

Volunteer News



Department of Conservation and Land Management



July 1991

Carers of the birds and the bees

Volunteers have been caring for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife ever since humans felt compassion for native birds and animals in need of assistance.

Now with more awareness for our environment, the public are actively seeking help when they find an injured bird or animal. While some veterinarians will help, and CALM can usually only oversee any care offered, the load on volunteers has become enormous.

"Wildlife Carers" are scattered throughout the State and the metropolitan area, but, initially, few people knew who all these volunteers were. In 1985 following the Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference at Murdoch University, two Carers, Sue Smith and Vicki Wakelam, decided to compile a composite list of all volunteers.

Wildlife carers list

A statewide survey of all existing and potential volunteers was begun and over 500 survey forms were mailed out. From the results of the survey the first "Wildlife Carers List" was formed. This list was distributed to all government bodies and each individual carer. Every six months the list was updated, collated and distributed by the now WA Native Bird Hospital. The Wildlife Carers List has been handed over to CALM to enhance central coordination and management.



**By Sue Smith,
WA Native Bird Hospital**

Most Wildlife Carers operate from their own homes and while the job might sound fun, it's a lot of hard work. Sure there are the sweet cuddly or fluffy babies, orphaned joeys, tiny birds - but that means 2-3 hourly feeds and dirty bottoms. Add to this the victims of car accidents, poisoning, cat attacks, oiling and many other problems confronting our wildlife, and one is presented with broken bleeding bodies needing veterinary attention and expert nursing care. Sometimes euthanasia is the only possible solution to free a wild animal from unnecessary suffering.

Caring for wildlife is also an expensive and time consuming task requiring not just a love of wildlife, but the desire to seek knowledge and learn more about how to best care for one's patients. Complete rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife

should be the ultimate goal; survival back in their natural environment is tough.

However, when a Carer does succeed and sees the patient strongly run or fly away, the reward is not just a sense of achievement felt deep within the heart but also the knowledge of having succeeded in helping put something back in its natural environment.

An honour

It is an honour and responsibility to care for another life and Wildlife Carers should not feel inadequate and isolated. There is literature available and help is only a phone call away. Volunteers caring for wild birds can go to a bi-monthly educational forum at Kings Park Education Centre.

For any advice on bird care please ring the WA Native Bird Hospital on (09) 295 1588. For further details concerning the Wildlife Carers program please telephone Terry Hales at CALM during normal business hours on (09) 364 0777.

Volunteer survey complete

During April and May a telephone survey was conducted to establish the motivations, expectations and characteristics of CALM volunteers.

Some CALM volunteers received a call from our researcher Margo Simshauser. Margo's survey was part of her study towards completing a Bachelor of Arts (Recreation) degree at Edith Cowan University.

Of the 700 plus volunteers registered with CALM only 103 were selected to participate by a random sample method. Of those 103 volunteers selected, 20 were unable to be contacted by telephone. Therefore, a response rate of 81% was achieved.

Information was collected to assess the extent of volunteering and the initial motivations and current expectations of volunteers.

By M. Simshauser
& C. Mathews

Data was also collected to determine the characteristics of CALM volunteers in terms of age, occupation, gender, education and marital status. This information will assist CALM to service your needs better as volunteers, and maximise the benefits of volunteering all round.

The summary of the results of the survey are as follows:

1. The most popular volunteer programs were the Friends of WA Herbarium and the Exmouth Turtle Group.

2. Most volunteers were involved in Wildlife Management/Research and Information/Interpretation.

3. 70% of volunteers are engaged in volunteer activities for

at least one other organization.

4. The main areas for volunteering were for enjoyment, recreation, personal interest or concern for the environment.

5. A large number of volunteers heard about the volunteer program through CALM staff.

6. Volunteers have a high level of expectation for feedback from CALM staff, notification of upcoming volunteer projects, and regular guidance and support.

7. Most volunteers were aged between 36 and 45, married, employed full-time and had completed secondary school. Males and females were equally represented in the study.

