



# PARKS AND WILDLIFE NEWS

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## Yawuru partnership secures future for Roebuck Bay

Planning for the future management of Broome's world renowned coast reached a significant milestone with the release of draft management plans for public comment.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob recently visited the West Kimberley and released the proposed Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay Marine Park and the Yawuru Birragun Conservation Park.

The Minister said the release of the plans underlined the State Government's commitment to working with traditional owners in jointly managing Western Australia's natural areas.

"Broome's marine and terrestrial environments both contain important conservation, tourism and recreational values and the plans set out how these will be jointly managed by Parks and Wildlife and Yawuru native title holders," he said.

Mr Jacob said the area's natural and cultural values were globally significant and the plans would help enhance Broome's standing as an internationally renowned tourism destination and gateway for experiencing the Kimberley.

Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay is one of five marine parks to be created under the \$81.5 million *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*.

The plans are open for public comment for three months until Friday 25 September 2015 and can be viewed at [www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/yawuru](http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/yawuru).

While in Broome the Minister also released new cane toad education manuals that will help teach Kimberley schoolchildren about the impacts of the invasive species on WA native animals.



Launching the resource at Cable Beach Primary School, Mr Jacob said it was important to raise community awareness about cane toads.

"These education manuals are an ideal way to introduce the concept of cane toads into the classroom and engage young children in a fun and informative way about toads, their effects on native animals and what we can do to help."

The new manuals are aimed at students in years 1-3 and years 4-6. They will be distributed to all Kimberley schools and contain curriculum-linked lesson plans with worksheets and background information for teachers.

The cane toad manual has been produced by the department with funding support from Perth Zoo.

*Top: Environment Minister Albert Jacob, Director General Jim Sharp and Yawuru rangers on board the Jangabarri for a tour of Dampier Creek.*

*Top right: Cable Beach primary school students and Minister Jacob meet Reggie the cane toad sniffer dog and his handler Andrew Rethus.*

*Below right: Minister Jacob, Jim Sharp and Yawuru representatives at the launch of the draft management plans. Photos - Jimmy Dobson/ Parks and Wildlife*



Published by the Department of Parks and Wildlife's Public Information and Corporate Affairs Branch

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Department of Parks and Wildlife



# WA Mountain Bike Strategy released

Environment Minister Albert Jacob has officially launched the *Western Australian Mountain Bike Strategy*.

Developed by WestCycle with input from the WA Mountain Bike Association and departments of Parks and Wildlife and Sport and Recreation, the strategy promotes sustainable mountain biking as a leading recreational and tourism experience by delivering opportunities, maximising participation and sharing benefits.

Mr Jacob said mountain biking was among the world's fastest growing sport and recreation activities.

"Nearly 120,000 mountain bikes are purchased each year in WA and almost

half a million Western Australians now own a mountain bike," he said.

"There are many mountain bike trails in WA, most of which are managed by Parks and Wildlife in conjunction with community groups.

"Along with the Munda Biddi Trail, the world's longest continuous off-road cycle trail, which draws tens of thousands of international, interstate and local riders each year, WA is home to the Kalamunda Mountain Bike Circuit, which is estimated to have attracted more than 50,000 rides last year.

"Because there is so much interest in mountain biking and because we are

creating and managing more and more facilities to support it, it is essential that we have a framework in place to ensure it is developed sustainably and using best practice."

Parks and Wildlife is investing more than \$900,000 into mountain biking, including \$750,000 for planning and development over four years from 2013–17 under the *Parks for People* initiative, \$125,000 over the past two years from the department's mountain bike partnerships program, and funding for the strategy and related master planning.

For a copy of the strategy visit [www.westcycle.org.au](http://www.westcycle.org.au).



Members of the WA Mountain Bike Strategy steering group with Environment Minister Albert Jacob. Left to right: Louise Wallace (WAMBA), Steve Bennett (Sport and Recreation), Parks and Wildlife Recreation and Trails Unit coordinator Stuart Harrison, Minister Jacob, Matt Fulton (Westcycle) and Sarah Smith (Westcycle). Photo – Parks and Wildlife



Wheatbelt Region staff carrying out prescribed burning. Photo – Parks and Wildlife

## Successful Wheatbelt burning

The Department of Parks and Wildlife has completed its most successful autumn prescribed burning program on record in the Wheatbelt.

The program included 17 burns on land managed by the department from Kojonup in the south to Bonnie Rock in the north over a period of 20 days, with 2047ha burnt.

Most burns were between 100–200ha, with close to 100 per cent of planned burns carried out during the season.

Great Southern District fire coordinator Mitchell Davies said early rain in March and April this year increased soil and litter moisture, which enabled burning to start earlier than usual.

"The burns will help mitigate bushfire risk to protect lives and property, manage wildlife values including regenerating specific vegetation types and threatened flora species,

as well as regenerate mallet trees for future timber supplies," he said.

