

Statewide

October 2006 No 15

After a challenging spring term for our EcoEducation team and supporting teachers, some of us took a well-earned break during the holidays. Others headed to Bunbury for the national Australian Association for Environmental Education Conference, which brought together international and Australian educators with a wide range of perspectives and approaches for a sustainable future.

Keynote speakers reiterated the importance of developing a sense of place in young people by giving them experiences in their natural environment – an endorsement of EcoEducation’s approach to education for sustainability.

EcoEducation’s approach will be supported further by a new resource, *Caring for Places: National parks in the south-west of Western Australia*, launched at the conference by Environment Minister Mark McGowan. This resource includes online materials, DVDs and other tools for teaching in or outside the classroom.

We will have other new opportunities for you in 2007 thanks to secondary science teacher Kim Braimbridge who is assisting EcoEducation with new projects. Welcome to the team Kim!

Read on to find out about our Term 4 specials, how you can take ‘time out’ with us and how we can help you plan for 2007 to contribute to a sustainable future. I will leave you with the recommendation that you see the film *An Inconvenient Truth* and a child’s simple definition of a sustainable future: “It’s about enough for all, forever”.

Liz Moore, Senior EcoEducation Officer, DEC



The ‘Fire and biodiversity’ EcoEducation display at conferences has generated much interest from teachers this year. Here Science Conference Convenor Geoff Lewis and Science teacher Vick Lazarov take a look at DEC’s resources. Photo: Liz Moore

Win a \$150 bus subsidy and a FREE excursion to the Henderson Environmental Centre, North Beach

Know your tuart woodlands

Take a look at this raptor, one of 11 species that live in remnant tuart woodlands that were once common along the Swan Coastal Plain.

Can your students answer these questions?

Which bird species is this?
What has been the major cause of the loss and decline of tuart woodland since European arrival?



The first class to email the correct answer to ecoeducation@dec.wa.gov.au after 8.30am on Thursday 9 November will receive a bus subsidy of \$150 and a free excursion to the Henderson Environmental Centre, North Beach. This must be redeemed in 2006.

Join us in the Perth hills on Friday 10 November or in Margaret River on Thursday 16 November for the ‘FIRE – A force of life’ PL.



Contact EcoEducation for more information

News from Perth Hills National Parks Centre

Term 3 brought out the wildflowers as well as hundreds of teachers and students from early childhood to university levels who enjoyed EcoEducation excursions and camp activities. We welcomed new leaders, Fiona Harris, Penny Tholen and Robyn Morris, to our team – a talented trio to help us with the demand for excursions.

Mooditch binar nyorps and yorgars proved to be our most popular primary program with more than 520 students getting an introduction to Aboriginal culture. All the staff and students from Waddington Primary School joined us for a day of activities. These whole-school events, supported by resources for pre- and post-visit work, are always successful. They provide an opportunity for bonding and sharing that benefits the spirit of the school community as well as biodiversity conservation!

Geography program as popular as ever

Around 1090 students took part during Term 3 in our hands-on geography activities. These activities give students excellent practical experience to help them understand geographical concepts, land management and conservation issues. It will be a great loss if students opt for subjects other than the humanities in response to changes by the Curriculum Council to university requirements.

Amendment to August newsletter

It was St Mary's Anglican Girls School Biology students who trapped a phascogale during a camp **not** Falls Road Primary School students. Apologies!



Mundaring Primary School students Anna Jorgensen and Matt Coates with 'Millie the roo', who celebrated National Threatened Species Day.

Trail a sensation, according to teachers!

EcoEducation hosted a Professional Learning (PL) day for teachers in August where our Sense-ational trail was a highlight that generated much hilarity among the 'big kids'. Teachers were so delighted with the resources and experience that some plan to return with their students in Term 4.



Thanks to Alcoa World Alumina Australia for continuing to sponsor EcoEducation programs at the Perth Hills National Parks Centre.

Term 4 PL opportunities – prepare for 2007

Fire PL days – \$100 teacher relief

Receive \$100 teacher relief for Fire PL days on Friday 10 November at Perth Hills National Parks Centre and Thursday 16 November at the Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre where you will explore the complexities of fire management and tour wildfire affected areas. Free classroom resources for secondary Science and Society and Environment students.

Enquiries: see 'EcoEducation contacts' box

Whole school staff PLs and Inservices at your school

These are available on request.

Bookings/enquiries for PLs

Coordinators – See 'EcoEducation contacts' box



DEC EcoEducation Officer Sue Miller gives instructions to delegates of the Australian Association for Environmental Education Conference on an EcoEducation tour of the Sense-ational Trail in Wellington Discovery Forest. Photo: Liz Moore

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science at <http://sciencewa.net.au>

ScienceNetwork
Western Australia

Recognising that tomorrow's scientists will come from today's classrooms, ScienceNetwork Western Australia is committed to providing relevant information and resources to science educators throughout the State. Teachers will find links to online journals, industry magazines and newsletters, information about scientific extension programs for all ages, lesson plans and teaching tools. Visit www.sciencewa.net.au and register to receive the free monthly newsletter delivered straight to your inbox and activate your connections to science.

Ghost Fungus (*Omphalotus nidiformis*)

The wonderful name – ghost fungus – aptly describes this fungi's most distinctive characteristic of glowing in the dark. Some specimens are supposedly even bright enough to enable the reading of newsprint. Unfortunately, this fungus tastes good and is often confused with edible species such as the oyster mushroom but will, if eaten, cause vomiting.



The ghost fungus is very important to bushland health. This fungus recycles precious nutrients from the wood it rots back into the soil that, in turn, is used by plants and other creatures.

To find out more about fungi and The Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project (PUBFP) visit a very informative website at www.fungiperth.org.au. The website pioneers a unique downloadable *Fungi Field Book*, featuring fungi found in the Perth metropolitan region.

Thanks to Roz Hart, Community Education Officer (PUBFP) for this information.

Photo: Neil Bougher



Florabase Plant of the Month

Grevillea wickhamii
Wickham's grevillea

See what's flowering each month:

www.naturebase.net/florabase/potm



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Visit the 'For Schools' section of NatureBase at
www.naturebase.net/schools for further information.