8. Most volunteers were the only members in their household who were CALM volunteers.

The major findings of the survey show that CALM volunteers are motivated by intrinsic rewards and higher social and esteem needs. Also a close relationship between volunteers and CALM staff in terms of communication, feedback and support is expected by CALM volunteers.

These findings can be of sufficient use to CALM in the future development and improvement of the existing volunteer program. If you would like further information concerning the survey, Margo Simshauser can be contacted at CALM on Mondays and Tuesdays by telephoning (09) 364 0777 during normal business hours.

Both Margo and CALM would like to thank all of those volunteers who had participated for your support and cooperation. Your enthusiasm and dedication has been greatly appreciated.

Flatback turtle tagging

Cowrie Beach, south of Port Hedland, is one of the State's most important rookeries for the endemic flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*).

It is also a popular recreational area and, being one of the few places where turtles can be seen nesting on the mainland, attracts large numbers of visitors.

The area's great potential for combining community involvement, public education and conservation research led to the commencement of tagging studies at Cowrie Beach in the 1986/87 season.

Since then numerous individuals and community groups have volunteered their time to assist with turtle tagging.

In the 1990/91 season tag-

ging had been continued by Karratha's Nickol Bay Naturalists' Club and, most recently, by Karratha volunteers Greg McLachlan and Linda Pemberton.

Greg and Linda spent a week camped near the beach and ventured, each night, to the turtle rookery to collect nesting information and tag turtles.

To date, this season's work at Cowrie Beach has resulted in the tagging of 47 new turtles and the sighting of six remigrants - one from the 1986/87 season, three from the 1988/89 season and two from the 1989/90 season.

Volunteer turtle tagging will continue in the Pilbara this year with Linda, and Anna Vitenbergs on Rosemary Island to tag hawksbill and flatback turtles.

A CALMing Experience

In early May, George Arnold, Alan Barsden and Mark Illingworth, three energetic but unsuspecting *Friends Of Marmion Marine Park* (FOMMP) ventured north to the warmer climate of Exmouth to assist CALM officers in organising signs for seven of the eight sanctuary zones in the Ningaloo Marine Park.

With 12 days allocated to erect 15 signs - a reasonably simple task we thought - discussions on the drive up often centred around what activities we would under-

take in our spare time. Wrong! Instead we were led to some quite inaccessible beaches within the Marine Park to find that the task at hand was not just stand-a-post and erect a sign on it. We found ourselves digging holes with crow-bars, mixing concrete, pushing concrete filled wheelbarrows over sand dunes, using a chainsaw and hammer drill, becoming surveyors, digging the landcruiser out of bogs, beating off flies, and realising there were muscles in our bodies we never knew were there.

All-in-all, along with the

hard work it was a very enjoyable trip, made pleasurable by the hospitality of the CALM Officers who went out of their way to ensure our stay was comfortable. The 15 signs were erected in nine days, giving us a couple of easy days before the trip home.

Many thanks to the management of CALM and the rangers at Exmouth for providing the opportunity to assist in this project.

By Mark Illingworth. Extracted from the FOMMP July/August Newsletter.

Volunteer Conference Report

The Volunteer Centre of Western Australia recently organized and ran a very successful *4th Annual State Conference on Volunteering: The New Image*, held on April 12 and 13, 1991, as part of a focus for National Volunteer Week.

The conference, based at the Department of Community Services East Perth Centre, had a wide ranging program that attracted

participants from the city and country.

A welcoming address from the Minister for Community Services, Mr Eric Ripper, commenced proceedings, with Mrs Ruth Reid, Chairperson of the Community and Family Commission, giving the keynote address.

Following this, the participants attended presentations and workshops of their choice, coming

together again for a plenary session later in the afternoon.

A similar program was followed on Saturday with presentations and workshops on a wide range of topics such as, "Can You Spell Community Without Volunteers?", "Should We Provide Care For Our Volunteers?", and, "Working With Volunteers With Special Needs".

