

# Yarning Time

## Issue 6 (Part 1), October 2016



*Dr Stephen van Leeuwen  
Chair  
Aboriginal Employee Reference Group*

### Message from the AERG Chair

Welcome to the sixth issue of Yarning Time, featuring what's going on around the State.

The Aboriginal Heritage Unit (AHU) and the Aboriginal Employee Reference Group (AERG) have established *Yarning Time* to:

- provide an update on Aboriginal staff news;
- inform all staff of the developments in Aboriginal affairs in the department; and
- share stories on the department's engagement with Aboriginal people.

Please have a read and enjoy.

Dr Stephen van Leeuwen.

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## Significant dates

### National Reconciliation Week 27 May – 3 June 2016

National Reconciliation week is an important week to celebrate. Building relationships with Aboriginal people, organisations and/or communities through celebrating National Reconciliation Week is a key action of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

#### Kensington

In Perth, about 50 staff from Parks and Visitor Services (PVS) and River and Estuaries Division (RED) gathered on 27 May for a BBQ breakfast and walking tour along the Swan River, visiting two recently completed interpretation facilities at Point Walter and Bicton Baths. A Whadjuk welcome was conducted by Elder Betty Garlett. Part of the *River Journeys* project – which encourages people to take their own journeys of cultural and spiritual discovery along Perth's rivers – the facilities include boardwalks and signs sharing stories of the connection between the Whadjuk Noongar people and the river.



*One of the interpretation panels sharing cultural, environmental and historical information about the river. Photo – Miranda Jackson/Parks and Wildlife*

#### Swan Coastal Region - Wanneroo

The Swan Coastal Region held a reconciliation week breakfast at the Wanneroo work centre where Aboriginal employee Derek Nannup (Visitor Services Personnel) from Yanchep National Park, spoke to the group and showed the YouTube video "Walking Together – Belonging to Country".

#### South West Region - Bunbury

Reconciliation week 2016 was celebrated at the Bunbury regional office with the unveiling of a mural on a wall near the reconciliation garden (Kaatamoordoo Kidji Maambakoort).

The mural was painted by Cassie Rampant, the daughter of Paul Rampant (remote sensing officer, GIS branch) who shares the office space near the garden.

In the spirit of reconciliation, Cassie volunteered her time and artistic ability to create the artwork which took many hours over a number of weeks, resulting in a spectacular piece which complements the theme of the garden.

Bob Hagan (regional manager), Peter Henderson (regional PVS leader and RAP rep) and 22 South West regional staff attending the customary activities and native title workshop delivered by the AHU and Simon Choo, senior project officer, thanked Cassie with a lunch and gifts acknowledging her commitment to reconciliation.

Bunbury staff also participated in a total of three Cultural Awareness Training events during this week.



*Peter Henderson, Cassie Rampant, Rhonda Murphy, Bob Hagan and Karim Khan. Photo by Paul Rampant*

## NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC stands for National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee. Its origin can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920s which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians.

NAIDOC Week is held in the first full week of July. It's a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements and an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society. Events were held at Kensington, Bunbury, Yanchep National Park and the West Kimberley District.

## Kensington

### Creative Native Aboriginal Art Gallery Team Building

Three divisions - Corporate Services, RED and PVS - combined their efforts to support a cultural activity in celebration of NAIDOC Week.

Creative Native (<http://www.creativenative.com.au/>) was engaged to run an Aboriginal art workshop for staff on Friday 8 June. Six partially-completed canvases created by Beverley Egan were provided along with art materials. Staff collaborated in groups to try their hand at Aboriginal art techniques and complete the intricate and beautiful dot paintings.

Beverley Egan was born in Mullewa on 21 August 1961. Bev is a Yamatji woman and speaks the Wajarri language. She maintains very strong links with her country and traditional culture in the Murchison/Gascoyne region and regularly returns for family events. Beverley has lived most of her life in Perth with her husband (who is also Yamatji) and her two sons. She began painting five years ago when she was taught by her niece Loretta and has also worked with Bundi Arts, working with ceramic art.

A well-respected artist, Beverley paints women's stories and stories from her family's country in the Murchison area. Her work is held in many private collections in Australia and around the world.

Over the past five years Beverley has developed a style of work varying from traditional to bright and contemporary. Her most recognisable paintings feature the turtle or Ganada, which is the totemic symbol of her father. The Ganada is often depicted swimming through the Murchison River in her home country.

Staff members chatted with artists from Creative Native who explained the meaning of many of the symbols in the works. Predominant themes included people interacting with each other, animals and waterways. The stunning artworks symbolize the importance of country and the interconnectedness of life.

Staff were excited to be part of creating something very special by contributing to the artworks during NAIDOC Week.

The completed artworks will be framed and returned to Parks and Wildlife to display



1) Main Waterhole, 2) Women digging for bush potato, 3) Women's story, 4) Woman's meeting place, 5) Bush potato dreaming, 6) Murchison River

## Canteen bush tucker-themed lunch menu

In support of the celebration of NAIDOC Week, the Kensington canteen provided a bush tucker-themed lunch menu on 5 July 2016. Bush tucker included:

- Kangaroo pies
- Buffalo hotdogs
- Kangaroo stew and rice
- Barramundi / salad
- Vegetarian Option



## Bunbury

Peter Henderson (regional leader PVS) and South West RAP rep) attended an event with the City of Bunbury at the Eddie Bricknell Music Shell. Peter had this to say about the event:

“The Welcome, songs, dance, smoking ceremony and flag rising were an interesting and moving introduction to NAIDOC Week. I appreciated how everyone was made to feel welcome and invited to participate. Hopefully I can encourage more representation from Parks and Wildlife next year.”

