



PARKS AND WILDLIFE NEWS

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Campaign promotes bushfire readiness

Parks and Wildlife has joined forces with cricketer great Justin Langer, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Western Power, local governments and volunteer firefighters to launch this summer's 'Are You Ready?' bushfire campaign.

Mr Langer fronts the public safety campaign as Western Australia's new Bushfire Ready Ambassador.

The campaign, launched on 19 October 2014, drives home the message that preparing for bushfires is a shared responsibility and that all Western Australians need to prepare their homes and property before the hot weather sets in.

The campaign was launched by Premier Colin Barnett, Environment Minister Albert Jacob, Emergency Services Minister Joe Francis and Energy Minister Mike Nahan.

Parks and Wildlife firefighters Tom Robinson and Renee Leaver represented the department in the television advertisement.

Tom said it was good to see the department being recognised for the role it plays in fire management.

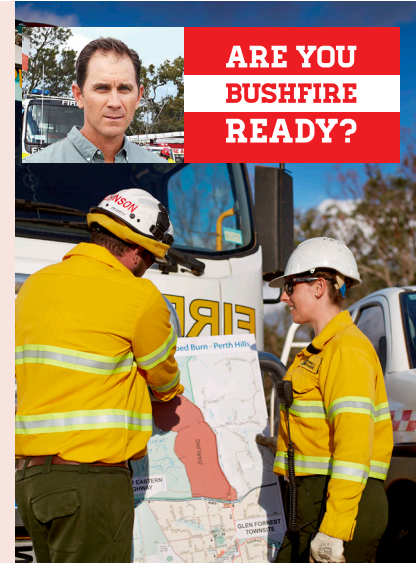
"I hope the advert raises the profile of bushfire awareness in the community," he said.

"Working in the Perth Hills District we are often involved in multi-agency fires where the community is impacted and I have seen first-hand how a well prepared property can survive a bushfire."

Renee said it was important that everybody got involved.

"We live in a highly fire-prone environment no matter if you live in the south or north of the State. The campaign is about encouraging people to create a protectable environment, not only for themselves but for the whole community," she said.

Visit www.areasready.wa.gov.au for more information about preparing your house.



Inset Justin Langer fronts this year's 'Are You Ready?' bushfire preparedness campaign.

Above Parks and Wildlife firefighters Tom Robinson and Renee Leaver on set to film the television advert. Photo – Brand Agency

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Department of Parks and Wildlife



Department wins Premier's Award

A key Parks and Wildlife conservation project has been recognised with a 2014 Premier's Award.

The 'Protecting the nature of the Kimberley' project won the Managing the Environment category of the awards on Wednesday 5 November.

Established in 1996, the *Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management* recognise and reward outstanding performance and achievements in public service to the community.

Acting Director General Peter Dans said the Kimberley project was part of the Landscape Conservation Initiative, WA's largest ever conservation project.

"The project involves managing fire, feral animals and invasive plants across more than 6.5 million hectares of the Kimberley and takes a science-based approach to management, integrating contemporary science with traditional Aboriginal practices and knowledge," Peter said.

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Landscape Conservation Initiative program coordinator Amanda Moncrieff said it was fantastic to have the project recognised with such a prestigious, high-profile award.

"It's been a big focus not only for the regional staff in the Kimberley, but for staff across the State," Amanda said.

"I want to thank everyone who has been involved, including operational, fire management and nature conservation staff across the Kimberley Region, with significant support from Parks and Visitor Services and Science and Nature Conservation Division.

"This award is a credit to their hard work, dedication and professionalism in implementing operations in incredible yet often remote and challenging field conditions."

"I would also like to acknowledge our partners, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and the Kimberley Land Council, who in collaboration with

Parks and Wildlife have undertaken significant fire management programs across the Kimberley. Parks and Wildlife has worked with these groups over the past three years to plan and carry out many feral animal and weed control projects, both on and off land managed by the department."

The Landscape Conservation Initiative falls under the wider [Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy](#), a \$81.5 million investment for the long-term conservation and management of the Kimberley.

The Fitzgerald River National Park improvement project, a joint project between Main Roads Western Australia and Parks and Wildlife, was also named as a finalist in the Premier's Awards.

The project was a five-year, \$40 million investment in Fitzgerald River National Park to upgrade and develop roads and recreational sites. It was the biggest infrastructure project in Parks and Wildlife's and its predecessors' history.