"To complete the program the department involved all available staff and actively encouraged local bushfire brigades. Staff and volunteers gained valuable fire experience by participating in prescribed burning, which enhanced their skills to better prepare them for managing bushfires over summer."

While small-scale nature conservation and vegetation management burns are always a major focus of the Wheatbelt program, a burn was also completed 2km north of Wagin to reduce bushfire risk and protect lives and property.

The program was developed after extensive planning and consultation with stakeholders including the local community, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, local governments and adjoining landowners.

# Partnering with Martu rangers for quoll research

Nestled between three sandy deserts, Karlamilyi National Park was not thought to be a likely home for rock-dwelling northern quolls (*Dasyurus hallucatus*), whose usual distribution is about 200km to the west.

Nonetheless, there have been two confirmed records of the species in the park two years apart, both in Desert Queen Baths, where permanent pools lie scattered through rocky sandstone gorges.

Research scientist Judy Dunlop said the initial discovery, made in 2012 by consultant ecologists Jeff Turpin and Mike Bamford undertaking a survey for a mining company, was significant for the species because of the location.

"Northern quolls have suffered serious population decline and contraction of habitat due to introduced predators such as feral cats, altered fire regimes and habitat destruction through pastoralism and industry," she said.

"In addition to the discovery of quoll scats, the 2012 record was confirmed by remote camera images of quolls and genetic analysis of the scats," she said.

Following this, Parks and Wildlife and Martu rangers from the Kanyirninpa Jukurpa (KJ) organisation have been on the lookout for these spotted nocturnal creatures in the park.

Karlamilyi is a significant area for the Martu, who are the traditional owners of the park and the surrounding country.

Judy said the Martu rangers put out remote cameras over summer in the same rocky gorge of Desert Queen Baths where the original discovery was made.

"They were excited to find that one northern quoll was photographed," she said.

"In April this year, operations officer Gary Hearle and I went with the team to set traps throughout the gorge and several of its offshoots. Unfortunately, no quolls were captured.

"It seems unlikely that there's a breeding population in Karlamilyi, as we were there during the perfect

time of year to catch young that are leaving the dens and searching for food.

"What it does suggest is that they are dispersing a long way, possibly hundreds of kilometres, to arrive here."

The northern quoll's range is across the top of Australia, from the Kimberley to Queensland, with an isolated population existing in the rocky Pilbara.

Quoll populations in the Kimberley, Northern Territory and Queensland are also severely affected by poisonous cane toads. The Pilbara currently remains the last stronghold for toad-free quoll populations.

With the support of Parks and Wildlife, the Martu rangers will continue to monitor the area for signs of quolls.

*Right: Northern quoll. Photo – Parks and Wildlife  
Below: Martu rangers Jarrod Kadibil, Carey Cutter, Austin Gibbs, Marc Huber, Neville Taylor and Parks and Wildlife scientist Judy Dunlop. Photo – Gary Hearle/Parks and Wildlife*



# Bright future for observatory

A new milestone for the Perth Observatory has been reached, with Parks and Wildlife signing the first community partnership agreement with the Perth Observatory Volunteer Group.

The agreement means the 70-strong volunteer group will partner with the department to continue and expand their public outreach program to educate and engage the community, and to assist in maintaining the facilities and valuable displays and equipment at the observatory.

Director General Jim Sharp said it was important the public had a range of opportunities to experience astronomy, space science and astrophotography.

“The Perth Observatory Volunteer Group has been an integral part of the observatory since the group was established in 1996, and I am pleased to see our

partnership with them strengthened and formalised,” he said.

In addition to hosting day tours, lectures, field talks, maintaining telescopes and managing and cataloguing the library, the highly trained volunteers run the popular evening star viewing sessions.

Tourism and Property Branch manager Rod Quartermain said 75 star viewing nights were held in the 2013–14 tour season, with four experienced volunteers assisting at each.

“The volunteers make quite a big commitment and we are thankful to have such a dedicated group on board,” he said.

The department will continue to maintain the buildings and surrounding grounds at the site.



Perth Observatory Volunteer Group Secretary Christine Coulstock and Chairperson Diana Rosman with Director General Jim Sharp and Science and Conservation Director Margaret Byrne. Photo – Karla Graham/Parks and Wildlife

## Kapinara Primary enjoys day in the bush

Kapinara Primary School had a great day out with *Nearer to Nature* at the Perth Hills Discovery Centre recently. The team received this letter from Year 3 teacher Gemma Hopetoun-Smith:

*Dear Zac and staff at Nearer to Nature,  
Thank you for a fantastic day out full of amazing sights, sounds and child-friendly activities. Both Year 3 classes enjoyed their day in the bush and learnt a huge amount. Thank you very much for a fabulous excursion.*

*Enclosed is a selection of thoughts from the children for you to enjoy.  
Once again, thank you for a wonderful day of learning about your culture.  
It was really insightful, interesting and fully interactive.*

*Yours sincerely  
Gemma Hopetoun-Smith*

*“I was speechless when Zac threw a real boomerang.” – Peter*

*“I felt wonderful when I got to be a warra wirren (bad spirit) in the play.” – Luka*

*“I was amazed at how the soap bush became soap when you just added water.” – Caitlyn*

For information about *Nearer to Nature* activities, visit [nearertonature.dpaw.wa.gov.au](http://nearertonature.dpaw.wa.gov.au).

