



Hello colleagues,

Another whirlwind three months has just blistered by. We have some new faces in the Perth Hills EcoEducation Centre office – Natalie replacing Meg, who is taking a well-deserved break and Robyn and Leone replacing Lisa, who has just contributed a new little team member.

Jay Freap joined us for three weeks to undertake his Curtin University practicum at our centre instead of in a school classroom. This was an outstanding success. He is welcome back anytime! He won over students, teachers and staff with his skills and professional approach. While he was at our centre, he developed an excursion from the Curriculum Council's new *Leave No Trace* package that focusses on helping Outdoor Education teachers achieve their new Senior School curriculum in the environment. This will be available from 2009.

Science and Society and Environment officers from the Department of Education and Training, Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA) and the Curriculum Council attended 'taster days'. They learnt about EcoEducation programs, re-learnt a lot about the forest and experienced some hands-on or feet-in activities (one of the activities was finding tortoises, eggs and crustaceans with their feet in a 'swamp').

A new Biodiversity in-school, hot-linked, electronic program has been written to support the new Integrated Science course. It is also very applicable to Year 9 and 10 students and Senior School Biology



*WA State Science Officers with Elaine Horne (right).*

students. I will make it available for teachers attending our EcoEducation science-related Professional Learning opportunities and sessions at conferences.

All of our 19 excursions are curriculum-linked learning programs and therefore the GST component can be reclaimed back at school. Our excursions are accompanied by pre- and post-excursion activities and extensive resources for teachers. Let us do the work for you to develop skills, understanding and environmental responsibility in your students.

I wish you and your school communities a wonderful holiday period and look forward to working with you again next year.

Elaine Horne, Senior EcoEducation Officer, DEC

## Dryandra Woodland Ecology Centre adopts EcoEducation

Matt Harding from the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) Narrogin office is the latest addition to the education team at the Dryandra Woodland Ecology Centre.

From next year, Matt will offer four full-day EcoEducation excursions, and two EcoEducation night-time activities for teachers and their classes while they are on camp. Matt was a teacher so we are very lucky to have an enthusiastic, competent officer who also understands schools and students. Welcome to EcoEducation Matt.



*An education activity at the Dryandra Woodland Ecology Centre.*



# ecoeducation news

## Bush Rangers WA celebrate 10 years

Environment Minister Donna Faragher joined students and staff at Mount Lawley Senior High School on Monday 24 November to celebrate 10 years of the award-winning Bush Rangers WA cadet program.

Mount Lawley Senior High School has been involved with the program since its inception in 1998, and Minister Faragher congratulated past and present Bush Rangers from the school for reaching the 10-year anniversary milestone by presenting them with a commemorative pin.



*(Left to right) Two students from Mount Lawley Senior High School with unit leader Andrew Paul, Minister Faragher, DEC Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Director Ron Kawalilak, Senior EcoEducation Officer Elaine Horne and Bush Rangers WA Coordinator Alison Hansen.*

"This school has been one of the most active participants in Bush Rangers WA, and I recognise the immense value this program provides not only to the Bush Rangers themselves, but the school and the wider community that benefit from conservation work," Minister Faragher said.

"It is vital we all do our bit to preserve the State's biodiversity to ensure a healthy and sustainable future, and getting positive messages out into schools and communities helps foster this involvement."

The program was piloted in 1997 and started as an official Cadets program in 1998.

The units celebrating 10 years were:

- Mount Lawley Senior High School
- Duncraig Senior High School
- John Septimus Roe Anglican Community College
- Esperance Senior High School
- Manjimup Senior High School
- Newton Moore Senior High School
- Tardin CBC Agricultural College
- Warnbro Senior High School
- Waroona Senior High School
- Wongutha Christian Aboriginal Parent-directed School

### Bush Rangers WA named finalist in Premier's Awards

The success of DEC's Bush Rangers WA program was recognised at this year's Premier's Awards.

The program was recognised as one of the three finalists in the 2008 Premiers Awards category of *Creating a healthy, safe and vibrant Western Australia*.

