



## Aboriginal Ranger Program

A new Aboriginal Ranger Program will see \$20 million distributed over five years to help provide jobs, training, and community development opportunities for Aboriginal people across a range of tenures in regional and remote communities in Western Australia.

Environment Minister Stephen Dawson and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ben Wyatt announced the program in September.

Minister Dawson said the program was great news for the environment and for the economic and social resilience of remote and regional Aboriginal communities.

"This program will generate more jobs and training for Indigenous youth, provide the opportunity to develop a career in land and

sea management and create long-term cultural, conservation and tourism opportunities," he said.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ben Wyatt said the government would continue to work collaboratively with traditional owner groups, Aboriginal corporations and representative bodies to deliver the program quickly and effectively throughout WA.

Parks and Wildlife Service ranger Ken Ninnette highlighted the importance of Aboriginal people working on country.

"It's the closest I can be without my ancestors, connected to country. To walk in their footprints and to manage, actually manage, and apply cultural knowledge to country and have the world come and visit, that's the best," he said.

Expressions of interest have now closed, with more than 50 applications currently being assessed.



**Top:** Parks and Wildlife Service Nyangumarta and Ngarla rangers at Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park. Photo – Miecha Bradshaw/DBCA **Above left:** Rangers in Murujuga National Park. Photo – Murujuga Land and Sea Unit **Above right:** Rangers work on a crocodile fence in Ord River Nature Reserve.



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# Community Rivercare Program launched on the Swan

The health and amenity of the Swan and Canning rivers will be improved with the support of a new Community Rivercare Program, which will provide \$900,000 over three years to volunteer community groups for restoration projects along the waterways.

Environment Minister Stephen Dawson launched the program at Bardon Park in Maylands with representatives from City of Bayswater, Friends of Bardon Park, Ellen Brockman Integrated Catchment Group, South East Centre for Urban Landcare, Armadale Gosnells Landcare Group and Bardon Park Riverside Restoration Group.

Minister Dawson got hands-on, helping the Friends of Bardon Park to remove lantana and other invasive weeds by the river as an example of the type of project

that could be funded under the new program.

"The Community Rivercare Program supports volunteers to become involved in activities that will help our river system become more vibrant and well balanced," the Minister said.

Projects include foreshore restoration and riverbank erosion, reduction of nutrient inflows, native waterbird conservation, native fish habitat protection and restocking of native recreational fish species.

Small and large restoration projects will be delivered by community volunteers.

Three hundred thousand dollars will be allocated annually from 2018–19 to 2020–21.

The program complements the existing Riverbank program, which this year will see almost \$325,000 distributed among six local governments for foreshore protection projects in the Swan Canning Riverpark.



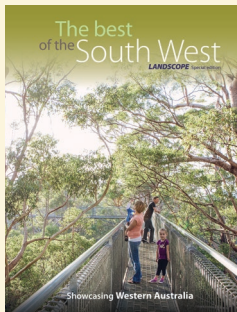
**Above:** Environment Minister Stephen Dawson and Alex Devine from City of Bayswater ready to tackle weeds at the launch of the Community Rivercare Program. Photo – Lauren Cabrera/DBCA

## The best of the South West

This special *LANDSCOPE* edition features a collection of some of the most popular *LANDSCOPE* articles showcasing Western Australia's stunning south-west.

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**Top:** The new bridge, Bilya Djena Bidi, spans 82 metres across the Murray River. **Above:** Bibbulmun Track Foundation volunteer Ross Simpson placing the last marker to realign the track across the new bridge. Photos – DBCA

## New bridge for Bibbulmun Track

A new bridge allowing Bibbulmun Track walkers to cross the Murray River has been opened.

The suspension bridge – named Bilya Djena Bidi – replaces historic Long Gully Bridge, which was destroyed in the 2015 bushfire near Boddington.

The locally designed and built bridge spans 82 metres across the river in Lane Poole Reserve. It includes two 12-metre towers that hold the bridge above the 100-year predicted flood level.

