



PARKS AND WILDLIFE NEWS

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Reflecting on 2014: a thank you to staff, volunteers and our community partners



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Department of
Parks and Wildlife



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As 2014 comes to an end, I would like take the opportunity to thank staff, volunteers and our community partners for their commitment and enthusiasm in conserving the natural assets of Western Australia.

The department has had many highlights this year. We commenced our second year of operation in July 2014 with the release of our revised *Strategic Directions* document, which refined and refocused our goals and priorities for the coming years.

Under the *Parks for People* initiative, we made significant steps towards providing greater access for people to appreciate nature, encouraging camping, recreation and tourism. Upgrades of nine campgrounds across WA progressed, and we saw the completion of the \$40 million Fitzgerald River

National Park improvement project, in partnership with Main Roads WA.

In November, one of our key programs, the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*, was recognised at the 2014 Premier's Awards, when the Landscape Conservation Initiative was awarded the winner of the Managing the Environment category. The award highlights the numerous achievements being made to jointly manage Australia's last great wilderness alongside Traditional Owners.

I would like to specifically recognise the department's many volunteers who provide an invaluable service to Parks and Wildlife and the community. Their substantial achievements were acknowledged recently at the Volunteer of the Year awards (see page 4).

The department was also touched by tragedy this year. In June we farewelled our colleague of 46 years, Ian 'Jock' Marshall, who died in a vehicle rollover east of Manjimup. My thoughts are with his family over the Christmas period.

My thoughts and thanks also go to those involved in fire management, who have already been, and will continue to be, called upon to keep the community safe from bushfires during a time when many others are enjoying a time of relaxation and festive fun.

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas, and I look forward to working with you to meet the challenges and opportunities 2015 has to offer.

Jim Sharp
Director General

Above Bottlebrush, Mount Frankland National Park. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife



Milestone for Kimberley marine park

Celebrating the signing of the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park joint management agreements. Back row: Environment Minister Albert Jacob, Larissa Brown, Tom Hatton, Lee Butcher, Director General Jim Sharp and Alan Byrne. Front: Nora Cooke, Margaret Rose and Diane Stewart. Photo – Jennifer Eliot

The future of one of the Kimberley's most important marine parks is secure with the recent release of the final management plan for Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob said the plan ensured the marine park would be a jointly managed place where wildlife could continue to thrive, where Aboriginal culture and heritage were recognised and conserved and where recreation and tourism could be supported.

"Covering more than 200,000ha, the marine park is the 13th to be established in Western Australia and the second park to be reserved under the *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*," Mr Jacob said.

"Importantly, it is the first marine park in the State to include special purpose zones for the recognition and protection of sites of Aboriginal cultural significance.

"It will be jointly managed with the Ngarla, Nyangumarta and Karajarri traditional owners, with

Nyangumarta and Ngarla traditional owners signing joint management agreements for the park with Parks and Wildlife."

The marine park is a 220km stretch of remote and remarkable coastal country between Port Hedland and Broome, stretching from Cape Missiessy to Cape Keraudren.

"It is one of the world's most important feeding grounds for migratory shorebirds and is recognised as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands," Mr Jacob said.

"It is major nesting site for flatback turtles, which are only found in northern Australia.

"Both are critical components of the Eighty Mile Beach Ramsar site and the management plan seeks to maintain this ecological character."

The park also provides for recreation and tourism, and recreational and commercial fishing.

The plan is available from the Parks and Wildlife [website](#).

International links built at China and Sydney events

Parks and Wildlife staff recently built international links at two events in China and New South Wales.

In early November, Director General Jim Sharp joined Environment Minister Albert Jacob on a visit to China to finalise a sister park relationship between China's Danxiashan National Park and WA's Purnululu National Park, which are both World Heritage-listed.

Mr Jacob said the newly signed agreement between the WA Government and the People's Republic of China would help forge strong relationships in tourism, park management and plant conservation research.

A second cooperative agreement was signed between the Institute of Botany and Chinese Academy of Sciences in Jiangsu province and Parks and Wildlife's Plant Science and Herbarium Program.

"The agreements, signed for an initial period of five years, will see collaboration on joint activities and projects, sharing of information and staff training," the Minister said.

