



How time flies when you are having fun - at least for most of the time!

A few months ago, for dedicated volunteers at Cape Range NP and in the South West, fun was not what sprung to mind. Torrential rain at Cape Range caused a major flash flood in the middle of the night and literally swept away campers, roads, tents and caravans. In the South West, part of a massive tree collapsed and fell over a tent containing campers. In both instances, thankfully no lives were lost, but Parks and Wildlife volunteers were directly involved in supporting visitors, staff and other volunteers. Some staff and volunteers were also subject to loss of equipment and possessions.

For all of us involved – even at a distance – it is a timely reminder that nature can provide harsh outcomes from time to time. Perhaps being in the outdoors with all its pleasures and uncertainty is what keeps us coming back for more – as opposed to the predictability of traffic on Canning Highway each morning! Thank you to everyone involved. Adversity certainly brings out the best in us and allows training, experience, and practice to be appreciated.

On page two we report on volunteering in the department over the last year - another fantastic contribution everyone. All Parks and Wildlife volunteers provide tre-

mendous benefit for the public; adding value to our conservation work and visitors' experiences.

Personally, as a volunteer, we may enjoy a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. We know also that volunteering provides physical and mental health benefits and therefore reduces demand on community resources. THANK YOU one and all for your support of Parks and Wildlife projects.

On rewards ....our series of limited edition lapel badges awarded when 150 volunteer hours are recorded each year are proving to be extremely popular. The red-tailed black cockatoo and then the *Eucalyptus Rhodantha* will soon be joined by the iconic.....??? Watch this space - to be announced soon! Please keep those time sheets and records up to date and send them to the community involvement unit as soon as possible after the end of September. The new lapel badge will be available in early October.

Please wear your badge(s) with pride as they identify you as a "very special volunteer", in assisting the Department of Parks and Wildlife. The limited edition concept also means that the badges will be increasingly rare and valuable as time moves on.

My final note is that the department has now been in existence for 12 months and a new strategic direction has been endorsed by the Minister. Volunteering is acknowledged and promoted within the strategy, which can be downloaded [here](#) or via [www.dpaw.wa.gov.au](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au)

Thanks again – take care, and plan to be out in a national park near you as the weather improves.

Hugh

Community Involvement Coordinator

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## 2013-14 Community Involvement report

The Department of Parks and Wildlife volunteers had another very active year supporting many projects across WA.

In 2013 - 14, a total of **4,345** volunteers contributed an amazing **506,285** hours of support to projects across WA - this works out at 117 hours per active volunteer - great work!



Across all programs, **1,881** new volunteers were registered with the Community Involvement Unit.

Across the state, **25** new projects were registered with the Community Involvement Unit during 2013 - 14.

During 2013 - 2014, Parks and Wildlife continued to provide training programs to **481** volunteers in face-to-face training programs with support from specialist services in DPaW and external agencies, plus a further **268** through the online learning program (a total of 749).

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.

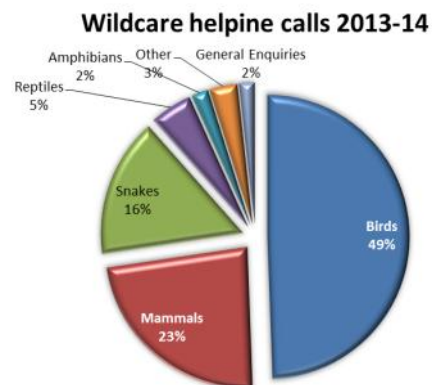
The online training program was introduced by the CIU in January 2013 and was developed in consultation with various Parks and Wildlife sections and Perth zoo, specifically to complement the CIU's existing training.

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.

The Wildcare Helpline continues to be a much needed service with **9,002** calls (broken down below) from concerned members of the public looking out 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.



In addition to these calls, the Wildcare Helpline web pages - [www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/wildcare-helpline](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/wildcare-helpline), which contain basic first aid for wildlife and other general wildlife-related information, received **3,969** unique visits.