Trip of a lifetime for Kimberley visitors

An interstate family with unique circumstances has thanked Parks and Wildlife staff and volunteers in the Kimberley for helping them have the trip of a lifetime as they toured the area visiting national parks and reserves.

Prior to their trip, the Wright-Smith family wrote to the department requesting access to national parks for their assistance dog Molly. The two-year-old golden retriever helps and accompanies their teenage daughter Tracey, who uses a wheelchair and requires 24-hour care for a disability. The department agreed, also waiving all park entry fees for the duration of their trip.

Following their return to New South Wales, Dianne Wright-Smith wrote:

"Dear Mr Sharp [Director Parks and Visitor Services],

I just wanted to write to you, to thank you for your personal understanding, help and encouragement to get us started on our adventure [...] We all enjoyed our trip in the Kimberley. Clive was, and is, exceptionally grateful for the opportunity to have done the trip.

[Parks and Visitor Services regional leader] Warren Mayers was very helpful; he told us about the best places to go to, where Tracey, Molly and I could have access or stay comfortably and safe, out of the sun and heat, while Clive explored areas that were too difficult for us to get to. We got to see the photos of these areas on the computer when he got back to us.

For a family like ours, that includes a person with a disability, often it is not only the person with the disability that misses out on seeing and experiencing such beautiful places as the Kimberley, but also the parent and the siblings.

Without help and understanding of people in authority, it all just gets too hard. In our situation with all the help afforded to us, it was possible, not only for Tracey, but for Clive and myself to enjoy the Kimberley also.

[Tourism and recreation officer] Kevin Smith sent a lot of information about the Kimberley Region and kept in touch with us while we were planning our trip.

We must also acknowledge all the help and encouragement we got along the way. [Overseer] Henry Corpus at Silent Grove gave us good advice and explained the park to us. [Senior ranger] AJ [Anthony Aiken] and his staff at Geikie Gorge helped us to access the barge and arranged for Molly to be minded.

Windjana Gorge was just a magic place. Erin Davis the ranger was wonderful to us. She is such an amazing person, she has a real empathy and understanding of people. Erin has a real interest and passion for the park. At Purnululu, [senior ranger] Adrian McKenzie gave us good advice about a good place to camp and what was available in the light of our circumstances.

Thanks again for your encouragement and help. We did go, we did see, and we really did enjoy the Kimberley region. It is an amazing place. Thank you."



Clive, Dianne and Tracey Wright-Smith, campground hosts Barry and Jeanette Ewers, ranger Erin Davis and Tracey's assistance dog Molly in Windjana Gorge National Park. Photo – Clive Wright-Smith

National Medals recognise fire staff

Sixty-eight dedicated staff were recognised early this month with the presentation of National Medals for service in fire management.

Acting Director General Peter Dans, on behalf of Environment Minister Albert Jacob, attended a ceremony

in the department's Kirup office on Tuesday 4 November to present Parks and Wildlife and Forest Products Commission staff with the awards.

Peter presented awards to personnel who had undertaken 15 years of service in a range of active roles in

fire management. In addition, clasps were awarded to personnel for each subsequent 10 years of service after their initial 15 years.

Staff within the department's South West Region and the Forest Products Commission were formally acknowledged, including officers from Harvey, Collie, Bunbury, Margaret River, Busselton, Nannup, Kirup and Donnybrook.

The awards represented more than 1600 years of service and were a fitting acknowledgement to the recipients for their dedicated service to community protection.

National Fire Medal and Clasp recipients Mick Zwart, Jim Green, Julie Proctor, Don Boothey, Robert Buckley, Steve Mills and Brad Commins.



Medal

Andrew Wall
 Peter Gibson
 Murray Mitchell
 Natasha Oke
 Iain Farmer
 Don Boothey
 Jeremy Chick
 Barry Fontana
 Peter Hope
 George Laws
 Stephen Mills
 Julianne Proctor
 Ben Tannock
 Stephen Tate
 Brian O'Hehir
 Dene Cullen
 Christina Gilbert
 Darren Harvey
 Colyn McKernan
 Mark Mullinger

Andrew Stone, FPC
1st Clasp
 Brad Bourke
 David Rawet
 Graeme Giudici
 Robert Hagan
 Peter Henderson
 Stephen Blythe
 John Carter
 Phillip Keeble
 Anthony O'Neil
 Terrence Roberts
 Malcolm Strange
 Shane Tyler
 Rory Neal
 James Allen
 Robert Brazell
 Alan Brown

