



Electronic milestone for *Environment and Conservation News*

Environment and Conservation News has made the transition from a printed to an electronic publication.

Director Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Ron Kawalilak said "staff, volunteers and other subscribers were emailed a link directing them to the first online issue".

"Every second week, DEC staff, volunteers and others who have registered their email addresses with the department or subscribed to the newsletter will be sent an email directing them to the latest edition," he said.

"The newsletter will be hosted on DEC's website at www.dec.wa.gov.au, so users will also be able to refer to back issues."

Ron said there were many advantages of the new format.

"The online version of *Environment and Conservation News* will contain the same interesting mix of stories about the department's staff and volunteers, and the work they undertake, but will be presented with a fresh new look," he said.

"When users click on the link at DEC's website, the PDF version of *Environment and Conservation News* will open at full-screen size, making it easy to read on screens of all shapes and sizes. This viewing method can be easily exited

using the 'Exit ECN' button at the bottom of every page.

"And, it can be read by many screen readers giving access to people who are visually impaired." Ron said.

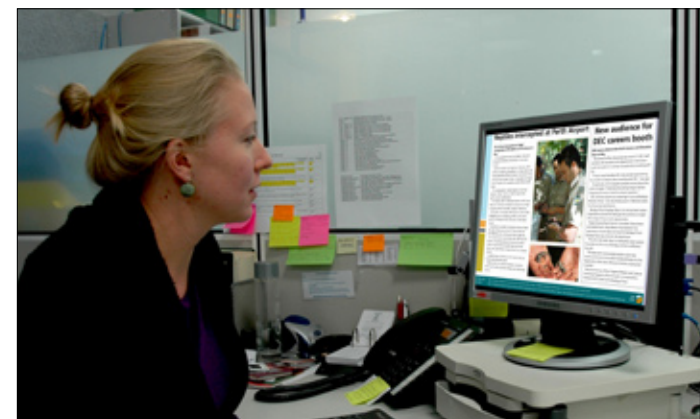
"The new format reduces printing and distribution costs and minimises the impact production of the newsletter has on the environment.

If you are a DEC volunteer or someone else who would like to receive this online, you can subscribe by going to www.dec.wa.gov.au/ecn and filling in your name and email address. Alternatively, you can send an email with the subject line 'subscribe'

to ecn@dec.wa.gov.au and provide, in the email body, your name and the email address you want to use.

"The new format will also enable us to reduce costs for printing and distribution, and minimise the impact production of the newsletter has on the environment."

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Reptiles intercepted at Perth Airport

DEC officers intercepted an illegal consignment of 34 reptiles at Perth Airport in May.

The consignment was estimated to be worth between \$35,000 and \$40,000 on the black market.

Acting on advice from police in Newman, DEC officers, assisted by Department of Agriculture and Food quarantine officers, Western Australian Police and Australian Federal Police, intercepted an illegal haul of reptiles that was being sent to New South Wales.

The consignment included geckos of various species, dragon lizards, a blue-tongue lizard, pythons and a death adder.

The reptiles, which had been flown to Perth from Newman and were scheduled to be put on a flight to Sydney, were concealed in plastic containers.

DEC Senior Investigator Rick Dawson said wildlife smuggling was an ongoing problem, with some geckos fetching up to \$2,500 each on the black market.

He said the successful interception demonstrated the value of the networks DEC had established with WA Police and other government agencies.

The seized reptiles are being looked after by DEC officers. Those that can be returned to the wild will be released after a health check and when there is an opportunity to return them to a suitable habitat.

Suitable homes will be found for those that can not be returned to the wild.

All the reptiles are native to Western Australia with most found only in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions.



New audience for DEC careers booth

DEC was on show at the *Perth Careers and Education Expo* in May.

Recruitment Officer Maria Zulj was one of 11 DEC staff members who assisted at the department's information booth and spoke to a variety of people about working with DEC.

"It was a very busy day with many people approaching the counter to enquire about working with DEC," she said.

"In particular, a lot of people wanted to know about the work of rangers. Thankfully, Mundaring Ranger Anthea Dempster-East was on hand to answer questions."

DEC will host a booth at a career day in June at Bandyup Womens' Prison – the only female prison in WA that caters for all security classifications.

Bandyup Prison Employer Expo is an annual event where organisations around the State give the women an insight into a range of future work opportunities.

People Services Branch Senior Consultant, Recruitment and Establishment, Tanya Mercer has assisted in the organisation of both expos and said the Bandyup Prison Employer Expo was a first for the department.

"The aim of all career days is to demystify career options for people and the one at Bandyup will be no different," she said.

"The expos aim to encourage people to plan their careers and let them know about study pathways into the department, rather than offering immediate employment to people."

Personnel Services Officer Dagmar Williams and Cultural Community Programs Officer Koodah Cornwall will be hosting the DEC booth at the Bandyup Prison.

Endangered species get a second chance with DEC translocation project

DEC staff are planting new populations of three critically endangered native flora species including the yellow-leafed gastrolobium (*Gastrolobium luteifolium*).

The yellow-leafed gastrolobium is known from only one population, located on Mt Trio in Stirling Range National Park.

DEC Research Scientist Rebecca Dillon from the Flora Conservation and Herbarium Program helped to create the translocation proposal and said the species was first discovered in 1923, but was not seen again until 1993.

After a series of wildfires in the area and the presence of the plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamoni* which causes dieback disease, the plants were struggling to mature and seed.

