

# CALM NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1994



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## Action plans for Wheatbelt wetland ...

A RECOVERY plan of international conservation significance has been launched for the most important remaining freshwater lake system in Western Australia's Wheatbelt.

The plan, which focuses on Toolibin Lake east of Narrogin, is the first strategy for the conservation of an entire threatened community.

Department of Conservation and Land Management Executive Director Syd Shea said the 10-year plan, costing almost \$4.5 million, was the single most ambitious recovery initiative of the Department.

"Toolibin Lake is listed under the Ramsar Convention as a wetland of international importance," Dr Shea said.

"The recovery plan gives us a vital opportunity to work with farmers and landowners to protect the lake and surrounding agricultural land from the impact of salinity."

In launching the plan, Environment Minister Kevin Minson said Toolibin Lake's diversity of waterbirds was greater than at any other wetland in the South West and was one of the reasons for the lake's listing under the Ramsar Convention.

"Toolibin also is the last wetland in the South West with extensive sheoak and melaleuca woodlands across the lake floor," Mr Minson said.

"However, the area is in danger of becoming highly saline and all these values could be lost unless we take urgent action."

Toolibin is the first in a series of nine lakes and the only major lake in the chain not yet badly affected by salinity.

The recovery plan has been pre-



Toolibin Catchment Group chairman Keith Parnell (left) and group member Lyn Chadwick explain their enthusiasm for the recovery plan to CALM Wheatbelt Region Manager Ken Wallace and CALM Executive Director Syd Shea.

pared by a team including representatives from CALM, Toolibin catchment landowners, the Water Authority, the Department of Agriculture and the Australian Nature Conservation Agency.

The team is chaired by CALM's Wheatbelt region manager, Ken Wallace. It is supported by a technical advisory group with representatives

from CALM, the Department of Agriculture and the Water Authority.

The plan lists a range of measures to save the lake. These measures include:

- ◆ immediate groundwater pumping;
- ◆ draining surface water on the Toolibin flats to reduce waterlogging on neighbouring farm land and help protect them

- from salination;
  - ◆ action to improve natural flushing of the lake and protect it from saline run-off;
  - ◆ revegetation in the catchment; and
  - ◆ forming a recovery team and technical advisory group to implement the plan and monitor its progress.
- Dr Shea said landowners in the catchment were aware they needed to

be involved in the solutions for their areas and more catchment groups were being formed.

"We now have an important opportunity to develop long-term solutions based on our inventiveness and ability to work hard together, as communities do when faced by a crisis," he said.

"Effective group action at Toolibin will not only protect an important wetland, it will also create options for increasing farm productivity and will provide a case study for action elsewhere in Australia."

Land degradation and saline waterways are massive problems for farmers and other landowners. In 1988 alone, the value of farm production lost because of salinity was estimated at more than \$44 million.

It now is believed a further 15 per cent of productive land in the Wheatbelt will be lost unless remedial action is taken.

Mr Minson said the cost to the State of losing any more land would be enormous but the cost to conservation values could be even higher.

"The Wheatbelt is an area of megadiversity, and unchecked salinity could result in the loss of species," he said.

"One of the goals of the Toolibin Lake recovery plan is to show that it is possible to stabilise and even reverse damaging water table trends.

"It is vital that we succeed in this because Toolibin and many other nature reserves cannot be saved if the surrounding catchments turn saline."

Copies of the Toolibin Lake Recovery Plan are available from CALM's Wheatbelt Region office in Narrogin. Phone (098) 811 444

## ... and fire protection

CALM has significantly boosted its fire management system in preparation for what promises to be another long, dry fire season.

The Department has allocated \$343 000 to recruit up to 60 additional fire fighters for both fire suppression and fuel hazard reduction for the fire season.

CALM also is continuing its program of establishing and upgrading water points in the forest and building access roads to provide improved protection for karri and jarrah regeneration and for plantations.

This work follows a \$250 000 boost to the annual program in the southern forests earlier this year.

As well, the Depart-

ment has extensively upgraded its fire spotting tower network which stretches from north of Perth to Walpole on the South Coast.

These towers, coupled with rapid-response Eagle spotter aircraft equipped with modern satellite navigation technology, will significantly lessen the time from when fires are detected and suppression crews are mobilised.

CALM fire crews, with assistance from volunteer brigades, fought several big fires in October, a reflection of the drier than normal conditions at this time of year.

Environment Minister Kevin Minson, who visited the southern forests last month, said the new fire fighters would boost

what was already an elite fire fighting force and help expand CALM's prescribed burning operations as recommended earlier this year by the Lewis inquiry.

That inquiry investigated CALM's prescribed burning policies and practices and found the fuel hazard reduction program in forest areas had been running behind desired levels in recent year.

"Reducing the fuel that accumulates on the forest floor is critical to minimising the risk of fires, improving safety for fire fighting crews and improving the ability to mount direct attacks on wild-fires," Mr Minson said.

CALM Executive Director Syd Shea said towers were being re-

introduced into the Department's fire management system as they were more reliable and cost effective than having only aircraft continually circling the forest in the fire season.

The combination of towers and aircraft will provide the most reliable and cost-effective detection system for the fire-vulnerable areas of the south west.

The towers are dotted throughout CALM's three forest regions — Swan, Central and Southern.

In Swan Region, a tower in the Gngara pine plantations has been replaced by a new tower in Walyunga National Park. This tower will be coupled with existing towers at Pinjar and Wabbling  
*Continued on page 2*



CALMFire — CALM's new fire protection unit — hosted delegates to the Australian Fire Authorities Council Conference earlier this month. The unit's senior operations officer Terry Maher (right) and Mundaring District fire protection officer Bruce Telfer (left) are seen briefing a South Australian visitor on CALM's fire management strategies. (See 'Council confers on fire' page 8.)



Christmas approaches, so it is a good time for a bit of navel gazing.

As usual, this has been a year of considerable activity in CALM, but what has made it different from other years have been the major organisational changes that have occurred.

This year has seen the structural organisation of CALM change more than at any other time since its formation.

At the same time, we have moved to a new system of budgeting, and 'workplace reform' has been continually on the agenda.

As I have observed many times in this column, change is not very comfortable, but in today's world it is inevitable and the organisations and individuals who suffer most are those who don't recognise the inevitability of change.

If CALM had not responded positively to the call for public sector reform, we would have faced imposed change.

While we are obviously in a shaking-down period, I am very pleased with the response by the Department to the changes that have been brought about this past year.

I know we still have problems to sort out and I know that some people are still personally unhappy about some of these changes.

But it was absolutely essential that we ensure that our business operations were efficient and that there was total accountability of both inputs and outputs of money.

I am confident we have achieved our aim.

We are already seeing some of the benefits of our financial independence flowing through.

More than \$500 000 additional funds have been provided to help with our fire management program, and there has been another \$500 000 to improve our recreation facilities in the South West.

Conservation projects (see the Lake Toolibin project in this edition) have also received additional funding and by the time this goes to press there will be another major announcement of additional funding for our feral animal control program.

Despite the usual amount of criticism from certain sections of the community during the year, I am delighted with the multitude of achievements by CALM people throughout the State.

But I am also conscious that everybody in CALM has had to cope with the additional stress of reorganisation, new systems of budget management, public criticism, as well as putting in a huge amount of effort to achieve major improvements in conservation and land management throughout the State.

This year, I have been able to get out to see most people in the field (something that always restores my spirits) and I do appreciate the effort they have put in.

I hope next year will be less stressful, and I wish everybody and their families the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Dr Syd Shea, Executive Director

# Choppers cut costs

by Tammie Reid

THE use of helicopters in CALM's prescribed burning program is now fully operational after several years of testing and costing different systems.