Charles Chapman
 Ian Charchalis
 Peter Conlon
 Charles Downes
 Leon Price
 Brian Smith
 Edwin MacIntyer
 Gregory Hodgson, FPC
 Michael Wright, FPC
2nd Clasp
 Greg Mair
 Alexander Moylett
 Alfred Lorkiewicz
 Robert Chandler
 Robert Buckley (Medal, 1st and 2nd Clasp)
 Lloyd Cockman
 Brad Commins

Ronald Howes
 James Green
 Aubrey Schuts
 Michael Zwart
 Graeme Cole
 Peter Delaporte
 Thomas Kenneally
 Leonard Jarvis
 Frank Colyer
 Bryan Taylor
 Michael Fielden, FPC
 John Clarke, FPC (Medal, 1st and 2nd Clasp)
3rd Clasp
 James Craigie
 Terry Maher
 Ronald Winfield

Partnerships from the ground up

Parks and Wildlife's departmental ethos to work closely with the community is proving successful, with the head office in Kensington forming a strong new partnership with a local not-for-profit organisation.

Community organisation Intework, which provides community engagement programs and employment for people with disability, has taken the lead contract for ongoing garden maintenance works at the department's headquarters.

Fleet and works manager Craig Simpson said the partnership was a win-win situation.

"We were pleased to be able to engage a not-for-profit organisation that helps the community, and at the same time receive a great service across such a large site," he said.

Intework ADE business manager Paul Timms said he was happy to be working with Parks and Wildlife.

"The department shares many of the values that we have as an organisation, and our supported employees are enjoying the range of work tasks offered at the Kensington site," Paul said.

Craig said the change in service provider had been smooth, with the previous lead contractor, Lochness Landscaping Services, remaining on as a subcontractor for a portion of the works.

"Lochness has been instrumental in training and mentoring Intework, so this arrangement works well for all three parties," he said.



Parks and Wildlife fleet and works manager Craig Simpson, Intework staff Kylie Lowry, Paul Timms, Craig Abercrombie, Robert Guidi, Mathew Millar and Richard Casey with Lochness Landscaping Services managers John Troiano and Stuart McIntosh.



Conference focuses on *Parks for People* initiative

More than 120 staff from around the State gathered in Perth last month to attend the annual Parks Conference.

The conference, this year themed on the *Parks for People* initiative, gave staff an opportunity to discuss the latest in park management and the provision of tourism and recreation experiences for people in parks.

Parks and Visitor Services Director Peter Sharp said attendees heard from 27 speakers over the three-day conference, as well as taking part in field trips, hands-on seminars and networking events.

"Keynote speakers included Murdoch University's Susan Moore, the Fathering Project's Wayne Bradshaw and WAAAC Summit Chair Michael Hayden," Peter said.

"Acclaimed businesswoman and philanthropist Janet Holmes à Court closed the conference

with a personal account of the importance of encouraging children to play in the environment in order to develop a connection with nature as adults."

Peter said it was valuable for the department to come together to share ideas and achievements.

"It is important that we encourage and support the well-informed, highly motivated and enthusiastic staff working in parks," he said.

Peter said the conference was the perfect opportunity to present the annual Wayne Schmidt Award, which recognises outstanding achievement within parks management.

"This year's recipient was regional leader PVS Tim Foley from the Warren Region, who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and contribution across multiple aspects of the department's business for many years," Peter said.



Above Director General Jim Sharp with Wayne Schmidt Award winner Tim Foley.

Photo – Jeremy Flynn/Parks and Wildlife

Right Keynote speaker Professor Susan Moore from Murdoch University discusses the community values of the Kimberley coast.

Far right Keynote speaker Janet Holmes à Court speaking about the positive effects of children experiencing nature play.

Photos – Steve Csaba/Parks and Wildlife



A survey trip east of Eneabba has uncovered a pair of Carnaby's cockatoo nestling siblings. Volunteers, along with senior wildlife officer Rick Dawson, made the rare find in late September.

Rick said Carnaby's generally lay two eggs, but only five per cent of the second nestlings survive to fledge.

