

Western Australia



Talking Tourism with the Department of Conservation and Land Management

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Attractions and facilities

A FACELIFT FOR A GRAND OLD LADY

Historic *Yanchep Inn* in popular *Yanchep National Park*, just north of Perth, has reopened to the public after a \$300,000 upgrade. The overhaul included improving the bar areas, extensive electrical work, water proofing, painting, and a complete renovation of the kitchen. The inn provides a full food and bar service and is an ideal spot for tours and groups to enjoy lunch or morning or afternoon teas. The Inn also offers a la carte dining on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings and is available for functions. Although accommodation is presently not available in the original building, four motel units adjacent to the inn have been upgraded.

The Inn upgrade is part of an overall program to improve recreation facilities at Yanchep. For more information, or to make a booking, contact the Inn manager Brenda Greening on (08) 9561 1001.

NEW NATIONAL PARK VISITOR FEES

The Western Australian Government has approved an increase in park visitor fees. The new charges will apply to four parks which were previously exempt from fees: Mirima (Hidden Valley) near Kununurra, and D'Entrecasteaux and Fitzgerald River National Parks along the State's south coast. A taskforce is being set up to examine the implementation of entry fees to Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park.

Excepting Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park, the daily visitor fee for the general public will increase to \$8 per vehicle from 1 January 1998. The fee for tour operators will increase to \$3 per passenger, to take effect from 1 October 1998. The starting date for Leeuwin-Naturaliste will be decided by the taskforce.

Park passes are a cost effective way for the general public to enjoy WA's national parks. Four different passes are available: the *All Parks Annual Pass* (\$45) entitles holders to enter all national parks for 12 months, the *Gold Star Pass* (\$64) offers entry to all national parks for 12 months plus an annual subscription to LANDSCOPE magazine -

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CALM's award-winning nature conservation magazine, a *Four Week All Parks Pass* (\$20) gains entry to all national parks for a four week period, and the *Annual Local Park Pass* (\$15) enables entry to a local group of parks for 12 months.

Park passes are available at CALM offices and selected tourist information centres. For more information, or to order a bulk quantity, contact Denise Hamilton at CALM on (08) 9334 0565.

INFORMATION CENTRE FOR TWO PEOPLES BAY

A new information centre at *Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve*, 30 km east of Albany is scheduled to open in January 1998. The stunningly beautiful reserve is home to two rare and endangered animals - the noisy scrub-bird, thought to have been extinct for about 80 years, and Gilbert's potoroo, a quokka-like mammal thought to have been extinct for over 100 years. Twenty-five years ago the total number of noisy scrub-birds was only around 100. Today the number is around 750 thanks to sound management strategies and a successful translocation program at Two Peoples Bay.

Displays in the centre will highlight the high conservation values of the area and the threatened species program. The centre will also feature an auditorium which will be used to show videos on CALM's conservation and translocation work in the area and for presentations to groups and tours.

The *Baie des Deux Peuples Heritage Trail* (or Bay of Two Nations Trail) is being expanded to link the new visitor centre with the picnic area and a new car park which can cater for tour coaches.

Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve is a great visit close to Albany. For more information about the area and the new visitor centre contact Terry Passmore at CALM's Albany office on (08) 9842 4518.

BIBBULMUN TRACK OPENING

The newly aligned northern half of the *Bibbulmun Track* between Kalamunda and the Brockman Highway was officially opened in August by Premier Richard Court, who says "the track will become one of the State's major tourist icons, attracting thousands of new users and giving people an opportunity to experience and learn about the natural features of the South-West."

The new 950 km track, from Kalamunda to Albany, will be one of the few long distance walk trails which offers a virtually unbroken stretch of natural environment and spectacular scenery. Peter Bidwell, the Bibbulmun Track Coordinator, believes the track will provide local communities with a variety of opportunities to service walkers and create new nature-based tourism activities, particularly in areas where there is accommodation (such as bed and breakfasts).

A new series of colour maps are now available. Used with other CALM publications such as *Bush Books*, walkers will be able to interpret the many different aspects of the forest they will discover along the way.

Further information can be obtained from the Bibbulmun Track Office on (08) 9334 0265.

STEP INTO SPRING ON THE COASTAL PLAIN WALK TRAIL

A new walk trail has been developed by CALM and the North West Metropolitan Tourism Association. The **Coastal Plain Walk Trail** starts from **Yanchep National Park** and extends 45 km south-east to Melaleuca Conservation Park. The trail traverses a number of natural features including wetlands;

jarrah, marri and tuart forests; banksia woodlands, and spectacular fields of wildflowers. From the trail, walkers can enjoy breathtaking views of the Swan Coastal Plain, the Indian Ocean and the Darling Scarp.

