



Community Involvement Unit newsletter August 2013

Reflections from the Community Involvement Bunker

“That was the year that was” - Those of you around my vintage might remember the TV show “That was the week that was...”, so I am giving away my age!

We have had another very busy year reflected in the amazing contribution made by all of our volunteers –

THANK YOU!



In summary – **4,717** of you provided **564,350** hours of time (a 23% increase on the previous year) and in addition, 28 new projects commenced.

Despite being very busy in most areas my observation is that we are all still enjoying ourselves, while contributing significantly to environmental, scientific, conservation and recreation projects and still coming back for more!

As DPaW staff we are privileged to work with such dedicated individuals and groups. **Thanks again** for making our daily work inspirational, fun and relevant to the work of the department and our personal beliefs.

However, in life only a few things are certain – change, perhaps a wooden box at the end and, of course, taxes.

We can reflect on current activity in our newly named Department of Parks and Wildlife. New name, new logo, and refreshed approach to our volunteering work.

Within these changes many staff previously located at Crawley and Perth have moved to Kensington where our CIU staff are based. The net result has been some initial stress involved with relocation, but already the lines of communication are more open meaning fewer frustrations all round.

For volunteering activity, the words PARKS and WILDLIFE in the title acknowledges the renewed focus on our work.

Government investment in programs such as “Parks for People” also indicates more camping opportunities with increased access to national parks and other conservation areas. However another change, as applies to our personal budgets from time to time, will require us to reduce expenditure in some areas.

Some significant future budget limitations have meant that we have begun to identify areas where we use your tax dollars most efficiently. For example – most of you will be aware that we have moved towards more electronic communication with you. This saves paper, postage charges and considerable time.

We are now also able to produce ID cards in-house which is not only far cheaper but also more professional than our previous system. Updates will occur gradually where new volunteers are issued with badges and where replacements are necessary. Issue of volunteer uniforms is also being reviewed.

Despite these unavoidable changes we will endeavour to continue to expand and improve DPaW’s volunteer program.

Rest assured that we are here to help all DPaW volunteer projects and I am certain that safe enjoyment and positive outcomes will prevail for 2013 / 14.

Thanks once again.

Hugh

Community Involvement Unit Coordinator

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Community involvement 2012-13

We are now well into a new financial year and DPaW (formerly DEC) had an extremely busy year supporting many volunteer projects across WA.

In 2012-13, a total of **4717** volunteers contributed an incredible **564,350** hours of support to projects across WA.

Across all programs, **1842** new volunteers were registered with the Community Involvement Unit.

The Campground Host program has continued to attract volunteers to the with **73** new hosts joining this year, making a total of **424** across the state.

Across the state, **28** new projects were registered with the Community Involvement Unit during 2012-13.

The CIU transferred all active volunteers to a new web-based database of volunteer recording, 'Volgistics', and began utilising the system fully from July 1 2012.

2012-13 was the first full year of CIU operation of Volgistics after transferring all active volunteer records to this new database. Active volunteers are considered those that have submitted timesheet hours to the CIU in the past three financial years.

Volgistics has proven to offer many advantages over the previous system such as enabling improved communications with volunteers, either individually or by project, group, region or district.

It has also enabled faster information sharing for important messages, media statements or volunteer recruitment opportunities.

As well as its efficiency, the ability provided by Volgistics to contact volunteers individually or en masse by email also has environmental benefits.

During 2012 - 2013, DPaW continued to provide training programs to more than 550 volunteers with support from specialist services in DPaW and external agencies.

Training included the Campground Host Forum; safe work practices as part of DPaW's corporate induction; risk management; basic fire awareness; first aid; cross cultural awareness; the basic wildlife rehabilitators' course (at regional and metropolitan locations); advanced and special topics for wildlife rehabilitation; and *Wildcare Helpline* evaluation and training.

The program includes an "Introduction to DPaW" module, which has been designed to be an induction for all new volunteers with background on the department and its work.

Further modules feature specialised wildlife rehabilitation and legislation modules aimed at the attendees of the basic wildlife rehabilitators' course, and also a campground host training module.

