

CONSERVATION CARD FUNDS PUT TO GOOD USE

Money raised through use of the innovative BankWest LANDSCOPE Conservation Visa Card has been allocated to projects that will enhance the conservation of some of WA's most threatened species and ecological communities. The first four threatened species and communities to benefit from this project are the Lancelin Island skink, Wyalkatchem foxglove, Lake Toolibin and Trigwell's rulingia. As more funds become available, other projects coordinated by the Department of Conservation and Land Management's (CALM) Western Australian Threatened Species and Communities Unit (WATSCU) will be allocated amounts to carry out specific work.

The BankWest LANDSCOPE Conservation Visa Card was launched last year by CALM and the then R&I Bank of WA. Each time the card is used, either in Australia or overseas, a percentage of the money spent is placed by the bank into a trust fund to be used for saving the State's endangered species.

LANCELIN ISLAND SKINK

This skink is thought to occur only on the small, 7.6-hectare Lancelin Island, just offshore from the town of Lancelin, 127 kilometres north of Perth. In 1992, after an apparent major decline in the skink's population, CALM undertook a rapid survey of the island's habitats to assess the conservation status of the species. Only one skink was captured.

A comprehensive survey and research project began late in 1993, which resulted in the capture of about 40 skinks and the discovery that they can occur throughout the island. The study is continuing and a

recovery team has been set up to coordinate research and actions to conserve the species.

Funds from the LANDSCOPE Conservation Card have been allocated to survey areas of potential habitat on the adjacent mainland. This will be done by members of the Western Australian Society of Amateur Herpetologists, in conjunction with CALM. It will involve the identification of possible habitat using aerial photographs, and ground survey using pit-fall trapping and intensive searching. The survey will also enhance knowledge about the distribution and conservation status of other reptiles.

WYALKATCHEM FOXGLOVE

In June 1992, only a single plant of this species was known to exist. Botanists at Kings Park and Botanic Garden propagated additional plants by tissue culture, but were unable to obtain viable seed, because the species was self-infertile. Extensive searches in 1993 led to the discovery of one new plant, and additional plants have been propagated from it.

Funds from the LANDSCOPE Conservation Card will be used for trial planting of the species in the wild. This involves growing the plants in pots and controlling weeds and rabbits before planting at suitable sites.

LAKE TOOLIBIN

Lake Toolibin, an important breeding site for freshwater birds, is the last remaining significant freshwater wetland with wooded vegetation in WA's southern Wheatbelt.

A recovery plan has been prepared for the lake and is being implemented by a recovery team that includes representatives of the local

farming community and government agencies (for more information about this project see 'Recovering Lake Toolibin' in this issue of LANDSCOPE).

Funds from the LANDSCOPE Conservation Card have been allocated to help prepare and print an information brochure about the Lake Toolibin Recovery Plan so that people can learn how to deal with similar problems facing other wetland areas of the south-west.

TRIGWELL'S RULINGIA

This threatened species is known only from four individual plants, growing on private property near North Dinninup. Extensive searches have failed to find more. Observation of the remaining plants shows that they are threatened with predation by 'twenty-eight' parrots.

Temporary protective measures have been implemented, but to ensure that these plants survive and seed can be collected from them, parrot-proof, metal-framed, wire netting cages are required. Funds from the LANDSCOPE Conservation Card will be used to construct the cages and erect them at the site.

The Wyalkatchem foxglove is one of first threatened plant species to benefit from funds provided through the use of the LANDSCOPE Conservation Card. Photo - Steve Hopper



LANDSCOPE

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Yellow-billed spoonbills have visited Star Swamp for the last three years. They sift small crustaceans from the shallow water. The story of this suburban wetland is told on page 45.



A marine park is proposed to adjoin the Prince Regent Nature Reserve. The Complex Coast (page 49) discusses the need for integrated management of land and sea around our coast.



Found all over Australia, short-beaked echidnas are one of two Australian egg-laying mammals. They still occur around Perth. See page 18.



About a quarter of Stirling Range National Park has been closed to protect its unique flora from dieback disease. Turn to page 10 to discover these plants on the edge.



The orange-bellied frog is part of the South West's fine-scale richness and variety. Find out more about these fascinating creatures on page 35.

C O V E R

The coral gardens in the sheltered lagoons of the Rowley Shoals contain dozens of different varieties of staghorn coral and are inhabited by a huge range of colourful reef fish. See 'Coral for Keeps' on page 28.

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