



Kimberley Schools Wrap

Term 1, 2013

Volume 2, Issue 1

2013 Dates

- 19-21/4 Bush Rangers WA State Conference (Perth)
- 22/4 Earth Day
- 19-24/5 Aspire to Astronomy
- 22/5 International Day of Biological Diversity
- 5/6 World Environment Day
- 7/6 Arbor Day
- 9-14/9 Bush Rangers Kimberley Region Camp (West Kimberley, Location TBA)



Janique and Liz (Fitzroy Valley Bush Rangers Instructors) learn to Be Crocwise with Ranger Clare (NT Parks)

Bush Rangers Get Together

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Teachers from the six Bush Rangers schools across the Kimberley came together in Kununurra last month for the third annual Kimberley Bush Rangers Conference.

The conference provides the opportunity for Instructors to network, share ideas and resources, and discuss their programs with staff from both DEC and CadetsWA (Department for Communities).

This year's conference also saw the launch of the *Level 1 Kimberley Manual Supplement*, a package designed to complement the *Bush Rangers WA Program Manual* with activities and examples specific to the Kimberley. Instructors had a chance to try some of the new sessions for themselves, and we're sure to

hear more about their experience with this new resource later in the year.

Other highlights included a Friday night barbecue and toadbus, a session on how to 'Be Crocwise' with Ranger Clare from Katherine, and a geocaching challenge that took participants to some of Kununurra's iconic sites.

James Taylor, One Arm Point Bush Rangers Unit Leader, was pleased to be able to attend his first conference, "It was an invaluable thing for me to network with other Units and share ideas. I benefited a lot from the experience and I know we all enjoyed the events."

The Bush Rangers WA State Conference will be held in Perth on April 19-21st.



Department of
Environment and Conservation

Our environment, our future



School Holiday Fun

There's no shortage of options for students in Broome these holidays, with a series of activities on offer for primary school-aged children organised by DEC, Fisheries and Nyamba Buru Yawuru.

Families are encouraged to get out and explore the Broome Bird Observatory with a 'Meet the Internationally Endangered Shorebirds of Roebuck Bay' workshop. Roebuck Bay is recognised as having the greatest diversity of shorebird species on the planet, with over 150 000 birds visiting each year.

Closer to town, come down and meet the Yawuru Rangers in Minyirr Park, learn about their role in looking after country, and go on a bush tucker hunt.

For something a bit different, why not join in the barramundi tour? Learn about how barra are farmed and fishing for the future.



Getting Creative in Minyirr Park

The second week of the holidays kicks off with 'Mudflat Mayhem' at Town Beach. Get muddy and discover the variety of invertebrates living in the mudflats. Members of

the Roebuck Bay Working Group will be on hand to talk about looking after this amazing environment and the challenges it faces.

If you feel like something a bit more relaxing after all that excitement, join in with our art and craft day whilst learning about the Yawuru seasons and language.

Still can't get enough of us? Drop by our stall at the North-West Expo at Broome Recreation and Aquatic Centre on May 4-5.

For more information or to register for any of these activities, contact Jason Richardson on 9195 5500. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Bookings essential.

Out and About

We were lucky enough to get the chance to meet the Year 7-8s from Halls Creek at the start of term when they ventured up to Kununurra for an orientation camp. Each of the two classes took part in a biodiversity workshop, learning about local fauna, food webs, and the impact of cane toads. They learnt how to handle toads safely, and got to test out our new 'Freshwater Food Chains' card game.



Halls Creek Student Ready for Toads

Students at Purnululu Aboriginal Community School in Frog Hollow had the opportunity to learn about the toads that they have been spying in their local area with an evening of toadbusting in February. The Yiyili Bush Rangers also had a chance to learn about the potential impacts of toads in their local area during a brief school visit by DEC staff.

Meanwhile in Broome, schools and DEC staff have been busy spreading the Clean Up Australia Day message. A clean up of the sand dunes of Minyirr Park and Cable Beach, led by the Broome Bush Rangers, resulted in the collection of 10 bags of rubbish including tyres, rope, and pearl-farm debris which had washed up after Cyclone Rusty.

We will be travelling back across the Kimberley in Term Two, so if your school would like a visit don't hesitate to get in touch.

Cane Toad Update

Get ready for the Kimberley Frogs Poster Competition! Open to all Kimberley students, we are asking for entrants to create an A3 poster highlighting the features of a frog found in their local area.

We hope that by becoming more familiar with their own native frogs, people will be less likely to mistake these locals for cane toads. We encourage you to display your entries in a public place such as a local shopping centre or library, to share this information with the rest of your community.

Prizes will be on offer to winners in each of three categories: K-3, Upper Primary, Secondary. Posters can be made by hand or on the computer, using photos taken by the students, or they may be drawn or painted. For the K-3 category, pictures may be cut out from brochures or magazines, or drawn with the help of a template.

Schools may select a total of three finalists from each category, to be submitted electronically (scan or photograph handmade posters) to sally.johnston@dec.wa.gov.au by July 5th, 2013.



Native frogs such as this Ornate Burrowing Frog (*Platyplectrum ornatum*) are often mistaken for juvenile cane toads

Bush Rangers

Introducing..... The Yiyili Bush Rangers



Looking for Bush Tucker

At Yiyili Aboriginal Community School we have begun our Bush Ranger Program with two sessions occurring weekly. The grade 6-9s have been involved in a variety of projects to help gain an understanding for what Bush Rangers can do in their local schools and communities.