All of the modules have been specifically developed to complement CIU's existing training. Uptake and feedback has so far been positive.

The Wildcare Helpline continues to prove to be a much needed service with over **10,000** calls from concerned members of the public looking for sick, injured or orphaned native wildlife.

These callers are either given advice over the phone or referred to our further network of volunteer wildlife rehabilitators, reptile removers and animal control agents.



Above: a screen shot from the volunteer e-learning © DPaW

A volunteer E-learning program was introduced by the CIU in January 2013. It has been developed in consultation with various DPaW sections and Perth zoo.

The Community Involvement Unit would like to thank all of our volunteers for their continual commitment to DPaW projects and for their many achievements. We look forward to another amazing year ahead!

Campground host vacancies

For general info on DPaW parks across WA, visit the [new](https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/) parks website at <https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>

The following campgrounds have vacancies in the next few months:

Coalseam Conservation Park has vacancies between Mid-September to Mid-October. Please contact **Megan Rowland**, on Ph: **9921 5955**, Mob: **0477 360 639** or email: megan.rowland@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Cape Arid National Park need hosts for October and November. Contact Snr ranger **Johlene Shalders** on **9075 0055**, mob: **0427 436 831** or email: Johlene.shalders@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Cape Range National Park have a number of vacancies:

- Lakeside camp - 3 months - Sept, Oct and November (would prefer a 3 month stay)
- Mesa camp - 1 month - November
- Boat Harbour camp - October and November (prefer a 2 month stay)

For these, please contact the Community Involvement Unit on **9334 0279** or email: Sonia.chalmers@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Please note: campground host vacancies are only available to those volunteers currently registered as DPaW Campground Hosts, that have completed the necessary training and information workshops.

More information on Campground hosting can be found on the DPaW website:

<http://dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities>



Photo © Brian Hopper

Community Caring for our Coast

Over the Australia Day long weekend, an enthusiastic group of around 20 people from the Land Rover Owners Club of WA (LROCWA) assisted the DPaW Donnelly District with the continuation of fencing at Yeagarup.

The fencing is being constructed to promote stabilisation of dune sands in order for vegetation to re-establish.

The members of LROCWA have assisted in past coastal



restoration projects in the D'Entrecasteaux NP, down at Fish Creek and Short Beach, so some members of this group had some prior experience.

This was just as well as our District crew had just arrived with all the materials and tools, when they were called away to a fire!

So with their prior experience under their belt, the group got stuck into it and over the two days built a series of six wind fences of 20m in length. They would have built more, but we ran out of materials!

The LROCWA are so keen to assist management of our coastal areas and tracks that they have signed up to participate in coastal track restoration works under the Motorised Recreation Adoption Program.

Under this program, the Donnelly District will benefit from practical assistance from the LROCWA (and the All Tracks 4WD Club) to improve the condition of the Warren Beach Track.

By Tracey Robins, National Park Ranger, Donnelly District.

Tracey.robins@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Thanks go to the whole team: Roger & Lorna Mawson, Gordon & Tracey Elliot, Sue & Keith McEwen, Marion & Dean Stewart, Andy Endacott & George Endacott, Danny & Jeannie Ravn, Karen & Martin Osborn, John & Nan Edwards, Steve Grossmith, Ann-Maree Enders, Alix Harris & Dean Stewart © DPaW

Volunteering with the West Pilbara Turtle Program by volunteer Corey King

I have volunteered for the West Pilbara Turtle Program (WPTP) for the last two seasons and look forward to the next season starting in a couple of months. WPTP are flexible so you can volunteer as much or as little as you like. I put my name on the roster one morning a week.

I find the volunteer work manageable to complete before 8am when my full time job starts. The work involves travelling to Wickham to walk the beach reading turtle tracks, recording findings and taking GPS locations of nests.



Above: Volunteers learning how to read turtle tracks © DPaW



Volunteers learning how to fill in data sheets © DPaW

It is an early start and makes for a long day but it's only one day out of my week. I am willing to sacrifice one morning's sleep for the chance to see what the turtles have got up to overnight.

