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Spring 2016

Hi <<First Name>>

Warmer weather and brighter skies have arrived! Spring is upon us and Yanchep National Park is bustling with new life and vibrant with colour. Rows of ducklings are enjoying the wetland and the recently rejuvenated Wildflower Gardens are bright with colour as nature blooms. Visit, take a walk, re-energise in the warmth of the spring sunshine and take a moment to immerse yourself in the wonder of such a beautiful natural environment.

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## Volunteers help the western swamp tortoise

Yanchep National Park volunteers ventured out of the park to help with a very important conservation project for the western swamp tortoise (*Pseudemydura umbrina*), Australia's most endangered reptile.

This tiny tortoise exists in only a few ephemeral swamps in the Swan Valley and is threatened by land clearing, pesticides, fertilisers, fire, climate change and feral predators like cats, rats and foxes.

Volunteers worked side by side with Parks and Wildlife nature conservation staff and Green Army participants to plant more than 6000 melaleucas in a reclaimed paddock, which is being restored to improve tortoise habitat at Ellenbrook Nature Reserve.

The melaleucas were nurtured in the volunteer nursery at Yanchep for the past two years until they grew large enough to survive seasonal flooding. Volunteers were delighted to see the plants they had lovingly cared for being used for such a noble cause with the knowledge that community participation is vital to ensure the survival of this critically endangered species.

Volunteers were treated to a gourmet barbecue lunch and a tour of the nature reserve with the hope to see a western swamp tortoise in its natural habitat.

If you are interested in volunteering at Yanchep National Park or learning more about park projects please contact Ciara on 9303 7771.



*Yanchep National Park volunteers at Ellenbrook Nature Reserve where they helped plant melaleuca to improve western swamp tortoise habitat.*

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## Farewell Lyptus

Yanchep National Park resident Lyptus the koala has died.

To park staff there was no mistaking Lyptus. If the fluffy ears, noisy eating or the vocal way she greeted you didn't give it away, it was the way she reached out and demanded a scratch each and every morning.

To tour operators and visitors to the koala boardwalk Lyptus was easily identified as the koala sat smack-bang in the middle of the sprinklers in summer or perching perfectly for photos in winter.



Lyptus's birth in 1996 entered her and her sister Euca straight into the record books as only the third set of koala twins born in captivity. Her passing in August 2016, at the ripe old age of 20 years, may also be a record. For a species that has only an average lifespan of 10 years in the wild, 20 years is an amazing run and for a twin is unheard of.

Park ranger John Wheeler remembers the day a pouch check revealed a twin surprise.

## Meet Mark

Mark Varley has worked in Yanchep National Park since February 2011. As senior ranger he is responsible for the overall operational aspects of the park and heads up a team of works crew, which also includes two other rangers.

Mark implements and oversees all projects across a range of different fields including flora and fauna protection and conservation, construction and maintenance, compliance in accordance with a broad range of CALM Act regulations and general park upkeep.



Mark also helps in the delivery of educational programs to students and visitors, and during fire season his duties also include bushfire suppression. Mark is a very busy and invaluable member of the Yanchep National Park team. Give him a wave next time you're in enjoying the national park.

We asked Mark a few questions to help introduce him.

### **What's your favourite thing about Yanchep National Park?**

My favourite thing would be the great bunch of people I get to work with in an awesome setting, very hard to complain when you have an 'office' like mine!

### **What do you like most about your job?**

The feeling that I can actually make a difference to how the park is presented and hopefully help provide an enjoyable experience to all the visitors that visit our fantastic national park.

### **What are three words that best describe you?**

Ha ha mmmm enthusiastic, honest and humorous, but probably best you ask someone else that one!

### **What is your favourite food, sport and place?**

Well being a pom the food would have to be a curry. Sport, pretty much anything but favourites are football and cricket and favourite place, I have two ... a remote national park or a London pub.

### **Name something on your bucket list.**

## Campground trial begins

The camping trial is well and truly underway on Henry White Oval with many visitors enjoying the experience of camping in Yanchep National Park. The online booking system went live on 1 July with Kevin Washer of Perth being the first to make a reservation.

