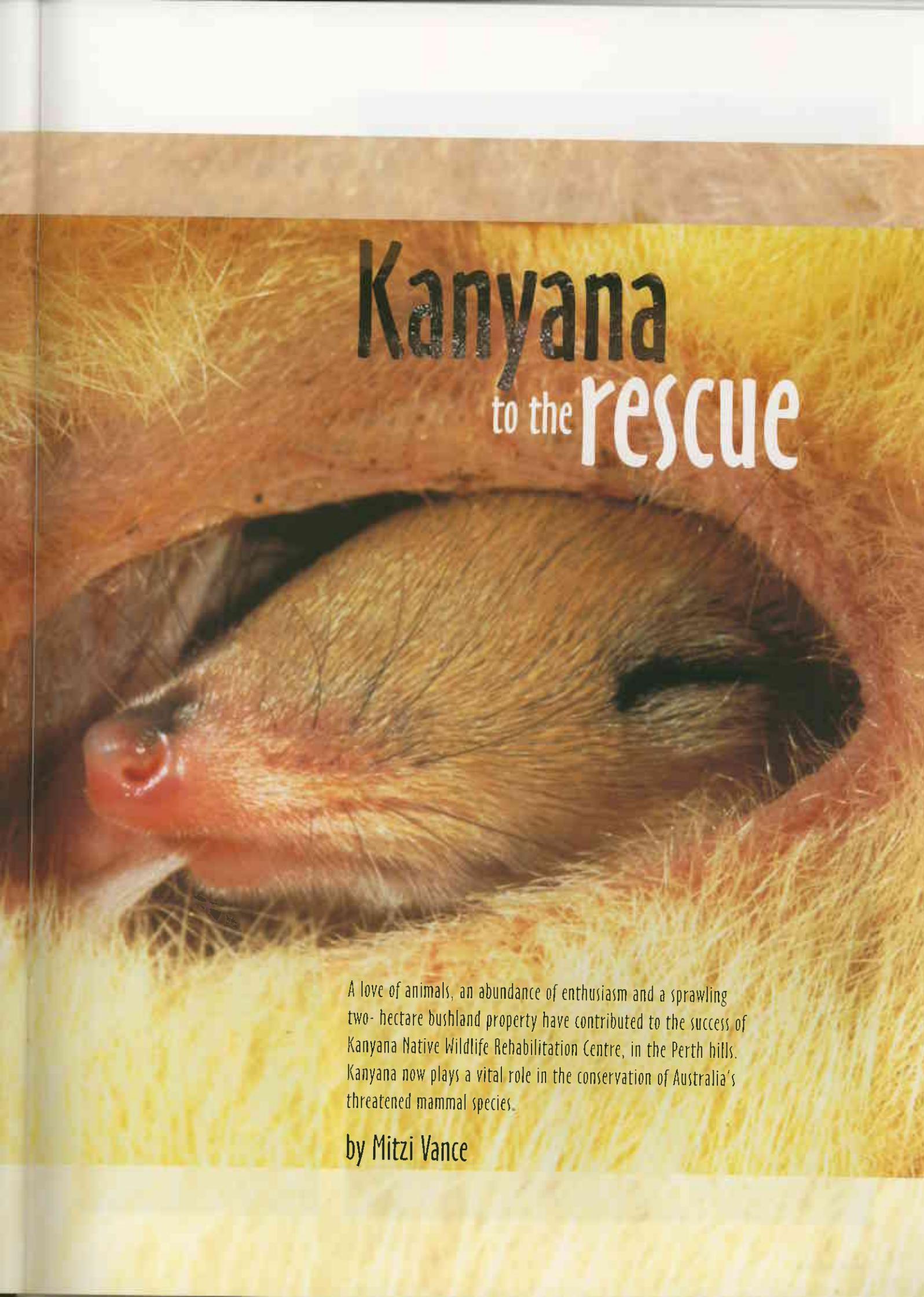




Pronghorn antelope are found in the western United States and Canada. They are the only ruminant that can survive in the harsh conditions of the Great Plains. Pronghorns are known for their incredible endurance and speed, and they are a vital part of the ecosystem. They are also a popular trophy for hunters, and their antlers are highly valued. Pronghorns are a symbol of the American West and are protected by law.



