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# Greater Noongar involvement sought

Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards has invited expressions of interest from people with expertise and experience in matters of interest to the Noongar community to be appointed as a member of the Swan River Trust Board.

Swan River Trust chairman Charlie Welker said the appointee should possess a broad community perspective on Trust issues of interest to the Noongar community.

"The Noongar community has traditional associations with the Swan and Canning rivers, and the Swan River Trust has statutory responsibility for managing the rivers," he said.

"Therefore, the State Government wants to ensure the Noongar community has the opportunity to contribute to decisions of the Trust Board. This is a way to ensure the community continues to have a genuine influence on the management of the rivers.

"A recent vacancy on the Swan River Trust Board has provided the Minister for the Environment with this appointment opportunity."

### New wetlands to tackle nutrients

More than 60 000 native plants will be used to tackle nutrients, prevent algal blooms and attract more wildlife in and around the Canning River.

Construction has started on a \$400 000 wetland in the Canning River Regional Park to address nutrients before they enter the Canning River.

On 21 April, Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards inspected the three-hectare wetlands site designed by local environmental experts.

The joint City of Canning and Swan River Trust project will address nutrient discharge from Liege and Cockram streets main drains.

Dr Edwards said the Liege St Main Drain was a priority for water quality improvement because it drained into the Kent Street Weir pool section of the Canning River where there were elevated nutrient concentrations.

"Nutrients are a trigger for algal blooms. The Health Department closed this part of the Canning River in January because of a potentially toxic bloom and it was only recently re-opened," she said.

"The wetlands have been designed to treat nutrient-rich urban drainage before it reaches the Canning River, and reduce the likelihood and severity of algal blooms.





Swan River Trust chairman Charlie Welker, Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards, City of Canning project environmental consultant Karl Karu, Swan-Canning Cleanup Program manager Adrian Tomlinson and Department of Environment environmental officer Rachel Spencer inspecting the Liege Street Wetlands; and right, Dr Edwards talking to journalists.

"The wetlands will recover the existing floodplain with sedgelands including rushland depressions and open water ponds.

"Last June the State Government allocated an additional \$1.2 million to the Trust to extend the Swan-Canning Cleanup Program, of which \$750 000 went to establish the Drain Nutrient Intervention Program that funded this wetlands project.

"In January an extra \$15 million was announced for Trust projects between now and 2008. This includes \$4 million for nutrient-stripping works such as these wetlands."

Dr Edwards said the community would also be involved, as well as the Department of Conservation and Land Management. "Canning River Regional Park volunteers and Two Rivers Catchment Group members will help establish the wetlands," she said.

"The completed wetlands will be a haven for wildlife and an important tool in our armoury as we address the long-term health of the Canning River."

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Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards checks out the Swan Region Strategy for Natural Resource Management with Francesca and Matthew Crilly.

# Have your say about the future of our natural resources

Do you want clean air, water and access to natural areas and attractive landscapes for future generations?

It is estimated that by 2030 there will be about two million people living in the Perth metropolitan area. Our increasing demand for land, water, energy and food puts enormous pressure on our natural resources.

The Swan Region Strategy for Natural Resource Management presents a 50-year action plan for a coordinated approach to the management of our natural resources. It also formalises the partnership between the Federal and State governments and the wider regional community.

Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards launched the Swan Strategy on 7 April. It is available for a six-week public comment period concluding on 19 May.

Swan Catchment Council chair Sue Metcalf said the sustainable use and management of our region's resources needed to be achieved, especially in the face of Perth's projected population increase.

"Demand for products and services to maintain current lifestyles puts enormous pressure on our natural resources," she said.

"Over the last 12 months, the community-based Swan Catchment Council has been working closely with its stakeholders in developing the Strategy.

"After the public comment period concludes, all submissions will be collated and analysed for inclusion into the Strategy."

Electronic copies of the Strategy are available on the Swan Catchment Council's website at www.swancatchmentcouncil.org or can be provided as hard or CD copies by contacting the Council.

Public forums will be held during the consultation period. For more information, contact the Council on 9374 3333.

### **New Riverplan Team**

The Riverplan Implementation Team has recently been established at the Swan River Trust.