Bilya Djena Bidi was named by Gnaala Karla Booja traditional owners, and means 'swinging river foot bridge'.

Environment Minister Stephen Dawson said the efforts of volunteers from the Bibbulmun Track

Foundation were amazing.

"These volunteers helped enormously with bushfire recovery efforts and building new sections of the track that connect with the bridge," he said.

Regional Development Minister Alannah MacTiernan said the 1000-kilometre Bibbulmun Track provided massive opportunities for expanding cultural and nature-based tourism.

The \$850,000 project was funded by the Parks and Wildlife Service, Bibbulmun Track Foundation, the Royalties for Regions Regional Grants Scheme administered through the Peel Development Commission and Alcoa, with in-kind donations from engineering company BG&E, and construction companies Duratec Australia and Bocol Constructions.

RRP: **\$16.95**

**LANDSCOPE** subscriber's price: **\$12.70**



# New homes for threatened native species

The release of more than 250 native animals including dibblers, western swamp tortoises, white-bellied frogs and two species of hare-wallaby into the wild over the past few months is boosting populations of threatened species.

DBCA recently reintroduced 69 dibblers bred at Perth Zoo into Peniup Nature Reserve near Jerramungup, on the State's south coast, to assist the long-term recovery of the endangered species.

Prior to the release, fox baiting was carried out under the department's *Western Shield* wildlife recovery program. Baiting, along with feral cat trapping, will continue at the site to help reduce predation by foxes and feral cats.

Meanwhile, 136 white-bellied frogs were released into forest near Margaret River in an effort to secure these tiny, critically endangered frogs.

In addition, 30 critically endangered western swamp tortoises were released into Moore River Nature Reserve, one of only four known and monitored wild populations of the species in WA.

DBCA senior research scientist Dr Gerald Kuchling said the western swamp tortoise was Australia's rarest reptile, with habitat loss, low rainfall and predation by foxes, pigs, rats and ravens the major causes for its decline.

"Less than 50 individuals survived 30 years ago, but since 1988, in a collaborative partnership with Perth Zoo, we have been running a successful breeding program and have been able to translocate captive-bred juveniles to three sites since 1994," he said.

Twenty-four threatened hare-wallabies have been translocated to historic Dirk Hartog Island, an important milestone for the ecological restoration project taking place on WA's largest island.

Twelve banded hare-wallabies and 12 rufous hare-wallabies captured by DBCA staff from nearby Bernier and Dorre islands were released in the southern part of Dirk Hartog Island National Park in August.

The translocation followed intensive baiting, trapping and monitoring of feral cats over three years. There have been no records of feral cats there for 12 months. The next stage of the Dirk Hartog Island National Park Ecological Restoration Project, *Return to 1616*, will see the reintroduction of another 10 mammal and one bird species.



**Top:** Dirk Hartog Island Lodge owner Kieran Wardle and DBCA technical officer Kelly Rayner release a rufous hare-wallaby into Dirk Hartog Island National Park. Photo – Keith Morris/DBCA **Above:** Conservation officer Christine Fleay with a white-bellied frog. **Inset:** One of 136 white-bellied frogs released. Photos – Shem Bisluk/DBCA

## 4000th Zoo-bred animal released

The recent release of dibbler to Peniup Nature Reserve near the State's south coast marked a significant milestone for Perth Zoo's Native Species Breeding Program – the 4000th animal bred or reared at the Zoo released to the wild.

The breeding program is one of a number of initiatives Perth Zoo works on to conserve threatened WA native species, in partnership with the Parks and Wildlife Service, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and tertiary research institutions.

With its dedicated breeding facility and staff located behind-the-scenes at the Zoo, the breeding program has seen many achievements since the 1980s.

In 2015 the 200th Zoo-bred numbat was released. Five numbat populations have been re-established in the wild at Boyagin Nature Reserve and Batalling State Forest in WA and Australian Wildlife Conservancy's fenced and baited sanctuaries at Yookamurra in South Australia, Scotia in New South Wales and Mt Gibson in WA. Additionally, more than 750 western swamp tortoises have returned to their natural swamps, while the Zoo breeding program for chuditch helped improve its conservation status from Endangered to Near Threatened.



