



Dens, nests ready and waiting

NATIVE wildlife in and around The Hills Forest Activity Centre at Mundaring are being encouraged to return to their natural habitat—with a little help from some new-found friends.

A group of young trainees under the Commonwealth Government's Green Corps Program have built and placed nearly 200 artificial nest boxes and rock dens, as well as feeding and viewing sites around the Centre.

The work is part of CALM Mundaring District's Hills Forest Fauna Enhancement Project.

The nest boxes are for species that usually use tree hollows, and include

cockatoos, brush-tailed possums, brush-tailed phascogales and mardos.

The rock dens are for ground animals like the chuditch, quenda, dunnarts and reptiles.

CALM's Mundaring District nature conservation program leader John Carter says that through *Operation Foxglove*—a joint initiative between CALM and Alcoa of Australia that's controlling foxes in the northern jarrah forest—the number of native animals is increasing.

"In April 1996, we reintroduced woylies into the forest to the east of the Activity Centre. Researchers are now finding second and third generations, which show that the

animals are doing extremely well indeed."

"The new nesting and feeding sites will encourage native animals to return and breed around The Hills Forest," John said.

John said The Hills Forest Activity Centre focused on family and school groups, with activities designed to bring people to the forest to learn about animals and plants in their natural habitat.

"The Go Bush! Program, that started in 1991, is now attracting 16,500 people each year. The enhancement program will open up opportunities for more activities in Go Bush! and other educational and recreation

programs," he said.

The project is also attracting sponsorship from the private sector: Timber Traders Cockburn, Hamilton Sawmills, Stephanelli Sawmills and Colli and Sons have donated timber and other materials for nest boxes, while Applecross Primary School's fundraising activities have raised \$2000 towards the project.

Green Corps is a Commonwealth Government program that aims to give young Australians between 17 and 20 years opportunities to become involved in conservation projects.

Left: Leanne Moyle shows the entrance to a completed den. Photo by John Carter



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