

CALM NEWS

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT



MARCH—APRIL 2000



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State Government program to save more wildlife

by Mitzi Vance

NATIVE wildlife recovery in Western Australia entered a new era today with the launch by Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes of a program aimed at bringing a range of species back from the brink of extinction.

The program—Return to Dryandra—was marked by the first release of bilbies into an area where they used to roam but have been wiped out by feral predators like the European fox.

Mrs Edwardes released 20 captive-bred bilbies into the Dryandra Woodland area near Narrogin.

She said Return to Dryandra was a significant step towards restoring the State's native wildlife by providing a haven for rare and endangered native animals.

"Return to Dryandra is part of CALM's wildlife recovery project Western Shield," the Minister said.

"What we plan to do is bring native animals back from the brink of extinction by controlling introduced predators and re-establishing native species in natural habitat areas.

"Whereas Western Shield is the overall feral predator control and native fauna recovery program for the State, the Return to Dryandra component will focus on restoring the range of native fauna once found in the Wheatbelt before agricultural clearing and the onslaught of foxes and cats.



Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes and CALM Executive Director Dr Wally Cox meet one of the bilbies, held here by CALM principal research scientist Tony Friend, and later released into the Dryandra woodland. Photo by Ernie McLintock

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New plan to save the Swan Estuary

A SIGNIFICANT step was taken to protect and conserve part of the Swan River with the launch on April 5 of a management plan for the Swan Estuary Marine Park and adjacent Nature Reserves.

Releasing the plan, Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes said it outlined effective management strategies to balance conservation needs with recreational visitor use by tourists and the local community.

"The management plan covers estuarine lands and waters within the Swan River at Alfred Cove, Milyu and Pelican Point—all areas of high conservation value," she said.

"These three areas provide important feeding

by Mitzi Vance

habitats for both migratory wading birds and local shorebirds—the sand flats, mud flats and beaches provide the only remaining significant feeding and resting areas in the Swan Estuary.

"The park and adjacent reserves provide habitat for a diverse range of aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals that also have significant educational values.

"The management plan allows for this continued recreational and education use within guidelines to ensure all competing interests are met without detriment to the conservation values."

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EARLY results from a biological survey by the Department of Conservation and Land Management have added to the sense of urgency

in the new Salinity Strategy, released this month by Premier Richard Court.

The four-year survey was one of the actions ini-

tiated by CALM under the Government's 1996 Salinity Action Plan and is the first comprehensive biological survey of the south-west agricultural region.

The survey shows that 450 vascular plants endemic to the Wheatbelt are under threat of extinction from salinisation and hydrological changes. About 220 aquatic invertebrates could also disappear from the Wheatbelt.

Modelling commissioned by the State Salinity Council last year shows that remedial action to combat salinity needs to occur across catchments on a bigger scale and more quickly than has previously been considered.

As well as the risk to biodiversity, salinity also threatens water quality, agricultural production and rural infrastructure.

There will also be an increased flood risk in many areas.

The new Salinity Strategy sets out a long-term approach to salinity

management, building on the foundations of the 1996 Action Plan.

The Premier announced at the launch that the Government would provide \$3.6 million for the coming financial year to help implement the Salinity Strategy. This is in addition to the \$40 million a year the Government currently spends on salinity management.

The Salinity Strategy includes techniques and tools designed to recover some land already affected by salinity, to contain the spread of salinity, and to help communities and industry adapt to saline land in some areas.

CALM is one of four key State agencies involved in implementing the Salinity Strategy, together with regional and community groups.

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Pictured at a 'getting-to-know-you' function held to introduce winners of the inaugural June Craig Trust Award are, from left, Liz Moore, Mrs Craig, a partly obscured Jay Gimbo, June Ellis, Carol Dymond and Donna Green. A coordinator of the award scheme Suzanne Curry is in front. See page 2 for story.

Photo by Verna Costello



Planning for the establishment of the new Forest Products Commission and Department of Conservation is progressing.

An interim Forest Products Division, under the leadership of Acting General Manager, Don Keene, has been established. A proposed structure is now being finalised and JDFs are in preparation. I expect that transfers to the new Division, which will form the basis of the new Commission, will commence early in June.

The Forest Products Commission will be located separately from the Department of Conservation. In Perth, an office in Great Eastern Highway is under consideration. FPC offices will also be located in Manjimup, Nannup, Harvey and Bunbury.

The State Budget papers include a provision of \$8.52 million (Capital Works) for the Forest Products Commission. This includes \$7.5 million for the continuation of the maritime pine program which involves pilot plantings of maritime pine as a basis for encouraging private sector investment to achieve plantings of some 150 000 hectares over ten years.

Such investment is more likely once the concept of carbon accretion and trading in carbon credits is accepted by the market place. One additional benefit from plantings of maritime pine is high water usage and a reduction in water tables, thereby reducing the risks of salinity.

Planning for the Department of Conservation is also progressing. Keiran McNamara has been appointed Acting Director, Sustainable Forest Management, to plan and implement sustainable forest management.

A purchaser-provider model is also being introduced which will improve the alignment between the Department's objectives and delivery. The purchasers are the Directors of Nature Conservation, Sustainable Forest Management, Parks and Visitor Services and the Executive Director. The providers are Regional Services, Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs, and CALMScience. Corporate Services will become a bureau providing services to both the Department of Conservation and the Forest Products Commission.

The recent State Budget provided \$71.69 million for the Department of Conservation. In addition, the Department will earn revenue from work done on behalf of the Forest Products Commission.

New funding for the Department includes:

- \$1.5 million for management of new national parks to be created following the Regional Forest Agreement, marine reserves, wetlands and conservation areas in the Gascoyne-Murchison;
- \$300 000 for further development of the Gnarara Park on Perth's northern outskirts; and
- \$1 million to implement the recommendations of the Ferguson report into forest management including new community consultation initiatives and fire management in the South-West.

The Department's planned capital works expenditure would include \$3.4 million for additions to the conservation estate, \$4.2 million for tourism roads and facilities and \$1.3 million for fire-fighting fleet replacement.

The building blocks are gradually coming into place, and subject to legislation the 1 July 2000 date for both agencies is achievable.

Dr Wally Cox, Executive Director

State Government program to save more WA wildlife

(from page 1)

"CALM has established two 10-hectare field breeding enclosures within Dryandra, where bilbies, banded hare wallabies, boodies (burrowing bettongs), western barred bandicoots and mala have been introduced.

"The Dryandra breeding centre is producing animals for reintroduction into the wild at Dryandra and other locations across southern WA.

"In the long term, it is envisaged that Return to Dryandra will provide a unique nature-based tourism experience where people can see a diverse range of native wildlife in high densities, similar to those witnessed before feral predators and agricultural clearing.

"A Federal grant of \$80,000 from the 1999/2000 Regional Tourism Program was recently awarded to CALM for the establishment of a two-hectare viewing enclosure at Dryandra.

"This grant, widely supported by the community and the Dryandra Woodland Focus Group, will significantly help in the long-term nature-based tourism plans for the Return to Dryandra Project and tourism in the Greater Dryandra area."

