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Winning streak at Yanchep, recognition for park volunteers, N2N activities for the kids and lots more

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Thursday, 12 December 2013

Hi Deborah Harding

Welcome to the Yanchep National Park e-newsletter. Summer is a very popular time at Yanchep National Park, with a host of school activities being held until the end of January. The park is open every day of the year including Christmas Day, so find a cool comfortable spot under the eucalyptus trees and enjoy the festive season.

In this issue ... find out how Yanchep recently celebrated some great successes, including the Western Australian Tourism Awards, City of Wanneroo Business Awards and a great acknowledgement for our volunteers. Read about the range of school activities that will be available during the summer school holidays, get some tips for Christmas and much more.

From all the team at Yanchep National Park, have a safe and enjoyable festive season.

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Yanchep National Park wins gold

The chance to explore caves, native bushland and fauna, walk trails and indigenous

experience tours have helped Yanchep National Park take out gold in the Tourism Attraction category at the Western Australian Tourism Awards.

The awards recognise outstanding customer service, innovation and ongoing business excellence in the Western Australian tourism industry.

DPaW's Yanchep National Park Manager Alison Pritchard said it had been an honour to accept the award on behalf of staff and volunteers.

"We have an incredible team of passionate and committed people here at Yanchep and this gold medal acknowledges our achievements," Alison said.

"Of course, this award would not be possible without the support of businesses that operate within the park, along with DPaW's district, regional and Parks and Visitor Services staff."

Yanchep National Park's win was not the only celebration for DPaW at the Tourism Awards, which were held at Crown Perth on Saturday 9 November.

DPaW's Walpole Wilderness Discovery Centre won gold in the New Tourism Development category.

The state-of-the-art interpretative centre is situated at the Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk.

DPaW Acting Director General Jim Sharp said both award-winning projects showcased how people could interact with the natural and cultural values in WA's parks.

"These awards demonstrate recognition by the tourism industry that we provide unique and innovative world-class amenities for visitors," Jim said.

Gold medallists will go on to represent WA at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards.



Yanchep National Park Senior Ranger Mark Varley, Park Manager Alison Pritchard, Regional Leader Ewen MacGregor, Marketing Coordinator Jennifer Green, Volunteer Coordinator Ciara McIlduff, Visitor Services Manager Julia Coggins and Tourism WA CEO Stephanie Buckland.

Summer fun with kids' Nearer to Nature activities

Yanchep National Park will be a hive of activity this summer when the school holiday program gets underway.

Children of all ages can discover the wonderful world of creepy crawlies, wild caves and local Nyongar culture, and find out how important water is to all of us.

Yanchep National Park Marketing Coordinator Jennifer Green said DPaW's Nearer to Nature initiative had an exciting summer program in store.

"This year's summer holidays will be jam-packed with things to do," she said.

"Places go quickly, so jump in early to make sure your spot is confirmed."

On Friday 17 January, enjoy the underground wonderland of Yanchep's wild caves on the *Adventure caving* session, with both Yonderup and Yanchep cave open for little explorers.

Wonders of the wildlife ark allow kids to get close to extra special creatures, including Monty the python, Adelaide the bluetongue skink and Phoebe the frog. It will be running on Sunday 19 January.

On Thursday 23 January, indulge in some local Nyongar culture at the '*Coolangar Dreaming*' activity including bush jewellery making, boomerang decorating and

listening to Dreamtime stories around the mia mia.

Later that day, *Aliens of the bush* will show kids how to spot an intruder in our bushland and how they can help to save the Australian bush from introduced species.

In addition to the Nearer to Nature activities, Yanchep National Park will deliver free activities during the school holidays that focus on the importance of water. Held every weekday from 6 to 31 January, with the exception of 17, 23 and 27 January, the activities will include exploring a fire truck and fast attack vehicle, storytelling, transplanting grass trees, colouring in and learning about our Aboriginal connection to water. Bookings are not required for these free activities.

To secure a spot on the Nearer to Nature activities call (08) 9295 2244 between 8.30am to 4pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday.



Lots of fun to be had during Nearer to Nature's summer holiday activity program at Yanchep.

Park volunteers recognised at awards ceremony

Yanchep National Park volunteers received special acknowledgement when Bill Brookes, Ray Turner and Dave Mulholland were granted Outstanding Service Awards at the DPaW Volunteer of the Year and Outstanding Service Awards on 25 November 2013.

Bill, who has been a volunteer at the park for nine years, has been providing assistance in park maintenance, koala care and rubbish collection since he was 15

years old.

