

NEW PLANT SPECIES

by Vicki Hamley

Angora goats and a blue-tongued skink led to the discovery of an undescribed plant species in the wheatbelt recently.

The Herbarium's Ray Cranfield and Phil Spencer carried out a rare flora survey north east of Merredin last year.

While searching granite rock pools for the declared rare species *Myriophyllum petraeum*, they were surprised by two angora goats with kids.

"We scooted around the rocks to get a closer look at the goats," Ray said "and instead came across a blue-tongued skink drinking from a deep rock pool.

"Floating on the pool was an unfamiliar species of *Myriophyllum*."

On their return to Perth, the pair sent specimens of the plant to *Myriophyllum* expert Dr Tony Orchard at the Tasmanian Herbarium.

Tony declared it a new species! He said the plant is closely related to *Myriophyllum petraeum*, but differs in a range of characters including fruit shape and size, number of stamen and leaf shape.

Ray's plant collection has now been designated as the species type on which Tony will base the scientific description.

Field days for farmers

A series of field days on CALM's pine sharefarming and bluegum establishment projects were recently organised by South Coast Region staff.

Although only a small number of farmers attended, the interest was high and several additional properties are likely to be considered for tree establishment as a direct result.

Thanks are extended to John O'Dea (*Manypeaks area*), David Treeby (*east of Porongurup*) and Heytesbury Holdings (*Rocky Gully*), to Terry Maher and Barry Jordan, CALM Albany office and liaison officer Ross Young.

- John Watson