Mrs Edwardes said the bilby was the first of five threatened fauna species scheduled for re-establishment within Dryandra Woodland.

"Bilbies being released today have been sourced from the Dryandra

Threatened Species Field Breeding Centre and Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, a private voluntary operation in the Perth suburb of Gooseberry Hill," she said.

Mrs Edwardes said that in order to establish the best methodology for future wild releases, the Dryandra release involved two groups of bilbies.

"One will be released into a 'soft release' temporarily fenced area, to help them form close associations with each other and a familiarity with the release site, before full release," she said.

"The second group will be released directly into the wild, with no temporary confinement.

"Both groups will be released into areas with pre-established burrows so that they may readily avoid predators.

"They will also be monitored by radio-tracking to ascertain their movements and the status of their health and welfare to ensure that they are adapting to the wild.

"A full review of the release operation will be undertaken to refine methods for future releases."

Mrs Edwardes said the release of the 'Easter' Bilbies provided further direct evidence of the ongoing success of the Western Shield program, which is recognised nationally and internationally as a leading initiative in the fight to conserve natural biodiversity.

Trust Awardees meet their patron

Winners of the inaugural June Craig Trust Award met Mrs Craig recently at a 'getting-to-know-you' function, during which Mrs Craig learnt how they planned to use the financial component of their awards.

CALM Estate Plantations project officer Carol Dymond plans to tour with key personnel who are working on accreditation processes of sustainable forest management in the USA or Europe.

Carol said she expected to gain practical experience in the area of ecologically sustainable forest management.

"This is particularly relevant to CALM, as the marketplace is demanding assurances that the timber products they purchase come from sustainably managed forests, both native and plantation," Carol said.

CALM's WA *Naturally* Information Centre supervisor June Ellis will attend a Desert Workshop at Rudall River National Park.

June said she expects to

gain first-hand experience, that will help her give the best possible service to visitors to the Centre.

"It's widely acknowledged that personal experience of the places people wish to visit is one of the best selling points," she said.

"I meet visitors from many walks of life, and from many parts of the world, so it's imperative that the information I provide is sound, timely and accurate."

Nature Conservation senior policy advisor Jay Gomboso will attend an international conference on biodiversity conservation.

Jay said that she expected the information she gained from the conference itself and by networking to be of immense help in the development of the Western Australian Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

CALMfire co-ordinator Donna Green will attend the Native Solutions: Indigenous Knowledge and Today's Fire Management International Symposium in Tasmania.

Donna said that the planning and co-ordination of fire management activities was an integral part of CALM's management responsibilities.

"The Department regularly reviews burning regimes, and is considering the introduction of Aboriginal burning regimes in some national parks," she said.

Community education officer Elizabeth Moore will visit interpretative

centres in forest settings in Australia and New Zealand.

Liz said that she hoped to investigate techniques and programs that could be used or adapted in WA.

"Last year, CALM's conservation and forestry programs at The Hills Forest catered for nearly 19,000 students, teachers and parents, and so I hope to be able gather information that will further enhance CALM's community and school-based education programs.

June Craig

June Craig was Western Australia's first female government Minister with a forestry-related portfolio, and second-ever female Cabinet Minister.

Born during the Great Depression, Mrs Craig (née June Lynn) grew up during World War II, witnessing many examples of hardship.

But it was her life in the rural town of Dardanup, where as wife, mother, farmer and employer of new migrants, she became aware of the disturbing lack of community support, both materially and emotionally, for migrants and rural women.

In 1972, Mrs Craig established the Citizens' Advice Bureau and Good Neighbour Council in Bunbury. In 1974, she became the Liberal member for the former seat of Wellington and went on to become Minister for Lands and Forests in 1977-1978.

During this time,

Staff Movements

Contract staff

Liesl Jonker, to Fremantle, as Marine Conservation Officer, Level 2/4 from Parks, Recreation & Tourism Planning Branch, Kensington; Cassandra Jury, to Katanning, as Field Officer, Level 1/2; Genelle Pennington, to Corporate Executive, Crawley, as Executive Assistant, Level 3; Jenny Allen, to Forest Resources, Manjimup Nursery, as Clerical Officer, Level 1; Michael Meffert, to Wildlife Branch, Kensington, as Technical Officer, Level 2; Roland Muench, to Southern Forest Region, Manjimup, as Landscape Architect, Level 5; Christine Nicholas, to Forest Management Branch, Bunbury, as Field Officer, Level 1/2; Bradford Rushford, to Kensington, as Wildlife Officer, Level 1/2; Tim Grubba, to Marine Conservation Branch, Fremantle, as Marine Conservation Officer Level 2/4; Karen Abel, to Parks, Policy & Tourism, Kensington, as Clerical Officer, Level 1; Kylie Ryan, to Marine Conservation Branch, as Field Officer, Level 1/2; Robert Archibald, to CALMScience, Forest and Tree Crops Group, Kensington, as Technical Officer, Level 2; Carlos Raphael, to CALMScience, Forest and Tree Crops Group, Kensington, as Technical Officer, Level 3; Andrew Stillwell, to CALMScience, Forest and Tree Crop Group, Kensington, as Technical Officer, Level 3

Permanent staff

Jennifer Reeve, at Manjimup, as Clerical Officer, Level 1

Promoted

Mike Cantelo, to District Fire Co-ordinator, Level 5, Wanneroo; David Guille, to Senior Field Manager, Level 5, CALM Sharefarms Midwest; Robert Powell, to Land Planning Officer, Level 4, Parks, Policy & Tourism, Kensington.

Seconded

Paul Biggs, to Minister's Office, as Scientific Adviser, Level 7 from Corporate Executive Division, Crawley; Debbie Burke, to Swan Region, Kensington, as Administrative Assistant, Level 2, from Broome.

Transferred

Kim Cream, to Kununurra, as Clerical Officer, Level 1, from Broome; Jeremy Chick, to South West Capes District, Margaret River, as Forest Ranger, Level 1/2; Paul Blechynden, to Albany, as Operations Officer, Level 3, from Moora; Karen Bettink, to Merredin, as Conservation Officer, Level 2/4, from Nannup; Rod O'Donnell, to Broome, as National Park Ranger, Level 2/5, from Derby; Warwick Roe, to Moora, as Wildlife Officer, Level 3; from Broome; Kristian Pollock, to Jarrahdale, as Field Officer, Level 1/2 from Harvey

Retired

George Duxbury, from John Forrest National Park, as Senior Ranger; Roy Fieldgate from Information Management Branch, Kensington, as Manager, Level 7

Resigned

Julia Lewis, from CALMpeople Services Branch, as Application Support and Development Officer, Level 5; Damien Mc Alinden, from Manjimup, as Senior Technical Officer, Level 3

she was responsible for the development of the General Working Plan for State Forests in Western Australia No. 86 and became a strong advocate for quarantine procedures relating to the potential spread of dieback and ensuring industry partners followed these procedures

Her community involvement continues to this day and has included becoming Australia's first female National President of Save the Children Fund and Chairwoman of Penrhos Ladies College.