Karin Khan (program coordinator AHU) led everyone in a smoking ceremony for the event.



*Karim Khan – Smoking Ceremony, Eddie Bricknell Music Shell – City of Bunbury*

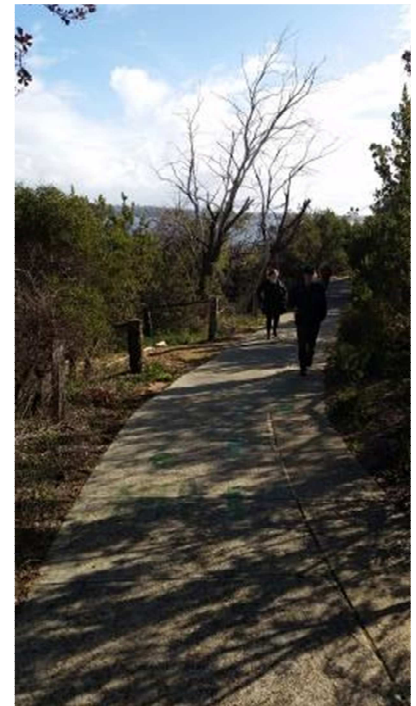
## River Guardians

River Guardians members celebrated NAIDOC Week by participating in a guided walk from Point Walter to Bicton Baths in the Swan Canning Riverpark. The activity started with an amazing Welcome to Country by Whadjuk Elder Marie Taylor, who shared cultural stories and welcomed everyone to the special area.

The new interpretive walk provided visitors with signage which started and ended their walk. The information is beautifully integrated with the environment thanks to Parks and Wildlife designers. River Guardians were guided by Ben Ansell (trails project manager) to download the Geotourist App, find the Jenna Bididi Yorga trail and start their experience.

Guardians walked the 2.1km trail listening to stories told by Aboriginal Elders. Recorded stories began playing automatically as participants' smart phones geo-located them as they walked past sites of significance. The group even encountered some dolphins and birds fishing near Blackwall Reach and were lucky enough to witness an osprey with a fish in its talons flying above the trail!

The event was a fantastic way for people to gain a deeper understanding of the area by hearing about the significance of the land to Aboriginal people, by Aboriginal people.



*Jenna Bididi Yorga Trail*

## Yanchep National Park

In Yanchep National Park (YNP), a number of events were held throughout the week, including a guided bushwalk and NAIDOC-themed sports carnival for Yanchep District High School students, but the centrepiece was a special NAIDOC Day celebration on Saturday 9 July. Park manager Julia Coggins said even a hailstorm did not deter nearly 200 people from enjoying the day.

“Visitors enjoyed a bush tucker barbecue and free activities including sand art, traditional face painting, artefact display and Dreamtime storytelling. A warming fire was lit in the Wangi Mia and our staff and volunteers had a great time helping to share Aboriginal culture with such an enthusiastic group of people,” she said.

### NAIDOC Olympics 22 June

About 90 year five and six students from Yanchep District High School joined us for our inaugural NAIDOC Olympic Games. Following an acknowledgement the kids were painted up with traditional face painting to reflect each of the three competing teams – Yonga, Wetj & Koomal. Teams then enjoyed a round robin of traditionally-inspired games including Boorna Wanghan (message stick relay through the Dwerta Mia), Klakadoon (bean bag throw – target/hunting game), Ilye (Boomerang game played with Frisbees), Yonga, Wetj, Karda (foot race with children imitating animals eg. hopping like Yonga) and spear throwing. Following lunch the kids were treated to an ‘all in’ Didgeridoo and Dance session, which was extremely well-received. No child missed the opportunity to have a go and the fun and laughs continued all day. Terrific feedback was received and plans are underway to expand the event to include additional schools next year.



*Students from Yanchep District High getting their faces painted*



*Students from Yanchep District High Playing the Olympic Games*

### NAIDOC Day 9 July

A hailstorm could not stop this event and did not deter a crowd of nearly 200 from enjoying our NAIDOC Day. Artefacts and displays decorated the Wangi Mia and a fire was lit. Derek Nannup mingled with visitors telling stories, making bracelets with children and playing impromptu didgeridoo. Ciara, Yanchep’s volunteer’s coordinator, was assisted by a couple of volunteers to cook a barbecue of bush tucker sausages and damper, which was delicious, with a delicious aroma enticing visitors all morning. Judith Birchall, assisted by many little hands, created a beautiful sand art piece in the Yorga Mia depicting the creation story of the Wagyl reflecting the NAIDOC 2016 theme of song lines. In the afternoon Derek told the story of our canvas in a Kaartdijin Dreaming segment, which was followed up with our regular Aboriginal Experience activity offered at no charge.



*Having a yarn*



*Sand Art*

## West Kimberley

The department's West Kimberley District hosted a number of educational and celebratory events for NAIDOC Week.

Parks and Wildlife and Broome Whale Watching charters provided 20 young Aboriginal people from Broome with a free whale watching cruise off Roebuck Bay. It was a great way to acknowledge those young people who have shown great leadership and achievement. Organisations such as Red Cross, Headspace, Nyamba Buru Yawuru, Broome Families and Youth Hub nominated five young representatives each to attend. Participants spotted dolphins, turtles and jellyfish despite conditions being too windy to get far enough out to spot whales. A big thanks to Cam, our captain, and Amber from Broome Whale Watching, for providing this opportunity.