Over the last two seasons I have been lucky enough to see hatchlings on three occasions. I was able to watch their journey from the nest to the ocean and I know other volunteers who have witnessed adult turtles on land. Our iPhones get a hammering at these times and we have great pictures and footage to remember the experience. I am grateful for the training opportunities and experiences that the WPTP offers.

Turtles are fascinating creatures and I enjoy being part of a team who monitor and record their nesting behaviour. I like to believe that the information we gather will provide a valuable insight into turtle activity in the Pilbara region in future years to come.

The West Pilbara Turtle Program began in 2005 and is a partnership between Rio Tinto and DPaW. It brings together industry, government and the community to undertake marine turtle research by monitoring nesting and raises the awareness of the importance of local beaches in marine turtle conservation.

The community support and contribution of time and effort by volunteers is invaluable and has made this program a success. If anyone is interested in volunteering next season contact **Joanne King** at DPaW Karratha on **9182 2010**.



Right: a flatback turtle emerging from the ocean © DPaW



Ningaloo Turtle Program

The Ningaloo Turtle Program (NTP) is a volunteer turtle conservation program run as a partnership between the Department of Parks and Wildlife and the Cape Conservation Group.

Green, loggerhead and hawksbill turtles nest in the Ningaloo World Heritage area. These are all threatened species and the data collected by the NTP is used to minimise human and predator impact on their survival.

Each summer during the turtle nesting season, the NTP recruits volunteers from all over the world to carry out this task.

They are trained in turtle tracking techniques, data entry and turtle rescues. Once deemed competent, volunteers each walk a section of beach at sunrise to record turtle activity.

Participation in the program may benefit you in the following way:

- Learn about and interact with marine turtles
- Contribute to a valuable conservation program
- Help protect these threatened species
- Meet new people
- Develop your conservation skills



Above: NTP Team Leader assessing a possible turtle rescue. © DPaW

The NTP is currently looking for **three Team Leader internship positions** (eight weeks), and **12 volunteer positions** (five weeks). Details for the volunteer position only are below.

To obtain more information on the internship vacancies, or to apply for either position please visit the NTP website at www.ningalooturtles.org.au,

email: ningalooturtles@dpaw.wa.gov.au, or contact **Keely Markovina** on **08 9947 8045**.



Position Title:	Ningaloo Turtle Program (NTP) Volunteer
Duration:	5 weeks (8 th December 2013-12 th January 2014)
Hours:	Approximately 35 hours/week (generally 5:30am start) irregular hours including weekends.
Monitoring Location:	North-West Cape, Exmouth, Western Australia.
Accommodation:	Two types of accommodation are provided. On a rotational basis you will camp remotely within Cape Range National Park and the remainder of your time will be spent in accommodation in the town of Exmouth. Food and travel to and from Exmouth is not provided.
Cost:	\$1300 (includes a \$500 non-refundable deposit)
Responsibilities:	Turtle track monitoring and data entry
Requirements:	A full manual driver's license and Senior First Aid qualification are desirable. All participants must be physically able to walk on sand for up to 6km in hot conditions.

Above: a green turtle returning to the ocean © DPaW

Recreational Trail Bike Riders Clean up!

Volunteers from the Recreational Trailbike Riders' Association of WA (RTRA) and DPaW staff recently cleaned-up a popular trail bike area close to Perth.

On Saturday 15th June, over 40 volunteers, with Perth Hills District and Recreation and Trails Unit (RTU) DPaW staff removed rubbish from approximately 10 hectares of bushland and road verge in Youraling State Forest. The site is located 64 kilometres south-east of Perth.

For many years this area has been used by casual trail and quad bike riders and for enduro events. There were extensive networks of existing trails and several areas of significant environmental damage through over-concentrated use.

Recently the RTRA and DPaW have taken the first steps in managing this site and the development of a new pilot trail.

