

# Mammal conservation course a first for CALM

by Keith Morris  
and Peter Moore

CALM has run its first accredited mammal conservation course for District staff.

The course was run at the Maxon Farm Field Centre, near the Batalling Forest block, east of Collie.

Course coordinators John Skillen, Keith Morris, Kim Williams, Rob Brazell and Peter Moore aimed at putting together a course that taught CALM staff the skills required to prepare and implement a district fauna management plan.

To pass the course, a district fauna management plan will have to be produced within 12 months.

Roger Underwood opened the course and outlined to the participants the need for such a course and emphasised the important role that District staff have in fauna conservation programs.

Lectures by CALM staff, the Agricultural Protection Board and WA Museum staff, combined with field demonstrations, showed the participants how to plan and carry out fauna surveys.

The course covered trapping and spotlighting

techniques, mammal handling and identification, and data recording and analysis.

Applied fauna management techniques, such as fox baiting, radio-tracking and the role of reintroduction programs, were demonstrated and discussed.

Legislative aspects of wildlife conservation were also covered.

The course was targeted at mammal conservation because it is this group, in particular the medium-sized mammals, that have declined most since European settlement and are in the most need of assistance.

However, some of the

skills learnt are also applicable to wider fauna surveys.

The forests are now the last refuge for several species of mammal so it was thought appropriate to invite forest district staff to the course in the first instance.

The course was considered to be a success by both organisers and participants and will be repeated later this year.

Interest in the course has been shown by CALM staff outside the forest districts and by other agencies such as the Agricultural Protection Board and Alcoa of Australia.