Mrs Craig strongly supports an education system that encourages women to express themselves confidently, make use of technology and strive to achieve their highest aspirations.

In 1994, she was awarded an AM (Member in the Order of Australia) to

honour her contribution to the community and charitable causes.

Mrs Craig is a notable example of a Western Australian woman for whom contributing to the community and conserving the environment has been a way of life, a means of self expression, and a career.

To that end, the June Craig Trust Award, inaugurated in 1999, was developed as one of CALM's initiatives for the Government Plan for Women 1998-2000.

It has been developed to encourage, support and facilitate all women in CALM to enhance and develop their careers, and increase their contribution to CALM's mission. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to develop, reward and retain knowledgeable and competent women in CALM.

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Workplace safety rewarded

A SPECIAL presentation to CALM's Perth District officers at Wanneroo has underlined the importance of both conservation and workplace safety.

As both Environment as well as Industrial Relations Minister, Mrs Cheryl Edwardes made the presentations to mark six months without a *lost time incident.

"The Perth District team has some 80 staff who undertake an incredible range of tasks, many of them hazardous," Mrs Edwardes said.

"To have six months incident free is all the more notable when you realise these people have to deal with chemicals, tree lopping and other traditionally dangerous forestry work, as well as fight more than 200 fires this season.

"Not only are these officers doing a fine job for the environment, they are doing it in a safety-conscious way.

"This award is all the more important, given many of the Perth District staff are MetroBus and Main Roads redeployee staff who have had little or no previous experience in bush work or fire fighting.

"I know that this splendid result has been the outcome of a lot of very close teamwork, commitment, respect for colleagues and their skills, and above all a sense of responsibility."

Mrs Edwardes said reducing lost time owing to injuries required the support and commitment of every workplace staff member to ensure safe practices were not only recognised but employed and improved upon.

She singled out the hard work of Perth District Risk Management Branch officers John Ireland, Tom Wood, Bruce Richardson and Linda Gilbert for helping to produce a sound safety platform for the District's work operations.

"Achievement of six months lost time incident free is an important milestone and I look forward to hearing of Perth District's achievement of 12 months incident free in September this year," the Minister said.

*no time lost owing to illness or injury in the workplace.



CALM Executive Director Wally Cox, second from left, relaxes with two of the Safety Award winners. From left, they are Alex Rogers and Kevin Hill, with Regional Services Director Alan Walker. Photo by Ernie McLintock



Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes, with CALM Executive Director Dr Wally Cox (left) and Marine and Coastal District Manager Peter Dans, at the release of the Swan Estuary Marine Park and adjacent Nature Reserves Management Plan. Photo by Brad Daw

New plan to save Swan Estuary

(from page 1)

Mrs Edwardes said the management plan was prepared by CALM for the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, in liaison with planning teams, park users and other interested members of the community.

"After the draft management plan was released for public comment in 1997, 22 submissions were received from a range of users and interest groups," she said.

"As a result, a number of changes were made to clarify areas where recreational fishing, prawning, crabbing and associated activities are permitted.

"The use of jet skis is now also prohibited within all waters of the Swan Estuary Marine Park and all other forms of motorised boating will be prohibited in the Wildlife Protection Zone."

Mrs Edwardes said the plan also suggested that a number of studies and works be undertaken, such as monitoring of bottom-dwelling aquatic fauna to assess any impact from recreational prawning within the Wildlife Protection Zone.

"A rehabilitation program will be developed for each of the three locations to remove weeds, excess landfill and introduced species in conjunction with the

planting of local species," she said.

"Fencing of Alfred Cove will also be extended to enclose Alfred Cove and Point Waylen to reduce inappropriate access and vandalism.

"The management plan advocates programs that involve community organisations, educational groups and volunteers in managing and monitoring flora, fauna and water quality in the reserve system and in surrounding areas," she said.

"Likewise, we will be seeking the support of local government and other State Government agencies for the complementary management of areas near or adjacent to the reserve system."

amend the plan to allow dog access at the western end of the nature reserve from Roberts Road," Mrs Edwardes said.

"In the meantime, CALM is working with the City of Melville and dog owners to identify a suitable dog swimming area to the west of the Alfred Cove section of the marine park."

Mrs Edwardes said it was only through community involvement that a balance between recreation and conservation could be met.

Pets in parks may be reviewed

FOLLOWING the release of the Swan Estuary Marine Park and Nature Reserves management plan (see page 1) Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes said that an information campaign would be mounted to inform visitors and neighbours living near the reserve system about the impact that pets can have on wildlife.

"If necessary, following the report of the Burke Drive Working Group to the City of Melville, I would support the advertising for public comment on a proposal to

New salinity strategy now under way

(from page 1)

In addition to the on-going biological survey, CALM is responsible for the following programs:

Farm forestry: More than 7000 hectares of maritime pine have been planted on previously cleared farmland since 1996, together with 500 hectares of mixed native species.

CALM's Manjimup nursery has been expanded at a cost of \$8 million to increase annual production from about 23 million seedlings to 45 million in 2000.

Land for Wildlife: Ten Land for Wildlife officers provide support for landowners wanting to protect nature conservation values on their properties.

By February, 581 landowners had applied to join the program and 71,000 hectares of remnant native vegetation

were being managed privately as Land for Wildlife sites.

Natural Diversity Recovery Catchments: Four catchments are currently being managed to protect key wetlands and natural diversity from salinity: Toolibin Lake, Lake Muir-Unicup, Lake Warden and Lake Bryde-East Lake Bryde.

Management of Crown remnants: Activities since 1996 include the rehabilitation of degraded areas, weed eradication, dieback mapping and direct seeding of local native species.

Areas of remnant vegetation totalling 2315 hectares have been protected through purchase for addition to the conservation reserve system. Agreement has been reached with landowners for the purchase of another 1170 hectares of remnant vegetation.

Drafty collects a pat on the back with his mail

A LETTER containing, not a bomb but a 'bombshell', dropped in to Colin (Drafty) Hunter's letterbox recently and found its tortuous way to the home of CALMNEWS.

The letter's contents are indicative of the high regard that our national park rangers throughout WA are held by visitors; in this case it was Drafty who collected the accolades.

Following are extracts from the letter: A few months ago I purchased a Hilux tray-top which came from your jurisdiction in Pemberton.

Whilst doing some modifications I had to remove the glove box compartment and lo and behold! Out dropped a

parcel addressed to you!! I took the liberty of reading the notes enclosed to see whether there was anything of importance.

Was there ever! When my wife and I eventually take our much-talked-about trip to WA to explore your exciting State, expect a visit. I just hope both you and I survive the rigours of growing older.

To be remembered in the way that you have been by people who 'pass by', and know you for such a short time is a credit not only to yourself but also to the service for which you work.

Colin, I would greatly appreciate the passing of the copy of this short note to either your co-workers, and/or to the

archivist/historian or whatever.

Such a reputation and obvious devotion to the forestry cause should not be hidden under bushel (or eucalypt).

Several of our camping trips on this side of Australia have been made very special by rangers similar to yourself displaying a love for our wonderful bush and sharing their knowledge of its vagaries with us.

