

Overseas visitors well cared for

IN the last issue of *CALM NEWS* we reported on the launch of the World Conservation Union Symposium in Albany, with the theme, *Protected Areas in the 21st Century: From Islands to Networks*.

In this issue, we show readers some behind-the-scenes efforts that helped make the symposium run smoothly.

It was a case of all hands on deck down in Albany late last year, as the town played host to more than 80 delegates from 50 countries, with CALM playing an integral role.

Regional Manager John Watson said it was a mammoth task that had involved virtually all local CALM staff plus

by Penny Walsh

park rangers, and he was delighted with the way things had come together.

During breaks in a hectic schedule, CALM staff were able to introduce delegates to a wide range of local beauty spots.

Regional leader—nature conservation, Kelly Gillen, said the feedback he received was very positive.

CALM staff involvement was high throughout the week-long symposium, but perhaps the most labour-intensive event from a CALM point of view was an all-day field trip to the Fitzgerald River National Park and Biosphere Reserve, via the Stirling Range and Two People's Bay.

Expert CALM guides provided commentary as the buses made their way past paddocks full of bluegums and others that were salty, waterlogged and bare.

A stop in the Stirling Range National Park gave delegates a chance to survey Bluff Knoll and hear about the threats of dieback and fire.

Fitzgerald River National Park was of particular interest because it represents the core area of the notional Biosphere Reserve.

Delegates heard how the park is linked through major vegetation corridors to other reserves and areas of high conservation value.

They were introduced to the area's incredible

species richness—with more than 20 per cent of the State's recognised flora and the richest mammal fauna of any reserve in the South-West.

A stop at scenic Point Ann, with its coastal cliffs, pristine sand and clear Southern Ocean water was greatly appreciated. Once again, CALM staff were on hand to lead walking tours and explain local features.

The final stop was Two People's Bay, where delegates got a sneak preview of the stylish new Visitor's Centre, before trying the picturesque heritage trail and learning about the important role the reserve plays as a centre for threatened species research and management.



CALM South Coast regional business manager Laura Beck and Albany District administrative assistant Helen Plowman chat with symposium delegates Penelope Figgis (Australia) and Juan Rito Larrucea (Spain) during a break in the program. Photo by Penny Walsh.



Bringing wildlife back from the brink

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