

As the fires and heat of summer cool into our autumn period, the pace of EcoEducation's work hots up! Term 1 has been a time of much action and planning for our team. In the South West, Janet Date has carried out a survey of students' understanding of biodiversity and EcoEducation's role in its conservation. This will provide us with baseline data to help us plan future programs at Wellington Discovery Forest.

In Dryandra woodland a group of keen teachers gathered in March for our Western Shield PD camp and at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre we hosted a full house for our first **Fire: Facts, Fiction and Fun Tour**. We know that fire has helped to shape the environment and has been a driving force in the evolution of native flora and fauna. But fire is perhaps one of the least understood of the 'natural elements' and is also a valuable land-management tool. As a result of so much interest in the Perth Hills wildfire we are preparing a new program and resources for secondary students that will help take the fiction out of current understanding of fire management.

This newsletter aims to help you with your curriculum plans so please let me know the current reasons that prevent or discourage you or your students from taking part in EcoEducation programs. My email address is [lizm@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:lizm@calm.wa.gov.au).

I look forward to hearing from you. Please read on to learn about our special offers and PDs for 2005.

**Liz Moore** Senior EcoEducation Officer, CALM



*The Perth Hills fire burnt through 27,000 hectares earlier this year.  
Photo – Ron D'Raine*

## Barna Mia provides a feast of animal encounters!

The Dryandra woodland, *Be a Nature Conservation Officer for a Night PD* and visit to Barna Mia generated great enthusiasm. Primary and secondary teachers, a Landcare student and two Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) staff attended the camp. One teacher echoed the feedback from others in the group as a "superbly magical experience that also provided a great range of resources for use at school".



*A quenda (southern brown bandicoot) (right) was one of the animals put under the spotlight at Barna Mia animal sanctuary. The bilby, the rufous hare wallaby, the western barred bandicoot, the banded hare-wallaby and the boodie were also spotted. As we approached the sanctuary we saw a tamar wallaby, western grey kangaroos and a woylie! The following day Kanyana volunteers provided us with more close encounters that included a bilby, tawny frogmouth, bobtail and an echidna. What a feast of new encounters!*

*Photo – Liz Moore*



*Teachers attend an introductory talk at Barna Mia animal sanctuary (left). Photo – Liz Moore*



## News from The Hills Forest Discovery Centre

EcoEducation has already hosted several excursions and activities this year involving nearly 2000 participants. Our Bookings Officer, Linda, has taken bookings for every day of Term Two. However, we can accommodate several groups on one day. To ensure you can have the day and excursion of your choice, you will have to book soon.

We are delighted to have two pre-service teachers from Edith Cowan University joining us next term for their practicum. A big welcome to Kristine Upston and Christine Rumble. We know from previous experience that this partnership will be as much our gain as theirs.

**Are you planning an excursion in spring?** Enquire from our Coordinator about our new *Fire for Life* excursion being developed for secondary students, which is to be launched in Term Three. The excursion will include plenty of hands-on work for Science and Society & Environment students and will address tools for fire management, the impacts of wildfire and the importance of fire to biodiversity.



*Thanks to Alcoa World Alumina Australia for continuing to sponsor our EcoEducation programs at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre.*

## Term 2 PDs

We encourage teachers to attend a PD before booking an excursion. This will familiarise you with the centres' facilities, the excursion activities and provide you with resources to prepare your students for an excursion.

### Star Swamp PD - Threatened animals and ecosystems

Join CALM and Greening WA for this special partnership PD. The day will include activities that focus on the conservation of native animals and tuart woodlands.

**When:** 8.30am to 3pm Friday 27 May

**Cost:** \$55 per teacher, \$33 per pre-service teachers (includes GST, lunch, resources)

**Where:** Henderson Environmental Centre, Star Swamp Bushland Reserve, North Beach

**Who:** Primary and Secondary teachers - all learning areas

### Fire: Facts, Fiction and Fun Tour

**FREE!**

Get an insight into the effects of wildfire in the Perth Hills and the massive firefighting operation that prevented loss of human life. Listen to experts and develop a proper understanding of the complexity of fire management, prescribed burning and use of geographical information systems (GIS) to fight fires. Take away resources for your classroom.

**When:** Saturday 28 May or Saturday 30 July, 9am to 3pm

**Where:** The Hills Forest Discovery Centre

**Who:** Primary and Secondary teachers all learning areas

### PDs in the South West Region

Wellington Discovery Forest *Christmas in July* PD

**When:** 4pm Sunday 3 July to 3pm Monday 4 July

Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre *Christmas in July* PD

**When:** 4pm Thursday 14 July to 3pm Friday 15 July

**Cost:** \$77 (includes 'Christmas dinner', accommodation, other meals, resources and GST)



*After the Perth Hills fire - teachers and EcoEducation Officers on tour learn of its impact from CALM's District Fire Coordinator, Kevin Pollock. Photo- Ben de Ree*

## Yanchep National Park PD

Yanchep National Park offers something different for your next Professional Development day. Set around a campfire, or in the eco-atmosphere of Cabaret Cave, you can experience some of the activities that make Yanchep National Park one the most visited and accredited indigenous experiences for schools in WA.