Several helicopter burns are planned for Dwellingup and Jarrahdale forests.

One recent successful burn at Dwellingup was designed to remove flammable material following logging operations when leaf litter had built up to 20 tonnes a hectare.

Such heavy fuels on the ground makes it dangerous and difficult for people to walk through and light at prescribed distances as they go.

Matt Reynolds, who was the fire controller for this operation, explained that it was necessary to burn under mild weather conditions, when the remaining jarrah trees were much less likely to become damaged by a too-intense fire.

"The conditions we were looking for included a lead-up period of fine weather,

with low winds on the day," Matt said.

"The dry weather experienced during this year's late winter months provided one of the best seasons to get this combination of factors.

He said it was decided that the helicopter be used to light up this particular burn because:

- ◆ each of the burn jobs covered large areas of 1000 to 1600 hectares.
- ◆ the easy manoeuvring of the helicopter provided the flexibility to design different lighting patterns needed to ensure an effective and safe burn.
- ◆ it was a safer and quicker option than using people to physically light the area; the area covered by the helicopter in one day equates with the use of 60 ground crews carrying out the same task.
- ◆ cost-wise it was more economical than using the fixed-wing plane as the

helicopter was in the area completing other operations for CALM's burning programs. The ferry time was minimal, travelling from one job in Harvey to another in Dwellingup and then on to Jarrahdale the next day.

Matt said the system involved a jelly-petrol mix in a sophisticated dispenser called a helitorch, suspended under the helicopter.

"A gas flame system ignites the jelly drip as it's released," Matt said.

"This is electronically controlled by the navigator to allow different lighting intensities.

"For example, on a cooler day there might be a need to light in a more intense pattern to get the same coverage and flame height."

The helitorch has been used this winter to burn approximately 5000 hectares of logging debris and pine needle beds.

CALM plans to use the helitorch in other forests south of Perth for spring and autumn burning programs.



A helitorch suspended below the helicopter used in the prescribed burning program. Photo by Tammie Reid

# CS Council begins work

CALM staff are being asked to contribute ideas on ways the Department can improve customer service.

Collecting those ideas is one of the tasks set for CALM's Customer Service Council, recently created by the Corporate Executive.

"The Council's first job is to help the Department prepare a Customer Service Charter," said council chairman Ron Kawallilak.

"It will require good ideas from people throughout CALM."

Other members of CALM's Customer Service are Como Public Information project officer June Ellis, Shoalwater ranger-in-charge Terry Goodlich, Afforestation manager Gary Inions, sales and marketing manager Estelle de San Miguel, Tourism and Recreation Program project officer Sue Moore and Swan regional manager Alan Walker.

"The Customer Service Charter will inform people what service they can expect from CALM at all times," Ron said.

"It will also give staff a clear idea of the service to aim for and a yardstick against which to measure performance."

The State Government has requested that all public sector agencies provide, by January 30, 1995, information on how their customer service will be improved.

A draft of CALM's Charter will be available by that time and will contain a list of products and services offered by CALM, an identification of customers, a statement on service standards and an outline of suggestion and complaint handling procedures.

CALM staff with ideas for improved customer service should contact Sue Moore on (09) 364 0715 or fax (09) 364 3192.

Continued from page 1  
to provide complete coverage of the pine plantations north of Wanneroo.

Another new tower, at Bickley, provides excellent surveillance of the jarrah forest between Mundaring and Jarrahdale.

"These towers give line-of-sight coverage from the pines near Yanchep to Jarrahdale," Dr Shea said. "They also provide a panorama over the Swan coastal plain."

An existing tower at Mt Solus also will be staffed to cover the jarrah forest between Jarrahdale and Dwellingup.

In the Central forest region, Stewart tower, near Kirup in the Blackwood Valley, Mowen, east of Margaret River and Mt William, north east of Harvey have been upgraded. Work also is planned for Mungilup tower, near Collie and Carlotta, east of Nannup. Towers in the South-

ern region being upgraded are Diamond Tree near Manjimup, Mt Frankland near Walpole and Beard, east of Quinipin.

A public viewing platform is planned to be built under the lookout cabin on Diamond Tree as part of CALM's strategy to promote tourism in the southern forest region. Bicentennial Tree in Wren National Park and Pemberton will be opened as a climbing tree for the public.

CALM also has reorganised its fire protection into a new unit known as CALMFire.

The unit, comprising dedicated, trained fire staff and crews, will ensure CALM provides reliable, cost-effective and environmentally sound fire management for the 19 million hectares of land the Department is responsible for, as well as providing security for the many community assets adjoining CALM land.

## CALM Classified

THIS column is divided into sections dealing with 'for hire', 'for sale', 'surplus equipment', 'swap', or 'wanted'. If you have any equipment or requirement that you wish to advertise through this service, please send or fax typewritten details to:

The Editor,  
CALM NEWS,  
Corporate Relations Division

### QUOTES

Dwellingup Woodshed open for business. Competitive quotes for fabrication of information shelters and toilets. Picnic tables and signs our specialty. For quality work from a renewable resource, contact Steve Raper or John Hanel of the Dwellingup Woodshed Team on (09) 538 1078.

## LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS

Dear Sir/Madam,  
For your information, the following is the text of a letter I have sent to the CALM office in Kununurra:

My wife and I have just returned from a travelling holiday which included a visit to Purnululu National Park in July.

We were very im-

pressed with the area and consider the visit, which included a helicopter flight, to be a highlight of our trip.

On the day we arrived we noticed a sign saying that there were slides to be shown that evening.

Along with a good number of other people we attended and were very impressed with the presentation given by Ian Solomon.

Early in his talk he sought people's input into such things as the condition of the entrance road, and park roads, the amenities or lack of them, and the standard of walking tracks, signposting, etcetera.

No doubt the information gained by him assists all who manage the park.

More importantly, I believe, he gave us a feeling of being a part of the park and a sense of pride and 'ownership'. His slide presentation and talk was of exceptional quality.

Assisted by his wife, he made it interesting, informative and entertaining.

In 1980 and 1981 our family of five travelled extensively in Australia. One of the most memorable parts was our visit to Wittenoom National Park. (sic).

Back then we met Ian doing exactly the same thing with an equally impressive, but different presentation of slides and talk.

We believe he has been showing this kind of enthusiasm for his work on a regular basis for many years; this is a rare dedica-

tion. Please pass on our sincere thanks to Ian and his wife.

Yours sincerely  
Ross Noble  
MAFFRA, VICTORIA.

Dear Sir,

I have recently returned from holidays, part of which included a visit to Windjana Gorge National Park in your State.

Myself, wife and another couple camped in an area maintained by your organisation for visitors to the area.

I write to you to commend the attitude and personality of ranger Arvid who we had the good fortune to meet during our stay.

This man was naturally pleasant, obliging and most knowledgeable about the

area in which he worked.

His attention to his duties of maintaining cleanliness of the camping area was conscientious and diligent.

His nightly collection of fees by visiting campsites and chatting with visitors made payment a pleasure.

While this camping area did not have hot water, grassed areas or other facilities, it was one of the most pleasant that we stayed in during our 14 000 km of travel.

I attribute this and the general atmosphere of the area to the person of ranger Arvid.

Yours sincerely,  
P D Garrett  
Superintendent -  
South Australia Police  
Department.

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# National award for LIB's excellence

UNDERSTANDING the principle that the quality of information relates to the quality of data has helped CALM's Land Information Branch (LIB) win a prestigious national BHP Engineering Technology Award.