Riverplan, the management framework for the Environmental Protection (Swan and Canning rivers) Policy, was launched last July to protect the environmental values of the Swan-Canning river system through the management of the activities that affect them.

The Trust will manage implementation of Riverplan on behalf of the Environmental Protection Authority.

Trust strategic programs manager Darryl Miller said Riverplan required organisations to evaluate their current management activities, identify future opportunities, form partnerships and where necessary establish agreements in light of their contribution to the fulfilment of the purpose of the Policy.

"The recently appointed Riverplan Implementation Team has started the assessment process in-house by working with key members of the Trust staff to evaluate the Trust's own contributions towards achieving the Policy outcomes," Mr Miller said.

"Over the coming months the team will be working with other State Government agencies and local governments to assess their contribution."

Information about Riverplan can be found on the Trust website www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au or by contacting the Trust on 9278 0400.

### New legislation on its way

In January, Premier Dr Geoff Gallop announced a package of initiatives to protect the Swan and Canning rivers, including new legislation.

Since then Swan River Trust strategic programs manager Darryl Miller has been discussing development of the new legislation with representatives from more than 80 State and local government, business, community and recreational groups.

He has been encouraged by community response so far.

"People recognise the need to carefully manage how we use the rivers and our activities throughout the catchment so that we can continue to enjoy the environmental, social and economic benefits of the rivers," Mr Miller said.

"There is widespread support for better integration of the efforts of State

agencies, local government and the community, and for the Swan River Trust to be the agency accountable for the health of the rivers."

The proposed legislation will create a Swan-Canning River Park, enable the development of an overall river management strategy and allow the Trust to establish partnership agreements with other organisations.

It will also increase community membership of the Trust, increase public consultation and review of Trust decisions, streamline development applications and address environmental management of drainage.

A public consultation paper on the proposed legislation is due for release soon. Keep an eye on the Trust website www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au for updates.



### Autumn Great Gardens workshops

Perth residents are only a workshop away from having beautiful cost-efficient and environmentally-friendly gardens that are the talk of their neighbourhood.

The Swan River Trust is providing a second series of the free Great Gardens workshops throughout Perth during autumn after more than 2100 participants attended the Spring Series.

Trust communications manager Wendy Yorke said the Autumn Series was made possible by the additional funding announced in January.

"The free workshops are provided for the community by the Trust," she said. "They are presented by Landcare Solutions as a fun, interactive and entertaining learning experience."

Mrs Yorke said over-fertilising gardens in metropolitan Perth had a significant impact on the health of the Swan and Canning rivers. The series was designed to increase people's awareness and ability to implement river-friendly gardening practices.

"It is one of many ways the Swan River Trust works with the community to help keep our rivers healthy," she said.

"Everyone in the community can be fertilise wise as well as water wise."



Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards, centre, checks out the Great Gardens Autumn Series at Garden Week with Chris Ferreira, left, John McWilliams, Garry Heady and Sabrina Hahn.

Mrs Yorke said the workshops were designed for specific locations, focusing on local residents' particular soil types and conditions.

The Great Gardens team provide tips, free product samples and practical advice, as well as information on gardening practices that minimise environmental impact.

Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards launched the Great Gardens Autumn Series at the opening of Garden Week, where mini Great Gardens workshops were held for the first time this year.

The workshops started in Gosnells and continue throughout the suburbs during autumn. Contact the Great Gardens hotline on 9210 2789 or www.greatgardens.info to register or find out more information.

### Greening the Cleaning Industry

WA cleaning services are estimated to produce at least one million litres of liquid waste daily.

This waste has the potential to harm the Swan and Canning rivers if it is not managed properly.

The Swan River Trust, Building Service Contractors Association of Australia WA Division and Department of Environment are developing a Green Stamp Environmental Accreditation Program to encourage and help businesses in the cleaning services industry achieve environmental best practice.

Swan-Canning Industry project coordinator Carlie Slodecki said 10 cleaning businesses, ranging from owneroperator carpet cleaners to national cleaning companies, were currently participating in a 12-month trial of the program.

Participants explored the environmental management and cleaner production processes that could realistically be implemented and how that information would be passed onto the cleaning services industry.