## Settlement reached for south-west

**The State Government’s recent signing of six Indigenous Land Use Agreements for the South West Native Title Settlement is a landmark moment for Parks and Wildlife.**

The settlement is the largest and most significant native title agreement reached in Australia’s history.

It will bring enduring benefits to both the State Government and the Noongar community, and includes:

- a Noongar Recognition Bill
- a State contribution of \$600 million to a Noongar Boodja Trust Fund
- the creation of a Noongar land estate of up to 320,000ha of Crown land
- the creation of a Government land fund to facilitate a variety of land-based activities
- a standard heritage regime across the south-west

- the refurbishment and transfer of housing to the Boongar Boodja Trust
- a range of joint and cooperative management partnerships with Parks and Wildlife.

Director General Jim Sharp described the signing as an historic step.

“This is an opportunity for greater collaboration and strengthened partnerships between Noongar people, the Government and agencies such as ours,” he said.

The Indigenous Land Use Agreements, which cover 200,000 square kilometres of the south-west, will be filed with the National Native Title Tribunal. The native title claims are Whadjuk (covering Perth metropolitan), the South West Boorah (Busselton, Pemberton, Nannup),

Harris Family (Yallingup, Margaret River), Ballardong (York, Northam, Hyden, Kondinin), Wagyl Kaip (Katanning, Gnowangerup, Albany), Yued (Jurien, Moora, Lancelin, Gingin) and Gnaala Karla Boodja (Mandurah, Bunbury, Donnybrook).

Mr Sharp thanked the Parks and Visitor Services Division, and in particular Native Title and Heritage coordinator Dr Simon Choo, for their outstanding work with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and other Government agencies in progressing the South West Native Title Settlement.

While there are still legal procedures to be completed, it is hoped the full agreement will start to be implemented by mid-2016.

# ILUA signed with Karajarri people



An Indigenous Land Use Agreement has been signed with Karajarri people for the creation and joint management of Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park, Walyarta and Jinmarnkur conservation parks and Jinmarnkur Kulja Nature Reserve in the Kimberley.

Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park is one of five new marine parks to be created under the \$81.5 million *Kimberley Science and Conservation Strategy*.

The beach is one of the world's most important feeding grounds for migratory shorebirds and is a major nesting area for flatback turtles. Sawfish, dugong, dolphins and millions of invertebrates inhabit the sand and mud flats, seagrass meadows, coral reefs and mangroves.

The ILUA provides for initiatives including working with and supporting Karajarri rangers and exploring cultural tourism opportunities along with the conservation of the area's natural values.

*Left: Marine Parks and Reserves Authority Chairman Tom Hatton, Conservation Commission of WA Chair Brian Easton, Environment Minister Albert Jacob, Karajarri Traditional Lands Association Director Moses James, Chair Joseph Edgar and Parks and Wildlife Director General Jim Sharp at the ILUA signing. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife*

## Oil spill exercise puts staff through paces

Parks and Wildlife staff are now skilled up and ready to respond in the event of an oil spill after being run through their paces during Operation Westwind in Exmouth.

The exercise between the Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre, the oil and gas industry, port authorities and Government saw more than 80 people from all over Australia respond to a simulated spill in Commonwealth waters of the Ningaloo Reef.

Realism was the name of the game and participants used dye to mimic an oil slick at sea, aerial dispersant using water bombers were deployed, offshore and onshore booms were rolled out to prevent sensitive areas from being oiled and an oiled wildlife facility for treatment and rehabilitation of affected wildlife was set up.

Parks and Wildlife principal policy officer Stuart Field said a significant amount of planning had gone into the preparation of Westwind in order to realistically

test the capacity for government agencies and industry to work together in responding to this potential catastrophe.

"Operation Westwind provided an excellent opportunity for State and Federal Government agencies and industry to work together on a credible oil spill scenario," Stuart said.

"Practicing our oiled wildlife response is an incredibly important component of our preparation for these rare yet potentially devastating incidents where the department will play a lead role in incident management and animal rehabilitation."

