

ecoeducation news

Statewide

March 2008 No 21

Welcome back to a new year. I hope one of your new year's resolutions is to treat yourself to more time in the natural environment. Western Australia has two World Heritage Areas – Shark Bay and Purnululu, one of the most biodiverse reef environments in Ningaloo Marine Park and Australia's only internationally recognised terrestrial biodiversity hotspot – WA's south-west. Visit the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) NatureBase website at www.naturebase.net to find out more about our biodiverse environment and step out into the great outdoors to observe it first hand.



Elaine Horne

EcoEducation continues to offer fully escorted, activity-based learning programs about WA ecosystems and biodiversity with strong messages about caring for our environment. Our programs cater for students from early childhood to late adolescence and are constantly evolving to take in teachers' feedback. Biology and Geography programs are now aligned with the new Senior Science Courses and Earth and Environmental Sciences is well catered for. So there are lots of opportunities to give your students experiences they will remember long after they leave school.

EcoEducation also continues to provide Professional Learning opportunities throughout the year that have corresponding resource packages and student activities. Our trained leaders are available for incursion sessions with kits and activities for your students. These opportunities are limited, so book early.

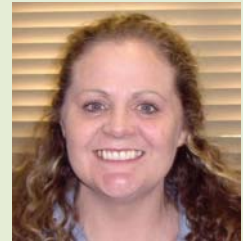
Camp sites are located near our prime EcoEducation centres, so we can help organise your camp program. See the contacts box to book or discuss your program with a member of the EcoEducation team.

DEC's Liz Moore has retired after developing and leading the EcoEducation portfolio for 12 years. I have taken over her extensive activities. Please contact me if you have ideas or comments about EcoEducation or wish to help.

See the segment at the end of this newsletter for your bookings or to talk to us about your ideas.

Elaine Horne, Senior EcoEducation Officer, DEC

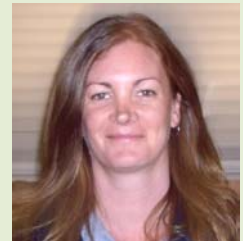
EcoEducation staff at
the Perth Hills
National Parks Centre



Meg Corsini



Stephen Crane



Lisa Ingram

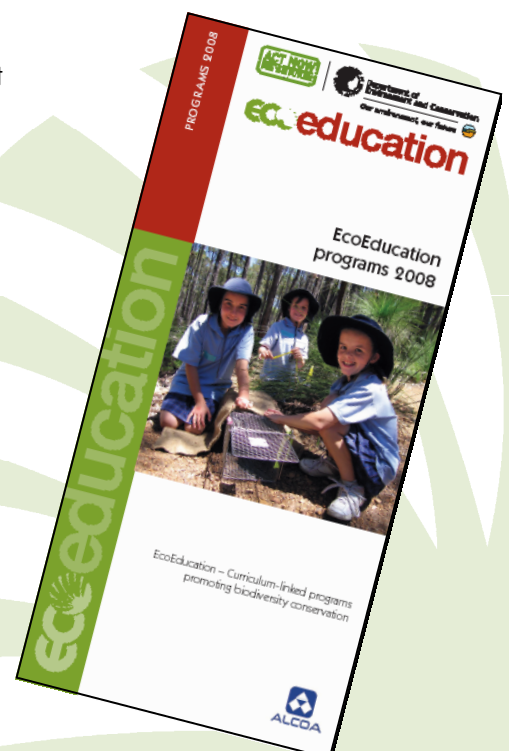
The 'EcoEducation programs 2008' brochure, which contains a range of fantastic activities for you and your students, is available now. Please contact ecoeducation@dec.wa.gov.au for your copy. We are minimising our ecological footprint so electronic copies will be sent unless otherwise specified.

EcoEducation programs cater to students from Early Childhood to Senior School. Paid Professional learning (PL) opportunities, resources for teachers and camps are also available.

Our EcoEducation leaders take care of all the preparation and teaching for the day and all the programs are curriculum linked. GST can be claimed back on your return to school.



Perth Hills National Parks Centre, Mundaring. Photo – DEC



News from the Perth Hills National Parks Centre and the Henderson Environmental Centre

Perth Hills National Parks Centre hosts *Catchments, Corridors and Coasts*

The Perth Hills National Park Centre was the venue for the *Catchments, Corridors and Coasts* PL course in January 2008. The course has been offered for the past 14 years.

Participants from local government, schools and other organisations enjoyed presentations and activities from DEC staff at the Perth Hills National Parks Centre. The participants learned about the variety of excellent EcoEducation programs such as those linked to DEC's *Western Shield* program and those focussed on biodiversity, Aboriginal culture and fire, the Forest Detectives Trail and Senior School programs.

