

Western Australia



Talking Tourism with the Department of Conservation and Land Management

FOREST SCIENCE LIBRARY
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND LAND MANAGEMENT
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Touring Western Australia was devised to provide a means for CALM to communicate directly to practitioners in the tourism industry in Western Australia. It is intended to let members of the industry know what is happening on CALM land which could affect their industry. We are particularly keen to ensure that the tourism industry knows about new tourism products that are being developed on CALM land. We are also very keen for members of the tourism industry to communicate their ideas (and their complaints) about how we can assist the industry.

Unlike many conservation agencies, CALM strongly believes that properly managed tourism will provide a major impetus to conservation of our places, plants and animals. While inevitably we must, on occasion, play the role of regulator, I hope that most of the time we are looked on as partners of the tourism industry.

I hope this newsletter will further develop this partnership.

Syd Shea

Syd Shea
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Attractions and facilities

CANOPY WALK OPENS

The **Tree Top Walk** at the **Valley of the Giants** near Walpole is open for business. A staggering 9000 people visited the walk in the first three weeks, which includes 1000 people who visited in one day. The enthusiastic reaction of visitors augers well for the positioning of the Tree Top Walk as one of Western Australia's tourist icons.

The walk has been built around and over a gully, which allows visitors to walk through the canopy of the forest 40 metres above ground level. Visitors who prefer to stay closer to the ground can enjoy the **Ancient Empire ground level boardwalk**. Boardwalks have been built around the base of giant tingle trees and take people right into the giant trunks of hollow, but living red tingle trees.

One Perth-based coach operator is operating day tours to the facility. Bookings are recommended. A special welcome briefing is provided to passengers of all groups booked in advance.

Hours: Valley of the Giants 9am -5pm
Tree Top Walk 9am - 4.15 pm

Closed during hazardous weather conditions.

For further information please contact Christine Wrench on (098) 408 263.

SHARING THE DREAMING

CALM has set up an **Aboriginal Tourism, Education and Training Unit** to provide opportunities for people to experience and appreciate Aboriginal culture in natural settings.

A program of tours and activities has been developed for The Hills Forest near Mundaring, and Walyunga National Park near Bullsbrook. These include performances of story dances from Noongar Dreaming, three hour walks and story telling with Aboriginal guides, didgeridoo lessons, overnight camping trips which include didgeridoo and dance workshops, plus bush tucker, bush medicine and Noongar language sessions. All activities are available on request for tour groups, subject to availability.

CALM staff are also available to give presentations or escort tour, special interest, and conference groups. Operators who have already tapped into the expertise of CALM's Aboriginal Tourism, Education and Training Unit staff have received excellent feedback from passengers.

Further information about the unit can be obtained by contacting Trevor Walley or Noel Nannup on (09) 432 5111.

HUMPBACKS HEAD SOUTH

Whale watching season is upon us. The number of humpbacks that live off the Western Australian coast is already bigger than the population that migrates along Australia's eastern coast, and numbers are increasing at the phenomenal rate of 10 per cent each year. As well as whale watching offshore from Perth, which has a success rate well in excess of 90 per cent, whale watching in regional areas is booming, with more than 28 licensed operators based in Broome, Exmouth, Coral Bay, Shark Bay, Kalbarri, Busselton, Dunsborough, Augusta, Albany and Esperance. Vessels are also likely to begin operating out of Dongara and Bunbury in the near future.

Check the Whales and Dolphins of WA *Bush Book* - details on page 3.

PERUP WILDERNESS LODGE

The *Perup Wilderness Lodge* is open for business. This unique accommodation complex is located in State Forest, 45km east of Boyup Brook. Built in an environmentally sensitive manner, the lodge can accommodate 20 persons (twin share).

In the evenings, guests can seek out nocturnal animals in night spotlighting tours. It is usually possible to see at least four, and possibly up to six different rare or threatened mammal species, including the numbat, chuditch, tammar wallaby, ringtail possum, or southern brown bandicoot, in addition to many other animals including the woylie.

Group and tour bookings are welcome. For details, or to arrange an inspection, please contact Anne Lillie on (097) 717 988.

THE HILLS FOREST

You may have seen road side signs around Perth pointing to "*The Hills Forest*". The Hills Forest is a CALM initiative that offers visitors to the Perth Hills area an opportunity to learn about the values of the forest by participating in a wide range of activities. The Hills Forest covers five national parks, including John Forrest National Park, plus scenic Mundaring Weir, a large area of State Forest, and Mt Dale - all on Perth's doorstep.

The *Go Bush!* program offers 35 different activities in Spring and Autumn each year. Activities include camping, backpacking, animal searches, moonlight bike rides in the forest and star gazing with staff from the Perth Observatory. A range of Aboriginal cultural activities including bush tucker walks, story telling, and dance performances are also available.

