

Sunshine and the anticipation of spring are bringing out the wildflowers as EcoEducation gears up for a busy Semester Two. Bookings for excursions to our field centres and queries about our newly launched tuart resources are rolling in.

The Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) science EcoEducation programs that focus on fire and threatened species management were recently showcased at the World Conference on Science and Technology Education held in Perth during the July school holidays. With science as the basis for many of DEC's land management strategies, EcoEducation can play a part in attracting students into science-based careers. This is particularly important as the number of students choosing science is declining.

The conference attracted some excellent speakers including Professor Lord Winston, a science communicator who is well known for his BBC television series; Professor Howard Gardner, Professor of Psychology at Harvard University; and Dr Graham Pearman whose measured delivery of 'The Climate Challenge: From Science to Action' was both powerful and alarming. Professor Ian Lowe's keynote address, 'Educating for Sustainable Futures', in my view, should be compulsory listening for teachers of all learning areas. The presentations can be accessed at www.WorldSTE2007.asn.au.

This semester we are offering teacher relief funding for our *Fire – A force of life* professional learning (PL) day, and introductory sessions for our new resources *Investigating tuart woodlands* and *Caring for Places, National parks in south-west Western Australia* – opportunities not to be missed. Our parks and reserves provide an ideal environment for hands-on learning and springtime is the best time to visit these areas. Please read on for details about our programs, special offers, resources and camps and how to contact us.

Liz Moore, Senior EcoEducation Officer, DEC



Above Nolene Harris, Curriculum Council (centre), and Colleen Sims, Manager of Project Eden (left), are shown the features of the declared rare flora species *Eucalyptus beardiana* by Herbarium research scientist Alex Chapman. The plant was 'discovered' by the group during the tour.



Right Peter Turnbull, National President elect of the Science Teachers Association, weighs a sandy inland mouse caught in a pitfall trap.
Photos – Liz Moore

Investigate your natural heritage

Teachers in the Albany region were treated to a special PL *Investigate your natural heritage* at Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve.

Below Sarah Comer, DEC Ecologist, shows off the nest of a noisy-scrub bird to interested teachers. Photo – Liz Moore



Special offer

Fire – A force of life PL \$200 teacher relief per school for PL day

Explore DEC's approach to fire management and tour the wildfire affected area. Free classroom resources. Familiarise yourself with the centre, facilities, programs and go away with resources for classroom use.

Where: Perth Hills National Parks Centre
When: 9am to 3pm, Wednesday 12 September
Who should attend?: Secondary Science, and Society and Environment teachers
Enquiries: see contact details box

FloraBase
Plant of the Month

Cabbage poison
Velleia panduriformis Benth

See what's flowering each month:
www.naturebase.net/florabase



News from Perth Hills National Parks Centre

Can you believe it? We have already reached the middle of the year! EcoEducation has welcomed more than 4000 students to our centres this year with excursion days for Term 3 filling up quickly. Our Geography excursion is proving to be as popular as ever. So book soon to ensure your chosen date.

In sunshine on **World Environment Day** more than 270 students, teachers and presenters took part in a day of challenging but fun activities at our centres. Native mammal and raptor encounters, an introduction to our *Western Shield* fauna recovery program, discovery activities in jarrah forest, remnant tuart woodlands and wetlands were all part of the day. Nyoongar leaders promoted traditional Aboriginal culture through story telling and tool making and a park ranger brought to life the problem of weeds. Students and teachers went away with a wealth of

ideas about how they could contribute to biodiversity conservation.

Special offers and events coming up

Book in for a *Caring for Places* or *Healthy Parks Healthy People* excursions in September – **Biodiversity Month** – and your class will receive a set of four Bush Books for your library!

Join us for our free teacher **PL, Fire – A force of life**. The day includes lunch and resources as well as \$200 teacher relief. See page 1 of this newsletter.



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

Science and Society and Environment tuart woodland resources now available!

The CDs offer rich interactive multimedia learning materials (Science, and Society and Environment Learning Areas) for Early and Late Adolescence. The poster and excursion activities are for Middle Childhood.

Metropolitan teachers can book by phoning 9334 0386 for an introduction to these resources on Tuesday 18 September or Wednesday 24 October, 4.00pm to 5.30pm at DEC's State Operations Headquarters in Kensington.

In May more than 120 keen educators attended launches of the new resources at venues from Yanchep to Bunbury. They learnt from managers and scientists involved in tuart protection and had the chance to encounter woodland animals, win door prizes and went away with our new resources – CDs *Out on a limb: Investigating Tuart Woodlands* and a poster.



Above Teachers assist Senior Ranger John Wheeler to plant a tuart tree during the launch at Yanchep National Park.

EcoEducation contacts

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Visit the 'EcoEducation' section of NatureBase at www.naturebase.net/community/ecoeducation for further information.