

Welcome to the November issue **Volunteer Newsletter**. This time of year, Kambarang in the Nyoongar calendar, means we see plenty of colour all around with flowers blooming, but it is also when snakes are on the move after hibernation and magpies are swooping to protect their nests from potential threats. This makes for a very busy time for our Wildcare Helpline volunteers. It's all perfectly natural behaviour and in most cases, the best advice is to steer clear. However, if you need advice, before you do anything, call the **Wildcare Helpline on 9474 9055**, or take a look at the Helpline pages on the **website**.

See below and inside for news on a very impressive year for volunteer contributions, as well as articles on current projects. We would like to say a massive thank you to all of our past, present and future volunteers – you help the department to achieve much more.

If you need information on getting involved in these or other volunteer projects, visit the **website**.



Volunteers outdo themselves

Parks and Wildlife's dedicated volunteer base has contributed a record number of hours to help in the conservation and management of WA's natural places, with 5189 volunteers contributing 638,747 hours in 2015–16!

Volunteer program coordinator Lee Hollingsworth said 5189 registered volunteers were actively volunteering, which is a record in itself.

"This is a fantastic effort by all volunteers who have generously given their time to conserving our natural areas," Lee said.

The highest contributing projects were 1993 wildlife rehabilitators giving a massive 303,946 hours followed by 235 campground hosts who contributed 158,837 hours across 50 campgrounds.

In 2015–16, 15 new projects were registered, and there are now more than 250 active volunteer projects registered. Volunteering opportunities include monitoring the Wildcare Helpline, helping at Perth Observatory or WA Herbarium, monitoring

Above: Beach crew and volunteer campground hosts.

November 2016

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Department of Parks and Wildlife





wildlife including turtles or rare flora, and looking after trails such as the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track.

In the Midwest Region, Kennedy Range National Park-based campground hosts Debbie and Andy Crook believe the personal reward they get from volunteering is far greater than their input.

“We’re both originally from country WA, we love the natural environment and love to share our enthusiasm for the environment with national park visitors. In this role, we have met a great diversity of people and made many friends,” they said.

“We understand that helping visitors to quickly settle in and appreciate the national park attractions brings them great satisfaction. The positive feedback we receive from visitors is especially rewarding.

“We also know that satisfied visitors usually stay longer and spread the word to their family, friends and colleagues. This in turn brings benefits to the local community.”

5,189 active volunteers



Parks and Wildlife volunteers are an integral component of the Western Australian community and add to the success and positive image of the department

638,747 hours volunteered

125 Average hours per volunteer

207 Active volunteer projects

1,717 New volunteers registered

1,993 wildlife rehabilitators contributed 303,946 hours



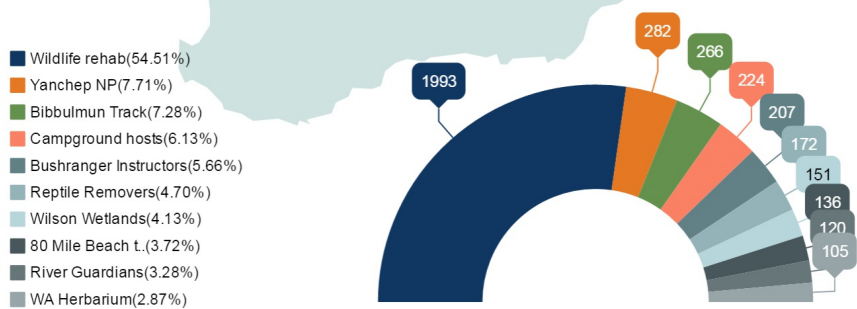
235 campground hosts contributed 158,837 hours



The next top volunteer programs by hours



Projects by number of volunteers

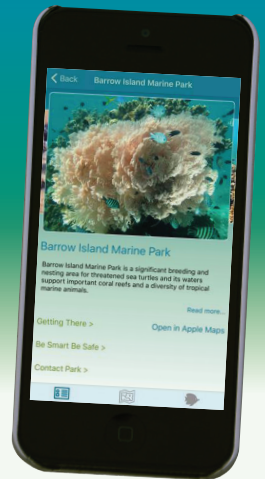


Sources: these numbers are from the Department of Parks and Wildlife Parks and Visitor Services Dashboard 2015-16



Explore Marine Parks WA

Smartphone app



Discover Western Australia's 13 marine parks, from Camden Sound in the Kimberley, to Walpole in the south via a new app.

