

NEW MAP FOR NEW BIBBULMUN



In 1993, the Building a Better Bibbulmun Track Project was launched to upgrade, realign and extend the Bibbulmun Track.

The first section to be realigned—65 kilometres from Kalamunda to Brookton Highway—was officially opened by Environment Minister Peter Foss last August.

The upgrade is more than just cosmetic, and by the end of 1997 more than \$1 million will have been injected into the extended track that will stretch 840 km from Perth to Albany.

The 'new' Bibbulmun will retain less than 20 per cent of the existing track. There will be new campsites, sleeping shelters, toilets, picnic tables,

barbecues, route markers and other facilities, all designed to make it easier for people to use.

CALM will also produce a new series of maps, especially designed for Bibbulmun walkers. By the end of the project there will be maps covering the northern section of track through to the Blackwood River (due for completion by the end of 1996) and the southern section through to Albany (due for completion by the end of 1997). The first in this series, covering the 65 km section between Kalamunda and the Brookton Highway, is now available*.

According to Ray Lawrie, the cartographer in charge of the project, the map represents a departure from CALM's usual format, with track notes, background information and

profiles included for the benefit of walkers.

"This time the information has been weighted towards the track—making that the focus and the main feature," he said.

Elements of the design were borrowed from maps of the Appalachian Trail in America, while others are a CALM innovation.

"Initial feedback on the map has been very positive, and given that it was the first of its kind, I think the response has been really good. There will be some refinements to the reprint, but the base material and design will remain the same," Mr Lawrie said.

*The map, *Bibbulmun Track, Kalamunda-Brookton Highway*, costs \$6.50 and is available from outdoor shops, RAC shops and selected bookshops.

FAT CATS

If you need proof that cats are a serious threat to populations of small to medium sized native animals, take a look at this graphic photograph supplied by Neil Hardman of Wanneroo.

The photograph, taken by

John Read, an ecologist with the Olympic Dam Mine at Roxby Downs, shows the stomach contents of a cat shot near the mine. The cat's stomach contained 29 dragon lizards, three skinks, a mouse and a zebra finch. Another cat shot

nearby had four dragon lizards, 15 skinks and a zebra finch in its stomach.

Cat predation is believed to have caused the local extinction of a number of vertebrate species. It may also seriously affect the continued survival of

many native species persisting at low population densities.

Control of feral cats is one of the most pressing problems in the conservation of threatened vertebrates in Australia today. However, hope is on the horizon in Western Australia, with CALM scientists involved in exciting developments that may eventually provide a practical method of feral cat control.

As part of *Project Eden*, CALM's wildlife conservation program on Shark Bay's Peron Peninsula, work continues on the development of a series of baits that are attractive to feral cats.

Large-scale trials of these baits on the peninsula early next year will provide CALM scientists with important new information in their fight against the feral predation threat.



Photo - John Read



Visitors can walk in the treetops along a series of walkways, platforms and stairways at the new Forest Heritage Centre in Dwellingup. (See page 10.)



A major survey of the Carnarvon Basin has recently been completed by staff from CALM, the WA Museum and the University of WA. What did they find? (See page 15.)

LANDSCOPE

VOLUME ELEVEN No. 2 SUMMER ISSUE 1995-96



It was a very good year in the Wildflower State. Find out just how good in our story on page 38.



Australia has its own families of songbirds that are very different from their European namesakes. See 'True Blue Birds' on page 45.



Quokkas were once widespread on WA's mainland, but the most visible populations are now found on just two islands. 'Where Have All the Quokkas Gone?' (See page 49.)

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COVER

Western black-footed rock-wallabies are on the increase in Yardie Creek, thanks to a CALM fox-baiting program. Their numbers are being monitored by local tour operators Neil and Rhonda McGregor. See our story on page 36.

Illustration by Philippa Nikulinsky



Managing Editor: Ron Kawalilik

Editor: David Gough

Contributing Editors: Ray Bailey, Mandy Clews, Verna Costello, John Hunter, Penny Walsh

Scientific and technical advice: Andrew Burbidge, Ian Abbott, Paul Jones, Tony Start and staff at CALM's Science & Information Division

Design and production: Maria Duthie, Sue Marais

Finished art: Gooitzen van der Meer

Illustrations: Gooitzen van der Meer, Philippa Nikulinsky

Cartography: Promaco Geodraft

Marketing: Estelle de San Miguel ☎ (09) 334 0296 Fax: (09) 334 0489

Subscription enquiries: ☎ (09) 334 0481

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Published by Dr S Shea, Executive Director
Department of Conservation and Land Management,
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