



**PARKS AND
WILDLIFE**

NEWS

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Director General appointed for Parks and Wildlife



Jim Sharp has been appointed to the position of Director General of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob recently made the announcement and congratulated Jim on his appointment.

"Jim has successfully led the formation of the new department from its inception and I acknowledge his professionalism and support in implementing the State Government's initiative," he said.

Mr Jacob said that with more than 40 years' experience in the government sector, Jim had

a broad knowledge and experience of parks policy and management at a State, national and international level. He also brought considerable skills in engaging in partnerships with parks and conservation stakeholders and community interests.

Jim said he had greatly enjoyed acting as Director General of Parks and Wildlife during the past nine months and looked forward to continuing in the role.

"The dedication and support of staff during this significant period of change has been greatly appreciated," he said.

One of Jim's first actions as Director General was to invite employees to participate in planning the strategic directions of the department for the next three years.

"I aim to visit as many of our workplaces as possible over the coming year so that I can meet with employees and personally discuss the exciting directions that we will be taking," he said.

"I look forward to continue working with all staff in the future."



Director General Jim Sharp (right) recently visited the Swan Coastal District staff at the department's Wanneroo office. Left to right: Environment Minister Albert Jacob, Mitch Borgogno, Marko Serra, Steve Busby, Stef Cannon, Shaun Anderson, Adam Edwards, Tim Gregson and Jim Sharp. Photo – Jeremy Preston/DPaW

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Department of
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New-look *LANDSCOPE* released

LANDSCOPE, the department's 29-year-old magazine, has been redesigned with a contemporary new look and interesting new features.

LANDSCOPE editor and long-time contributor Rhianna King said she was delighted to receive the first printed copies of the Autumn 2014 issue.

"This new look is the result of significant consultation with Parks and Wildlife staff and our readers with the aim of redesigning the magazine to reflect the new department," she said.

"This included reader surveys and interviews with key staff to ensure that any changes we made to the magazine reflected what our loyal readers wanted as well as attracting new readers."

"*LANDSCOPE* has a significant role in the magazine market as the only

publication of its kind to communicate the work of the department and its partners in an entertaining, informative and engaging way."

Rhianna said probably the most obvious difference of the new-look magazine was the use of photographs on the cover.

"*LANDSCOPE* has carried the beautiful work of renowned botanical artist Philippa Nikulinsky and Parks and Wildlife senior graphic designer Gooitzen van der Meer, as well as others, for more than two decades but the redesign showcases some of our spectacular plants, animals and landscapes with photographs," she said.

"The magazine has a new section, called 'Nature's pin-up', which features the work of local artists."

Rhianna said the magazine, which was designed based on concepts by design

and production coordinator Natalie Curtis, boasted a number of other new features.

"In response to feedback, we've also introduced a section for shorter news articles, a page dedicated to new discoveries, more profiles about notable people in conservation and more stories about our natural areas and the things people can do in them," she said.

"We're always looking for story ideas and for people to contribute articles."

Sales and distribution manager Cathy Birch said staff and qualifying volunteers received a complimentary subscription and a 20 per cent discount on gift subscriptions by contacting the front counter at Kensington.

Please contact Rhianna King on (08) 9219 9903 or email landscape@dpaw.wa.gov.au with your story ideas and feed back.



The team behind *LANDSCOPE*'s new look. Left to right: sales and distribution manager Cathy Birch, senior graphic designers Mandy Pike, Tiffany Taylor and Gooitzen van der Meer and editor and features writer Rhianna King. Absent: design and production coordinator Natalie Curtis.



Penguin Island's newest addition

Staff at the department's Penguin Island Discovery Centre have successfully hand raised a newborn penguin chick after its parents struggled to cope with feeding demands.

The 13-week-old chick, named Noorook (an Aboriginal word for egg), was re-introduced to the centre earlier this month, as part of the island's dedicated wildlife interaction program that raises visitor awareness of the vulnerability of the little penguin population.

Penguin Island Discovery Centre supervisor Jane Dawson said hand raising the captive-

bred little penguin initially involved fish smoothie feeds every two hours.

"Noorook had a rocky start to life since hatching in November but he is now flourishing," Jane said.

"The arrival of Noorook has excited staff and visitors and watching his progress has once again reinforced the importance of the population.

"By the time a little penguin reaches 10 weeks of age it is fully grown, which is why we waited a while to introduce Noorook to other penguins in the group. Noorook has

been spending an hour each day mingling to help with the transition."

The little penguin is the world's smallest penguin species, standing about 40cm tall and weighing about 1kg. It is also the only penguin to breed in Australia.

"Their average lifespan is between seven and 10 years," Jane said.

"However, of the eight little penguins we have at the centre, seven are between the ages of 11 and 21."

Penguin Island is home to more than 400 breeding pairs of little penguins.

