## BUSH TELEGRAPH

## AND THE CREEKS ARE ALIVE ...

Two species of frogs the size of a thumbnail are the subject of a special search by officers from the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

The white-bellied and yellow-bellied geocrineas are the only species of frogs on the threatened fauna list in Western Australia.

The frogs are found only in a few damp sites near Witchcliffe and Karridale in the south-west.

The white-bellied frog has so far been recorded from 26 sites, of which 19 are on privately owned land. Six appear to have lost their frog populations since they were first surveyed in 1983.

"One of my main tasks has been to visit and talk to farmers in the area who might have frogs on their properties," CALM technical officer Ian Wheeler said.

"We are keen to identify all locations where the frogs are currently found as well as survey sites where they could potentially exist but are currently not found."

Much of the area is privately owned and subject to clearing for farming, which destroys the frog habitat. Protection of suitable creeks in the area will be essential to maintain the habitat and ensure the survival of this species.

The survey is a vital first step in a recovery plan for the frogs, drawn up by CALM with funding from the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. The recovery plan, which will operate for the next ten years, aims to prevent both species from becoming extinct by protecting existing populations from further loss of habitat and establishing



new populations in suitable areas.

The frogs are unusual in that they never enter water, preferring to lay their eggs in moist soil depressions. When hatched, the tadpoles remain in the jelly surrounding the eggs, drawing on food reserves in the egg yolk. Above and below: The endangered yellow-bellied geocrinia (Geocrinea vitellina) is one of the most restricted vertebrates in Australia, with a total distribution of less than 30 hectares. Photo - Grant Wardell-Johnson

THE LIBRARY DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & LAND MANAGEMENT WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DSCOPF

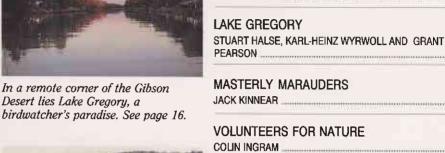
**RETURN OF THE CHUDITCH** 

KEITH MORRIS





Twenty-three captive-bred chuditch were recently released in the Julimar forest in an attempt to establish a new population. The story of the 'Return of the Chuditch' is on page 10.



VOLUME EIGHT NO. 2 SUMMER ISSUE 1992-3

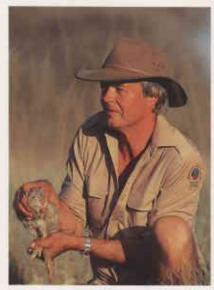
PEARSON	16
MASTERLY MARAUDERS JACK KINNEAR	20
VOLUNTEERS FOR NATURE	28
BACK IN THE OUTBACK PER CHRISTENSEN AND CAROLYN THOMSON	. 34
EAST OF THE GULF TONY START AND NORM MCKENZIE	41
TREE CROPS FOR FARMS SYD SHEA, JOHN BARTLE AND GARY INIONS	47
REGULARS	

R

..... 4

...... 40

And the second se	TREE URUPS FUR FARMS
A silent workforce of volunteers assist CALM with a multitude of projects.	SYD SHEA, JOHN BARTLE AND GARY INIONS .
Colin Ingram tells us more about these 'Volunteers for Nature' on page 28.	REGULAI
	IN PERSPECTIVE
· A contraction in	BUSH TELEGRAPH
ALCAN	ENDANGERED PRICKLY HONEYSUCKLE.
	URBAN ANTICS
To be the first	



'Back in the Outback' (page 34) follows the trail of endangered mammals recently reintroduced into the Gibson Desert from Barrow Is.



The urban cat vies with its feral cousin and the fox for top spot in the predator stakes. See 'Masterly Marauders' on page 20.

Ð 0

The chuditch (Dasyurus geoffroii) was once found in every State and Territory of mainland Australia. Now it is only found in the jarrah forest and parts of the southern wheatlbelt in the south-west of WA about two percent of its former range.

The illustration is by Philippa Nikulinsky.



Managing Editor: Ron Kawalilak Editor: David Gough Contributing Editors: Verna Costello, Helenka Johnson, Carolyn Thomson Scientific and technical advice: Andrew Burbidge, Roger Underwood Design and production: Sue Marais, Sandra Mitchell Finished art: Gooitzen van der Meer, Sue Marais Advertising: Estelle de San Miguel = (09) 389 8644 Fax: 389 8296 Illustration: Ian Dickinson, Sandra Mitchell Cartography: CALM Land Information Branch Colour Separation by Prepress Services Printed in Western Australia by Lamb Print © 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.