Graeme & Liff Blakey Adelaide, SA 5140

Footnote: The parcel contained postcards, cards and letters of thanks from 'satisfied customers' from several countries, including Germany, Switzerland, Japan and the UK.

A prize for getting out of an old habit

STORIES and story leads still arrive, referring to CALM's Operational Headquarters as Como instead of Kensington, so now there's a prize for the first person to email the editor, pointing out where, in CALM NEWS, the word 'Como' appears when it should read 'Kensington'—likewise 'Hayman Road', when it should read 'Dick Perry Avenue'.

The prize is a free copy of the next issue of CALM NEWS!
Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington is the correct physical location of CALM's Operational Headquarters and the recently re-located Swan Region's offices. (See story on page 6 of the January-February, 2000 issue of CALM NEWS.)

Roy has future well mapped

ON Thursday March 16 this year, Roy Fieldgate grumbled about his computer for the last time as he logged out of the CALM network, and ended 43 years of continuous employment in the public service.

Roy's career culminated in the position of Manager of the Geographic Information Services (GIS) Section of Information Management Branch, at Kensington, where he was responsible for maintaining the department's core geographic data and producing its operational and published maps.

Roy became well known throughout the department for his comprehensive knowledge of everything related to maps, map information and map production.

He put this knowledge to use with an entrepreneurial flair in seeking to meet users' needs—particularly by exploiting improvements in technology and map data.

Perhaps most notably, he presided over the development of the so-called CALM

by Colin Pearce

Operational Graphics and Regional Operational Graphics series of maps, which together with their derivative products support a wide range of CALM's activities in the field.

The preparation for all this came during Roy's 35 years spent in DOLA, doing everything from mapping field surveys, to running the Central Map Agency, and marketing and selling the finished products to the public.

In his early survey days (about which stories abound—some of them actually true) he carried out soil surveys on the mineral sands around Eneabba, but unfortunately for him, and fortunately for CALM, he did not appreciate their commercial significance.

Instead of driving twice a day between Golden Bay and Kensington, Roy hopes to spend his retirement making a fortune on the stock market, and then cruising the open seas with his wife Val on a luxury launch.



Looking every inch the 'boatie' he's reputed to be, Roy Fieldgate and wife Val enjoy his farewell cruise and sausage sizzle on board the catamaran Adrenalin Sprint, hired by colleagues for the occasion. Photo by Jacqueline O'Toole

Wallaby rescue operation is a gem

KIMBERLEY Region staff found themselves and more than 450 agile wallabies (Macropus agilis), 'island hopping' in March—courtesy Cyclone Steve.

The cyclone impacted heavily on the Kimberley Region, bringing sustained and heavier-than-usual seasonal rains, with Lake Argyle, WA's largest man-made reservoir, reaching a record level, some two metres higher than its previous highest in 1982-1983.

CALM's Kimberley Region manager Chris Done said that the rains flooded the wallabies' usual range, forcing them onto higher ground, which became isolated islands in Lake Argyle.

"Adjacent to the Lake, the lush pastures of Grass Castle Plain (from Mary Durack's book *Kings in Grass Castles*) were largely covered by two to three metres of water," Chris said.

"Fortunately, there was plenty of roughage (mainly spinifex), on the newly isolated islands, and easterly winds had begun to blow ashore some ribbon-weed (an aquatic plant), which the wallabies seemed to find fairly palatable.

"Although this was an animal welfare emergency, rather than a conservation issue, CALM staff swiftly sprang into action, with wildlife officer Ben Tannock organising the logistics.

"East Kimberley District operations officer David Grosse, regional ecologist Gordon Graham, principal

research scientist Tony Start, clerical officer Kim Cream, maintenance worker Brett Lewis and I, lugged the 30 kg bags of food pellets to and from the boat, and distributed them on the islands. All seriously macho stuff!

"However, it quickly became clear that more resources were needed.

"Enter the benevolent rescuers—Argyle Diamond Mine—which responded promptly—and generously.

"The company financed helicopter reconnaissance, boat charter to the islands and the food pellets (almost as precious as diamonds on this occasion), that saved the wallaby population from starvation."

Others involved in the Argyle Diamond Mine's Operation Animal Rescue were AGWEST (formerly Agriculture WA) district vet Tony Tully, who checked the nutritional value of the ribbon-weed, and provided advice on the wallabies' general condition.

"Lake Argyle Cruises' director Steve Sharp also kept a keen eye on the animals, and continued providing information on their progress until their situation began to improve," Chris said.

"Opportunists all, we also collected plant samples during the food drops, to observe differences in vegetation as influenced by the less frequent fire regime on the islands compared to those on the nearby mainland.



An appropriately undressed Chris Done releases a young euro on one of the islands. Photo by Gordon Graham

CALM staff do well in swim to Rottnest



At the end of the Fremantle to Rottnest leg, and looking fresh enough to tackle a return trip, are, from left, Peter Dans, Peter Lambert and Brad Daw. Photo by Jane DuToit

CALM swimmers outlasted Suzie Maroney and completed the 19.5 km Rottnest Channel Swim, finishing in 6 hours, 14 minutes and 36 seconds in near perfect conditions. They were fifth in the mixed Relay Team-Combined Age 150 Years Category.

Motivated by Peter Lambert, Peter Dans, Brad Daw and Linda Gilbert had the comparatively easy job of swimming, while, Elena Aneire and Jordan Hampton (son of Dave) had to provide directional guidance, paddling the journey on a surf-ski, as Kingley Miller skillfully skippered his boat *Viking* through the crowded fleet and swimmers from Cottesloe Beach to Rottnest.

Former Rottnest channel swimmer Nick Gales reluctantly withdrew from the team due to work commitments in Antarctica,

leaving an opening for Linda Gilbert to join the bunch.

Linda, the team's nutritionist, coach and also a former Rottnest channel swimmer, left the beach at 7.05 a.m. in the last wave of starters. Linda, nicknamed 'the fish' made a quick start, easily found Elena on the ski and headed to the boat for the first change over.

Brad Daw, a marine ranger for four years—without a single incident of nausea, started to feel queasy around the north mole. That's what the slow pace, boat fumes, an early a.m. start and adrenalin can do for you. Brad says he felt a lot better after his first swim. His nausea returned instantly on approaching the shipping channel when he saw a baby shark. Fortunately for the rest of us he didn't tell us at the time.

Peter Dan's speed and eagerness to get to the island, resulted in him head-butting the rear end of Elena's ski more than once to get her going.

Elena's slowing could have resulted from passing 'Team Nude' with their bare male buttocks lining the gunwale of the their vessel (Unlike Suzie Maroney, the nude team didn't have any problems with the stingers).

Peter Lambert's training program included two 5-km swims the week before the big day. Needless to say he wore a huge smile every time he got in and out of the water, looking fit enough to swim straight back to Cottesloe. However, the beckoning 'Quokka Arms' won the day.

Congratulations also go to other CALM swimmers who completed the swim.

A great day was had by all.

