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From: WA Parks Foundation <info@ourwaparks.org.au>
Sent: Thursday, 4 April 2024 3:52 PM
To: Library
Subject: March Newsletter - Community stewardship grants, John Forrest National Park upgrade complete and much more!

WA Parks Foundation | Connecting people to parks



March 2024



A Conservation Council of Western Australia project designed to limit the impacts of climate change on Little Penguin survival and maximise the opportunity for successful breeding, using a range of innovative solutions, was among the projects funded in 2023. Image credit: City of Rockingham

Applications invited for Community Stewardship Grants

Submissions are now open for the 2024 round of Community Stewardship Grants to facilitate the conservation and sustainable management of Western Australia's natural resources.

They are available annually to support local community groups to undertake projects to protect and restore their local environment.

The Community Stewardship Grants prioritise the direct involvement of local community groups in all project stages of design, planning, and implementation, fostering efficient and effective partnerships between government, industry, and community.

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Young volunteers support turtle conservation



Watching a flatback turtle lay her eggs. Image credit: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

The North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program (Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions) supports schools and Aboriginal organisations to connect young people to conservation and Country during the turtle monitoring season in the Pilbara.

On Thevenard Island, off the coast of Onslow, Year 11s from the Mount Lawley Senior High School Bush Rangers Cadets unit, Year 7 and 8s from Onslow School and families from the Waalitj Foundation in Onslow joined DBCA staff for several days throughout November and December.

The young people worked alongside scientists and volunteers to collect monitoring data, including identifying and measuring turtles, conducting nest excavations and track counts of the endemic flatback turtle. They also received lessons about flatback turtle biology, ecology and conservation research, and shared their stories and experiences of turtles with the North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program team.

[Read more](#)

New festival to highlight Esperance hiking trails



Frenchman Peak (Aboriginal name Mandooboornup) offers spectacular views across Cape Le Grande National Park to the Southern coastline and islands in the Recherche Archipelago. Image credit: Tourism WA

The inaugural Esperance Hiking Festival will take place over three days in September 2024, promoting Esperance's hiking trails while also supporting the local economy during a lower visitation period.

The festival in September invites you to explore the diverse tracks that wind through the captivating landscapes of Cape Le Grand National Park. It features five carefully crafted guided hikes tailored to different fitness levels to cater for beginners to seasoned hikers.

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John Forrest National Park – further upgrades completed



Rocky Pool, popular with visitors to John Forrest National Park, is a series of small pools that are formed along the Jane Brook. Image credit: Jean and Fred Hort

The upgrading of Western Australia's oldest national park continues, with a new day-use area and trails now open to visitors.

Upgrades at this scenic national park located on the edge of the Darling Scarp about 40 minutes' drive from the Perth CBD include the Noolbenger trail, Little Eagle trail, realignments, maintenance, and extension works to the popular

Eagle View, Wildflower, and Glen Brook trails, landscaped gardens; and accessible picnic and barbecue facilities.

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Aboriginal Ranger Program – Applications open



Ngurrara Rangers, Aboriginal Ranger Program. Image credit: Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Aboriginal organisations from throughout regional Western Australia will receive \$13 million as part of the seventh round of the State Government's Aboriginal Ranger Program.

Funding was awarded to 21 on-Country projects as part of Round 7 of this program which has led to employment for nearly 1,400 Aboriginal people since its inception in 2017.

A further \$16.5 million has been allocated to the program's Round 8, which will focus on climate action, youth, and tourism. Applications are open until 5pm AWST Monday 22 April.

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Whale shark research – assessing tourism impacts



Whale shark and friends. Image credit: Murdoch University

Using technology akin to a 'fitbit' for sharks, a team of researchers has tagged and tracked whale sharks to study the effects of tourism at Ningaloo Reef in Western Australia for the first time.

In a resounding endorsement of local tourism practices, the research found the activity of boats and divers has minimal impacts.

While there was evidence of some increases in activity levels and directional changes by the sharks when tourists were swimming with them, each shark's exposure was very limited.

[Read more](#)

Wilderness experience – Kennedy Range National Park



Kennedy Range National Park. Image credit: All Trails

Western Australia's spectacular network of terrestrial and marine parks encompasses more than 31 million hectares, including three World Heritage areas and one of only 36 internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots.

The WA Parks Foundation promotes these diverse, beautiful and often dramatic places to encourage visitation, enjoyment, appreciation and conservation of our State's natural assets.

The vast and ancient Kennedy Range National Park, known as 'Mundatharrda' to the local Inggarda Aboriginal language group, is about 230 kilometres east of Carnarvon. Over millions of years, natural forces have etched out valleys and created remarkable cliff faces in the Range.

Guided day tours are a great way to explore the National Park, while scenic helicopter flights are an opportunity to see the Range from above.

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