Ms Slodecki said participants recently attended a workshop to develop 'Greener Cleaning' Action Plans.

"The workshop was a great success," she said.

"Participants identified their environmental impacts and ways to implement management actions to comply with environmental legislation and improve environmental performance." Green Stamp was originally developed in 1999 by the Department of Environment and the Motor Trades Association of WA and is now being extended to other industry sectors in WA.

Ms Slodecki said the Green Stamp Program was just one method to engage small to medium sized businesses in environmental management and cleaner production.

To find out about Green Stamp and other initiatives, contact Carlie Slodecki on 9374 3301.



Swan-Canning Industry project coordinator Carlie Slodecki, left, with Green Stamp cleaning services industry trial participants.

### Funding announced for Phosphorus Action Group

Perth's Phosphorus Action Group has received an additional \$40 000 from the Swan River Trust to play a more active environmental education role in schools and help regional catchment groups with their annual restoration projects.

Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards presented a cheque to group coordinator Amy Krupa at the launch of the 2004 Autumn River Festival.

The funding is part of the State Government's \$15 million commitment to improve the health of the Swan and Canning rivers, announced in January this year.



City of Bayswater deputy mayor Terry Kenyon, Phosphorus Action Group coordinator Amy Krupa and Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards at the Autumn River Festival.

# Algae barrier protects the river

It's curtains for potentially toxic algae trying to enter the Swan River, thanks to a new device recently installed at Maylands.

A 1.5 m deep floating algae curtain has been fitted to Tranby Lake to stop algae and algal scum from entering a drain that feeds into the river during overflows.

The project is funded through the Swan River Trust Nutrient Intervention Program that was kick-started with \$750 000 from the State Government last June. It is administered through the Trust's flagship Swan-Canning Cleanup Program with help from the Department of Environment.

Department aquatic science environmental officer Zoe Goss said the 5500 m2 lake was suffering from an

10th anniversary

accumulation of 40 years of sediment build-up from drains as well as nutrients from bird life in the area and the general

impact of human development.

"This is a prime example of what happens when things other than rain go down the drain," she said.

"The drain that feeds water from the lake to the river has been identified as a pointsource of blue-green algae.

"By installing a floating barrier across the width of the lake, algae cannot access the drain and pollute the river.

"Algae needs light to survive and therefore resides in the top section of water.

"By using a floating curtain, the top 1.5 m of water in the 4 m deep lake is always blocked from entering the drain but bottom water continues to flow so flooding is not an issue."

Ms Goss said the department had collected nutrient and sediment samples from the area and would continue to monitor

She said the algae curtain was a short-term solution to prevent potential algal blooms in the Swan River.

The sampling regime currently being conducted would result in valuable information when addressing future management and remediation options of the lake by the City of Bayswater.



Department of Environment aquatic science environmental officer Zoe Goss with the algae curtain at Tranby Lake.

Catchments, Corridors and Coasts On-ground work to save our rivers

More than \$450 000 was presented in January to 34 community environmental groups undertaking 95 projects as part of the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program.

Swan Catchment Council chair Sue Metcalf said community groups used SALP funding for on-ground revegetation and rehabilitation work in the Swan and Canning catchments.

"The community groups are the ones doing the work on the ground and SALP provides them with the money to

Ms Metcalf said SALP was established in 1998 to give community groups easy access to alternative funding.

The program is managed by the Swan Catchment Council and jointly funded by Alcoa World Alumina Australia and the Swan

"This is a unique partnership program that empowers the community we rely on so heavily to achieve on ground outcomes," Mrs Metcalf said.

Since its inception the SALP program has funded more than 400 projects worth more than \$2 million across the metropolitan

The State Government's announcement in January to provide an extra \$1.25 million over five years to the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program boosts the Swan River Trust's contribution to \$350 000 a year. This continued support was recognised by the Council in April when it provided the Trust with a certificate of thanks.

Busy year for new group It's full steam ahead for the recently formed

Swan-Canning Cleanup Proget The elected office bearers. The community-based urban landcare organisation formed in January 2004 by merging the Canning Plain and Belmont-Victoria Park catchment groups. It extended

Two Rivers Catchment Group and their newly-

both groups' previous boundaries to include catchments within the City of South Perth and the Shire of Kalamunda.