Campsites are located one days walk apart and are equipped with a hut, water tank, picnic tables, tent sites, a fire ring and bush toilets. The trail caters to all levels of walkers, and access by public transport is available to Yanchep National Park. Walkers are asked to register at Yanchep National Park as a safety measure and trail guides are available from CALM metropolitan offices.

Stage Two of the trail to Walyunga National Park is nearing completion, and negotiations are underway to extend the trail to Two Rocks in the north.

For further information about the Coastal Plain Walk Trail, contact CALM's Perth District Office on (08) 9405 1222.

NEW MARINE RESERVE BEING CONSIDERED

An advisory committee appointed to consider the creation of a marine reserve in the waters off Jurien, 200 km north of Perth, met for the first time in October.

CALM staff profile

MEET TERRY GOODLICH

Each issue we profile one of CALM's field staff.

Terry Goodlich joined CALM as a Ranger in 1985 after a career in carpentry and photography. His first post was at Yanchep National Park, followed by stints at Walpole-Nornalup National Park and surrounding parks, and Marmion Marine Park.

Now back in his home town of Shoalwater, Terry is Ranger-in-Charge of Shoalwater Islands Marine Park, which includes responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the islands in the park and adjacent Penguin Island. Penguin Island has undergone extensive rehabilitation in recent years and now boasts quality visitor facilities including picnic areas, the penguin viewing centre and boardwalks. Terry has had a key role in transforming Penguin Island into a popular day visitor destination.

Terry is passionate about the tourism opportunities offered by the islands, and represents CALM as a committee member on the Rockingham Tourism Authority.



Left: As part of his role, Terry has been involved in rescuing many stranded dolphins.

The appointment of the committee followed Government and local community interest in creating a marine reserve for the area, which is part of the longest, continuous temperate barrier reef system in Australia. It also supports an abundance of unusually diverse wildlife.

The committee membership reflects broad community and stakeholder interests including commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, local government, Aboriginal interests, the voluntary conservation movement and marine science.

People interested in providing comment can contact the Committee Chairman Nigel Sercombe at CALM's Midwest office on (08) 9921 5955.

WOW WILDERNESS CRUISES

Each issue we profile a tour operator who operates in CALM-managed areas

Walpole-Nornalup National Park on the State's south coast is one of Western Australia's most spectacular natural areas. Well-known for its giant tingle trees and the **Valley of the GIANTS Tree Top Walk**, the Walpole-Nornalup area also boasts a network of rivers and other waterways which captivate those lucky enough to experience this pristine wilderness area.

WOW Wilderness Cruises (taken from Wild Over Walpole) offer visitors the opportunity to experience the beauty of the area on daily three hour cruises aboard the *Rainbow Lady*, a 49 seat fully enclosed catamaran and *Naughty Lass*, a semi-enclosed 25 seat vessel. The cruises operate all year round and journey into the heart of the Walpole-Nornalup National Park, where WOW Wilderness has worked with CALM to develop a sustainable tourism service.

Gary Muir, one of the owners of WOW Wilderness was previously a CALM Ranger for over 12 years. He is now sharing his dream with fellow partners Ross and Marion Muir by escorting others to his favourite place and enriching their understanding and appreciation of the area. The Muirs have a strong family history in the area dating back seven generations, and Ross is one of the last south coast stockmen.

In addition to daily cruises, WOW Wilderness caters for specialist groups from photographers to scientists. The cruises can incorporate a variety of managed activities including astronomy nights, wildflower walks, swimming with some of the 37 fish species, and birdwatching. Groups can also take advantage of Gary's interpretive skills to develop tailor-made tours to suit their interests.

For more information about WOW Wilderness Cruises, contact Gary Muir and the crew on (08) 9840 1036.

Hot off the Press

Two more of CALM's full-colour, pocket-sized *Bush Books* have been released. **Common Trees of the Goldfields** highlights the diversity of trees that grow in this arid climate, many of which grow nowhere else in the world. **Wildflowers of Shark Bay** looks at some of the most common and visually stunning plants in this flora-rich area. *Bush Books* retail for \$5.95 and can be purchased in bulk (10 or more copies) at wholesale prices by operators for resale to customers.

The WA Tourism Award-winning publication **Dive and Snorkel Sites in Western Australia** has been reprinted with four bonus dive sites. It describes the best underwater areas to explore and has detailed maps of 47 dive sites. It retails for \$14.95 from most dive shops and bookshops.

Watch out for **Bushwalks in the South-West**, which explores the forests, mountains and sea cliffs from Mandurah to Esperance. Containing maps and descriptions of 49 walks, it has just been released and sells for \$14.95.

Further information about CALM's extensive publications list can be obtained by contacting (08) 9334 0333.