We started with researching what a national park is and why they are so important to the conservation of our land and country. This has involved a weekly computer session gathering information for our poster presentations. There was a focus on a park's flora and fauna so we could relate to them against our own local environment.

Outside the classroom we have rejuvenated an old greenhouse at the school that we hope to start growing seedlings in for native vegetation. We are visiting the local CDP propagation area to learn from the community workers about best practice and gain a better understanding of the conditions required to grow seeds in the Kimberley.

Our Aboriginal Education Worker has been teaching us about bush tucker and we have already had our first bush trip to find and sample these foods. We took many photos and were extremely lucky to have several community elders come along and teach traditional cooking methods and tell stories of the past that were significant to their country.

In term two we plan to continue our greenhouse project and include navigation and bush survival skills along with some basic first aid.

Anthony Collins, Unit Leader

From the Regional Coordinator

It was great to see everyone at the Conference a few weeks ago, we hope you enjoyed yourselves and discovered lots of new ideas to take back to your Units. Please send through any photos that you have from the weekend, Geoff from CadetsWA is particularly keen to get a photo of him holding a cane toad.

We look forward to hearing how you are getting on with the new *Kimberley Manual Supplement*, we hope it has given you a few more options for how your cadets can go about achieving the Bush Rangers WA outcomes. We will be collecting feedback on this new resource later in the year, prior to

starting work on the *Level 2 Manual Supplement*.

Next term we will get started on planning the Region Camp with Instructors from Broome and One Arm Point. We'll keep you posted, and I will be around to visit all schools again in June.

Celebrating 15 Years of Bush Rangers!

From modest beginnings as a pilot program in 1997 with two schools and twenty five participants, DEC's Bush RangersWA program has gone from strength to strength. Since its official inception in 1998, thousands of young people aged 12 -17 have participated in the program, amassing over 3.4 million volunteer hours to conservation and community projects. In this, its fifteenth year, it has much to celebrate and be proud of.

As we reflect upon the program's significant achievements over the past fifteen years, we're reminded of the need to also celebrate and honour these achievements. To this end, Bush Ranger cadets, Unit Leaders and Instructors, DEC staff and program partners will come together at the Annual State Conference in April this year to celebrate these achievements before embarking on the next stage of the Bush Ranger programs' exciting journey.



Goldfields Baptist College Cadets wish Bush Rangers a Happy 15th Birthday

Excerpt from *Landscape*, Vol 28 Number 2 Summer 2012-13

Bush Rangers
Western Australia

15 CELEBRATING YEARS IN 2013

Cadets WA
Government of Western Australia



Waste Wise Schools Corner

How to...

Make a Mini Herb or Veggie Garden

If you haven't got your school garden ready for action yet this year, now is the time to get moving. Even if a large garden just isn't for you, there are still plenty of options you can try with your students. In the place of garden beds, why not reuse polystyrene boxes, old bathtubs and sinks, or even old boots?



Take-Home Box Garden

You need: polystyrene box or other 'pot', knife, soil, compost, seeds, watering can

1. Cut 12 drainage holes in the bottom of the box using the knife (assist younger students).
2. Fill the box with a mix of soil and compost up to 5cm from the top. Water well.
3. Plant seeds according to their instructions, water again (you could apply mulch at this stage). Don't forget to give your garden the right amount of water and sunlight for whatever you have planted!

Project Profile - St Josephs

Students and teachers at St Josephs School in Kununurra have been busy becoming Waste Wise this term. Following a waste audit, which involved going through the school's rubbish bins and recording what was found, they have started an organic gardening project involving the whole school community.

Teacher Sarah Kelly explained, "By growing our own garden beds the students will have an ownership about the work they have done and will hopefully want it to continue into the future. Using the food they grow to cook healthy and yummy meals they will eat at school will give the students an opportunity to enjoy their own hard work!"

"Students will be involved in every aspect of the gardens. But in particular the composting they will be in complete control of. We are going to have a class on compost duty each week and it will be their job to collect food scraps from the collection area and put them into the compost bin."

We look forward to hearing more from St Josephs later in the year.



Students Conducting a Waste Audit

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An Interview with... Jason Richardson

A Broome local, Jason started out with DEC as the Yawuru Clerical Officer in 2011. He is now the acting Yawuru Communication Education and Interpretation Coordinator.



Jason in the Office

Tell us about a typical day at work It's never the same. Sometimes I'm in the office taking phone calls, paying bills, planning events or developing brochures, at other times I'm out in the field helping the rangers.

What do you like most about your job? The variety. There is always something different coming up and getting to work with lots of different people.

What is most challenging? Sharing and dedicating my time and effort between all the different programs I'm involved with is a big challenge.

What is your favourite part of working in the Kimberley? Being able to get out and work on country, working with my fellow Yawuru mob and learning more about the environment and my culture.

What 3 things would you want when stranded on a desert island? A coconut grove, a tackle box full of fishing gear and my missus and kids. I think that covers the three essentials to sustain life.



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Check out our Websites:

<http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/>

<http://education.dec.wa.gov.au>