



Collie forester Brad Barton lifts the lid on trapping secret - peanut butter.
Photo by Tanya Maxted

Collie's Krafty treat

PEANUT butter is the latest device in CALM's program to boost numbers of endangered species in Collie State forests.

Kraft Foods Ltd recently donated 20 kilos of the smooth sandwich paste to the department. The paste is mixed with oats and sardines and used in traps to attract animals such as the woylie (brush-tailed bettong), quenda (southern brown bandicoot), and the chuditch (western quoll, or native cat) which have declined in the wild due to the fox, and to the clearing of bushland for agriculture.

CALM staff trap the animals to determine

by
Tanya Maxted

their numbers in a given area, before, during, and after fox control. The animals are tagged and have their weight recorded before being released.

"We've seen a dramatic increase in the number of woylies since we began the program 15 months ago," said reserves officer Rob Brazell.

Rob and fellow Collie forester Brad Barton coordinate the program and have just secured \$26 000 from CALM's Operation Foxglove fox control program to

continue it over the next two years. Operation Foxglove was unveiled in CALM's Draft Forest Management Strategy, launched recently, and aims to see 20 per cent of the forest fox-free in 10 years' time.

Rob and Brad are presently baiting about 3000 ha in the Batalling forest block in Collie.

The pair have begun to survey three new areas in State forest to determine native animal populations, and assess the need for fox control. Other areas will be added as the need occurs.

"We started trapping to see if woylies that were reintroduced from the Perup State Forest

near Manjimup several years ago were still here," Rob said.

"They were, as were lots of chuditch - which was encouraging.

"Then, as we began controlling foxes, the numbers of woylies increased, and they have continued to do so.

"It's hoped that the chuditch and bandicoot show a similar response."

Brad said it was hoped that if other endangered species such as numbats, tammars and western ringtail possums - animals that no longer exist in the Collie State forests - increased in other areas to a point where their young were

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unable to survive because of a scarcity of food, individuals could be translocated to areas where foxes had been controlled.

Rob and Brad have

also begun surveying areas once known to support the quokka, to see whether or not any remain, and if there is enough suitable habitat to reintroduce them.

