



LAND FOR WILDLIFE

ANNUAL REPORT July 2010 - June 2011



The spirit of *Land for Wildlife* (Photo: Roger Harris)



Department of
Environment and Conservation



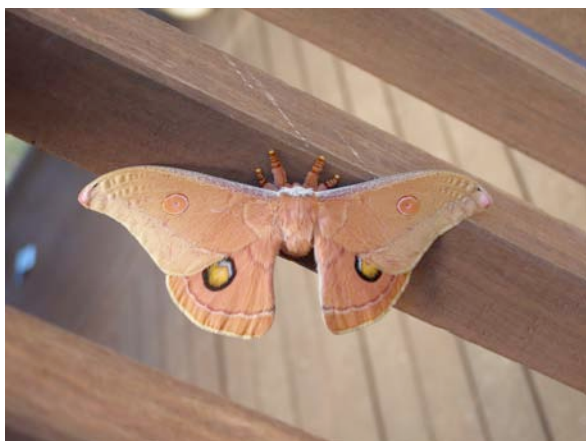
Land for Wildlife (LFW) continued its successful programme of providing biodiversity conservation advice to landholders in WA.

Landholders register their properties with LFW, then during the property visit, a wide range of topics is discussed, concerning the diversity and health of the remnant vegetation, the flora, fauna and fungi present and methods of management to enhance the quality and sustainability of the natural assets, integrated with whatever else the property is being used for.



Inland Cave Bat, *Vespadelus finlaysoni*, roost site. Mingenew. (Photo: Fiona Falconer)

People are often keen to know what species they have on their block, and increasingly, digital images are being emailed to LFW officers for identification.



Helena Gum Moth, *Opodiphthera helena*, Margaret River. (Photo: Pauline McMullan)



Slime mould, *Fuligo septica* Mount Barker. (Photo: Dan Mathwin)

Management actions to conserve and enhance biodiversity on the property are discussed and the landholder is informed of organisations that may be able to assist, including providing grants for on-ground activities.

Positive actions are noted and encouraged. This can often be seen on revisits, especially if a series of monitoring photographs have been taken.

Summary of *Land for Wildlife* activities during 2010/11

Registrations and deletions

Landholders request that their property be registered with *Land for Wildlife*. The property may be deleted from the register whenever the owner requests that this be done. This year, all the deletions were because of property sales.

- Number of properties newly registered in 2010/11 75
- Number of properties deleted from the register 23

This leaves a total of 1,898 properties registered, of which 138 are yet to be assessed.



A beautiful piece of Karri/Marri forest, Porongurups. (Photo: Bill Shanklin)



Kwongan, Regan's Ford. (Photo: Penny Hussey)



Jarrah/Marri woodland being rehabilitated, Bullsbrook. (Photo: Claire Hall)

Property assessment

The core of *LFW* is the property visit, when the landholders and the *LFW* Officer carry out an on-site inspection and have a wide-ranging discussion about wildlife habitat and its management. The *LFW* Officer writes up the topics discussed as a '*LFW* Report'. Properties are assessed as 'full' if they already have wildlife habitat, or 'interim' if they are developing habitat on the property. A target is set for interim to be converted to full.

Number of properties visited 2010/11

First assessment	103
Revisit	51
Total number of formal property visits	154

New properties visited for 2010/11 encompass:

Total area of the properties (ha)	23,012
Area of remnant vegetation (ha)	3,385
Area of <i>LFW</i> sites (ha)	4,798

(See map of all property locations attached)

The table below gives the statistics for currently active properties as at 11th July 2011:

Registration type	Number of applications	Area of whole property (ha)	Area of remnant vegetation (ha)	Area of <i>Land for Wildlife</i> sites (ha)
Full	1575	1,214,455	489,431	311,817
Interim	189	13,383	1,331	1,738
Not yet assessed	138	Not known	Not known	Not known
Total	1902	1,227,838	490,762	313,555



Panorama showing part of two *LFW* sites on a property at Munglinup. Foreground, *LFW* site 2, the ridge at rear shows the edge of *LFW* site 3. (Photo: Wayne Gill)



Swamp Sheoak, *Casuarina obesa*, regeneration after flooding on the Mortlock River East, Grass Valley. (Photo: Penny Hussey)

Stewardship

This consists of revisits, preparation of Voluntary Management Agreements, assistance with funding applications, nomination for awards and general contact time.