## Broome

The Yawuru rangers hosted a NAIDOC afternoon tea with staff from Parks and Wildlife, Yawuru Land and Sea Unit and Shire of Broome to celebrate culture, country and achievement. Jason Richardson, a trainee Yawuru ranger with the Parks and Wildlife joint management program, spoke in Yawuru language to acknowledge the traditional owners of Minyirr Park. MATES trainer and assessor Daniel Balint talked about the significant achievements of the department's Aboriginal staff throughout the West Kimberley District and we all shared some damper, scones and local bush tucker.



*Celebrating NAIDOC week with a traditional morning tea*

## Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park

From 4 to 7 July, Parks and Wildlife's Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park rangers and the marine visitor interpretation officer ran a fantastic week of school holiday activities at the Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park. These activities celebrated NAIDOC Week and the start of the school holidays. The week consisted of many exciting activities including a movie night, boomerang painting, ocean bingo, colouring in fun and a sand sculpture competition.



*Children with their painted Boomerangs at Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park  
Credit: Nathan Hunter (Parks and Wildlife)*



Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park rangers helping out with the school holiday program at Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park.  
From left to right:  
Augustine Badal. Jeffrev Brown. Nathan Hunter. Stephen Brown

## Cultural Awareness training Eighty Mile Beach

On 21 July 2016 Parks and Wildlife staff and representatives from Greening Australia and BHPBIO took part in a cultural awareness session with elders from Nyangumarta country at Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park. The Nyangumarta people have a long and deep connection with their country, which begins in Manguny (creation time). Since Manguny the Nyangumarta people have faced many changes to their land, from working on neighbouring pastoral stations in the 1900s, to more recently gaining native title rights.

The cultural awareness session consisted of the Nyangumarta elders discussing the workings of their family trees (Waljamarrri). The group were then introduced to various words from the Nyangumarta language. Nyangumarta Elder Nyaparu Rose explained the different seasons and how they are determined by the type of native food that is available. The elders took the group to two culturally-significant sites while describing the history, significance and interesting stories connected to these places. They talked about joint management and working together to protect the environment and culture while discussing the way forward for land management in the area.



Parks and wildlife staff and representatives from Greening Australia and BHPBIO with elders from Nyangumarta country.  
(Photo: Parks and Wildlife)



## Graduation Ceremony

### Awards

Recognising and promoting the achievements of Aboriginal staff is a key element to the Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

We would like to congratulate the following staff for their achievements, celebrated at the 1 June 2016 Graduation Ceremony:

Trainee of the Year – Reserve 31165 ranger Peter (Benji) Curtin was awarded the Aboriginal Trainee of Year for taking ownership of his Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management that resulted in him setting a new record – completing the qualification in only 11 months.

Runner up – Curtis Robinson

Kwabalitch Award – Curtis Robinson received the Kwabalitch award for demonstrating tenacity, perseverance and dedication to his studies throughout his traineeship. He was recognised for his continued commitment to the Department, Yawuru rangers and MATES. Curtis is the first Yawuru ranger to successfully complete a Certificate IV in Conservation and Land Management.

Runner Up – Tristan Jessell

## Training

The following staff members have completed training programs in:

Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management – Kyle Hill, Tristan Jessell and Peter Curtin

Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management – Jason Richardson

Certificate IV in Conservation and Land Management – Curtis Robinson



*Peter Curtin*



*Curtis Robinson with Director General Jim Sharp and Environment Minister Albert Jacob*



*Tristan Jessell with Director General Jim Sharp and Environment Minister Albert Jacob*

## Employee news

Parks and Wildlife is committed to increasing the representation of Aboriginal employees working within the agency at all levels, occupations and locations.

### New staff

The Department would like to welcome 10 new Aboriginal staff members. They will be working in the following areas within the department: West Kimberley District, Swan Coastal District, Blackwood District, Wheatbelt Region South and East Kimberley District.

### Departing staff

Since the last Yarning Time, nine Aboriginal staff members have left the department. The department would like to thank them for their service contribution to conserving and protecting Western Australia's plants and animals. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

### Special Tribute - Farewell Eugene Winmar

Eugene Winmar, the department's longest-serving Aboriginal employee, retired in January 2016 following a long and successful career. He started with the Forest Department in 1971 as a forest worker and had a career spanning 45 years. The Perth Hills District organised a farewell for Eugene where staff gathered to wish him luck. There was a great turnout from his colleagues. He will be remembered fondly for his strong work ethic, attention to detail and the way he would go out of his way to pass on his skills and knowledge to other staff members.

To celebrate Eugene's career, the Eugene Winmar Award for Excellence was established. It recognises outstanding performance and achievement by an Aboriginal staff member. This award is presented at the biennial Aboriginal staff conference to honour and pay tribute to Eugene's legacy.

We wish Eugene a long and happy retirement.



*Eugene Winmar retirement present, crafted by a departmental staff member*



*Eugene Winmar, Karim Khan and Benson Todd*



*Staff at the farewell*

## Around the State

### Indigenous Ninu (Bilby) Festival – Gibson Desert

Parks and Wildlife recently jointly sponsored the Ninu Festival, which was held at Kiwirrkurra in the far eastern Gibson Desert. The festival was hosted by the Kiwirrkurra rangers, Kiwirrkurra community and facilitated by Central Desert Native Title Services.

