

Community Involvement Newsletter

Department of Parks and Wildlife

Welcome to the August 2015 Community Involvement newsletter – In the last few weeks we have been busy compiling 2014's volunteering efforts. Early reports are showing that the volunteers have had a phenomenal year and contributed a record number of hours towards Parks and Wildlife environmental and recreational projects.

In 2014-15, 4,636 volunteers contributed more than 614,000 hours to over 200 projects across WA. This translates to more than 81,000 full time days and an incredible 133 hours per active volunteer. This is our highest annual level since we began recording.

It is a monumental effort and special thanks go to all volunteers for their continued commitment to parks and the environment. On behalf of the department we would like to say a massive THANK YOU! to everyone involved, including volunteer coordinators who help us bring it all together.

[Volunteering Australia](#) recently updated their definition of volunteering to state that "Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good without financial gain". We recognise that financial gain is not why you volunteer but for those of you that completed more than 50 voluntary hours last year, a Park Pass will be winging its way to you in the next few weeks as a small thank you for your efforts – please enjoy visiting [WA's beautiful national parks on us](#).



Volunteer campground host workshop © DPaW

Thanks to all of the readers that gave us feedback on our previous issue. We've taken your comments on board and hopefully evolving into an aesthetically pleasing and user friendly newsletter. We welcome your feedback and encourage your input – if you have a story about volunteering or your community group, send it to Community.Involvement@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Further to the piece in our previous newsletter regarding the [BBC's Tweet of the Day podcast](#), it was brought to our attention that Radio NZ has been broadcasting New Zealand native birdcalls prior to the 7am news bulletin for 40 years on its flagship show, Morning Report.

There was national outrage several years ago when Radio NZ let it be known that they were even considering dropping the birdcalls from its broadcasts (of course they kept it and the coverage generated lots of publicity for them). Listen to the birds [here](#).

Never let it be said that people aren't passionate about their wildlife!

Thanks again for your continued efforts; we look forward to supporting you through 2015 - 16.

[Lee, Lorene & Sonia](#)
[Community Involvement Unit](#)

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Department of
Parks and Wildlife



Swanning Around

The Dutch navigator Willem de Vlamingh was one of the first Europeans to see black swans as he sailed up and named the Swan River. The swans were a popular food resource for early settlers and today, the once abundant black swans are far less common. However, they are listed as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Breeding

In the north of Australia black swans generally breed from February to May, in the south they breed after the rains from May up until September.

Black swans can breed at 18 months old. While older birds may bond for life with one partner, younger swans pair up for a short time, breed, desert the nest, leaving the other partner to care for the young.

The nest is a large, messy mound of grass, sticks and rushes constructed at the water's edge. Normally, the nest is built by the female, with the male supplying materials.

Cygnets start off fluffy and grey but develop brown feathers after three or four weeks and fully fledge at around five months. At one year old, they develop their black colouring and their bills begin to turn the distinctive orangey-red.

Feeding

Black swans are mostly vegetarian, eating algae and waterweeds from underwater, or grazing pasture on land. They will eat the molluscs that cling to vegetation, and also eat small fish, frogs and worms.

Feeding swans bread and other food scraps can cause serious nutritional defects. Swans may also become dependent on humans and lose their natural foraging skills and fail to pass these on to their young. Birds that get used to being fed also have decreased predator awareness, potentially making them more vulnerable to dogs, cats and foxes.

Sources: <http://www.backyardbuddies.net.au/>
<http://www.riverguardians.com/> <http://www.rspb.org.uk/>

Threats

Loss of habitat severely impacts black swans. As urbanisation increases, their habitat decreases as it is filled, degraded or polluted.

Like ducks, adult and juvenile swans are known to cross freeways or other busy roads and cycle paths. For your own safety, slow down and do not go onto or near the edge of any road to 'rescue' them – contact Main Roads WA on 138 138 or police on 131 444. The police are the only people who can control traffic if necessary.

Avoid disturbing swans, including feeding them, as they walk with their young as this may cause them to panic and wander out in front of traffic, while male swans are known to become aggressively protective over their cygnets.

Did you know?

Swans legs and feet play an important role in thermoregulation. To conserve heat in cold weather, they reduce the amount of blood flowing to their feet by constricting blood vessels. To further minimise exposure in cold weather, they are often seen standing on one leg at a time, tucking the other leg into their body feathers.