The app provides information about each marine park including what activities you can enjoy in each area, visitor sites and attractions and directions to the park.

The app even lets you know what marine species you might encounter in the marine park you visit.

A 'Where am I?' function allows you to see which marine park zone you are in and works even when you are out of mobile range.

The app is only available for Apple products at this stage and can be downloaded from the App Store.

Download it free from
the iTunes store today.



Rio Tinto Earth Assist visit Perth Hills Discovery Centre

A partnership between Parks and Wildlife's *Nearer to Nature* program and *Rio Tinto Earth Assist (RTEA)*, saw more than 50 students from Thornlie Christian College participate in a number of experiential learning opportunities around the Perth Hills Discovery Centre.

Under the direction of Parks and Wildlife Programs Officer Shaun New and the watchful eye of the RTEA team leaders, students participated in invasive species removal, tidying up of garden beds and removal of debris.

Right: Thornlie Christian College student meets some local fauna. Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Rio Tinto Earth Assist visit Perth Hills Discovery Centre continued...

The students also assisted with the development and installation of a new pit-fall trap line to be used for subsequent educational opportunities. The students gained an appreciation of the significance of invasive flora and how it influences existing vegetation complexes.

After all their hard work, the student group were lucky enough to spend some time with local Wildlife Rehabilitator Sue Turner who provided some insight into the responsibilities and duties carried out by her (and other wildlife carers) on a daily basis. Students developed a greater understanding of the detrimental impacts of habitat destruction and introduced species on our local fauna. The experience was highlighted by the opportunity to handle some of Sue's furry favourites, including a woylie, a joey and ringtail possum.

For further information on the Rio Tinto Earth Assist program, please contact Melissa Tan at Conservation Volunteers Australia on (08) 9335 2777 or email Mtan@conservationvolunteers.com.au

*Below: Thornlie Christian College students at Perth Hills Discovery Centre.
Photo – Parks and Wildlife*

RioTinto
**earth
assist**

In partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia



**Conservation
Volunteers Australia**



Western Shield Julimar State Forest monitoring

by Marnie Giroud



Western Shield is the Department of Parks and Wildlife's lead animal conservation program and one of the biggest wildlife conservation initiatives in the country. The program aims to recover and conserve wild populations of native fauna in Western Australia that are threatened by foxes and feral cats.

Foxes and feral cats are controlled using 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate baits) across nearly 3.8 million hectares of land managed by Parks and Wildlife, including national parks, conservation reserves and state forest.

Monitoring native animals is a key component of the program, and a team of volunteers recently visited the Julimar State Forest to help monitor native animals.

Parks and Wildlife's Rebecca Kay led the team during a week-long monitoring program over four sites. Species such as chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) and the common brush-tail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula hypoleucus*) were captured and details of the animal's condition, size and sex were recorded. This important information helps scientists to understand the effectiveness of the baiting.

Western Shield has automated monitoring cameras to capture images of native and introduced animals. **You can get involved by registering as a volunteer for [Western Shield's Camera Watch online project here](#) and help monitor wildlife by classifying images according to what animals you see.**

The information can then be used to determine how effective the *Western Shield* is at controlling feral predators and if (and what) native wildlife is thriving.

Above: Volunteer releasing a chuditch after measuring.

Right: Measuring the foot of a chuditch.





River Rangers – real conservation for primary schools



River Rangers gets primary school students engaged in environmental action and proves you are never too young to start volunteering.

Currently active in 17 schools, this program provides youth with the opportunity to learn about their local environment and take action to care for it.

River Rangers program coordinator Linley Brown said working with the community and volunteering was a key aspect of the program.

“*River Rangers* provides fabulous opportunities for the empowerment of our children so they can meaningfully contribute to the sustainability of our environment,” Linley said.