*Left: The participants in Operation Westwind took the exercise extremely seriously. Parks and Wildlife staffer Alison McCarthy takes all the care in the world in transporting an 'injured' bird from the wash container to the rinse container. Photo – Jennifer Eliot/Parks and Wildlife*



# Trainees, graduates and award-winners honoured

Almost 20 years of dedication to native animal conservation in the Albany district has earned Peter Collins the inaugural *Western Shield* award at the department's annual Graduation and Awards Ceremony.

Peter is the principal staff member responsible for the delivery of the successful wildlife conservation program in the Albany area and has established many of the local *Western Shield* animal monitoring and fox baiting transects. He has also provided advice and support to the Esperance district for its program and been a strong advocate for *Western Shield*.

A popular winner of the new award, Peter was presented with his framed certificate by Environment Minister Albert Jacob and Director General Jim Sharp at the Kensington ceremony.

Parks and Wildlife staff from around the State were present to receive their awards, which honoured high achievers in fire management, conservation and land management, the MATES program (Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme) and those who have completed extra training through the Pathways and Frontline Management programs. There were also presentations to recipients of 2015 scholarships.

Mr Sharp said Parks and Wildlife supported continuous learning and professional development for all employees.

"By taking on extra training and education staff members are enhancing their professional expertise and the department's ability to provide important services to the community. It is a win-win situation," he said.

"I urge our staff to consider pursuing further learning and development either at the vocational or tertiary level in the future."

Congratulations to all the graduates and award winners.

*Award list on next page*



**1** The inaugural *Western Shield* Award was presented to Peter Collins by Environment Minister Albert Jacob and Director General Jim Sharp. **2** Aboriginal Trainee of the Year was awarded to Jayden Miller. **3** MATES Program award winners and graduates Jason Richardson, Preston Manado, Ethan Cooyou and Jayden Miller. **4** Graduates of Certificate IV in Frontline Management. **5** Fire Rewards and Recognition Program award winners.



## AWARD RECIPIENTS

Fire Rewards and Recognition Program 2015	Outstanding Leadership Award	Trevor Howard
	Outstanding Achievement Award	Jeff Bennett
	Outstanding Crew Member Award	Adam Edwards
	Excellence Award	Isaac Hatch, Len Jarvis, Ross Mead
	Outstanding Contribution Award	Martin Clarke, Emma Clingan, Tammie Reid
Western Shield	Western Shield Award	Peter Collins
Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES)	Aboriginal Trainee of the Year	Jayden Miller
	Aboriginal Trainee Supervisor of the Year	Matthew Prophet
	Kwabalitch Award	Jason Richardson
Pathways Program	Pathways Award	Leigh Woodland



## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Women's Scholarship in Honour of June Craig	Sarah Comer, Alison McGilvray
Leadership Scholarship in memory of Seamus Mulholland	Stephen Bradfield
Science Scholarship in Memory of Dr George Malajczuk	Hooman Tabarestani, Saorla Finucane (DER)
Director General's Career Development Study Assistance Scholarship	Sonia Gillespie, Michelle Jess, Jayden Miller, Catherine Hasluck-Lang (OEPA), Leanne Kolin (OEPA), Katie Needham (DER)

**1** Trevor Howard was the recipient of the Fire Rewards and Recognition Program Outstanding Leadership Award. **2** Regulatory Training Program graduates **3** Jeff Bennett was the recipient of the Fire Rewards and Recognition Program Outstanding Achievement Award.

## GRADUATES

MATES	Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management	Preston Manado, Winston Gerrard
	Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management	Ethan Cooyou, Jeremy McGinty, Jonathan Saegenschnitter
	Certificate III in Government	Jayden Miller
Pathways	Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management	Darren Barnsby, Kristopher Coates, Peter Cornock, Christopher Tom, Leigh Woodland, Jamie Yovkoff
	Certificate IV in Conservation and Land Management	Tania Bishop, Stefan Cannon, Jamie Conway-Physick, Paul Dunstan, Trevor Dye, Adam Edwards, Benjamin Farquhar, David Hawke, Carolyn Hill, Peter Laurent, Joseph Morgan, Craig Popperwell, Christopher Roy
Frontline Management	Certificate IV in Frontline Management	Choo Soo (Michelle) Chin, Emma Clingan, Jessica Correia Henriques, Liezl De Beer, Roxanne Pendreigh, Jeremy Preston, David Read, Marija Ristic, Gilbert Stokman
Department of Environment Regulation - Regulatory Training Program	Certificate IV in Government	Jaala Baldock, Humera Blakers, Ursula Boyes, Antony Crum, Julie Dean, Jessica Dixon, John Edwards, Stephen Franklin, Carol Haldane, Helen Hamilton-Broad, Jimmy Hossain, Emma Jones, Gargi Joshi, Helen Lunsmann, Janet Macmillan, Brendan Mohr, Katie Needham, Eleanor Notley, Jacqueline O'Toole, Louise Owen, Victoria Sanford, Anne Truong, Adam Woodhead