Group chairperson Rowena Skinner welcomed the new committee. She said the group aimed to ensure a coordinated and balanced approach for overseeing the delivery of environmental management, rehabilitation and behaviour change within its catchment area.

"This is already happening," Ms Skinner said. "We had a busy start to the year and there are more volunteer opportunities for community arising in the next few months."

On 18 March, the group collaborated with the City of Belmont and South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare to host 34 Year 10 students from the Paya Lebra Methodist Girls School, Singapore, on an environmental education and planting day at Tomato Lake.

The catchment group is also one of the partners in the Liege St Demonstration Wetland project, and project officer Tom Atkinson is busy coordinating planting, weed control and monitoring.

A workshop for the newly-formed Friends of Sir James Mitchell Park in South Perth will be facilitated by the catchment group on 2 May. Catchment support officer Michelle Crow said the

workshop was designed to help volunteers develop a shared dream for the park and prioritise on-ground activities.

Mr Atkinson and Ms Crow are based at the South East Region Centre for Urban Landcare and can be contacted through the website www.sercul.org.au or by phone on 9458 5664.

### Successful Heavenly Hectares and Property Planning workshops



More than 2000 rural and hobby landholders have attended Heavenly Hectares and Property Planning workshops since they began five years ago.

The WA Environment Awards 2003 finalist program was designed to educate landholders about how they could use a whole-of-farm approach to minimise the impact their farming practices had on the environment, including the Swan and Canning rivers.

Department of Agriculture development officer Nancye Gannaway and the Landcare Solutions team completed a successful autumn series in Perth, Armadale, Forrestfield, Caversham and Midland during March.

"There are more than ten thousand small landholdings, hobby farm or lifestyle properties in the Swan Canning Catchment that range from one to 50 hectares in size," Ms Gannaway said.

"These families and businesses are an important group and have a key role to play in keeping the Swan and Canning rivers

"Heavenly Hectares is important because many people are keen to do the right thing but they don't know where to go to get the right information and skills-Heavenly Hectares gives them the skills and starts them on this journey."

## Environmental best practice for Perth's parks and gardens



most of this is public open space, according to a new TurfSustain handbook launched in March by Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards.

protect vital groundwater resources and improve the health of the Swan and Canning rivers.

> The handbook will help municipal ers be more efficient with ising and watering turf on reserves, reation areas and ovals.

> > It is estimated that parks and gardens use about 10 per cent of Perth's groundwater, or 48 GL a year," Dr Edwards said.

"Research has shown that wellmanaged turf that is efficiently irrigated and fertilised appropriately, does not negatively impact on the environment.

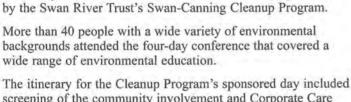
State Government is to meet its target to reuse 20 per cent of our waste water by 2012."

The TurfSustain handbook is a new initiative of the Swan River Trust's environmental flagship, the Swan-Canning Cleanup

TurfSustain was developed as a partnership project with the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council, Parks and Leisure Australia, the Phosphorous Action Group, and consultants Sports Turf Technology, with the help of Lotterywest and the Department of Environment.



Swan River Trust deputy chairman Rod Willox, left, City of Bayswater Mayor Lou Magro, Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards and Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council chair Elizabeth Taylor at the launch of the TurfSustain manual.



The 10th Catchments, Corridors and Coasts conference was held

in January, and included a river care and water day sponsored

screening of the community involvement and Corporate Care Day videos, an algae in the Swan and Canning rivers presentation, hands-on work with Ribbons of Blue/Waterwatch WA, a demonstration of the Swan Estuary Physical Model at the University of WA Centre for Water Research, and discussions about the Swan River Action Kit and Great Gardens workshops.



Department of Environment aquatic science principal environmental officer Tom Rose, centre, talks to conference participants about the Swan River.

There is more than 13 500 ha of turf in metropolitan Perth and

TurfSustain was developed to encourage local governments to

Local Governments can implement river-friendly practices by using the TurfSustain manual that was launched in March.