# Kanyana to the rescue

A love of animals, an abundance of enthusiasm and a sprawling two- hectare bushland property have contributed to the success of Kanyana Native Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, in the Perth hills. Kanyana now plays a vital role in the conservation of Australia's threatened mammal species.

by Mitzi Vance

**J**une and Lloyd Butcher have spent 40 years developing Kanyana Native Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre into a thriving 200-plus-capacity animal care facility run on a voluntary basis. Their dream and lifetime commitment has been important in assisting the Department of Conservation and Land Management bring native animals back from the brink of extinction.

Under the award-winning wildlife recovery program Western Shield, the department is working to control the threat of introduced predators, the European red fox and feral cat, on around 3.5 million hectares of land it manages (see 'Western Shield',

*LANDSCOPE*, Winter 1996). More than 100 years of exotic predation has seen native species such the dalgyte (bilby) decline to the point where assistance is needed, even with fox control in place, to boost populations through the introduction of new animals. Kanyana has come to play a vital role in this work.

### GROWING CONCERN

The Butchers' love of caring for native animals began in 1962 when they purchased a property in picturesque Gooseberry Hill, on the Darling Scarp. This magnificent bushland property came endowed with 140 springs, hence

the name Kanyana—an (eastern states) Aboriginal word that means 'meeting place of many waters' or 'gathering place'.

The first native animal the Butchers cared for at Kanyana was an injured galah, spotted by June as she was driving down Kalamunda Road. The galah soon recovered, so June and Lloyd began taking in more and more injured native animals and nursing them back to health, before releasing them back into the wild. Their first home, a caravan, was used as the base for this animal rescue work.

The Butchers' interest in caring for native animals soon grew, alongside building their home and bringing up their two children, when, in 1986, they heeded the call for a rehabilitation centre in Perth's hills. Funding the



**Previous page**  
**Main:** A marl (western barred bandicoot) suckling in its mother's pouch.  
 Photo – Jiri Lochman  
**Insets (from top left):** Rescued native bat; boodie; June Butcher with a dalgyte.  
 Photos – Ann Storrie

**Left:** Dalgytes in Kanyana's captive breeding program.

**Below left:** Kanyana's June Butcher with a sick bobtail.

**Below:** One of Kanyana's 106-strong force of volunteers in the magpie enclosure.

Photos – Ann Storrie



**Right:** Dorre Island at Shark Bay is one of only two islands in the world with natural populations of the marl.

Photo – Jiri Lochman

**Below right:** Tony Friend and a volunteer releasing a dalgyte at Dryandra.

Photo – Michael James

entire project themselves, they constructed a purpose-built animal hospital on their property. Much research and thought went into the project to ensure the facilities were similar to the natural surroundings of the animals. For example, when they built an enclosure for breeding dalgytes, the Butchers trucked in a load of sand similar to that found in the State's arid zone. Twenty feet of curved plastic pipes were then buried deep in the ground to mimic the burrows naturally tunnelled by the species in the wild. Beneath these pipes, the Butchers laid fencing mesh to prevent the animals from burrowing too far.

This type of commitment, and the long hours needed to care for the animals, soon saw June, a child health nurse, and Lloyd, then State Manager of Ansett WA, retire to dedicate themselves full-time to running Kanyana. Over the years, Kanyana has taken in a wide range of native species including the mala, red-tailed phascogale, echidna and numerous native bird species.

### A FRIEND IN NEED

In 1994, Department of Conservation and Land Management research scientist Tony Friend was working on boosting population numbers of the threatened marl (or western barred bandicoot, *Perameles bougainville*) and turned to the Butchers for help. This species, once widespread, was decimated by clearing and fox predation and now survives naturally only on Bernier and Dorre Islands, in the Shark Bay World Heritage Area. The last mainland sighting of the species was in 1929, at Rawlinna on the Nullarbor.