They can also release excess body heat this way. By opening blood vessels and standing or swimming in water that is cooler than the surrounding air, they can avoid heat stress on hot days.

If you need further advice regarding swans or other wildlife, please call the Wildcare helpline on 9474 9055 or visit the [Wildcare helpline web pages](#).

WILDCARE helpline

FOR SICK, INJURED OR ORPHANED NATIVE WILDLIFE

(08) 9474 9055



Photo credits: (left to right) Swan dive © Matt Christie, © Christine Chester, Swans crossing path, cyclist © Sue Harper

Ningaloo Turtle Program Opportunities



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 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.

The NTP is currently advertising for three Team Leader positions (eight weeks), one Communications and Multimedia Intern (eight weeks) and twelve volunteer positions (five weeks).

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

To obtain more information or apply for a position please visit the NTP website www.ningalooturtles.org.au or email: ningalooturtles@dpaw.wa.gov.au or contact Keely Markovina on 08 9947 8045.

Please note – the closing date for applications is 10th August 2015.



Photo credits: (top to bottom) Follow the leader v © Sue Ferrari, ©Tristan Simpson, NTP Volunteers © DPaw, © Meghan Segers Ningaloo Turtle Program

Parks and Campgrounds of Western Australia 2016 Calendar



The beautiful Parks and Campgrounds of Western Australia 2016 Calendar is now available. Featuring stunning professional photographs showcasing WA's magnificent parks and reserves, the calendar also contains seasonal information on each park to help you explore and enjoy.

In addition, the 2016 calendar also includes:

- WA school and public holiday information
- room to record your own special events
- an envelope for posting (now weighs under 250gms for more cost effective international postage)
- a pull-out map of WA's parks and reserves
- free wallpaper and desktop downloads



Plus with every calendar you purchase there's the chance to WIN one of two wonderful wilderness camping prizes in WA's magnificent south-west (See inside the calendar for details).

The Parks and Campgrounds of Western Australia 2016 Calendar is the perfect inexpensive, quality gift that can be enjoyed all year by family and friends.

Ways to order:

Parks and Wildlife [online shop](#), by phone on (08) 9219 9071, or in person from DPaW reception at 17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington. It will be available from regional and district Parks and Wildlife offices from August 2015.

Volunteer reward vouchers can be applied when purchasing the calendar.

All photos courtesy Landscape 2016 Calendar





DOLPHIN WATCH



Dolphin Watch Training

Do you love dolphins? Interested in science and the rivers?

Become a Dolphin Watch volunteer and join 900 others who have been trained to monitor our local bottlenose dolphins. Help scientists to discover more about the Riverpark dolphins by providing your observations.

Attend our free training evening and:

- find out more about the Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin
- learn how to identify individual dolphins with your free copy of FinBook
- learn how to document your observations and be part of new discoveries!
- enjoy a light supper with other keen Dolphin Watchers
- receive a free t-shirt and hat as a registered volunteer
- be part of the Dolphin Watch team and receive invitations to events

Date

Wednesday, 26 August 2015

Time

6.00pm registration and light refreshments

6.30pm training presentation

Venue

[SciTech - Lottery West Science Theatre](#)

Address

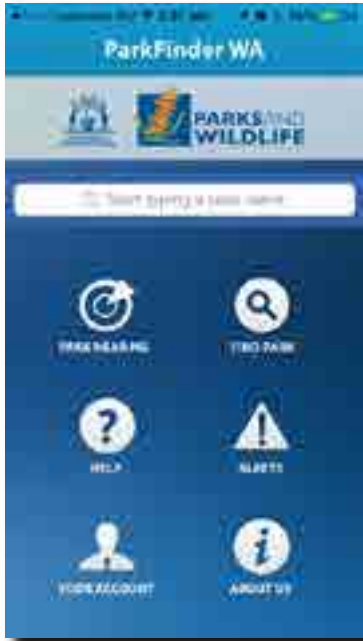
City West Centre,
Corner Railway Street & Sutherland Street, Perth



RSVP is essential - complete the details on the web page: <http://www.riverguardians.com/event-registration>
If you have any queries please email: guardians@dpaw.wa.gov.au for more information

Photo credits: (top to bottom) Leighton Broad staff training as Dolphin Watchers, Dolphins © Brett Nichols of Mt Pleasant.

ParkFinder app



The department's new ParkFinder WA app for iPhone was released in May as part of a range of online and mobile resources being rolled out for the Parks for People initiative.

