



# Western Australia



Talking Tourism with the Department of Conservation and Land Management

## Attractions and facilities

### **DRYANDRA WOODLAND FAMILIARISATION**

CALM's Narrogin office is hosting an overnight familiarisation tour to Dryandra Woodland on 23 and 24 May to give tour operators a first-hand look at the unique attractions and tour opportunities available at Dryandra. The tour has been arranged in response to interest generated at a recent industry breakfast held in Perth to promote the Wheatbelt region.

The visit will include an evening spotlight tour for nocturnal animals, checking animal traps with CALM staff, and the opportunity to learn about Aboriginal bushcraft.

CALM will be providing a bus from Perth, meals and accommodation. Numbers will be limited so please advise your interest, or direct any queries to the Narrogin office on (098) 811 113.

### **WA TO BOAST WORLD CLASS WALKING TRAIL**

CALM is undertaking a major re-development to transform the *Bibbulmun Track* into one of the world's great long-distance walk trails.

The Bibbulmun Track is Western Australia's longest bushwalking track, and presently stretches 650 km from Kalamunda, in the hills overlooking Perth, to Walpole, on the State's southern coast.

The redevelopment will see the length of the track extended to a massive 950 km which will provide a unique opportunity to experience the beautiful country of the south-west of the State.

The upgrade involves the construction of hundreds of kilometres of walk trail; 46 new camp sites, between 10 and 20 km apart, which feature comfortable "weather-proof" timber shelters; and the production of new user-friendly maps and guidebooks.

To date, 25 campsites and over 200 km of new trail have been completed. It is anticipated that the new track will be completed by May 1998, and that the northern half will be open in May of this year.

Experienced walkers are not the only people who enjoy the Bibbulmun Track. The track is used by a wide range of groups including recreational walkers, community

groups, and visitors to the State. The track has been designed to offer walkers the flexibility to choose how long they want to walk. Short circuit walks mean that people can park their car, walk for half a day or up to a week, and return to the car without backtracking.

Bibbulmun Track brochures are available at CALM offices. For further information contact Jesse Brampton at the Bibbulmun Track Project Office on (09) 334 0265.

### **PROJECT EDEN ENTERS TOURISM PHASE**

Shark Bay will be known for more than the dolphins of Monkey Mia thanks to *Project Eden*, an ambitious project which aims to restore native wildlife to the Peron Peninsula.

The next phase of the project involves the development of nature-based tourism, including renovating the Peron homestead precinct into an interpretive and tourist facility. Visitors will be able to experience first-hand the process that was undertaken to restore the natural beauty of the peninsula and its native wildlife.

The former station homestead, built in the 1950s, will be used as accommodation, and the old overseers quarters will be transformed into an interpretive centre for Francois Peron National Park. All renovations will retain the original heritage and pastoral character and additions will be designed to complement existing buildings.

For further information please contact Paul Brown, CALM's Gascoyne District Manager on (099) 48 1208.

### **TURTLES GET A SECOND CHANCE**

A partnership between CALM and Underwater World at Hillarys is giving turtles a second chance at survival. More than 120 stranded turtles found in 1996 were relocated to Underwater World for a rehabilitation program. Of these, 105 have been released back into the natural environment. The majority of these were endangered loggerhead turtles found stranded on southern beaches which were successfully released in the Shark Bay Marine Park in August last year.

All seven species of marine turtles found worldwide are now considered threatened or endangered. Six of these are found in Australian waters.



Western Australia's marine waters are fast becoming one of the last remaining places in the world where turtles can find safe haven.

For further information about the program call Kevin Crane at CALM's Marine Operations on (09) 432 5111 or Jason Froud at Underwater World on (09) 447 7940.

#### **POSSUM NIGHT SPOTLIGHTING TRAIL**

A *Possum Night Spotighting Trail* has been developed in the *Tuart Forest National Park*. It is a self-guided trail designed to be completed at night with a spotlight or large torch, allowing users to come face-to-face with the nocturnal inhabitants of the tuart forest. This area has the largest population of the rare western ringtail possum and the densest populations of brushtails ever recorded in

Western Australia. Visitors may also encounter other nocturnal animals such as the wambenger (also known as the brush-tailed phascogale), tawny frogmouth and boobook owl.

Red reflectors on trail markers and information plaques guide the way. The plaques provide excellent interpretive information about the breeding biology of possums: their food, nests, home ranges and so on. The trail is a 1.5 km loop and takes less than an hour to complete. It begins from the Layman Picnic area (adjacent to Wonnerup House) just 16 km from Busselton. There are picnic tables, barbecues, toilets and an information shelter at the start of the trail.

Contact Kim Williams at CALM's Central Forest Region on (097) 25 4300 for further information.