Revisits

Total revisits during the year	51
general (5 or more years on)	26
new owner	6
field day	2
miscellaneous specific requests	15
upgrade from 'interim' to 'full'	2



Landowner in a 5-year-old direct seeded bush corridor at Calingiri. Note that, unusually for a stock farmer, Box Poison, *Gastrolobium parviflorum*, was included in the mix. (Photo: Penny Hussey)

Assistance with funding applications

Staff assisted landholders with 33 applications for funding.

These included requests to Caring for our Country, Environmental Community Grants, Lotterywest and Regional NRM bodies.

In some instances, these funding applications involve the preparation of Voluntary Management Agreements, as a condition of receiving the funding.

Threatened species and communities

During the year 108 occurrences of rare and threatened species and communities were noted:

occurrences of threatened or priority flora	26
occurrences of threatened or priority fauna	80
occurrences of threatened ecological communities	2

In addition, landholders often report sightings of fauna, but not in sufficient detail to be able to put in a report form. Often they are vague on dates, for example. They are encouraged to record details more carefully.



Leucopogon rotundifolius (P3), Munglinup. (Photo: Wayne Gill)

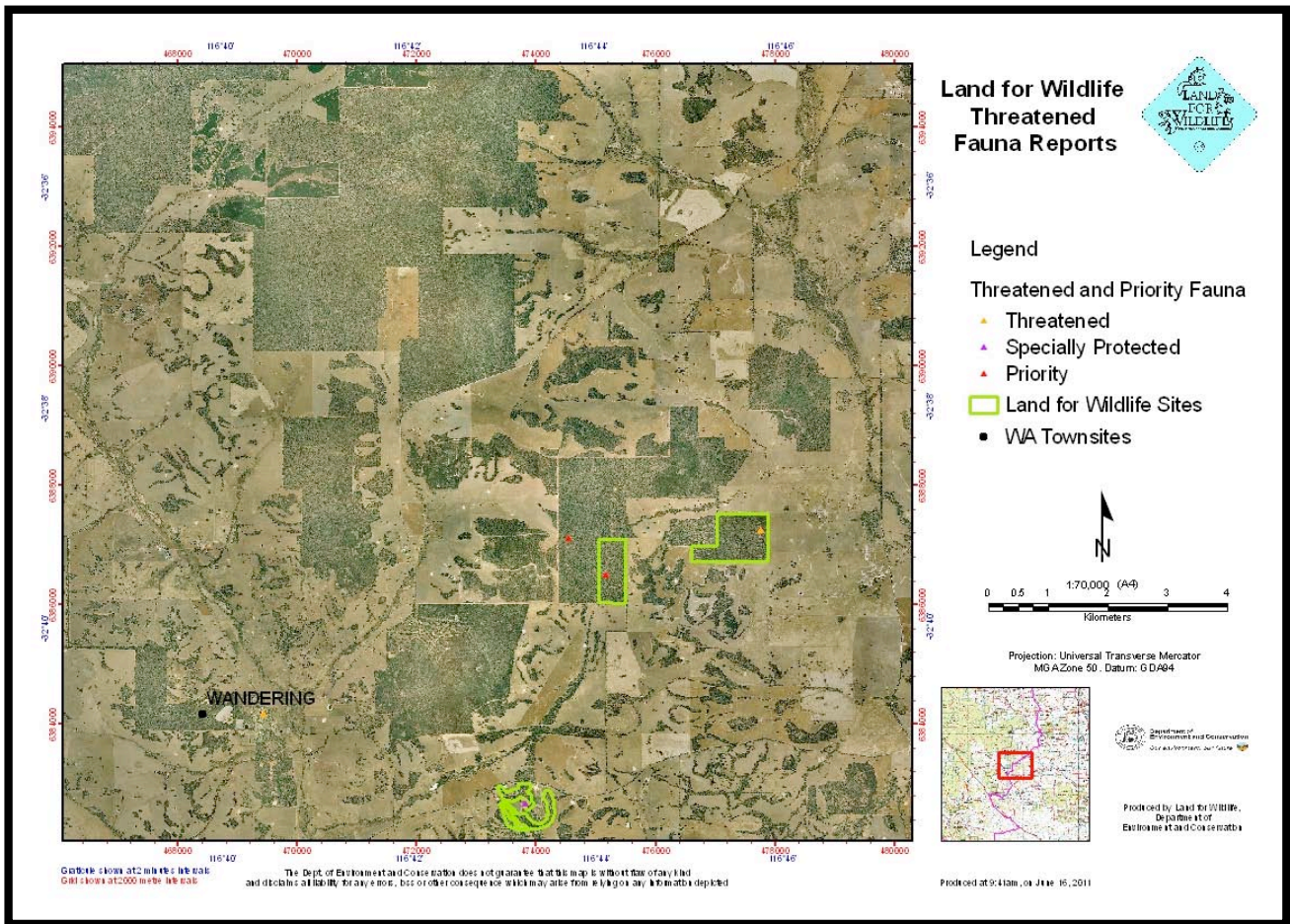


Rinzia longifolia (P1), Monjebup.
(Photo: Sylvia Leighton)



Western Ringtail Possum, Mandurah. (Photo: Lyn Smith)

These records from landholders may be the only records from quite an extensive area, as shown on the example below, where even the record from DEC land was submitted by a *LFWer*. Thus, these reports become a very important part of the State database.