In order to boost numbers of marl to enable reintroduction of the species to mainland areas, Tony Friend and the Butchers set up a captive-breeding facility at Kanyana, with a founding



stock of 10 animals from Bernier Island. This represented a major expansion in focus: taking Kanyana's work beyond animal rescue and rehabilitation to carrying out vital conservation work on threatened species. Lloyd Butcher constructed special hot boxes for the breeding program, and great care was taken to minimise any adverse impacts on the animals. The caring hands of the Butchers and other Kanyana volunteers, together with Tony's scientific knowledge, soon led to a

thriving breeding colony. More than 60 marl have been bred at Kanyana since the program began, and at any one time there are at least 10 animals in the program.

In 1996, the Butchers realised they needed to expand the hospital to cater for more animals. This, coupled with the need for more volunteers, saw them turn Kanyana into an incorporated body, which allowed them to apply for much-needed funding provided under government and community grants.



**Left:** Dalgytes were first released into artificial burrows at Dryandra in 1998.

**Middle left:** Mammals reintroduced to Dryandra are continually monitored.  
Photos – Michael James

**Below left:** Vermin-proof enclosures in Dryandra Forest.  
Photo – Jiri Lochman

Today, Kanyana requires an average of 12 volunteer carers on hand each day for nursing, feeding, cleaning, maintenance and microscopic analysis of faecal matter, which helps to fast-track diagnosis of an animal's illness, ensuring efficient and faster treatment. Volunteers also assist with clerical duties associated with fundraising, medical records, insurance and preparation of educational information.

### BABY DALGYTES

With the start of the Western Shield project in 1996, the department saw an opportunity to expand on Kanyana's captive breeding success, by establishing a second breeding program at the recently-expanded centre.

Another threatened species, the dalgite (*Macrotis lagotis*), was chosen. Once found throughout arid and semi-arid Australia, the dalgite was, at that time, confined to northern deserts, including parts of the Pilbara and southern Kimberley. With founding stock of two dalgytes, one an injured animal named 'Bet-bet' found at the Jigalong Community near Cotton Creek in the State's north-west, the breeding program began. Six years later, more than 55 offspring have been produced.

Both breeding programs operate under strict guidelines to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the animals. New animals are continually introduced to limit in-breeding and ensure good genetic composition. Captive-bred dalgytes from Kanyana were swapped with captive-bred dalgytes from South Australia to ensure diversity and new blood. In 1999, the department provided the privately-owned Yookamurra Sanctuary, in South Australia, with a male and female dalgite from Kanyana. A number of other animal transfers have also been made with other interstate government and private organisations. Both





**Above:** The echidna is one of the mammals sometimes cared for by Kanyana volunteers.

Photo – Jiri Lochman

**Right:** The Return to Dryandra program aims to restore the range of native fauna originally found in the Wheatbelt.

Photo – Michael James



breeding programs have exceeded departmental expectations and, within six years of their commencement, have provided enough offspring to allow for the two species to be reintroduced into their former home ranges.

The Butchers have applied for and received numerous grants, which significantly helped to construct purpose-built breeding enclosures designed to resemble the natural habitats of both these arid-zone species. Their enthusiasm and knowledge also resulted in June Butcher's appointment to the department's Animal Ethics Committee in 1999.

## RETURN TO DRYANDRA

Dryandra Woodland, north-west of Narrogin, is within the former range of both the dalgyte and marl, and is

considered to be an ideal habitat. The department's Return to Dryandra project (see 'Return to Dryandra', *LANDSCOPE*, Winter 2001), which is part of Western Shield, focuses on restoring the range of native fauna once found in the Wheatbelt before agricultural clearing and the onslaught of foxes and cats. Two 10-hectare field breeding enclosures were established at Dryandra, into which dalgytes, banded

hare-wallabies, boodies (burrowing bettongs), marl and mala could be introduced.

The marl was reintroduced to Dryandra Woodland in 1998—more than 90 years after the marsupial had disappeared from the south-west. The animals were released into a temporary enclosure. Later that year, dalgytes were released into artificial burrows in the same enclosure.



viewing area within Dryandra Woodland, which will allow visitors to view native species with minimal human impact on the animals.

### KANYANA AND KIDS

June's involvement in Western Shield has also led to an ongoing partnership between the centre and the department's EcoEducation program based in The Hills Forest. Since 1996, more than 45,000 students and teachers have participated in the Western Shield schools program, which offers resources for use in schools, field excursions and professional development days for teachers.