Former Community Involvement Coordinator Colin Ingram ran a workshop entitled "Volunteers and the Union" and Terry Hales, Project Officer, acted as a recorder. Other people seen at the conference included Marie McDonald of Metropolitan Region, Bill Adams of Northern Forest Region, and Fiona Marr of CALM's Recreation, Landscape and Community Education Branch.

If you would like a copy of the Conference Report, or any other information, please contact The Volunteer Centre on (09) 220 0676.

VOLUNTEER NEWS is for Volunteers

Your comments, letters, articles, photos and notices of up-coming events are all welcome and we'll do our best to publish them. This newsletter can only be effective with your contributions so if you think you have something interesting to say, or wish to make us aware of a CALM volunteer project, please send your articles to:

The Editor
VOLUNTEER NEWS
Policy & Extension Branch
P.O. Box 104
COMO W.A. 6152

Let's clean up Australia

On National Clean Up Day, Sunday March 24, 1991, a resolute gathering of 18 members of the Friends of Marmion Marine Park (FOMMP) bravely faced the wet and windy conditions to clean up Hillarys Boat Harbour.

The intrepid group walked and crawled around the rocks of the harbour breakwater, adjacent to the Marine and Harbour buildings, and collected 22 bags of litter and rubbish which was later removed by the Department of Marine and Harbours.

Colin Ingram and Terry Hales were involved in the organisation of the Clean Up Day as CALM's representatives on the Clean Up Perth Committee.

Both the Friends of Marmion Marine Park and CALM were presented with Certificates of Appreciation from the Clean Up Perth Committee for their contribution. CALM's Certificate of Appreciation is on display in the foyer of Murdoch House in Mt.

Pleasant.

Meanwhile, in Exmouth, a host of Conservation, Animal rescue, Research and Education (CARE) members and volunteers, both local and visiting, undertook a similar project for National Clean Up Day. They had before them the awesome task of cleaning the beachfront between Town Beach and Bundegi.

With their sights set the volunteers plunged into the clean up with gusto. Filling bag after bag of rubbish and trash, they braved the fierce heat of the day. An extremely efficient shuttle system, involving private, Navy

and CALM vehicles, took on the job of collecting the full bags and transporting the volunteers.

By 5pm the beach was spotless, without a trace of litter anywhere. About three tonnes of rubbish was collected throughout Exmouth, of which approximately 300kg was recycled.

Let's hope that the hard work put in by volunteers throughout the State will come to be an example to others. Congratulations to all.

Exmouth Clean Up information extracted from the CARE Annual Report.

Earth is in good hands : *Earth Carers*

The Metropolitan Region has launched a new, and particularly exciting, group of volunteers.

"*Earth Carers*" are a non-site-specific-group of trained people who will help run CALM's educational programs like "*Go Bush*" in the Northern Forest Region, "*Earth Caretakers*", a Community Education section initiative, and the interactive displays at shopping centres and other special functions.

Metropolitan Regional Manager Drew Haswell said that the group was intensively training in a variety of fields - from CALM management philosophies, to safety and first aid, from interpretation and communication techniques to estate inspection.

"It is planned that the train-

ing will allow the volunteers to answer questions accurately, or redirect enquiries to more appropriate staff," he said.

"It is hoped that this highly motivated and enthusiastic group will become the core group of honorary CALM officers, should the relevant legislation be passed."

The Earth Carers are readily identified at the educational programs - as well as the normal "CALM Volunteer" shirts they wear bright green overalls which have been 'walked' on by various native animals!

For more information concerning the Earth Carers program contact Rae Burrows at CALM Metro Region on (09) 364 0777 during normal business hours.

By Rae Burrows. Article courtesy of "CALM News".

**Greenhouse
Corps**

Applicants are sought for
**LANDCARE PLANNING
& COMMUNICATION
SKILLS**

8 WEEK TRAINING COURSE
PART ONE (live in)
30 Sept - 25 Oct. \$90 per wk.
Rylington Park Farm
near Boyup Brook

PART TWO (live in)
4 Nov. - 29 Nov. \$90 per wk.
Albany/Denmark

ENQUIRIES TO:
Louise Duxbury or Basil Schur
(098) 48 1019, Fax (098) 48 1248