



Just a few of the authors at the launch of CALM's Bush Books (from left): John Hunter, Brent Johnson, Greg Keighery, Kevin Kenneally, Andrew Brown, Judy Wheeler and, at front right, Carolyn Thomson. Photo by Verna Costello

Karijini draft plan released

LOCAL community involvement in caring for one of the State's biggest conservation areas has been strongly recognised in a draft management plan for the Karijini National Park in the Pilbara.

The draft plan has been redrawn, following submissions from traditional Aboriginal owners on an earlier version. It was prepared by officers from CALM and representatives of the Karijini Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority.

Environment Minister Peter Foss said the draft plan honoured a Government commitment that the traditional Aboriginal owners, represented by the Karijini Aboriginal Corporation (KAC) and tribal elders, would have

direct input into the management of the Park.

A park council would be formed to advise on all matters in the park that affected the interests of Aboriginal people.

Involving elders

The council would include tribal elders of each of the Yinhawangka, Panyjima and Kurrama people, three elected Aboriginal representatives of the KAC and three representatives from CALM.

A second committee—the Karijini National Park Advisory Committee—also would be formed to represent the broader interests of the Pilbara community.

The Advisory Committee would comprise representatives of a broad cross section of the Pilbara community—in-

cluding tourism operators, local government and conservation groups.

The 627,444-hectare Karijini National Park is the State's second biggest national park behind Rudall River (1.3 million hectares), also in CALM's Pilbara Region.

Its features include the spectacular gorges of the Hamersley Range, geological formations dating back 2500 million years and a variety of ecosystems with more than 30 species of native mammals, 133 species of birds, 90 species of reptiles and eight species of fish.

Rare species

The animal life includes five rare species—the western pebble-mound mouse, (orngadji) peregrine falcon, grey honeyeater, grey falcon and Pilbara olive python.

More than 480 species of native flowering plants are known to occur in the park, representing a transition between two climatic regions.

Key issues in the draft management plan include:

- The right for Aboriginal people to visit and practise traditional customs in the park.
- Provision of up to three living area leases for traditional owners. This will assist elders in passing on their knowledge, as well as creating economic opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Strategies to promote tourism and to protect Aboriginal cultural and natural values of the park. These strategies include zoning for different levels of use within the park.
- Commercial conces-

sions to promote and enhance visitors' experiences. This already is under way to the compatible operations process and expressions of interest already have been called for commercial accommodation developments.

- Improved air and road access to recreation zones.
- Establishment of a permanent visitors' centre.

The draft plan has been released for public comment for four months.

Copies of the plan are available from CALM offices in Karratha and Como.

Submissions should be sent to the Executive Director, CALM, Locked Bag 104 Bentley Delivery Centre, WA 6983, marked 'Plan Co-ordinator, Karijini National Park Draft Management Plan.'

