



In this issue

WA prepares for coming fire season

Regional Services Division managers' annual meeting a success

LANDSCOPE calendar comes of age

Volunteers save 200-year-old grass tree

News in brief

- Commitment to Kimberley parks

Walpole kids explore parks

Girl guides enjoy Parks and Wildlife facilities

WA prepares for coming fire season

ON 21 August DPaW joined various agencies to take part in a Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) coordinated state bushfire exercise, designed to test WA's ability to respond to large fires.

The exercise was based on the following scenario: it is Australia Day 2014, there is a total fire ban and people are expected to be heading to national parks, beaches and the fireworks shows in the evening... enter six uncontrolled fires in the south-west.

DPaW Senior Fire Operations Officer Greg Broomhall was part of the exercise development committee and helped assess the day from a statewide perspective.

"The scenario involved six fire incidents occurring simultaneously around the south-west, with a level three fire in Kalamunda," he said.

"These were large and threatening fires, with their management involving multiple agencies. A level three fire is the highest ranking possible, and is based on the fire's complexity, risk to the community, difficulty to suppress and resources required.

"The purpose of the exercise was to prepare for large bushfires requiring a multi-agency response prior to the coming fire season, and to test the ability to coordinate the response at a regional and state level."

The exercise was carried out as if it was a real event, with Incident Management Teams



Police Emergency Coordinator Stephen Byrne (left) and Deputy Incident Controller Benson Todd providing a media conference at the evacuation centre in Kalamunda.

set up at fire sites in Wanneroo, Kalamunda, Albany, Geraldton and Bridgetown, and Incident Support Groups set up with local shires, WA Police, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Western Power and local industry groups.

The practice scenario also involved evacuation centers being set up, with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Red Cross, and St John staff looking after 'distressed residents', portrayed by a large contingent of actors.

One of many DPaW participants, Perth Hills District Manager Benson Todd took on the role of Deputy Incident Controller at the Kalamunda 'fire'.

"It was a fantastic opportunity for all involved to gain working knowledge of the Incident Management System and become more familiar with their roles within the system," he said.

"Senior staff from all agencies were present, providing useful feedback in what was a very dynamic and fluid learning environment."

The exercise was also used to assess DFES's operational doctrine.

Published by the Department of Parks and Wildlife's Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Division

Editor Joanna Adele

Contributors Cat Jack, Gemma Taavale, Claudia Simpson, Emily Jowett-Blinman, Emma O'Leary, Nigel Higgs, Claudine Ledwidge-O'Reilly and Mitzi Vance

Design and production Natalie Curtis

Telephone (08) 9389 4000

Email pwn@dpaw.wa.gov.au



Department of Parks and Wildlife



Regional Services Division managers' annual meeting a success

MANAGERS from around the state recently had the opportunity to share ideas and collectively contribute to strategic directions early in the life of the department at the annual Regional Services Division managers' meeting.

The three-day meeting, held in Mandurah from 30 July to 1 August, highlighted the diversity of work undertaken by DPaW and comprised various workshops and presentations. These covered a range of topics including regional park management, Indigenous joint management, compliance and enforcement, risk management, traineeships, prescribed burning, and key nature conservation priorities such as dieback management and the biodiversity audit.

Director Regional Services Peter Dans was pleased with the meeting's outcomes.

"Nine regional managers, 16 district managers, two branch managers and the executive office staff came together and examined the critical issues and challenges facing the division," he said.

Peter said a new workshop format, which replaced the standard one-way presenter style, worked very well.

"The new approach gave managers the opportunity to discuss in-depth a range of challenging issues relevant to their day-to-day work, and as a result we identified how service delivery can be



Attendees at the Regional Services Division managers' meeting.

maximised in line with the department's new strategic directions," he said.

One of the few presenters was the department's chaplain, Steve Bradfield, who spoke on the management of critical incidents. His insights included how staff, both as individuals and collectively, can best manage critical incidents and make the most of the opportunities presented when responding to change.

Steve said the meeting was a great opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities faced by employees on the frontline of the organisation.

"Since starting as the department's chaplain in January I have become aware of the crucial and often challenging role regional staff play as the public face of the organisation," he said.

"Our colleagues are frequently faced with situations such as fire, visitor search and rescue, wildlife rescue and extreme heat, not to mention vandalism and unruly behaviour.

"As a result of dealing with these situations employee morale can suffer, and it is imperative that we do everything we can to provide support through counselling, supportive leadership and employee engagement opportunities."

Steve highlighted the importance and value of 'mateship' at a peer level within DPaW, emphasising that peer support gained through workplace friendships is often one of the most significant factors in effectively dealing with challenging situations.



LANDSCOPE calendar comes of age



THE WESTERN Australia calendar presented by LANDSCOPE magazine is celebrating its 21st year in production, with the 2014 edition now available for purchase.

The calendar features stunning images of WA's landscapes, plants and animals, taken by some of the state's top photographers.

To celebrate the 21st birthday milestone, the calendar includes four postcards beautifully illustrated by DPaW's Senior Graphic Design Gooitzen van der Meer, whose designs can often be seen gracing the front cover of LANDSCOPE magazine. Customers buying the calendar direct from DPaW will also receive a free pocket-sized guidebook from the department's 'Discovering' series.

With hundreds of calendars available on the market, Sales and Distribution Manager Cathy Birch attributed the calendar's ongoing success to its stunning photographs and high quality design and production.

"For some customers purchasing a copy of the calendar has become tradition, with many sending the calendar to family or friends overseas," she said.

continued page 3 ...

Volunteers save 200-year-old grass tree

A HUGE grass tree has been returned to its position in Wellington National Park thanks to volunteers from the South West Four Wheel Drive Club (SW4WDC).

