

Win a night out with the woylies

UNTIL last year, woylies could no longer be found in the jarrah forest near Mundaring. But recently, two groups of primary school students spent a night proving these formerly endangered animals were alive, well and breeding.

The turnaround was made possible by CALM's *Operation Western Shield*, which aims to eradicate foxes and feral cats and reintroduce native species.

Winning 'a night out with the woylies' was the culmination of classroom work carried out by several schools using CALM's *Western Shield Action Pack*.

This pack is designed for upper primary teachers and students, and is linked to school curriculum subjects.

Raising awareness

Its object is to raise awareness and understanding of our threatened animal species and to promote conservation initiatives.

And what better way for students to become aware and understand than to take part in research methods used in *Operation Western Shield*?

After completing the Action Pack work, schools registered for a draw.

Schools won sets of CALM's Bush Books, while the lucky winners of the camp under canvas were the students of Chidlow (Year 5/6) and St Lawrence (Year 7) Primary Schools,

by Liz Moore

In the early evening, the students visited an animal-viewing hide, deep in the jarrah forest where woylies were released last year. Supervised by CALM officers, students set traps close to the hide.

Later, at The Hills Forest Activity Centre, they saw several threatened species, including a bilby, burrowing bettongs and western barred bandicoots that are being cared for by the Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre.

The evening wound up with a starlit walk in the forest, and later, as they settled in their tents, the students were serenaded by cicadas, quacking frogs and a boobook owl.

Early next morning, an inspection of the traps revealed mardos (marsupial mice), a quenda (southern brown bandicoot) and, of course, several woylies (one of which was a female with a joey in her pouch).

Traps checked

These were all checked and released again into their natural habitat.

Back at the Centre, students were challenged by an endangered species treasure hunt before returning to school.

Teachers and their students all agreed that the camps were a great success,

exceeding their expectations. Teacher, Wendy Harvey, said:

"The Action Pack really caught my students' interest and also resulted in an enormous amount of effort and improvement in their language skills and other areas of the curriculum.

A memorable experience

"The camp has been a memorable experience for every student, and one they will remember for many years to come".

The enthusiasm of students and teachers for the Action Pack and the camps, as well as the high standard of the entries has been overwhelming.

Buoyed by this reception, CALM is encouraging many schools to participate in the program in 1997.

In 1996, all primary schools in the State were sent *Western Shield Action Packs* that can be used again in 1997. 'A night out with the woylies' will be drawn again in late 1997.

If readers have any queries about the program, or wish to have a copy of the action pack, please contact me on tel: (09) 295 2244 or (09) 334 0387, fax: (09) 295 3247 or 334 0498, or email Lizm@calm.wa.gov.au.

The *Western Shield Action Pack* is also available through CALM's NatureBase web page on <http://www.calm.wa.gov.au>



CALM forest ranger Dennis McDonald holds out freshly mixed bait for a wary Julien Coci to sniff. Two of Julien's fellow St Lawrence students Daniel Taborsky and Anthony Armenti look on. Photo by Liz Moore





DENIS McDONALD HODDS
A WOLFIE CAUGHT IN
A TRAP SET UP BY
SIMONS DUMBAK (WORKING
ON)

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VIKING A
MARDU

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DENIS MCDONALD AND
SIMON BURMBARK. LOOK AT
A WOTLIE THAT WAS
CAUGHT IN SIMON'S TRAP



DENIS McDONALD WITH
STUDENT NIKKI KINARDI
LOOKING ON AS HE CHECKS
ONE OF THE ECLECTIC
TRAPS FOR SMALL
ANIMALS.

KARAWOBI NINAR







STUDENT AND TEACHERS
OF ST LAWRENCE PRIMARY
SCHOOL QUIETLY APPROACH
THE ANIMAL VIEWING &
HIDE.

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ST LAWRENCE PRIMARY
SCHOOL. STUDENTS SET OUT
TO CHECK THEIR TRAP IN
THE EARLY MORNING.



DENIS McDONALD
HOLDING A BAG CONTAINING
A WOTCIE CAPTURED IN
STUDENT MICHAEL CIRCHINI'S
TRAP. MICHAEL LOOKS ON.

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DENIS McDONALD
CALM'S FOREST RANGER
AND STUDENT SAVIA D'SOUZA
WITH A CAPTURED
WOOLIE

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