Facilities include a resource centre for audiovisual presentations plus a rammed earth amphitheatre which is used regularly for evening entertainment from Aboriginal Dreamtime dances to jazz. Plans are underway for a camping area for the disabled, to be completed by the end of the year, and the

reconstruction of a typical hills soft wood mill. A small rare and endangered WA flora garden has also been established.

The office, on Allen Road off Mundaring Weir Road 6km from Mundaring, is open all day Saturday and on Sunday mornings to provide information to visitors. Staff can arrange tailor-made activities for any type of group. To enquire about any activities of The Hills Forest simply 'phone the forest' on (09) 295 2244.

GREAT FOREST TREES DRIVE MAP AND GUIDE

A full colour, illustrated map and guide has been released for the *Great Forest Trees Drive* through Shannon National Park (*starting point is at the day use area on the South West Highway near where it crosses the Shannon River*). It includes detailed maps, route descriptions, colour photographs and information on plants and animals visitors might see along the way. The 48km drive takes in some of the most spectacular old growth karri forest, and this guide is essential to get the best out of the journey. It is available CALM offices in Pemberton, Walpole and Albany; the Pemberton Tourist Centre; and CALM's WA Naturally shop in Henry Street Fremantle. The guide costs \$12.95.

DAVID EVANS BICENTENNIAL TREE

Towering 68 metres, the *Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree* near Pemberton is the tallest of the three lookout trees in the southern forest region that are open to the public. The tree was pegged in 1988 as part of Australia's Bicentennial celebrations. Visitors are welcome to climb the tree and enjoy the views of the Warren National Park and surrounding farm land.

Nestled in the magnificent karri forest, facilities at the site include wood and gas barbeques. Picnic shelters and information boards are under cover - making it an ideal stopping point for coach groups.

The site also offers a network of walk trails, and is an excellent spot for photography and to view prolific bird life. There is parking for coaches and the site is wheelchair accessible. For further information contact David Meehan on (097) 761 207.

TREE TOWER TRILOGY

CALM has released a *Tree Tower Passport* for visitors to *Gloucester Tree*, *Diamond Tree* and the *Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree* - which together make up a trilogy of karri tree towers.

By using a simple embossing machine at the lookout of each tree, visitors can prove that they have climbed the three highest fire lookout trees in the world. Passports are available from the Pemberton Tourist Centre, Manjimup Tourist Bureau and Gloucester Tree. For group enquiries please contact CALM's Pemberton Office Tel: (097) 761 207 or the Manjimup Office Tel: (097) 717 988.

KIMBERLEY BOARDWALK OR BIRD WALK?

Visitors and wildlife at *Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve* in the east Kimberley will benefit from the construction of a boardwalk and bird hide at Marlu Billabong.

Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve, about 20km south of Wyndham, is an outstanding area for birdlife. The wetlands, a recognised stopover point for migratory waders, are an important feeding and breeding area for many species of Kimberley waterbirds.

The new raised boardwalk and bird hide will minimise disturbance to birdlife and vegetation. It will also provide safe viewing for visitors by minimising the risk of attack by saltwater crocodiles. Interpretive facilities will increase visitor awareness of the wetlands' values, the need to protect such areas and the role visitors can play in achieving this.

For further information telephone CALM's East Kimberley office on (091) 68 0200.

BEST EVER WILDFLOWERS

This year's wildflower season promises to be the best yet judging by the success of the everlasting showing - which usually flower before the majority of other species.

The conditions in most parts of the south-west have been ideal, and with the onset of warm weather much of the landscape will be a profusion of colour through to November, and in the instance of some species, into the new year.

WA has a phenomenal variety of wildflowers. In the south-west, there are over 9,000 species of flowering plants - one of the highest numbers in the world, and of which many are brilliantly flowering shrubs. While many flowers are found in confined areas, others are widespread such as the kangaroo paw, banksia, dryandra, and many myrtles.

CALM has now produced five wildflower titles in the Bush Books range - details page 3.

CORRECTION

Issue one of *Touring Western Australia* incorrectly reported that visitors to Yanchep National Park could have their photo taken holding a koala. Visitors are welcome to have their photo taken standing next to a koala but not holding a koala. We apologise for any inconvenience.

KARIJINI NEWS

Planning is advancing to establish a permanent visitor centre at Karijini National Park by the 1998 tourist season, with the completion of a study to identify the most suitable site for the centre. A temporary visitor centre, which is proving popular with visitors, will continue to operate until the permanent centre is established.

In short

CALM welcomes Keiko Sasaki who has joined its staff to assess CALM's tourism products from a Japanese perspective. Keiko, who is in Perth for a 12 month period from Japan, had extensive marketing experience in Japan. CALM will be tapping Keiko's knowledge of the Japanese market to assist it to develop, and improve, its tourism services and facilities. Tourism operators who wish to contact Keiko are invited to call (09) 334 0207 on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Hot off the Press

BUSH BOOKS

Four more *Bush Books*, full colour pocket guides on WA's plants, animals and special features, have been released by CALM. The State's amazing wildflowers are featured in *Common Wildflowers of the Mid-West*, *Wildflowers of the South Coast* and *Common Plants of the Pilbara*. *Animals of Shark Bay* will help people learn about and identify lizards, frogs, snakes and mammals.