New guide to marine wildlife

A new edition of a guide for identifying north-west marine wildlife has been produced, featuring information about sea turtles and other key species.

Launching the latest edition of the guide recently, Environment Minister Albert Jacob said it was available as a durable, water-proof booklet for boaters, and as an online download.

"This is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in Western Australia's remarkable marine wildlife," he said.

"The new publication includes added pages about nesting and hatching turtles, estuarine crocodiles and the red-tailed tropicbird.

"This adds to existing material on whales, dolphins, fish and birdlife found in marine waters from Shark Bay Marine Park to the Northern Territory border.

"A map of WA's marine parks and reserves has also been updated to reflect new and proposed marine park areas being created as part of the State Government's \$81.5 million Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy."

Produced by the Department of Parks and Wildlife with financial support from ExxonMobil Australia, the identification guide replaces a popular earlier version published in May 2011.

The Minister said the booklet provided important information about significant or threatened marine fauna and ways the public could assist with conserving marine life.

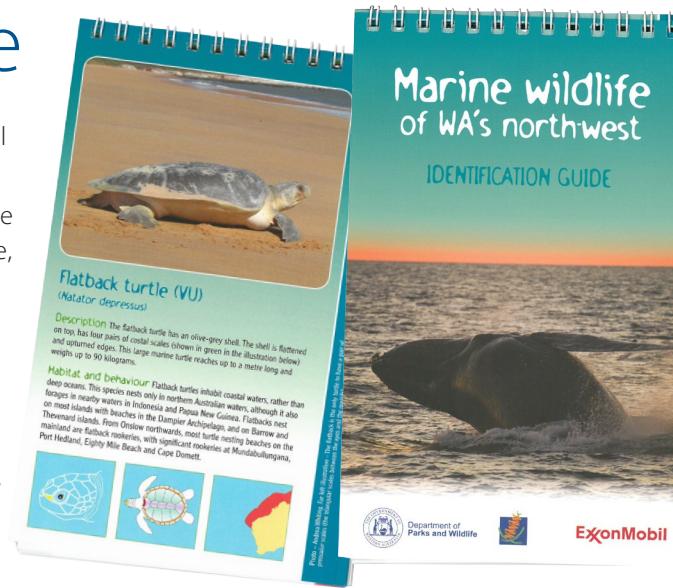
"Visitation to our north-west continues to increase with a broader understanding

of the region's beauty and unique natural environment," he said.

"The guide helps raise awareness of the north-west's marine values and wildlife, and appropriate behaviour by boaters and fishers."

The guide can be downloaded at www.marineparks.wa.gov.au.

Hard copy versions are available from Parks and Wildlife offices in Kununurra, Broome, Karratha, Exmouth and the Jurabi Turtle Centre.



Marine ranger Erina Young with Broome tourists Toni Schumann and Wilhelm Hoogen checking out the new marine wildlife guide.

News in brief

Public comment sought for Swan Coastal plan

The Conservation Commission of Western Australia has released the *Swan Coastal Plain South draft management plan 2014* for public comment.

The plan covers 81 existing conservation reserves on the southern part of the Swan Coastal Plain, totalling about 21,000ha, and considers more than 4,000ha of adjacent lands for addition to the conservation reserve system.

Conservation Commission chairman Brian Easton said the area lies within the internationally recognised south-west Australian 'biodiversity hotspot' characterised by high endemism among plant and reptiles.

"With the highest population density in Western Australia, it is important that the natural areas of the southern part of the Swan Coastal Plain are managed carefully," he said.

For more information or to view the plan visit the Parks and Wildlife website. Public submissions are open until 30 May 2014.

Grants available for banksia woodland projects

Community groups interested in restoring banksia woodland in the greater Perth area are being invited to apply for funding to help enhance the habitat of rare species.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob said \$300,000 was available under the State Government's Banksia Woodlands Restoration Program to assist volunteers to manage and conserve important bushland.

Grants range between \$5,000 and \$20,000 for projects undertaken between 1 June 2014 and 30 September 2016.

For more information read the full media statement. The closing date for applications is 14 April 2014.

Goldfields herbarium relocated

The Goldfields Reference Herbarium with its valuable plant specimen collection has been moved to its new home at the Department of Parks and Wildlife in Kalgoorlie.

The herbarium contains about 1700 specimens collected from local reserves and former pastoral leases managed by the department, plus collections donated by renowned botanist Ken Newbey and the old Western Mining Corporation.



Parks and Wildlife conservation officer Jennifer Jackson said the herbarium played an important role helping people to identify regional plants.

"Landowners might have a tree or shrub growing on their property and want to know what it is, or consultants could use the herbarium if they are surveying an area," Jennifer said.

In use for 20 years, the reference herbarium had operated from the Department of Agriculture and Food office in Kalgoorlie before being relocated to the Parks and Wildlife office recently. The herbarium is open to the public from Monday to Friday.