Fifteen finalists from the Public Sector representing five categories gathered at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to hear the announcement of the winners of these highly coveted awards.

## 2009 Professional Learning opportunity to Shark Bay and Ningaloo

After an enormously successful Professional Learning (PL) experience for teachers at Ningaloo, EcoEducation will hold a similar PL in 2009. It is hoped teachers can visit and interact with DEC scientists and rangers at Shark Bay on the June long weekend (so teachers can attend without having to find relief teachers). In addition, the Ningaloo PL will be held just before Shark Bay, so teachers can do either or both of these. Please contact Elaine with your interest.

*Photo – Turtle observed during the 2008 Ningaloo PL.*





# ecoeducation news

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

### More trapping success

On a *Monitoring Marsupials* session in October, students from Corpus Christie made a significant capture – a big male quenda! Suitable habitat for quendas surrounds the Perth Hills National Parks Centre, but none have ever been caught in traps. Now we have evidence of their presence and trapping in this area will continue next year to try to find more individuals.

Not only is *Monitoring Marsupials* a great educational opportunity, it is also a valuable tool for monitoring the fauna of the area. Monitoring results indicate changing populations patterns in a range of native animals. Getting the data is one part of the puzzle, explaining why populations are changing over time is the other part. Senior students who engage in *Monitoring Marsupials* are making a valuable contribution to our understanding of the fauna of this area.

### Adjusting our programs

In 2009, several subject areas will be changed to meet Curriculum Council requirements, particularly Biology and Geography. If you want to do an EcoEducation program, but what we offer doesn't match what you need to meet recent changes, please talk to us about amending a program to suit your needs. With suitable lead times, changes to our program can be made.

Nolene Harris from the Curriculum Council and Elaine wrote a program on Biodiversity, that is hot-linked and has lots of activity sheets. If you would like a copy for teaching Year 9 to 12 students, please email Elaine.



Teachers enjoying an EcoEducation PL in the Perth Hills.

### FloraBase Plant of the Month

WA Christmas tree  
*Nuytsia floribunda*

See what's flowering each month:  
[www.dec.wa.gov.au/florabase](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/florabase)



### Where's Meg?

Teachers ringing EcoEducation in the Perth Hills may have noticed that our Customer Service Officer, Meg, is no longer with us. Meg is taking a year off (lucky thing!) but Natalie Price is acting in the Customer Service Officer role during Meg's absence. Natalie has been a Leader with EcoEducation for the past year and has taken this opportunity to broaden her skills and get a better understanding of the administrative side of EcoEducation.

### A future EcoEducation Leader?

Perth Hills EcoEducation Coordinator, Lisa, is also taking time off to take up the role of motherhood. All the staff at EcoEducation congratulate Lisa and Derek on the birth of their first child.

### Nearer to Nature

DEC's *Nearer to Nature* program, located on the same site as Perth Hills EcoEducation Centre, offers some fantastic holiday programs. Laughter and excited banter of groups are a daily occurrence on *Nearer to Nature* programs. For more information contact 9295 2244 or visit [www.dec.wa.gov.au/n2n](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/n2n).

Sponsors of the Western Shield schools program:



### Statewide

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

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

**Perth Hills National Parks Centre and Henderson Environmental Centre** contact the Customer Services Officer (ph 9295 6149 or 6300, fax 9295 3247, email [ecoeducation@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecoeducation@dec.wa.gov.au)).

### EcoEducation in the South West Region

For enquiries, bookings for excursions or PLs contact Kristy Pengelly, Administrative Assistant at DEC's Wellington District Office. Phone: 9735 1909 Fax: 9734 4539 Email: [wdf@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:wdf@dec.wa.gov.au). For the development of programs and educational liaison contact Hannah Hampson, Project Officer, DEC's South West Regional Office. Phone: 9725 5900 Mobile: 0427 980 306 or email [Hannah.Hampson@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:Hannah.Hampson@dec.wa.gov.au)  
Visit DEC's website at [www.dec.wa.gov.au](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au)