

Lisa Wright

From: WA Parks Foundation <info@ourwaparks.org.au>
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To: Library
Subject: January Newsletter - Smartreka mapping expanded, groundbreaking spider DNA research and much more!

WA Parks Foundation | Connecting people to parks



January 2024



The brush-tailed bettong *Bettongia penicillata* (Woylie) is a small potoroid marsupial which once occupied most of the Australian mainland. Photo credit: Western Australian Museum

Woylies benefitting from increased fox management

Evidence that populations of the critically endangered woylie (*Bettongia penicillata*) are making a comeback in Batalling State Forest near Collie

highlights the importance of feral predator management.

Western Shield, the lead wildlife recovery program at the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, closely monitors populations of native species in targeted bushland areas.

Western Shield zoologist Dr Michelle Drew said that in 2023 a substantial increase in the number of woylies at Batalling was noted, with 34 individuals captured, compared with 19 in 2022, and just two in 2019.

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Smartreka mapping series expanded



Lane Poole Reserve, with abundant wildlife and a diversity of everchanging landscapes, covers about 55,000 hectares comprising rock rimmed pools, rapids and small waterfalls, spanning out to steeply forested valley slopes and undulating woodlands. Photo credit: Bronwyn Wells, DBCA

Smartreka digital maps for Wellington National Park west of Collie and Lane Poole Reserve south of Dwellingup in the picturesque Murray River valley are now available via the WA Parks Foundation website.

This brings to 19, the total number of maps published in the Smartreka series, an initiative of the WA Parks Foundation developed with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions in partnership with BHP.

A further five priority national parks will be selected, including Rottnest Island through a partnership with the Rottnest Island Authority.

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Spider web DNA opening a new window on wildlife research



Joshua Newton, PhD candidate, Curtin University School of Molecular and Life Sciences. Photo credit: Curtin University

Spiders might be silent heroes in helping us understand and keep track of animals, with new Curtin research revealing their webs act like natural traps for tiny bits of environmental DNA (eDNA) from vertebrates.

The groundbreaking study analysed 49 webs from a wildlife sanctuary in Perth's hills and at Perth Zoo and identified the genetic signatures of 93 different animals, from birds and native mammals to meerkats and elephants.

Lead author PhD candidate Joshua Newton, from Curtin's School of Molecular and Life Sciences, said spider webs might be a clever way to keep an eye on what animals are around us.

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Fancy being a high-flyer in Pemberton?



Nestled among the giant Karri trees, Aerial Adventure Pemberton features an all-glide-line course. Photo credit: Aerial Adventure Pemberton

Pemberton's new aerial ropes adventure course offers plenty of excitement and is already attracting hundreds of visitors. The multi-level treetop experience, including a 100m flying fox, was officially opened on Boxing Day.

Visitors to Gloucester National Park can enter free of charge for the next six months, making Aerial Adventure Pemberton more accessible for local, intrastate and international tourists.

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Lightscape returning to Kings Park



Lightscape Kings Park 2023. Photo credit: Mum in Australia

Western Australians will have another opportunity to experience global sensation Lightscape when it returns to Kings Park mid-year in a reimagined form.

“Roots” will be the theme of the 2024 edition presented in June and July, exploring the mysteries of the world beneath Kings Park while also celebrating the area's Noongar culture, history, heritage, and storytelling.

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Support for river care projects in the Swan Canning catchment



When it escapes into the wild, Watsonia can become an invasive environmental weed.

Weed control along Jane Brook in John Forrest National Park to promote natural regeneration has attracted support in the Community Rivercare program's latest round of funding.

The \$20,000 grant has been awarded to the Friends of John Forrest National Park, a dedicated and knowledgeable group of volunteers having an impact on weed removal and encouraging regrowth of native vegetation.

[Read more](#)

Individual tourism awards nominations close soon



Individual tourism award nominations close soon. Image Credit: Tourism Council WA, 2023 WA Tourism Awards Gala dinner

Nominations for the Individual Categories in the Perth Airport WA Tourism Awards are closing soon, with final entries required before February 22.

This is an excellent opportunity to acknowledge someone who has made a significant contribution to the WA tourism industry or you may want to nominate yourself and be recognised for individual excellence.

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