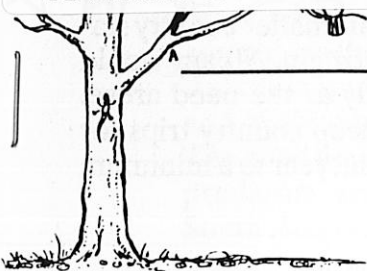




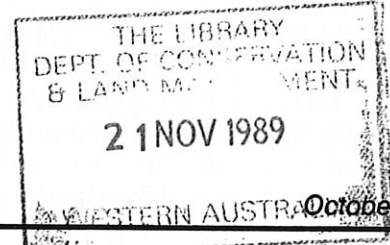
SEARCH NEWS

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The newsletter of the Research Division of the Department of Conservation and Land Management



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BIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CAPE ARID

The field phase of the survey of Cape Arid National Park has just concluded. This park, the best known of all the major south coast parks was studied for snails (P Kendrick), ants (A Anderson - CSIRO Darwin), reptiles and frogs (J Rolfe) birds (AH Burbidge), mammals (J Rolfe, AH Burbidge, N McKenzie) and plants (G Keighery and J Alford).

Initial results reveal a rich assemblage of all biota surveyed. Several endemic species of *Bothriembryon* (snails) are known from the area. Jim Rolfe discovered a new species of Blind Snake (*Rhamphotyphlops* sp). Two extinct taxa of plants (*Gratiola* off. *pedunculata* and *Hydatella australis*) re-appeared, numerous range extensions were discovered, the most notable being an *Acacia* previously confined to the Albany district and a native mint (*Mentha saturaeoides*) previously only known from the Pemberton area. The known flora list is approaching the 1 000 species mark. Numerous birds were recorded, including populations of the rare Western Ground Parrot.

During the latest trip large areas of heath and *Banksia speciosa* shrubland were dying from waterlogging caused by the very heavy winter rains. These deaths mimic dieback, and will be studied and reported on in greater detail.

Information gained will be used in the management plan, and provides baseline data for monitoring purposes.

Now the easy part, the write up! Allan Burbidge says it will be ready by Christmas.

Greg Keighery
Biogeography Program Leader

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