



ENDANGERED!



THE "WALPOLE WAX"

Walpole wax (*Chamelaucium* sp.) is found in only a few habitats in the wilderness area of Walpole-Nornalup National Park. Here, it forms impressive displays of colour on coastal heathland from September to November.

Walpole wax is a shrub, related to the Geraldton wax, that grows to one or two metres tall. It is similar to a small pine tree in shape and produces thousands of small white or pink-tinged flowers in spring and early summer.

It is one of the thousands of Western Australian species without a formal scientific name. CALM botanists Neville Marchant and Greg Keighery have studied the *Chamelaucium* genus for a number of years and have located a number of populations of Walpole

wax relatives on granite rocks near the south coast, from near Northcliffe to Two Peoples Bay.

They range from spindly shrubs with the same flower structure as the coastal Walpole wax to populations with variations in flower structure.

North of Mount Frankland there is a related species that is similar to Walpole wax, that was named in 1878 by well-known botanist Ferdinand von Mueller as *Darwinia forrestii*. The flowers of this rare species have a long style characteristic of other *Darwinia* species. However, it will soon be renamed because its other flower structures are those of the genus *Chamelaucium*.

For 30 years the Walpole wax was incorrectly known as Esperance wax

and was widely cultivated, although its wild locality was unknown until quite recently. Because of the common name, it was assumed that the original plant from which the cultivated material had been propagated came from the Esperance area.

Then, about 10 years ago, Albany wildflower enthusiast Eileen Croxford told Neville Marchant that the pine-like species came from Walpole.

Taxonomic studies that will result in names for the new species and variants, as well as an understanding of relationships between them, are currently being undertaken at the Western Australian Herbarium.

NEVILLE MARCHANT

LANDSCOPE

VOLUME 5 NO 2 SUMMER EDITION 1989/1990



Dolphins, whales and seals frequently strand along the WA coast. Find out who helps them and what they do on p. 10.



Powerful forces have formed the rocks and land surface of WA over billions of years. See p. 48.



Why are the thousands of feral camels that roam inland Australia the scourge of the desert? Turn to p. 22.



Explore the fascinating subterranean worlds deep beneath the earth on p. 28.



Inlets and rivers, towering karri and tingle forests, rugged coastline and remote wilderness areas - Walpole-Nornalup National Park has it all. See p. 15.



Australian sea-lion (Neophoca cinerea). Photo - Nick Gales

FEATURES

SHORE SURVIVORS

NICK GALES, DOUG COUGHRAN & CAROLYN THOMSON 10

WALPOLE-NORNALUP... AN ANCIENT LAND

GRANT WARDELL-JOHNSON & VANESSA SMITH 15

DESERT BIGFOOT

ANDREW BURBIDGE 22

LIVING LIMESTONE

JOHN WATSON, BARBARA YORK-MAIN & BILL HUMPHREYS 28

UNRAVELLING THE MYSTERIES OF VERTICORDIA

ELIZABETH GEORGE 35

SHOOTING FROM THE STARS

RAY BAILEY 39

PHOTO ESSAY

RAINBOW DESERT 42

BLAZING COMPUTERS

JUDI BECK 46

ROCKS OF AGES

GEOFFREY SHAW 48

REGULARS

IN PERSPECTIVE 4

BUSH TELEGRAPH 6

ENDANGERED

WALPOLE WAX 27

URBAN ANTICS 54

Managing Editor: Ron Kawallak

Editor: Carolyn Thomson

Designers: Louise Burch/Robyn Mundy

Production: Karen Addison/Margaret Wilke

Maps: Project Mapping, CALM

Advertising: Tim Langford-Smith ☎ (09) 389 8644 Fax: 389 8266

Colour Separations by The Colour Set

Printed in Western Australia by Kaleidoscope

© ISSN 0815-4465 All material copyright. No part of the contents of the publication may be reproduced without the consent of the publishers.



Published by Dr S Shea, Executive Director,
Department of Conservation and Land Management,
50 Hayman Road, Como, Western Australia 6152.