The visit to the centre scored 1.56 in the evaluation, where 1 was 'fantastic' and 5 was 'poor'. Evaluation comments such as: "I never knew such a wonderful place existed, and one that offers such great programs"; "Had never visited before and found the whole place amazing. Will definitely be going back!"; and "The venue is great and the programs they conduct are a great experience that can be catered for all ages", emphasise how beneficial the visit was.

The session was followed by peals of laughter as participants enjoyed exploring their senses on the Sense-ational trail. Participants reported that the experience was "Great fun! Simple activity, but really makes you think how important our senses are"; "Shows how different the environment is without visual aid. Makes you appreciate nature a lot better"; and "Excellent 'hands-on' experience and team building exercise."

Finally the participants enjoyed a visit from the Kanyana team of volunteers and some of their native friends, including Henry the red-tailed black-cockatoo, an inquisitive echidna and a bilby.

Other comments included: "Encouraged me to think about how important it is to look after the environment to help these wonderful creatures"; and "The animals are beautiful and I feel so fortunate being able to see and touch them up close. Some animals I have not even heard of let alone seen them."

Overall the Perth Hills experience was a success and everyone learned a great deal while also having some fun!

Thanks to:



for their sponsorship of the *Western Shield* schools program.



Group of educators at the *Catchments, Corridors and Coasts* program. Photo – Catherine Baudains

Florabase Plant of the Month

Bushy yate
Eucalyptus lehmannii

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



Statewide

Elaine Horne, Senior EcoEducation Officer
(ph 9334 0387, mobile 0407 196 626, fax 9334 0498
email elaine.horne@dec.wa.gov.au).

Alison Hansen, Bush Rangers Coordinator
(ph 9334 0137, fax 9334 0498,
email alison.hansen@dec.wa.gov.au).

Lisa Ingram, The Perth Hills National Parks Centre and
The Henderson Environmental Centre programs
(ph 9295 6149 or 6300, fax 9295 3247, email
ecoeducation@dec.wa.gov.au).

South West

Hannah Hampson, EcoEducation Project Officer, South
West (ph 9725 4300, mobile 0427 980 306).

Kristy Pengelly, Coordinator bookings Wellington
Discovery Forest and Margaret River Eco Discovery
Centre (ph 9734 1988, fax 9734 4539,
email wdf@dec.wa.gov.au).

Visit DEC's website at www.naturebase.net/community/ecoeducation for more information.

Metropolitan 2008 calendar of events

Date	Event	Location	Special information
Term 1	Saving threatened species incursions	Your school	First two classes per school free, however limited places
7 March	Investigate your natural heritage PL	Perth Hills National Park Centre	Filling fast!
29 May	Investigating tuart woodlands PL	Henderson Environmental Centre, North Beach	Explore our new program for years 9–11 students focusing on tuarts
9 May	Fire – a force of life and Caring for places PL	Perth Hills National Park Centre	Explore the impact of fire and find out the role your school can play in sustaining our natural environment
5 June	World Environment Day	Perth Hills National Park Centre and Henderson Environmental Centre	Limited places each location, book early!
25 June	EcoEducation/Naragebup Rockingham Regional Environment Centre joint PL	Naragebup, Rockingham Regional Environment Centre	Resources, opportunities and excursions for Secondary teachers
16–24 August	National Science Week special	Perth Hills National Park Centre	Forest Detective Trail special – reduced to \$8.50 per student
September	Biodiversity Month	Perth Hills National Park Centre	Book a caring for places or <i>Healthy Parks, Healthy People</i> and receive a set of four BushBooks free
5 September	National Threatened Species Day	Perth Hills National Park Centre, John Forrest National Park, Henderson Environmental Centre	Special two-hour program of events highlighting threatened special, limited places, book early!
Term 4	Saving threatened species incursions	Your school	First two classes per school free, however limited places
28 Nov	Fire – a force of life and Caring for places PL	Perth Hills National Park Centre	Explore the impact of fire and find out the role your school can play in sustaining our natural environment

South West Region 2008 calendar of events

Date	Event	Special Information
10–14 March	Wellington Week	all standard day excursions discounted to \$6.05
7–11 April	Last week of Term 1	all standard day excursions discounted to \$6.05
2 May	Fire a Force of Life PL	see below for more information
5–9 May	Monitoring Marsupials Week WDF	
22 May	International Day of Biological Diversity	\$50 discount per group
29 May	Investigating Tuart Woodlands PL	see below for more information
5 June	World Environment Day	\$50 discount per group
6 June	Arbor Day	Special event in tuart woodland
30 June–4 July	Last week of Term 2	all standard day excursions discounted to \$6.05
Whole of September	Biodiversity Month	all standard day excursions discounted to \$6.05
7 September	National Threatened Species Day	\$50 discount on 8 September for <i>Back from the Brink</i> excursions
22–26 September	Monitoring Marsupials Week WDF	
27–31 October	Monitoring Marsupials Week MREDC	
1–16 December	End of Year Special	all standard day excursions discounted to \$6.05