The Community Involvement Unit would like to thank all of our volunteers for their continual commitment to Parks and Wildlife projects and congratulate their many achievements.

If you'd like to find current volunteer opportunities please visit:

[www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities)

We look forward to another busy and productive year ahead!





## Mount Augustus Adventure 2014 by Rob Britza

Chris and I recently completed a month at Mt Augustus Station as campground host volunteers which we enjoyed immensely.

We got our one and only puncture 30Kms before arriving, which was fun changing a wheel in the heat of a mid-afternoon sun. The dirt road (300+ Kms) had just been graded which picks up the sharp rocks to catch out the traveller. The campground manager's husband, a 64 year old Maori spent the next two days repairing tyres for travellers using only hand tools. A harder worker than this bloke would be hard to find.

We had a campfire every night, which we shared with and enjoyed the company of the camp manager and husband (Cathy and Brian) plus some of the travellers that also like a campfire. We also had five hand-reared calves (now almost fully grown) visit

us most nights. They are very curious and tried to lick the flames and then my leg. They then went on to check out our TV satellite dish which Chris wasn't too impressed with as she was trying to watch her show in between blackouts caused by



From "The Pound" lookout

the calves standing in front of the dish and licking it.

The "Royal Flying Doctor outback car trek" came through one night and refuelled which I assisted with for five and a half hours. Toward the end I had stinging eyes and was getting high on the fumes. Chris helped out with salads and other stuff in the kitchen, so we both slept well that night. The trekkers took off again after breakfast the next morning and we gave a hand cleaning up after them. There were about 100 vehicles and 200 people to feed and fuel up, so a very busy and interesting 36 hours.

As with all stations, there is an enormous amount of dis-used and worn out equipment scattered over a couple of acres of ground and we spent an hour or so in awe at some of the old machinery and took plenty of photos. It was a case of organised chaos as there were areas for tyres, whitegoods, windmill parts and batteries among other stuff. The area is called "the compound" by most, but Dot, the station owner refers to it as "Mitre 11" because that's where they go for spare parts as similar machinery breaks down.

Both Dot and her husband Don, the owner of the million acre (!) station, joined us several times around the fire for a drink and chat which we enjoyed because with all our chats and interaction, we learnt so much about station life and mustering.

"Tacker" the station dog is a character who loves a neck massage and wanders all over the camp grounds scavenging any titbits he can. He also has his own seat in the sta-



tion's mustering aeroplane which he flew in to the official opening of the new Gascoyne Junction Roadhouse and Caravan Park during our stay.

One day a very nice couple from Mandurah flew in on a chartered plane and we drove them around to all the sights and walk trails within the national park for the day. They kindly gave us a \$100 donation which we passed on to the Ranger.

As volunteers we didn't have a very arduous job because we weren't collecting fees from travellers as hosts normally do. The campground managers do that, as well as run the shop, fuel bowsers and carry out all the maintenance jobs. Our tasks included handing out maps and other information, pulling weeds out at Cattle Pool, checking the walks and associated car parks were clean and of course checking and cleaning the two toilets on the drive around the mountain.

All in all, a fantastic month and a place we will return to and recommend to others.



For more information on visiting Mt Augustus:

<http://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/park/mt-augustus>

Information on becoming a volunteer Campground host can be found on the DPaW website:

<http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/100-campground-hosting>

All photos © Rob Britza

## 30 years of the Society for the Preservation of Raptors Inc.

By Noelene Jenkins

The Society for the Preservation of Raptors Inc. reached a significant milestone in April 2014 in turning 30 years old. In 1984 the Society's coordinator, Phil Pain, founded WA's first raptor rehabilitation group, with members coming from all walks of life.

It was born out of a heightened concern for the welfare of the state's raptors, arguably nature's most beautiful and majestic creatures, yet which have been greatly despised, maligned and misunderstood for their character and place in our ecosystem.

From a collective point of view, members felt that through education we could change ideas and laws, and of course we had a desperate need for hands-on people to care for and maintain the ever increasing number of sick and injured raptors being passed on by a newly emerging, environmentally aware community.



