

Welcome to another year of exciting CALM opportunities.

This year began with several Australian states being involved with wildfire. I have recently been working with CALMFire on the wildfire that started south of Dwellingup and spread to just east of Waroona and Harvey. Fortunately, there was no loss of life and no substantial loss of property in this incident.

Unfortunately, there has been serious disruption to the natural environment. Habitat destruction and loss of animal life in wildfire can be catastrophic. The noisy scrub bird, a vulnerable species, was translocated to seven sites in the vicinity of the fire area five years ago. This animal, which has a total population of about 1000, relies on long unburnt habitat for survival. Sadly, three translocation sites were destroyed in this wildfire, severely affecting bird numbers.



All students in WA should be aware of the effects of wildfire and the management practices CALM has in place to reduce the risk of wildfire. After the Perth Hills wildfire of January 2005, which burnt 28,000 ha, EcoEducation developed and implemented a program called *Fire for Life* addressing these issues. Students in Years 9 to 11 can take part in an excursion at The Hills Forest in Mundaring. Teachers have the opportunity to participate in a free Professional Learning (PL) opportunity on Saturday 6 May at The Hills Forest Discovery Centre from 9am time to 3pm time. Phone Jill or Linda on 9295 6149 for bookings and enquiries.

Through learning about the extreme differences and relationship between wildfire and prescribed burns, teachers, students and the community will hopefully become more vigilant in reporting suspicious behaviour in our State forests and national parks, motivated in stopping deliberate ignitions and more environmentally responsible.

Cheers, **Janet Date**, Project Officer, EcoEducation, CALM

Threatened species relocated

CALM and the Perth Zoo have long worked in partnership to recover threatened species through a captive breeding program. In December 2005, captive bred numbats were released into the Batalling forest block in the Wellington District, as part of this recovery program. The numbats were fitted with radio collars allowing Nature Conservation Officers from the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) to monitor and track their movements following their release during summer.



I will endeavour to update information on the developments in the project in the next newsletter. Students involved with *Monitoring Marsupials (MM)* this May will be presented with the latest information. (*MM* at Wellington Discovery Forest is scheduled for the week 22 to 26 May inclusive. Places are limited so secure your booking early.)

CALM's caves

Calgardup and Giants

The caves are located just 15 kilometres south-west of Margaret River. CALM provides helmets and torches as part of the fee charged for your self-guided experience. **Calgardup** cave caters to all ages and has interpretive signage.

Giants cave requires you to walk, climb vertical ladders and scramble over rocks as part of this adventure that is suited to the older student (Year 7 and above). To make a booking for either cave please phone 9757 7422.

Active citizenship opportunity

Would you like the opportunity for your students to become involved in community work to monitor the endangered species Carnaby's black cockatoo? Birds Australia WA is coordinating the 'Great Cocky Count' to be conducted Sunday 12 February (4.30pm to 7pm), Sunday 26 March (3.30pm to 6pm) and Sunday 14 May (3pm to 5.30pm). The website www.carnabycockatoo.org has further details including practise counting techniques. A good place to meet would be at the John Boyle O'Reilly information shelter in the Leschenault Peninsular Conservation Park at the end of Buffalo Road. You could do your monitoring and then have a picnic or drive further down the track to the Belvidere site and enjoy a barbecue.

Special excursion prices – Term 1 2006

Wellington Week (WDF)

Special prices for 'Wellington Week' include bookings from 20 to 24 March inclusive. All standard day excursions at WDF will be \$6.05 per student (GST inclusive).

Pre-Easter special

The last week of Term 1, 10 to 13 April inclusive, at MREDC and WDF, will have discount day excursion prices of \$6.05 per student (GST inclusive).

Book special dates early to secure your preference and avoid disappointment!

Whole School PL

Do you have new staff members? They might not be familiar with EcoEducation and our programs. Bring all your staff to one of our idyllic locations in the south-west forest? Contact Janet if your school or department would like to organise an exclusive half-day, whole day or overnight course, tailored to your individual needs.

Term 1 – Professional Learning (PL) at MREDC

To prepare for your class camp and excursions in the year ahead, join us for an overnight PL at MREDC.

Sleep under the stars in your own tent or stay in our bunkhouse, carry out the Department of Education and Training Excursions Policy's Risk Management Assessment, develop awareness, knowledge and attitudes commensurate with EcoEducation's program and excursions, book your preferred dates throughout the year at either WDF or MREDC, explore CALM's NatureBase website, hone your investigative skills... And so much more!

When: 5.30pm Friday 17 to 3pm Saturday 18 February

Cost: \$66 per teacher or bring a friend and get two places for just \$100 (includes meals, accommodation, resources, activities and GST)

Book: now with Kristy!

Outback Safety and Survival course - SW3

The next course is planned for Friday 5 to Sunday 7 May. The one-day theory and active learning will be held at the Wellington Discovery Forest Centre with the practical days following in nearby jarrah forest within the Wellington National Park. For more information please check our website at www.naturebase.net and to book, contact Kristy.

Camp venues

Wellington Forest Cottages

Heather and Rob, managers of the Wellington Forest Cottages, welcome your enquiries about the hire of their eight cottages, each sleeping up to eight people. Offering camp catering, hall for hire and walking distance, straight over the road from WDF!

Book now by contacting Heather or Rob on 9728 3043, or fax 9728 3315 or email forestcottages@bigpond.com.

Wharnccliffe Mill Forest Camp

This camp is co-located with the MREDC. There is bunkhouse style (42-bed) accommodation and camping sites (for 100 people). Facilities include a camp kitchen (with a gas cook-top and two refrigerators), electric barbecues, designated fire rings, picnic benches and a state-of-the-art ablution block. To book, phone CALM's Busselton Office on 9752 5555.

Did you know?

You will have had to have read the December issue of this *EcoEducation News* to answer this question and win a \$50 discount off your next trip to either Wellington Discovery Forest (WDF) or Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre (MREDC). **What is the year and the name of the once endangered species that was translocated into Wellington National Park, the reason for which we now celebrate Wellington Week?** Email Kristy (wdf@calm.wa.gov.au) with your answer on/after 8am 20 February. The first correct answer will win.

We didn't receive a correct answer for the end last year's Term 4 quiz, possibly as you were busy with end-of-year activities. The answer was the previous overflow of Wellington Dam was during September 1999.

Contacting EcoEducation in the South West

For any enquiries, bookings for excursions or PLs, please contact Kristy Pengelly at CALM's Wellington District Office.

Ph: 9735 1909

Fax: 9734 4539

Email: wdf@calm.wa.gov.au

For the development of programs and educational liaison, please contact Janet Date at CALM's South West office.

Ph: 9725 4300

Mobile: 0427 980 306

Email: janetD@calm.wa.gov.au

Resources and information are available from CALM's NatureBase website at www.naturebase.net/schools.