



Volume 3 Issue 3

Winter 2000

# Western Australia



Talking Tourism with the Department of Conservation and Land Management

FOREST SCIENCE LIBRARY  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND LAND MANAGEMENT  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## CALM INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The second CALM Information Exchange for tourism industry representatives was held recently at Burswood Convention Centre.

This year's event attracted 110 representatives from CALM, Regional Tourism Association (RTAs) and the tourism and travel industry from as far north as the Kimberley and as far south as Esperance, keen to experience some of Western Australia's most outstanding natural attractions.

Executive Director Dr Wally Cox opened the event by saying that "Western Australia's great tourism sites such as the Bungle-Bungle, Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk and the Monkey Mia Dolphins are all natural attractions located on conservation lands".

The exchange offered CALM the opportunity to inform the travel and tourism industry about how they can best utilise and protect the nature-based attractions situated in CALM-managed lands and waters.

Feedback from visitors and presenters has been extremely positive with the majority highlighting the beneficial value of holding such an event.

Phillipa Heaford of the Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association said that the CALM information exchange was "a fantastic cooperative event with invaluable networking opportunities".

Skyworx Aviation's Paul Baxter said the event was "an informative gathering with the ability to see what CALM is doing in each region along with the Regional Tourism Associations".

Brad Barton, CALM Operations Officer from the Gascoyne District, stated "it was a great opportunity to meet with people from various operations and gain some idea of their expectations of CALM".

Dr. Wally Cox mentioned how CALM had been working alongside Regional Tourism Associations and the Western Australian Tourism Commission towards the organisation of the 2000 Exchange.

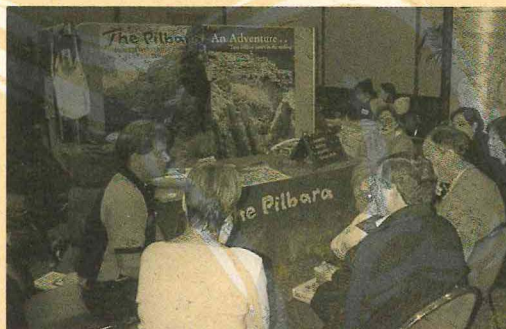


Networking at the Exchange: Front from left, Steve Crawford (WATC), Colin Ingram (CALM) and Patt Barblett (FACET). Back from left, Rick Reid (Sea Reward Charters) and Tony Baker (Captain Cook Cruises).

Presentations were delivered cooperatively between both CALM and RTA representatives, who added value to the CALM product by promoting CALM-licensed operators, accommodation and transport providers that service the CALM product.

The CALM Information Exchange has proven to be a valuable medium to exchange information and inform the industry of CALM's commitment to assist them in offering a premium nature-based tourism product.

The event was funded by CALM's Commercial Tour Operator Licence fund with contributions from CALM's Park Policy and Tourism Branch and the Western Australian Tourism Commission (WATC). For further information contact Kieron Wogan on (08) 9334 0371.



Stephen Pahl (Pilbara Tourism Association) presenting with Judymae Napier (far right: CALM Karratha).

## Around the Regions

### **SOUTH COAST**

**Stokes National Park:** Facilities at both of the two campsites located adjacent to Stokes Inlet have recently been upgraded by the provision of six new brick gas barbecues and shade shelters. An additional attraction has been the construction of a new walk trail, which provides excellent vistas over Stokes Inlet. The new trail now links the Heritage Trail with the Northern Inlet campsite. For further information, contact Stokes National Park on (08) 9076 8541.

### **SOUTHERN FORESTS**

**Beedelup Falls:** The falls are now open to the public—just in time for winter, when they build towards their spectacular best. The carpark, picnic shelter, paths and boardwalks have all been completed, with more work being planned. Visitors will be able to enjoy access to the majority of the sites. However, the main viewing platform is still in construction and not accessible to the public. CALM apologises for any inconvenience and asks you to bear with us while work continues through winter and spring.

The site is now accessible to coaches and long vehicles, and will be fully accessible to people in wheelchairs and the elderly when the main viewing platform is finished this winter. For more information, contact the Project Manager John McKenzie or the Recreation Officer David Meehan on (08) 9776 1207.

**D'Entrecasteaux:** The Point D'Entrecasteaux coastal drive has now been graveled and is open to the public for their enjoyment. This spectacular drive caters for coach and long vehicle access to Point D'Entrecasteaux and the surrounding vista points. A fully accessible walk trail leading around the point offers breathtaking views of the Southern Ocean.

