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Published by the Department of Environment and Conservation's Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Division, Cygnet Hall, (cnr) Mounts Bay Road and Hackett Drive, CRAWLEY, WA 6009.

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FAMILY, friends, colleagues, and the Albany and firefighting communities celebrated the life of a courageous and much loved wife, mother, sister, daughter, friend and colleague Wendy Bearfoot at her funeral on Wednesday 14 November.

Around 200 DEC staff wearing green firefighting jackets formed a

guard of honour at Allambie Park Cemetery to pay tribute to their colleague, who tragically lost her life after fighting a fire near Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve last month.

DEC fire trucks formed a motorcade while a DEC fixed-wing water bomber flew overhead as a tribute to Wendy's bravery and courage as a firefighter. The service was attended by hundreds of people from throughout the state and the local community, including Environment Minister Bill Marmion.

DEC Assistant Director Regional Services Kelly Gillen delivered some moving words, prepared by DEC Albany District staff.

"On behalf of DEC and the Government of WA, I would like to express our heartfelt condolences to Garry, his sons Steven, Josh and

Geoffrey and the rest of the family for the immeasurable loss of one so loved," he said.

"DEC, and the previous CALM, is in many ways a family and the loss of Wendy has struck at the heart of that family.

"In particular, for those of us who work in fire, there is a special bond that comes from working together under often difficult conditions, the dependence we have on one another and the camaraderie that develops from doing a tough job and sharing the highs and lows of that experience.

"Our friend and colleague brought to the workplace a love of life and a love of her job that was infectious, and she was good at her job.

"Thanks for the time you shared with us Wendy. Your memory will be cherished by your workmates and your colleagues will forever honour your life, the joy it brought to those around you, and your undeniable courage."

In paying tribute to his wife, Garry also thanked those who assisted Wendy after the incident, as it allowed the family time to farewell her.

DEC staff gathered at the Albany office following the service, where many stories were shared about Wendy's life and work.

DEC Albany staff thanked all who attended and those staff that were unable to attend but whose thoughts were with Wendy's family and colleagues.



DEC staff wearing green firefighting jackets formed a guard of honour at Wendy Bearfoot's funeral.

Flags were flown at half mast on Wednesday at DEC offices around the state.

South Fremantle Senior High School takes out top award at WA Environment Awards



AUSTRALIA'S first carbon-neutral school was awarded overall winner of the 2012 Western Australian Environment Awards.

During the presentation of the award, Environment Minister Bill Marmion said South Fremantle Senior High School's achievements epitomised the high calibre of entrants.

"It takes a great deal of commitment, passion, drive and innovation to develop and implement the kind of projects nominated for this award, and I congratulate the community groups, businesses and organisations for their tireless work," Mr Marmion said.

The Minister said South Fremantle Senior High School was a standout in its commitment to environmental education and communication.

"South Fremantle Senior High School is a standout not only in this quality field of Environment Award entrants, but also on a national scale, because it has become Australia's first carbon-neutral school," he said.

RePipe Pty Ltd was awarded a high commendation for its use of innovative technology in replacing underground pipes with minimal disturbance to vegetation.

Mr Marmion said the WA Environment Awards were an excellent way to acknowledge, celebrate and promote community involvement in environmental care and biodiversity conservation.

"Much of the environmental work being done by the state government relies on community involvement and support. The awards are an excellent way to acknowledge work well done," he said.

The WA Environment Awards 2012 were coordinated by DEC with generous support from sponsors Publishers National Environment Bureau, Western Power, Swan River Trust, Royalties for Regions, Whiteman Park and the Waste Authority.

The Western Australian Environment Awards acknowledge, reward and recognise the businesses, government agencies, community groups and individuals who make a valuable contribution to protecting and conserving the state's natural environment.

The awards program has been very successful during the past decade in providing recognition to those organisations, community groups and individuals who are setting new benchmarks in environmental care and conservation.

