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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Research News

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

Editor: Jeanette Gilmour

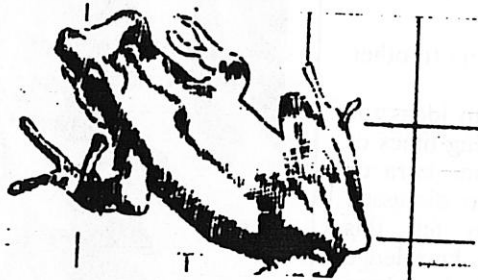
Wildlife Research Centre
PO Box 51
Wanneroo WA 6065
Telephone: 4055105

No 2/89

February 1989

Editorial

"We Need Contributions"



Any kind of interesting contribution will do (stolen cartoons, snippets, jokes *et al.*). We're particularly interested in original articles - results of latest research, highlights from field trips and of course what about spreading the news on any interstate or local conference you may have attended (after all Research Division does pay the costs in many instances).

The only barrier between you and being immortalized in print is the Editor's power of veto and she doesn't exercise it all that often. What've you got to lose?

Ed

ISSUE	DEADLINE	DISTRIBUTION
DEADLINE FOR MARCH 1989	22 MARCH '89	EARLY APRIL
NEXT ISSUE		



Information from the Research Division Policy Group Meeting

The meeting was held on 28 February 1989 at the Wildlife Research Centre, Woodvale. This was followed by a meeting with the Program Leaders.

Information from the meetings.

- Andrew Burbidge opened this the 19th meeting of the Policy Group by welcoming and introducing the new Curator of the Herbarium, Jim Armstrong, to the meeting.
- Temporary release of technical officers to other scientists.
Neil Burrows presented to the group ideas for the sharing of technical officers during times of low demands. This would be either intra or inter program. The ideas were also discussed with Program Leaders who also felt this mechanism would help broaden the knowledge of technical officers. Program Leaders have been asked to, over the next six months, to identify periods of peak and low use of technical officers in their programs.
- Interstate Travel Application - Lachie McCaw
The RDPG supported a case for Lachie McCaw to attend the 1989 Bushfires and Shrublands Conference in Canberra. The conference will be held from 8 to 10 May 1989 and is being organized by the Australian Defence Force Academy and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- Australian Botanical Liaison Officer (ABLO)
A submission from the Herbarium requesting support for Terry McFarlane to spend a year in England as the ABLO was addressed. The case was supported and a submission will be forwarded to the Executive Director and Minister.
- Panel for assessment of technical officers for criteria progression
Tony Start informed the RDPG that the Public Service Commission had now developed criteria for progression for technical officers that were uniform across the service. These will be circulated as soon as the Division receives an official copy. The formation of an internal panel to review officers eligible for progression was discussed with Program Leaders and considered necessary. The panel would consist of the:
Divisional Manager, Research
SPRS or PRS (Management)
The Technical Officer's supervising scientist
A Technical representative from the Technical Officer's Research Centre

- Budget
Copies of next year's budget plus updated details on this year's expenditure were circulated to Program Leaders

The next meeting of the RDPG will be on Thursday 30 March 1989 at the Manjimup Research Centre.



Western Australian Heritage Committee

National Estate Program Grants 1989/90

The West Australian Heritage Committee is currently calling for applications for those seeking grants under the National Estate Program for the 1989/90 fiscal year.

The Program is aimed at assisting projects concerned with the identification, conservation and interpretation of the heritage of the State. This encompasses a range of projects including:

- (i) restoration projects on historic buildings
- (ii) studies and surveys of the built or man-made environment;
- (iii) studies and surveys of the natural environment
- (iv) Aboriginal site documentation and protection.

Priority will generally be given to projects involving places which are Classified by the National Trust, or on the Register of the National Estate.

Any scientist requiring a copy of the guidelines and an application form should contact Jeanette Gilmour at Woodvale (4055105). Research Division applications are being co-ordinated by Steve Hopper and should be submitted to him no later than Friday 14 April 1989.

