


Community Involvement Unit newsletter



Department of
Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future 

May 2012

The Winter Edition

How time flies! Easter now past and the nights are drawing in....

As we move towards winter the type of calls on the Wildcare Helpline change a little with fewer snake calls but still the steady stream of calls related to birds, the biggest group represented every year.

Related to the Helpline, we have been lucky to have Helen Ouf join us in the Community Involvement Unit for 3 – 6 months (longer if I can arrange it!), on secondment from the WA Library.

Helen is specifically supervising the Wildcare helpline program and is currently reviewing all of it's recruitment, training and operational systems.

It is refreshing to have a new pair of experienced eyes to help us make positive changes to our service. Thanks Helen – keep up the good work !

In the February edition of this newsletter we enjoyed a short report on Maroo Wildlife Refuge being established 40km east of Manjimup by Jo and Glen Burston.

I was lucky enough to visit them last month and can report great pro-

gress with more exciting initiatives to come.

We are privileged to have such dedicated volunteers (with their own Wildlife Refuge Centre!!) training and supporting other volunteers in the Warren Region and servicing the SW generally. Thank you Jo and Glen.

Whilst in Manjimup I stayed at the Karri Rose B&B owned by Val and George Kammann (08 9772 4240) Great value – and home from home if you are down that way.

I'm giving them a special promotion in recognition of the awesome fact that George (aged 75) has completed the Bibbulmun Track no less than four times - around 4,000 kilometres of walking and another example of the extensive DEC family's shared values and our connection as DEC volunteers - see the item on page 5 for volunteering opportunities on the Track.

As always, thanks to everyone for your time, expertise and patience, both volunteers and staff, we couldn't do it without you!

Do let us know if your contact details have changed and as we approach the end of the financial year please

submit time sheets, hours worked etc so we can issue appropriate acknowledgement and rewards.



Finally, it's National Volunteer Week 14 to 20 May, which is a great excuse to try something new or to encourage friends and family to get involved in some volunteer work.

Our next newsletter will have details of our revised, improved volunteer rewards scheme which will come into effect from July.

Regards,
Hugh Maclean, Coordinator,
Community Involvement Unit

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Donnelly Campground Hosts BBQ by DEC Ranger Tracey Robins

The last day of the Australia Day long weekend was changeover day for hosts at two of our three sites and a social BBQ was held at Big Brook Dam.

Current Donnelly District ranger Tracey Robins invited ex-Donnelly ranger Sid Sepkus & his family along. There was quite a gathering with all three current Rangers present, as well as five lots of hosts.



Senior ranger Jeff Kimpton 'frocking up' to cook

Shannon hosts, Robin & David Cross were handing over to Ken Suckling. Robin & David assisted at Shannon in January and did a sterling job as usual.

Shannon is very popular with caravans and campers, and with the provision of wood fueled hot showers means there is a lot of work to do.

Helen & Graham Sullivan were leaving the busy Big Brook Campground in the hands of Anita & Paul Flynn.

If you are interested in becoming a campground host, visit www.dec.wa.gov.au and click on Community and education > Volunteer programs > Campground hosting to fill out an expression of interest form, or call 9334 0279

Healthy Parks
Healthy People



Helen & Graham enjoyed the fishing at Big Brook Dam on numerous occasions in the early morning, as well as trying their hand at catching the local delicacy: Marron.

Margaret Salter & Richard Hawkins arrived in late December for their usual three month stint at Drafty's campground in the magnificent Warren National Park, something they have been doing now for around seven years; a huge commitment as Drafty's doesn't allow 'caravan camping' due to the access road not being caravan friendly. Margaret & Richard stay in a camper trailer, so no hot showers!

However, the incredible beauty of the location in old growth Karri forest on the bank of the pristine Warren River makes up for any hardships.

There was a high level of chatter as people met for the first time or caught up after a long period.

Everyone was particularly pleased to have an opportunity to catch up with Sid who managed the Donnelly District Host program for several years, which Tracey has now taken over whilst he is on leave.

Senior Ranger, Jeff Kimpton cooked the meat to perfection on the gas BBQ provided at the site. Helen won the popularity stakes when she revealed not one, but two delicious home-made Pavlovas!



Big Brook Dam beach and picnic tables

After a few hours of feasting and chatting, people departed to their various destinations: some heading home, others to their next Host commitment and the Rangers headed off to do the dishes.