Above: Society founder Phil Pain with partially blind wedge-tailed eagle © SPR Inc

The Society is a not-for-profit organisation with its headquarters located in Margaret River on seven acres of public-restricted land behind the Eagles Heritage Raptor Wildlife Centre. This area includes our hospital, 80ft and 40ft aviaries, smaller mews and an endangered species breeding barn.

In addition to the rehabilitation at Margaret River, Society members provide all stages of rehabilitation at various other, smaller sites across WA. Our education and lobby group play a prominent role in promoting the importance of conservation of all native fauna, including protecting and maintaining the state's forests, woodlands and wetlands which play an intrinsic role in the continued survival of native populations.

Hopefully the years have made us a bit wiser and certainly a lot more skilled as wildlife rehabilitation becomes more professional with higher standards and a greater focus on training.

In Western Australia, the Society has been involved in encouraging and organising training and education as well as the development and adoption of formalised standards for wildlife rehabilitation.

If you'd like to find out more, become a member or volunteer for the group, they have a website:

<http://www.raptor.org.au/>

and a Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/raptor.org.au>



Above: Society volunteer Marra with an injured brown goshawk © SPR Inc



## Smartphone and tablet apps



### Field Guide to Western Australian Fauna

Western Australia's animal fauna are unique and diverse.

This app features detailed descriptions of animals, maps of distribution, and endangered species status combined with live images from their native habitat to provide a valuable mobile reference to be used in the bush, outback and metro regions of Western Australia.

The content has been developed by scientists at the Western Australian Museum and supplemented by scientists from other museums nationwide.

The app holds descriptions of over 250 species encompassing birds, fishes, frogs, lizards, snakes, mammals, freshwater, terrestrial and marine invertebrates, spiders, and insects.

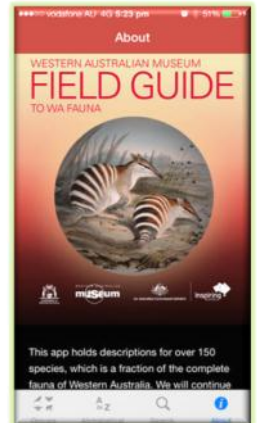
There is also a lot of the more common and widely species, as well as some unique animals that speak of Western Australia's amazing diversity. Enjoy!

The app is free on iPhone / iPad :

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/field-guide-to-western-australian/id853600331?mt=8>

And Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.wa.museum.fieldguide>

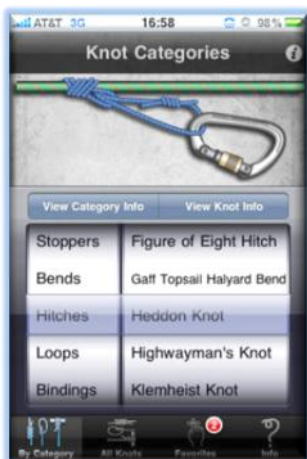


## What Knot to do

Who doesn't love a good knot? What Knot to Do (in the Greater Outdoors) is a pocket guide to 70 must-know knots in six categories: bends, hitches, loops, bindings, stoppers, and specials.

For each knot, the What Knot to do app provides some background information on the knot, why and when you'd want to use it, and then 4 or 5 clear illustrations that step you through the tying process.

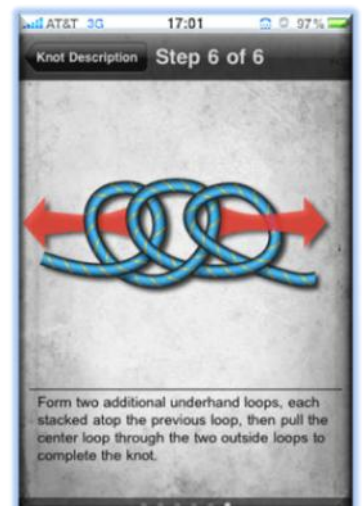
The knot collection can be viewed by category, in a single alphabetical list, or saved to a group of your own favourites for quick access.