Please call the Education Coordinator on 9561 1004 to arrange your next PD Day.

## Invitation to an overnight PD

Be a Nature Conservation Officer for a Night (PD)

For those of you who could not make it to Dryandra we have a similar opportunity for you at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre. For bookings see the Contacts box.

**When:** 5pm Friday 20 May to 12.30pm Saturday 21 May

**Cost:** \$55 per teacher, \$44 for STAWA members (includes GST, accommodation, meals, resources)

**Who:** Primary and Secondary teachers all learning areas

## Sustainable Schools Initiative

If you take a keen interest in the future of our natural environment and the role that education for sustainability can take to protect biodiversity, you will be interested in the Sustainable Schools Initiative pilot.

The federally-funded initiative encourages school communities to embrace the principles of ecological sustainability and adopt behaviours that reduce the schools' impact on the natural environment, while promoting social and economic well-being. Howard Flinders, based at the Department of Education and Training, has been appointed Project Manager. About 20 schools will take part in the pilot.

A lively forum of 70 representatives of stakeholder groups (community, government and industry) was held recently to contribute ideas to the development of this initiative. If you would like more information contact Howard on 9264 4776 or [howard.flinders@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:howard.flinders@det.wa.edu.au).

## Special offers

### Arbor Day and World Environment Day

We will celebrate these days with a series of special biodiversity conservation activities for Year 4 to 7 Primary School students. There will be opportunities to meet a Ranger, take part in Aboriginal culture activities, sample macroinvertebrates, have close encounters with reptiles, raptors or marsupials, plant a tree or tune into tuarts.

**When:** Friday 3 June

**Cost:** \$5.50 per student (includes GST) for full day of activities

**Where:** The Hills Forest Discovery Centre and Henderson Environmental Centre

All *Back from the Brink* excursions, sponsored by *Western Shield*, during 2005 will be discounted from \$8.80 to \$6.60 per student. Book early to avoid missing out!

## FloraBase

FloraBase is the authoritative interactive information resource for all WA plants. It is compiled and updated continuously from the comprehensive scientific datasets maintained by the Department of Conservation and Land Management's (CALM's) WA Herbarium, FloraBase presents the latest flora information online at [www.naturebase.net/](http://www.naturebase.net/)



*Nuytsia floribunda*

## Action for Environmental Education

WA now has an Environmental Education (EE) Strategy and Action Plan! Launched by Environment Minister Dr Judy Edwards last year, the strategy aims to improve education for Western Australians about the environment, their impact on it and what they can do to help protect it.

An Advisory Committee, chaired by independent consultant Gary Hodge, is now implementing the strategy and is providing advice to the State Government on resource allocation, priorities and research.

If you would like further information about the strategy contact Bernie Riegler, Executive Officer, by email ([bernie.riegler@environment.wa.gov.au](mailto:bernie.riegler@environment.wa.gov.au)).

## Congratulations

### 'What's in the bag?' competition winner

Congratulations to Tamara Dawson, Aranmore Catholic College, who successfully identified the animal that was trapped during the January Catchment, Corridors and Coasts course. The one-kilogram, endangered, carnivore was indeed a chuditch.

Tamara won free attendance at a *Be a Nature Conservation Officer for a Night* PD.

## EcoEducation contacts

### Statewide

**Liz Moore**, Senior EcoEducation Officer,  
(ph 9334 0387, mobile 0407196 626, fax 9334 0498  
email [lizm@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:lizm@calm.wa.gov.au)).

**Bronwyn Humphreys**, CALM Bush Rangers Coordinator,  
(ph 9334 0137, fax 9334 0498,  
email [bronwynh@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:bronwynh@calm.wa.gov.au)).

**Jill Francis**, EcoEducation Coordinator for The Hills Forest Discovery and The Henderson Environmental centre programs, (ph 9295 6149 or 6300, fax 9295 3247, email [ecoeducation@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecoeducation@calm.wa.gov.au)).

### South West

**Janet Date**, EcoEducation Project Officer,  
(ph 9725 4300, mobile 0427 980 306,  
email [janetD@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:janetD@calm.wa.gov.au))

**Kristy Pengelly**, Coordinator bookings Wellington Discovery Forest and Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre, (ph 9734 1988, fax 9734 4539, email [wdf@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:wdf@calm.wa.gov.au)).

Visit EcoEducation on-line at CALM's NatureBase website at [www.naturebase.net](http://www.naturebase.net).