

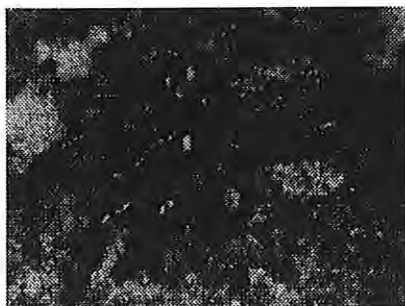
## The status of the Trapdoor Spider Genus *Moggridgea* in the Stirling Range National Park

In 1995 the Scientific Ranking Panel ranked two species of spiders, *Moggridgea* sp. (Stirling Range) and *Teyl* sp B.Y. Main 1953/2683, to be 'Critically Endangered'. The panel adopted the threat categories used by the World Conservation Union when the ranking was carried out. CALM is committed to developing Interim Recovery Plans (IRPs) for taxa ranked in this category and as a result assistance was provided to the Western Australian Museum to carry out surveys to enable us to gain better knowledge of the species' distribution, habitat and conservation requirements.

For *Moggridgea* sp. (Stirling Range) the following information was sought:

- What is the current distribution and abundance of the species?
- How can the burrows be distinguished from other mygalomorphs?
- How should the populations be monitored?
- What management actions are necessary?

Dr Mark Harvey from the Western Australian Museum with Dr Barbara York Main from the Department of Zoology, The University of Western Australia, recently completed the survey. Their report, "The status of the Trapdoor Spider genus *Moggridgea* in the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges" has now been received by CALM. Information provided in it will enable the development of an IRP and will aid CALM's South Coast Region to manage the sites where this spider occurs.



Female *Moggridgea* sp.

Recommendations from the report follow:

- Exclude fire (where possible) from known sites recognised as possessing viable populations.
- Adopt a fine-scale habitat approach to conserving populations.
- Monitor several sites in the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges.
- Explore nominated potential sites.
- Investigate further the specific status of all known populations.
- Consider supporting a researcher to study further the biology and persistence of *Moggridgea* in the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges, compare the status of such populations with *M. tingle*, and search other possible sites in the south-west forests.

The report on *Teyl* sp. will be available soon.

## UPDATE ON NIGHT PARROT

The night Parrot remains an enigma: the only species whose very survival remains doubtful for which an interim recovery plan has been written. The emphasis of the IRP is to continue seeking reports of possible sightings of Night Parrots, investigate those sightings, confirm the probable location of a population, and learn the best ways to keep finding them.

Accordingly, following a quite convincing report from the Canning Stock Route in June 1996, in the general area of a number of accepted historical reports over the last 30 years, an expedition was arranged in November 1966. The trip was designed on the assumption, based on historical records, that Night Parrots would visit waterholes during hot weather. We concentrated on mist-netting, listening and spotlighting around isolated waterholes, close to previous reported sightings. Further information was gathered from discussion with members of the Aboriginal community at Punmu, and direct searching was conducted to find waterholes, dense spinifex, and potential feeding areas.

Unfortunately no signs of Night Parrots were seen or heard, so most of the aims of the trip were not achieved. The historical evidence for Night Parrots being observed most at waterholes remains convincing, but it is likely that a combination of water and available food is a key factor. The seeding spinifex which was presumably abundant when the June sighting was made had disappeared by the time of our expedition.

During the three year life of the IRP we will continue trying to conduct one or more field trips per year to search likely places for Night Parrots. Provided the species is not yet extinct, even negative results gradually build up more insight into how to search for it. Future trips will concentrate on areas from which recent and historical reports have come and where a combination of water, food and hot conditions are combined.

*John Blyth*