SEMINAR

THURSDAY 16 MARCH 1989

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CALM'S FIRE POLICY

Presented by Roger Underwood

When CALM was being formed five years ago, one of the first fears was that the new Department would introduce inappropriate fire regimes in the State's national parks, nature reserves and forests.

A fire management policy was one of the first policies developed by the new Department. It is now widely accepted.

On the other hand, implementation of the policy, specifically the use of fire to reduce fuel levels in areas where there is a high wildfire threat, continues to be controversial. Decision making by CALM managers (will fire be used and if so how?) is the fundamental question.

I will look at how CALM's field managers use fire; the options which are considered; and the regimes adopted in the implementation of the fire policy.

I will also indicate the new developments which I think are likely to stem from complementary policy development, and from current research and operational trials.

**Venue: Training Centre
CALM SOHQ
50 Hayman Road
Como**

Time: 3.00pm

All fired up at the Tutanning Nature Reserve

The Fire Program combined a Program meeting and a field trip to examine fire research and management issues in the Wheatbelt Region.

Members of the Program, Wheatbelt Regional Manager, Ken Wallace and Narrogin District Manager, Ken Atkins, assembled at Boyagin Rock at 10.00am on 23rd of February. While the Manjimup contingent argued over whether or not they really got lost en route from the deep south, we made for the first stop on the itinerary. Following brief introductions by Gordon Friend and Ken Atkins, we inspected recent buffer burning in Boyagin Nature Reserve and discussed aspects of monitoring vegetation within the burnt buffer. As is the case with most wheatbelt reserves, the main fire management issue was how to manage fuel levels to minimise the impact of wildfire, yet at the same time, maintain conservation values. It was agreed a compromise could be reached. Continued monitoring of vegetation in the burnt buffers would provide information on which decisions about the frequency of burning could be based.

We then trekked south east to Mockerdungulling Hill Reserve near Tutanning. Here, Ken Atkins spoke about attempts to regenerate Jam Wattle and York Gum using prescribed fire. The debate centred on whether it was necessary to interfere with prescribed fire, or to allow the stands to senesce and regenerate without the use of prescribed fire. This small reserve is infested with weeds and rabbits and while fire could be used to regenerate Jam, the young seedlings standing in flammable grasses, were vulnerable to subsequent fire. There was considerable discussion about defining the conservation values of this reserve and opinions were varied. Lack of information was the only area of certainty.

We lunched at the Tutanning Nature Reserve field station and Gordon Friend and Angas Hopkins outlined past and current research activities within the reserve.

After lunch it was off to Gordon's fire ecology study sites on Tutanning Nature Reserve. Gordon described his sampling techniques, designed to study the effects of fire on fauna. God, and the Regional Manager willing, Gordon hopes to burn his study site in the coming weeks. Ted Griffin and Lachie McCaw outlined aspects of a field/s and fire behaviour study to be conducted in connection with the burning of Gordon's fauna plots.

We then headed down to Toolibin Nature Reserve. Ken Atkins explained the chronic salinity problems and we inspected results of activities designed to revegetate areas of the Reserve including burning and planting.

The group then adjourned to Tutanning field station where the issues of the day and other topics of

lighter note were further discussed over a "Bishop" (2.2) or two. After a hearty meal (prepared under the direction of Angas) and more to drink, we retired to our swags.

The following morning was spent briefly reviewing the progress being made by Fire Program scientists. Dave Ward presented a thought provoking seminar entitled "Ecology Question Maps". Dave's ideas on establishing a framework for setting ecological questions and for assembling ecological information was well received. In the coming months and with help from Dave, we will attempt to put his system to the test (or put our research to the test!!!!?)

The meeting was declared a success, the format a good one and we plan to emulate it in 6-7 months at the Perup Ecology Centre.