On the day, the volunteers were briefed and enjoyed hot drinks before setting out to clean up the car park areas and entry road verges.

A barbeque lunch was provided by DPaW while some volunteers set off on bikes to test their skills on the 16 kilometers of new trails.

Keep Australia Beautiful WA (KABWA) generously provided a supply of rubbish bags and the Shire of Beverley allowed the rubbish and recycled materials to be disposed of at the local refuge site at no charge.



Director of the RTRA Steve Pretzel and DPaW's Acting Senior Ranger Paul Udinga said they were amazed and impressed by the number of volunteers who came out to help from varied destinations, demonstrating that the trail bike community is serious about working with DPaW and keen to be involved in natural area management with a view to sustainable access.

Terry Goodlich from DPaW's RTU stated it was also good to see many other regular trail bike users getting involved by helping the volunteers.

DPaW would like to thank the RTRA and their volunteers for putting in a huge effort on cleaning up this site. DPaW would also like to thank the Shire of Beverley and KABWA for their assistance.

Keep Australia Beautiful WA provides free resources and support for community groups planning clean ups in their community. Visit www.kabc.wa.gov.au for more details.

Written by: Terry Goodlich
 A\Senior Recreation Officer
 Recreation and Trails Unit
 Mobile: 0439 907 801



Above: A quick briefing before the clean up © RTRA/DPaW



Above: At the end of the day - volunteers with their huge pile of cleared rubbish © RTRA/DPaW

Smartphone and tablet apps

Sharing the Dreaming

Developed by the Department of Environment and Conservation/DPaW

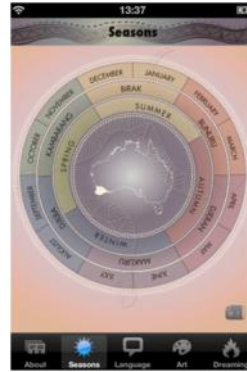
Sharing the Dreaming is a window to an Aboriginal Australian culture: the culture of the Nyoongar, the traditional custodians of Australia's South-West.

Listen to Dreamtime stories, illustrated by images of paintings in the local style.

Discover the meanings of symbols used in those, and other, traditional paintings.



Hear and learn Nyoongar words and their English language translations.



See how the six (not our traditional four) Nyoongar seasons of the year reflect the natural annual rhythms of country.

The app is available for free from the iTunes app store:

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/sharing-the-dreaming/id642267711?mt=8>

Cane Toad ID

Developed by University of Western Australia

This app has been developed to help distinguish between cane toads and native frogs.

Cane toads are poisonous and native frog-eating predators may die if they eat one.

Often, when people see native frogs or toads they are mistaken

for cane toads and they may try to catch or kill them.

Unfortunately many native frogs are killed in error so correct identification is important.

Use this app to help answer the question; is it a cane toad or a native frog? The app has sound re-

cordings of native frogs and cane toads as well as visual tips on telling them apart. You can also log your sightings on Google maps.

This app is available for free via the iTunes app store - <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/cane-toad/id642370264?mt=8>



If you use any other Apps which may be of use or interest to other volunteers, let us know and we'll feature them!

Tips for tackling swooping magpies

It's that time of year again - Magpies nest from early August to late November. During this time, male magpies defend their territory.

September and October are peak 'swooping season'. Magpies tend to swoop from behind, often from the direction of the sun, so an approaching shadow can be a warning.

Some make warning swoops and deliberately miss, but some will make contact. Taking heed of these warnings and leaving the area before contact is made is generally the best advice

Birds that make contact usually target the head and can perform a side swoop attacking ears, cheeks and even eyes.

Magpies have a fairly small territory so it is usually easy to find an alternative route during the swooping season. Magpies which swoop once are likely to repeat doing it.

So, what to do?

- **Avoid the area**

The best way to protect yourself from a swooping bird is to avoid venturing into their territory.

- **Know your local swooping hotspots**

Keep informed about parks, schoolyards and bike trails in your local area.

- **Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes**

- **Stay calm**

If you *are* swooped by a magpie, do your best to stay as calm as possible – move quickly through the area but do not run.