**Above:** A numbat bred at Perth Zoo. Photo – Alex Asbury





## Milestone for Bold Park

The Friends of Bold Park Bushland celebrated their 30th anniversary with an open day at the Perth park in October. The free community event included family fun, special guided walks and hands-on displays.

The Friends first began during the campaign to have Bold Park protected as an A-class reserve in the 1980s. While advocacy will always be at the group's core, members now focus their efforts on environmental restoration and engagement with the community.

The Friends have been equally passionate about raising Bold Park's profile and in 2010, obtained a Lotterywest grant to train 18 volunteers to host free guided walks within the park. The program continues to raise awareness of Bold Park by sharing knowledge of its natural wonders as well as a positive conservation message.

Today, the Friends group plays a vital role in supporting, complementing and enhancing the efforts of the Botanic Gardens and Park Authority. Thanks to their combined efforts, Bold Park remains a sanctuary by the sea, a wilderness in the suburbs to be enjoyed by the whole community for generations to come.

**Above:** Children enjoying the free guided walks. Photo – Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority

## Celebrating Bankwest volunteer partnership

The Parks and Wildlife Service has celebrated a new corporate volunteering partnership, with Bankwest signing on to do regular volunteer sessions at Yanchep National Park.

Staff from Bankwest's Perth office headed north in September to spend a day in the park weeding, monitoring cockatoos and learning about Aboriginal culture.

Parks and Wildlife Service volunteer program coordinator Lee Hollingsworth said it was the first time the department had established an ongoing volunteering partnership of this kind with the private sector.

"We're excited about this opportunity to work with Bankwest, to help boost nature-based volunteering in WA and in turn give Bankwest staff an insight into our parks and their natural and cultural values," he said.

"About 20 staff came along to help weed problem species and plant natives along the Wetlands Walk Trail, followed by an afternoon session monitoring hollows for evidence of Carnaby's cockatoo breeding."

Lee said the partnership builds on positive statistics from the past two financial years, which have seen volunteer numbers grow to record highs.

"In 2016–17, 5410 volunteers gave 723,508 hours to conservation and park management projects in WA, and 21 new projects were registered."

Bankwest volunteer programs manager Wendy Gauci said staff enjoyed their first day working in the park during Djilba, and relished the

opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal culture from Yanchep National Park's visitor services officer Derek Nannup.

"Our staff are particularly interested in reconciliation, so learning a bit more about Aboriginal culture was an excellent opportunity for us," she said.

"We are passionate about WA, making a difference and using our influence for good, now and for generations to come. What could be more lasting than looking after our beautiful natural surroundings?"

"We're look forward to spending more time at Yanchep and doing our bit to help maintain and improve this beautiful park," she said.



**Above:** Bankwest staff get stuck into some weeding at Yanchep National Park. Photo – Karla Graham/DBCA



## Wadjemup Bidi nearing completion

After five years of construction, the final section of the renowned 45km Rottne Island walking trail network known as the Wadjemup Bidi is nearing completion.

The Wadjemup Bidi is a major tourism and conservation success which manages visitor access to Rottne's beautiful natural, cultural and historical landscapes in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Interpretive signage and wayfinding information at trail nodes highlight areas of interest, while audio stations relay cultural stories by Whadjuk traditional owners.

Construction of the final 7.6km section, known as Ngank Wen Bidi, is well underway and circumnavigates the west end of the island. This section consists of new beach access-ways onto Rocky Bay (west) and Marjorie Bay (east and west).

The trail will link Narrow Neck to Cathedral Rocks seal viewing platform and will allow exploration of the rugged southern coast, linking Radar Reef to Strickland Bay.

Three of the five walking trails intersect at Narrow Neck, providing excellent access for the boating community in the surrounding bays.

Maps are available at the island visitor centre or online at [rotnneisland.com](http://rotnneisland.com).