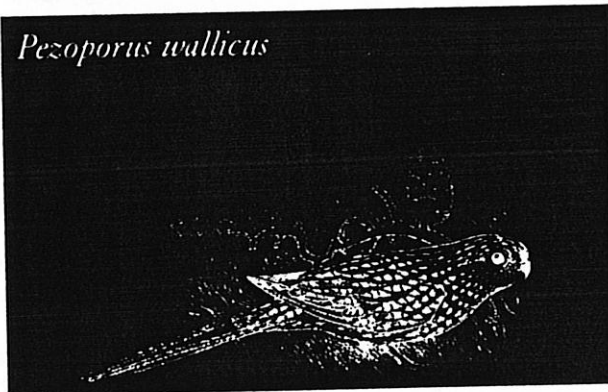
Thanks.....

Ken Atkins
Ken Wallace
Gordon Friend, and
Angas Hopkins

for your efforts.

Neil Burrows, Fire Program Leader

Pezoporus wallicus



A Word From The Scientific Editor

The once heavy backlog of scientific and technical manuscripts waiting to be edited has been cleared, so if you have any papers you want published now is a good time to submit them.

We have a few copies available of many past issues of Departmental Reprints for anyone who would like to add to their collections or who have some missing. The numbers available are: 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 84, 86, 88, 89.

A list detailing the author and title of these Reprints is available from Research Centre Managers.

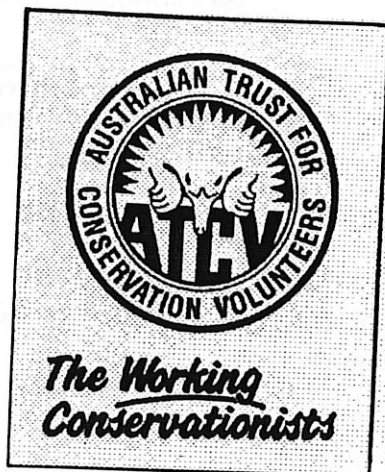
Anyone requiring copies of Reprints should contact either Robyn Weir or myself at Como.

Marianne Lewis

GROUND PARROTS AND VOLUNTEERS - THE ATCV

Our Ground Parrot project in the Fitzgerald area was progressing well except for one great difficulty - finding and catching birds was proving to be extremely labour intensive. We needed at least six extra people throughout the day, from early in the morning until well after sunset. Too difficult and expensive to do with CALM staff in a region where there are few CALM officers, all heavily committed already. The solution : the Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

For minimal cost (\$12.00 per volunteer per day, plus team leader at \$75.00 per day if required, plus transport) the ATCV provides willing workers for practical conservation projects.



Apart from the Ground Parrot project, the ATCV has also participated in several other CALM projects on the south coast (including re-routing and upgrading walk trails in Cape Arid National Park and Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve) and in weeding and replanting in Yanchep National Park.

The Ground Parrot project appears to be the first CALM research project involving the ATCV, but I am sure that they could be of use in other projects. The six ATCV people involved in the Ground Parrot project were certainly good value. Despite their diverse backgrounds and (for most of them) lack of training in research or biology, they were of substantial assistance. Volunteers helped in walking through the heath (sometimes hot and tedious work) to locate birds, helped in erecting and dismantling mist nets, and helped in radio-tracking. These activities all contributed significantly to the success of the project.

It is important to note however that for a project involving the ATCV to be successful, the task needs to be one requiring minimal training, yet still be rewarding and interesting. At its simplest level, the activity needs to be perceived to be leading towards a clearly defined and desirable goal. Positive feedback to participants is absolutely essential. Provided careful thought is given to these aspects, then the ATCV may well be able to contribute to a number of other CALM projects.

Anyone with a project in which the ATCV might be involved is welcome to contact me (Woodvale, Telephone 4055100) to discuss my experience with them. Alternatively, contact the ATCV directly (tel (09) 335 5508). A reading of CALM's policy on volunteers is an important step before actually utilizing volunteers.

Allan Burbidge

Woodvale

CALM LIBRARY AND CALM ALERT

Money problems yet again. CALM Alert is a very useful way for the CALM officers at regional centres to keep in touch with current journals and book accessions. Last year about two thirds of the 2 830 photocopy requests handled by the library were generated by CALM Alert.