- **Cover your head**

Wear a hat or carry a stick or umbrella above your head. Cyclists should wear a helmet, dismount and walk through the area.

- **Have 'eyes' at the back of your head**

Birds may be less likely to swoop if they think you are watching them. Draw a pair of 'eyes' and attach to the back of hats and helmets.

- **Do not harass wildlife – Don't throw sticks or stones**

Magpies have been proven to have great memories and can remember those that have attempted to cause them harm! This also gives them more reason to see you as a threat and may increase swooping behaviour.

- **Do not destroy nests**

This may prompt birds to rebuild their nests, extending the swooping period.

- **Don't feed swooping birds**

- **Notify others**

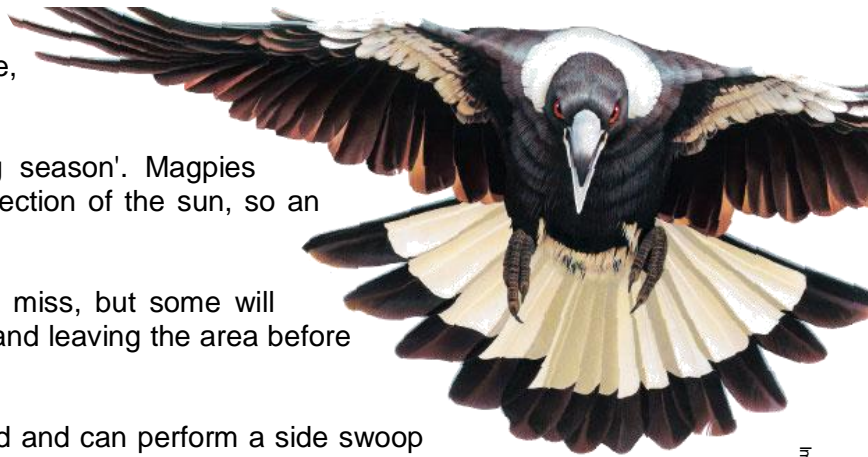
Put up warning signs for others who may not be aware that there are swooping birds in the area, or ask your council to do so.

Try to remember that they are just trying to protect their nests and young and it is a completely natural behaviour that will pass after the breeding season.

If you find a baby bird:

If it has **feathers**, leave alone and observe from a distance - usually the parents are not far away and will be returning with food. They may be a while (possibly hours) but it is perfectly normal for young birds to leave the nest before they can fly and to be left alone. If it has **no feathers**, try to see where it may have fallen from and place it back in the nest if possible. If not, on a nearby branch or somewhere off the ground out of danger - again, mum and dad won't be far away.

In most cases it is not necessary to remove the bird from its environment and may in fact be the worst thing for it, so please only do it as a last resort when you are certain it needs your help.



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www.flickr.com/groups/decparks/

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

The CIU supports DPaW 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 us via:

Community.involvement@dpaw.wa.gov.au

or call (08) 9334 0582

For information on volunteering for DPaW, visit:

www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities

Cockburn Sound needs your help!

The Rockingham Bay Seagrass Monitoring Group (RBSMG) is a volunteer organisation that has been carrying out baseline seagrass monitoring since 2001.

They need your help!

The RBSMG is looking for willing and able volunteers to help with their ongoing seagrass monitoring.

If you have a snorkel, a wet suit or rashie and a passion for maintaining the health and integrity of Rockingham's pristine waters then they want you!

Undertaken over five Saturday mornings during summer, small teams work together to monitor seagrass meadows from five sites located from Mangles Bay to Becher Point in Warnbro Sound.

These teams take labelled photos, measurements and observations underwater, as well as one lucky member who records everything and gets to stay dry in the boat!

If it is one Saturday or all five, or even if you have equipment to lend current volunteers, they would love to hear from you.

If you would like to help please contact Elaine Christy (coordinator RBSMG) on **9339 8049** or **0407 026 233** or email:

bloodnut41@hotmail.com or

amchrist@optusnet.com.au



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