"These siblings are in very good health, with a good weight and have a good chance of survival. Normally second eggs are laid seven to eight days later but this pair were born 18 days apart – the oldest is 33 days old and the youngest is 15," he said.

"We were thrilled with this discovery and will be following their progress in the future."

Above The nestling siblings.

Photo – Rick Dawson/Parks and Wildlife



Biodiversity survey gathers valuable data

Surveys of animals and plants in key locations throughout the Kimberley are providing important information to help conserve the region's biodiversity.

The annual survey program, run by Parks and Wildlife and local Aboriginal ranger groups, is part of the Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy and the Cane Toad Initiative for Western Australia 2014–19.

Teams visited Windjana Gorge National Park, Wire Springs near Fitzroy Crossing, Cockburn Range, Drysdale River, Walcott Inlet and Carson River Station, along with several Kimberley islands.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob said it was the first time data about local animals and vegetation had been gathered from Walcott Inlet and Drysdale River.

"Parks and Wildlife staff and Balangarra rangers camped in a remote area of the Drysdale River mouth and trapped and photographed a diverse range of mammal, reptile and amphibian species," he said.

"The highlights of this survey included finding bandicoots, water rats, very large crocodiles and an almost legless lizard known as the Kalumburu slider (*Lerista kalumburu*).

Above left Parks and Wildlife technical officer Jasper Kruse with school-based trainee Andrew Rethus and Balangarra rangers at Cockburn Range. **Above right** An Ambangardi ranger sets a funnel line for animal trapping at Carson River.

"At Windjana, officers trapped rock rats and a variety of reptiles in the first year of a three-year program to gather baseline information about the terrestrial biodiversity and vegetation conditions.

"At the Cockburn Range, a variety of reptiles and amphibians in four different habitat types were found, which was a very good result considering cane toads have been in the area since 2011."

Mr Jacob said the importance of the work was underscored by data collected during surveys earlier this year which revealed new populations of endangered northern quolls.

"Quolls are vulnerable to impacts such as cane toads, so it is important we have an understanding of their distribution across the Kimberley," Mr Jacob said.

"It was exciting to find a new population at Windjana Gorge National Park and also at Buckle Head on the north Kimberley coast."

News in brief

Works start on The Gap and Natural Bridge

Works to redevelop and improve visitor facilities at the iconic Gap and Natural Bridge in Torndirrup National Park are underway.

Albany district manager Peter Hartley said initial site works began on Monday 10 November.

"The improvements include new lookouts, pathways and interpretive signage designed to enhance visitors' experience and safety," he said

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

Video highlights Yanchep camping

The success of the Great Aussie Camp Out at Yanchep National Park on October 11–12 has been captured in a new video that's now available on the department's website www.dpaw.wa.gov.au.

Almost 100 first-time campers enjoyed this *Parks for People* event, which was delivered in partnership with Nature Play WA, Outdoors WA and the Caravan Industry Association as part of Outdoors October. The short video features great vision of the park, alongside interviews with campers and organisers.

The event was the first in a program of *Go On Get Camping* events that encourage people to try camping as a way of reconnecting with family and friends while spending time outdoors.

Working to restore rock wallabies

The fantastic work being done in remote Western Australia to successfully translocate threatened black-flanked rock wallabies to Jilukurru (Durba Hills) has been captured in an incredible video.

Check out our [Facebook page](#) to watch Parks and Wildlife staff working with local Martu people to help secure the long-term survival of these precious animals.

Campground closures as revamp works begin

Two popular camping spots managed by Parks and Wildlife have been closed while they undergo significant improvements to visitor facilities.

Osprey Bay campground and day-use area in Cape Range National Park will be closed until April 2015 during the redevelopment.

Exmouth district manager Arvid Hogstrom said the current number of camp sites at Osprey Bay would be doubled.

"They will be divided into two loops that will have their own access roads and walking tracks to the beach," he said.

In addition, the old Baden Powell campground in Lane Poole Reserve in Dwellingup has been closed while redevelopments to turn it into a day-use area and overflow campground take place.

Capital works project officer Laurence Radin said the old campground was established 30 years ago and had become degraded with the ageing of pine trees.

"The site also no longer caters for the increased number of campers, with Lane Poole Reserve attracting 204,404 visits during 2013–14," he said.

Campers should seek alternative locations within Lane Poole Reserve including Nanga Mill and the Nanga town site campgrounds. See parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au for information about these sites.

