

## CELEBRATION AT MARGARET RIVER

*A Land for Wildlife 10th anniversary event*

*The theme was 10 years – what have we achieved? Where have we come within that time?*

Wharnecliffe Mill was the venue on the 30th Nov. for over 35 people to get together to celebrate ten years of *Land for Wildlife* in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste region. The day consisted of a series of talks covering separate themes, with participants able to come or go at any point. The informality of the day enabled plenty of discussion.

The morning's speakers were from DEC staff who have been involved in the *LFW* program and who have had valuable input into the *LFW* Officer's role and communication with the general community as well as *LFW* private property owners over the ten years. Where have we come in ten years? Certainly, better communication between DEC and the community in the local area.

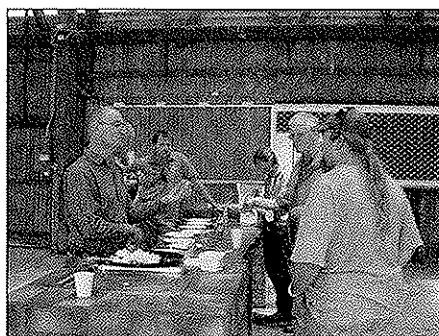
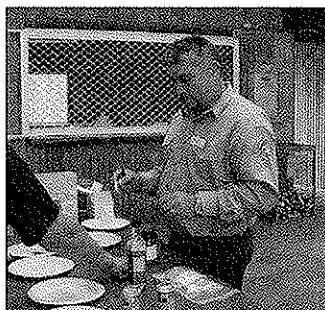
First, DEC's Blackwood District Manager, Greg Mair, gave an overview of activities within the District, which extends to the eastern boundary of Boyup Brook Shire. Participants were surprised by the extent of the responsibilities as he touched on various activities. Greg emphasized the importance of *LFWers'* properties in providing stepping stones and corridors between reserved bushland.

Nature Conservation Officer Janine Liddelow gave a quick overview of the rare and threatened flora, fauna and communities in the local area. She also outlined problems with *Phytophthora* Dieback and how to manage it.

National Park Ranger Ken Ninyette gave a very interesting presentation on indigenous culture and heritage, emphasising that the

need to know and understand country is the same, whatever your cultural or ethnic background. His 'bush spice tasting' was very popular!

The session immediately after lunch focused on *LFW* property owners' issues and achievements. Where have we come within the last



ten years? We have gained so much knowledge through both research and trial and error; we have learnt to use local provenance; we have learnt about ferals and local fauna habitat and we have seen the return of local fauna to rehabilitated areas!

Mike McCall described the trials and triumphs of actually recreating fauna habitat from ex-paddock over a seven year period. Richard Clark of Geographe Community Landcare Nursery emphasised the need for local provenance material and distributed a very impressive list of species being grown for rehabilitation. Neil Taylor discussed feral-proof fencing, including the research he carried out before attempting to build a feral proof fence on his property and the

designs/materials actually used. Keith White demonstrated a cat trap, as well as some plaster casts of truly **enormous** cat footprints. FAWNA members Kristie Gawthrop and Cheryl Campbell distributed material on the care of native animals, while others in the audience gave a practical demonstration of care for orphaned youngsters.

The last session was geared towards – where to go now? What is in store in the future for *LFW* in the South West?

Cherie Kemp ran through some statistics of *LFW* properties in the State and in the South West region and asked the audience where they thought *LFW* could venture in the future.

New happenings in *LFW* in the South West: Steve McKinney from the Gracetown Progress Association impressed everyone by showing how professional a local community group needs to become in order to have an influence on Local Government development planning. He expressed the wish that 'the *LFW* model' could be used on Shire reserves. Ernie Stead-Richardson, Shire Environmental Officer for the Augusta-Margaret River Shire, outlined some future incentives for *LFW* property owners under their Draft Environmental Policy.

Cherie finished with a roundup of *LFW* activities in the region. "Thank you all for being marvelous people to work with", she said, and invited everyone to stay on for food and wine. "An especial thanks goes to some local *LFW*-registered vigneronns who contributed some of their produce – now, let's party!"