"The parks are both major visitor attractions and their striking natural landscapes, together with plant and animal biodiversity, as well as being the focus for

scientific study, have inspired outstanding historical artworks."

Mr Jacob said Parks and Wildlife and the Jiangsu Institute of Botany and Chinese Academy of Sciences carried out botanic studies and plant conservation research.

In mid-November, a group of senior staff members from the department's Parks and Visitor Services Division joined the Director General at the World Parks Congress in Sydney, a major event held every 10 years with about 6000 worldwide delegates.

During the eight-day event, a number of issues were discussed and ideas shared, including: an increase in Aboriginal involvement in the management of protected areas; the benefits of new technology to identify change and communicate messages; and the substantial effort going into creating and managing marine protected areas.

Following their return, staff who attended the congress hosted a round table discussion with interested colleagues to share their experiences and answer questions..



Parks and Visitor Services staff Rod Quartermain and Colin Ingram with Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation Chief Executive Officer Ron Critchley and Parks and Visitor Services Director Peter Sharp at the World Parks Congress in Sydney. Photo – L-A Shibish



Firefighters awarded **National Medals**

Another round of National Medals has been presented to personnel who have undertaken more than 15 years of service in fire management.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob visited Wanneroo and Mundaring offices recently to present officers with their medals. He also awarded

clasps to personnel for each subsequent 10 years of service.

Including the 68 South West Region and Forest Products Commission staff named in our last issue, the 134 National Medal recipients have contributed more than 3500 years' service in protecting the WA community and wildlife.



Congratulations to:

Medal

Steven Gunn
Nibs Morganti
Ricky Pearce
Clinton Hull
Myles Mulvay
Charles Kerfoot
Paul Brennan
Glen Bradbury
Clive Smith
Michael Lobb, FPC
Dean Irving, FPC
Jayson Puls
Stefan De Haan

1st Clasp

Brian Smith (Medal and 1st Clasp)
Allan Clarke
Gary Doust
Ian Freeman (Medal and 1st Clasp)
Douglas Giles
Mark Humble

Paul Musarra
Philip Bastian (retired)
Nigel Higgs (retired)
Kevin Pratt
Wayne Rhodes
Philip Spencer
Ralph Staines
Bradley Walter
Kelly Gillen
Keith Low
Barry Flet
Mark Graves
Femina Metcalfe
Steve Raper
Derek Winters
Wayne Calvert
Brian Carling
Simon Caunter
Gary Hunton
Brian Inglis
Julian Morris
Andrew Williams
Greg Napier

Grant Pearson
Owen Donovan (1st Clasp and Medal)
Grant Pearson (1st Clasp and Medal)
David Perkins (1st Clasp and Medal)
Murray Carter (1st Clasp and Medal) (OBRM)
Lyndon Mutter (1st Clasp and Medal)
Paul Brown (1st Clasp and Medal) (DoW)
Alan Sands (1st Clasp and Medal) (DER)
Brad Hasson (1st Clasp and Medal)

2nd Clasp

Thomas Niven
Steven Strachan
Jamie Ridley
Greg Standing
Geoffrey Styles
Steven Thomas
Peter Burton
John Moore (posthumous recognition)

Ross Mead
Greg Broomehall
Rob Towers (Medal, 1st Clasp and 2nd Clasp)
Michael Cantelo
John Wheeler
Andrew Lange
Andrew Haswell
William Muir (Medal, 1st Clasp and 2nd Clasp)

Top left and right Environment Minister Albert Jacob presents medals to Phil Spencer (top left) and Rob Towers (top right). Photos – Karla Graham/Parks and Wildlife
Left Medal recipients and Minister Jacob at the department's Wanneroo office. Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife

Volunteers rewarded during 25-year anniversary

In early December Parks and Wildlife celebrated the 25th year of its volunteer program by acknowledging and congratulating volunteers for their efforts in conservation projects throughout the State at its annual Volunteer of the Year Awards.



Right Director General Jim Sharp with Volunteer of the Year Award winner Monica Iseppi and Environment Minister Albert Jacob.
Above Environment Minister Albert Jacob (right) with award-winning volunteers. Photos – Rolf Pery/Guildford Photographics



Held at the Keiran McNamara Conservation Science Centre to coincide with International Volunteer Day, the awards were presented by Environment Minister Albert Jacob and Director General Jim Sharp.

