

RESEARCH HISTORY GOES ON-LINE



Above: Librarian Lisa Wright 'databasing' research history.

Photo – Verna Costello

The first database on the history of research into Western Australia's native plants, animals and forests, from the establishment of Government in the 1890s to the present day, is available on the Department of Conservation and Land Management's NatureBase website (www.naturebase.net).

The database lists material produced by staff from the department and its predecessor agencies since 1896 and numbers 9,138 items.

This historic bibliography

includes journal articles, books, unpublished reports, abstracts, 16 millimetre films, videos, slides, CD-ROMs and items such as posters, pamphlets and wall charts. It is an invaluable collection on WA's native wildlife in cultural, environmental and historic terms, and will be continually revised as new titles are produced or come to light.

The decision to produce a computer-based bibliography stems from the need to ensure that early research work is not overlooked and is

preserved for future generations. Most of the titles in the bibliography are held in the Department of Conservation and Land Management Library.

Members of the public who do not have access to the internet will be able to view the list or database by phoning (08) 9405 5132 to make an appointment to visit the department's library at Wildlife Place, Woodvale. It is expected that the database will soon be established also at the department's Kensington library.

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES COLLECT VITAL RESEARCH DATA

Indigenous people of the Broome-Dampier Peninsula area are helping to develop a management strategy for harvesting turtles.

The strategy is part of Western Australia's aim to quantify the extent of the indigenous harvest of turtles—one of the objectives of the 1998 National Draft Recovery Plan for Marine Turtles in Australia.

Department of Conservation and Land Management Acting Executive Director Keiran McNamara said the department had formed a partnership with Aboriginal communities to determine how best to ensure the sustainability of the turtle harvest (mainly the female green turtle) (*Chelonia mydas*) in the area in the State's West Kimberley region.

Since the program began in September 2001, staff from the department's Science Division and West Kimberley district office have been working closely



with the Beagle Bay, Lombadina-Djarindjin, One Arm Point and Mamabulanjin Aboriginal communities. The communities have been provided with data sheets and recording equipment to help them monitor where, when and how many turtles are harvested. Information on how much effort is put into catching turtles is also being collected.

The aim is to collect these data over the next 12 months for compilation and analysis by the department's

West Kimberley office. The information will then be used to lay the foundations for a future management plan for the indigenous harvesting and conservation of turtles. Information received so far indicates that most turtles are taken in the vicinity of One Arm Point, the largest community on the Dampier Peninsula, and that it takes on average 1.5 hours to catch a turtle.

This approach follows a similar successful program undertaken by the Northern

Above: Female green turtle.

Photo – Keith Morris

Territory Government and Northern Territory University with the Dhimurru community in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The WA project, partly funded by the Commonwealth Government's Natural Heritage Trust, could provide a blueprint for the conservation of other marine species that are also important food sources for the State's indigenous people.

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

LANDSCOPE



VOLUME SEVENTEEN, NUMBER 3, AUTUMN 2002

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Colour Separation by Colourbox Digital.

Printed in Western Australia by Lamb Print.

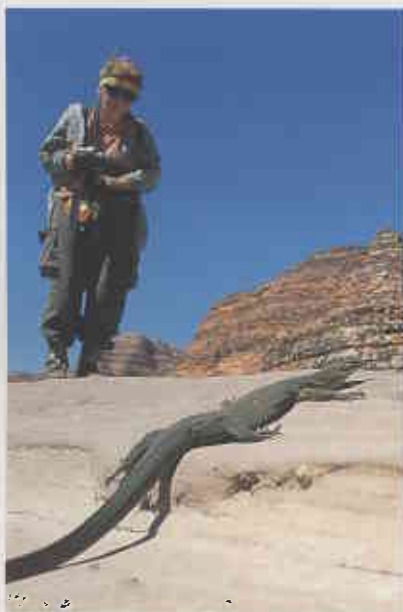
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Published by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, Western Australia.



Conserving the nature of WA



During the past decade more than 500 people have contributed to science projects in WA by joining a *LANDSCOPE* Expedition (see page 34).



The Goldfields Woodlands National Park protects the region's best examples of eucalypt woodlands (see page 28).



Since the 1960s Barrow Island's animals have shared their island paradise with the oil industry. Read how the mammals are being monitored and protected. See page 18.



Georgiana Molloy made a major contribution to the early botanical knowledge of the south-west. Read about this remarkable woman on page 43.



Collecting seeds is one way in which we are helping to conserve biodiversity. Join the 'Hunters and Gatherers for Conservation' on page 49.

COVER

There's something going on in our schools. Students are voluntarily taking an active interest in conserving their local environments. They are visiting forests, beaches and wetlands to study native wildlife. And they are having fun! What is happening and why? See 'EcoEducation—winning over school communities' on page 10.

Cover illustration by Ellen Hickman

