

South West Region

December 2006 No 16

Dear colleagues,

It has been a very busy and successful year in the EcoEducation South West Region.

Both the Wellington Discovery Forest (WDF) and the Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre (MREDC) continued to be popular places for teachers, students and parents to visit. Our EcoEducation Officers conducted excursions for hundreds of students across all levels from more than 30 schools. One group travelled from as far away as Katanning! There was also great support and interest in our relatively new programs at MREDC, where we hosted school and Bush Ranger excursion and camp activities for more than 1000 students.

My thanks go to Kristy Pengelly, the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) South West Region Administrative Assistant – EcoEducation, for her ongoing support and professionalism. I would also like to thank our EcoEducation Officers – Carolina, Julie-Anne, Chelsea, Gene, Adele, Hollie, Phoebe, Ken and Anita – for their continued hard work and enthusiasm throughout the year.

This issue of *EcoEducation News* outlines some of the special offers and Professional Learning (PL) opportunities for Term 1 2007. The February issue and flyers will contain details of all the excursions and opportunities that will be offered throughout the coming year.

DEC's South West EcoEducation team wishes you a happy and relaxing break, and we look forward to seeing you in the forest next year.

Sue Miller, Project Officer, EcoEducation, DEC



Teachers and DEC staff members at Calgardup Cave, the site for fieldwork on the Fire – A force of life excursion. Photo: Sue Miller

## ***Caring for Places – new resource for 2007***

To help students learn more about Wellington National Park and take an active role in lessening their impact on national parks, reserves and the natural environment in WA's South West, a fantastic new teaching resource – *Caring for Places* has been developed.

The resource will be provided free of charge when you organise an introductory session at your school. The resource will also be available for free download from DEC's NatureBase website. Please contact us for more information and to book a session.

## ***Western Shield activities at MREDC***

Students from Newton Moore Senior High School in Bunbury enjoyed an overnight stay at the Wharncliffe Mill Forest Camp this term. They were lucky enough to see a honey possum (*Tarsipus rostratus*) and a bush rat (*Rattus fuscipes*) captured along monitoring transects in the Boranup Forest. This was part of the *Monitoring Marsupials* program offered at MREDC.

Teachers and staff from DEC took part in an overnight *Be a Nature Conservation Officer for a Night* camp at MREDC, supported by the *Western Shield* Threatened Species Schools' Program. The program gave attendees the opportunity to experience the field work of Nature Conservation Officers and introduced teachers to the range of EcoEducation activities available to students in the South West Region. These sessions are extremely popular, so book early to secure a place and avoid disappointment. Full details will be in the February issue of *EcoEducation News*.

Teachers and DEC staff members 'spotlighting' at MREDC.  
Photo: Liz Moore

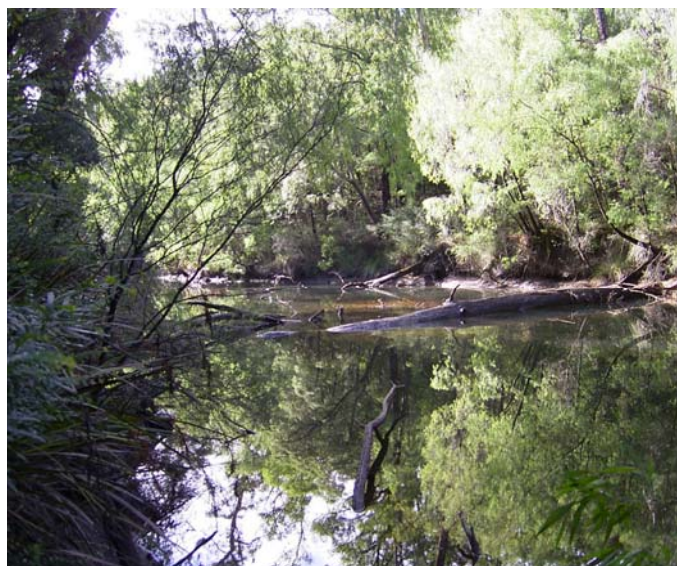


## Wellington National Park

Wellington Discovery Forest is located adjacent to Wellington National Park, 36 km east of Bunbury and 16 km from Collie. There is evidence, dating back thousands of years, that Indigenous people were present in the Collie/Wellington area, while Europeans are thought to have first visited the area in 1830 when an expedition led by John Septimus Roe ventured up the Collie River.

The area was named after England's Duke of Wellington and the first timber mill operated from 1881 to 1918. Wellington National Park has strong conservation, culture, education, recreation and tourism values.

For more information about national parks in Western Australia, visit DEC's website at [www.naturebase.net](http://www.naturebase.net).



## Changes to upper school programs at WDF and MREDC

In response to the valuable feedback provided by teachers, we have decided to increase the length of our *Biology*, *Geography* and *Back from the Brink – Senior* excursions by 30 minutes.

This will ensure that sufficient time is allocated to the practical component of the excursions as the three programs involve the use of scientific equipment in the field. The excursion will cost \$8.25 per student (including GST).

## FloraBase Plant of the Month Wing-seeded lobelia (*Lobelia heterophylla*)

See what's flowering each month:

[www.naturebase.net/florabase](http://www.naturebase.net/florabase)



## Special excursion prices Term 1 – 2007

### Wellington Week (WDF)

Monday 19 to Friday 23 March 2007 (inclusive) is 'Wellington Week'. All standard-day excursions at WDF will be \$6.05 (including GST) per student.

### Pre-Easter week

For the last week of Term 1, 2 to 5 April (inclusive), MREDC and WDF will offer discounted standard day excursion prices of only \$6.05 per student (GST inclusive).

Bookings and enquiries for these dates have already been received, so don't delay in securing your preference!

## NEW for 2007 at MREDC

### *Fire – A force of life*

Next year we will be introducing a new program, *Fire – A force of life*, which is recommended for Years 10, 11 and 12 and will contribute to outcomes for Geography, Biology, Society and Environment, and Science Learning Areas.

The program includes resources for pre- and post-visit activities, and an excursion that involves fieldwork at a wildfire site near Margaret River Eco Discovery Centre. It aims to raise awareness of the impact of fire on forests in WA's South West, the response of government agencies and communities in managing bushfires and the importance of fire to biodiversity conservation. Contact us for more information.

## Contacting EcoEducation in the South West Region

For any enquiries, bookings for excursions or PLs, please contact Kristy Pengelly, Administrative Assistant – EcoEducation, 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, please contact Sue Miller, Project Officer, at DEC's South West Regional Office.  
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Resources and other information are available from the 'For Schools' section of DEC's website at [www.naturebase.net/schools](http://www.naturebase.net/schools).