

## Western Australia

Volume 2 Issue 8

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Talking Tourism with the Department of Conservation and Land Management



Left to Right: Annie Keating, Raelene Hick, from CALM Bibbulmun Track Project and Becky Shrimpton from Friends of the Bibbulmun Track holding the award.

## THE WOODY ISLAND EXPERIENCE

An impressive visitor centre was officially opened by Minister for the Environment Cheryl Edwardes on 30 March at Woody Island. The Island is one of 105 islands in the Archipelago of the Recherche that extends for more than 200km along the coast off Esperance. The visitor centre has been built by MacKenzie's Island Cruises on part of the island which has been leased from CALM; the Department called for expressions of interest to provide visitor facilities and services, and the MacKenzies were the successful proponents. The centre enhances the nature-based tourism experience offered by the MacKenzies to visitors to the island.

The timber-framed centre is suitably positioned on a vantage point overlooking the bay, close to the island's jetty. The complex comprises a kiosk and kitchen, an open split-level eating area and viewing deck, and composting toilets. An interpretation centre is also housed within the complex and is currently being developed to provide information about the island, including its diverse range of wildlife.

The number of visitors has grown considerably since 1973 when the MacKenzies first conducted tours to the island, with more than 18,000 people now landing there each year.

The visitor centre complements other visitor facilities on the island, including a camp area and six safari tents. An additional five safari tents are to be built this year, and the camp kitchen is proposed for upgrade. Standard seasonal tents are also available for hire on the island, or visitors may bring their own.

During its opening, Mrs Edwardes said the visitor centre highlighted the benefits of integrating nature-based tourism and conservation through partnerships with the private sector. The new complex will enable increasing visitor numbers to be adequately managed so as to conserve the island's natural values.

## Attractions and facilities

## CALM – WINNER IN TOURISM AWARDS

Two CALM-managed attractions were acknowledged for their high standard of quality at the annual Western Australian Tourism Awards held on 11 June. The **Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk** won an award in the Significant Regional Attractions category for a second year running, while the **Building a Better Bibbulmun Track Project** was successful in the Tourism Development Projects Category. They will now represent Western Australia at the national awards to be held in November.

CALM *LANDSCOPE* Expeditions leader Kevin Coate was also acknowledged for his guiding ability. He was a finalist in the inaugural FACET Golden Guide Award.

The Tourism Awards honour excellence, where a submission demonstrates significant involvement and contribution to the tourism industry.





## GOONGARRIE – THE TRUE BUSH EXPERIENCE

CALM's Goldfields office now offers four unique station stays within the Kalgoorlie region at Goongarrie, Jaurdi and Mount Elvire stations and the Wanjarri Nature Reserve. Each reserve provides visitors with a different bush experience.

Goongarrie is a 100,000ha station and adjacent 60,000ha National Park situated 100km north of Kalgoorlie, with the homestead 14km off the Kalgoorlie–Meekatharra Highway. Accommodation available at the station includes the Homestead as well as the Shearers and Sandalwood Camp cottages, or visitors may prefer to camp out under the stars. The Homestead has three bedrooms for up to eight overnight guests, while both cottages sleep ten. There is also cooking and barbecue facilities, picnic tables and a conventional bathroom (bore water shower) at each building. The buildings are wired for electricity, but visitors need to bring a generator and generally be self-contained with food and bedding. Animals are not allowed on the station.

Goongarrie provides a launching pad for visitors keen to explore the Goldfields. It is part of the Goldfields wildflower drive trail and close to the historic towns of Leonora and Kookynie.

CALM encourages cooperative nature-based opportunities with tour operators at Goongarrie. The station is proving popular for large social groups and special events such as astronomy, evenings, bush weekends, nature-based tourism and social campouts.

Accommodation at Goongarrie is \$10 per adult/night. Children under 16 are free. There is no charge for bush campers on the station, except where facilities are used. For large groups, the Goongarrie Station (all buildings) is available for hire at \$250 per night. For further information or station stay bookings, contact CALM Goldfields office on (08) 9021 2677 or fax (08) 9021 7831.



## Around the Regions

### KIMBERLEY

Slide shows are being held again this year in **Purnululu National Park**. The slide shows are free of charge and a great way for tour groups to learn more about the Park. CALM staff are also conducting free guided walks in **Mirima National Park**. The times and locations for both these activities are advertised in the parks. Separate guided walks can be arranged at Mirima for tour groups at \$2 per person.

Birdwatching sessions are being conducted at **Marlgu Lagoon** in Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve. The telescopes provided offer brilliant views of the birdlife. A fee of \$5 per participant applies for this two-hour session.

Contact the CALM office in Kununurra on (08) 9168 4200 for a booking or further details for any of these activities.

The **Mirima National Park walk trails** have been renamed following consultation with Miriwoong people from the Mirima Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre in Kununurra. The revised names of these trails are considered more appropriate, providing greater meaning for speakers of the Miriwoong language.