**Above:** Enjoying the view from the Wadjemup Bidi trail network. Photo – Rottne Island Authority



# Carnaby's embrace new nesting hollows



Larger artificial hollows for nesting Carnaby's cockatoos are proving effective, with the birds immediately taking to new models installed at Coomallo.

Since 2010 senior wildlife officer Rick Dawson, conservation biologist Dr Denis Saunders and volunteers have installed a total of 68 artificial hollows at the largest known nesting ground 200km north-east of Perth at Coomallo farm near Badgingarra.

The project was launched after a bushfire burnt through part of the site, destroying key nesting hollows and many chicks.

Rick said since the first artificial hollows were put in place seven years ago the nesting attempts of the birds has increased by 300 per cent and the number of nestlings making it out of these hollows has also risen by up to 25 per cent.

"This is largely due to the improved design of the hollows, which has been refined to better accommodate the birds and provide protection from predation," he said.

"This year we replaced 23 artificial hollows with the larger design that had a minimum depth of one metre.

"It was extremely satisfying to see that all of them were instantly occupied by the Carnaby's in the area, and we are now confident that we have created a near-perfect nesting hollow for the birds.

Rick said after a delayed start to the breeding season due to late rains, the Carnaby's nesting season was well underway.

"We are very hopeful of having another successful year with even more nestlings than last year."

Following the success of the artificial hollows project, Rick has been imparting his knowledge about his work to others around the country.

In September he travelled to western Victoria to assist with measures to improve the nesting program for the endangered south-eastern red-tailed black cockatoo, and last year he provided advice to help improve numbers of the endangered glossy black cockatoos at Kangaroo Island in South Australia. Both areas are now trialling hollows similar to the design used by Carnaby's cockatoos in WA.

## Help for injured cockatoos

Did you know that the Perth Zoo Veterinary Department provides care to injured black cockatoos?

Every admitted cockatoo is anaesthetised for full veterinary evaluation, including radiography and clinical pathology. Many cockatoos present with fractures requiring orthopedic surgery. Hospitalised cockatoos are often stressed and inappetent, requiring twice-daily medications and supplementary feeding.

Every effort is made to treat and rehabilitate black cockatoos and return them to wild flocks. The Zoo also conducts research with Murdoch University and other partners, placing satellite trackers on the released birds and initial data is showing they integrate with wild flocks and go onto to lead successful lives in the wild.



**Top left** One of the new artificial hollows that was taken up just 20 minutes after it was installed and the cockatoo laid eggs a few days later. Photo – Rick Dawson/DBCA **Above:** A cockatoo in care at Perth Zoo. Photo – Zoological Parks Authority

## New book highlights river dolphins

Staff, volunteers and children gathered at Point Walter Reserve in September for the launch of new children's book *Daniel's Investigation* – the story of a boy who investigates the Swan Canning Riverpark dolphins, written by *Dolphin Watch* volunteer and graphic designer Jo Haythornthwaite.

Jo has been a *River Guardians* member since 2012 and a registered *Dolphin Watch* volunteer since 2015.

Parks and Wildlife Service community program coordinator Marnie Giroud said Jo was so inspired by the two programs that she wanted to write a book about the rivers and the dolphins that call them home.

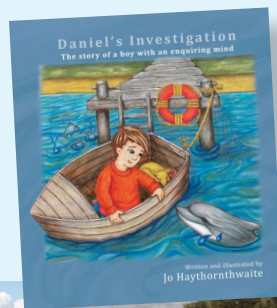
"It is so important to have community engagement in this project, supporting the work we do to protect the Swan and Canning rivers," Marnie said.

*Daniel's Investigation* is available at [shop.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://shop.dbca.wa.gov.au) or in book stores with part proceeds returning to the *Dolphin Watch* project.

The event was also a great opportunity for the launch of Dolphin Discovery – a new dolphin-themed *Nearer to Nature* activity on offer as part of the school holiday program.

