

Statewide

November 2005 No 11

## Towards the finish...

As 2005 flies along to its finish we reflect on what has been another successful year for CALM's EcoEducation units in The Hills Forest and South West Region. CALM's State-wide secondary schools' CALM Bush Rangers program also goes from strength to strength with a total of 35 units.

The popularity and quality of our programs is due largely to our energetic and totally devoted EcoEducation staff members who work together so brilliantly. I cannot praise their enthusiasm and professionalism highly enough.

Thanks also for the enthusiasm shown by the students and teachers who took part in all our programs this year. We hope to see you, and many new faces, again in 2006.

Liz Moore will be back editing the next newsletter after her well-earned break this semester. Until then, have a safe and restful Christmas break.

**Robyn Weir** Project Officer, EcoEducation, CALM



*Teachers at one of our popular Be a Nature Conservation Officer weekends.*

## Five venues... many programs... many opportunities!

CALM's EcoEducation programs provide many opportunities for students and teachers to take part in a wide range of nature-based programs and/or school camp experiences.

**The Hills Forest Discovery Centre** is set amidst the jarrah forest, two kilometres from Mundaring Weir with camping/accommodation facilities available. Bookings/enquiries: ph 9295 6149 or 9295 6300, fax 9295 3247 or email [ecoeducation@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecoeducation@calm.wa.gov.au).

**Henderson Environmental Centre** is nestled in the Star Swamp Bushland Reserve (off North Beach Rd, City of Stirling). Bookings/enquiries: ph 9295 6149 or 9295 6300, fax 9295 3247 or email [ecoeducation@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecoeducation@calm.wa.gov.au).

**Wellington Discovery Forest** is built in the beautiful jarrah forest near Wellington Dam, close to Bunbury.

**Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre** is set in magnificent karri, jarrah and marri forest near Margaret River township.

Accommodation is available close to Wellington Discovery Forest and Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre. Bookings/enquiries: ph 9735 1909, fax 9734 4539 or email [wdf@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:wdf@calm.wa.gov.au).

**Dryandra Woodland Ecology Centre** stands among the wonderful wandoo woodlands of Dryandra, two hours from Perth, camping/accommodation available nearby. Bookings/enquiries: ph 9881 9200 or email [tricias@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:tricias@calm.wa.gov.au).

## Fire for life

On Friday 14 October we had 19 students from Kent Street Senior High School take part in our new *Fire for Life* excursion for Years 9 to 11 at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre. Their accompanying teacher, Mark Lyons, said he thought it was a fantastic excursion, which combined well-thought out activities, with excellent resources.

The program included an overview of fire and a comparison between wildfires and prescribed burns. A trip out to a wildfire site (burned in the January 2005 Perth hills fires), involved documenting examples of the effects of wildfire on plants and an analysis of the six permanent quadrats that were set up after the wildfire. Students also discussed the effect of fire on animals and different species' vulnerability in wildfire situations and visited a prescribed burn area to search for evidence of animals following a prescribed burn.

The *Fire for Life* excursion is a marvellous opportunity for students to examine whether 'fire diversity promotes biodiversity'.



**FloraBase**  
Plant of the Month

Spiked feather flower  
*Verticordia spicata*  
subsp. *spicata*

<http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au/potm/>



## News from The Hills Forest Discovery Centre

### Five years and still going strong

*Over the past five years more than 8000 students have participated in our Year 11/12 Geography excursion at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre.*

It was a happy coincidence that, on 9 September, Year 11 students from Perth Modern Senior High School visited The Hills Forest Discovery Centre for the excursion, exactly four-and-a-half years since it was the very first school to take part in this program.

On 9 March 2001, Education Officers Liz Moore and Peter Russell (pictured right) presented the excursion for Perth Modern teacher Alex James and his Year 11 Geography students. The day must have been a success as Alex and other teachers from Perth Modern have brought their students to take part in this wonderful program every year since. Alex has high praise for the excursion, saying it offers more than just a day of fun.

"It provides an opportunity for students to develop various skills," he said.

"Ecological knowledge and field science skills are enhanced by developing an understanding of relationships in the jarrah forest from their own data, and the excursion provides for putting transect results together and working out landscapes, vegetation patterns and associations."



During the past five years, many other teachers have expressed similar sentiments, and the rate of return visits by teachers and schools is very high.

The immense success of the excursion for Years 11 and 12 has been underpinned by the dedication, experience and high level of professionalism shown by EcoEducation staff. This excursion (for Years 11 to 12) is also part of our South-West EcoEducation program, at the Wellington Discovery Centre.



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

### Practical experience

By Jasmine Arnott and Kathryn Fitzgerald (Edith Cowan University)

Well, what can we say? This practicum was an invaluable experience for us. We were provided with the opportunity to explore The Hills Forest, learn about our native flora and fauna, and experience different aspects of the Nyoongar culture, under the expert guidance of the EcoEducation team.



The range of programs offered by The Hills Forest Discovery Centre were exceptional and educational (for the school students, and us!) and positive examples of effective learning experiences in an open and exciting environment.

We have benefited greatly from our time at the centre and will take, and use, all that we've learnt to educate students about the significance of our unique forests and wildlife.

Thank you to the staff at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre for this enriching and enjoyable experience.

*Thank you Jasmine and Kathryn for all your help too! (Ed)*



Unfortunately, no-one identified the 'all seeing eye' in our last newsletter – a tawny frogmouth! Thank you to all those who entered our **Know your animals?** competitions throughout the year.

### EcoEducation contacts

#### Statewide

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#### South West

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