The LIB crew adhered to the principle when they developed the Tenure Information System - codenamed TENIS.

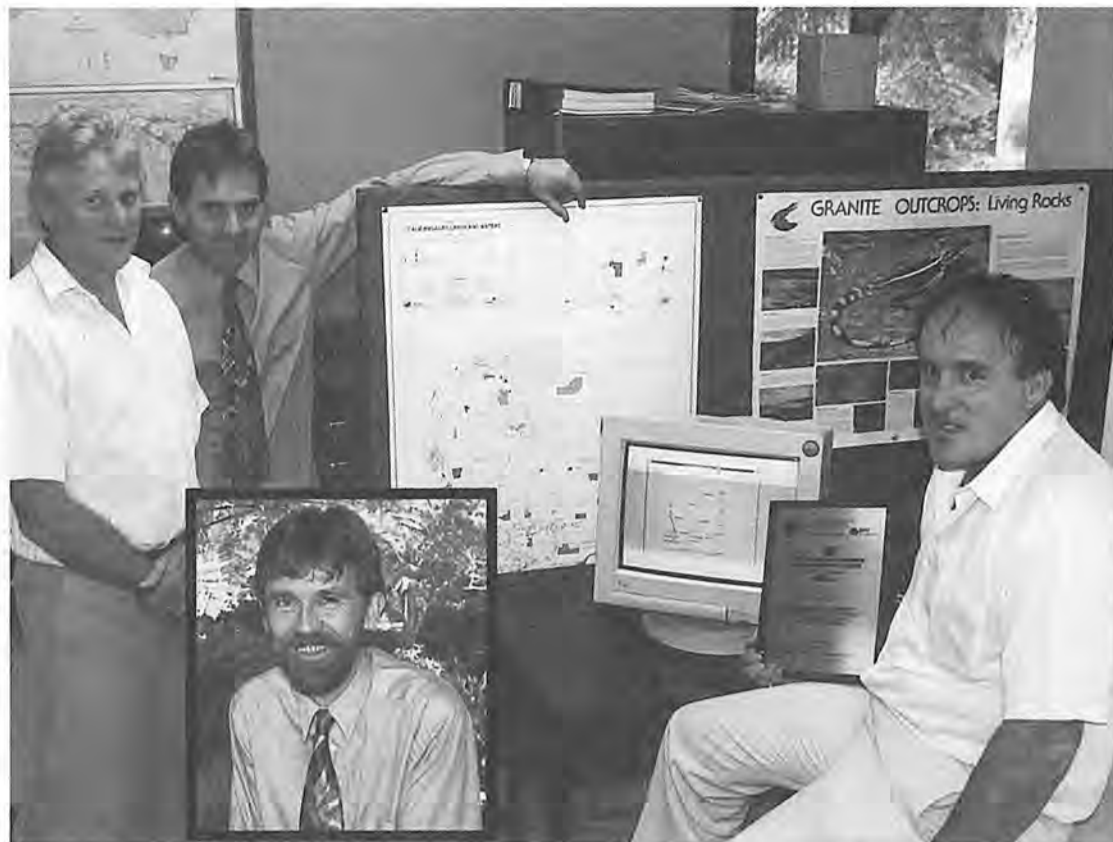
The system details information on tenure as it applies to the 20 million hectares CALM manages on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

LIB Manager Peter Bowen says TENIS is quite different from traditional computer systems in that it works under Windows.

Consequently, it has the same look and feel as other office personal computer programs such as MSWord, Excel, and Paintbrush.

"This means people who are familiar with Windows-type applications will feel at home with it, which is particularly important for people who will use the system only occasionally," Peter says.

With such a big estate, catering for a range of multiple uses, it is critical that the knowledge of the



Members of CALM's Land Information Branch team which worked on the new tenure information system were Graham Hoare, left, Bernie Nebel, Branch manager Peter Bowen and Mike Green (inset).

current state of tenure, land use and extent of these areas is available to help in making decisions on how these areas and resources are managed.

This is the prime role of TENIS.

The program's development involved the

equivalent of 10-people years spent collecting and checking information from LIB's own records as well as those held by other branches and organisations.

"This is where the old adage — garbage in, garbage out — comes in to

play," Peter says.

"We recognised that the task was not only big, but complex, too; so we wanted to be sure of the integrity and consistency of the information.

"After all, this data is critical to a multitude of land processes that involve

all tiers of government, industry and the public."

"A key to the success of the program is its 'user friendliness'.

"Most people who use computers are familiar with the point-and-click approach of Windows, so it was just a matter of in-

corporating it into the overall system," Peter says.

TENIS data resides on the Corporate Oracle database at CALM and access can be gained through CALM's network.

A stand-alone PC version also is available for offices that do not have the correct network access.

The award hasn't meant the end of the development of the system.

Although it covers lands and waters managed by CALM, and other Crown reserves, in time it will be extended to include proposed changes and additions to tenure as well as other lands of interest to CALM such as sharefarming leases.

The next major milestone is to incorporate graphics of these lands.

This is putting CALM at the forefront of this process. The prototype already has been demonstrated to the Executive Information Technology Committee.

The BHP Engineering Technology Awards are presented every two years in partnership with the Australian Institute of Cartographers and recognise innovation in the application and development of information systems.

## Contracts let for specialty timbers

WESTERN Australia's woodcrafts and furniture industry will have more secure access to specialty feature logs under a new series of long-term contracts with CALM.

The contracts give feature-wood users guarantee of supply for five years with the option of a four-year extension.

The new contract system provides a basis on which the fine woodcrafts industry can develop, confident it will have access to the timber it needs.

Environment Minister Kevin Minson said the system is part of the Government's 10-year Forest Management Plan which aims to add value to native timbers and to create employment opportunities, especially in regional areas.

A recent tender for 1500 tonnes of high and low-grade feature sawlogs and 100 tonnes of hardwood burls had attracted 47 bids.

Previously, much of the material had not been considered millable because of the size and shapes of the logs available.

These logs had been regarded as unprofitable because of the small volumes available, the low recovery rates and the widely spread marketplace.

The total quantity covered by the bids was 3800 tonnes of feature sawlogs and burls, more than double the amount available.

Prices offered were at a substantial premium over standard royalty rates. These premiums were up to \$65 a tonne for high-grade feature logs, \$11 for low-grade and \$125 a tonne for burls.

As a result of the open tender, 15 new contracts have been signed with buyers in Mandurah, Colliie, Nannup, Bridgetown, Manjimup and Perth.

Research by CALM over the past few years has resulted in some major breakthroughs in low-cost methods of seasoning and using small sawlogs.

These include solar-powered kilns that can dry timber for a fraction of the energy cost of conventional kilns that rely on continuous use of power.

Many of the successful tenderers have portable sawmills which are ideal for converting these logs for use as high-value feature items in furniture, joinery, turning, carving and other specialised uses.

The feature-grade timber came from integrated logging operations. The logs, mainly jarrah, blackbutt, sheoak, wandoo and banksia, have features such as curly grain, birdseye grain and forks.

# Prisoners' program beautifies Bibbulmun

ONE of Western Australia's biggest nature-based tourism attractions is being upgraded through an unusual mix of justice and conservation.

Prisoners from Ministry of Justice prisons, working with CALM, are undertaking much of the work to realign and lengthen the Bibbulmun Track.

The new track will be an 830-km walk trail between the Hills area on the outskirts of Perth and Albany on the south coast.

As well as realigning much of the track, the work involves installing campsites, sleeping shelters, toilets, picnic tables, barbecues, route markers and other facilities made in prison workshops.