Actually there weren't too many dishes as many brought their own but they made do: it's something Hosts are all good at – making do.

Campground hosts are greatly valued by DEC—Information on all of DEC's hosted campgrounds can be found via the website:

<http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/content/view/2881/1452/>



Sid Sepkus chatting with Richard Hawkins

Rewards for retirees who love camping! by Host Brian Hooper

DEC offers training and courses for Campground Host volunteers (generally, but not always, retirees) at over 50 national parks across WA.

A two-day seminar, held at the Head Office in Kensington, covers department policies, park locations, general guidelines and the opportunity to meet park rangers.

Further courses are offered such as fire awareness, first aid and Aboriginal cultural protocol. Other training involves dealing with people and bush survival skills.

The role of a campground host includes helping rangers, meeting and greeting park campers, fee collection, campsite allocation, cleaning duties and just being on hand to advise people the best way to enjoy their nature experience. Hosts receive a uniform and do not pay campground costs while hosting.

In 2011, we hosted at the Broome Bird Observatory and worked closely with the wardens Sarah and Glen. After completing our daily duties we helped identify, measure and record birds caught earlier in the mangrove and bush.

Pulling on mud boots we joined the Aboriginal park rangers on



the biodiversity-rich Roebuck Bay to collect mud samples. Cores of mud extracted at low tide were sieved and the remaining contents taken back to the laboratory where worms, shells and other invertebrates were recorded.

Campground locations extend from the Kimberley, Ningaloo Reef, Karijini and the Goldfields, to the coastal South West through to Albany and Esperance.



Campground hosting is rewarding with the opportunity to meet people from diverse backgrounds and spend time in national parks.

So if you're looking for a sea change and enjoy wide open spaces, fresh air, new adventures and would like to see WA's forests or magnificent bush, it is all waiting for you.

Article reproduced with kind permission from Have a Go news, December 2011. Photos by Brian Hooper

For more information on becoming a Campground Host email: community.involvement@dec.wa.gov.au or visit the DEC website: www.dec.wa.gov.au or call 9334 0279

Campground host vacancies

Current vacancies are available for campground hosts at the following:

Goldfields region:

Goongarrie Homestead - contact Louise.o'reilly@dec.wa.gov.au or call 9080 5555

Perth Region:

Martins Tank redeveloped campground in Yalgorup National Park - vacancies from August to December 2012—contact Ranger Ben Byrne on 9405 0738, Mob: 0419 973 414



Kanyana Wildlife Caretaker vacancy

Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre is situated in the foothills of Perth, 30 minutes east of the city centre.

The 16 hectare property is set in tranquil bush, surrounded by National Park on all sides.

Kanyana is a vibrant rehabilitation centre, with over 200 volunteers involved at some stage throughout any week.

The caretaker would have access to a two bedroom fully furnished home, in a non smoking setting.

Utility costs would need to be met by the caretaker as

well as a small volunteer and uniform cost. In return for locating to this ideal setting the caretaker would be required to undertake training, complete one 4 hour (approx.) shift per week, others in emergency, collect mail, clean the admin building, perform maintenance tasks as required, assist at major functions where needed and have lots of fun meeting new people and contributing to Kanyana.

Interested people should email info@kanyanawildlife.org.au or call 08 9291 3900 and choose the admin option.

Please visit their website www.kanyanawildlife.org.au for more information.

Share your volunteer experiences!

Here at the Community Involvement Unit we'd love to see photos of your volunteer work and projects and share them with other volunteers – show off the amazing work you do and the amazing places you do it.

The easiest way to do this is to put them all in one place, so we have set up a DEC Flickr group...DECParks WA

Flickr is a well known photo management website, ideal for sharing your photos. It's the ideal place to show off pictures of your volunteer work, taken on a digital camera or even on your phone (there's also a Flickr App for smart-phones, meaning you can upload photos instantly).

You can view photos that other members have uploaded to the DECParks Flickr group via -

www.flickr.com/groups/decparks/



How to join Flickr and upload your photos to the DEC Parks WA group

- If you are already on Flickr, it's easy to join the DECParksWA group – if not, you'll need to sign up to join. This is a fairly straightforward process, which it guides you through. (You can view the group without signing in, but some photos cannot be seen unless you join the group, so you're missing out if you don't!)
- Alternatively, you can use your Facebook login details to sign in
- In the sign up process you'll create a username and password and you'll have your own home page where you keep all your photos – click on the "upload your photos" icon on the right and again it guides you through.
- Once you're signed up, go to the DECParks group page and there it says "Join group?" just above the top row of photos. Click on that and you're in the group.
- Once you're in the group you can share photos to the group –above the top row of photos it says "Add photos" – click on this and you'll see thumbnails of photos from your page and you can upload 6 at a time to the DECParks group. It's a straightforward process if you follow the guidance on-screen.

