

CALM BUSH RANGERS AMONG AUSTRALIA'S BEST

Western Australia's innovative conservation cadet unit—CALM Bush Rangers—has been highly commended in the Young Australia Award for Environmental Achievement in Schools.

The award was announced in June this year, to commemorate World Environment Day. It was open to all primary and secondary schools to acknowledge an outstanding project or program that promoted awareness of environmental issues and sustainable solutions.

CALM Bush Rangers was developed and coordinated by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), and was the first 'conservation-oriented' school cadet corps in Australia, attracting strong interest from other States.

In less than two years, it has grown from nothing to a contingent of 800 students in 23 schools spread across WA from Kalbarri, Mullewa and Tardun in the north, to Coolgardie, Norseman and Esperance in the east, and to Manjimup, Bunbury and Waroona in the south-west, as well as in the Perth metropolitan area.

They had put more than 100,000 hours in to nature conservation projects over the year leading up to the Award.

The Bush Rangers form part of CALM's schools programs that aim to foster a conservation ethic in young Western Australians. The success of the program is believed to be due, largely, to the practical nature of the conservation and environmental



management projects the various units undertake.

The activities of the Bush Ranger units are as varied as their locations. For example, CALM Bush Rangers at Esperance have been creating an underwater dive trail around Woody Island as well as helping CALM to rid the island of feral predators such as cats.

In Perth, CALM Bush Rangers at John Forrest Senior High are involved in a wide variety of activities, such as providing termites for Perth Zoo's numbat captive breeding program,

and growing bana grass and sugar cane as food for some of its other animals. They have also removed graffiti, and painted bird-watch hides at the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary.

CALM Bush Rangers also work alongside the Department's scientists, monitoring threatened species such as chuditch, numbats and ringtail possums in the Perup Nature Reserve east of Manjimup.

Those seeking further information should phone

CALM Bush Ranger Coordinator Bronwyn Humphreys on (08) 9334 0137.

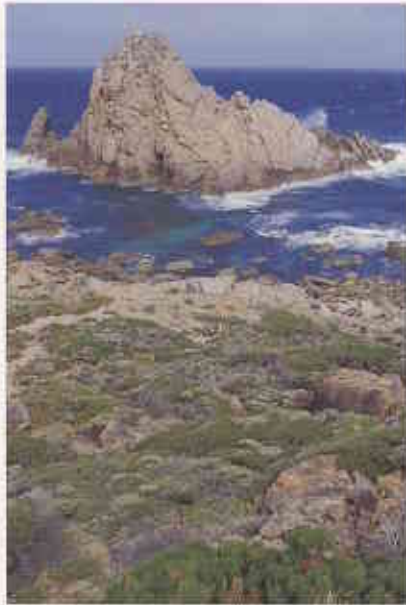
Pictured among the bana grass and sugar cane are CALM Bush Ranger Unit Leader Gerald Fontaine, standing at rear, with Senior Bush Rangers Kristy McKay, right, Sarah Rayson, front right, and CALM Bush Ranger 1st Class James Wishart. James (14) was a finalist in the Youth Environment Category of the WA Youth Awards.

Photo – Verna Costello

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

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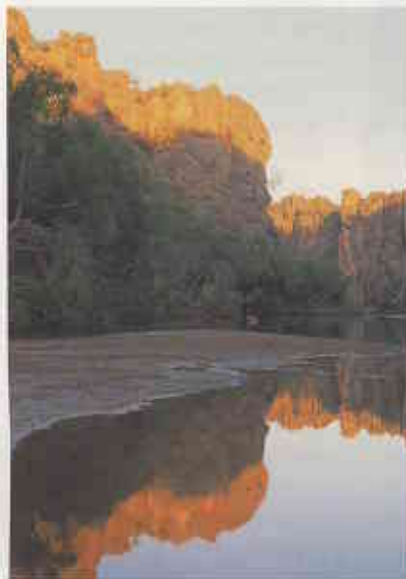
Sugarloaf Rock is just one of the many features that make Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park the most visited park in WA. (See page 10.)



Premier Park: John Forrest National Park is Western Australia's oldest park, celebrating its centenary year. (See page 22.)



Pinnacle of Parks: These unusual formations make Nambung National Park well known the world over. (See page 36.)



Windjana Gorge National Park holds important clues to the evolution of fish. See 'Old Fossils' on page 28.



William Bay National Park displays a miniature version of karri forest flora. (See page 42.)

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With 67 national parks spread across the State, park rangers are often the first contact that visitors have with the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM). Apart from providing visitors with information and guidance, they perform a vital role in the day-to-day management of their local environment.



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