The problem with this service is that it is costly. Until recently \$600 for the 118 issues per month, with the price rising for the next issue. Information Branch have borne the costs in the past but now feel unable to do so. Well, should CALM Alert cease? Should fewer copies go out, perhaps to individual offices rather than individuals? Should the library consider reducing journal subscriptions to pay for CALM Alert on the present system? And come to that, what about journal subscriptions, they too are increasing and the library has only a limited budget. Are all the journals needed? Should journals which relate specifically to specialist programs be partly paid for by those programs? How much do you value your library and the service it provides? Hugh Clift will be delighted to hear from you.

Elaine Davison

Short Of Time.....?

Effective Meetings

Meetings are at once the crux and the bane of a manager's work life. When they are successful, meetings bring forth creative ideas, solve problems and provide opportunities for efficient communication. When meetings are unsuccessful, however, they are sources of anger, frustration and resentment at the unproductive use of precious time.

For the manager wanting to make his/her daily work time as productive as possible and achieve the maximum benefit from meetings, here's a few ideas.

- Before you call a meeting be sure that the benefits outweigh the cost.
- Do not hesitate to cancel meetings if people are unable to attend.
- As soon as committees or teams have served their purpose, abolish them or they will become unproductive.
- Limit the time for each meeting, remember meetings expand to fill the time allotted for them.
- Time your meetings to determine whether they have been efficiently run.
- Avoid packing too much into meeting agendas - question every proposed agenda item before accepting it for inclusion.
- Limit the time allocated for each item, specify this time limit in advance.
- Insist that participants come prepared to all meetings.
- Start and finish the meeting on time.
- Stick to the agenda.
- Resolve conflict in meetings
 - (a) by bringing out the positives in arguments
 - (b) by establishing common goals
 - (c) by emphasising win, win situations
 - (d) by eliminating win, lose situations
 - (e) by showing common ground
 - (f) by encouraging creative thinking
 - (g) by playing down the differences
- At the end of the meeting, summarise the position, clarify follow-up responsibilities and deadlines.
- Send out minutes as soon as possible after the meeting, they should be action orientated.

Finally - remember no one likes their time wasted at meetings. There is often a dislike and high frustration level associated with business meetings where they waste their own time and others time. But the fact remains there is a need to call and attend meetings from time to time. So instead of them being disorganized time wasters or platforms for long winded know-it-alls, make sure they are planned and used as effective business tools.

Hints for Writing an Informative Abstract

After the title of your paper, the Abstract will be the most read part. Although it is a concise summary, it is also a form of advertisement for your paper

Do	Don't
slant the abstract to your audience	mention earlier work
tell what was found	include detailed experimental results
tell why the work was done	describe details for conventional apparatus
place findings early in the topical sentence	mention future work
put details in succeeding sentences	begin abstracts with stock phrases
place general statements last	use involved phraseology
separate relatively independent subjects	use questionable jargon
differentiate experiment from hypothesis	waste words by stating the obvious
be informative but brief	say the same thing two ways
be exact, concise and unambiguous	use noun form of verbs
use short, complete sentences	over-use synonyms
	use a choppy, telegraphic style

For those that might be interested, here is a listing of the Curtin University Seminar Program for the first half of the year.

**Curtin University of Technology
School of Biology
1989 Seminar Program - Semester I
12.00 noon, Davis Lecture Theatre No 1
(Building 302, Room 001)**

Wednesday 1st March

Peter Davis, Entomology Branch, Department of Agriculture - "Argentine ants: past, present and future".

Wednesday 8th March

Mike Mouritz, WA Mines Department - "Environmental management in the mining industry - bureaucracy at work".

Wednesday 22nd March

Adjunct Prof Stephen Davies, School of Biology - "Current projects of the RAOU".

Wednesday 5th April

Dr Jacob John, School of Biology - "Diatom hunting in Greece".

Wednesday 12th April

Alenka Zigon, School of Biology - "Vertebrate ecology of heathland sites at Eneabba".

Shapelle McNee, School of Biology - title to be announced.

Wednesday 26th April

Dr Robert Gerritse, CSIRO Division of Water Resources Research - "Effects of urbanization on the quality of ground and surface waters in the Perth metropolitan area".

