

WELLINGTON DISCOVERY FOREST CENTRE OPENS

If you had been at Wellington Forest a few months ago, you would have witnessed the opening of a discovery forest centre, the reintroduction of woylies into the forest and the establishment of a Register of Trees of Significance. Talk about killing three birds (feral, of course) with one stone!

The Wellington Discovery Forest Centre—a rammed-earth building attached to a former forestry cottage—will enable the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) to extend its popular schools forest activities to the Bunbury-Collie region, as well as introduce a range of programs for the public.

The Wellington Discovery Forest covers 650 hectares, but is located within the Wellington Forest, an

area of 27,000 hectares of State forest, national park and conservation park. This area contains a diverse range of environments: native forest, pine plantations, the Wellington Dam, the rugged lower Collie Valley, forested highlands and granite outcrops. In fact, it is a microcosm of much of the South-West forest region.

It is also part of the South-West Development Commission's Living Windows nature-based tourism promotion, which encourages visitors and residents to discover the nature of Western Australia.

Initially, two programs are being offered to schools: Discovering Wellington Forest, and Back from the Brink, the latter being about threatened species.

CALM also hosted a professional development day for teachers, to provide them with an overview of the programs. The day was highlighted with a further release of 37 woylies. The spring programs for students include some hands-on activities such as methods of monitoring native mammals.

The programs are expected to become increasingly popular, as they fit in with the overall vision for the centre to be a

unique educational and recreational resource, thereby raising the level of understanding of the jarrah forest and its management needs. Local Aboriginal custodians are working with CALM to develop the activities at the Discovery Forest.

So what about the woylies and the giant trees? See pages 7 and 8.

Below: Two views of the new forest discovery centre at the new Wellington National Park.

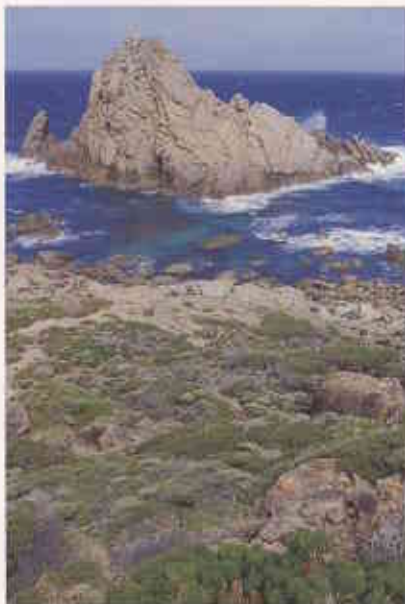


Winner of the 1998 Alex Harris Medal for excellence in science and environment reporting.

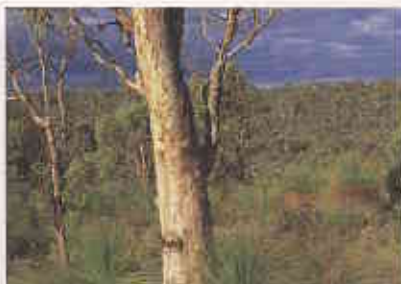
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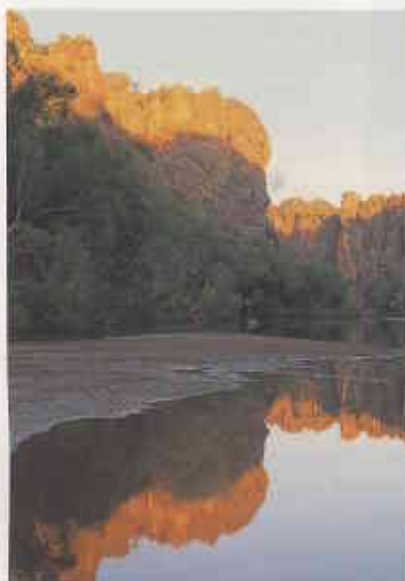
Sugarloaf Rock is just one of the many features that make Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park the most visited park in WA. (See page 10.)



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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COVER

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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