How a Victorian was won over by WA

IN 1989, when Robyn Wilson arrived in Western Australia from Victoria, she intended staying only six months.

But she found WA really getting under her skin—and now, as part of our 'Women in CALM' series, she gives some reasons why she stayed:

"I've been with CALM for eight years now, and my current position is Geographic Information System project leader.

"In this capacity, I work in the GIS applications area with the latest computer software, managing and analysing geographical data relating CALM's lands and waters.

"I also help staff throughout the department to use GIS technologies themselves, and I develop tools for them to use in managing spatial information, and generally make their jobs easier.

"One of the things I enjoy most about my work is the sheer diversity of working with people from across the whole range of the department's activities.

"However, it does carry with it occasional frustrations, in that there is never enough time or resources to provide CALM people with the full potential that GIS tools and intelligent geographical data can provide.

"The technology is changing rapidly, so a significant part of my time is spent in just keeping up with changes in the GIS industry and seeing how they can best benefit our activities.

"I've spent the last three years working on the Regional Forest Agreement, which has proven to be my biggest career challenge to date.

"There's a vast amount of geographical data associated with the RFA, and GIS played an essential role in bringing it together and analysing it.

"In the three years spent on this process we published more than 30 maps and produced more than 2000 special maps for meetings, for politicians and others, and for use in information centres.

"Although it sometimes seemed very stressful and frustrating, I met and worked with some excellent professionals, who contributed enormously to the science behind our forests, and our flora and fauna management.

"A positive side of the RFA, although not often discussed, was how it provided us with the resources to collect invaluable data that we continue to use on a daily basis, especially in the GIS environment, to assist us in our management processes.

"One of the highlights since coming to WA was travelling up north for six weeks, when I was able to visit many of the places that CALM manages.

"It is truly a magnificent State and it's great to be part of the organisation that manages it so effectively.

"And yes, I am the only woman in CALM who drives an orange kompie!"



Robyn Wilson can't wait to test run the latest ArcInfo 8 software, which among other refinements, replaces much time-consuming typing in of commands with simple mouse clicks. Photo by Verna Costello

Keith's living a new dream

TWENTY-THREE years' service in national parks was for Keith Cunningham a dream that became a continuing reality.

For recently retired Keith, it began when the criteria for appointment as national park ranger in Western Australia stipulated a trade background, public interaction skills, and a married male over 25!

After training at Yanchep National Park, Keith, was posted (with wife Wendy), to Walpole, where he became Crystal Springs' first ranger.

Here, he began restoration of walk trails and assisted with the first prescribed area control burn over karri tangle forests in a national park.

Keith's next move was as ranger-in-charge at Pemberton. Five years later, the cold and wet were exchanged for the heat of the Pilbara's Karijini National Park.

Here, he liaised with the Shire on road works, designed new camping grounds, became the fire control officer for CALM, the Bushfires

by Melinda Bolt

Board and the Shire, and provided information on the park to tourists, as they sipped Wendy's excellent coffee.

He was also the local SES man, co-ordinating many rescues with the local police, the Shire and Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Keith also became involved in WA's first Aboriginal rangers' training program, his close liaison with tribal elders resulting in young Aboriginal men beginning a career within the parks.

During bushfires, Wendy became the invisible force organising food and drinks, changing tyres, monitoring the high frequency radios, cooking, cleaning and housing weary firefighters.

In 1993, Keith was awarded a National Medal for fire service.

Transferring to Shark Bay in 1995, Keith was involved in many important construction projects, including the

design and erection of a predator-proof fence on the Peron Peninsula.

Keith also led volunteers in the construction of Peron Visitor Centre and upgrades to the Peron Homestead.

At Francois Peron National Park, Keith worked hard to eradicate eight weed species; established free gas barbecues, and built breeding cages for some of Australia's most threatened native species, such as the western barred bandicoot, woylie and bilby.

Keith and Wendy now live a different dream—on their property at Wannamal, where they are building their new home, preparing a dam for black bream, and planting craft-wood trees, sandalwood, and a grevillea hedge to encourage honey possums.

In recognition of his exemplary service, CALM has presented Keith with a certificate for Long and Meritorious Service.

Happy retirement, Keith and Wendy!



Ruth Morgan, photographed at Crawley, with not even a snowflake in sight. Photo by Verna Costello

Ruth has a (n)icy holiday

STANDING in the freezing wind and rain at 1700 metres, and listening to a lecture on geomorphology, while slushing through alpine bogs is not everybody's idea of a holiday.

However, from the comfort of sun-drenched Perth, CALMScience research scientist Ruth Morgan decided that since she was going to be 'in the area', she would incorporate the annual Alpine Ecology Course into her holiday in Victoria.

Below, Ruth tells us of her experience:

"CALM provided part support, as some of the topics covered during the course were relevant to my work, which is aimed at the conservation of ecosystems in Western Australia.

"Being from WA, which is not exactly known for its alpine areas, and also being the first West Australian ever to attend the course, I encountered a fair

amount of interest from both colleagues at CALM and participants at the course as to just how relevant the course could possibly be!

"The Alpine Ecology Course, organised by LaTrobe University, is a six-day course that covers the basics of alpine ecosystems and associated land use and conservation issues.

"With a background in zoology and a job that entails deciphering a lot of plant data, I figured the course was a good opportunity to get some hands-on experience in plant ecology.

"The idea of the course is that the techniques taught in the alpine setting can be applied anywhere.

"After an introductory day spent looking at alpine flora, fauna, *geomorphology and soils, using the Bogong High Plains as the classroom, we then chose from a range of field projects for the remaining time.

"With projects such as the

rehabilitation of alpine bogs, hunting for cryptogams (mosses, lichens, etc.) on granites, sampling invertebrates in alpine streams, and trapping the mountain pygmy possum and alpine sheoak skink, it was a difficult choice.

"We also analysed the results and gave group presentations, which turned out to be an afternoon of science and comedy.

"The highlight of the course for me was an afternoon spent with one of Victoria's foremost plant ecologists, David Ashton, travelling from the top of the mountain to the town of Mt Beauty near the bottom, taking soil samples and looking at corresponding changes in vegetation.

"Anyone wanting more information about the course should contact Warwick Papst at LaTrobe University. Email: W.Papst@latrobe.edu.au."

*The study of characteristics, origin and development of landforms.



Savouring the perfume of a honey myrtle, Keith dreams of the new challenges that await him at Wannamal. Photo by Melinda Bolt

High achieving team reaches new heights

WITH the school year well under way, The Hills Forest's dedicated team of leaders is busy taking students from pre-primary to Year 12 through a variety of curriculum-linked wildlife education programs.

The team has grown from two part-timers in 1993—when just 250 students visited the centre—to six part-time leaders and two clerical staff, with participation from staff of CALM's Aboriginal Tourism, Education and Training Unit. Other local wildlife experts are also called in as needed.

Last year, the team ran activities and camps for nearly 19,000 students, teachers and parents.

