

## FROM BEING SEEN TO SEA BEING

The water quality in three marinas on Perth's metropolitan coast will determine the siting of a sea oceanarium for Atlantis Marine Park's nine dolphins.

Atlantis closed in August and Two Rocks, Hillarys and Mindarie Keys marinas are being considered for the dolphins' temporary home by the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the owners of Atlantis, the Tokyu Corporation. Both parties are engaged in a program to rehabilitate and return the dolphins and most other captive animals to their natural habitat. The program is being funded by Tokyu at a



cost estimated to be more than \$2 million.

Rehabilitation, expected to take three years and attract international attention, is being

run by marine mammal expert Dr Nick Gales under the direction of CALM. Working with him are several key CALM staff and seven dolphin handlers from Atlantis. The eventual aim is to release the dolphins as a family pod.

However, several hurdles face the dolphins on their path to freedom: they have to get used to normal bacterial levels associated with living in the sea (Atlantis pools were chlorinated), learn to feed for themselves on live fish, adapt to the move into a contained ocean environment, learn to respond to new signals, and get used to (and follow) a boat on 'training runs' in the wild. Their movements will be monitored by transmitters and time depth recorders attached to their dorsal fins.

Bottlenose dolphin numbers in the waters off the metropolitan area are being surveyed to determine pod size and structure, daily movements, and foraging activity. This information will be vital for the dolphins' eventual release, and will provide previously unavailable research data on the local dolphin population. Similar research will continue to ensure the animals

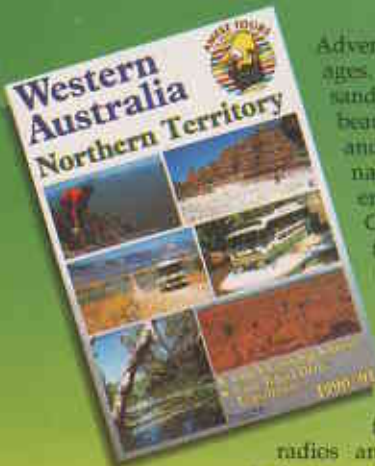
*Two dolphins and calf in the Atlantis pool.*

*Photo - Doug Coughran*

integrate with the wild population.

Meanwhile, eight sea-lions from Atlantis are being released off the South Coast, their original stamping ground, and the park's sub-Antarctic fur seals will soon be released off the continental shelf south of Augusta. A group of five fur seals and one Australian sea-lion unable to be released will be relocated in zoos and other marine parks.

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## WHALE TALES



Each spring, humpback whales migrating to feeding grounds shelter near Perth. CALM guide-lines ensure whales are protected.

Underwater World, with the Pacific Whale Foundation, provides whale watching trips. For information call 09 447 7034.

# LANDSCOPE

VOLUME SIX NO. 1 - SPRING EDITION 1990



*In the central Kimberley, a screw-pine-surrounded creek - just one of the threatened areas in this fragile frontier. Turn to page 22.*



*Until 1984 more was known about what was underneath the Nullarbor than what was on top. But with such a vast area to study, where do we start? See page 16.*



*Public awareness and involvement is vital in the conservation of WA's rare and endangered flora. Page 49.*



*Ten WA mammal species have become extinct in the last 200 years. What can be done to ensure no more are lost forever? Page 28.*



*Forests protect our environment. They also provide timber. How do we strike a balance? Turn to page 35.*

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*Dolphins and whales are perhaps the best-known inhabitants of Western Australia's coastal waters. But this unique area is also home to an astonishing range of marine flora and fauna, from sea-turtles and coral reefs in the north to sea-grass banks and great white sharks in the south. See page 10.*

*Illustrated by Martin Thompson.*



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Colour Separation by Prepress Services

Printed in Western Australia by Kaleidoscope

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