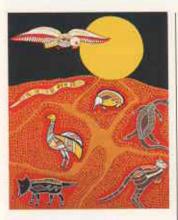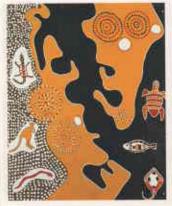## BUSH AND OCEAN THEME FOR PAINTINGS

The bush and the ocean were the main themes of a series of paintings by the children at Denham Primary School.

Living close to the natural environment is a way of life for the children of Denham, especially as many of their fathers are fishermen.

Grades 5, 6 and 7 students were asked to develop four paintings, and decided to use Aboriginal painting styles.
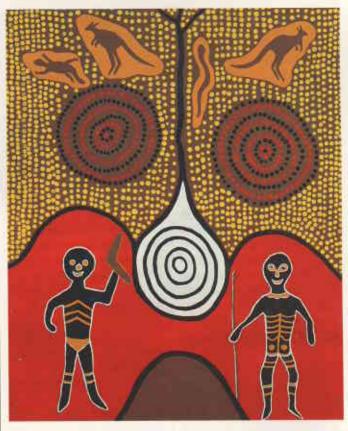
One of the paintings, featured on the back cover of this issue of *LANDSCOPE*, depicts many of the marine animals of Shark Bay, including the dugong, manta ray, turtles and sea snakes. Another shows the land animals that survive on the area's dry red earth (concept by Grade 5 student Michelle Dunne). It illustrates a harsh environment and its impact on the soil surface, and shows how the animals evolved with this landscape.

A third painting, suggested by Christopher Jones in Grade 7, highlights Big Lagoon, in François Peron National Park. It is one of the spectacular scenic areas of Shark Bay. The idea was to show the backdrop of Big Lagoon against the land and sea animals that live in this unique area.

The fourth painting is based on a story by Grade 6 student Quoin Sellenger. In the story, two Aboriginal boys go hunting by themselves.

Because of their inexperience, they are noisy and scare all the animals away as they approach a waterhole. Grade 1 students helped with the painting, which took several weeks.

Their work was so spectacular that the local office of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) asked the schoolchildren to produce another set of paintings, which will become an integral part of an interpretive display planned by CALM for Shark Bay.

NEW NATURE RESERVE NEAR GINGIN

A new nature reserve, of 9250 ha, has been set aside at Boonanarring Hill, north of Gingin.

In 1976 the area was recommended as a nature reserve in the study's final report, the System Six Red Book, in 1983.

The area is representative of the Dandaragan Plateau and its scarp, and contains a variety of soils: laterite, orange sand, grey sand and peaty winter-wet soils.

The flora is rich and varied and a number of plant species have special interest. These include pouched grevillea (*Grevillea saccata*), which is gazetted as rare, and fishbone banksia (*Banksia chamae-phyton*).Two poorly known species are also present: *Dryandra* aff. *polycephala* and *Calytrix superba*. The area is the main location of the *Calytrix*. In addition, two species of spider-orchid are not yet named or described. The trigger-plant *Stylidium leptocalyx* and the shrub *Dryandra polycephala* are restricted and are poorly represented in reserves. The slender mallee (*Eucalyptus decurva*) and paper-lily (*Laxmannia omnifertilis*) occur here well outside their normal ranges.

The dominant trees include salmon white-gum (*Eucalyptus lane-poolei*), an uncommon species. Two other dominant tree species - jarrah and pricklybark - have hybridised here. No hybrids of these species are known anywhere else.

A fairly brief fauna survey in 1986 revealed 10 species of mammals, 54 species of birds and 20 species of reptiles.

The System Six study also proposed that some adjoining reserves be included, and also, if possible, some land be purchased to include further valuable conservation land in the proposed nature reserve. It is hoped that ultimately an area similar to that recommended in the System Six Report will be consolidated as a nature reserve.

LANDSCOPE

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When European scientists first set foot on our shores they found a bewildering array of animals and plants. Péron the Explorer *takes an intimate look at the French scientist whose name lives in Western Australia's newest national park. See page 20.*

This tour of the Gascoyne's desert coast guides you through Shark Bay and WA's newest national park. See page 10.

Close to where the fictional Gulliver is believed to have been shipwrecked lives one of the world's oldest organisms. Lilliput's Castles, *on page 34, describes the creatures and the ecosystem they have built.*

Seagrass covers 3 700 square kilometres of the ocean floor around Shark Bay. Grasses of the Sea, *on page 42, takes us on a journey through these underwater meadows.*

At first glance, Shark Bay is dry, arid and inhospitable. But if you look more closely you discover its Hidden Treasures. *See page 16.*

C O V E R

Green turtles (Chelonia mydas), *the commonest turtles found along our coast, begin to congregate in the waters of Shark Bay from the end of July. The Bay is the southernmost nesting area for these long-lived animals. During summer, female green turtles lay their eggs on the white sandy beaches of Bernier, Dorre and Dirk Hartog Islands, and occasionally at the northern tip of Peron Peninsula. Illustration by Philippa Nikulinsky.*