The festival brought together Indigenous ranger groups and scientists working to conserve and manage bilbies in the wild. More than 150 participants attended from all mainland states and territories. A traditional welcoming ceremony was held at an important Ninu Dreaming site. Senior knowledge holders presented cultural knowledge of bilbies and shared stories about the significance of bilbies to traditional owners.

Ranger groups and scientists presented and shared information on research and management being undertaken on bilbies around the country. Science and Conservation Division scientist Dr Martin Dziminski was among the invited speakers, presenting research being carried out by Parks and Wildlife in the Pilbara, Kimberley and deserts in WA, as well as the reintroduction of bilbies to Matuwa.

Afternoons during the festival were spent on practical activities in the field, including identification of food resources used by bilbies, cat hunting and using standardised track plot searches to indicate the presence of bilbies and other animals. Dr Dziminski also demonstrated the use of the newly-developed, user-friendly Parks and Wildlife bilby monitoring method which involves collecting scats along transects to monitor bilby numbers using DNA techniques. Time was also taken to demonstrate how to use remote cameras and the potential value of drones for bilby detection and monitoring.

The festival promoted the sharing of ideas and information and led to stronger links between ranger groups working on bilbies and researchers, to attempt to reverse the decline of one of the last remaining critical weight range and iconic arid zone marsupials.



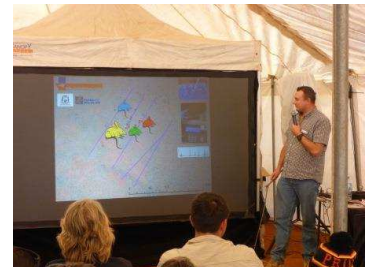
*Bilby Burrow (Photo by Kate Crossing CDNTS)*



*Nolia (Yukultji) Napangarti Ward at a Ninu burrow (Photo Immogen Semmler CDNTS)*



*Group Photo (Photo Kate Crossing CDNTS)*



*One of the presentations (Photo Kate Crossing CDNTS)*



*Mapping Exercise (Photo Ngaanyatjarra Rangers CDNTS)*



*Welcome photo (Photo Immogen Semmler CDNTS)*

## Kalgoorlie

### Matuwa

Early June 2016 saw some significant progress with the land management partnership between Parks and Wildlife and the Wiluna Martu at the 600,000ha Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara Indigenous Protected area (MKK IPA), formerly known as Lorna Glen and Earahedy, north-east of Wiluna. The MKK IPA management team met over several days and discussed many aspects of land management and arranged several new projects, including a biological survey at Kurrara Kurrara (Earahedy) in spring, operational activities, prescribed burning, ongoing research and mammal reintroduction and feral predator baiting. The involvement of volunteers and a *Bush Rangers* reward camp is also being progressed. The newly-established management team processes and project proposal approval methodology resulted in a very successful meeting, with additional substantial projects being referred to the Aboriginal Corporation for further discussion and advice.

This management team meeting was the last for retiring regional manager Ian Kealley and his 16 years of joint management work at MKK was acknowledged by the Wiluna Martu, who invited him back as a volunteer to assist with ongoing management work.



*Natuwa Kurrara Indigenous Protected Area Management Team*

### Women's business trip

The Martu women rangers joined female Parks and Wildlife staff from the Goldfields Region on a 'women's business' trip to Matuwa in June. It was an opportunity to establish a working relationship between the Martu women and departmental staff. The trip involved a variety of works including identifying and cleaning out culturally-significant rock holes and assisting with prescribed burning in the mammal reintroduction compound.

Jennifer Jackson, Parks and Wildlife conservation officer, said it was great to work with the women and to get to know them. "We felt fortunate that they shared their stories with us," Jennifer said." It was great to get the rock holes cleaned out so they will hold water for native animals.

"It was just the start of this collaboration and it was great to get the women back on country, sharing their knowledge and getting involved with prescribed burning."

PVS regional leader David Pickles said that with other trips and projects being planned, it was great to build a solid foundation for future works.



*Martu women and female Parks and Wildlife staff on a 'women's business' trip to Matuwa*

# Yarning Time

Issue 6 (Part 2), October 2016



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## Culture in the Park

Culture in the Park is a standing invitation for Aboriginal people and businesses to use land managed by Parks and Wildlife for cultural events and/or tours. This may include, but is not limited to, music, art events, simple yarning sessions about culture or normal tourism operations. These can be carried out in national parks, marine parks, nature reserves and other conservation areas.

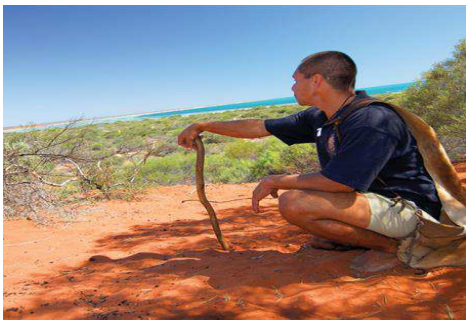
This enables Aboriginal people to come to the department with an idea and receive some assistance to help them achieve it. This may be through partnerships, individuals or local governments. The department also provides an incentive where it will waive all licence charges for the first year of operation.