This emphasises the importance of involving landholders as part of the 'citizen science' network.

Extension

As well as working directly with *LFW* members, staff also provide information to the wider community in a number of ways, including through the media and by giving talks or mounting displays at agricultural shows or similar.

During the year, the following were organised:

Media	
Print	11
Radio	1
Scientific paper	1
Talk, field day, workshop etc *	57
Display	16

* This includes 11 events 'badged' with *LFW*.

Most of these events are arranged in partnership with one or more other organisations, in order to split the effort required for the organisation. This is important both for saving costs and to ensure that part-time staff have maximum working time available for the on-site landholder interactions for which the programme was set up. Large agricultural shows, for example, often have one large 'landcare' tent, where space can be found for numerous organisations, including *LFW*. This provides excellent networking for both visitors and the staff manning the stalls.

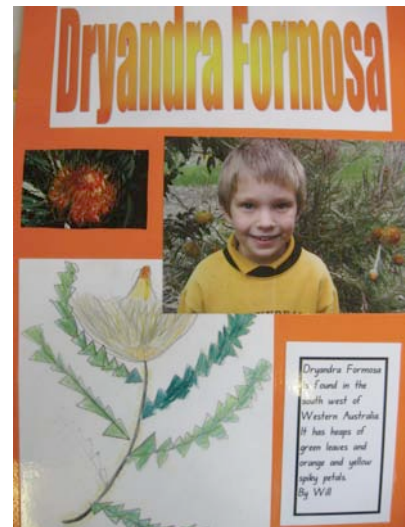


LFWer Doug Russell explains about paperbarks to students from Manypeaks School.

From the same school, one of the winners of the *LFW* South Coast Year of Biodiversity art competition.
(Photos: Sylvia Leighton)

Display at The Festival of the Lakes, Cockburn.
(Photo: Zara Kivell)

Managing farm bushland, West Arthur.
(Photo: Avril Baxter)



Publications

Four issues of *Western Wildlife* were produced, all in full colour. The move from black and white to full colour has been very popular with readers, and permitted more 'identification' articles than were run previously. It is also good to note that the increase in cost has been minimal – a mere \$0.49 per subscriber for the entire year!

The activity of a Red-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale calura*) that was caught on a motion-sensitive camera during a LFW weekend excursion to Kulin was sufficiently interesting to be published in the scientific literature. This reinforces the quality of work being done by LFW Officers.

Baxter, A., and A. Chapman. 2011. Observations on the feeding habits of the Red-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale calura*) in the Western Australian wheatbelt. *Western Australian Naturalist* 27: 18-20

Special projects

Spatial database

All of the LFW sites continue to be digitised as a separate layer, and installed within the DEC corporate spatial database. Updates are on-going, and the 'LFW layer' is now automatically distributed to all users within DEC.

This is proving useful to DEC, NRM and other government staff who work on a diverse range of projects, as it shows how existing LFW sites augment nature reserves and substantially increase the area devoted to nature conservation.

Working with Carnaby's Black Cockatoos

During 2010, two Wheatbelt-based LFW Officers, Mal Harper from Merredin and Phil Worts from Kojonup, combined their normal LFW duties with extension work targeted at properties that could provide useful habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoos. They have identified a number of properties where Carnaby's Cockatoos occur, that had not been recorded before, and recommended a number of vegetation management actions that could provide long-term benefit to these endangered birds.

Using motion-sensitive cameras

Increasingly, LFW is promoting the use of motion-sensitive cameras to document fauna on members' properties. These devices are easy to use, stress-free for the animals, and provide verifiable evidence of presence of fauna. The LFW Staff Workshop in June had a half-day session devoted to the use of these cameras.

