

TRAGEDIES BECOME TOOLS FOR TEACHING

For many people who care about wildlife it is upsetting when beached sea creatures die—particularly after those same people have worked hard to return them to the open sea.

When such incidents do occur, however, it is useful to remember that death is just as much a fact of life as birth, and that we should look for lessons that might be inherent in such incidents.

For example, two large whales stranded late last year. One was a fin whale (the second largest species on Earth after the blue whale) and the other a humpback whale.

The fin whale stranded live at Mandurah in August, but died an hour after hitting the beach.

The humpback washed ashore at Quinns Beach, in November, after being dead for several days.

While these incidents were regrettable, they did



provide an opportunity for CALM Supervising Wildlife Officer Doug Coughran to talk about the life cycle of these animals to the many interested passers by, and to school groups in an open classroom situation.

More importantly, he was able to use the bodies of these mammals of the ocean to demonstrate their features more clearly.

"These were two life experiences that will be more clearly remembered

through this association, than from mere lines in a newspaper or vision on a television set," Mr Coughran said.



*Above: Mr Coughran is peppered with questions from school children about the humpback whale in the background at Quinns Beach.*

*Photo - Matt Warnock*

*Left: Crowds such as this one surrounding the fin whale, beached at Mandurah Silver Sands Beach, took advantage of look-and-learn talks on the mammal's life cycle.*

*Photo - Colin Crowley*

057147

Winner of the 1998 Alex Harris Medal for excellence in science and environment reporting.

# LANDSCOPE



VOLUME FIFTEEN NUMBER 1, SPRING 1999



In 'Photographing a Temperate Wonderland' (page 10), photographers Sue Morrison and Ann Storrie share their experiences .



In 'Those Spotted Things' (page 22), we see how fox-baiting and captive breeding continues to swell populations of this popular native mammal.



Snakes. You either love them or hate them, but how do we live with them? See story on page 45.



Many farmers and landowners are turning to plantation pine for a variety of good reasons. Five of them tell us why. See 'A Crop of Forests' on page 38.



As habitat changes, so do species populations. But just when does a species become threatened? See 'Healing the Land' on page 49.

## FEATURES

PHOTOGRAPHING A TEMPERATE WONDERLAND  
SUE MORRISON & ANN STORRIE.....10

RESTORING DIVERSITY, RESTORING HOPE  
LEONIE MONKS & DAVID COATES.....17

THOSE SPOTTED THINGS  
BRENT JOHNSON.....22

KARIJINI NATIONAL PARK  
ALAN THORNE.....28

ADVENTURES IN THE FOREST  
LIZ MOORE.....33

A CROP OF FORESTS  
ANDREW BADO & JULIA BERNEY.....38

SNAKES  
PETER MAWSON.....45

HEALING THE LAND  
IAN ABBOTT & MATTHEW WILLIAMS.....49

## REGULARS

BUSH TELEGRAPH.....4

ENDANGERED  
CUNDERDIN DAVIESIA.....53

URBAN ANTICS  
RUBBISH TIPS AND HINTS.....54

## COVER

The magnificent gorges of Karijini National Park are a refreshing retreat from the arid plains above. They also have a fascinating geological history. See story on page 28.

Illustration by Philippa Nikulinsky



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Colour Separation by Colourbox Digital  
Printed in Western Australia by Lamb Print  
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