Parks and Wildlife encourages Aboriginal people back to their country to celebrate their culture and to educate the community about their values. Establishing quality Aboriginal tourism operations provides unique Western Australian experiences and a point of difference to other destinations around the world.

Currently the department has nine operators around the State. They include:

- Bungoolee Tours – West Kimberley
- Kepa Kurl Eco - Cultural Discovery Tours - South Coast
- Creative Pathways – Swan Coastal
- Darngku Heritage Cruise - West Kimberley
- Wula Guda Nyinda - Aboriginal Eco Adventures – Mid West
- Shark Bay Coastal Tours – Mid West
- Ngurrangga Tours – Pilbara
- Windjana Tours – West Kimberley
- Karijini Dreaming Pty Ltd – Pilbara

For more information have a look at the Department's website: <https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/for-business/aboriginal-tourism-development>



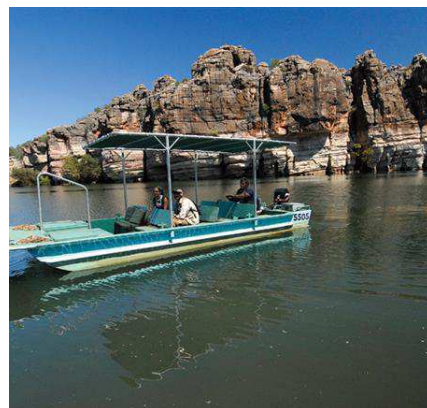
*Wula Guda Nyinda Eco Adventures- Shark Bay – Photo by WAITOC*



*Kepa Kurl Eco - Cultural Discovery Tours- Lucky Bay Esperance – Photo by WAITOC*



*Bungoolee Tours- Windjana Gorge and Tunnel Creek - Photo by WAITOC*



*Darngku Heritage Cruises- Geikie Gorge – Photo by WAITOC*

## New fly/drive licence for helicopter tours in Purnululu National Park

One of the most exciting and spectacular ways of getting to the World Heritage-listed Purnululu National Park and viewing the stunning Bungle Bungle Ranges is by air. The term fly/drive is used because after flying to Purnululu, there is actually quite a distance to drive to significant sites. Fly/drive allows a tour operator to fly the tourist to the Purnululu air strip, where their ground team drives people to the significant sites of interest. The department has also recently allowed helicopter flights to land near one particular site called Cathedral Gorge.

In August 2015 the department released an Expression of Interest (EOI) for three fly/drive licences for Purnululu National Park. The EOI closed in September 2015, with one of the successful applicants being Bungle Bungle Guided Tours. This company is a joint partnership between Helispirit and Wunan Foundation. The criteria assessment in all of Parks and Wildlife's EOI processes includes demonstrating how applicants will create employment, training and equity opportunities for local Aboriginal people and ensuring the correct permission is obtained when presenting cultural information to visitors.

Helispirit is a helicopter tour operator who for years has been operating scenic flights from the Bellburn airstrip in Purnululu and at other sites across the Kimberley. The Wunan Foundation is an Aboriginal organisation which helps Aboriginal people to build capability and receive opportunities necessary to make positive choices that lead to independent and fulfilling lives. The foundation uses education, employment and accommodation to unlock these choices and opportunities.

Bungle Bungle Guided Tours have employed a Jaru woman Margie Lippitt to conduct the guided tours. She meets the tourists at the air strip with a kitted-out Canter bus ready for the Kimberley.

Rod Quartermain, Parks and Wildlife's tourism and property branch manager, said it was a great opportunity for Margie to get back on country and educate visitors about Aboriginal culture, expand cultural knowledge about the park and create career opportunities.

Sonja Mitchell, sales and marketing manager at Bungle Bungle Guide Tours said: "The reception from the wider tourism industry has been incredibly positive. There hasn't been a new ground tour at the Bungle Bungles for many years and people love that they are being shown Purnululu by a local Aboriginal guide."

The department monitors licence conditions that require companies to offer training, employment and equity opportunities for local Aboriginal people. Bungle Bungle Guided Tours have so far ticked all those boxes. Any revenue gained by the department is reinvested back into park management and the upkeep of visitor facilities.

This is a successful initiative and partnership which the department hopes will continue for many years and be a model for other areas of the State.



*Margie in Cathedral Gorge*



*Piccaninny Creek*

## Cadet leaders introduced to the importance of acknowledgement

*Bush Rangers* and *River Rangers* cadet unit leaders recently gathered at Ern Halliday Recreation Camp for their annual conference. More than 90 unit leaders, who are mainly teachers, came from around the State including Halls Creek and Esperance, for two days of networking, hands-on workshops and presentations.

A highlight of the conference was the Aboriginal acknowledgement training session run by Belinda Cox from the AHU. The session was attended by more than 30 teachers, many of whom are from schools in places such as Wiluna, Leonora and Coolgardie, where the majority of their cadets are Aboriginal.

Parks and Wildlife's *River Rangers* coordinator, Linley Brown, suggested the session should be part of the conference after she attended the training herself and thought it would be ideal for the cadet leaders. And so it was! The reaction from attendees was very positive, including this comment from Wongutha woman, Felicity Harris, of Leonora: *"I think the Indigenous acknowledgement session was a very good session. The presenter did a fantastic job. She was knowledgeable, entertaining and involved the audience. I have been to some presentations where Aboriginal people are not so comfortable when other Aboriginal people sit in on their presentations. I found Bel made me part of her presentation and made me feel proud of who we are, Australian Aboriginal people."*

Butler College unit leader Sophie Collins also attended: *"The Indigenous acknowledgement session was one of the most culturally-informative sessions I have ever had the pleasure to partake in. The presenter's knowledge and pride in her Aboriginal culture was inspiring and it made me feel a great respect for their laws and traditions."*

Planning for next year's ranger cadet conference is already underway and we would definitely like to include a follow-up session from the AHU.



