

NEW CONSERVATION CADET SCHEME FOR WA YOUTH

Bush Rangers, a new program developed by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and the Office of Youth Affairs, is for school students between the ages of 13 and 17.

The overall mission of Bush Rangers is to empower young people to play an active role in the conservation of Western Australia's natural environment for both present and future generations, and to understand the need for its proper management.

The program is part of the State Government's Cadets WA Scheme and was launched by Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes and Youth Minister Mike Board at Matilda Bay Reserve in June.

"Young people are not only becoming more aware

of our environment, they're wanting to be actively involved in conserving it," Mrs Edwardes said.

"Bush Rangers will teach our future generations the basic skills needed to make them good environmental citizens."

Mr Board said the program was heavily accented towards practical, hands-on experience in the natural environment, rather than lectures in the classroom.

"These practical projects will provide opportunities for teamwork, leadership and personal development, and help students gain self-confidence," he said.

The objectives of Bush Rangers are to:

- foster a conservation ethic among young Western Australians;
- develop leadership and teamwork skills as well as



Above: CALM Wildlife Officers Julie Gale (far left) and Matt Warnock (far right) introduce John Septimus Roe student-cadets Sherridin Lindsay and Bradley McDowell to some of the wildlife they would be likely to encounter during Bush Ranger Cadetships.

Left: In tandem. John Septimus student-cadets Natalie Wheeler (left) and Kellie McEnaney wearing a 'python necklace'.

Photos - Norm Bailey

the values of duty, loyalty and service to the community, their school and to the Bush Rangers;

- provide young Western Australians with skills and knowledge related to CALM's role and its functions;
- support and strengthen the links between schools, the community and CALM activities throughout the State; and
- provide the basis for an active commitment to conservation of the natural environment that will carry over into adult life.

Bush Rangers will undertake training that covers a wide range of topics such as the meaning and practice of nature conservation, landscape and environmental management, park and reserve management, and interpretation of the natural environment.

As well, they will attend first aid, risk management, bushcraft and survival skills courses, and learn the value of self-discipline from drill.

They will also take part in a range of practical conservation projects in conjunction with local councils, CALM district officers and local

conservation groups. These projects include monitoring local plants and animals, helping CALM officers with the *Western Shield* wildlife recovery initiative, caring for remnant bushland, building walk trails and preparing interpretive material, or even monitoring coastal islands for bird nest sites.

Note: Those wishing to know more about the program should contact Bush Ranger Project Leader Liz Moore by phoning (08) 9334 0387 or faxing (08) 9334 0498, or phone Bush Ranger Co-ordinator Bronwyn Goble on (08) 9334 0152 or fax her on (08) 9334 0498.



LANDSCOPE

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Can WA's sharefarming plantations also help fight greenhouse gases? See 'Farming Carbon' on page 17.



With increased numbers of travellers, the Canning Stock Route is in need of some TLC. See 'A Track Winding Back' on page 10.



The job of a CALM Wildlife Officer is as much about dealing with people as it is about protecting our native wildlife. See 'On the Wild Side' on page 23.



The Esperance Lakes Nature Reserves are a haven for water birds and a significant international wetland. See 'Picture the Lakes' on page 36.



There are billions of tiny white shells lining the 150-km Shell Beach in Shark Bay. But why are there so many concentrated here? Find out more on page 49.

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COVER

Two years into the Western Shield program and already three Western Australian native species have been brought back from the edge of extinction, and others are growing in abundance. 'Bouncing Back', on page 28, looks at the successes of the first two years and at where we hope to be at the turn of the century.

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