2012 Winners

Overall Environment Award Winner

South Fremantle Senior High School – The Carbon Neutral Project

Overall Highly Commended Award

RePipe Pty Ltd – RePipe

Corporate Business Leading By Example Award

Joondalup Health Campus and John Holland Group – Joondalup Health Campus Redevelopment Project: pushing the boundaries of sustainable business practice

Small Business Leading by Example Award

RePipe Pty Ltd – RePipe

Government Leading by Example Award

SEAVROC, WEROC and NEWROC (South East Avon Voluntary, Wheatbelt East Regional and North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils) – Perennial farming systems targeting wind erosion within the north, eastern and southern Wheatbelt

Resource and Waste Management Award

Custom Composts with Main Roads WA – New Perth Bunbury Highway Soil Manufacture for Landscaping and Construction

Bush, Land and Waterways Award

South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) – Restoring and protecting the wetlands and estuaries of the south region of Perth

Rivers, Estuaries and Wetlands category

Peel Harvey Catchment Council – Management and protection of the Peel-Yalgorup Ramsar Site

South Fremantle Senior High School representatives receive their award from Environment Minister Bill Marmion.



News in brief

Comment called for Esperance/ Recherche parks plan

Environment Minister Bill Marmion released the *Esperance and Recherche parks and reserves draft management plan 2012* on 31 October and invites the public to comment on the plan.

Stokes, Cape Le Grand and Cape Arid national parks are included in the plan as well as 64 nature reserves, including islands of the Recherche Archipelago.

For more information visit the DEC [website](#) or read the full [media statement](#).

East Kimberley nature reserves protected

The final management plan for the Ord River and Parry Lagoons nature reserves in the East Kimberley was released on 22 October. The plan outlines strategies to protect the area's natural values and provide opportunities for visitors to experience these values.

The 129,500 hectares covered by the plan included the Ord River Floodplain Ramsar site, which supports more than 20,000 migratory birds and other species.

For more information visit the DEC [website](#) or read the full [media statement](#).





Retiring Deputy Director General Environment Robert Atkins thanked his wife Janet for her support during his career, his Executive Officer Vicky Sanford, his ministerial support team lead by Senior Policy Officer Cheryl Leyland, and his team of directors and managers.

Robert Atkins farewelled

DEC's Deputy Director General Environment Robert Atkins has retired, following a 32-year career across a variety of senior executive roles in the protection of Western Australia's environment.

Robert was farewelled—and his career celebrated—at a function at the WA Conservation Science Centre on 2 November.

The event was attended by the Environment Minister Bill Marmion, DEC Director General Keiran McNamara and Robert's wife Janet Atkins, and many colleagues and friends from both industry and state government.

Speeches at the function clearly showed the respect held by many for Robert's role in the department.

Keiran, together with Mr Marmion, presented Robert with a framed print by Philippa Nikulinsky, a gold park pass, a lifetime subscription to *LANDSCOPE* and a letter of personal thanks.

News in brief

Release of latest IOCI research report

DEC, jointly with CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology, has released the latest Indian Ocean Climate Change Initiative research report providing important new insights into the intensifying drying trend experienced in WA's south-west.

DEC Director General Keiran McNamara said the Synthesis Report highlighted that the drying trend was expected to continue as greenhouse gas emissions rose. It also covered findings on tropical cyclones and the factors influencing WA's north-west rainfall increase.

For more information read the full [media statement](#).

Hedland named WA's tidiest town

The dynamic community of Hedland (Port and South Hedland) in the Pilbara has won the state title in the Tidy Towns – Sustainable Communities Awards for the second time in three years.

The state winner was announced during a ceremony on 16 November that recognised community efforts to improve the appearance and environment of towns.

For more information read the full [media statement](#).

Updated Threatened Species List released

THE 2012 update of the Threatened Species List for WA has been released, and includes an additional 16 fauna species and eight flora species.

DEC Director Nature Conservation Gordon Wyre said nine fauna species had been removed from the list and the most notable change was the conservation success story of the Muir's corella, which has been brought back from being nearly extinct 100 years ago.

"Conservation status reviews have also demonstrated that the Gouldian finch and the graceful sun-moth are now adequately conserved in the wild, with the sun-moth being found to occur over a wider distribution and wider host plant range on the Swan Coastal Plain, following detailed surveys and scientific investigations," he said.