Wednesday 10th May

Louise Egerton-Warburton, School of Biology - "Tolerance of jarrah forest species to acidic soils".

Linda Manning, School of Biology - "Post harvest handling of kangaroo paws".

Wednesday 24th May

Neil Pettit, School of Biology - title to be announced.

David Wedderburn, School of Biology - "Ephippia production in chydorids".

Wednesday 31st May

Dr Graham Arnold, CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology - "Will kangaroos survive in the wheatbelt of Western Australia?"

Wednesday 7th June

Dr Ron Hacker, WA Department of Agriculture - "Rangeland monitoring".

Contact No: Andrew Craig (350 7073/7368)

Scientific and Technical Publications

The following scientific and technical publications have been approved for submission for publication this month.

Author(s): G J Keighery
Title: *Caesia viscuda* Keighery - a new species of Anthericaceae (Liliaceae S.I.) from south western Australia
For submission to: Nuytsia

Author(s): J A Friend
Title: The Numbat *Myrmecobius fasciatus* (Myrmecobiidae) : A history of decline and potential for recovery
For submission to: Proceedings of ESA conference, Geraldton

Author(s): L Siamos and G R Siemon
Title: Effect of pencilling and furnace oil treatment on strength properties of jarrah
For submission to: WURC report

Author(s): C Semeniuk, V Semeniuk, I Cresswell and N Marchant
Title: A proposed descriptive

classification for wetland vegetation of the Darling system
For submission to: Journal of the Royal Society Western Australia

Editors: P Brown, E Davison and P Hussey
Title: Newsletter - Tree Decline and Revegetation

Author(s): G J Keighery, J Brown and B J Keighery
Title: Vegetation and flora of Bold Park, Perth, Western Australia
For Submission to: Western Australian Naturalist

The following have recently been published

Author(s): A V Milewski and G J Keighery
Title: Vegetation and Flora - Edjudina-Menzies Study Area
Published in: Records of the Western Australian Museum. Supplement No 31 - The Biological Survey of the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia (Part 5 pp 11-37, 76-106)

Author(s): G J Keighery
Title: Breeding systems of the Western Australian flora III: Aizoaceae
Published in: The Western Australian Naturalist Vol 17 No. 5, October 1988 pp 121-125
Author(s): G R Siemon, K J White, A B Thomson
Title: Sawmilling trial of agroforestry and conventionally grown radiata pine
Published in: WURC Report No. 8 February 1989

Research Project Plans

The following Research Project Plans have been approved this month

No: 65/88
Title: Evaluate regrowth Eucalypt log degrade after six months storage under continuous waterspray using two systems.
Officer in Charge: K J White

No: 1/89
Title: A flowering calender for the Walpole Nornalup National Park
Officer in Charge: Grant Wardell-Johnson

Philosophy Corner

"Getting organized is no longer good enough. You must stay organized".

"The best revenge is to live long enough to be a problem to your children"

HAVE YOU HEARD?