This enables you to photograph whatever you like, upload them all to your own page, and put just the DEC related ones you wish to share into the DEC group. You can also add your photos to other groups of interest for wider audiences to see. The copyright of all photos on Flickr remain your property.

To add interest, Flickr allows you to include lots of info about the photo in description boxes and even allows you to "geo-tag" them, by placing the location of the photo on a map.

If you have any issues or questions please contact Lee via lee.hollingsworth@dec.wa.gov.au or 9334 0582



"The End of the Drought" from v volunteer Jan Baker



Campground host Bob Harrison at Stokes Inlet. Photo: Bob & Diane Harrison

Mitsubishi 4WD Club Volunteers clearing the beach at Leschenault Peninsula (c) Odysey Images

The photos on this page and more all feature on the DECParks WA Flickr page:

www.flickr.com/groups/decparks/

Volunteer on the Bibbulmun Track

The Bibbulmun Track is one of the world's great long distance walk trails, stretching from Kalamunda in the Perth Hills to Albany on the South Coast, through the heart of the scenic South West of Western Australia.

The campsites with their unique timber shelters provide a welcome haven to long-distance walkers and day walkers alike. Over the past 13 years, hundreds of volunteers along with DEC employees have maintained the Track for the enjoyment of thousands of walkers.

Additionally, DEC has spent \$700,000 over the past two years upgrading the campsites and installing steps, boardwalks and other infrastructure to protect the environment. Upkeep of the Bibbulmun Track is a never-ending job.

The Eyes on the Ground Volunteer Maintenance Program, generously supported by

Boddington Gold Mine, was introduced to ensure that the Track is cherished and well maintained for generations to come.

There are presently about 250 maintenance volunteers looking after the 1000km Track which is split into 147 sections. These volunteers are integral to ensuring that walkers have an enjoyable and safe experience.

Although the majority of sections already have a team, there are always opportunities available, especially in the regional areas through which the Track passes.

Volunteers develop a real sense of ownership of 'their' section of Track and carry out tasks such as lightweight pruning, clearing minor obstacles like rocks and branches, checking and replacing trail markers and keeping campsites clean.



Above and below left: Volunteers working on sections of the Bibbulmun Track. Left: The Bibbulmun Track's route through South West WA



Track maintenance volunteers report regularly on conditions likely to affect walkers or the long-term future of the Track itself. These reports are vital in formulating works programs for DEC who do the 'heavy' work.

So if you enjoy the great outdoors and want to give something back why not become 'Eyes on the Ground' - Call Gwen on **9481 0551** or Email: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Adopt an Orchid - A first assignment

by DEC volunteers Urszula & George Kokosinski

Being members of the West Australian Native Orchid Study and Conservation Group (WANOSCG) for just over a year my husband George and I were both excited and afraid at the same time when the opportunity arose for us to join the DEC volunteers in a form of the "Adopt an Orchid" project.

We were assigned the Priority 1 *Caladenia uliginosa* subs. *uliginosa* (frail spider orchid), which was known from just three locations in south west WA.

The aim was to survey known populations, recognize the threats and obtain data as well as to look for new populations. We were well prepared by Andrew Brown from DEC and Kim Hanson our group project coordinator.

The DEC officers from down south were more than helpful in assisting us with information but it took three trips and help from other WANOSG volunteers to locate and recognize our first frail spider orchid.



Frail Spider Orchid

Once we knew what to look for (there are many different white spider orchids in the bush) we located over 40 plants, most of them flowering.

It was great experience to learn about a particular orchid and its environment but also to find ways of proper data taking, documenting and analyzing it.

Unfortunately the joy of seeing such a beautiful orchid was shadowed by the many threats it faces particularly weed infestation, chemical spraying, household rubbish and industrial waste dumping, land erosion (both due to the weather and human excavations) and off road traffic.

We thoroughly enjoyed our expeditions and each time learned something new.