## Hot off the Press

#### **LATEST BUSH BOOK TITLES**

##### ***Kimberley Questions Answered***

How was the Bungle Bungle formed? What are the Rowley Shoals? When and how did a dinosaur leave its footprints at Broome's Gantheaume Point? Why are the Argyle diamonds beautifully coloured? *Geology and Landforms of the Kimberley*, the latest **Bush Book** to be published by CALM, provides a fascinating insight into the geological processes that shaped the stunning scenery that attracts visitors to this region. It is packed with colour photographs and fascinating colour illustrations. Written for CALM by geologist Ian Tyler from the Geological Survey of Western Australia, this book is the first of its kind that presents technically accurate geological information that anyone can understand. It is available from CALM offices, tourist bureaux and bookshops for a retail price of \$5.95, and is perfect for tour operators seeking answers to those difficult questions.

##### ***Bush Tucker Tips***

The newly-released *Bush Tucker Plants of the South-West* looks at the traditional Aboriginal uses of almost 30 common plants, such as blackboys, yams, milkmaids, Christmas trees, quandong and orchids. Aboriginal names are used, and full colour photographs and detailed descriptions are an aid to identification. *Bush Tucker Plants of the South-West* was written by three CALM officers with a long and abiding interest in bush tucker and bushland plants: ranger Brad Daw, Aboriginal tourism officer Trevor Walley, who is a member of the Noongar community, and botanist Greg Keighery.

The book is the 16th in the *Bush Book* series, which are easy-to-understand tourist guides on the plants, animals and special features of Western Australia, region by region.

*Bush Books* are designed to fit easily into pockets and are an excellent information source for tour operators or ideal gifts to passengers on tours. Bulk and wholesale rates apply to tour operators. For further information please contact Marcus Benbow on (09) 334 0385.

#### **CD-ROM Set for Release**

CALM's CD-ROM *Wild About Western Australia* will be released in mid-May. The CD-ROM, which was launched to an enthusiastic travel industry at the *Best of the West* tourism exchange, will be an invaluable tool in promoting Western Australia. It features spectacular 360 degree images of several key attractions in addition to video footage, still photography, and general information about areas managed by CALM.

By clicking onto an icon, users of the CD-ROM will be able to access contact details of all CALM licensed operators to the location they are visiting. This information will be expanded in future editions to include all tour operators involved in nature-based tourism e.g. accommodation operators.

The CD-ROM is available to tour operators and retail outlets at special rates. For orders of a minimum of five copies, the cost is \$23.97 - a great price for operators who wish to give their passengers a CD-ROM as a memento of their tour, or who wish to make them available for sale to passengers. For operators who wish to purchase a single copy (or less than five copies) as a resource, these are available for \$31.95. For bulk purchases please phone Marcus Benbow on (09) 334 0385. For single purchases please contact an Information Officer on (09) 334 0333 and mention this special offer.



# Around the Regions

## PERTH REGION

### Visitor Centre at Yanchep

An interpretation and information centre has opened at **Yanchep National Park**. Housed in historic McNess House, the centre provides visitors with information on the park's activities, history, plants and animals and will soon include information on all Western Australian national parks.

Present services and displays include a large orientation map, park information, display items, historic photos, a staffed information desk, interactive light table and panels outlining cultural themes of the park.

The centre will be enhanced by the addition of touch screens, multi-media, and scaled displays in the near future.

The upper level of McNess House has been leased to the Yanchep Rose Quality Arts and Crafts Association as a gallery.

The opening of the centre, after being damaged by fire, is part of a three year program of upgrading services and facilities at Yanchep. These have included the upgrade and opening of Yonderup Cave for adventure caving, new walk trails, the beginning of the 100 km Coastal Plains Trail, upgraded picnic and barbecue areas, and disabled access.

For more information please contact Yanchep on (09) 561 1004.

## SOUTH-WEST

### Great Forest Trees Drives

Several thousand cars travelled the **Great Forest Trees Drive** during the summer school holidays, providing great feedback on the drive and the attractions visited en route.

There are many features along the drive including 'the other treetop walk' - a 30m elevated boardwalk to a lookout at Snake Gully, the giant karri trees at Big Tree Grove, and the **Great Forest Trees Walk**.

The Great Forest Trees Walk is an 8 km return walk (4 km each way) through the middle of the northern loop of the Great Forest Trees Drive.

Trail-side plaques help users to identify the great forest trees and some understorey species. In winter and spring stepping stones are needed to cross the Shannon River a short way down the track, however, in summer the river may be reduced to a few waterlogged areas of pools. There are two rest stops along the way.

The area was burnt two years ago, which will mean the karri forest wildflowers will be spectacular this spring. A map and guide for the Great Forest Trees Drive is available for \$12.95 from CALM offices and the **WA Naturally** information centre in Henry Street, Fremantle.