The ParkFinder WA app makes it easier to plan your next outdoor adventure because it allows you to search by map, park name, find parks nearby or filter your search by the activities and facilities that you want.

It is a great tool to help you find a park that matches your needs, and all the data is downloaded to your phone, allowing you to access park information when you are offline or out of mobile range.

You can save parks to a favourites list or share with friends on social media. No internet connection is required to use this application once downloaded to your device, but when connected it checks for updates and links to the Parks and Wildlife Explore Parks website to make sure it is providing the most current information about our parks to visitors.

With the app you can:

- Find parks near your current location (in Western Australia)
- Search parks for regions, activities, facilities and other amenities
- Find parks where you can take dogs and/or drinking water is available
- Add parks and sites to your favourites which syncs back to the Explore Parks website (Internet connection required)
- Share parks and sites information using Email, Facebook & Twitter
- Review parks and contact park directly from the app

The app is free and available to [download from iTunes](#).

You can view and share posts on the [Explore Parks WA Facebook page](#).

An android version of ParkFinder WA is currently being planned.

Volunteer opportunities

Weed management volunteers

Donnelly District needs volunteers to assist with the backlog of weed data that needs to be entered and validated into the newly revised database and distribution map.

Volunteers will gather an understanding and knowledge of what weeds are out there within the Donnelly District and how the department is trying to manage them. You will also gain experience in using databases and mapping.

This role is vital to the department in achieving its conservation goals and any assistance will be extremely useful in continuing the vital work in the Donnelly District.

No particular skills are needed, besides basic computer knowledge (if you're reading this, then you have them). The position is based at the [Parks and Wildlife office in Manjimup](#). If you can help please contact Madison.Read@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Do you want clinic experience with WA's endangered black cockatoos?

[Kaarakin Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre](#), in Martin WA is taking expressions of interest for clinic volunteers. The conservation centre is growing rapidly and they are in need of skilled volunteers such as vet students, vet nurses/students, conservation/biology students and those experienced with wildlife care (birds in particular) to join their clinic volunteer team.

Clinic volunteers work with Carnaby's, Baudin's and Forest Red Tail Black Cockatoos that are rehabilitating after release from Perth Zoo.

Shifts are from 8am – 12pm daily but, depending on the needs of particular treatment or feeding schedules, some flexibility is occasionally required. There is also scope to stay later into the afternoons if you wish, and plenty of other wildlife onsite to learn from. However, a regular, consistent commitment is necessary due to the ongoing needs of the birds.



Kaarakin cockatoo release © DPaW

The experience you get includes:

- monitoring sick or injured birds and assessment for the release programme
- clinic husbandry, quarantine and specific hygiene requirements
- catching and handling birds
- general treatment and crop feeding
- rearing of chicks
- cockatoo rescue and transportation of birds
- general clinic administration, including self-management of volunteer roster
- training new volunteers once you have reached a certain skill level

All training is provided, but if you are interested and have not had any experience in hands-on clinic or wildlife care, let Kaarakin know so they can pair you with one of their more experienced volunteers. This is a great opportunity for those looking at a career in wildlife medicine, rehabilitation and care.



All enquiries to Rachel (Avian Management Officer) at kaarakin@kaarakin.com

New Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation in WA



After an extensive review we are pleased to announce that the revised 'Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation in Western Australia' (formerly known as the 'Minimum Standards'), is now available.

The Standards have been compiled and reviewed by a number of wildlife rehabilitation experts across WA, including major wildlife rehabilitation centres, Perth Zoo and departmental wildlife officers.

The document is the go-to document for anyone rehabilitating native wildlife in WA, with information and resources on the recommended minimum standards of care for a wide range of native wildlife.

This document is available to view or download from the [DPaW website](#).

Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation

The final Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation for 2015 is being held on the weekend of September 12 & 13.

This introductory course, facilitated by the Department of Parks and Wildlife, is designed for anyone in the community interested in the rehabilitation of sick, injured or orphaned native wildlife.

The course is presented by some of Western Australia's most experienced wildlife rehabilitators. They will share their expertise in their specialist fields - marsupials (kangaroos and possums), reptiles and birds (including raptors).

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

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

For more information on the training course and a registration form visit the [website](#) -

If you are looking for volunteering opportunities with wildlife, please call the Community Involvement Unit on 9334 0251 for information on wildlife rehabilitation centres.

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

The Unit 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 of suggestions, please contact us.

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