

URBAN ANTICS



RUBBISH TIPS AND HINTS

The last urban antic of the millennium, folks . . . gee, time goes fast when you're havin' fun.

It only seems like yesterday, as a spotty-faced youth, I was pondering the quill-like pens and ink powder of some long-gone engineer's clerk in the basement of the Barracks Arch and . . . zzzzzzip . . . forty-one years later, I'm 'writing' this document with keys and coloured edits on a Pentium PC in Cygnet Hall. Wow! One giant leap for this kind man.

Scary stuff that, but thank goodness our backyards and special bits of bush where some of us go to reconnect with nature are unchanged. Or are they?

Although the year to date rainfall is below average, nature's garden has taken it in its stride. Local vegetation, in all its greens and greys, is thrusting tender fingers of new growth toward a fatherly sun, while blooms of native flora in this part of the world are again . . . out of this world.

Perth urbanites are heading to the Darling Scarp high country for their weekend picnics and seasonal indulgence with wildflowers, jarrah forest and a mix of gregarious bird life. It is prime time to show the kids the bush and share some snaggers and red wine with friends and family.

You'll be more than pleased with the quality and surrounds within all national, regional and local parks throughout the urban areas, but if, for a change, you want to enjoy the views and bush off Toodyay Road at Red Hill, you're in for a shock.

While we are fortunate to have the availability of a technological high-class waste disposal site at Red Hill, it is very disappointing to find that people cannot be bothered completing the trip and are dumping refuse along the way. Some are simply refusing to pick up their spillage, expecting to rely on a council ranger to do it for them.

In the surrounding road reserve bushland there is anything from discarded bikes, cans and bottles, to car tyres, beds and refrigerators. You could be forgiven for thinking you're in downtown Denpasar, Bali, not on a major tourist road to the Avon Valley. It is a terrible scene for weekend walkers, and even worse, a death trap for wildlife.

Another situation where technology still needs cooperative contribution by people is with our



local mechanical, one-armed, rubbish bin 'pick-er-uppers'.

Have you noticed lately that your weekly rubbish collector leaves a delicate trail of notepaper and tissues on your front verge? On a windy day as the arm goes up and the bin lid opens, out streams the 'confetti' like snow in a Russian winter. Unfortunately, the economics of these 'one-man' units does not provide for a 'sweeper', as in times past, and for the good of our environment, we all need to pitch in and help. Technology will do it differently, but it won't do it all.

Now it probably goes without saying that readers of *LANDSCOPE* are the last people you'd have to remind about rubbishing their environment, but we are all a little tardy when it comes to either 'picking up' or simply saying to a neighbour, 'Drop something, sport?'

BY JOHN HUNTER

DID YOU KNOW?

"As humans use technology to raise their standard of living, they are inadvertently creating other human miseries in the form of pollution and environmental deterioration. In those countries with the highest technical development and where environmental problems are of greatest concern, the bright promise of technology is starting to tarnish.

"Time and again, in different ways, the ominous question is repeated: In approaching the limits of what they may demand of their environment, are humans beginning to threaten the process of living itself?"

*From Consider the Process of Living
The Conservation Foundation of
America*

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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.

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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.

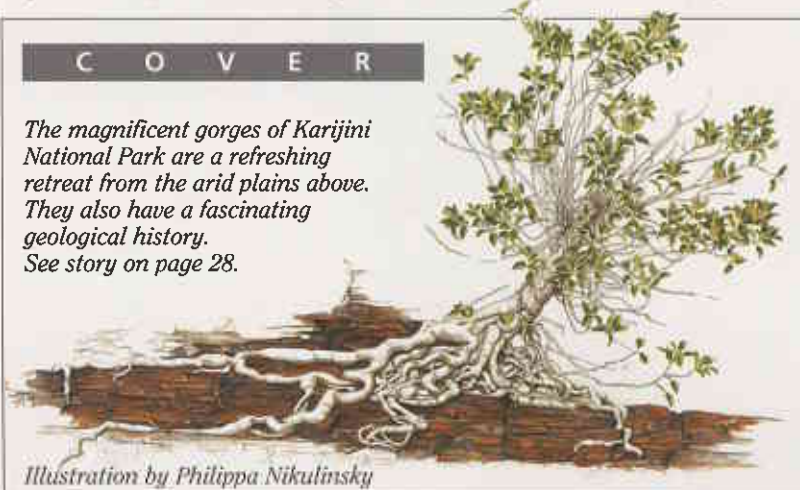



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