



Kimberley Schools Wrap

Term 2, 2014

Volume 3, Issue 2

2014 Dates

- 1-31/7 [Plastic Free July](#)
- 6-13/7 [NAIDOC Week](#)
- 25/7 [Schools Tree Day](#)
- 25-29/8 Kimberley Bush Rangers Region Camp (Manning Gorge)
- 1/9-16/10 [Night Stalk](#)
- 12-14/9 [Great Northern Clean Up](#)
- 19-25/10 [National Water Week](#)



This northern knob-tailed gecko was one of the unusual creatures the Bush Rangers caught

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Cadets go bush with Rangers

Bush Rangers from Derby and One Arm Point have been gaining practical experience in the field, assisting Parks and Wildlife staff and Bunuba Rangers on a biodiversity survey at Wire Springs, near Tunnel Creek. Parks and Wildlife run a series of biodiversity surveys, or animal trapping programs, across the Kimberley each year, with an aim of recording as much information as possible about the species found at each survey site. Small groups of students are invited to come along and see what it's all about, as long as they're not afraid of hard work.

The cadets learnt about the different types of traps used and the ethical considerations that must be taken into account when planning and conducting surveys, before assisting with checking and maintaining the four trapping sites under the supervision

of Parks and Wildlife and Bunuba staff.

The team caught lots of native rodents and small reptiles, with some of the more unusual captures being planigales, the world's smallest marsupial, dunnarts, a knob-tailed gecko, and a greater black whip-snake that was caught at two locations 2km apart.

Other highlights for the cadets included hearing stories about the area from the Bunuba Rangers, swimming in the turquoise pools at Wire Springs, and visiting Tunnel Creek and Windjana Gorge in their free time.

If you are interested in bringing a group of students along on one of our 2015 biodiversity surveys, contact [Sally](#) to be notified of dates and locations as they are released. Groups may have a maximum of 6 students, and stay for a minimum of 2 nights.



Department of Parks and Wildlife



School Holiday Fun

We received a huge amount of interest for our Kununurra April holiday activities, with more than 400 participants taking part over the three days. The most popular session was undoubtedly the reptile display, where children were invited to hold a variety of Kimberley creatures and make a slithery mobile to take home. The Kununurra Community Library generously lent their venue for the activities and put together some displays from their collection for those who wished to do their own research afterwards.



Investigating water bugs in Kununurra

For the first time these coming holidays activities will be offered at [Purnululu National Park](#) for visiting children over three days at the start of the holidays. After exploring the park with their families in the mornings, children are invited to take a closer look at some of the flora and fauna found in the park each afternoon from 7-9 July.

If you're considering a quick break at the start of the holidays, why not head to [Eighty Mile Beach](#) from 4-8 July and learn what's been happening in the marine park. Activities for families include damper making, re-use bag painting and an outdoor movie night.

Parks and Wildlife will also be at the Kununurra Agricultural Show on 11-12 July

with displays showcasing the department's work in the region, fun activities for kids, and parks passes available for sale.

Meanwhile in Broome children of all ages can find something to do with the Kimberley Coast, Conservation and Culture Community Education Program. Brought together by a number of partners, highlights from the program include a whale watching cruise and the chance to produce your own radio segment to be aired on Radio Goolarri. See the attached flyer for further details.

See attached flyers for Kununurra and Broome event details. For further information on Purnululu activities contact [Sean](#) on 9168 4200, and to book for Broome activities contact [Melanie](#) on 9195 5500. For details of the Eighty Mile Beach activities contact [Sara](#) on 9195 5574.

Out and About

After an initial rush of Waste Wise activity in Kununurra and Wyndham during the Ord Valley Muster, our efforts this term have mainly focussed on central Kimberley schools.

A quick sidetrip to Muludja gave us the opportunity to see the gardens and worm farm the students have been working on, and to have a chat with the students about Kimberley frogs and cane toads. We also enjoyed visiting Wananami RCS and having the

students show us around their veggie patch, and were lucky enough to visit on a day when they were making recycled paper plant pots and designing the layout for their reuse shed.

As this newsletter goes to print we will be down at Billiluna and Mulan delivering cane toad, Kimberley biodiversity, and waterway incursions. These schools will also be the first to test out our new cane toad and biodiversity curriculum-linked lesson plans for Yr 1-3. We'll keep you posted when we're ready to distribute these to a larger audience.

During the April holidays you might also have caught the Yawuru Rangers helping out with an open day at the Yawuru Language Centre in Broome. This July we will be trialling excursions specifically for childcare and OSHC providers with the rangers at Minyirr Park.



Having a go at fire suppression at the Yawuru Open Day

Cane Toad Update



Georgia and the rangers with their first big goanna

Over the 2013-2014 wet season, PhD candidate Georgia Ward-Fear and a team of Balanggarra Rangers have been braving the weather at the abandoned community of Oombulgurri in the name of science. Georgia has been investigating whether or not goannas, specifically yellow spotted monitors (*Varanus panoptes*), can learn not to eat cane toads. Populations of these frog-eating reptiles are known to decline rapidly following the initial arrival of cane toads. As part of the study, the goannas are fed cane toad metamorphs, or 'baby' cane toads, which contain less bufotoxin than their adult counterparts. It is hoped that by ingesting small amounts of the poison and becoming ill, the goannas will learn to associate the smell of toads with nausea and know not to eat them in future. Georgia and the team make regular follow-up trips to track the goannas, and are learning a lot about their behaviours at different times of year. We look forward to hearing back from Georgia once she has the results of her study.