Premier and Tourism Minister Richard Court, Environment Minister Kevin Minson and Attorney General Cheryl Edwards earlier this month inspected the first major redevelopment on the track, a remote walk-in campsite in the forest beyond Mundaring Weir.

Mr Court said the camp, called Waalegh — a

Nyoongar word for the wedge tail eagles that often are seen circling the skies above the forest — was the type of discrete development that would occur along the track as part of the State Government's initiative to foster greater international recognition of the walktrail.

"The Bibbulmun Track, with its upgrading, realignment and extension to Albany, is going to be one of the great long distance wilderness walks of the world," Mr Court said.

"When the work along the track is complete, the Bibbulmun will be an icon for the State's rapidly-growing nature-based tourism industry."

Mr Court said the Waalegh campsite heralded a new dimension in prisoner employment programs run by the Ministry of Justice.

The Ministry saw the project as an opportunity to employ prisoners in a meaningful community project which would enhance their self-esteem, work skills and personal development.

Over the past few

weeks, seven prisoners from Wooroloo Prison Farm and Bandyup Women's Prison have been working on the track to build the backpacker's campsite and 3.5 km of new trail.

The walk-in campsite includes an overnight shelter, toilet, water tank, fire place and picnic tables, and has spectacular views across the Helena Valley. The development blends in with the surrounding environment and will greatly enhance visitors' experience of the Bibbulmun.

Mr Court said the attitude of the prisoners involved in the project had been highly enthusiastic and there had been a noticeable increase in their confidence and self-esteem.

"It is an outstanding venture that has a significant role in the Ministry's prisoner work and development programs and will result in a much improved facility for the State and our tourism industry," he said.

The Bibbulmun Track project is being funded by the State Government through CALM, the Ministry of Justice and regional development commissions with private sector support from Alcoa of Australia.

Stage 1 of the project involves the section from Mundaring to the Blackwood River near Greenbushes and is due to be finished by September next year.

Stage 2 will see the extension to Albany completed by September, 1996.



Premier Richard Court (centre) and Environment Minister Kevin Minson with Bibbulmun Track project co-ordinator Jesse Brampton at the naming ceremony for the Waalegh campsite in the Helena Forest beyond Mundaring Weir.



Former forester Peter Hewitt (left) was a driving force behind the creation of the Bibbulmun Track in the 1970s. Peter was a guest at the ceremony to mark the naming of the Waalegh campsite. He is with CALM's Swan Region Manager Alan Walker and Kim Maisey of Alcoa of Australia which is supporting the project through the CALM-Alcoa Forest Enhancement Program

## A thank-you to you all

Brian and Judy Fitzgerald and family sincerely wish to thank Executive Director Dr Syd Shea and staff for the kind tributes - verbal, written and floral - sent to us after the passing of our son Craig, who was so special to us.

Brian, a former CALM administrative assistant at Kirup, retired in May this year.

# Agroforestry partnership

CALM is investing \$5 million over the next three years in a major agroforestry project in partnership with farmers on the sandplains north of Perth.

The project is part of a 10-year plan to establish 20 000 hectares of pines between Perth and Dandaragan and the potential development of a timber processing industry in the region.

CALM is funding the initial stages of the northern sandplains project, but it is expected the private sector would become the major investor.

Environment Minister Kevin Minson launched the project at a land conservation district field day in Gingin.

The sandplains pines initiative brings to 4500 hectares a year the area farmers are planting to trees under sharefarming arrangements with CALM. The Department has established a new business unit, Pine Sharefarms, to run

the venture.

The first year involves planting 1.5 million radiata and pinaster pine seedlings over 1000 ha next winter and the three-year goal is to plant 7.5 million seedlings over 5000 ha.

The seedlings will come from CALM's Plant Propagation Centre at Manjimup, where select strains have been developed in tree-breeding programs over the past 40 years.

About \$500 000 a year will be spent in the local region through employing contractors to plant and maintain the plantations.

The development of downstream processing facilities such as Wesfi's veneer and medium-density fibre board plants in Perth, and the current expansion of Wespine's sawmilling capacity at Dardanup, reflect the long-term confidence the timber industry has in the State's pinewood industry.

The expansion of the plantation estate and investment by the private

sector go hand in glove, and operations such as the medium-density fibre board plant have created an end-use for virtually every tree that comes from these plantations.

The pine processing sector will continue to expand as further supplies of timber from new plantations such as those planned for the northern sandplains pine project come on stream.

Landowners entering sharefarming agreements with CALM will share in the revenue and gain all the land care benefits resulting from tree planting integrated into the rural landscape.

CALM research has shown on-farm productivity can increase as much as 40 per cent through integrating trees with existing farming operations.

This is because the mixture of tall, deep-rooted trees, and shallow-rooted, annual legume-based pastures, makes better use of natural resources such as

water, nutrients, sunlight and carbon.

The plantations also create a more favourable local climate for plants and farm animals, and the pines also help lower water tables and combat the spread of salinity.

The pine plantations will be thinned twice before a final harvest after 30 years. The first thinning at seven to 12 years will provide woodfibre for the medium-density fibre board industry.

More mature trees harvested at the second thinning — around year 18 to 20 — will be used as high-value sawlogs and for industrial uses. The final harvest at around year 30 will yield sawlogs and peeler logs for veneer production.

This will create significant regional development and employment opportunities.

CALM has estimated about 100 000 ha between Perth and Dandaragan could be suitable for pine plantations.



Marine operations manager Peter Dans and marine park ranger Dave Burton erect a new sign on Carnac Island. Photo - Carolyn Thomson

## Clean up at Carnac

by Carolyn Thomson

MARINE operations staff from CALM's Hillarys office recently visited Carnac Island to put up new signs, pull down some unsightly barriers and clean up litter from the beach.

By the time they left the island it was spotless and the marine park vessel *Gandara* was loaded with old signs, timber and rubbish. This was unloaded at Fremantle and

taken to the tip.

Staff also checked on a sealion with an overgrown tooth and an eye that looked like it may have been damaged at some stage by contact with a boat.

"The tooth didn't appear to have caused any problems for the large old

bull. It looked fat and healthy so had obviously been feeding well," marine park ranger John Edwards said.

After all this activity there was still time to field check a dive site for a new book being prepared by CALM.

Peter Dans and Dave Burton snorkelled and mapped a good site around a rock to the north of the island.

## New look toilet-tree

by David Meehan

UNTIL recently, visitors to the Gloucester Tree recreation site had to face up to the thought of two long drops — one if they fell out of the tree and another when they visited the toilet.

Neither was at all likely — they just looked precarious to those without a head for heights or a sense of balance.

Now, new toilets have a reassuringly secure look about them, give a much-needed facelift to the site

and cater for the 250 000 people who visit each year.

The new toilets took about six months to complete and were built by CALM employees, with brick and plumbing work contracted to local tradesmen.

Recreation supervisor Jeff Daubney was in charge of the project with the help of forest worker Alan Sheppard and other

CALM Pemberton staff. The brick and timber structure was carefully designed to allow access for the disabled and to blend with the environment.

Particular attention was given to the type and colour of the building materials used, so as not to detract from the site's main feature — the Gloucester Tree.

Anyone wanting more information about the design and construction of the toilets should phone me at CALM Pemberton on (097) 761 207.

## Coalseam upgrade

VISITOR facilities and environmental protection works at the State's newest conservation park near Mingenew will be provided under a \$30 000 program being undertaken by CALM.

Under the program, CALM will provide interpretive information and toilets, upgrade picnic facilities, signs and visitor safety and undertake erosion and weed control measures at Coalseam Conservation Park.

The park, on the Irwin River 30 km north of Mingenew, covers 750 hectares and was gazetted on July 15 this year.

