

SUNSET FROG UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

A \$25,000 grant will help to ensure that the sun will never set on the threatened sunset frog (*Spicospina flammocaerulea*).

The grant, from the Natural Heritage Trust, will be matched by CALM and the Zoology Department of UWA, and allow frog expert Dale Roberts to collect data on the estimated number of populations, trends in population size, and the species range and conservation status.

The sunset frog is one of the world's most recognisable frogs. It has a knobbly, brownish-black back and bright orange hands and feet, but the belly is even more dramatic.

Half of the belly is bright orange and the other half is covered with striking light blue spots. It reaches about 35 millimetres in length.

Because of the remote area in which it lives, the sunset frog was only discovered in January 1994 and described in 1997.

It is known from only 13 swamps, some on public land and others on private property. These lie within a small area, 24 to 30 kilometres north-east of Walpole, in the south-west of Western Australia. All have deep peat beds and could be prone to fire damage. Because of their close proximity, a single fire could be catastrophic for

the species.

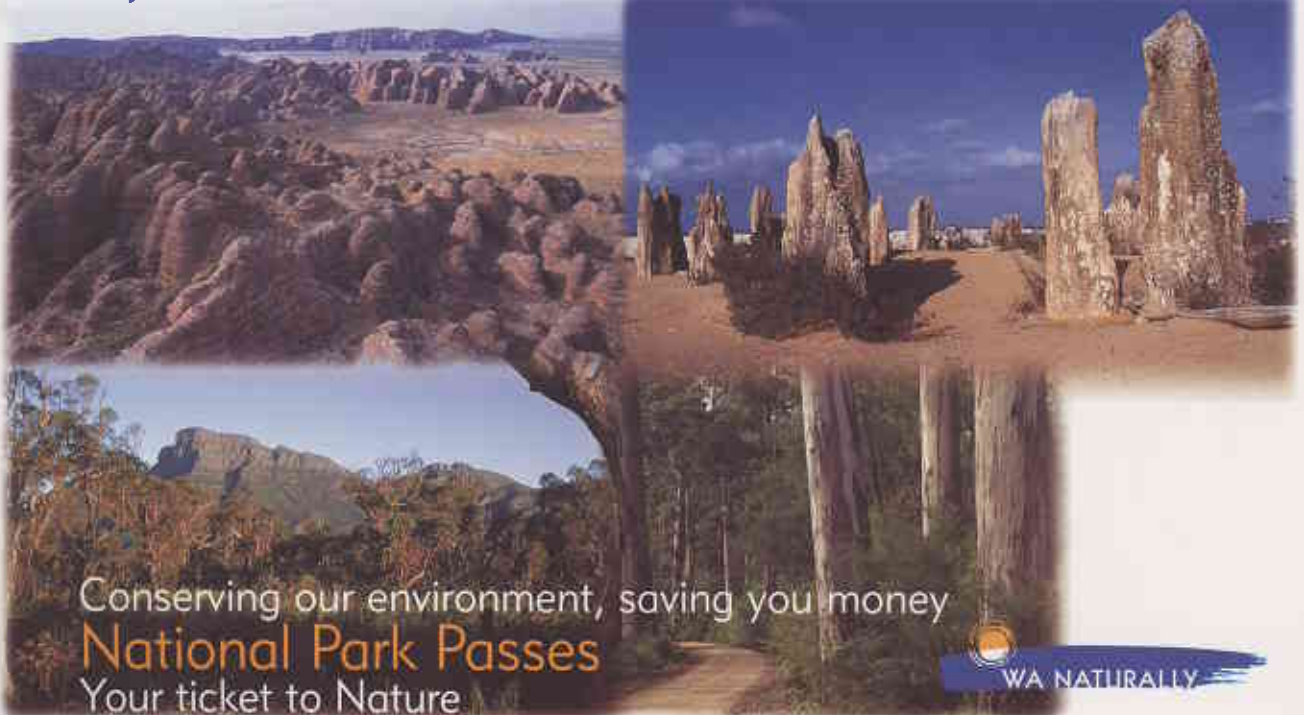
Once the research is completed, CALM will set up a Sunset Frog Recovery Team to prepare and implement a recovery plan for the species. The plan should be finished by January 2001.

The sunset frog is one of the species appearing in the Western Australian Museum's recently revised field guide *Frogs of Western Australia* (see page 6).



Photo – Grant Wardell-Johnson

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LANDSCOPE



VOLUME SIXTEEN, NUMBER 2, SUMMER 2000-2001



Botanists rediscover a presumed extinct grass perched on the mountain tops of the Stirling Range National Park. See page 43.



How can we preserve the Leeuwin-Naturaliste caves while catering for increasing visitation? See page 16.



Salinity Strategy surveys are revealing that salinity threatens more than 850 Wheatbelt plant species. How can managers intervene? See page 36.



Discover Perth's eight regional parks and their special features and attractions on page 28.



Learn about the spineless wonders of the marine world and their clever disguises on page 42.

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COVER

More than 160 different bird species use Cape Arid National Park, which lies on the South Coast about 120 kilometres east of Esperance. The red-eared firetail is one of them. This exotic-looking finch is confined to south-western Australia. It is found in areas of dense heath and undergrowth in thick forest, never too far inland. Cape Arid National Park is the eastern limit of its distribution.



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 Colour Separation by Colourbox Digital
 Printed in Western Australia by Lamb Print
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Published by
 Department of Conservation and Land Management,
 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, Western Australia