The aims of the excursions, camps and activity programs are that:

- students must be *in* the forest to experience and learn *about* the forest.
- they must find out more about the natural environment and the

by Kate Baxter

role of effective nature conservation, and they have a responsibility to conserve the natural environment and its life forms for future generations.

The first of the programs, *Discovering the Hills Forest*, remains one of the most popular, and a further eight have joined this exciting, action-packed, environmental program.

The program has Years 6 and 7 students exploring the jarrah forest ecosystem that examines the community's use of forest resources and shows students how to lessen their impact on the forest.

Excursions are supported by classroom resource packs, and teachers are able to attend Professional Development Days.

Trialed in 1998, the latest program has direct links with Western Shield and includes



The Hills Forest education team from left: Liz Moore, Jenny Forrest, Jill Francis, Wendy Hayter, Lorita Schmitz, Louise Austen. (Absent: Marie Jacquier, Winsome Mortimer and Anne Taylor.) Photo by Michael Phillips

a *Threatened Species Excursion*.

More than 1,000 students enjoyed this full-day excursion, with a hands-on native animal contact session, an introduction to the importance of Western Shield, with

some bait mixing and trap setting.

They were also shown what to do with the contents of a scientist's toolbox, how CALM monitors native animals for population increases in baited areas, and how to

measure and check animals' pouches.

Around The Hills Forest, students can see a demonstration pit-fall trap and the large number of log hollows and dens, cockatoo tubes, bat and possum boxes strategically

positioned around the Activity Centre to attract native wildlife back to the area.

Money for the wood and materials used to make these boxes was raised by their counterparts at Applecross Primary

School—all part of the message that they, too, can make a difference!

For further information about The Hills Forest school programs please contact Wendy Hayter on 9295 6149 or Liz Moore on 9334 0387.



Brenda and Jack James beside Lake Mcness in Yanchep National Park. Photo by Chris Garnett

Full lives lead to long lives

JACK and Brenda James just don't know when to stop!

by John Hunter

And why should they. They've enjoyed helping travellers and tourists see this great State of ours for some thirty-three years, and in that time they have broadened their horizons, enriched their own life experiences and acquired a lot of good friends.

The couple first went bush to Karijini National Park (then Hamersley Range) in 1978, when Jack was appointed mobile ranger and a newly chosen work ethic and opportunity opened their eyes and hearts to some spectacular country.

Since then, Jack has continually stated that he wouldn't mind a quid for all the times visitors have said "Strewth, I wouldn't mind your job—and you get paid as well."

Within weeks, the splendour

of the land and the development of friendships with neighbours and visitors had Brenda breaking out into reporter mode.

Soon the first copy of the National Parks Authority's internal newsletter 'Papa Delta Data' (a radio call sign), was being distributed to all staff throughout the State.

For the five years prior to retirement, Jack and Brenda plied the tracks and highways between Windjana Gorge in the Kimberleys, and Cape LeGrand on the south coast, helping visitors and maintaining facilities.

Being marooned by flood waters in Windjana Gorge with 28 park visitors, including a new-born baby and a heart

patient, was no picnic but to while away the days and the boredom, the park was 'rubbish-rid' and the boundaries checked.

At one time it was reported that they had worked ten weeks straight without a day off, but as Jack says, "It was a wonderful way of life, not just a job".

Brenda's ability to co-ordinate her State-wide newsletter while taking care of the mobile ranger 'home-base-cum-office' while Jack was 'on the beat', is a wonderful example of dedication to national parks.

Today, although well into retirement, they are still on the advisory committee of Yanchep National Park, produce craft-ware, and help with the shop in the park.

As they both would say, "It's not the years in your life that matter, it's the life in your years!"

Reserves clean-up progresses

ABOUT 22 hectares of degraded land in nature reserves in the Narrogin area is the target of a massive clean-up and revegetation program this year—the third, and probably last, year of the program.

CALM Narrogin District Manager Stephen White said the work, in and around seven nature reserves in the Quairading, Bruce Rock, Kondinin and Kulin Shires, would receive top priority for the District's Salinity Action Plan funds.

"Rehabilitation of gravel and sand pits will be completed and the rubbish buried at Lake Gounter Nature Reserve at Hyden, completing the program CALM started there last year," Mr White said.

"We will also be helping the

local progress association in a clean-up around the local tip, which has gradually spread onto the reserves over the years.

"Other reserves to be treated this year include sand pits at Lake Hurlstone and Lake Varley Nature Reserves, gravel pits at Pederah, Jilakin Rock and South Kulin Nature Reserves, and rubbish burial at Wamenusking and Wialkutting Nature Reserves."

Mr White said the aim of these works was to clean up the sites for revegetation programs and land conservation.

"A bulldozer will be used at almost all of these sites to bury rubbish and spread top-soil over affected areas," he said.

"The bulldozer will then rip through each pit every two metres to a depth of at least 750



Almost engulfed in the rubbish they have collected from Lake Gounter Reserve are from left CALM Narrogin District operations officer Greg Durell, volunteer Elizabeth Early, CALM Narrogin District manager Stephen White, and volunteers Kent Mouritz and Kath James. Photo by Jane Mouritz

mm, so that any trapped seed in the soil is 'stirred up'. This is expected to encourage seed germination, which will form

the basis of a new and diverse stand of vegetation."

Mr White said all of the sites would be inspected after two

seasons and if there appeared to be no new growth, seedlings grown from seeds collected from the sites would be planted.

"The rehabilitation of the sites and restoration of natural vegetation will also help in the fight against salinity."

If you dreaded the Y2K bug, hold on to your hat



Mark Laming (left) and Richard Tomlinson examine one of the new GDA-compliant map products. Photo by Verna Costello

WE'VE survived the Y2K meltdown, the February 29 scare and now we are into the next potential disaster.

On Monday, December 4, in this year of Our Lord 2000, Western Australia will move about 190 metres, in a north-easterly direction. (No, it isn't an attempt by us sandgroppers to get a little closer to our east coast brethren.)

We will have lived through a 'spheroidal shift', and it's fair to predict that there won't be any casualties (providing you hold on *really* tight if you should feel the earth move. Just kidding.)

More than a decade ago, the Inter-governmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping of Australia (ICSM), adopted the Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA'94). This decision was ratified by the WA government in 1994 and has been 'in progress' since then.

The Western Australian Land Information Secretariat (WALIS) is responsible for overseeing GDA'94's implementation in WA and the Department of Land Administration (DoLA), is the lead agency—and we are required to follow DoLA's lead.

More information about GDA'94 can be accessed via the hotlink in the Corporate Services (GIS) Section's home page on CALMWeb.

And 'yes' there is a LOT of extra information available.

The next thing for us to do is to identify data and data sets that exist in both hard and soft copy from within CALM.

Map stocks in hard-copy form, must be either stamped or have a sticker with a warning notice attached (see box). Where soft-copy (electronic)

by Richard Tomlinson

data exists, we have to decide whether or not it is of corporate significance and then target these data for appropriate treatment.

As a minimum requirement, a metadata statement must be prepared. 'Metadata', for the uninitiated, is information about data: who is the custodian, date of creation, maintenance cycle and, of course, what reference spheroid.

