



Geoffrey Mangolamara
Photo by Kevin Kenneally

Death of a statesman

STAFF of CALM Research Division and the Kimberley Regional office were saddened to hear of the all too early death, at 55 years, of Geoffrey Mangolamara of the Kalumburu Aboriginal Community.

Geoffrey was a much admired elder statesman and member of the Wunambal tribe whose traditional country took in much of the north-west Kimberley.

His intricate knowledge of the country was utilised by CALM's regional staff in locating crocodile nesting areas and assisting in other operational and wildlife projects.

During the Kimberley rainforest expeditions from 1987 to 1989,

by
Kevin Kenneally

Geoffrey was responsible for liaison between CALM and the local Aboriginal communities. During this period Geoffrey endeared himself to all who worked with him.

His fine sense of humour and willingness to bridge the cultural gap provided a rare opportunity for exchange of information about rainforests and their fauna and flora between a person with a wealth of local, traditional knowledge and scientists conducting research into rainforest composition and dynamics.

This cooperative

effort, with Geoffrey as the senior author, resulted in the chapter "Wunambal words for rainforest and other Kimberley plants and animals" published in the Kimberley Rainforests book last year.

Geoffrey was immensely proud of his culture and welcomed the opportunity to contribute to CALM's wildlife projects and the rainforest survey.

It is fitting that his rainforest chapter will serve as a memorial to a fine field companion who will be sadly missed.

CALM thanks the family of the late Geoffrey Mangolamara and the Kalumburu Aboriginal Community for granting permission to print this tribute and photo of Geoffrey.