DPaW Volunteer Coordinator Ciara McIlduff said Bill was a dedicated, loyal, hardworking and much respected team member at Yanchep.

“He has contributed in excess of 4,000 volunteer hours in his time at Yanchep and his commitment is extremely valuable to the park,” she said.

Ray Turner and Dave Mulholland joined Yanchep as volunteers in November 2011 and July 2012 respectively.

“Both Ray and Dave are involved in numerous projects including revegetation, fauna monitoring and park maintenance,” Ciara said.

“They were also a fundamental part of a recent fauna study that required setting up and monitoring infra-red cameras in remote and difficult locations.”

More than 80 volunteers, school groups and community groups provide assistance at Yanchep National Park, contributing more than 8,200 hours to conservation projects and park maintenance in 2012–13.

“Ray, Dave and Bill are an integral part of a larger team that work together to provide outstanding service to Yanchep National Park. These three in particular were recognised for their dedication, commitment and passion for our local environment,” Ciara said.



Photos: Left - Bill receives his award from Environment Minister Albert Jacob.

Right: Ray and Dave receive their awards.

Chocolate Drops wins at Business Awards

There were sweet celebrations at Yanchep National Park when Chocolate Drops won two gold awards at the 2013 City of Wanneroo Business Awards in November.

Owner Sue Dash and her staff received the awards for 'Businesses with Over 5 and Under 20 Employees' and the 'Tourism and Hospitality Business Award'.

"It's been an exciting year for Chocolate Drops after we reached the finalist stage at the WA Tourism Awards and the more recent City of Wanneroo Awards," Sue said.

"Life really is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're going to get."

The City of Wanneroo Business Awards recognise outstanding contributions to business excellence throughout the City of Wanneroo.



The Chocolate Drops team accept their award.

Christmas ideas at McNess House Visitor Centre

Christmas is almost upon us once again and if you haven't done your gift shopping yet, then Yanchep National Park is a good place to start!

McNess House Visitor Centre and gift shop has a wide range of Australian-made gifts that would suit even the most discerning buyer.

New to McNess are stunning earrings, bracelets and necklaces from Victorian jewellery designers Angie Mac. With prices starting at just \$19.95 for a pair of gold-plated drop earrings, this collection will not break the bank.

McNess also houses an impressive range of arts and crafts made locally, including paintings and Australian timber wares.

For something more on the funky side, why not consider some handmade bowls, water pitchers, teapots and plates from local ceramic designer Sarah May.

McNess House is open every day throughout the year.

We look forward to seeing you soon.



Some of the lovely items for sale at McNess House Visitor Centre.

Alison leaves

Yanchep National Park staff recently said farewell to long-serving staff member Park Manager Alison Pritchard, who had accepted a position at Mulu National Park in Sarawak, Malaysia.

Staff and volunteers from the Perth region attended a special farewell BBQ lunch on Tuesday 12 November.

Alison said her 12 years at the park had been “incredibly rewarding”.

“We have an incredible team of passionate and committed staff and volunteers at Yanchep,” she said.



Alison's farewell.

Old engine powers up again

Thanks to the generosity of the Capricorn Community Association, the Yanchep National Park Volunteers have been awarded funding to proudly display and provide interpretative signage for an old engine that once powered the electric lights in Crystal Cave during the depression years of the 1930s.

The run-down 'Crossley' single-cylinder oil-driven engine was lovingly restored by one of the park's volunteers over 96 hours. From being sandblasted and repainted, and even being tested to see if it still runs, this old engine certainly has a new lease on life.

Volunteer Coordinator Naomi Hunt said displaying the old engine would give visitors an insight into early years and add another element to their experience.



The old engine gets some TLC.

Hot Rods in the Park at Yanchep

Hot rod fans were in for a treat this month when an impressive lineup of classic cars rolled into Yanchep National Park.

The annual Hot Rods in the Park event was held at Yanchep National Park on Sunday 17 November.

DPaW's Jennifer Green said an estimated 4,000 hot rod fans attended the park to view the display.

"Hot Rods in the Park is always a popular event, with visitors coming from all over the metropolitan area," she said.

"Some 290 cars coordinated by Goodfellas Hot Rods Club made the entourage up Wanneroo Road into Yanchep National Park.

"There was plenty to keep everyone happy with the colourful display of cars, a magician, reptile display, stalls and bouncy castle."

This year's event saw an increase of approximately 40 hot rods, making it the largest display in the park to date.



Some of the hot rods on display at this year's event.



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