"Proper fertilisation and watering without waste is essential if the

### AUTUMN

### Swan River focus of Autumn River Festival

More than 10 000 people enjoyed beautiful warm weather at the 2004 Autumn River Festival on March 28.

The annual festival was sponsored by the Swan River Trust and held on the banks of the Swan River at Belmont, Maylands and Bayswater.

This is the first year that the popular Great Gardens workshops were held at the festival.











Hundreds of people spent time talking to Trust representatives about the environment and what they could do to Help Keep Our Rivers Healthy. Children of all ages enjoyed learning about waste disposal by playing the popular Drain Game that was run by local Scouts.

During the past few months the Trust has been involved in a myriad of community events. Check out the photos on this page to see just some of the action in the catchment.











#### Photos

- 1 Trust chairman Charlie Welker presents the Toxic Cup to Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club representatives in commemoration of the microsystis algal bloom in 2000.
- 2 The Swanfish competition was an event for the whole family, and registration was a great time to remind people of the link between the catchments and the rivers.
- 3 Trust communications officer Kerrin Simmonds with Michael and Jarrad Symes who helped collect 68 bags of rubbish at Point Walter on Cleanup Australia Day.
- 4 Trust manager Rod Hughes, chairman Charlie Welker and Board member Pat Hart attended the artificial wetlands opening at Point Fraser.
- 5, 6 National Australia Bank staff braved extremely hot conditions to participate in a Corporate Care Day at Piney Lakes Environmental Centre with the Bannister Creek Catchment Group.
- 7, 8 Minister for the Environment Dr Judy Edwards opened the Channel 9 Garden Week 2004, where Phosphorus Action Group coordinator Amy Krupa spread the word about the importance of minimising fertilisers in the garden.
- 9 The Autumn River Festival was a huge success where many people took the opportunity to participate in a Great Gardens workshop.
- 10, 11 The Trust entered two teams in the Lord Mayor's Cup corporate rowing regatta, and provided the trophy for the women's final.
- 12 Trust acting principal assessments officer Peter Tapsell and Department of Environment senior environmental officer Natasha Hyde completed the Bridges Fun Run.





### Canning River System flows in spotlight

Investigations into the health of the Canning River System have revealed the water flows have changed significantly since the construction of supply dams.

The preliminary study to determine ecological water requirements also found that modified flow regime has contributed to the degradation of ecological values, loss of river power and flooding flows.

Canning Environmental Flows Project coordinator Leanne Hartley said water had been released to maintain summer flows in the Canning River from the Water Corporation's scheme water supply pipelines since the 1940s.

"While these releases have ensured sufficient flows for irrigation and stock watering, they have not necessarily provided sufficient flow for the environment," she said.

"The Department of Environment, in partnership with the Swan Catchment Council and the Swan River Trust, have started a project to develop environmental water provisions for the Canning River System by 2006.

"A technical working group is developing and implementing an environmental flows investigation and monitoring program."

Ms Hartley said a community-based Steering Committee was established last August, with members representing social, environmental, economic and indigenous interests within the Canning Catchment.

She said the community was also involved through a series of community workshops held in December last year.

"Feedback from the community
workshops suggested that most people
wanted the Canning River to be healthy
—with less algal blooms and weeds and
more healthy riparian vegetation—while
maintaining public, recreational and



A release valve allowing scheme water to provide flows to the Canning River.

passive use areas as well as riparian rights," Ms Hartley said.

"Local community landcare groups and local government authorities will play an important role in the project where river restoration is being carried out."

"This is likely to include using restoration techniques such as placing large woody debris along the river to help improve ecological values of the river and maximise the benefits of the water being released."

### Riverbank and foreshores restored

Removing debris from the riverbank and replenishing sand are all in a day's work for the Swan River Trust field crew.

The field crew joined forces with the City of Perth in February to remove building rubble and debris used as landfill along the Swan River foreshore near the causeway.

The work was partly funded by the Trust's River*Bank* program, designed to restore and protect riverbanks and foreshores.

Trust operational staff used a crane, several excavators and a front end loader to remove about 275 tonne of concrete and debris from between Trinity College and Claisebrook Cove in East Perth.