The area contains significant geological, environmental and recreation values and fossil deposits.

It also is of historical interest as the site of the first coal discovery in Western Australia in 1846.

The park is a popular local and tourist destination, especially in the wildflower season.

The spectacular breakaways and stunn wildflower displays attract more than 10 000 visitors to the area each year.

The reserve previously had been managed by the Shire of Mingenew, which had provided excellent visitor facilities.

CALM will work closely with the Shire to ensure protection of environmental values, and that the needs of visitors and the local community are met.

Mingenew Shire Clerk Maurice Battilana said the Shire welcomed the funding for the park.

"CALM already has been consulting closely with the Shire and we look forward to continued involvement in the management of the area," he said.



Denise Allan, manager of Pine Sharefarms, Gary Hartnett, Swan Region field manager for the Softwood Business Unit, and John Winchcombe, project officer with West Coast Pine Timberbelts were at the Gingin field day.

## No dull moments at District Day Margaret River

STAFF brave enough to hurl themselves backwards off a cliff at the South-West Capes District Day at Margaret River, voted the activity 'a great hit'.

Otherwise known as abseiling, its popularity was almost equalled by caving with parks and recreation officer Neil Taylor.

The abseiling took place at WI (Witchcliffe) 16, a collapsed cave north of Giant's Cave, and the caving with Neil was at Lake Cave.

Both activities followed a morning listening to interesting people like Brian Davies of Eagle Heritage, who spoke on raptors in the Cape Leeuwin to Cape Naturaliste area, Jane Reisset from Workcover speaking on worker com-

by Graeme Gardner

pensation, and CALM's health and fitness coordinator Linda Gilbert.

The District Day finished with a barbecue at Wharnclyffe, an old mill site where many a tall tale of abseiling abandon were told.

None was in a more tall tale telling mood than Anthony (Paddy) O'Neill who, thanks to expert guidance from Linda Gilbert, had overcome his vertigo and plunged into the abyss; but with his eyes closed at the time, he missed the passing scenery.

Thanks must go to district manager Roger Banks and Greg Voigt for organising a highly enjoyable District Day.



Rob Klok (standing left) and Greg Voigt pretending not to notice a hungry Glenn Willmott attacking Greg's plate of food. Photo by Graeme Gardner

# Ray's ready to ring in right recruits

THE job of union representative can be likened to that of a tightrope walker, and representing the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) is no exception.

CALM forest worker Ray Jarvis of Dwellingup district has represented the AWU for nearly 10 years and has witnessed massive changes in the work place.

Such changes include industrial reform, enterprise bargaining, award restructuring, consultative committees and public sector down-sizing.

Ray sees his task as representing his workmates, to protect their working conditions and interact with the managers and decision-makers of the Department.

"This means I'm often caught in the middle of the tightrope, between the old ways of doing things,

by Tammie Reid

and the way they have to be done today if CALM and our jobs are to survive," Ray says.

"Sometimes I find myself trying to pass on the new ways of thinking to the younger members of the crew who want to keep to the old ways - I'm one of the older blokes and here I am trying to teach the youngsters the new tricks!"

Ray sees the joint consultative committees at the districts as a good way to improve workplace conditions and resolve problems locally rather than let them grow into full-blown conflict on a wider scale.

"Plenty of good ideas are coming from these committees and we can learn a lot by sharing them between districts," he said

Ray says that a big problem with joint consultative committees seems to be the lack of time to follow up on all the things needing attention and fixing.

"We want to work towards improving morale and team work, and we want job security and recognition for the work we do," he said.

"The biggest challenge I see is working out a fair system within enterprise bargaining, how we can be more productive, save money and still retain our positions.

"I've been working in the forest for 28 years and there've been a lot of changes in this time.

"I like to think I've done a good job, but now I'd like to see someone else wanting to fill the Australian Workers' Union rep position - it's time for new blood."



Ray Jarvis puts up an AWU notice outside Dwellingup district store. Photo by Tammie Reid

## Four-wheel driving for fox-baiters finds favour

CALM research staff working in the jarrah rest on the fox-baiting program Operation Foxglove, must be self-reliant and equipped to work in isolated areas such as the more remote parts of the Pilbara.

Technical officers Kathy Himbeck, Frank Obbens and Cory Watts, along with national park ranger Kevin Lockyer and forest ranger Bruno Rikli recently learnt this when they attended an intensive, hands-on, four-wheel-drive training course run by CALM's accredited driving instructors Mark Humble and Alan Byrne of Dwellingup.

By the end of the course, the five had become confident enough to drive up greasy, muddy 15-degree slopes, not to mention wheel ruts and washouts along the rough fire-breaks in the Murray River pine plantation.

All three were confident about their ability to handle any situation in which they might find themselves during research work.

"The main lessons we learnt were to assess the situation before committing to it, and to ask ourselves three questions," Kathy said.

- ◆ Am I capable?
- ◆ Is the vehicle capable?
- ◆ and do I really need to go there?"

Senior training officer Alan Byrne said they concentrated on stallout procedures and cadence braking, and he



Kathy Himbeck takes a closer look at an obstacle pointed out by Mark Humble on a steep slope in the Murray Valley Pine Plantation. Photo by Tammie Reid

encouraged them to look at ways to change the circumstances if things looked tricky.

"By this I mean changing the weight ratios of the loads, changing the tyre pressures

or altering the centre of gravity by moving the load height or distribution," Alan said.

"They all did well in their five-day theory and driving basics course last March, so

from now on it's on-the-job training as they go about their work."

Story and photo by Tammie Reid

## The Monte Bellos - a mixed blessing

by Stephan Fritz

ABOUT two years ago, responsibility for the administration of the Monte Bello Islands was transferred from the Commonwealth to the Western Australian Government.

The island group is managed by CALM as a conservation park and consists of more than a hundred islands ranging in size from isolated rock stacks to 1000 hectares.

Conservation and recreation values of the park are high. However, recreation is focused on marine activities including diving and fishing (outside the park) and is pursued mainly by a small number of 'cruising yachties' and Pilbara-based charter boat clients.

The islands include important rookeries for sea turtles, shearwaters and various other seabirds.

A visit to the 'Montes' truly is a memorable experience and the potential for expanding nature-based tourism is considerable.

As part of the Commonwealth-State agreement for State management of the Montes, CALM has undertaken a biological survey of marine areas to determine their suitability for some form of marine reservation.

The Western Australian Museum was contracted to do the survey and completed the work recently.

The Museum's findings indicate particularly high conservation values and a species diversity that is comparable with places like Ningaloo, Rowley Shoals and Ashmore Reef.

The Montes present their fair share of manage-

ment challenges; feral animals, industrial development and radiation are all important issues.

Rats and cats plague the islands and, consequently, several native mammal species have become extinct there.

While we are confident that the rats can be eradicated using baiting techniques developed in recent years on Barrow Island and other island nature reserves nearby, the cats present a more difficult proposition because of their reluctance to co-operate and take baits or enter traps.

To complicate matters further, the sequence of eradicating feral species must be correct as both animals are directly related on the food chain.

For example, removal of rats without removing cats may increase predation on native fauna.

WA Threatened Species and Communities Unit (WATSCU) and Pilbara regional staff are seeking a solution to the feral animal problem and recently have completed terrestrial biological surveys to help discover the presence of any non-target species.

Eradication operations may begin next autumn and if successful, reintroduction of spectacled hare wallabies and golden bandicoots will follow.

The island group is located about 120 km west-north-west of Dampier on the North West Shelf near operating oil production facilities.

The Montes area generally is considered to be reasonably prospective and

is the subject of an exploration permit.

