A WILDFLOWER WEEKEND

Flora buffs will get a chance to discover the wealth of wildflowers at Manjimup's Perup forest, on a course offered by the University of Western Australia extension program.

Like the Wild Weekend at Perup, which focuses on the area's unique and endangered mammals (see *LANDSCOPE*, Summer 1990-91), people who do the course get the opportunity to participate in practical conservation.

Last year they went in search of a species of *Andersonia*, a type of heath, that had not been seen since 1966. The *Andersonia* was discovered by Tony Annels, who runs CALM's herbarium at Manjimup, on a quartzite ridge that supports many Wheatbelt species.

Course members relocated and photographed it - an opportunity that thrilled the wildflower enthusiasts.

"The place where the plant had been found had been quarantined because of dieback and we had to get special permission to enter it," said Greg Keighery, who took the course last year. "No-one had been on the tracks since the area was quarantined and there were large trees growing in the middle of the road."

Last year course partipants also removed five rubbish bags of fresias from the nature reserve. Fresias were introduced to the area when it was a farm and they choke out the native plants, especially the orchids.

"The course gives people an idea of the number of different plant communities in the forest and of how complex the forest is to manage," said Greg.

Perup forest is a particularly rich area for orchids, as it supports both wet country orchids and dry country orchids. Some areas have been recently burnt, which stimulates orchid flowering.

Participants are also taken spotlighting for the possums, woylies, chuditch and other nocturnal animals - many of them rare - which live in the forest.

Botanist Bronwyn Keighery will take this year's course. People who would like to attend the Wildflower Weekend (1-3 November) should telephone Jean Collins at the University of WA on 380 2433.

A rare Andersonia species, lost since the 1960s, was found during a wildflower weekend at Perup. Photo - Greg Keighery

OF PIXIE MOPS AND BEARDED HEATHS

Botanists have completed a detailed vegetation map and complete flora list for Scott National Park and discovered new populations of poorly known and presumed-rare plants on the Scott Plain with the help of a Federal endangered species program grant.

The Scott Plain is a complex of low-lying wetlands and ridges between Black Point and Augusta - an area increasingly pressured from tourism, new town developments, mining and farm clearing.

Botanists Chris Robinson and Greg Keighery were able to map and list more than 500 species for Scott National Park. Many new populations of poorly known or presumed-rare plants were located, including the Scott Plain myrtle, beard heath, wiry sedge, melaleuca and silvery pea. The Scott Plain twining wild violet, previously known only from one stand at Margaret River, now has four recorded populations in the park.

Numerous range extensions of locally endemic species were found. Some of the more spectacular of these were an undescribed species of trigger plant from near Busselton, and the twining *Ampera* from Black Point, their ranges both extending to Scott National Park.

Surveys were also undertaken and flora lists compiled for Chester, Moonah and Forest Grove forests. Accurate maps for the ranges of the Boranup wattle and Boranup *Bossiaea* have also been made.

Surveys of the ironstone heaths on the lower Swan and Scott Plains revealed a previously unknown species of ironstone pixie mop on the Swan Plain.

To their disappointment, Robinson and Keighery did not locate any substantial populations of the declared plants ironstone darwinia and round-leaved lambertia. Fortunately, consultant botanists have found stands on land owned by BHP. The company has agreed to protect these areas to preserve the endangered flora.

LANDSCOPE

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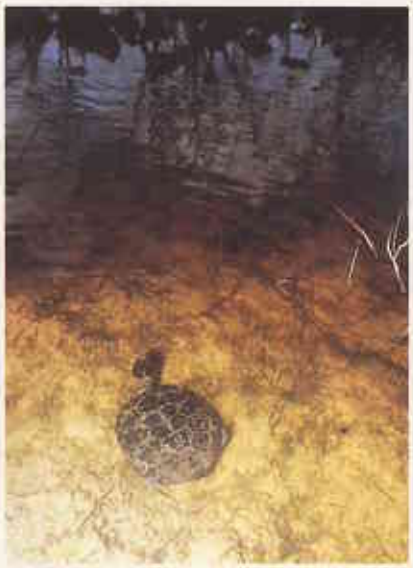
Cloud-capped Bluff Knoll, majestically brooding sentinel of the Stirling Range. Does it hold a secret in its stony heart - perhaps the answer to the missing mammal mystery? See story on page 9.

Mulga and fire - at best an uneasy relationship - sometimes symbiotic, sometimes disastrous. Find out when and where on page 20.

The Kimberley's rugged grandeur is deceptively fragile. Additional reserves managed by CALM help protect the region's delicate, complex and diverse ecosystems. See page 35.



A western swamp tortoise (Pseudemydura umbrina). *Could this be one of the last to be photographed? Not if CALM's ten-year recovery plan succeeds. See page 28 for details.*

An uncommon dragon, Caimaniops amphiboluriodes *inhabits mulga shrubs. Many other dragon lizards prefer harsher habitats such as rock-piles and salt lake beds. See page 51.*

FEATURES

REGULARS

COVER

Central netted dragon (Ctenophorus inermis), *one of the more than 60 species of dragon lizard that inhabit the arid and semi-arid parts of Australia. The acute eyesight and swiftness of dragon lizards are essential in order to avoid predators and to capture food. See page 51.*

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