Unfortunately, dumping of rubbish is a threat to the frail spider orchid

If you like the bush and care about the future of some, if not all, the beautiful native orchids of WA join us in the "Adopt an Orchid" program. Another great season is just around the corner.

For more information or to join the program please contact Andrew Brown on 9334 0122 or email Andrew.brown@dec.wa.gov.au



Volunteer Urszula measuring frail spider orchids

Training Courses

There are still some places available for the following dates on DEC's Basic course in wildlife rehabilitation:

Metro weekend courses:

May 18, 19

July 28, 29

September 8, 9

With a midweek course on **Monday May 28** and **Tuesday May 29**



Woylie in care at Maroo

Maroo Wildlife Refuge in Manjimup are offering two wildlife training days on different subjects aimed at rescuers and rehabilitators.

The first, on **Sunday May 20**, is on applying supportive splints to a range of wildlife, and understanding the reasons for and techniques needed in crop feeding and tube feeding to make it a safe procedure.

The second, on **Sunday June 10**, covers handling and capture techniques including the tools and methods required to plan safe and stress-free captures of native fauna.

Both courses run from 9am to 3pm and are taken by Jo Burston RVN, an experienced vet nurse and DEC registered Wildlife Rehabilitator.

There are also **Regional** courses:

June 16, 17 at Kalgoorlie

August 18, 19 at Katanning

This year's Advanced topics include:

Sat **May 5**—Why DNA is a useful tool in protecting and understanding wildlife, with Dr Mike Bunce from Murdoch University

Sat **June 30**—Wound management (with focus on burn management), with Perth Zoo veterinarian

Sat **September 22**—Managing oiled/sticky wildlife, with Perth Zoo veterinarian.

Registration forms for all courses are available on the DEC website:

www.dec.wa.gov.au/content/view/285/2299/

Email Lorene.bennett@dec.wa.gov.au or call **Lorene** on **9334 0251** for more information or to book your place.



Volunteers Lilah and Sharon at DEC's Basic Course for Wildlife Rehabilitation in March

For Maroo courses, a \$25 donation is appreciated, with all money from training going directly towards wildlife rehabilitation at Maroo.



A vibrant network of volunteers happy to care for our natural environment

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT UNIT



Department of
Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future



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community.involvement@dec.wa.gov.au

The
CIU provides community members in WA with opportunities to support, be involved in, and contribute to, the work of DEC.

The CIU supports DEC volunteers as an integral component of the Western Australian community. Volunteering enriches the community through the delivery of environmental, social, economic and health benefits to individuals, local groups and communities, the state and the nation.

If you have an event or story you would like to feature in future editions of the newsletter, or have any comments or suggestions please contact the Community Involvement Unit via:

Community.involvement@dec.wa.gov.au

or call **9334 0582**

Healthy Parks
Healthy People



For information on DEC volunteer programs, visit the website at www.dec.wa.gov.au/content/category/16/183/341/

Volunteers wanted

Herdsmen Lake Wildlife Centre

Are you a nature nut or just want to chill out for a couple of hours on the weekend with the ducks at Herdsmen Lake?

The WA Gould League is looking for volunteers to join a roster to keep the Herdsmen Lake Wildlife Centre open to the public on weekends and school holidays.

Tea and Coffee provided, BYO binoculars / knitting / cards / book and cheery personality - why not make it a regular catch up time with your friends and roster on together?

Contact Jennifer Newhill 9387 6079
jenny@wagouldleague.com.au
www.wagouldleague.com.au

Please note: The Herdsmen Lake Wildlife Centre operates on land leased from DEC. This position does not qualify for the DEC Volunteer Rewards Program.

Wildcare Helpline

DEC's Wildcare Helpline is always looking for volunteers to help out on the 24 hour referral service.

You'll be the frontline response to calls from members of the public, referring them to their nearest Wildlife rehabilitation centre or vet, or just giving reassuring advice. You don't need to know lots about wildlife as you'll have great support from a knowledgeable network.

After your initial training you can take calls either at DEC's offices in Kensington, or from home—you'll be supplied with a phone to take calls on.

Any amount of time you can spare counts and you'll be helping native injured or orphaned wildlife.



For more information please contact Helen on 9334 0577, or email:

community.involvement@dec.wa.gov.au



WILDCARE helpline

FOR SICK, INJURED OR ORPHANED NATIVE WILDLIFE



Department of
Environment and Conservation



(08) 9474 9055