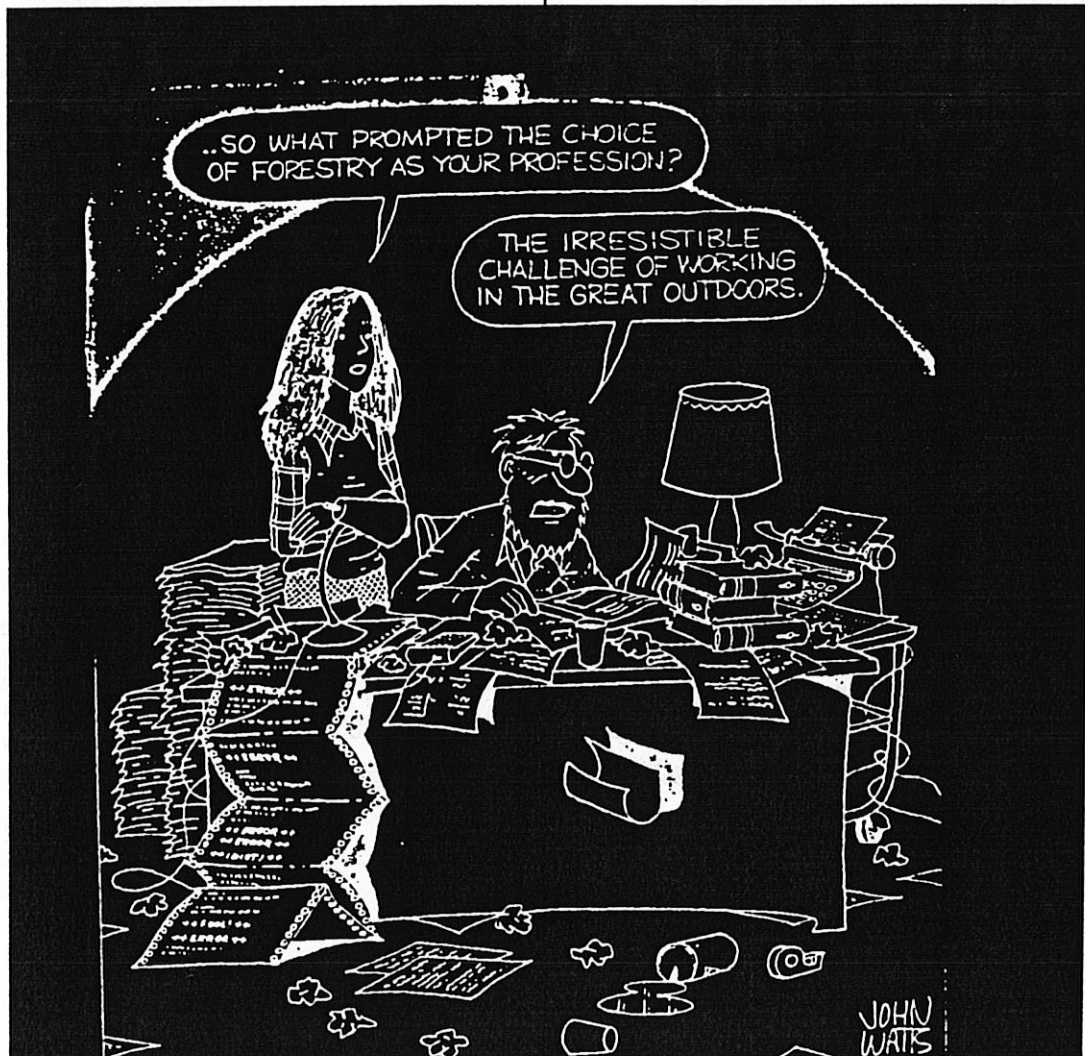
- Business Cards - "Breakthrough!" Approval has been obtained for the printing of qualifications after the scientist's name on Departmental Business Cards. So next time your ordering a business card don't forget to get your qualifications added. Business cards are available for people who have frequent contact with the public or other organisations.
- Bill Frost from the Manjimup Research Centre has resigned. Bill has been offered a professional appointment with the Victorian Department of Agriculture.
- Stephanie Moran from the Library at Woodvale will also be leaving in a couple of weeks. After her

wedding, Stephanie will be moving with her husband to live in Sydney.

- Andrew Burbidge travelled to Canberra and Hobart for the week of 20 February to attend meetings of the Commonwealth Government's Endangered Species Advisory Committee (two days), the Scientific Advisory Committee of World Wildlife Fund Australia (2 days) and the WWFA Trustees meeting (1 day). He says the highlight was a trip to Bruny Island, near Hobart, where he saw a potoroo and some real *Eucalyptus globulus*!
- Janet Gardner and Mike Lyons the latest additions to the technical staff have recently taken up residence at Woodvale. Janet will work with David Pearson in the Fire Program. Mike will be working with the Biogeography team.

Quote of the month

"I make a policy of not talking to the press" - a reluctant Jack Kinnear when asked if he cared to contribute to this gossip column



THERE'S ONE CONSOLATION TO BECOMING EXTINCT.



When you're out bush, one usually goes behind the nearest tree"



Steady on Charlie! It's on the protected list."