

Annual Sun and Stars Festival attracts big crowds



Even family members are roped in, but Noel Nannup's daughter Allison looks happy enough showing visitors her snake-handling skills with this carpet python. Meanwhile, her proud dad has taken the opportunity to record her on film.

CALM's annual 'Sun and Stars' Festival went off with a bang, as more than 700 carloads of visitors rolled into Yanchep National Park for a fun-filled day of activities, celebrating CALM's partnership with the community.

A number of CALM branches and projects were represented, with their staff lugging display boards, brochures and information equipment to Yanchep—to provide the 1500 visitors with information on conservation projects.

The Aboriginal Tourism Unit's Noel Nannup and Kevin Hill led with a guided walking tour around Lake McNess, a great display on traditional bush-tucker and medicine, and the building of a mia on the lake-side.

Not to be outclassed, the Maritime Pine Plantations group set up a display and brought along numerous seedlings for give-aways and sale.

The Land for Wildlife Display was also a roaring success, especially among the hundreds of kids who grabbed the free stickers that project officer Emma Bramwell brought along to accompany the display.

Before this got too far out of hand, the kids, along with adults, raced down to the lakefront to view the spectacular aerial water bombing displays generously put on by CALMFire.

Perth District also made their mark on the festival, and their territory, with an excellent display on Gnangara Park, by Annie Grieg, and the Swan Coastal Plains Walk Trail by Therese Jones, not to mention a well stocked stall selling a variety of merchandise such as caps and t-shirts.

Near Yanchep Inn, the sandalwood promotion was boosted by free wine tastings of Hotham Valley Wines

by Mitzi Vance

Classic Red enhanced with sandalwood fragrances.

A sandalwood truck from pioneer days, and an informative display, with incense sticks, fragrant wood shavings, and historic photographs, enticed many adults into the newly renovated Yanchep Inn, and also perked their interest in this precious timber resource.

One of the stage-grabbers of the day, however, was the *Western Shield* project, with its mascot Charlie the Chuditch who, with a little help from native animals from Kanyana Wildlife Centre, wowed the crowd.

Boxes of *Western Shield* informative brochures were picked up like ice creams on a 40-degree day—which it was.

CALM's observatory was by far the biggest highlight for festival-goers, as Government astronomer Jamie Biggs led his team into amazing the crowd with a slide show and high-tech, awe-inspiring telescopes.

Yes—it was indeed a fantastic promotional day for CALM, and for the Wanneroo community.

The Wanneroo Police had the task—no doubt envied by some—of setting up a Dunk a Copper Competition, while the local SES and community art and crafts groups operated numerous stalls, not to mention continuous entertainment throughout the day.

The success of this year's festival holds great promise for next year, when Yanchep National Park will once again come alive with CALM festivities under the Sun and Stars.



CALM Observatory volunteer Bevan Harris is on hand for questions from visitors such as those seen here peering at the stars through one of the observatory's transportable telescopes. Photo by David Gough.