What will happen, now? The plan is for at least one member of the GDA Co-ordination team to visit each CALM site and help staff determine what data there is, and how it needs to be treated.

This whole exercise can be characterised as frantic activity by a few (mostly the GDA Co-ordinators) and a warm, fuzzy feeling by everybody else, knowing that they have someone to blame if something goes wrong!

WARNING

Information on this map is referenced to the AUSTRALIAN GEODETIC DATUM 1984 (AGD84) and will differ by approximately 200 metres SW to positions based on the new GEOCENTRIC DATUM of AUSTRALIA 1994 (GDA94), to be implemented on 4 December 2000.

All heights will remain the same. For further information contact the Manager, GIS Section, Information Management Branch by telephoning (08) 9334 0342 or e-mail.

CALM initiates groundbreaking collaborative study

by Mitzi Vance

IN the first comprehensive study of the movement of rare dugong species in WA, CALM principal marine zoologist Nick Gales is leading a pioneering project to track the movement of Shark Bay's unique dugongs.

The project involves a special collaboration of scientists and researchers from CALM, Edith Cowan University and James Cook University, as well as members of the Yadgalah Aboriginal Corporation of Denham.

Nick said that unlike previously held surveys, this study included the direct involvement and insights of the local Aboriginal group—a key factor in the project's success.

"Their involvement not only provides invaluable information and advice on the history of the species in the Shark Bay area, but also facilitates greater involvement by them in conservation management," Nick said.

Dugongs are highly threatened throughout most of their



CALM volunteer Keith Shadbolt (far left) carries a satellite tag on his shoulder and a 3-metre tether attached to the dugong. Beside the boat (from left) are Brendan Bellottie and Daniel Cocks of the Yadgalah Aboriginal Corporation. They captured the dugong, which is being secured by Denham operations officer Brad Barton and Edith Cowan University Masters student Dave Holley. On board are Dr Ivan Lawler (left) of James Cook University and professional fisherman Benny Bellottie, also of the Yadgalah Aboriginal Corporation. Photo by Nick Gales

range, which includes east Africa, the northern Indian Ocean, south-east Asia, the south-west Pacific and parts of Australia.

With a population of more than 10,000 animals, Shark

Bay is an important stronghold for the species.

Nick said that the innovative project arose from the need to understand dugong movements and identify their important habitats to ensure

effective conservation management.

"Human activities such as tourism, aquaculture and exploration can then be better developed to ensure that any impacts on dugongs

are minimised," he said.

"To successfully track dugongs, they are first caught in shallow water from small boats.

"A specially designed floating GPS satellite tag is then

attached to the animal via a tether.

"The GPS tag records the position, water temperature and the dugong's diving activity, and stores these data until the tag is released from the dugong some time later (using a special VHF radio-activated electronic link) and retrieved.

"A pilot project for the study was successfully conducted last September, during which the group learnt how to safely capture and handle the large animals.

"It also provided a means to test the new equipment and the release mechanisms, especially the satellite tags, which were built specifically for this dugong study."

The shy, gentle marine herbivore, which features prominently in mythical sea legends, closely resembles a rotund dolphin or 'sea cow' and has been hunted for thousands of years.

This, coupled with the depletion of sea grass meadows in some areas and a low reproductive rate compared to that of most mammals, has led to a decline in the species over most of its range.

Murray's gone, hopefully not for long

ONE of CALM's rising stars has decided to meet new challenges as operations manager of remote Lord Howe Island.

Blackwood District manager Murray (Charlie) Carter was recently appointed to the position by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

In his 15 years with CALM, Murray served three Districts in two Regions: Pemberton, Katanning and Blackwood, rising through the ranks after graduating from CALM's fabled Cadet School, holding positions as forest ranger, ranger-in-charge, and finally as Blackwood District Manager.

In 1996, he took up the challenge of steering an emerging Blackwood District down the rocky road of

by Bob Chandler

restructure, following the merger of the former Nannup and Kirup Forest Districts.

When District staff farewelled Murray, his wife Linda and sons Jake and Riley, they joined MC Trevor Radford in lamenting the impending economic downturn at the Kirup Social Club.

They also mourned the loss of the district's legendary pumpkin grower, and the productivity deficit soon to be felt by Kirup community organisations, where Murray and Linda were energetic contributors and respected members.

Trevor's eulogy was followed by more from several others, including Brian Mahoney and Greg Miller, representing the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) workforce from Kirup and Nannup.

They commended Murray on his open, honest and approachable management style that saw them become a cohesive, highly motivated and self-managing group.

The final speaker, senior operations officer Brad Commins, thanked Linda for her support, enabling Murray to devote the time needed to effectively lead a large and highly diverse District.

"Murray held forthright but enlightened views that often challenged con-

vention, but they help set the direction for the District well into the future," Brad said.

His legendary energy and wit was never more evident than when he expounded his theories during after hours informal strategy meetings, or philosophical discussions.

"Murray challenged staff to achieve excellence at every opportunity, and developed junior staff to a level that made them targets for other managers to recruit".

The information Murray gained as a result of his *1999 Lane Poole Scholarship should prove useful to the architects of the new structures under the Forest Products Commission.

Murray has expressed his fervent



hope to return eventually to CALM, and it is the hope of those in the Blackwood District that he will.

*See January-February issue of CALM NEWS.

New book reveals the Swan

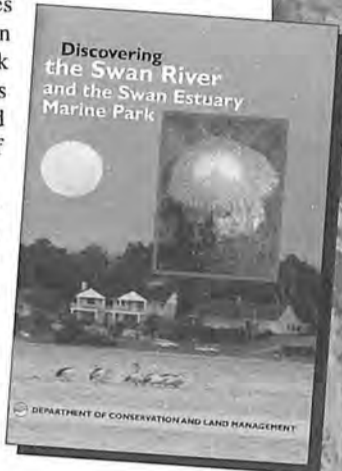
AS part of the launch of the Swan Estuary Marine Park and adjacent Nature Reserves management plan, (see page 1) Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes released CALM's publication *Discovering the Swan River and the Swan Estuary Marine Park*.

Mrs Edwardes said the pocket-sized, 72-page publication would further help facilitate greater community awareness of the natural attributes of this special area.