Oil exploration and the development of infrastructure associated with oil and gas production are issues that will receive careful consideration in future management planning for the park and when dealing with any future marine reservation.

Other commercial development includes a pearl oyster farm that has been established for 13 years.

The farm operates with a small houseboat, sea plane and pearling vessel within Faraday Channel and uses a small land base on Hermite Island to store floats, nets and other gear.

Further interest in aquaculture projects is likely.

In the 1950s, the British conducted atomic tests at the Monte Bellos, where three devices were detonated, resulting in elevated radiation levels on parts of Trimouille and Alpha Islands.

These areas potentially present a health risk to the visiting public and to CALM staff.

The Australian Radiation Laboratories and the WA Health Department have been monitoring radiation levels over the years and CALM has engaged a radiological consultant who has developed safe working procedures that are strictly followed by all staff operating in the area.

The consultant has also developed guidelines for safe use by the public.

CALM recently erected signs on the beach landings next to the affected areas of Trimouille and Alpha Islands.

# Juggling jobs is 'just jake' for Goldfields' June

AS with many of CALM's remote regions, Goldfields field staff spend many days away in the bush, which means that those left behind must attend to a mixed bag of inquiries that can test their ingenuity and local knowledge.

In these situations it is comforting to know there is an efficient administration officer holding the fort and Goldfields regional office has such a person in June Anderson.

Most CALM personnel contacting Kalgoorlie will be familiar with the sound of June's reassuring voice at the end of the phone, fielding questions on a wide range of weighty matters that include accounts, sandalwood contracts, wildlife and staffing.

As for weary CALM officers and sundry other camp followers somewhere out there in the 77 million-plus hectares of the Goldfields region, the

by Grant Pronk

comforting sound of June's voice on the radio reminds them that they are not alone and civilisation hasn't dropped off the edge of the world.

Among her colleagues, June's knowledge and expertise, from knowing the calculations required to formulate regional budgets to the skill and prowess needed to capture an echidna under the kitchen sink, are well-respected.

Being a keen sports-woman, June can be found on Thursday evenings giving CALM guys a whipping on the badminton courts.

June is married to 'Stewy' and has two daughters Linda (18) and Helen (16).

She has lived in Kalgoorlie all her life and the knowledge that 'she wouldn't move for quids', is a great relief to Goldfields field staff.



Goldfields Region's Administration officer June Anderson shown at her station in Kalgoorlie office. Photo by Grant Pronk

# The Volunteer's lament

A guide on Penguin Island - the idea appealed to me  
A friend to the little penguins - that's what I would be  
I answered the advert right away, and then with breath a-bated  
I watched for the postman every day, as I sat me down and waited  
Would I be one of the lucky ones? Would I be selected?  
Would I be one of the chosen few? Or would I be rejected?  
I lay awake for hours each night - it haunted me by day,  
The thought that I might not make it just would not go away.  
My nerves were stretched like banjo strings - my head spun with emotion  
My hopes would fly on seagull's wings - then plunge down in the ocean  
And then at last one fateful day the postman brought to me  
A letter with OHMS on the front for all to see.  
ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE! What an honour. Oh my, what could it be?  
I never dreamed the Queen herself would even know of me!  
With trembling hands I broke the seal, my heart began to race -  
I was to present myself for training at the proper time and place.  
I got there bright and early - I never missed a minute  
They taught me about the ocean and the things I might find in it.  
Of terns and tetragonia, of seaweeds and seagrasses  
And lots and lots of other things to educate the masses.  
Of silver gulls and sea lions, of dolphins, whales and sharks,  
Of starfish, shells and other things to be found in national parks  
I learned about the penguins - with one thing and another  
I knew more about our little friends than David Attenborough.  
With midnight oil and homework and notebooks filled with scrawl  
I studied and I studied 'till I'd memorised it all.  
And then at last the great day dawned when I was rostered 'ON'  
I tossed and turned in bed all night and was up before the sun.  
How smart I looked in shirt of blue, CALM badge on my chest.  
A look in the mirror told the tale - I'd passed the acid test!  
I was first aboard the ferry, I couldn't wait to start,  
With my head so full of learning, so keen to play my part.  
I'd amaze them with my knowledge, I'd answer every question  
On porpoises and penguins and anything they might mention.  
And then HE came, the very first, a frown upon his face  
As though in pain he walked to me with hesitating pace.  
He gasped for breath as he drew near, cold sweat ran off his brow,  
I was trained to answer anything - I must not fail him now!  
He was bursting for an answer - it was plain for all to see  
He took my arm in a grip of steel and softly spoke to me.  
"I've travelled far o'er land and sea," - a tear dropped from his eye -  
"That I might tread this sacred place just once before I die.  
"It's been my life's ambition to visit this lovely Isle -  
To see the little penguins, I've travelled many a mile."  
He paused and looked me in the eye, "Oh, yes, I've come so far -  
Can you tell me sir," he said, "WHERE THE TOILETS ARE?"

by Reg Bebbington.

# Fire-fighting, fitness and fun on this AGM agenda

CALM's Wheatbelt Region staff got together earlier this month for the annual region meeting.

The meeting gave staff the opportunity to discuss regional structure, functions and possible future directions as well as receiving updates on projects being run within the region.

Activities on the first day focused on basic training for the fire season.

Topics included map reading, radio procedures,

By Daryl Moncrieff

fireline safety and the use of basic fire fighting equipment.

Health advice and fitness testing also were part of the program, prompting retorts such as: "Your scales must be broken!" or "No, I'm not sucking my stomach in!"

The day's activities concluded with a social volleyball game — Katan-

ning District carrying off the blue ribbon — and a barbecue at the Narrogin tree nursery.

Regional objectives, functions and efficiencies were covered on day two.

The highlight was an entertaining and informative presentation by the acting head of CALM's Bio-Resources Group, Neville Marchant, on the services of the Herbarium.

Given the diversity and conservation significance of the Wheatbelt flora,

Neville's talk provided excellent advice to staff on how to maximise their plant-collecting efficiency.

Discussion of various regional projects, including on-farm conservation projects at Toolibin Lake, and the oil mallee project, rounded off the day.

These projects are an integral component in the region's future direction towards achieving the interdependent goals of conservation and sustainable land use.

# Marine talks under way

THE public consultation period for the State's marine reserve system has been extended until the end of January.

This follows considerable interest shown following the release of the report of the working group that investigated the State's 12 500 km coastline and prepared recommenda-

tions on the structure and location of marine reserve areas.

CALM is holding a series of briefings on the report with local communities around the coast. These are being attended by former Director of Nature Conservation and chairman of the working group, Dr Barry Wilson,

and the manager of CALM's Marine Unit, Hugh Chevis.

As well copies of the State Government's New Directions in Marine Management strategy now are available through CALM.

Copies of the marine reserves report are available from CALM Offices for \$10.

# Dwellingup staff's skills reach out to Onslow

Alan Clarke, a forest workman and member of the Dwellingup woodshed team, recently returned from Onslow where he ran a 14-day course for 12 people as part of a Skillshare Aboriginal employment training program.

Alan's job was to teach the group how to use the power tools, construct tables, artifacts and signage to a high quality, and run an efficient and productive woodshed.

The course also included safety practices, first aid, and Department of Health, Safety and Welfare (DoHSA) work practices.

At the end of the course, some of the participants were offered jobs in a woodshed business unit Skillshare has set up in Onslow.

Alan's task involved intensive five-hour days of non-stop demonstration and training.

It seems Alan has an enviable knack as an in-

by Tammie Reid

structor because all those taking part produced high quality individual projects, and were enthusiastic about continuing to develop their skills.