### Valley of the Giants

Opening hours at the **Valley of the Giants** will change from 8am - 6pm to 9am - 5pm following the April school holidays. More than 30 umbrellas are now available at the Valley for the comfort of people in wet weather. The onset of winter will bring new experiences for visitors to the Valley as winter rains bring the smells of the forest to life. The scene of falling rain into the forest 40 metres above the forest floor will also provide exhilarating moments. We remind all tour operators to book in advance. Staff can then be allocated to provide a complimentary commentary.

Nearly 50,000 people visited the Valley in the first two months of 1997 and more than 6,700 people visited during the Easter break, auguring well for the 1997 season. For further information about the Valley of the Giants please call the Valley on (098) 408 263.

## GASCOYNE

### Vision for Shark Bay

The Shark Bay Marine Reserves Management Plan, which will guide management of the Shark Bay Marine Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve over the next ten years, has been released. The plan recognises the economic value of tourism to the region, and the importance of maintaining the quality of the marine environment to sustain tourism and fishing. Copies of the plan are available for \$10 from the **WA Naturally** information centre at 47 Henry Street, Fremantle or by contacting (09) 334 0333.

### Mount Augustus

Visitors to **Mount Augustus National Park** will have the opportunity to learn more about the park's wildflowers, wildlife and heritage this year. Seasonal Ranger, Trevor Anderson, will conduct guided walks to Edney's Lookout and present informative evening slide shows. A small charge will apply for these activities. For more information, contact the Mount Augustus Tourist Village or the CALM office in Denham on (099) 48 1208.

### Kalbarri National Park

Major road works have been completed to provide easier access to the coastal sites of **Kalbarri National Park**. The northern section of the Port Gregory to Kalbarri Road is sealed, as are all spur roads leading to the park's scenic coastal sites. Further improvements are planned to upgrade paths and lookouts at these sites.



## **PILBARA**

The Pilbara has had excellent summer rains which have caused some damage to roads. Please drive with caution in the region. Updated information on road conditions for Karijini and Millstream-Chichester National Parks can be obtained from the Shire of Ashburton, which is responsible for maintaining the roads.

Offshore, the number of tour operators is increasing as visitors discover the attractions of the Dampier Archipelago and Monte Bello Islands.

Operators interested in conducting tours or activities in the Archipelago are invited to contact Kate Hay or Lynda Giles on (091) 431 488.

## **Karijini National Park**

The Karijini National Park Visitor Centre will open from 11 April this year, and will again be managed by the

Karijini Aboriginal Corporation. Aboriginal cultural tours and star gazing activities with staff from the Perth Observatory are planned for the 1997 season.

Fern Pool at Fortescue Falls, which is a popular but environmentally sensitive area, has been redeveloped. A boardwalk and swimming platform are now provided to protect the delicate ferns and aid the rehabilitation of the area.

Oxers Lookout, which offers exceptional views of the junction of four gorges, is being redeveloped in 1997 to provide better access for visitors.

## **Millstream-Chichester National Park**

Campgrounds can become crowded if several tour operators arrive at once. To avoid this congestion, operators are requested to contact the rangers at Millstream on (091) 845 144, who will be able to suggest the best available areas.

# Inside CALM

## **New CALM Tourism Marketing Unit**

CALM will be taking a more active role in promoting its growing range of attractions and services with the formation of a Tourism Marketing Unit within its Park Policy and Tourism Branch. CALM will be participating in a variety of tourism industry promotions such as the Australian Tourism Exchange and the WATC's inbound tour operators workshop, and has already attended the *Best of the West* tourism exchange held recently.

One of the key aims of the unit is to work closely with tour operators to promote Western Australia's wealth of natural attractions. The unit is based at CALM's Como offices in Hayman Road. The unit is staffed by Jennifer Brice who can be contacted on (09) 334 0371 and Kate McNamara who can be contacted on (09) 334 0119. The fax number for the unit is (09) 334 0253.

## **Welcome**

Elena Aniere joins CALM's tourism branch as a Policy Project Officer with responsibility for restricted E class commercial tour licences. Elena has recently returned to Western Australia from Queensland where she completed a Graduate Diploma in Tourism at James Cook University. She holds a Degree in Agriculture Business from Curtin University and has worked throughout the State in a variety of roles in the hospitality and agricultural industries. Operators with E class commercial licences can direct their queries to Elena on (09) 334 0566.

*Touring Western Australia* is a quarterly tourism industry publication produced by the Park, Policy and Tourism Branch of the Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management. We welcome feedback from our readers and topic suggestions for future editions.

Please contact Jennifer Brice on (09) 332 0371 (fax: (09) 334 0253; email: jennib@calm.wa.gov.au). Colin Ingram, Manager Park Policy and Tourism, can be reached on (09) 334 0576 (fax: (09) 334 0253; email: colini@calm.wa.gov.au).