Jennifer said she was keen to recruit some new volunteers to assist at the herbarium.

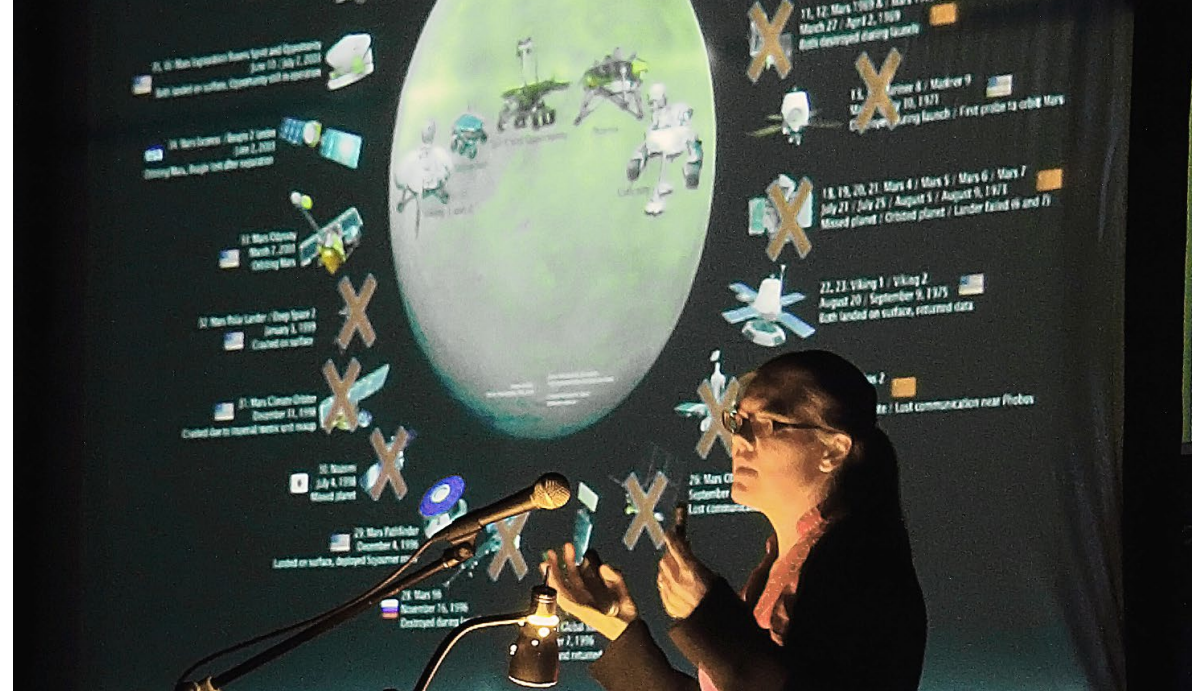
"This is a great time to engage local people and get volunteers on board to help manage this important community resource," she said.

"We are keen to bring the herbarium up to a standard consistent with other regional herbaria.

"A volunteer could do jobs such as specimen mounting and preparation, cataloguing, data entry and general upkeep."

Anyone interested in becoming a herbarium volunteer, or in more information, can contact Jennifer Jackson on 9080 5555 or email Jennifer.jackson@dpaw.wa.gov.au.

Conservation officer Jennifer Jackson using the herbarium.



Mars and music feature at observatory lecture

There were stars on the ground as well as in the sky at the annual summer lecture at the Perth Observatory, as guests were entertained by an array of musical talent while they picnicked in the twilight on the observatory's back lawn.

An appreciative audience of more than 200 soaked up classical upbeat melodies performed by the group Effulgent, who lived up to their name, shining brightly throughout the evening's opening performance that included the theme music of *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

The evening continued with a performance by Perth Observatory volunteer Megan Ladbrook, who sang classical

works before concluding with the theme song to TV's *The Big Bang Theory* and *Monty Python's The Galaxy Song*.

For the past two years, Curtin University's husband-and-wife team of Professors Phil Bland and Gretchen Benedix-Bland (pictured above) have captivated audiences at the observatory with their knowledge of solar system history.

This year, Professor Benedix-Bland, senior lecturer in Geology and Geophysics, gave a fascinating insight into the evolution of Mars during her lecture 'Mars Today and its Geology'.

She explained how asteroid impacts on Mars in the past have been powerful enough to blast

fragments of Martian rock up through the thin atmosphere and out into space, and that some of these have landed on Earth as meteorites.

Perth Observatory astronomical officer Greg Lowe said Perth was privileged to have two such internationally renowned astro-scientists based in the city.

"It was so encouraging to see so many amateur astronomers and other astronomy buffs attend the lecture," he said.

"The observatory has been holding these lectures for more than 20 years. Visitors have been able to experience outdoor lectures and cosmic picture shows, learning a thing or two about the marvels of the universe from astronomical experts."