Equally important was their enjoyment of both the work and Alan's training methods.

He was impressed with the group's approach and said participants had a positive attitude to safety.

"They used the ear muffs and other workshop safety gear, and if one of them looked as if they might have forgotten, he or she was reminded by one or more of the others," Alan said.

"They began a bit hesitantly with the power tools — the belt sander used to run away from one of them — but they soon became confident and capable of good work."

As a teaching aid, Alan showed the group a video he had made of the Dwellingup woodshed in operation.

His camera and video skills were put to good use filming the Onslow group; these training videos now are being used to promote the project and seek on-going funding.

The aim is to set up an efficient workshop that will win local contracts for picnic tables, signs, guide posts and other outside wood products.

Alan has a great deal of knowledge to share about how to refine and improve the production process.

"Ideally, they should throw nothing away; if they can get hold of a planer and saw bench to handle the offcuts they'll be able to use everything, as we do at Dwellingup," he said.

Alan arrived on the job in time to see the quick clean up of Onslow, as all



At the Dwellingup woodshed, Alan Moutney from the Aboriginal Economic Development Organisation watches as CALM's Keith Harris shows him how to set up a router. Photo by Tammie Reid

the loose outside clutter was collected and tied down in readiness for cyclone Sharon.

His time in Onslow wasn't all hard work

and cyclones. Alan also enjoyed some fishing — bagging a 1.2-metre mackerel — and he has the photos to prove it.

The woodshed skills

training course was organised by Skillshare course coordinator Alan Moutney of Onslow.

And, of course, Alan Moutney wants Alan

Clarke, or another member of the Dwellingup woodshed team, to return and run more advanced sessions in six months' time.

# Jarrahdale eco-experience has children rapt

**THERE is much more to creating wildlife corridors than simply planting trees, as Jarrahdale Primary School children discovered recently.**

Staff from CALM Jarrahdale and the local primary school are part way through a 10-year planting program at the Jarrahdale Eco-experience Development.

Students plant trees each year throughout the once cleared old forest lease, but survival rates in the past have varied because of strong competition by weeds.

As chemical control is not appropriate in wetland areas, the students have been using a form of permaculture in their planting this season.

This involved using a mixture of worm castings and Dynamic Lifter in the soil, then placing layers of

by Andrew Darbyshire

newspaper completely covering the soil up to a metre around each seedling.

The planted trees were then clearly visible, well spaced and set for a weed-free start to life.

After planting, CALM forest workers gave the Jarrahdale Primary Planters (JPPs) a sneak preview of the guided wetland, fauna and forest experience walk.

One of the male residents of the semi-tame bandicoot colony was called upon to show the value of wetlands as he was released from a trap set that morning.

"There was stunned silence as about 200 wide-eyes watched him slowly wander off into his

melaleuca wetland home," said CALM district forester Ralph Smith.

Ralph explained that feral cats, rabbits and rodents had been removed from the site, and how fox baiting also would help the growing populations of mardos and possums known to live there.

Once completed, the Jarrahdale Eco-experience will be part of a low-cost tourist package suitable for day trippers or an overnight stay within an hour's drive from Perth.

The Eco-experience, along with a combination of bike hire, backpacker accommodation, the high quality jarrah forest of the Mundlimup area, blue rock granite outcrop and the proposed Langford Park camping facility, will provide the complete 'Up in the Jarrah Dales' learning adventure.



Ralph Smith showing Jarrahdale Primary Schoolchildren one of the 'local residents' thought to be a bandicoot. Photo by Marie McDonald



Left to right Michelle Widmer, Des Donnelly, John Clark, Greg Lange and Mike Bucton inspect marri slabs at Bunnings Sawmill in Collie. Photo by Graeme Gardner

## Hard yakka at end of day

**FACING an exam at the end of a day's solid training may not be everyone's favourite way of spending the remains of the day.**

Doing so while enduring cold, wet, squally conditions puts the experience on quite another threshold of pain.

CALM's hardwood utilisation staff bore this pain heroically when they spent a two-

by Graeme Gardner

day course (including the exam) in a 'classroom' made of canvas.

The classroom was a tent supplied by Forest Industries Training Service (FITS), and was erected in Mangee Millings Sawmill Yard in Bunbury.

The course was run by FITS training officer Bob

Jenkins and was a mix of practical and theory, its aim being to instruct participants in the characteristics permissible when grading structural timbers.

Armed with this additional knowledge, CALM staff can be instrumental in exploiting more fully the number of uses for log products, leading to less wastage at the forest harvesting stage, and to in-

creased royalties.

The second day's class was conducted by Des Donnelly, CALM's chief utilisation officer and began at Koppers yard in Bunbury, where sleepers were inspected for overseas and local use.

The afternoon was spent at sawmills in the Collie area looking at sawmilling techniques and assessing timbers cut by the mills.

## A crushing experience

**WHILE its name may sound destructive, the use of the crusher roller after pine harvesting is actually bringing valuable environmental benefits.**

Normal practice after logging pines is to heap up the residue and burn it. But because contractors have to burn in autumn, this poses a fire risk and means a lot of nitrogen evaporates from the soil.

"We now leave the debris to dry after harvesting, then run the crusher

roller over it," said CALM's Blackwood district manager Peter Bidwell.

This huge piece of machinery crushes the small pine and buries a lot of it, thereby returning nutrients to the soil.

"As a result we use less fertiliser and fewer areas are put at risk from fire," Peter said.

"Areas treated in this manner are easy to plough afterwards and provide a good bed into which seedlings are planted.

"Because this saves on establishment costs, less manpower is needed, so CALM's resources are also better used."

To illustrate these points, Peter inspected nine-month-old pines at the Grimwade plantation.

The plants were all strong, green and healthy and were doing very well for trees of the same age.

Use of the crusher roller is now in its second season in the Blackwood district.



CALM Kirup's district manager Peter Bidwell examines one of many sturdy nine-month-old pines planted in a bed of crushed residue from an earlier pine harvest. Photo by Carolyn Thomson

## Wildlife officers watching the whale watchers' ways

**CALM wildlife officers visited Geographe Bay last month to monitor a new whale watching industry where three licensed commercial whale watching vessels are operating.**

"This was the first year such charters have been run in the area and we believe it was important to have a presence," CALM's chief wildlife officer Dave Mell said.

"We deployed the CALM vessel *Pseudorca II*

to monitor commercial activity.

"Wildlife officers also spent time on each of the vessels to run through whale watching guidelines and help out with any other queries."

During their visit wildlife officers learnt a great deal about humpback whale migration patterns.

They believe that the potential for whale watching along the Leeuwin-Naturaliste coast is at least as good as in Perth because

the huge mammals come in so close to shore and the waters are so sheltered.

"The industry is only going to increase, as research has shown that humpback whale numbers are growing at the rate of 10 per cent a year as new young are born," Dave said.

"This is particularly impressive when you consider that numbers of humpbacks along the WA coast were as low as 500 or 600 when whaling ceased in 1963.

"It is a fantastic tourist attraction and we need to ensure that the whales are not disturbed in any way so that they keep coming back."

This season is an especially good one, with a great deal of spectacular behaviour, such as breaching and spy hops, occurring.

"In many cases the whales have been extremely playful and curious, and swam straight towards the charter vessels," Dave said.

# Council confers on fire

REPRESENTATIVES of fire agencies from throughout Australia met in Perth earlier this month for the first conference of the Australian Fire Authorities Council.

A highlight of the conference was the national launch of the Wildfire Simulator Project, which CALM has adopted as part of its training program.