Learn to tie the perfect knot, whether for fishing, camping, sailing, backpacking, hunting, building a shelter, lashing up a raft, tying down a load or tying up your llama.

The app is available for free on iTunes:

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/what-knot-to-do/id345618285?mt=8>



## Friends of the Western Ground Parrot



Very few Western Australians know that the Western Ground Parrot (*Pezoporus flaviventris*) is our State's rarest bird, with fewer than 140 estimated to be left in the wild. It is a sad state of affairs for a species that once ranged from just south of Geraldton all the way to Israelite Bay.

The *Friends of the Western Ground Parrot Incorporated* (FOWGP) was established in 2003 by a group of citizens concerned about the survival of this unique and beautiful bird, one of only five species of ground dwelling parrots in the world.

We assist the South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team (which includes individuals from the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW), the FOWGP and BirdLife Australia) by raising public awareness of the western ground parrots' plight through newspaper and magazine articles, radio interviews, public events and the use of social media.

We also help DPaW western ground parrot recovery project team to carry out surveys in the Fitzgerald River and Cape Arid National Parks, the last two known locations of the Western Ground Parrot.



But by far one of our biggest challenges has been to find enough money to support the establishment of a fully-fledged (pardon the pun) captive breeding and release program. Though there are currently seven birds being held in captivity, for such a program to be effective the Recovery Team advised us that there must be a minimum of 20 birds.

Expanding the existing aviaries and hiring extra staff to look after 20 or more birds will be expensive, but is one of the vital steps in insuring against the extinction of this species.

Thanks to the generous votes of DPaW volunteers, we recently won a \$5,000 grant in the SunSuper Dreams competition. The support we received has been inspirational and proves that people power *can* make a difference. The money will be put towards establishing the key elements of the captive breeding program.

But although we won the SunSuper Dreams battle, the war against extinction is not yet over.



Some of the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot volunteers  
© Sarah Comer DPaW/FOWGP

You can help save the western ground parrot by making a tax deductible donation to the Western Ground Parrot Recovery Fund at Just Giving:

<https://www.justgiving.com/westerngroundparrot>

or becoming a member of the FOWGP or assisting DPaW to conduct surveys this spring.

For more information, email:

[wqparrot@gmail.com](mailto:wqparrot@gmail.com) or find us on [Facebook](#).

Georgina Steytler  
Committee Member  
Friends of the Western Ground Parrot



## Create a skink friendly garden

Skinks, and other lizards are great to have in your garden, as they protect your plants by eating insects, their larvae and even take care of slugs and snails. Most skinks are active during the day and are generally ground-dwellers rather than tree climbers, while some also like to burrow. They can be quite evasive but you may find them sunning themselves on a rock or wall.

If you meet their needs for food and shelter they can be easy to attract and be extremely beneficial to your garden. Please bear in mind though, that what is good for lizards is probably good for snakes too....

### To encourage lizards in your garden.....

#### Do:

- Plant local native plants – including a variety of different areas across the yard - use ground cover, areas with thick vegetation and areas of shade. Encourage creeping plants up fences or walls.
- Plant berry and nectar producing local natives as these will attract insects for lizards to eat – strawberries are a bobtail favourite.
- Leave leaf litter and use lots of mulch in your garden for skinks to hide and feed.
- Include rocks, bits of bark and log piles for lizards to sun themselves on and to hide in or under – don't take from the bush to put in your garden as they are already some creature's home where they are!
- Use PVC pipes or bricks as sheltering spots for lizards. Old tin or roofing is also great for sunning themselves or hiding under.
- Keep cats and dogs indoors or segregated as much as possible - they will attack lizards and skinks.
- Check for blue tongues before moving the lawn or reversing out of the driveway.
- Include a pond in your garden as somewhere to drink from, which will also encourage insects and frogs. If not possible, provide a shallow bowl of water in a protected spot, keep the water supply regular and fresh, and keep the bowl clean.
- Compost veggie scraps and plant cuttings. Not only will this save waste from going into landfill, it will be great for your plants, and it will also attract insects and snails for lizards to eat.