"Another significant listing change arose from the rediscovery of the presumed extinct flora species *Ptilotus pyramidatus*, the pyramid mulla-mulla, which had not been collected for 160 years until rediscovered within the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands in Perth's metropolitan area.

"This discovery highlights the importance of the Swan Coastal Plain and Perth region for flora conservation, with important species still being discovered on our very doorstep."

Gordon said the list was updated following the Minister for Environment's consideration of the recommendations of the Threatened Species Scientific Committee. The new listings brought the number of recognised threatened species of flora and fauna to 653, an increase of 15 species.

Gordon said the delisting of three species of threatened fauna highlighted the success of conservation efforts and investigations.

"While Muir's corella can no longer be considered threatened, there remains a need for the department, in cooperation with landholders, to carefully manage the species and its impact on agricultural production across its south-western distribution," he said.

For more information, including the listing of species and ecological communities, visit the DEC website.





Parkfield Primary School year five students planting in the gravel pits at Crooked Brook Forest.

Partnership leads to national success

A PARTNERSHIP between the Crooked Brook Forest Association (CBFA) and Parkfield Primary School, and supported by DEC, has led to the school winning an award for its exciting and innovative 'PLUS' project (Parkfield Learning for Understanding Sustainability).

The \$30,000 national award, made available through the NAB Schools First initiative, recognises the sustainability education project that has grown from embryonic beginnings out in the forest, originally initiated and developed by program coordinator and school teacher Peter Robinson.

Six years ago Parkfield's year five students ventured out to the forest to undertake rehabilitation plantings in disused gravel pits in an attempt to restore them to a natural jarrah-marri woodland.

DEC Wellington District Parks and Visitor Services Coordinator Leon Price, the department's liaison officer with the CBFA, worked closely with Peter to prepare the pits (by ripping) and to provide advice for the planting.

Successive cohorts of year five students completed rehabilitation planting in each area and then moved onto newer pits.

Building on the Crooked Brook success, year six students became involved in rehabilitation along the Brunswick River. These 'BRATs' (Brunswick River Action Teams) worked to help the Leschenault Catchments Council achieve plantings targets.

Then, as year sevens—the 'Dune Dudes'— they teamed up with the South West Catchments Council to plant in a number of dune rehabilitation projects.

With the upper school heavily involved in their various activities, teachers from years one to four joined the initiative and now all students at Parkfield Primary School take part in environmental education excursions involving a partnership with an outside agency.

The NAB School First awards program recognises school-community partnerships that improve student outcomes or act effectively to meet an opportunity. National recognition for the project is a great honour, and it all started at Crooked Brook Forest—a community/DEC partnership.

Concern over increase in illegal waste dumping

DEC has reported a spike in toxic and hazardous waste being dumped in bushland in the South Coast Region.

DEC South Coast regional investigations leader Nathan Hallett said the rise in rubbish being dumped was concerning.

"We are finding more instances of hazardous materials, including asbestos, being dumped in bushland," he said.

"When people deliberately dump waste in bush or near roads, not only are flora and fauna impacted but it can also affect people's health. Illegal dumping costs the community in many ways as resources need to be diverted to clean up the rubbish.

"Our natural environment is there for everyone to enjoy, not for people to use as their personal rubbish dump."

Individuals or corporations found guilty of the offence of unlawful dumping of waste respectively face maximum fines of \$62,500 and \$125,000.

Nathan said asbestos had been dumped on the road and roadside near Mt Barker and had been spread over a large area, while asbestos was also discarded in Hassell National Park east of Albany.

"In addition, a large pile of building rubble was dumped in Gull Rock National Park east of Albany, and cement rubble was unloaded in Torndirrup National Park south of Albany," he said.

DEC has removed the rubble in Torndirrup and Gull Rock national parks, and is in the process of cleaning up the asbestos in Hassell National Park. The Shire of Plantagenet has removed the asbestos near Mt Barker.

People with information about illegal dumping can report it to their local DEC office or WA Police.



Building rubble and asbestos dumped in bushland in DEC's South Coast Region.