SPECIAL OFFER

Bush Books are available to tour operators and retail outlets at special rates. For orders of a minimum of ten copies of a single title the cost is only \$3.57 - a great price for operators who wish to give their passengers a *Bush Book* as a memento of their tour, or who wish to make them available for sale to passengers. For operators who wish to purchase single titles as a resource on their vehicles, these are available for \$4.75. For bulk purchases please phone Marcus Benbow on (09) 334 0385. For single purchases please contact an Information Officer on Tel: (09) 334 0333 and mention this special offer.

NEED INFORMATION?

Check out *CALM's home page* on the Internet for up-to-date information on national parks, new book releases, *LANDSCOPE* magazine, nature based tourism and much more. Each month, we profile a park of the month, plus the latest information on CALM managed areas. Our home page address is www.calm.wa.gov.au - it's definitely worth a look.

The *WA Naturally Information Centre* is open for business in Henry Street, Fremantle six days a week (it is closed on Tuesdays). It is a one stop centre for information on national parks, marine parks, and other CALM managed areas and stocks CALM guide books, maps and other publications. Drop in and talk to the staff or call (09) 430 8600.

Around the Regions

ALBANY DISTRICT

Torndirrup National Park

The footpath to the Gap/Natural Bridge has been widened and upgraded to improve access for all visitors including disabled (with assistance).

Fitzgerald River National Park

A new campsite at St Mary's has been completed. Facilities include campsites for groups and single campers. Camping fees apply.

Pt Ann is now a day use area which features a new shelter. Visitors to this area can also enjoy the beach, walk along the heritage trail, and spot southern right whales in the winter and spring months.

Stirling Range National Park

Repair on footpaths at Mt Trio and Mt Toolbrunup, which were damaged by fire, will be completed by the October school holidays. For further information please phone the Ranger in Charge (098) 279 230. For further information on national parks in Albany contact Martin Lloyd on (098) 474 500.

Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park

Facilities have been completed at Calgardup Cave at Boranup. A self-guided trail has been established with a series of interpretive signs about the cave's history, fauna, and the special formations. A small fee is charged. For further information phone the CALM office at Margaret River on (097) 572 322.

GASCOYNE DISTRICT

Shark Bay

❖ **Francois Peron National Park** - Northern coastal recreation sites are being upgraded. Fencing has been erected to protect coastal vegetation. Toilets and gas barbecues will be installed by the end of October.

❖ **Monkey Mia** - A timber boardwalk was recently built along the foreshore to create a promenade for visitors. A rubberised track from the boardwalk to the jetty provides wheelchair access across the beach. The construction of the boardwalk was jointly funded by CALM and the Monkey Mia Resort.

❖ **Project Eden** - Project Eden aims to control feral animals on Peron Peninsula to reintroduce a suite of rare native mammals which were present prior to European settlement. Brochures on Project Eden's progress are regularly published and available from CALM's Denham office, phone (099) 481 208. **Check the new release Animals of Shark Bay Bush Book - details page 3.**

Gascoyne Outback

❖ New information panels have been provided at Kennedy Range and Mt Augustus National Parks and at the Mt Augustus Tourist Village.

❖ Roads in the outback Gascoyne have now reopened after heavy rains in July. Wildflowers are expected to continue their flourish right through spring.

YANCHEP NATIONAL PARK

The Inn at Yanchep National Park will be closed for 16 weeks from late October 1996 to fix storm water damage, improve the kitchen, and paint the building. We apologise for any inconvenience.

DRYANDRA WOODLAND

Spotlight Tours

Staff at CALM's Narrogin office are available to conduct night spotlighting tours of Dryandra Woodland, 160km south-east of Perth. Woylies, boobook owls, tamar wallabies, brushtail possums, tawny frogmouths, kangaroos and wallabies are regularly seen in these tours.

A series of new walk and cycle trails cater for all fitness levels, from one km to 12.5 km, and complement the Sounds of Dryandra Drive trail. One of the most popular walks is the ochre trail, which describes some of the modern and ancient Noongar culture of the Dryandra area. The trail is being upgraded to include information panels designed by Noongar children. The developments will be completed by the end of November. For details phone the Narrogin Office on (098) 811 113.

PEMBERTON AREA

Gloucester National Park

Major road works to improve the car park and road intersections at the Gloucester Tree are proposed for February 1997. The new car park will include more parking areas for vehicles including coaches.

The park will be closed for about six weeks while the works are underway. We suggest visiting the Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree or the Diamond Tree during this period. For further information phone David Meehan on (097) 761 207.

Touring Western Australia is produced by the Park, Policy and Tourism Branch of the Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management. Enquiries from the tourism industry are welcome and can be directed to Jennifer Brice on Tel: (09) 388 29092 or Colin Ingram Tel: (09) 334 0576 Fax: (09)334 0253.