*Nearer to Nature* project officer Joselyn Juraszek said the Dolphin Discovery activity, run in two separate age categories, provided children with the opportunity to explore the Swan Canning Riverpark and discover more about the animals that live in it.

"Through nature-based play, children learn what they can do to keep the rivers healthy and look after our dolphins," Joselyn said.



**Above:** Students from Melville Senior High School with and Parks and Wildlife Service staff Rachel Hutton, Rod Annear and Marnie Giroud, and Dolphin Watch Patron Professor Lyn Beazley.



**Above:** Ann Newman, Jennifer Weston and Jane Tucker have contributed a combined 71 years of service to Kings Park. Photo – Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority

## Life membership for Kings Park volunteers

Three volunteers who together have contributed 71 years of service to Kings Park were recognised earlier this month with a life membership to the Kings Park Volunteer Guides.

Ann Newman, Jane Tucker and Jennifer Weston have been integral members of the dedicated volunteer group, staffing the visitor information centre and leading three-daily guided walks on 363 days of the year.

### Ann Newman

Ann has been a loyal and enthusiastic guide since 1986. With an exceptional knowledge of the flora of WA, Ann is an invaluable resource to the guides and has wowed locals and tourists alike with her plant knowledge and identifications skills.

After becoming a guide, Ann studied for a diploma in botany at TAFE and worked in horticulture, cultivating native plants as well as lecturing.

### Jane Tucker

Jane has been a member of the Kings Park guides for 24 years. Like Ann, Jane has an extensive knowledge of the plants in the WA Botanic Garden and the Kings

Park Bushland. Jane has a particular passion for leading bushwalks through the Kings Park Bushland. She is also keen to encourage children to experience nature-based play and is a member of the Naturescapers volunteer team.

### Jennifer Weston

Jennifer's willing and enthusiastic work over 17 years has made a very significant contribution to the education of Kings Park guides and the development of the organisation in general. Jennifer has served as a committee member and President for many years and has led training sessions for new guides. She has also worked on organising and improving the botanical library for the guides – an invaluable resource, especially during the Kings Park Festival when thousands of wildflowers are in full bloom.

If you are interested in volunteering at Kings Park or Bold Park, please contact [volunteer@bgpa.wa.gov.au](mailto:volunteer@bgpa.wa.gov.au).

## The buzz on Rottnest Island

The importance of honeybees is well-known – they are responsible for pollinating roughly one third of the food we eat. But did you know the condition of Western Australia's bees is dependent on Rottnest Island?

Due to their role in pollinating agricultural and horticultural crops, bee diseases are seriously affecting global food production.

Rottnest Island is used as an isolated mating station for breeding queen bees by Better Bees WA, through a service agreement with Rottnest Island Authority.

The mating of bees on the island plays a crucial role in ensuring the State's bees remain free of exotic diseases and pests that now exist in other parts of Australia, as well as overseas.

The hives are located on the island for a period of six weeks in spring. Once the drones have mated with the queen bees and they have a sealed brood, all hives and nuclei are returned to the mainland. The latest batch was successfully transferred by barge in mid-October.

The continued disease-free status of WA's bees provides State and national universities with an invaluable source of bees for genetic research, as well as increased employment and export income through honey production.



## Crocwise in the Kimberley

With estuarine (saltwater) crocodile sightings on the rise, the Parks and Wildlife Service's *Be Crocwise* campaign aims to increase awareness of the dangers associated with crocodiles in Kimberley waters.

Parks and Wildlife Service Kimberley regional manager Daryl Moncrieff said it was important for people to be aware of the risks associated with proximity to crocodiles.

"With the growing number of locals and visitors to the Kimberley and more sightings of crocodiles each year, it is timely to remind people of the presence of crocodiles in the Kimberley and to *Be Crocwise*," Daryl said.

"One common misconception is that estuarine crocodiles only live in saltwater, when in fact they can be found in freshwater habitats far from the coast, such as rivers and billabongs."

For more information or to report a crocodile sighting, please contact the Parks and Wildlife Service Broome office on 9195 5500 or Kununurra office on 9168 4200.



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