



Above: A mardo (left) and chuditch (right) are just two of the species commonly caught at Batalling State forest since a successful fox control program by Collie District. Photos by Carolyn Thomson.

Right: Brent Johnson measures a juvenile bungarra. Photo by Jenny Daniels.

Partnership a boost for forest animals

STAFF from Collie District and researchers from Woodvale are jointly investigating the impact of prescribed burning on vertebrates in the jarrah forest near Collie.

by Brent Johnson

assistance with fire ecology research and a joint project began in November 1992.

The project began after a successful fox baiting program by district staff in forest blocks east of Collie.

The scientific data and findings will be used for planning and management within Collie District, and could be applied throughout similar areas of jarrah forest.

Research into this program by CALM researcher Keith Morris showed that native fauna increased dramatically.

From day one it has been a co-operative undertaking by the district and Science and Information Division.

As a result, Collie forest officers Rob Brazell and Brad Barton identified the need to study the effects of district operations on fauna and develop management plans for these and other areas.

At times in the past, research studies have been carried out with minimal liaison between local staff and researchers.

Principal research scientist Gordon Friend was approached for

This is not the case in Collie where initial reconnaissance, establishment

and subsequent sampling has involved personnel from both Woodvale and Collie.

Many students, graduates and other interested people have also participated in the study as volunteers.

Hands-on

The rostering of AWU workers and field officers to help researchers has given district staff the chance to get 'hands-on' experience and gain an understanding of the nature and importance of research on community ecology.

This rotation of staff has provided a valuable pool of expertise on a local level.

As well as benefiting this particular project, the co-operation has increased awareness about native animals and their habitat

requirements throughout the district.

The district is now planning a series of prescribed burns in the study area that fit in with both the district's management objectives and researchers' requirements.

Protection of all sites both before and after the burns is also catered for in this planning.

This district commitment to provide staff, logistical support and accommodation on nearby Maxon Farm has created an environment of teamwork and co-operation.

It is a good example of integration within a multi-disciplinary organisation such as CALM.

It is a case of recognising an important need and pooling resources to achieve a common goal.



Left: Principal research scientist Gordon Friend checks a trap, while volunteer Alison Sampey records data. Photo by Carolyn Thomson

Below left: Brent Johnson and Ross Sturgess from Collie District examine a bungarra during trapping in Batalling forest. Photo by Carolyn Thomson

Below right: Gordon Friend checks the eartag of a young brushtail possum. Photo by Carolyn Thomson

Right: Researcher Brent Johnson resets a trap while a volunteer records data and forest ranger Rob Brazell from Collie District weighs a brushtail possum. Photo by Deborah Banks courtesy of the Collie Mail



Red-tailed skink