*Belinda Cox runs an Indigenous acknowledgement workshop for unit leaders*



## Bush Rangers – giving back to environment and community

The *Bush Rangers* cadet program operates in 65 secondary schools around WA and is financially supported by the Department of Local Government and Communities. Each unit provides young people with opportunities for personal development such as leadership and team work skills. Cadets do that by taking part in volunteer conservation projects and experiencing our natural landscapes in recreational activities such as camping, hiking, biking or canoeing. There are about 2,500 *Bush Ranger* cadets in WA and about 20 per cent of those are Aboriginal.

Units are spread far and wide across the State: from Kalumburu in the north, to Esperance in the south; west from Carnarvon and east to Ngaanyatarra Lands School. While many units are in the metropolitan area, several are in remote community schools.

In the more remote areas, cadet units often work closely with Indigenous ranger groups to help with projects on country. For example, One Arm Point *Bush Rangers* worked with the Bardi Jawi rangers to do a biodiversity survey on Sunday Island. They also produced a poster in Bardi promoting 'Leave No Trace' principles. Wiluna girls visited Matuwa with Martu women rangers to conduct a range of activities including tracking native animals and helping maintain the compound fence to keep it predator-proof.

*Bush Rangers* also gives cadets the opportunity to do things they might never be able to do otherwise. Last year Wiluna cadets organised a trip to Murujuga National Park to be introduced to rock art by traditional custodians. Many Perth schools travel all over the State to work with Parks and Wildlife staff on volunteer projects in our parks. Each July metropolitan schools visit Millstream Chichester National Park, and before they start weeding, they are welcomed by Yindjibarndi elders. As one *Bush Ranger* leader at a Mandurah school recently said: "Some of our kids have never even been to Halls Head, most don't go any further than the local shopping centre, yet we take them to Ningaloo to dive with whale sharks."

So what do the cadets have to say about *Bush Rangers*? Here are some quotes from *Bush Rangers* at Wongutha CAPS (near Esperance):

- *I really enjoy rangers because everybody works together, plus we build great friendships with each other.*
- *I've learnt that being a leader takes a lot of courage and bravery. It takes time for a team to learn how to work together and support each other.*
- *Cleaning up the country is the most important thing because it's safe for the animals and for the visiting tourists. It's a good idea to keep the environment clean and safe.*
- *Rangers help us build confidence and leadership along with many challenges.*
- *We go to different places and discover the beautiful places of Esperance.*
- *I figured out I love our planet and our land.*

Parks and Wildlife supports *Bush Rangers* by providing State-wide coordination (Richard Olive) and a coordinator for the 10 units in the Kimberley (Sally Johnston). There is also the *River Rangers* program for primary school students, which is expanding after coming to Parks and Wildlife from the Swan River Trust. Providing Aboriginal students with opportunities to connect with country and helping non-Indigenous students understand Aboriginal ways of caring for the land and community are core for *Bush Rangers*, and we are always open to advice on how to do that better.



*Derby cadets put up their sign about caring for a favourite fishing spot*



*One Arm Point cadets with Bardi Jawi rangers trapping on Sunday Island*



*Wongutha cadets enjoy their damper-making*

## Marine Science mentors Aboriginal university student

A key action in the Department's Aboriginal Employment Strategy is a commitment to building relationships with local communities, schools, universities and Aboriginal employment agencies to assist in finding suitable applicants for positions. To meet this, opportunities will be created for school-based and mature age trainees, work experience and tertiary student interns to undertake work and projects.

Aboriginal marine science students Ashley Marino and Anita Byrne are receiving hands-on experience through a marine science mentoring program. Ashley and Anita are studying at the University of Western Australia (UWA) and are in their third year of a Bachelor of Science.

Ashley is assisting research scientist Holly Raudino with data management for the Pilbara Dolphin research program by learning photo identification techniques used to estimate abundance of dolphin species and track the life history of individual dolphins. Her duties include data processing, formatting, data-basing and statistics and she is hoping to join the research team in the field in spring. The team travels to the waters off Onslow and Dampier seasonally and are building relationships with the local Thalanyji and Murujuga rangers in these areas.

Anita is working on a marine turtle identification poster for the North West Shelf Flat back Turtle Conservation Program with principal scientist Scott Whiting and communications officer Liz Grant. She is researching and compiling a list of local names from 11 language groups in the Kimberley. There are six species of marine turtle found in WA and the poster will include scientific, English and Aboriginal names for those species. Anita will also be researching local Aboriginal names for marine mammals found in the Kimberley. The turtle poster and other communication products produced by this project will be sent to local schools and communities to help promote knowledge transfer and assist in building a wide knowledge base incorporating local Aboriginal knowledge and western science.

Rhonda Murphy from the AHU was integral in establishing this mentoring program with Gabrielle Garratt, academic coordinator at the UWA School of Indigenous Studies. As Curtin University's first Aboriginal PhD graduate, assistant science and conservation director Stephen van Leeuwen will provide inspiration and insight into his journey as a research scientist with the department to these up-and-coming marine scientists.