Bush Rangers

Introducing... the Kalumburu Bush Rangers!



The Kalumburu Bush Rangers have really got into the swing of things since joining the program at the start of the year. They have signed up to [Keep Australia Beautiful's 'Adopt-a-Spot' program](#), and having already completed a few clean ups the students have really taken to the idea of leaving a campsite or picnic area cleaner than they found it.

To help out tourists who visit the area, the girls have been putting together a resource based on the [7 Leave No Trace principles](#), and have been practicing these behaviours on all of their excursions. Plans are underway for the boys to make some bins to place at high-use camping spots which the unit will then maintain.

Back at school the group has been working hard in their [EON](#) edible garden; harvesting, feeding, watering, planting and measuring lots of veggies.

The cadets are looking forward to meeting Bush Rangers from other schools at next term's Region Camp at Manning Gorge, and also have plans to assist with a biodiversity survey at Carson River later in the year.

The girls enjoyed modelling the Leave No Trace principles as they spent a day by the river.

From the Regional Coordinator

As always, it's been great to hear what you are all up to this term, from One Arm Point's camp at Sunday Island, to Kalumburu's adopt-a-spot, Fitzroy Valley's navigation exercises, to Wyndham's volunteer work at El Questro and Yiyili's scrap metal art exhibition.

I would suggest you all take Fitzroy's lead and brush up on your navigation skills in preparation for our Region Camp next term, as we've already started planning our orienteering course and it's going to include a few challenges for more advanced navigators as well as plenty of easy checkpoints for beginners.

It has been great working with cadets from Derby and One Arm Point out at Wire Springs, and I know our staff in Broome were happy to have the Beagle Bay Bush Rangers helping out with their Mud Sampling at the Broome Bird Observatory. We look forward to catching up with you all at our camp next term.

Campers' Corner



In early May, the One Arm Point Bush Rangers went on camp to Sunday Island. The focus was on cultural conservation and included a hike to the old mission with community members guiding us and telling us traditional stories. The Bush Rangers assisted the local Bardi Jawi Rangers by setting up pit traps and documenting the diverse fauna captured during the three day camp. There was also an input from community members representing the 'Leave No Trace' organisation, and students also had emergency first aid training with a remote area nurse. Other activities included traditional spear making/fishing and an amazing walk along the coral reef on low tide (taking care to step in the right places!), looking at marine life and

learning some of the local language.

It was a really good trip and helped us build relationships with the wider community whilst also paying close attention to cultural and environmental conservation. We are already looking forward to a return trip there in 2015!



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Waste Wise Schools Corner

Wyndham DHS Open Day!

Wyndham District High School was a hive of activity on 21 May, with visits from Stephanie Alexander and staff from her Kitchen Garden Foundation and the Waste Wise Schools Program as part of the Ord Valley Muster. Parents, teachers, and community members from across the East Kimberley and further afield were treated to a school tour, worm farm workshop, cooking class, a drill demonstration from the Bush Rangers, and lots of delicious food grown and prepared by the students. Wyndham District High School became a Waste Wise school in 2012, and since the start of 2014 the school has been running a 'green canteen', serving food in reusable containers and feeding food scraps to the school's chickens. The new worm farm, housed in an old fridge, will be used to recycle paper waste from classrooms alongside fruit and veggie scraps to produce a rich fertiliser to use on the school's gardens.

Teachers from Kununurra District High School, St Joseph's Kununurra and St Joseph's Wyndham took part in a series of events as part of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation's visit to the region.



Building a worm farm out of an old fridge

How to.... make a classroom worm farm

Worm farming is a great way for schools and offices to reduce the amount of paper they send to landfill. Worms will eat their bodyweight in food every two to three days, and survive best on a diet of 20% fruit and veggie scraps and 80% shredded paper. They don't like anything acidic like citrus, onions, or pineapple.

Keeping worms in the classroom is a great way for kids to see recycling in action, and the [Waste Wise Curriculum Guide](#) helps build worms into your class' program.

1. Find a house for your worms. Use an old polystyrene box, or commercially available worm farm.
2. If using a polystyrene box, make a drainage hole in the bottom and sit it up on some blocks so you can place a container underneath to catch any leachate.
3. Place some bedding, such as shredded paper and manure or soil in your box, and water it until it is 'as wet as a wrung out sponge'.
4. Add your worms. Cover with damp newspaper or a damp square of old carpet, and keep away from sunlight.
5. Feed your worms every 2-3 days, making sure they don't dry out.



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An Interview with...

Jasper Kruse

My name is Jasper Kruse, I was born in the Netherlands, but have lived in the Kimberley now for over 6 years. Before I started my job at Parks and Wildlife I was a chef, working in the kitchen. I started with Parks and Wildlife 3 years ago and have never looked back! Now I'm the Biodiversity Survey Leader with the Cane Toad team.



Jasper with an olive python
caught in the Cockburn Range

Tell us about a typical day at work. An average day in the field is checking traps for animals and identifying them. Sometimes you get some really interesting animals.

What do you like most about your job? The variety, and to be able to see very remote beautiful places around the Kimberley, catching amazing animals.

What is most challenging? Motivating people to set up trapping sites can be challenging because you have to dig in rocks in the heat, but sometimes the hardest part is to try and get people up at dawn to check traps!

What is your favourite part of working in the Kimberley? The rugged wild landscapes with lots of fresh waterholes to swim and fish.

What 3 things would you want if stranded on a desert island?

1. Juggling balls
2. Fishing rod
3. BBQ



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Check out our website:

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