

Mixed Fortunes at Yanchep



Honey Possum.

A mixture of good news and bad news has been the order of the day during recent biological survey work at Yanchep National Park. Major sampling sessions for the survey, which is being carried out by officers from CALM's Research Division with assistance from local Park staff, began in October

and are being concluded currently. Rangers at Yanchep have assisted with digging holes for the 138 pit traps used in the survey, and have also assisted in the trapping sessions.



Western Spiny-tailed Gecko.

The good news is that the reptiles and frogs seem to be doing well and we have been able to add several species to the list of species known for Yanchep. Interesting finds included Turtle Frogs which were caught in pit traps after rain, and the endangered Carpet Python, which Park Rangers occasionally record in the Park. A number of interesting plants have come to light, including the second known population of a declared rare eucalypt which is so 'new' that it hasn't even been named yet - and it is only 50 km from the GPO!

The bad news is that some of the native mammals seem not to be faring very well. The diminutive Honey Possum is still abundant, but we have not yet caught any of several other species of mammals which have previously been recorded in the Park. The only rodents we have found so far are the introduced Black Rat and House Mouse. During extensive trapping in both spring and autumn, we failed to trap the native Bush

Rat, which was once common in the Park, but is now obviously quite rare. The Brush-tailed Possum has also declined in numbers, and is possibly no longer resident in the Park. Three other mammals known to have occurred in Yanchep and not recorded in recent years are the Chuditch, Ash-grey Mouse and Western Pygmy-possum.

Unfortunately, it is not known what has caused the decline of these species but it is likely that introduced animals (cats, foxes) are implicated. Further understanding will only come about through studies of the biology of individual species.

Allan Burbidge.

Peel Inlet ERMP Released

The Environmental Review and Management Program for the Peel Inlet and Harvey Estuary was released by the Government on May 23rd. It is the result of ten years of investigation into the causes of noxious algal growth in this major coastal lagoon, and possible ways of controlling it.

Written comments on the ERMP proposals are sought, and will be received by the Environmental Protection Authority up to the deadline of August 1st, 1988.

The proposed management strategy has six elements:

- construction of a new channel to the ocean at Dawesville to allow flushing of the Harvey Estuary
- modification of farm fertiliser practices to reduce the amount of phosphorous leaching into the system
- moratorium on further clearing and drainage in the catchment until suitable policies are developed
- expansion of intensive agricultural activities in the catchment will only be permitted subject to stringent restrictions on nutrient loss to ground water and drains
- investigation of the potential for farm forestry with a view to the afforestation of up to half the sandy soils to reduce phosphorous leaching
- continuation of weed harvesting operations

The ERMP can be obtained from: The Department of Agriculture, the Department of Marine and Harbours, or Local Government Authorities in the region.

Banksia Atlas Published

The Banksia Atlas, a three year volunteer participant mapping project involving all 75 Australian species, has been published by the Australian Government Printing Service. The project was run by CALM research staff with major funding provided by the Australian Biological Resources Study.

More than 400 enthusiastic contributors and their friends from throughout Australia participated. About 23 000 records of banksias at particular locations were reported and mapped. New species

were identified. Information on flowering, habitat, new shoot growth, habit and pollination was collected in comprehensive detail. Many conservation problems and potential research projects were elucidated.

The Banksia Atlas retails for \$39.95, and is available from the Australian Government Publications Office in each capital city, or the CALM office at 50 Hayman Road, Como.

LANDSCOPE

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EDITORIAL

Anybody who reads tourist brochures in this State will appreciate that the tourist industry is, to a large extent, dependent on natural features and wildlife for its 'product'. Many people who are concerned with the natural environment are antagonistic to tourism, and it is certainly true that in the past there have been some insensitive tourist developments in the State. But, just as the farming community over the past ten years has become one of the greatest allies of conservation, so, increasingly, is the tourist industry. For example, in a recently published tourist industry report on tourism in the Kimberley, the need to preserve this environment was given top priority.

This report is indicative of the growing awareness in that industry of the symbiotic relationship between tourism and the protection and maintenance of our unique flora, fauna and landscapes. Rather than being despoilers, the tourist industry has the potential to become one of the strongest advocates for conservation in the broadest sense.

There is a great potential for synergism between those interested in the science of conservation and the tourist industry. One of the ways by which the tourist potential of any natural area can be enhanced without any cost to the environment is by providing information to the visitors on the natural science that makes that area special.

Landscape is one avenue by which we are attempting to provide an added dimension to the 'look it's lovely' tourist experience. Interestingly, while *Landscape* receives almost universal acclaim from the general public, there is ongoing, often vigorous, internal debate about how technical we should make the magazine. We would appreciate your views.



Shark Bay, p.8



Carving the Future, p.33



Garden Escapes, p.44

Cover Photo

'Now, just how do I find my way out of this Renoir landscape?'
Photographer **Richard Woldendorp**
captured this lizard taking a sighting.