More work is planned over winter and spring. However, the site is well worth a visit to experience the power of the winter ocean. A viewing platform will be constructed during winter. Your patience is much appreciated as we continue to implement this exciting project. For more information, contact the Project Manager Jeff Kimpton or the Recreation Officer David Meehan on (08) 9776 7095.

### **SOUTH WEST**

Visitors to the beautiful south-west now have another option when spending time in the Margaret River area. The two caves recently reopened by CALM in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste

National Park are now accessible to the general public, following extensive rehabilitation and construction works.

**Calgardup Cave:** The boardwalk has now been extended to include both branches of the cave, allowing visitors to explore and admire the exquisite hanging crystal deposits from the safety of the constructed pathway. Ongoing works include the creation of a nature trail outside the cave (leading to the fascinating inflow hollow in the bush), additional parking bays (including a bus area), rehabilitation of the abseil platform (preventing erosion of the delicate habitat thereabouts), and continuation of the clean-up inside the cave.

**Giants Cave:** Paths, steps, ladders, handrails and signage have all been part of an ongoing construction program furthering the development of Giants Cave. These additions not only make the cave more accessible to the public, but further protect the cave from erosion and other damage.

For more information, contact Cave Manager Anne Wood on (08) 9757 7422.

### **KIMBERLEY**

**Wolfe Creek Meteorite Crater Reserve:** The first stage of improvements to the site includes work on a new carpark, scheduled for June and July. The old carpark will be closed and rehabilitated and new information signs installed. A camping area is planned for 2001, which will be staffed by volunteers at peak times.

**Bell Gorge:** A new walk trail, which is easier and safer to negotiate, is under construction. The old walk trail will be closed and rehabilitated.

For further information, contact Interpretation Officer Jennifer Wilksch on (08) 9168 4200.

### **PILBARA**

**Karijini National Park:** The current Karijini Visitor Centre has seen better days and this year will be its last. It first opened in 1994 to provide information to park visitors, promote local Aboriginal culture and provide training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people. Over the years, it has hosted more than 300,000 visitors from around the world. A new, world-class visitor centre is being built just up the road from the present site. It's due to be completed at the end of the year, and will open early next year.

**Millstream-Chichester National Park:** Due to flooding, Deep Reach camping area is closed. There is very limited camping available at Crossing Pool, so please avoid the school holiday periods. Day tours to the Homestead and Chinderwariner Pool are most welcome, and there is basic camping (pit toilets only) at Snake Creek, adjacent to Python Pool.

**Shark Bay:** The completion of the Eagle Bluff board walk and lookout is imminent, with only 'finishing off' work to be completed. This \$250,000-project was funded by the Federal Government and World Heritage funding, with assistance from the Shire of Shark Bay and the

Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers (ATCV).

Coastcare has funded a beach clean-up for Bernier, Dorre and Dirk Hartog Islands. This project is to be completed by July, with the support of ATCV and the Shark Bay Marine Rescue Group. Rubbish that is removed will be catalogued and weighed to determine possible sources.

**Monkey Mia:** Tenders have been let for the construction of the \$900,000 Monkey Mia Visitor Centre. Construction is due to start later this year.

## In Short

### ***TOURISM ICON PROJECT***

As part of the Regional Forest Agreement, the State Government has committed up to \$2 million for the development of a new tourist attraction(s) in the Manjimup-Nannup area of the south-west. The key purpose of this project is to increase visitor traffic and extend stays in the area, while boosting tourism and community development in its vicinity.

A public competition was recently run to attract innovative concepts for the tourist development. Seventy-one entries were received and ranked against selection criteria by an independent judging panel.

Suggestions included sculpture parks, laser light shows, bike trails, river trails, a virtual tree, railways, Aboriginal interpretive centre, theme parks, mazes, many variations on getting into the canopy of the forest—lifts, gondolas, flying foxes, monorails, sky rails etc. Suggested sites were mainly the Diamond Tree area, One Tree Bridge area, and a steep part of the Donnelly Valley 30 kilometres west of Manjimup.

The next phase of the project is to call for expressions of interest from professional groups or other interested parties to put forward proposals to develop further, any one, part of, or an amalgam from the seventy-one concepts received in the public competition.

Expressions will be called on Saturday June 17, 2000, and close at COB Friday July 28. A tour of the potential sites will be conducted from Manjimup on June 30.

Briefing Packages will be available in early June through Contract and Management Services (CAMS) on (08) 9792 2266.