An overall decline in the number of mature plants and degrading habitat quality, together with the plant

only being known from a single population, attributed to the species being listed as critically endangered in 2000.

Rebecca said this was the first attempted translocation of the yellow-leafed gastrolobium.

“One hundred and sixty-eight seedlings grown from seed collected from the natural population will be translocated to a secure dieback-free site south of the Stirling Range National Park,” Rebecca said.

“Unfortunately, the selection of suitable translocation sites within the Stirling Range is extremely limited due to the extent of infestation by dieback disease, an issue that affects other threatened species endemic to the park.

“While managing the species in its natural habitat is of highest priority, in this case due to the nature of the threatening processes operating, this alone will not be

enough to ensure the long-term survival of this species.

“Translocating this species to a secure site is crucial in order to assist its survival. Once the translocated plants are reproductive, the seeds will be collected and stored in the department’s Threatened Flora Seed Centre so they can be used as a source for future recovery actions.”

Rebecca said the translocation project was a cooperative effort with staff from DEC’s Albany District who will look after the area once the translocated flora are planted.

Yellow-leafed gastrolobium is one of three critically endangered species that are being translocated and funded through DEC’s Biodiversity Conservation Initiative. The other two species are *Grevillea acropogon* from near Manjimup and *Lysiosepalum abollatum* from the Wongan Hills area north-east of Perth.

Munda Biddi Trail opening

STAGE two of the Munda Biddi Trail is now open.

The new 139-kilometre section of the trail extends the Munda Biddi all the way from Mundaring to Nannup, marking the 500-kilometre half-way point of the trail, which will eventually reach Albany.

The newest section of the trail travels south of Collie, through Wellington National Park, Crooked Brook Forest and through the towns of Boyanup and Donnybrook. The new section also features two new campsites named Nglang Boodja (the name of the area’s traditional owners)

and Nala Mia (My Place).

Environment Minister Donna Faragher officially opened the section at an event where she also launched the Munda Biddi Foundation Volunteer Trail Maintenance Program.

DEC Trails Coordinator Megan Graham said the volunteer program would encourage volunteers to help maintain the trail.

“It works on the same principle as the Bibbulmun Track’s volunteer program, whereby certain individuals or groups are responsible for certain sections of the track,” Megan said.

“If there are minor maintenance

issues, the person or group conducts the maintenance and they report bigger issues to the local DEC district office for action.

“By involving volunteers in this way, we’re helping the districts keep abreast with maintenance issues over a big area, while also promoting community ownership and participation in the trail.”

Speaking at the launch of the new stage, Deputy Director General Parks and Conservation Jim Sharp commended the efforts of all involved and reinforced the importance of working partnerships between government and the community.



Deputy Director General Parks and Conservation Jim Sharp (left), Munda Biddi Trail Foundation board member Mike Wood and Munda Biddi Trail Foundation Marketing and Events Coordinator Crystal Reed at the opening of the next stage of the Munda Biddi Trail.



New graduates look forward to career with DEC

FIFTEEN bright men and women, who were graduating from DEC's Graduate Development Program, were among those honoured at a DEC ceremony in May.

The graduates were among 178 people who applied for positions in the department's Graduate Development Program in 2007.

DEC's Graduate Development Program has become one of the department's great success stories with more than 300 people taking part in the program since its development 15 years ago.

Graduating recruits have undertaken 10 weeks of training in a broad range of areas such as field surveying, law enforcement, four-wheel driving, team leadership and fire management suppression among other subjects – many of which have national accreditation and recognition.

By Catherine Jack

Thirteen MATES trainees were also honoured during the ceremony after graduating in Certificates II, III and IV in Conservation and Land Management.

Environment Minister Donna Faragher attended the ceremony and congratulated all the recipients.

"It is a pleasure to be here and honour these graduates," Mrs Faragher said.

"I wish you all the best in your future endeavors. You have made us all proud."

Director General Keiran McNamara awarded scholarships in the science and leadership disciplines while June Craig presented scholarships to three DEC women to further their individual research ambitions.

2009 Environment Awards open

CHAMPIONS for the environment are being encouraged to nominate and have their efforts recognised in the 2009 WA Environment Awards.

The nomination period was opened on Friday 5 June by Environment Minister Donna Faragher who said the Environment Awards program was an opportunity to publicly recognise the wider community for their commitment to the conservation and sustainability of WA's diverse environment.

Nominations can range from flora and fauna conservation projects and wildlife rehabilitation to business initiatives that minimise waste or implement energy efficiency measures.

"I encourage all Western Australians who have undertaken environmental and conservation initiatives to submit a nomination," she said.

This year there are 11 categories:

- Community achievement - regional
- Community achievement - metropolitan
- Community energy efficiency
- Environmental education and communication
- Government leading by example
- Small business leading by example
- Biodiversity conservation
- Bush, land and waterways
- Coastal, marine and estuarine
- Resource and waste management
- Corporate business leading by example.

The 2009 Environment Awards is hosted by DEC and proudly sponsored by Western Power, Packaging Stewardship Forum, Publishers National Environment Bureau, Sustainable Development Energy Office, Whiteman Park, Royalties for Regions and Edith Cowan University.

Entry is free and nomination forms can be filled out online. For further details, visit the DEC's website at www.dec.wa.gov.au/awards, phone 6467 5147 or email awards@dec.wa.gov.au.

Nominations close on July 24.