Trust site manager David Färdig said many of the concrete blocks weighed between four and five tonnes each.

"The foreshore was used for landfill many years ago," he said.

"Our task was to move the debris to a registered landfill site so the public amenity and aesthetic values of the foreshore were enhanced." It was a case of replacing rather than removing in Fremantle, where sand was added to the Fremantle Rowing Club steps in the Swan River to address erosion.

Trust field crew relocated 108 cubic metres of river sand from the Point Walter Spit to the rowing club in mid-February.

This work followed on from sand replenishment along many of Perth's favourite river beaches so people could use them during summer.



Trust RiverBank environmental officer Roweena Hart and site manager David Färdig inspecting building rubble being removed from the Swan River foreshore.

### Environmental educators workshop

Social change was the focus of a two-day workshop held at the Swan Catchment Centre in March.

The Swan River Trust helped the Swan Catchment Centre bring Les Robinson from Melbourne to facilitate the Enabling Change workshop. It was attended by more than 30 environmental educators from local catchment and environment groups.

The skills presented will help local environment groups engage with their community, increase participation, change behaviour and achieve positive environmental education results.

### New website

The Swan River Trust is relocating its website to www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au.

The new site will be easier to use and include even more information on Trust initiatives and ways you can help keep our rivers healthy.



### Houseboat trial review

Public submissions are being accepted on the commercial houseboat trial on the Swan River.

Swan River Trust approval for a five-year trial lapses this December.

Trust acting principal assessments officer Peter Tapsell said the trial was approved by the Swan River Trust in 1999 and operated upstream of the Causeway bridges to Middle Swan Road Bridge.

"Several river moorings were installed to provide overnight mooring of the houseboats," he said.

"The trial was initiated to provide alternative family holiday accommodation on a hire and self drive basis on the Swan River."

Plans detailing the trial location and other relevant information are available for inspection in the planning section of the Swan River Trust website www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au.

Documents can also be viewed in hard copy at the Trust or the City of Belmont offices during business hours.

Submissions should be made in writing, addressed to Trust manager Rod Hughes, and lodged with the Trust by close of business on 30 June 2004.

### What's on May-June 2004

#### MAY

- Working with nature when to plant and when not to, Arthritis Centre, Shenton Park, 9am-3pm.
- How to promote your group—and get the results you want, Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, Wembley, 5-8.30pm

### JUNE

- 5 World Environment Day
- Foundation Day.
- 10 Fostering Sustainable Behaviour Change workshop presented by Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr, Piney Lakes Environment Centre.
- Fostering Sustainable Behaviour Change workshop presented by Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr, Piney Lakes Environment Centre
- 11 Arbour Day.
- 12 Exploring Ecosystems (advanced), Henderson Environment Centre, 10am-3.30pm.
- Fostering Sustainable Behaviour Change workshop presented by Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr, Piney Lakes Environment Centre.
- 19 Getting started and keeping your community group going (beginners), Department of Conservation and Land Management, Kensington, 10am-1pm.
- Call for Swan-Alcoa Landcare Program funding applications. Contact the Swan Catchment Centre on 9374 3333.
- TBA Call for local government Riverbank funding applications. Contact the Swan River Trust on 9278 0400.



#### Wanneroo:

City of Wanneroo Civic Centre, Dundebar Road Wanneroo.

Wednesday, 19 May, 1-4pm.

### Leederville:

Town of Vincent Administration Centre, Vincent Street.

Sunday, 23 May, 9am-12noon. Sunday, 23 May, 3-6pm.

### Mundaring:

Shire of Mundaring Civic Centre, 7000 Great Eastern Highway.

Friday, 28 May, 6-9pm.

## Fishing brochure available in three languages

The popular free Fishing for a Healthy River brochure is now available in traditional Chinese and Vietnamese as well as English.

Commonly referred to as the 'digging for bait' brochure, it has also been updated and is available on the Swan River Trust website

www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au or by contacting the Trust on 9278 0400.



Check out where and how you can dig for bait and how to conserve the environment while fishing.



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Phone: (08) 9278 0400 Fax: (08) 9278 0401

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