Mr Jacob said that for the first time in almost a decade, volunteers with more than 20 years of service were recognised for their long-standing contribution towards caring for the environment, with the inaugural presentation of Long Service Awards.

This year, the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award went to Monica Iseppi for her expertise, passion and commitment to Yanchep National Park.

The department has more than 300 active volunteer projects involving 4,300 volunteers contributing around 506,000 hours to projects across WA – an average of 117 hours of service generously provided by each volunteer. During 2013–14 more than 1800 new volunteers signed

up with the volunteer program. Overall since 1 July 1999, 18,327 volunteers have registered with Parks and Wildlife. Community Involvement Unit coordinator Hugh Mclean said this translated to more than 5.7 million hours that were actively contributed.

“In appreciation of these efforts, Parks and Wildlife continues to provide support, information and training to volunteers through workshops held in Perth and regional areas,” he said.

Twelve nominations were received for the Volunteer of the Year Award this year, and the quality of nominations received was very high.

The work by volunteers done this past year include science-based terrestrial and marine flora and fauna monitoring programs, endemic species preservation and recovery programs, track and trail maintenance, regional campgrounds and the Wildcare Helpline to name a few.

Congratulations to:

Volunteer of the Year Award

Monica Iseppi

Outstanding Service Awards

Suzanna Chan
Reece Coombs
Colin Gee
Elsie Grygiel
Hans Hoette
Alan Howe
David James
Maureen and James Lindsay
Maryanne Sorenson
Colin Valentine
Peter Whittle
Peter Robinson, Crooked Brook Forest Association

Tina Garbelini, Crooked Brook Forest Association
Robert Dixon, Crooked Brook Forest Association
George Panorios, Crooked Brook Forest Association

Long Service Awards

Liz Appelt
Barbara Backhouse
Pauline Baker
Lex Bastian
Rob Baxter
Anne Bellman
Margaret Brims
June Butcher
Jill Cross
Suzanne Fiegert
Klaas Gaikhorst

Rod Giblett
Lesley Harrison
David James
Noelene Jenkins
Margaret Larke
Marlene Lievens
Marian Maughan
Carol Mooney
Brian Moyle
Sue Palmer
Amanda Payne
Dorothy Perret
Betty Philpot
Bob Smith
Maurice Stonehouse
Dot Terry-Bos
Sue Turner
Pamela Young



Campground hosts' workshop held

The attendance of more than 150 campground hosts at the two-day Parks and Wildlife Campground Host workshop last month provided an inspiring buzz of positive energy.

Community Involvement Unit coordinator Hugh Maclean said this was characteristic of the excellent customer service provided by these volunteers in campgrounds all over Western Australia.

"The workshop is run annually at the Keiran McNamara Conservation Science Centre in Perth as an opportunity for new and existing volunteers to share knowledge and experience," he said.

"Parks and Wildlife officers from across the State gave information on the campgrounds in their area to encourage hosts to volunteer there."

Of the 614 registered campground hosts, 208 provided 150,569 hours of service last year.

"The value provided by these frontline volunteer workers in advising and supporting the department should not be underestimated," Hugh said.

"In addition to their hosting duties, volunteers this year have been instrumental in responding to a number of significant events, such as flooding at Cape Range National Park, major tree limbs falling in the south-west, and a difficult evacuation of an injured tourist in the Kimberley."

Campground host programs modelled on the successful Parks and Wildlife system are being trialled on Rottne Island and in Albany, Ravensthorpe and Esperance this summer.

More than 150 volunteer campground hosts attend a two-day workshop in Perth. Photo – Steve Csaba/Parks and Wildlife

High hopes 20 years after rare marsupial rediscovery

Twenty years after the rediscovery of Gilbert's potoroo, monitoring of the world's rarest marsupial has revealed small populations of the quokka-like animal in Western Australia are continuing to respond well to recovery efforts.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob said Gilbert's potoroos had been the subject of intensive conservation work by Parks and Wildlife since the discovery of a single population of about 30 animals at Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve near Albany in 1994.

The population is now more than 100 animals across three colonies. A celebration to mark 20 years of progress was held at Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve last week.