All aspects of the program highlight the importance of saving threatened species. One of the highlights for participants is a close encounter with captive-bred threatened species, such as dalgites, from Kanyana. The centre's involvement has been such a success that it holds animal encounters at The Hills Forest at least three times a week.

This venture is just another example of the Butchers' continuing drive to help native wildlife, and is the reason why they were both awarded Members of the Order of Australia when the Queen's Birthday Honours were announced this year. Kanyana and the endangered species breeding programs have also featured in the documentary 'Return to Eden' and on ABC TV's 'Aussie Animal Rescue'. The Butchers have come a long way from their caravan in the 1960s to the Kanyana of today—a centre staffed by 106 volunteers and looking after approximately 1500 native animals a year.

The department's partnership with Kanyana has been a boon for Western Shield and, with the success of both breeding programs, we can be sure that this partnership will continue to thrive well into the future.



**Top:** June and Lloyd Butcher were awarded Members of the Order of Australia in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. Photo – Courtesy of *The West Australian*

**Above:** Kanyana holds animal encounters at The Hills Forest at least three times a week, through the Department of Conservation and Land Management's EcoEducation program. Photo – The Hills Forest

The reintroduced animals were monitored by periodic trapping and by the use of radio-collars that were fitted during the early releases. Breeding was continuous and, as further dalgites from Kanyana were released, the Dryandra colony has grown steadily. About a year after the first releases, there was a sudden explosion of dalgites and a release into the woodland outside the enclosure, where

the fox population is controlled but not eradicated by 1080 baiting. Since the original reintroduction of captive-bred dalgites from Kanyana, the breeding population of dalgites in the enclosure has increased by 44. There are currently 25 dalgites in the enclosure. Thirty-six dalgites have now been released outside the Dryandra enclosure and small dalgite colonies are growing up across the woodland.

All reintroductions are done under strict monitoring programs, and June Butcher has been a key player in all reintroductions out on site.

A breeding centre at Dryandra has also been established to produce animals for reintroduction into the wild both at Dryandra and other locations across southern WA. The department has also begun work on the construction of a separate, four-hectare

Mitzi Vance is a Media Liaison Officer with the Department of Conservation and Land Management. She has been the media officer for the Western Shield Project since its inception. Mitzi can be contacted on (08) 9389 8644.



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

# LANDSCOPE

VOLUME EIGHTEEN, NUMBER 1, SPRING 2002



Discover some amazing lifestyles of the little-known fungi of our south-west forests. See 'Forest fungi' on page 10.



One of WA's longest serving wildlife researchers looks at changes to nature conservation in the State. See 'For the times they are a-changin' on page 20.



Two unusual beetles are attracted to large bushfires. But why, and how do they find the fires and avoid getting burnt? See 'Australian fire-beetles' on page 36.



Two wildlife rescuers recently received Queen's birthday honours. See 'Kanyana to the rescue' on page 42.



What do wildlife officers do when a large whale weighing up to 80 tonnes becomes entangled? Turn to 'When nature calls...for help' on page 42.

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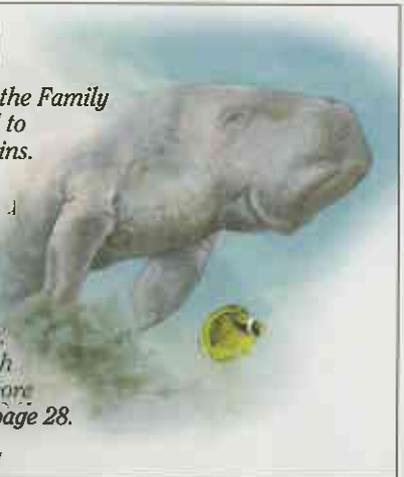
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## COVER

The dugong is the only living species in the Family Dugongidae, and is more closely related to elephants than it is to whales and dolphins. One of the largest and most secure populations of dugong grazes on the extensive beds of seagrass in the shallow marine environment of Shark Bay. An estimated 10,000 dugongs, representing 10 per cent of the world's population, live in the bay. A new study, involving collaboration with local Aboriginal people, is discovering more about their movements in the bay. See page 28.

Cover illustration by Phillipa Nikulinsky



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