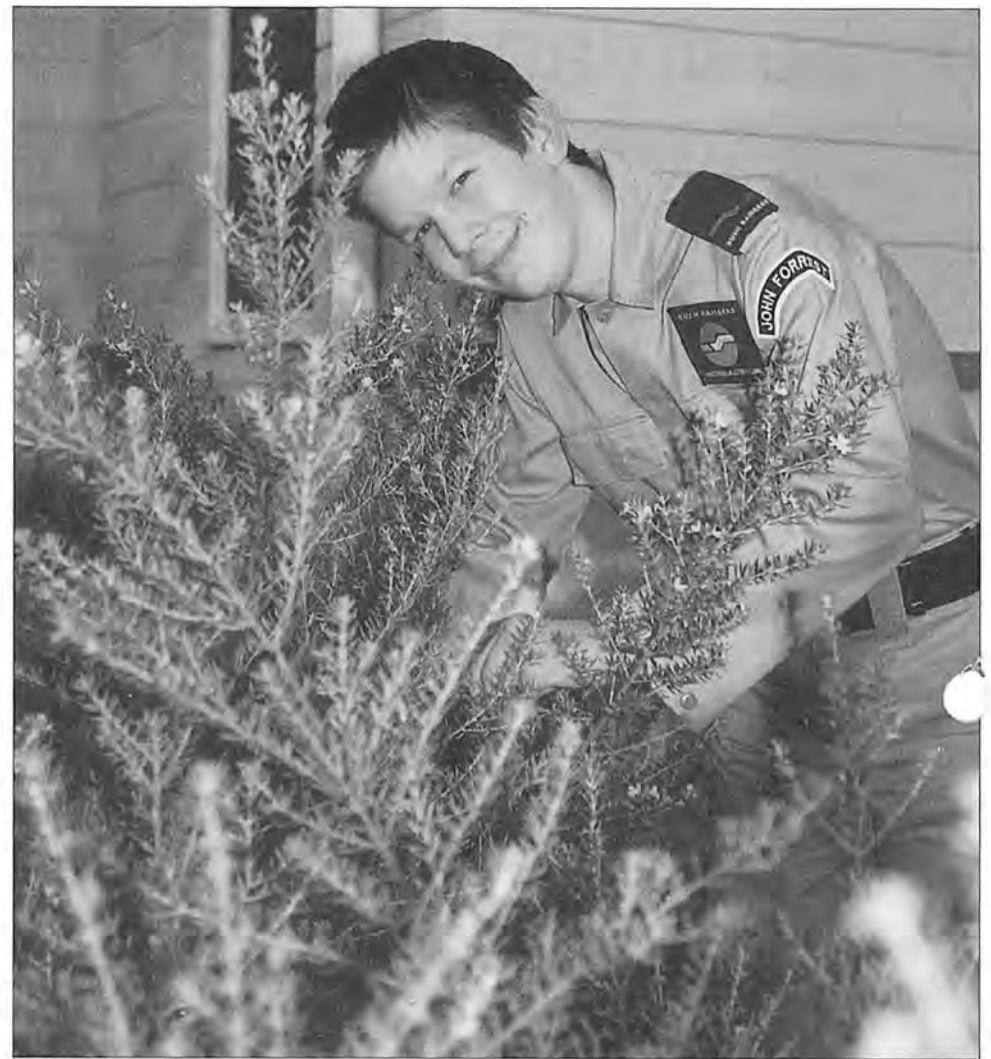
"The book provides comprehensive information on the history of the Swan River, its Aboriginal heritage and the large variety of terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals that call the Swan River home," she said.

"The book also provides information on recreational activities in and around the Swan River, from walk trails and cycle trails to windsurfing and snorkel-ing sites of interest.

"The book is available at many book stores, and is part of CALM's Discovery Series, which provides people with a guide to some of WA's nature-based tourism treasures."



Seahorse photo by Ann Storrie



In addition to his Bush Ranger duties, James has responsibility for the front garden of his family's home. Here, he was checking on the condition of the plants during the March hot spell.

Photo by Verna Costello



CALM wildlife officer Darren Graham and reserves officer Sarah Adriano remove a misguided swan from underground mining operations at Kanowna Bell Gold Mine.

In mining, it's swan thing after another

IN what is thought to be a first in Western Australia, Goldfields wildlife officer Darren Graham went deep 'under cover' to rescue a black swan that had made its way some 220 metres underground at Kanowna Bell Gold Mine, north of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

Two swans were seen at the bottom of the open cut area, where water had accumulated with recent rains.

When disturbed by mining activity above, one flew away. The other made its way down an offshoot tunnel, eventually

coming to rest in complete darkness, in a pool 220 metres from the surface, and nearly 200 metres from the tunnel entrance.

The area was due to be set up for blasting, and the pitch black maze of tunnels meant it was unlikely that the swan would make its own way out in time.

Assisted by reserves officer Sarah Adriano, on her first day's work in the Goldfields Region, the rescue went without a hitch, and was over in minutes. In fact, the essential mine-site safety induction and the 'kit-up' took considerably longer.

CALM Goldfields management and staff would like to thank Kanowna Bell staff Megan Bright and Ian Pimmer for their help and co-operation.

"The swan was a bit aggressive, as they don't take too kindly to being handled," Darren said.

"However, he survived, apparently unscathed—and so did we."

The swan was released (strong and healthy but somewhat browned off by all the attention) at Lake Douglas near Kalgoorlie.

One Bush Ranger's story

BY the end of 1999, James Wishart had completed his first year as a student at John Forrest Senior High School, and during that year he volunteered to take part in CALM's Bush Ranger Program.

As a CALM Bush Ranger, James made a commitment that, for one day a week after school, he would take part in nature conservation projects, much of which involved 'hands-on' work in the field.

The main focus for him and his fellow Bush Rangers at John Forrest SHC, was the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary, and this will be the topic of a story by James for a future issue of CALM NEWS.

Meanwhile, he has written the following on his and his

fellow Bush Rangers' contribution to the success of last year's Royal Agricultural Show:

"In about June 1999, I decided, as part of my community service, to contact the WA Royal Agricultural Society to find out if CALM Bush Rangers could help at the Royal Show the following September.

"I spoke to the organiser of the Conservation and Landcare Pavilion, who said that the Society would very much appreciate our help. My fellow Bush Rangers agreed to take part and our instructors agreed to help me organise a duty roster.

"I volunteered to work for four out of the six days, while other Rangers contributed whatever time they could spare.

"We did just about everything! We packed Landcare show bags, we talked about our program to other students from all over Western Australia, and were general 'dogs bodies', ready to help at the drop of a hat.

"We also had a very good time, and offered to help organise CALM Bush Rangers from other schools who would like to become involved in helping at the year 2000 Royal Agricultural Show. They can contact me by phoning Mr Gerald Fontaine at John Forrest-SHC on 9272 1255."

Note: It has just come to our notice that James was a finalist in the recent Youth Environment Category of the Western Australian Youth Awards.

New course 'fires' up



PICTURED, from left to right, at the recent inaugural Fire Sector Commander Course, were forest rangers Alan Wright (Mundaring District) and Ian Freeman (Dwellingup District), CALM fire senior fire training officer Ross Mead, forest ranger Dennis McDonald (Mundaring District) and Yanchep National Park grounds and facilities ranger Gerald Drummond.

Keen participants all, they had decided to forego morning tea in favour of mastering one of the training exercises.

The course, held at CALM's Kensington Training Centre, was designed for those who are likely to be the first CALM officer to arrive at the scene of a fire, or who may be a sector commander, particularly during the progress of a major fire.

The aim of the course is to have those taking part acquire skills in managing a small fire and identification and application of appropriate fire suppression techniques, and includes supervision of the crew and fire-fighting equipment.

Most of those attending the inaugural course were from CALM's Swan Region. Others were from Geraldton, Merredin and Katanning Districts. Photo by Verna Costello