

A TRACK OF MANY DREAMS

To some, it's a long distance dream; to others, a series of short walks to be enjoyed as time goes by. Whichever way one looks at it, the new Bibbulmun Track is destined to become one of the great attractions of Western Australia's southern native forests and the south coast.

On September 13, Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes cut a ribbon and farewelled the new track's first teams of 'end to enders', those intrepid bushwalkers who over the next 56 days walked the track's entire 960 kilometres.

The new Bibbulmun Track extends from Kalamunda on the outskirts of Perth to Albany on the south coast, wending its way through WA's magnificent forests and spectacular southern coastline.

While the track is enjoyed by thousands of people every year for picturesque short walks and weekend camps, to others it is one of the world's great long-distance adventures that will attract thousands of tourists, providing a significant boost to small towns and communities along its route.

The Building a Better Bibbulmun Project is an initiative of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), and has involved a wide range of local community groups, other Government agencies and corporate sponsors.

Funding for the project has come from almost \$2 million in sponsorship and grant funds, and approximately \$3 million of 'in kind' contributions from CALM, the Ministry of Justice, DEET programs, bushwalking clubs,



volunteer groups, service clubs, the Army Reserve and individuals.

Sponsors include Ministry of Justice, Trails West, the Friends of the Bibbulmun Track, Alcoa of Australia, Regional Development Commissions, Employment Training programs, Worsley Alumina, Griffin Coal, Hedges Gold, Random Access, CSBP and Farmers, Mountain Designs, BP Australia, Alpha West, Midland Brick, Cullity

Timbers and the Gordon Reid Foundation (Lotteries Commission). The Federal Government's Regional Development Program has contributed \$1.38 million through the Southern Province Projects Group over two years for the program.

The Lotteries Commission has also granted \$136,500 to the Friends of the Bibbulmun Track for a range of maintenance, management and marketing initiatives. The Friends and

Top: Walkers setting off from the new Albany terminal of the Bibbulmun Track.

Photo – David Gough

Above: Waalegh campsite, Bibbulmun Track.

Photo – Chris Garnett/CALM

CALM have produced two videos that promote the track and tell intending walkers how to have a safe and enjoyable adventure.

Since work began on the new track four years ago, there have been major improvements to facilities, built by CALM staff, prisoners, people engaged in employment and training programs, and local community groups. A total of 48 new campsites—with sleeping shelters, toilets, rainwater tanks, discreet tent areas and tables—have been created.

The Bibbulmun Track is part of an integrated program by CALM to create greater opportunities for nature-based tourism experiences. As part of the Bibbulmun Track project, CALM has produced a new series of coloured maps that

are now available to the public. These maps, along with other CALM publications such as its Bush Books field guides, help walkers understand and appreciate the many different aspects of the forest they would discover along the way. A new track guide for the northern section from Kalamunda to Brockman Highway has been released and a guide for the southern section is currently in production.

Right: Veteran walker Bonnie Hennessey strides out at the start of her end to end walk.

Photo – David Gough



A BIBBULMUN FRIEND REMEMBERED

The memory of one of Western Australia's leading law officers, who had a special expertise in environmental law and worked closely with CALM for many years, has been dedicated with the naming of the Graham Delaney Lookout and Walk at Walpole on the south coast. The lookout has views over Nornalup Inlet from a rise above Coalmine Beach and the walk meanders four kilometres to an existing lookout at Hilltop, east of the town, where visitors can view the inlet, Southern Ocean, Frankland River and Casuarina Isles. The lookout and walk are part of the new Bibbulmun Track.

Mr Delaney, who was Deputy Crown Solicitor, died in March this year. He was regarded as a brilliant lawyer who made an outstanding contribution to law and, in particular,

environmental law in WA, and was closely involved with the development of the track, giving advice to CALM on the construction of the trail through nature reserves.

CALM Executive Director Syd Shea said CALM appreciated the tremendous assistance from many community groups, other Government agencies, prisoners, volunteers and the private sector in constructing the new track. The Ministry of Justice's Offender Management Division has had a direct role in building several of the 48 overnight camping spots along the track, as well as constructing several hundred kilometres of trail.

Prisoners have contributed greatly to the establishment of the track and their contribution has been in the form of field crews working directly on

the track and in prison workshops, building shelters, barbecues and signs. The in-kind contribution by the Ministry of Justice is worth more than \$1.5 million, without which this project would not have been possible.

It has been a particularly worthwhile project that helped to build the prisoners' self esteem. They showed they could make a positive

contribution to the community, and at the same time acquire work skills and work habits that will greatly assist their successful return to the community upon release.

Below: Family and friends of the late Graham Delaney join Attorney-General Peter Foss at the official opening of the new lookout.

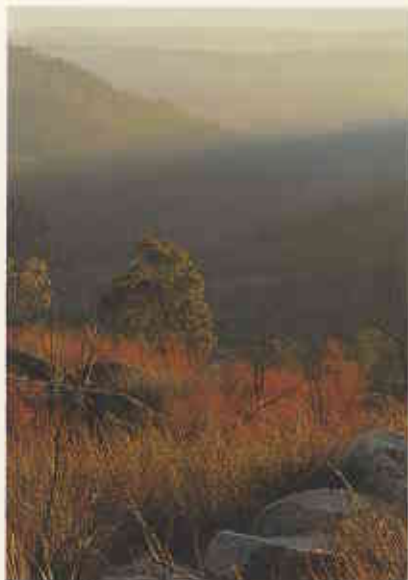
Photo – David Gough



LANDSCOPE

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VOLUME FOURTEEN NUMBER 2, SUMMER 1998-1999



This land, where the Avon River cuts through the Darling Range, was home to WA's most notorious bushranger. His story is on page 10.



Just when everyone thought it was extinct, this small mammal suddenly reappeared. See 'Dibblers' on page 28.



100,000 hectares of bluegums by the year 2000. Was it a realistic target? See 'From Blue sky to Blue Chip' on page 35.



'What about the Animals', on page 21, discusses early findings from the Kingston Study.



'Karla Wongi: Fire Talk', on page 48, is a Nyungar perspective on the use of fire in the south-west of WA.

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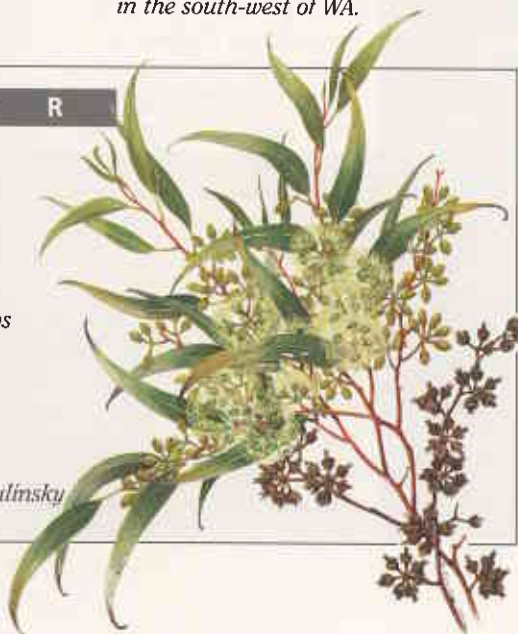
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One of Western Australia's best-known woodlands may be under threat now, but research by CALMScience Division staff is playing a key role in safeguarding their future. See 'Small Steps to Save Salmon Gums', on page 17

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