The grass tree was found by DPaW national park rangers several metres off Leonard Track. It had been pushed onto its side and, from appearances, a vehicle had driven off the track and onto the fragile embankment, crushing bushes and shrubs, scraping bark off trees and uprooting the grass tree.

National Park Ranger Jamie Gault said the grass tree was nearly three metres tall, with five separate 'heads' and had an estimated age of 200 years.

"Grass trees are very slow growing plants and a magnificent example such as this—especially located in this ancient and fragile part of the Collie River Valley—is worth every effort to protect," he said.

"Due to recent wet weather, the grass tree had an excellent chance of survival so DPaW park rangers in cooperation with SW4WDC began a rescue operation. The aim was to reposition the tree and restore the surrounding damaged bushland."

SW4WDC environmental officer Pam White said the club had 'adopted' Lennard Track five years ago and members were shocked and disappointed to hear of the vandalism and damage to the area.

"Within a fortnight, we had organised nine volunteers onsite with all the required lifting, digging and positioning equipment needed for this sensitive operation," she said.

"Relocating the grass tree took the



Volunteers use winches to manoeuvre the grasstree back in place.

concerted effort of all members of the group using hand winches, tree trunk protectors and winch extension straps. The entire operation took about five hours, but by the end of the day the grass tree was upright and secure. The rest of the damaged area was rehabilitated and is on its way to a full recovery."

Jamie thanked SW4WDC for their assistance and ongoing support, and reminded the public that four-wheel driving in Wellington

National Park was dependent on seasonal conditions.

The club works to encourage respectful use of Lennard Track and on its maintenance, enabling DPaW to keep the track open for more of the year.

DPaW encourages people to be responsible when driving and enjoying areas of significance. Members of the public wishing to be involved in maintaining Lennard Track should contact SW4WDC, or DPaW in Collie on (08) 9735 1988.

News in brief

Commitment to Kimberley parks

The new State Budget has provided additional funding for the establishment and management of new marine and national parks in the north Kimberley.

This allocation of a further \$15 million boosts funding for conservation in the region to an unprecedented \$80.5 million.

The new funds will support the expansion of the Great Kimberley Marine Park, the creation of a national park at the internationally recognised Horizontal Falls, and the establishment of what will be Australia's biggest national park.

For more information see the [full media statement](#).

from page 2 ...

"The fact that so many people purchase the calendar to give as a gift, as well as to display in their own home, is a terrific compliment to the designers and photographers.

"It really demonstrates that people appreciate a quality product."

The calendar is part of the *WA Naturally* range available from DPaW. This range covers a wide selection of products, from children's books about rescuing whales and exploring the tuart woodlands, to excellent field guides and books such as *Rediscover Perth outdoors* and *Exploring Western Australia's natural wonders*.

To order a Western Australia 2014 calendar call (08) 9334 0481 or email customer.service@dpaw.wa.gov.au. To view publications from the *WA Naturally* range visit the DPaW shop online at shop.dpaw.wa.gov.au. If ordering a calendar online please enter your free 'Discovering' title in the notes section.

Walpole kids explore parks



Students from Walpole Primary School enjoy place-based learning as part of 'UR Walpole'.

INTERPRETATION Officer Claudia Simpson has been working with children at Walpole Primary School as part of a place-based learning initiative 'UR Walpole'.

Place-based learning uses student's local environment as one of the primary teaching resources, creating education that focuses on the unique history, environment and culture of their community.

DPaW's Frankland District team are strong supporters of this community education program run by Walpole Primary School, with Claudia developing activities that are hands-on, project based and locally focused.

"Above all my aim has been to create activities that are engaging and provide lots of outdoor fun," Claudia said.

As part of the program Claudia, Marine Park Coordinator Shaun Ossinger and Marine Park Ranger Justin Ettridge took the students on

an excursion to the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park.

"This type of learning takes students out of the classroom and into nature using real life examples," Claudia said.

"They were able get involved by tasting, touching and playing during the activities while they explored concepts such as salinity, aquatic photosynthesis and the effects of adding artificial and natural substances to our inlet systems."

Claudia said the program was proving successful at involving students in the life of their community and helping them become more aware of their local environment.

"We hope that this experience will make a difference to the well-being of the local community."

The 'UR Walpole' program is now being modelled for expansion into other schools.



The girl guides collecting water from trees.

Girl guides enjoy Parks and Wildlife facilities

THANKS to Emily Jowett-Blinman, age 11, for the following report of a girl guides trip to DPaW's Perth Hills Discovery Centre. **The camping trip, organised by DPaW Ministerial Liaison Officer Jane O'Neil in her role as a girl guides group leader, is a great example of people in the community enjoying time in the natural environment.**

On Friday 9 August the Midland and Mundaring Guides went to the camp site at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre. We arrived at 5pm and put our tents up with the help of our parents. For dinner we had spaghetti bolognese and then went on a possum-watching walk but unfortunately there were no possums. Then we came back and there was cake and custard for desert.

The next morning at 7am we all got up. We got dressed and had breakfast which was pancakes and a variety of cereal and toast with vegemite or jam. Then we cleaned our teeth and did each other's hair.

That morning we had Bob come to camp to teach us bush survival skills. We had some morning tea with Bob and he showed us some equipment for lighting a fire and also his bush survival kit, which was just bigger than a soap box and had more than 40 things in it. We also learned how to collect water from trees using plastic bags and string and we made our own string from a plant.

After showers and a delicious dinner we put on some super warm clothes and went to the campfire. It was too wet to light the campfire but we still sang some songs until it started raining. We had supper, cleaned our teeth and went to bed.

When we woke up we had to pack our bags so we could have breakfast, then we put down our tents and did a treasure hunt. After lunch it was time for a 'guides own' exercise and then camp was over.