#### Don't:

- Use chemicals; pesticides, non-organic fertilisers etc, especially snail pellets in your garden. If a lizard eats a poisoned bug or snail, it will also be poisoned. Also, they won't hang around if there aren't any insects or snails to eat .
- Take lizards from the park or bush for your garden. Simply provide the habitat for them and they will come!
- Feed lizards - they are great at finding their own food and can become dependent on you. This can quickly turn against them if you go on a long holiday or move house.

For more information on helping wildlife in WA visit:

[www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/wildcare-helpline](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/wildcare-helpline)

The above has been adapted from <http://backyardbuddies.net.au/for-reptiles/create-a-lizard-friendly-garden>

### HELP wanted - Contribute to the rescue and release of endangered native fauna

Native Animal Rescue wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre at Malaga needs help to move, spread, and possibly compact truckloads of rubble fill which have been donated. The material is already on site and just needs moving to firebreak tracks, and other access pathways. The task is to move the rubble, spread and possibly compact where necessary.

Front end loader, several dump trucks and a bulldozer (or any suitable combination) would be ideal but 100 trainees with shovels is not an option!

No urgency, but if you have plant and operators that can help please contact Lizzie Aravidis on 9249 3434 or email [Lizzie.aravidis@nativeanimalrescue.org.au](mailto:Lizzie.aravidis@nativeanimalrescue.org.au)

Thank you in anticipation - ps, if you haven't got a back yard full of big yellow machinery please forward this request to any of your friends and family who may be able to help.



# Dolphin Watch® Training

Do you love dolphins?

Are you interested in science and the rivers?

Join more than 700 *Dolphin Watch*® volunteers who have been specially trained to monitor local bottlenose dolphins residing in the Swan and Canning rivers.

Attend our free training evening and get involved in this exciting project.



RSVP quickly as places fill fast

- When:** Wednesday 20 August 2014  
**Time:** 6pm (for registration), training starts at 6.30-8.30pm  
**Where:** Scitech, Cnr Railway Street and Sutherland Street, West Perth  
**Parking:** Free, underneath the building.  
Scitech is opposite the West Perth train station.  
**RSVP:** [guardians@swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au](mailto:guardians@swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au) or 92780900

Light refreshments will be provided.

All registered volunteers will receive a T-shirt and cap at the end of the event.

(Volunteers must be 16+ years and older)





## **Community Involvement Unit**

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Bentley Delivery Centre  
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Fax: 08 9334 0221

E-mail: [community.involvement@dpaw.wa.gov.au](mailto:community.involvement@dpaw.wa.gov.au)

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<http://instagram.com/exploreparkswa>

**#exploreparkswa**

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

The CIU supports 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](mailto:Community.involvement@dpaw.wa.gov.au)

For information on volunteering for DPaW, visit:

[www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities)

### **Basic Course in Wildlife rehab**

There are two Metro Basic courses remaining in 2014:

- August 5, 6 (Tues/Wed)
- September 13, 14 (Sat/Sun)

The course caters for those interested in volunteering at an established wildlife rehabilitation centre and is a prerequisite for those volunteers who would like to become a registered DPaW wildlife rehabilitator.

The course format does not provide for the handling of native wildlife.

Please call the Community Involvement Unit on 9334 0251 for information on wildlife rehabilitation centres or visit the volunteering opportunities pages via [www.dpaw.wa.gov.au](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au).

### **Special Topic Talk**

Western Australian Seabird Rescue (WASR) has been rescuing and rehabilitating seabirds since 2003.

In this presentation WASR volunteers Marg Lerner and Linda Emery will take us through the basics of:

- safe capture and handling
- first aid and initial care
- successful rehabilitation of these beautiful birds

Date: Thursday 28 August, 2014

Time: 6pm to 8pm

Cost: \$25

Booking for these courses is essential - for more information and booking forms visit:

[www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/wildlife-rehabilitation-and-courses/159-wildcare-courses](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/wildlife-rehabilitation-and-courses/159-wildcare-courses)