### ***FUNDING RECEIVED FOR THE NEW VIEWING ENCLOSURE AT DRYANDRA***

Recent years have seen the expansion of tourism and recreational activities at Dryandra. The establishment of the State's first radio drive-trail and the upgrading of recreational facilities at the reserve have resulted in increased visitation. Guided tours conducted by CALM staff have expanded, and Aboriginal cultural tours have been developed. Visitor surveys have also indicated an increased enjoyment of facilities and satisfaction of their stay.

April saw the announcement of a successful application for a grant of \$80,000 from the Regional Tourism Development Program to construct a 2.5-hectare viewing enclosure.

Initially, visitor access will only be provided in conjunction with trained guides. The guide will conduct spotlight tours within the enclosure, following an introductory talk in the attached interpretive centre. Observation of rare and threatened animals will be improved with the provision of feeding trays adjacent to a constructed path. A visit to the enclosure and to Dryandra Woodland promises to be a unique nature-based experience within Australia.

The construction of the viewing enclosure has been well supported by the local community. The Greater Dryandra Focus Group has viewed this development as the key platform for other nature-based and cultural enterprises in the community. As visitation increases, it is planned that improved economic returns and further development of commercial tourist enterprises in the neighbouring seven shires will result.

For further information on Dryandra or the 'Return to Dryandra' project, contact the Narrogin District Office on (08) 9881 1113.

## Info Updates for Tour Operators

### **NATURE AND ECOTOURISM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM (NEAP)**

A new era for Western Australian Tourism has begun with the introduction of a revised accreditation system for nature-based ecotourism operators. The program called NEAP (Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program) has been available since 1997, but has been improved and expanded to broaden its appeal.

Environment Minister Cheryl Edwardes launched the initiative on April 13, 2000 in the water gardens of Kings Park on behalf of the WA-based Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco Tourism (FACET) and the Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA), who are hosting the program in the State.

The aim of the program is to encourage an understanding and appreciation of nature, integrate opportunities, involve different cultures (particularly Aboriginal culture) and consistently market accurate information to meet customer expectations.

"The program marks the foundation for improvement and recognition of the State's environmentally-conscious tour operators, who provide a diverse range of tours to the many and varied natural attractions WA offers," Mrs Edwardes said.

Mrs Edwardes said that CALM had endorsed the scheme and would offer incentives for operators, who ran tours on lands and waters managed by CALM, to gain accreditation.

From next year, CALM would offer tour operators conducting tours in national parks the opportunity to be licensed for three years if they complete the revised NEAP accreditation. Currently, licences for tour operators are only issued annually.

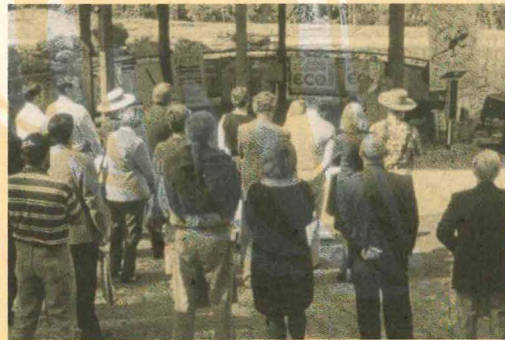
To gain accreditation, products must not just meet environmental standards, they must also ensure stimulating and responsible experiences by providing interpretation and educational material, to give something back to the local

community, help with local conservation, and ensure sensitive cultural interactions.

Dr Ross Dowling, Vice Chairperson of FACET, said the launch of the accreditation program was a great leap forward for the State's tourism industry, as it would provide the industry, government, public and tourists with quality assurance of nature-based and ecotourism products.

The program was developed as a joint initiative between the country's peak ecotourism body, the EAA, and the Australian Tour Operators' Network (ATON), with the seed funding provided by the Office of National Tourism.

For further information on NEAP Edition II, please contact the Ecotourism Association of Australia on (07) 3229 5550.



*The launch of NEAP Edition II at Kings Park's water gardens, 13th April 2000.*

## Coming Up!

### **FIRE IN THE BELLY - DEVELOPING THE CRAFT OF INTERPRETATION.**

The Interpretation Australia Association's National Training Program of Workshop Modules in Interpretation Planning, Design, Presentation and Evaluation, Perth 1-5 July 2000.

For an outline of the program of presentations, activities and workshops, Pre and Post Program Tours and registration details contact Anne Greig on (08) 9334 0581 or fax (08) 9334 0583. Alternatively, you could check out the "What's On" section of NatureBase (<http://www.calm.wa.gov.au>).

### **YOU WERE WONDERING?**

*Touring Western Australia* is a newsletter produced by CALM to keep the tourism industry informed about developments which affect the industry. If you have a query regarding any of CALM's tourism policies, activities or developments, 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 ([kieronw@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:kieronw@calm.wa.gov.au)).