Mt Clarence Bush Reserve Fauna Survey

The *Land For Wildlife* programme in Albany has been running a small mammal fauna survey in the inner urban Mt. Clarence and Mt. Adelaide bush reserves for eighteen months. Under the DEC license of LFW Officer Sylvia Leighton and guidelines from the Animal Ethics Committee there have been four five-night trapping sessions covering seven sites. The project has been supported by volunteers from the local TAFE college, the local Bushcarer Association and Friends of Mt. Clarence. There have been media releases promoting the project. The ecological balance of fauna in the reserve appears to be out of balance with the Western Native Bush Rat dominating and smaller mammals like Honey Possums, Pygmy Possums and Dunnarts almost absent.

LFW has also been running spotlighting evenings in the reserve for over ten years. This monitors the location of the endangered Western Ringtailed Possum and Brushtailed Possums within the reserve. A 'maildrop'

public survey was also carried out, requesting that Albany residents who live adjoining the Mt. Clarence and Mt. Adelaide bush reserves report fauna sightings.

A report collating all data that will be submitted to the City of Albany by LFW is in preparation. It is hoped the report will assist the City of Albany to manage the inner urban bushland reserves in order to preserve the native fauna populations.



Volunteers with a Bush Rat in an Elliot trap.



This young volunteer, a member of the Albany Museum Young Naturalists' Club, is almost rigid with the responsibility of holding a torpid Honey Possum to have its photo taken! (Photos: Sylvia Leighton)

Funding

Income

Salinity Action Plan	\$400,000
DEC Species & Communities Branch	\$174,667

Expenditure

\$574,667

Staff

During the year, the following staff were employed:

Coordinator	Kensington	Full-time	Penny Hussey
Technical Officer	Kensington	Full-time	Claire Hall
Officer	Albany	0.4 FTE	Sylvia Leighton
		0.2 FTE	Dorothy Redreau
	Bridgetown	0.4 FTE	Sheila Howat
	Busselton	0.6 FTE	Cherie Kemp
	Coorow	0.4 FTE	Fiona Falconer
	Esperance	0.4 FTE	Wayne Gill
	Kojonup	0.3 FTE	Philip Worts
	Mandurah	0.6 FTE	Heather Adamson
	Merredin	0.4 FTE	Mal Harper
	Mundaring	0.4 FTE	Zara Kivell
	Narrogin	0.6 FTE	Avril Baxter
12 staff overall		6.7 FTE	

LFW staff are a stable group, tending to remain with the programme for many years, as demonstrated in the photo below. In part, this is due to the initial selection process, which emphasises the need for locally-based employees, with a working environment tailored to the individual. Flexible hours are designed to fit in with the needs of the landholder clients and other work the person may be doing – such as putting in a crop or lecturing at TAFE – which means that the part-time employment is exactly right for them. As a result, the Officers have built up a detailed knowledge of their region – one would be hard put to find a better bunch of field ecologists anywhere in the State.

This has contributed to the high regard in which *Land for Wildlife* is held by other kindred organisations and within the general community.



Acknowledgement

During the year, *Land for Wildlife* has worked towards biodiversity conservation with over a hundred and fifty other organisations – community groups, non-government organisations, natural resource management bodies, local and state government officers as well as educational institutions at all levels of study. This collaboration has pooled knowledge and extended action, to maximise the spread and take-up of the conservation message.

Fuelled by the advancement in digital technology, many individuals are now requesting information about photographs they send in. Often, these images pose a question that cannot immediately be answered by the *Land for Wildlife* Officer. In departments and institutions across the State, individuals with expertise are called upon to help, which they unflinchingly do with alacrity and good humour. As another example of the assistance that is freely tendered, many experts give talks or lead excursions, mostly without any financial recompense. In addition, experts write for *Western Wildlife*, a publication that gives pleasure and interest to readers, but provides authors with neither financial rewards nor academic 'brownie points'.

Staff from other areas of DEC, especially Regional Services and Science Division, also freely give of their time and expertise. Whether it be identifying a moth, a cycad or a jawbone, dealing with *Phytophthora* or fire, or coping with the complexities of electronic mapping programmes, being based within DEC provides superb back-up resources.

Without the support of all these people and organisations, *Land for Wildlife* would not be able to offer the high quality advice that has given the programme such a good reputation for the dissemination of accurate, cutting-edge information. The *Land for Wildlife* programme is deeply grateful to all these people.



Great Southern District Manager Greg Durrell explains about fire during an excursion to Tutanning Nature Reserve.

Further details of all operations, including individual *Land for Wildlife* Officer annual reports, may be obtained by contacting the Senior Project Officer *Land for Wildlife* on (08) 9334 0530.

Penny Hussey
Senior Project Officer, *Land for Wildlife*

1/8/2011