In short

A NIGHT UNDER THE STARS AT KOOKABURRA CINEMA

Imagine sitting under the night sky enjoying a latest release movie. This is possible at **Kookaburra Cinema**, an outdoor cinema next to **The Hills Forest Activity Centre** 40 km from Perth near Mundaring Weir. The cinema will screen a season of selected Australian and mainstream films on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights from November until April 1998. Group discounts are available for tour operators for groups of 20 or more. For more information, call Lindsay on (08) 9574 6175, or fax (08) 9574 6600.

NATUREBASE WINS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

NatureBase, CALM's award-winning Internet site, has won another international website competition - the Metal Workers' Contest. This award, run by Canadian website software provider SoftQuad Inc, carried a US \$10,000 prize and is among the internet's most prestigious accolades. The prize-money will be used to fund a range of multimedia educational activities that will be available on the site.

NatureBase has been expanded to include details of tour operators licensed by CALM. Users will be able to obtain operators' contact details and find out what activities they offer and national parks they visit. *NatureBase* can be found at <http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/> People who do not have access to the internet can visit *NatureBase* on computers at CALM's *WA Naturally* information centre at 47 Henry St, Fremantle.

CALM ADVISORY GROUP APPOINTED

CALM has appointed a Tourism Industry Reference Group (TIRG) to provide advice about matters affecting the tourism industry. Representatives on the group are Eddie Watling (Tourism Council of Australia WA), Brian Tolhurst (WA Inbound Tour Operators Association), Manny Papadoulis (Feature Tours), Ean Baird (Design A Tour), Bill Mason

(Skywest Airlines), Alan Hines (Kimberley Tourism Association) and Terry McVeigh (WA Tourism Commission). The group will meet quarterly and is chaired by CALM's Executive Director, Dr Syd Shea, and attended by CALM's Director of National Parks, Jim Sharp. Tourism industry operators are invited to contact members of the group to raise issues for consideration at TIRG meetings.

PENGUIN ISLAND RE-OPENS

Popular Penguin Island off the coast of Rockingham, 40 minutes from Perth, re-opened in September for the summer period. A ferry service operates from the mainland throughout the day, and the cost of entry to the island's Discovery Centre which houses fairy penguins for which the island is named, is included in the fare. For further information contact Rockingham Sea Tours on (08) 9528 2004.

Around the regions

PILBARA

KARIJINI NATIONAL PARK

Oxer Lookout in *Karijini National Park* has been permanently closed following an engineer's report which found that the edge of the lookout was potentially unstable. An alternative viewing platform, *Junction Pool Lookout*, has been erected overlooking Hancock Gorge and offers a magnificent view of the Pool at the junction of four gorges. A replacement for Oxer Lookout, about 70 metres from the original lookout, and a new lookout over Weano Gorge will be built in early 1998 as part of a major redevelopment plan. This will also include the construction of new car parks and the redevelopment of Weano campground as a day visitor area with new shelters, picnic facilities and toilets.

Sealing of Karijini Road, which joins Tom Price to the Great Northern Highway through Karijini National Park, has been completed and was officially opened in October.

SOUTH WEST

VALLEY OF THE GIANTS TREE TOP WALK MILESTONE

The *Valley of the GIANTS Tree Top Walk* has been open for 12 months. Response to the new attraction has exceeded all expectations and created a new tourism icon in our forests. More than 200,000 people have already experienced the thrill of walking 40 metres above the forest floor amongst the canopy of giant tingle trees.

Despite this success, plans are underway to expand facilities at the Valley to include a new retail/information centre and an exciting range of interpretive activities to add value and enjoyment to the forest experience. New Valley of the Giants Manager Rod Hillman, who recently joined CALM from Kingfisher Bay Resort in Queensland, is excited about the future of the Valley.

"The outstanding quality of the experience has meant that the Valley of the Giants has been welcomed by visitors and the tourism industry alike," says Rod.

"The challenge ahead is to enhance our services and facilities to reflect the seasons, and to encourage people to make repeat visits to the site knowing that they are going to have a different quality experience each time."

Rod Hillman can be contacted at the Valley of the Giants on (08) 9840 8200.

HOFFMAN CAMPSITE RECEIVES FACE-LIFT

Popular Hoffman campsite, 25 km north east of Harvey in the jarrah forest along the banks of the Harvey River, has undergone significant redevelopment. The site has new toilets, gas barbeques, new parking facilities, and trees for summer shade. Several walk trails that run from the site along the old rail formations now include historic footbridges which cross the river. Standard camping fees apply.

For more information contact Tom Kenneally at CALM's Collie office on (08) 9734 1988

YOU WERE WONDERING?

Touring Western Australia is a newsletter produced by CALM to keep the tourism industry informed about developments which affect the tourism industry. If people in the industry have a query regarding any of CALM's tourism policies, we would be pleased to answer these in future editions of the newsletter. Enquiries can be sent to *Touring Western Australia* fax: (08) 9334 0253 or email jennib@calm.wa.gov.au