The manager of the Department's fire protection branch (CALMFire) Rick Sneeuwjagt, said the simulator was akin to "virtual reality" as it covered the events fire controllers

could expect in wildfire situations.

"It is an invaluable training aid to help develop decision-making skills," he said.

"The package has been based on a Canadian concept which has been updated to suit Australian conditions.

"A number of fire agencies contributed to its development and CALM-Fire is the first fire organisation to incorporate it into its training program."

Rick said the conference looked at a broad range of issues that in-

cluded fire management in forests, national parks and nature reserves; fire prevention through planning and fuel hazard reduction; and fire detection systems, including CALM's use of towers and spotter aircraft.

"Western Australia's forest fire detection system is recognised as the best in Australia," Rick said.

"The combination of towers and rapid-response aircraft with latest satellite navigation technology is proving to be the most efficient method of pin-

pointing fires and planning effective suppression strategies."

Other issues covered at the conference include the incident command system, the impact of bushfires on urban areas, land subdivision and planning, public education, and multi-agency response systems.

Several delegates took the opportunity to go on a field trip and inspect fire management strategies in a range of locations near Perth, including Kwinana, the Darling Scarp and the forest around Mundaring.

# Hunter is off-duty healer

CALM staff can be found in their off-duty hours occupied in a wide variety of sports, hobbies and community activities.

CALM Dwellingup's head mechanic Stuart Hunter is a St John Ambulance officer and a registered instructor; he is also a first aid trainer for the Swan Region.

Stuart recently ran 15 people through re-

fresh and senior first aid sessions as part of the Health and Safety Accreditation Program at CALM Dwellingup.

It was at a similar session that Lane Poole Reserve ranger John Hanel and wife Julie acquired the expertise that was to be called upon while on a touring and camping holiday around the south coast. (See 'Busman's holiday'

story this page.)

Stuart advocates a firm and gentle manner and an approach to each situation, much like a detective 'sleuthing' for the symptoms that tell the story and help the first aider decide on how best to handle the situation.

"I try to give people the skills and confidence to tackle situations that buy time for the one who

is hurt, until professional medical help becomes available, either at the scene of the accident or at a hospital or medical centre," he says.

Stuart is seen (below right) with CALM mechanic John Downey, also a volunteer ambulance officer, outside the newly completed St John Ambulance Australia's Dwellingup premises. Story and photo by Tammie Reid



John and Julie Hanel try to revive a very dead dummy during a St John Ambulance training session. Photo by Tammie Reid

# Busman's holiday

A FAMILY camping trip turned into a busman's holiday when Dwellingup's Lane Poole reserve ranger John Hanel and his wife Julie headed off on a tour around the south coast recently.

Their work and first aid skills were soon to be put to the test while they camped at a mobile ranger pad in Cape Le Grand National Park.

First, a busload of international tourists took a wrong turn while on a bush walk, so John helped out with the radio communications until all the walkers were accounted for and found to be none the worse for their adventure.

The following afternoon, a young man burst into their camp, calling for help to rescue his brother who had been

By Verna Costello

washed off the rocks. Once more, John joined the rescue party and the young man's brother was eventually snatched from the seas without injury.

On the third day, Cape Le Grand mobile ranger Geoff Passmore called for help to control a deliberately lit wildfire 2 km out of reach of vehicle access. All pumps, hoses and gear had to be carried in by volunteers, the task being co-ordinated by John.

The couple was also involved in a 'sea rescue' when a young man with more enthusiasm than know-how, hurled himself — minus adequate footwear — into the task of helping fight the fire.

The only access to the

area that had been burned was via the ocean, so he had to be carried to a dinghy that took him out to a sea rescue boat which in turn landed him further along the coast.

John and Julie decided not to stick around for more thrills, so they quickly packed and slipped away the next day to seek quieter camping at Stokes National Park.

Soon after their return, the couple signed up for a first aid refresher course with CALM Dwellingup's head mechanic Stuart Hunter, who doubles as a St John's Ambulance officer and registered instructor in his off-duty hours. (See story above right.)

John and Julie recently returned from a trip to the Gunbarrel Highway where, we hear, absolutely nothing happened.



Stuart Hunter (right) with John Downey. Both are volunteer ambulance officers and CALM mechanics and are seen outside the new St John Ambulance building in Dwellingup. Photo by Tammie Reid

# New dolphin feeding rules

IMMEDIATE changes to the feeding regimes of the Monkey Mia dolphins have been introduced following a report commissioned by CALM's Executive Director Dr Syd Shea.

The report suggested current feeding practices may have contributed to mortality in unweaned dolphins.

Dr Shea had commissioned Dr Barry Wilson, a former Director of Nature Conservation with CALM and chairman of the Working Group for a Marine Conservation System in Western Australia, to review dolphin management at Monkey Mia.

The review followed advice from American researchers that suggested mortality rates of the offspring of hand fed dolphins were significantly

higher than in wild dolphins.

The current feeding program has been modified so that:

- ◆ Feeding of male and female calves will cease until they are fully weaned.
- ◆ There will be no more feeding of male dolphins.
- ◆ Feeding sessions at the beach will be carried out at regular times to avoid the tendency for dolphins to stay in the beach area for long periods waiting for feeding.
- ◆ A major effort will be made to eliminate the feeding of dolphins from boats in the vicinity of Monkey Mia.
- ◆ Endeavours will be made to provide a consistent supply of fresh fish, with frozen fish

kept only as a back-up.

Dr Shea said that at all times the principle had to be that dolphin welfare came first, even though it was acknowledged that the dolphin-human interaction at Monkey Mia was a unique tourist experience.

He said although it was obvious the dolphins enjoyed handouts, there was scientific evidence that the practice would be detrimental to their health if it was not carefully controlled.

Dr Shea discussed the report with the Shark Bay Shire Council, the Monkey Mia Management Committee and the rangers at Monkey Mia yesterday and today in Denham.

He said the decision to implement changes in the feeding arrangements had

been endorsed by the Shire and the Management Committee.

Dr Shea said Dr Wilson would visit Denham to supervise the introduction of the new arrangements.

Dr Wilson also would be employed by CALM to co-ordinate scientific advice on dolphin management for the Department.

"A range of other issues in the report will be the subject of further discussions with the Shire and the Management Committee," Dr Shea said.

He was confident that the unique Monkey Mia experience could be sustained, but it was important that research findings were implemented rapidly and that the management of the dolphin-human interaction was carefully controlled.

# Naming the koalas

A COMPETITION held by CALM recently to name the first baby koalas to be born at Yanchep National Park for many years drew an enthusiastic response.

"We looked for names with an Australian theme for the four joeys, born last January," CALM fauna ranger John Wheeler said.

The competition was open to young people aged 17 years and under, with first prize, a mystery flight with Ansett Airlines, going to 10-and-a-half-

year-old Bianca Martin of Yanchep who chose 'Medika', which is believed to be an Aboriginal word meaning blossom.

Runners-up were five-year-old Cody Jackson of Two Rocks, with 'Melleca', a derivative of Melaleuca; four-year-old Lloyd Miller of Kensington, with 'Yaberoo', after the Yaberoo-Budjara trail that runs from Lake Joondalup to Yanchep National Park; and four-year-old Bronwyn Bates of Yanchep, with 'Wando', the Nyoongar word for white gum.

They received koala tee-shirts, Australian koala information bags, and annual passes to Yanchep National Park.

"Yanchep National Park has had a koala colony since 1938, but in the 1970s the colony became infected by clamydia, a disease that causes infertility," John Wheeler said.

"The koalas born in January are the offspring of 12 disease-free animals flow to WA from Kangaroo Island in South Australia by Ansett Australia over the past two years."