The Didbagirring lookout trail becomes the **Derdbe-gerring banan lookout trail**. *Derdbe-gerring* means 'for looking out' and *banan* means 'trail' in the language of the local Miriwoong Aboriginal people. The Wuttuwutubin trail becomes the **Demboong banan gap trail**, *demboong* meaning 'gap'. Visitors walking into the park can follow the **Gerliwany-gerring** (meaning 'for walking') **banan entry trail**. New signs are being installed to reflect these name changes.

Steps will replace the handrail-assisted climb at the *Derdbe-gerring banan* lookout trail to improve visitor safety.

### Purnululu redevelopment

Work is currently in progress at the park headquarters to upgrade the Purnululu verandah shop and office to a visitor centre. Renovations will improve the aesthetic values of the building and provide visitors with an orientation to the park. The shop is temporarily located at the staff accommodation building and opening times are advertised in the park.

### PILBARA

A new viewing platform at **Oxers Lookout** in Karijini National Park was opened by the Minister, Cheryl Edwardes, in June after geotechnical engineers found the original natural rock platform to be potentially unstable.

This new lookout provides a safe platform from which to view the spectacular Hancock, Weano, Joffre and Red gorges while also complementing the replacement lookout overlooking Junction Pool. The steel facility was designed and constructed by CALM in association with the Karijini Aboriginal Corporation and local engineering consultants, providing a vantage point to cater for the increasing number of visitors to the area.

Other works which have been completed in the Oxeer area include the upgrade of walk tracks, visitor information facilities, new shade shelters for day use, new toilets and improved parking facilities. CALM was assisted by the Commonwealth Office of National Tourism and Hamersley Iron in the provision of these new facilities.

The **Karijini Management Plan** has been released after eight years of consultation with the traditional Aboriginal owners of the lands and the



wider Pilbara community. The plan provides the opportunity to establish tourist facilities within the park. Also, five wilderness zones covering nearly 30 per cent of the park will be classified under the CALM Act. Copies of the plan are available from the CALM offices in Karratha and Como or the information centre *WA Naturally* at 47 Henry Street, Fremantle for \$10. Alternatively, the plan can be viewed at the Tom Price and Karratha shire offices and libraries.

## PERTH

### **A Vision for Gngara Park**

The State Government recently unveiled a concept plan for a huge conservation and recreation park at Gngara for public comment. The plan was prepared after extensive consultation between key stakeholders and the government agencies responsible for land management and protection. Public submissions that were received after the proposal to create Gngara Park was announced were also considered.

The document was prepared by a Technical Working Group with representatives from CALM, Water and Rivers Commission, Water Corporation, Ministry for Planning, Department of Minerals and Energy and the Department of Environmental Protection. The concept plan describes four primary values established by the Working Group, sets out the key issues and makes recommendations for land and resource use. It takes into account multiple planning requirements and a wide range of uses, including recreation, timber production, mining for sand and limestone, wildflower picking and beekeeping.

It also identifies opportunities for commercial operators to bring people to the Park to promote the values of the Park. Recreation uses catered for in the plan include trail-bike riding, horse riding, four-wheel driving, camping and bushwalking.

Public submissions for interested parties to comment on the plan close on 30 September 1999. Copies are available for \$5 from CALM's Wanneroo and Como offices or can be viewed at these CALM offices or local shires and libraries.



## In Short

### **REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT DELIVERS BALANCED OUTCOMES**

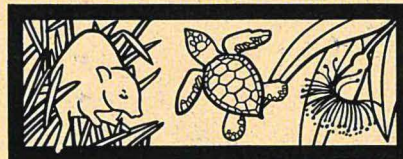
The Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) between the Commonwealth and WA Government was signed in May after extensive community consultation. As a result of this agreement, WA will have a world-class forest reserve system that meets or exceeds national targets for the protection of biodiversity and old growth. Prime Minister John Howard and WA Premier Richard Court said the agreement for WA's South-West Forest Region

was a balanced result for both the natural environment and forest-based industries.

The RFA increases the region's formal conservation reserves by 12 per cent. This includes the creation of 12 national parks and 25 additions to existing national parks in the State's south-west.

Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes said that the tourism industry would receive a \$17.5 million boost as a result of the RFA, focusing mainly on the Nannup, Pemberton and Manjimup regions. This funding is earmarked for the development of a major new tourist attraction in the Donnelly River Valley, three eco-lodge camping and chalet sites, a scenic drive in the Pemberton area, a tourist development in the new Wellington National Park and strategic tourist roads in the Nannup area.

For further information, visit CALM's website, *NatureBase* ([www.calm.wa.gov.au](http://www.calm.wa.gov.au)).



### **NATIONAL ACCREDITATION FOR LANDSCOPE EXPEDITIONS**

CALM's research expedition program, *LANDSCOPE* Expeditions, is now a nationally accredited tourism business. Over 200 tourism businesses in Western Australia have achieved accreditation as part of the Tourism Council of Australia's National Tourism Accreditation Program.