"This is an outstanding success story, with government and community organisations working together to bring about real improvement in the numbers of this critically endangered species," Mr Jacob said.

"Prior to its rediscovery, the species was thought to have been extinct for more than a century, with the last recorded specimens collected in the late 1870s."

The Minister said ongoing recovery efforts included translocating 10 potoroos from the original colony at Two Peoples Bay to predator-free Bald Island between 2005 and 2007, as insurance against the loss of the mainland population.

"In 2010, nine potoroos from Bald Island and Two Peoples Bay were released into a predator-free 380ha enclosure in Waychinicup National Park, 25km east of Albany, with more animals introduced into the park over the past four years," he said.

"The latest monitoring at Waychinicup has shown the species is doing well, with at least 29 animals in the enclosure, including the 12 animals that were translocated by helicopter from Bald Island to Waychinicup during July this year.

"This operation was funded through a generous donation of \$10,000 by Albany-based community organisation, the Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group."



The team involved in the rediscovery of Gilbert's potoroo in 1994. Back: Leigh Whisson, Bridget Hyder, Liz Sinclair, Andrew Burbidge and Tony Friend. Front: Adrian Wayne and Alan Danks.

National award for Parks and Wildlife comic

A Parks and Wildlife educational comic strip about a fish named Bazza has won a prestigious national interpretation award.

Bazza's Fish Tales took out the Gold Award in the 2014 Interpretation Australia Awards for Excellence in the 'project under \$30,000' category.

The weekly newspaper comic is produced and compiled by Parks and Wildlife Frankland District staff in Walpole to promote understanding and appreciation of the marine environment, particularly the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park.

District interpretation officer Claudia Simpson, who draws the comic, said the award recognised the innovative way in which *Bazza's Fish Tales* educated and built a relationship with readers.

"Bazza is a breem exploring the inlet system, encountering local issues and interesting characters, which provides endless opportunities to inform people about the marine environment in a fun way," Claudia said.

"The comic has proven to be an effective and upbeat way of creating environmental awareness within the local community.

"The Bazza character resonates with children and adults alike."

Claudia said the *Bazza's Fish Tales* team, which includes marine park coordinator Shaun Ossinger and marine park ranger Justin Ettridge, were passionate about their role in community education.

"The Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park is a place of stunning natural beauty, pristine waters and unique flora and fauna and we want to share that with people," Claudia said.

"The comic is an integral part of a multi-level approach to community education, which also includes delivering hands-on education programs."

Bazza's Fish Tales appears in newspapers in Walpole, Albany, Denmark, Hopetoun, Bremer Bay and Pemberton.



Marine park ranger Justin Ettridge, district interpretation officer Claudia Simpson and marine park coordinator Shaun Ossinger with their award for Bazza's Fish Tales.

Predators in the spotlight



Predators of native wildlife will be caught on camera as part of a wide-scale monitoring project in jarrah forest north of Dwellingup to south of Collie.

Foxes and feral cats will be monitored with remote infrared camera technology as part of an intensive fox baiting program from north of Dwellingup to south of Collie to protect iconic threatened species including the woylie, numbat and chuditch.

Cameras have been deployed as part of a large study across three 10,000ha sites in the northern jarrah forest, including one area which is aerially baited six times a year and two non-baited control sites, under the Parks and Wildlife *Western Shield* animal conservation program.

The cameras will be in place for 12 months and will monitor fox and feral cat activity as well as observe native animals in the area.

Western Shield coordinator Ashley Millar said the camera monitoring would help the department learn more about the effectiveness of frequent baiting in the northern jarrah forest

as well as the wider baiting program across the State.

"*Western Shield* involves recovery actions including extensive fox and feral cat baiting to protect WA's threatened animals and has helped save many species from extinction in WA," he said.

"Previous monitoring shows that fox and feral cat baiting is having a positive effect in the areas where the program operates, but it is important to continue trialling the most efficient and effective way to bait in order to protect native animals.

"Results from the camera monitoring and other research being undertaken may result in changes to the program and the improvement of baiting and monitoring."

It is the first time cameras have been used over this size and scale to monitor foxes and feral cats in the northern jarrah forest.

The camera monitoring is sponsored by BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina, who, along with Alcoa of Australia, support the *Western Shield* program in the northern jarrah forest.