

**Nicole Wreford**

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**From:** WA Parks Foundation <info@ourwaparks.org.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 April 2025 2:14 PM  
**To:** Library  
**Subject:** March Newsletter - Smartreka continues to expand, Supporting conservation through eDNA and much more!

WA Parks Foundation | Connecting people to parks



March 2025



The Dryandra Woodland National Park is one of WA's major conservation areas, and although it is far from pristine due to its history of logging operations, a number of threatened fauna species are rebuilding populations through the removal of introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats. It also has strong cultural links to the Noongar people. Image credit: Shire of Narrogin

## Smartreka mapping program continues to expand

Smartreka maps are now available for the Dryandra Woodland National Park and the Stokes National Park, making it easier and more rewarding to explore the features of these two outstanding natural attractions.

Located near Narrogin, the Dryandra Woodland National Park is 192 kms south-east of Perth. Covering nearly 18,000 hectares, it includes two class A

nature reserves dedicated to safeguarding the diverse native wildlife in one of the last remnants of original woodland in WA's western wheatbelt.

Among these inhabitants are some of Australia's most vulnerable species, such as numbats, woylies, brushtail wallabies, chuditch, quenda, and malleefowl.

The park also offers exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities, especially for those who enjoy bushwalking. Well-marked walking trails guide visitors through magnificent open eucalypt woodland.

Stokes National Park, 80 kilometres west of Esperance, encompasses Stokes Inlet and features long beaches and rocky headlands backed by sand dunes and low hills.

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## Supporting conservation through eDNA research



The most surprising animals of the Pilbara live in the perpetual darkness of underground aquifers, fissures, voids and caves. The animals living in groundwater, known as stygofauna, are dominated in the Pilbara by crustaceans – ostracods, copepods and amphipods. Image credit: Bennelongia Environmental Consultants

Projects monitoring the endangered Pilbara Olive Python in Western Australia, detecting elusive underground invertebrates and developing new tests to identify invasive marine species are part of Curtin University's environmental DNA (eDNA) research.

Another of the projects, Living Waters of Western Australia, will enhance the ability to monitor wetland health using DNA-based survey methods, crucial for tackling wetland biodiversity loss in WA. Ancient DNA from sediments will be used to examine past biodiversity changes.

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## Private lives of phascogales



In WA, the Brush-tailed Phascogale is known to occur in the south west between Perth and Albany. Image credit: Rewild Perth

What's in a name? Especially when it comes in two parts, contains 19 letters, and is near unpronounceable. Juliet's rose would have trouble smelling as sweet, if it were called a Phascogale *tapoatafa!*

The *tapoatafa* (brush tail) and their relatives the Red-tailed phascogales would be unfazed by these scientific monikers. They are carnivorous marsupials that live and hunt in the dry, sclerophyll bush of the southwest. They eat insects and spiders and even small birds. You might see them in the Collie River valley, or near Margaret River, and think it's a rat! Or a small possum! But then the big ears identify that it's a phascogale climbing a tree and foraging.

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## Applications invited for riverbank conservation grants



The Point Resolution shoreline project in Dalkeith has been supported by the Riverbank program over several years. Image credit: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Up to \$900,000 is available in the 2025-26 funding round of the Riverbank program with expressions of interest now open.

This program, managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and supported by Burswood Park Board, provides grants to State and local government for foreshore restoration and protection projects in the Swan Canning Riverpark.

## Upgrading tourism favourites in the Southern Forests region



New ramp facilities at Nornalup Jetty. Image credit: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Upgrades have been completed at the WA's Valley of the Giants and the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park as part of a State funded program to make regional tourism attractions in the South West more accessible.

The Ancient Empire Trail within the Valley of the Giants has been transformed to enhance accessibility and improve the visitor experience, with Traditional Owners providing input.

The upgraded 540-metre-long loop replaces the existing stairs with smooth, levelled timber decking, making it easier for people of all abilities to experience the majestic tingle forest.

[Read more](#)

## WA businesses excel at national tourism awards



Swan Valley Visitor Centre. Image credit: Swan Valley Visitor Centre

Western Australia has once again proven itself a shining star in the tourism industry, earning accolades at the prestigious Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. With thirteen medals, the State showcased its diverse and world-class offerings.

Of the winners, four took home gold, including Cowaramup-based Harvest Tours, Kununurra-based helicopter tourism and charter company HeliSpirit, and Spinifex Brewery, which was recognised for its new Cable Beach venue in Broome.

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## New luxury eco-lodge planned for Purnululu



The beautiful Cathedral Gorge, a Purnululu National Park geological landmark, has astonishing acoustics.  
Image credit: Trail Hiking Australia

The Kimberley is set to become Australia's latest sustainable tourism hotspot with a world-leading luxury travel company to develop a new eco-lodge in Purnululu National Park.

Abercrombie & Kent will develop their first signature accommodation in Australia in the East Kimberley national park, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Listed site and home to the famous Bungle Bungle Ranges.

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