The accreditation program is designed to assist tourism operators to improve their service levels to meet the increasing demands of the domestic and international markets.

*LANDSCOPE* Expeditions is the first Western Australian tourism business to be listed under the Research Expeditions category.

The expedition program works in partnership with The University of Western Australia and private enterprise to deliver a program of research expeditions that allows people from all walks of life to join CALM scientists and regional staff on exciting field-based studies all over the State. Since they started in 1992, more than 30 non-profit, self-supporting studies have taken place. The expeditions program has increased our knowledge of threatened environments and endangered species and has benefited nature conservation throughout Western Australia.

All accredited tourism businesses are now listed on the TCA website ([www.tourism.org.au](http://www.tourism.org.au)).



## Info Updates for Tour Operators

Tour operators holding whale shark licences to operate from Exmouth have been refunded their deposits in recognition of the damage caused by Cyclone Vance to the local tourism industry.

The \$750 deposit, paid to CALM before the whale shark season, contributes to the research, monitoring and management of the whale shark interaction tours. Tour operators play a vital role in this management by educating visitors about whale sharks. CALM enjoys a strong relationship with whale shark operators and is pleased to be able to assist the local industry during these difficult times.

### **CALM working with the industry**

There are increasing opportunities for the tourism industry to profit from CALM's range of products available for resale.

Many outlets sell CALM publications, ranging from WA's conservation, forests and wildlife magazine, *LANDSCOPE*, to the popular Bush Books series. Over 100,000 copies of the 21 titles in the series have now been sold.

Most major tourist bureaux and information centres throughout the State are also selling National Park Passes, which attract a 10 per cent commission. Unfortunately commissions or trade cannot be factored into the pricing structure for CALM's nature-based tourism sites, as these prices are set under government regulation with a recreation and public benefit component attached.

However, CALM has developed partnerships with operators where common industry practices are used to increase the efficiency of product distribution to tourists. This occurs at Penguin Island, where the entry fee to the Penguin Experience Island Discovery Centre is packaged into the tours offered by Penguin and Seal Island Cruises.

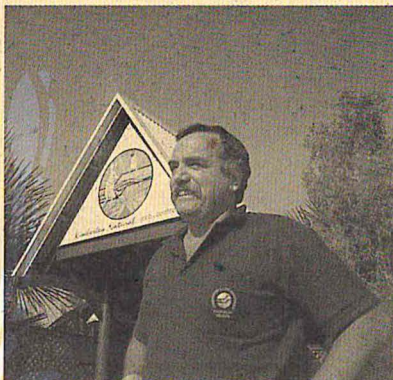
Any trade enquiries about CALM publications can be addressed to Estelle de San Miguel on (08) 9334 0296. Contact Denise Hamilton on (08) 9334 0565 for enquiries about National Park Passes and Rod Quartermain on (08) 9334 0562 for any other tourism industry liaison issues.

## CALM Staff Profile

### **A COLOURFUL CHARACTER**

Allen Grosse joined CALM in 1989 as District Manager for the West Kimberley, following a position as Kimberley Regional Tourism Manager for the WATC. Over the years Allen has undertaken a variety of pursuits, such as safari tour operator, shearer, builder and teacher. Allen's affection for Australia's north and interest in Aboriginal culture attracted him to his current position, which is based in Broome.

As West Kimberley District Manager, Allen is responsible for overseeing the management of some of the most remote, yet increasingly popular nature-based tourism sites in Western Australia. This includes Geikie Gorge, Windjana Gorge and Tunnel Creek National Parks, Silent Grove (Bell Gorge) and the Rowley Shoals Marine Park. Allen is very much aware of the necessity to establish partnerships with stakeholders in the region such as Aboriginal communities, pastoralists, the



tourism industry, local government and the private sector to manage these areas.

Allen's most recent initiative is the development of the **Kimberley Natural Eco-Centre**, a major visitor education facility being built at the West Kimberley District headquarters in Broome.

'Our Snake House has been an integral part of CALM's Kimberley visitor education program for the last three years. Now is an exciting time to expand this facility to provide visitors with the opportunity to learn about other unique native animals,' says Allen.

The eco-centre includes a free range compound for visitors to view bilbies at night and learn about the successful capture and relocation program to re-establish bilbies elsewhere in the State. The eco-centre is scheduled to open in September this year.

Allen can be contacted at CALM's West Kimberley District office on (08) 9192 1036 or email ([alleng@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:alleng@calm.wa.gov.au)).

### **YOU WERE WONDERING?**

*Touring Western Australia* is a newsletter produced by CALM to keep the tourism industry informed about developments affecting the industry. If you have a query about any of CALM's tourism policies, activities or developments, we would be pleased to answer these in future issues of the newsletter. Enquiries can be sent to *Touring Western Australia* by fax on (08) 9334 0253 or email ([kateh@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:kateh@calm.wa.gov.au)).