

MAGIC MOMENTS AT MONKEY MIA

Imagine being able to share the thrill of seeing the famous Monkey Mia dolphins with your friends and relatives overseas—and prove you were there!

DolphinCam, the Department of Conservation and Land Management's first live webcam, is hosted on the NatureBase website and was officially launched in June 2001. It provides live coverage of an area of beach at Monkey Mia, on WA's far-west coast, favoured by dolphins that come inshore to interact with people.

The camera operates from 6 am to 6 pm and refreshes

its image every 30 seconds.

The best time for seeing dolphins is between 7.30 am and 11 am, but there is often other activity outside those hours. Visitors who are unable to log on during the 12 daylight hours the camera is active can view a selection of our favourite camera images, like that of an emu strolling along the foreshore, or browse the previous day's archive.

DolphinCam was developed by the department's eMedia unit, which also set up the NatureBase web kiosk and interactive multimedia displays in the Monkey Mia Visitor Centre.



Visitors to NatureBase can view the DolphinCam page at www.naturebase.net/webcams/dolphincam.html

NEW MONKEY MIA VISITOR CENTRE



The official opening of the new million-dollar Monkey Mia Visitor Centre by Minister for the Environment and Heritage Judy Edwards took place on 19 June, 2001. Visitors on the day were able to view the static and interactive displays in the new centre, as well as enjoy music in the adjoining beach-front amphitheatre, which will be used for a

range of educational and other relevant activities.

The Monkey Mia Visitor Centre is an important example of cooperative promotion of a world-class nature-based tourism destination. It provides a base for interpretation and conservation of the bottlenose dolphins, the Monkey Mia Reserve and the Shark Bay Marine Park.

Designed by Perth Architect James Edwardes, formerly of Cox Howlett and Bailey Woodland, the centre is built along angular lines with a rough, unfinished timber look. The display was conceptualised and written by the department's Senior Interpretation Officer Gil Field, with assistance from Monkey Mia Reserve staff, international researchers and others. Under the art direction of Insight Communication and Design, the careful crafting of text, images, sounds, lights and shapes provide a special insight into the fascinating bottlenose dolphins and the world around them.

The exhibits include colourful static panels with evocative graphic images and photos and an informative text that thematically interprets dolphins and their environment. A replica of the much loved dolphin

'Holey Fin', along with her skeleton and a profile of her internal anatomy, contrasts with an intriguing sculpture of a dugong constructed from metal and seagrass fibre. A touch table, multimedia station and NatureBase web kiosk provide hands on and minds-on activities—an immersing experience for the visitor, linked by the painted floor, simulating a transect from the red dunes to the ocean floor complete with illustrations of wildlife inhabitants.

Construction of the centre, by Geraldton Building Company, began in July 2000 and funding for the project was provided by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the federal Department of Industry, Science and Tourism, the Monkey Mia Trust and the Department of Workplace Relations and Small Business.

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

LANDSCOPE



VOLUME SEVENTEEN, NUMBER 1, SPRING 2001



Within 40 years, the numbat has risen from near extinction to endangered with 10 populations in WA and interstate. See 'Numbats Forever' (page 17).



The forces that shaped the geology and landforms of the south-west began more than 3,500 million years ago. Read the fascinating story on page 10.



The Marine Community Monitoring Program is a new and ambitious program to involve the community in keeping our oceans clean. See page 35.



Shark Bay Marine Park provides spectacular opportunities for divers and snorkellers. No wonder it is called Bay of Delights. See page 23.



The history of Aboriginal occupation in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste region spans 50,000 years. Find out more in 'History from the Caves' (page 40).

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 Colour Separation by Colourbox Digital
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C O V E R

Leschenaultias are some of the most widely known and recognisable plants in Western Australia. They have fantastic horticultural value and provide glorious floral displays. The wreath leschenaultia is a favourite with visitors during our wildflower season. See page 23.



Cover illustration by Philippa Nikulinsky

Published by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, Western Australia

DEPARTMENT OF
Conservation
 AND LAND MANAGEMENT
Conserving the nature of WA