them to hear about some of the plan's key issues.

They also met members of the Fitzgerald River National Park Advisory Committee and the Fitzgerald River National Park Association, and visited Twerup Field Studies Centre.

The participants were treated to a one-hour flight over the park before visiting various sites in the park's western section and staying overnight at Twerup.

The next morning, most people tackled the Hill Walk before breakfast.

The party then visited Fitzgerald Inlet and Quoin Head before returning to Perth.

The visit, planned and coordinated by Sue Moore (plan coordinator) and Dave Hampton (NPNCA scribe), was very successful. — JOHN WATSON



CALM's Wayne Schmidt chats to NPNCA member Marion Blackwell.

# FIRE CLUES FOUND IN OLD PHOTOS

By NEIL BURROWS

THE discovery of aerial photos from the 1940s may provide the key to reversing the decline of native mammals from the arid interior of WA.

Changes in the fire regime since Aboriginals left their nomadic lifestyle and moved into urban areas is believed to have contributed to the decline and, in some cases, extinction of these animals.

Aboriginals used fire for many reasons.

The diversity of vegetation that resulted from their mosaic system of burning provided favourable animal habitat and stopped large, devastating bushfires from developing.

However, detailed information about the size and frequency of the fires was scanty.

Then, aerial photos of the deserts taken in the 1940s, when there were still small Aboriginal groups living a traditional lifestyle, were found.

Fire scars on the photos show burning was carried out by Aboriginals in a number of desert areas, such as Mt Madley and Lake McKay.

Straight edges at the base of fires show where people dragged a fire stick to torch the flammable spinifex on the sand dunes.

A computerised digitising system allows research scientists to measure the distribution, size and perimeter of burnt patches.

The age of fire scars can be measured by tonal differences.

Over a 20-year period most of the landscape which could carry fire was burnt.

Most fires were less than 100ha, although a few burnt 950ha.

By studying these photos and using aerial burning, CALM will be able to implement the Aboriginal patch burning system in the desert.

Together with ecological and biological studies, CALM should be able to regenerate habitat and reintroduce selected animal species from isolated colonies.

## Tackling fire problem in north

A fire burning out of control is always frightening.

But what do you do when a fire burns for months and months, and affects 5.5 million hectares of the State's north?

That's what happened in the Kimberley last year and, what is more, fires of this magnitude aren't that uncommon in this region.

Both CALM and the Bushfires Board are working to rectify this situation.

CALM regularly prepares fire plans for its national parks and nature reserves, while the Bushfires Board is currently preparing a fire management plan for the entire Kimberley region.

It has embarked on a comprehensive education and awareness programme, which targets pastoralists, the travelling public, Aboriginal communities and other Kimberley residents.

An aerial burning programme, based on a system of strategic firebreaks, located around natural landforms such as rivers, or along roads, is also an important component of the Bushfire Board's fire management strategy in the Kimberley.

These firebreaks serve to protect pastoral lands and preservation areas from encroaching bushfires.

One of the firebreaks, in fact, protected the Prince Regent River Nature Reserve from last year's huge fire.

It burnt right up to the firebreak on the northern boundary.

However, the encroachment into the Kimberley's small, but unique, rainforest remnants is a real tragedy.

Fire will not usually burn in these lush moist areas, but in a big fire, a proportion of the vegetation around the edge will be lost.

# RARE FLORA RARE FIND

FOREST Ranger Steve Pickering recently stumbled upon a new rare flora population.

Steve, from Margaret River, found "Chamaelacium sp. (Busselton) G.J. Keighery 3655" — an attractive shrub with affinities to the Darwinias.

This species was declared Rare in September 1987.

A formal scientific description has not yet been published although a name has been decided on; hence the form of description used here.

The population location, 17km from the nearest previously known, widened the known range of occurrence of the species and, although the greatest distance between extremes increased only from 76 to 79km, the Herbarium regards the find as a good range extension.

— GRAHAM McCUTCHEON.

# Como venue for trainees

It's not every day that CALM's trainee park rangers can get together.

Scattered throughout the State, they are usually separated by hundreds of kilometres — so when they do get the opportunity to meet, rest assured they will make the most of it.

That's exactly what they did when they converged on the Como headquarters in February for a one-day introductory training course.

During the day, the 14 trainees were addressed by General Manager Roger Underwood and Director of National Parks Chris Haynes.

Human Resources Branch manager Bob Cooper then spoke about career development, while Senior Training Officer Tony Brandis outlined the requirements of the traineeship course.

David Greenhill (Human Resources) and Tom Wood (Safety) also addressed the group.

Later in the day, trainees Anne Greig and Mark True conducted a session called "Speaking from Experience", relating their experiences in the first six months on the job.



CALM's trainee park rangers came from the far-flung corners of the State to attend the training session.

# GREAT TREK IS ON

THE great track trek is on! Bushwalking fanatics will set off from Kalamunda on September 16 for a 31-day walk along the entire 650km Bibbulmun Track.

CALM is helping to organise the trek to celebrate the track's 10th anniversary.

Recreation Projects Officer Drew Griffiths said hundreds of walkers are likely to be involved in the trek.

"We anticipate that we will have a core group of about 40 people who will walk the entire track," said Drew.

"They will be joined along the

way by people who just want to walk for a day or a couple of days."

But, excited as he is about the project, Drew said it presents something of a logistical nightmare.

"It has the potential to be a great public relations exercise for CALM and I will be seeking support from regional and district offices to make sure it goes ahead," he said.

"We want to get local communities along the way involved in this project and that means liaising with shires, schools and community groups.

"Ideally, we would like shires to provide overnight shelter or a camping ground while the CWA, for example, may prepare a hot meal for the walkers as a fund-raising exercise."

Drew also plans to hold a pre-walk weekend camp to ensure the participants have the right equipment and know how to use it.

While there are many small details still to be finalised, Drew welcomes enquiries from any CALM personnel who may be able to help organise the great track trek of 1989. He can be contacted on 367 0286.