*Front: Dr Stephen van Leeuwen, Anita Byrne, Ashley Marino and Rhonda Murphy. Holly Raudino is top left and Liz Grant top right.*

## Tree Top Walk enjoys Festival of Voice choirs

Visitors at the Tree Top Walk enjoyed an impromptu performance from choirs which participated in the annual Festival of Voice held in Denmark over the June long weekend.

The choirs were guests of the Tree Top Walk, which had partnered with Denmark Arts to provide performers, some of whom came from very different landscapes, with an opportunity to experience one of the State's top tourism attractions.

Singers from Poco Tutti and the Central Australian Aboriginal Woman's Choir performed a song each and collaborated on a moving rendition of 'Kumbaya My Lord', with the sound filtering out across the Valley of the Giants into the tingle forest.

Poco Tutti is Australia's first completely inclusive choir and takes its name from the musical term 'Tutti', meaning everyone. With its strong commitment to access and inclusion, Poco Tutti is passionate about supporting talented disabled artists to develop high quality work for international presentation.

The Central Australian Woman's Choir is a combined choir from Alice Springs spanning five Aboriginal communities, spread more than 1000km. They sing in six languages including traditional Aboriginal languages, English, German and Zulu.

Acting Tree Top Walk assistant manager Julie Ewing said it was a delight to have such a lovely group of artists visit the site. "Listening to the performers sing on the Tree Top Walk within the setting of the majestic tingle forest was a magical experience. The brief performances were a celebration of the human voice.

"For the performers and visitors alike, I am sure they went home with very special memories of their visit."

The performance at the Tree Top Walk was the choirs' last in the area and proved to be a perfect wind down after their busy schedule.



*Julie Ewing gives an overview of the Tree Top Walk to the choirs*



## **Trainee opportunities for Aboriginal youth in the Riverpark**

Whadjuk Noongar history is being celebrated along the Swan Canning Riverpark, thanks to young Aboriginal trainees who participated in the Department of Training and Workforce Development “Future Skills WA”, completing their Certificate II in civil construction.

### **Brentwood Living Stream Project**

The Brentwood Living Stream Project is a joint partnership between the Department of Parks and Wildlife, South East Regional Centre of Urban Landcare (SERCUL) and the City of Melville to restore a degraded drainage line flowing out into the Canning River, in Bull Creek Reserve. The project aims to create a living stream along a 150m stretch of the degraded drainage line.

As part of the Brentwood Living Streams Project, additional funding was allocated to develop an interpretation facility for the site. The Brentwood interpretation facility functions as a main point of sharing information relating to both the living stream project and Whadjuk Noongar history and culture of the local area.

### **Construction of the Brentwood interpretation facility**

To construct the interpretation facility Parks and Wildlife awarded a contract to Carey Marine & Civil Pty Ltd (Carey MC), the civil construction business unit of the Carey Group of Companies – one of the largest Aboriginal contractors in Australia. The Carey Group operates across three business units - Mining & Rehabilitation, Civil Construction and Training – and offers sustainable training and employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians. Carey MC recognised the Brentwood project as a unique opportunity to provide Aboriginal trainees with new skills and gain workplace-ready experience in civil construction. While this was not part of the tender criteria, Parks and Wildlife strongly supported Carey MC’s proposal to strengthen and increase Aboriginal participation, as well as encourage strong working relationships with government. Carey MC also demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements for the works project.

To complete the Certificate II in civil construction course, eight trainees completed a seven-week theory and practical component, which taught basic construction skills. Parks and Wildlife agreed the construction aspect of the Brentwood project would form the practical component for the trainees. According to Carey MC general manager, Allen Zorotovic: “The importance of the link to a live works project not only prepares the students better for real time employment, it increases their confidence and inspires them to break the mould of unemployment by improving their resumes to apply for work with rejuvenated belief.”

Carey MC appointed a project engineer and surveyor to oversee the works, while Carey Training provided a dedicated training supervisor with extensive experience in the building and construction trade, for the four-week project.

The students also completed their construction industry white cards (Government-regulated general construction induction), Water Corporation fieldwork HSE inductions and received life-skill coaching in regard to work readiness, resume writing and job interview techniques.

## Future Skills WA

The Future Skills WA course is run by Carey Training. The course is open to unemployed Indigenous people over 16 years of age who reside in Western Australia. Candidates are sought through various employment agencies and the Aboriginal Workforce Development Commission. The candidates are then interviewed by Carey Training to ensure their suitability in terms of interest and enthusiasm for construction work and commitment to participate.

## Virtual trail guide

Similar to the Point Walter and Bicton Baths interpretation facilities, an additional feature of the Brentwood facility is the inclusion of a virtual trail guide. Cultural heritage stories provided by Whadjuk Elder Marie Taylor were edited to be used as ‘tour points’ as part of the virtual trail guide, named *Kaalitj – ngort Koondaam* (Dragonfly Dreaming). The trail guide can be accessed via the free Geotourist app, if you search under “Brentwood” or “Kaalitj – ngort Koondaam”.

This project was completed in June 2016, see photos below.

