

Eastern Goldfields bio-survey report released

THE Museum of the Goldfields in Kalgoorlie was the setting recently for the release of the final biological survey report of the system 11 series of surveys of the Eastern Goldfields.

The survey involved the establishment of about 1600 vegetation sites and 160 fauna sites, the discovery of five new species of mammal and two of reptiles, and at least 100 species of plants.

The event was attended by 40 local people as well as most of the survey report authors and some of the original members of both the Conservation Through Reserves Technical Sub-Committee (CTRC) and the Biological Surveys Committee who recommended, planned and implemented an integrated approach to biological surveys in Western Australia.

Special guests included Ian Taylor, former Minister for the Environment and Member for Kalgoorlie, and Ian Cresswell, from

Australian Nature Conservation Agency in Canberra.

CALM's regional ecologist for the Goldfields Andy Chapman, welcomed guests, and provided background to the survey which began in 1979.

Andy's opening address also recognised the significant contribution that the CTCRC process had made to the establishment of a representative reserve system in the Goldfields, as well as the benefits that the formation of CALM in 1985 had conferred.

The field work alone, which took place between 1979 and 1983, involved 3 700 people days.

Guest speakers at the event were CALM's Goldfields regional manager Ian Kealley and Greg Barrett, senior environmental officer for the local gold mining company PosGold Kaltails.

Ian spoke of the value of identifying biologically significant areas to the role of a regional manager, particularly in the regional planning process.

"The report is a magnificent achievement and those who were involved in the survey work are to be congratulated," Ian said.

"With the information contained in the reports, we are now ideally placed whenever the opportunity to purchase pastoral leases for inclusion with existing reserves presents itself.

"It will also be helpful in managing valuable sandalwood resources, as the landform classifications now enable the development of a more detailed sandalwood resource inventory.

"The report is also essential for future monitoring projects, as surveyed sites have now been marked in the field."

Greg provided a mining industry perspective on the value of biological data to the industry.

Both speakers made the point that the survey provided an overview of the region's biota and is not a substitute for site-specific data for environmental impact assessment.

At the conclusion of the



Among those attending the launch of the final survey were, left to right, WA Museum senior curator in terrestrial vertebrates Ric How, CALM principal research scientists Greg Keighery and Norm McKenzie, WA Museum terrestrial invertebrates senior technical officer John Dell, editorial consultant Alex George, and CALM's Director of WA Threatened Species and Communities Unit Andrew Burbidge. Photo by Tony Holmes, courtesy Kalgoorlie Miner

event, 25 of those who attended the launch of the report, adjourned to Goongarrie Station Homestead for a sundowner barbecue, as well as a demon-

stration by Norm McKenzie of ultrasonic bat detecting, which aroused great interest.

The following morning, participants examined wet-

lands on the station which are still a legacy of rain from Cyclone 'Bobby' in February 1995, and examined proposed sites for a future experimental bio-

logical survey project, the aim of which will be to compare the effectiveness of a new method of pit-trap setting with the traditional labour-intensive technique