“Cadets enjoy a wide range of learning and volunteering opportunities including building animal nest boxes, planting, growing seedlings, litter pickups, wildlife surveys and water monitoring.”

River Rangers is designed as a precursor to *Bush Rangers*, a high school environmental cadet program that operates in 65 secondary schools around WA.



Mundaring Christian College *River Rangers* unit leader Dion Farr describes the program as one that students love, because it gives them the platform to make a real difference in the community.

“*River Rangers* gives students a unique opportunity to not only engage with concepts of conservation with a special focus on protecting the Swan Canning River Park, but to also plan and implement real life strategies,” Dion said.

1. Water testing – Weld Square PS cadets collecting water from the river to sample the water quality. 2. Building Nest boxes – Regent College cadets help build and install nest boxes at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre 3. Growing seedlings – Ardress PS cadets growing seedlings in their greenhouse for planting along the river foreshore 4. Planting – Ardress PS cadets planting marri seedlings in the Shire of Harvey



Volunteers in Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre’s education team have been spreading conservation messages for twenty years, and are looking for new members.

Kanyana is run by a team of approximately 300 volunteers who clean, feed and care for more than 2,600 sick and injured animals annually, as well as assisting with facilities maintenance, administration, professional training and community education.

Audrey Boon started volunteering in 2010 after retirement and said it is very enjoyable to see the interest children take in having local wildlife up close and in some cases, being able to touch them.

“A close encounter, say with an echidna, stays with them for years,” Audrey said.

Lorraine Dunn has been volunteering for the past 14 years and started because she wanted to make a difference.

“My favourite thing about volunteering in education is seeing the pleasure that contact with animals gives to one and all,” said Lorraine.

“My role involves taking animals to schools, unis and events to give the public a positive view about our wildlife.”

You do not need to have any prior experience, but a willingness to learn, and volunteer at least once a week is a must.



If you would like to learn more about volunteering with Kanyana’s Education Team, visit their website, call (08) 9291 3900 or email info@kanyanawildlife.org.au



Can you help save Australia's most critically endangered marsupial?

The Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group has teamed up with Edge Pledge, a challenge-based fundraising platform that raises money for wildlife on the brink of extinction.

There are fewer than 100 Gilbert's potoroos in the wild, and the species was put under further pressure when a fire destroyed much of the species' habitat at Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve in November 2015. After the fires, Parks and Wildlife staff rescued seven Gilbert's potoroos and undertook emergency baiting to protect the remaining animals in addition to routine fox and feral cat control under the Western Shield wildlife recovery program.

Following the fires, Parks and Wildlife moved swiftly to protect the remaining critically endangered Gilbert's potoroos, holding them in captivity before releasing them onto predator-free Michaelmus Island off the coast of Albany.

Prior to the Gilbert's potoroo rediscovery at Two Peoples Bay in 1994, the species was thought to be extinct, with the last recorded specimens collected in the 1870s. Mt Gardner harboured the only known

wild population of Gilbert's potoroo but Parks and Wildlife has established new populations at Waychinicup and Bald Island.

The Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group is leading the community effort to help Parks and Wildlife in their work to save Gilbert's potoroos. The organisation provides volunteer support for the fieldwork and funding for equipment while working hard to raise community awareness about the plight of the species.

Edge Pledge allows people to raise money for endangered wildlife by pledging to complete the most popular of three challenges, as voted by their friends, family and supporters.

Funds raised support practical projects assisting wildlife on the brink of extinction, delivered by our environmental partners. Money raised for Gilbert's potoroos will go towards bolstering the population of the species to ensure its long term survival.

For more information, visit www.edgepledge.com

The Volunteer and Community Unit provides community members within WA with opportunities to support, be involved in, and contribute to, the work of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

The unit supports volunteers as an integral component of the Western Australian community. Volunteering enriches the community through the delivery of environmental, social, economic and health benefits to individuals, local groups and communities, the State and the nation.

If you have an event or story you would like to feature in future editions of the newsletter, or have any comments or suggestions, please contact us. All photos credited to Parks and Wildlife unless otherwise stated.

Volunteer and Community Unit

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