Ben Ansell and Adnaan Abrahams



*The trainees getting involved in pouring the concrete*



*Decking installed at the Brentwood interpretation facility*



*Young Aboriginal trainees show off their fantastic work at the new Brentwood interpretation facilities. Photo: Ben Liddelaw*

## South West Native Title update

The South West Native Title Settlement (the settlement) is the most comprehensive native title agreement proposed in Australian history, comprising the full and final resolution of all native title claims in the south-west of WA, in exchange for a package of benefits. The historic agreement involves around 30,000 Noongar people and covers approximately 200,000km<sup>2</sup>. The settlement represents a significant investment in both the Noongar community and the shared future of the Western Australian community as a whole.

The WA Government and Noongar representatives have been negotiating since 2009 and the WA Government's offer has now been considered and authorised by all six Noongar claim groups.

The Noongar Claim Groups are:

- **Yued** (Jurien, Moora, Lancelin, Ginning)
- **Gnaala Karla Boodja** (Mandurah, Bunbury, Donnybrook)
- **South West Boojarah** (Busselton, Dunsborough, Margaret River, Pemberton, Nannup)
- **Wagyl Kaip** (Katanning, Gnowangerup, Albany)
- **Ballardong** (York, Northam, Hyden, Kondinin)
- **Whadjuk** (Perth Metropolitan area)

The settlement will provide the Noongar people with long-term benefits and opportunities for developing Noongar interests. The settlement will also provide an opportunity for the WA Government to work in partnership with the Noongar people to improve economic, social and cultural outcomes for the Noongar community. The settlement will provide for the joint management of conservation estate through the south-west.

### Status of the settlement

The six Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) were executed on 8 June 2015 by the WA Government. The ILUAs have been signed by all parties and submitted to the National Native Title Tribunal for registration by the Native Title Registrar. The Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement came into operation on the ILUA execution date (8 June 2015).

### Registration of the ILUAs and commencement of the settlement

The South West Native Title Settlement will only commence once all of the Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) are registered on the 'Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements' and any legal proceedings relating to registration are concluded.

While it is difficult to predict how long resolution of the legal matters related to ILUA registration may take, at this stage the expected best-case scenario is that the settlement will commence in 2017 with the establishment of the Noongar Boodja Trust and the appointment of the Noongar Regional Corporations.

Notwithstanding the delay, the WA Government and SWALSC, on behalf of the Noongar Claim Groups, remain fully committed to the South West Native Title Settlement and are continuing to work together to prepare for the commencement of the settlement.

A link to the full article is on the AHU's Intranet: Key Links page.

## Update on Aboriginal strategies

### Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training (ACAT)

The AHU has recently returned from a roadshow in the Warren Region, where three ACAT sessions were delivered. There were two in Manjimup, which included personnel from Parks and Wildlife and the Forest Products Commission, and another session delivered in Walpole. The attendance for all sessions was high. From comments received on the day, the training was extremely well-received and staff found it valuable.

Key achievements:

- Since the inception of the ACAT program in March 2014, the AHU has delivered 43 courses, 21 of these regionally.
- 857 people have completed the course including contractors and volunteers from Exmouth and Coral Bay.
- Since the last Yarning Time in April 2016, the AHU has delivered nine ACAT sessions.

The AHU headed to the Goldfields in August to deliver an ASAT session and is also visiting the Pilbara in September, Broome in October and Bunbury in November. Learning and Development and the AHU have added extra sessions to the training calendar in Kensington because of the huge demand for the mandatory ACAT training. These will be held in October, November and December.

Peter Sharp, Director of Parks and Visitor Services, recently attended an ACAT session.

“The ACAT training package has been specifically developed for, and by, officers of Parks and Wildlife. It is something I recommend all departmental staff complete even if you have done such training before. I got a lot out of it and I’m confident you can too.”

Thanks to Learning and Development for their continued support.

### Customary activities

The latest sessions have been held in Mundaring and Bunbury, coinciding with the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training which gives good context to the objectives of the customary activity opportunities.

There have been a number of Local Area Arrangements or LAA’s established around the regions as well. LAA’s are an initiative in the customary activities provisions to provide opportunities for the department and local Aboriginal people or groups to come together and come to an agreement on where and when activities can take place. LAA’s are about local issues at a local level and they were implemented to eliminate the burden of creating too many regulations.



*Noongar youth on country in Dryandra Woodland tasting bush tucker*

Photos from ACAT and customary activities in Perth Hills District and the South West and Warren regions



Mundaring



Mundaring



Manjimup



Bunbury



Jarrahdale





Thanks!  
for your  
Support!!

### Contributors

- Peter Henderson
- Karim Khan
- Belinda Cox
- Stephen van Leeuwen
- Rhonda Murphy
- Peter Hill
- Mathew Carter
- Simon Choo
- Clair Barrow
- Holly Raudino
- Kelly Hudson
- Alan Byrne
- Sarah Mullineux
- Ben Ansell
- Kathryn Wilkinson
- Marnie Giroud
- Rachel Hutton
- Liz Grant
- Richard Olive
- Adnaan Abraham
- Sonja Mitchell
- Julia Coggins
- Eva Farm
- Peter Henderson
- Jennifer Jackson
- David Pickles
- Rod Quartermain
- Craig Olejnik

This newsletter is produced quarterly. Please contact Tina Bowers if you would like to contribute to the **Next edition: December 2016**

### Contact

Aboriginal Heritage Unit

Tina Bowers – 9219 8564 / [tina.bowers@dpaw.wa.gov.au](mailto:tina.bowers@dpaw.wa.gov.au)

Rhonda Murphy – 9219 8283 / [rhonda.murphy@dpaw.wa.gov.au](mailto:rhonda.murphy@dpaw.wa.gov.au)