Kevin and his family pitched tents on a grass site in July and told staff he and his family enjoyed the experience very much despite the wintry weather!

With the changing of the season it is also time for our inaugural volunteer campground hosts to move on. Robin and Carole Barker of Quinns Rocks have been meeting and greeting campers around the clock since the campground opened.

Park manager Julia Coggins said Robin and Carole have provided an invaluable service.

"As our very first campground hosts it's been wonderful to have them onsite to greet campers and they've also been able to provide us with detailed feedback on a range of points that will be submitted for consideration as part of the greater trial process," she said.

"We'd like to thank Robin and Carole for investing the past two months with us and wish them all the very best on their future endeavours."



If you are interested in becoming a volunteer campground host please contact the park office on 9303 7760 for more information.

There are still some camp sites available for camping in the spring school holidays. To make a booking or for more information see [parkstay.dpaw.wa.gov.au](http://parkstay.dpaw.wa.gov.au).



Kevin Washer and his family were the first to book a camp site at Yanchep National Park. Photo – Pips Carboon/Parks and Wildlife

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## Spring back in time

Yanchep National Park is inviting you to celebrate its European history this spring with a '**Spring back in time**' program of activities to run this long weekend from Saturday 24 September to Monday 26 September.

Free activities will include an **exhibition of old photos in the Gloucester Lodge** and **old school games and art** on the lodge lawn. Volunteers will be offering **tea from the old tram** for a gold coin donation. **Free guided spring walks** will also be running plus our regular **free koala talk** each day.

For something different why not join an **Expedition to Yonderup Cave**, a history tour of the cave led by lamplight. Our usual daily tours of Crystal Cave will also be operating. Fees do apply for each cave tour.

The fun will continue through the school holidays with the history exhibition, art on the lawn and old school games continuing on weekdays (excluding Sept 30th & Oct 6th). For more information or to pre book a cave tour please contact us on 9303 7759.

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## It's a Sunlit Spring with *Nearer to Nature*

Parks and Wildlife's *Nearer to Nature* program has unveiled its new spring program of school holiday activities.

some well-loved activities plus some exciting new ones that are interactive, fun and specifically designed to get kids out and about in nature these school holidays.

In Yanchep National Park, kids are once again invited to explore a wild cave with the ever-popular **Adventure Caving** activity available on Friday 30 September.



This activity is available for younger children aged 8–10 years as well as for the bigger kids aged 10–14 years. Hard hats and torches are provided so participants just need to wear old long pants and long-sleeved top and bring their sense of adventure as they prepare to take a journey into an underground wonderland and discover all of its magnificent secrets.

On Thursday 6 October children aged 4–7 years can enjoy learning about waterbird babies in the **Downy Ducklings** activity while children aged 7–12 years will be treated to an exciting **Eco Treasure Hunt** complete with GPS trail and fascinating facts. Both of these activities are new to Yanchep National Park and staff are very excited to be sharing them.

Bookings for these activities are essential. To secure a spot please contact *Nearer to Nature* on 9295 2244 during business hours.



## EasyRider Adventures welcome spring!

There's been smiles galore and memories made at the Obstacle Fun Zone on Bull Banksia Oval since EasyRider Adventure launched operations.

With warmer weather on the way EasyRider Adventures, who offer the opportunity to experience 'segwaying' in the park, are offering a 20 per cent discount to ALL holders of a current Annual Local Park Pass.

Why not take advantage of the September sunshine and bring the family to experience this Yanchep National Park exclusive attraction? For terms and



## Come play and learn outdoors with us!

*Some thoughts from Lee-Anne*

*Groenewegen of Little Gumnuts:*

*"We learn much more from the world around us than we necessarily do sitting at desks." – Sir Ken Robinson*

Education guru Ken

Robinson lists five reasons why learning outdoors is a good idea:

1. Nature is a powerful resource.
2. Children can learn through practical hands-on activities.
3. You can tap into children's curiosity.
4. It is a social experience and children learn from working together.
5. Learning outdoors is fun.

Little Gumnuts offers programs for pre-kindy, home schoolers, holidays and education for schools and playgroups.



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## Monarchs on the march on the Wetlands Trail



1890s.

They feed on introduced milkweed and are common in wetland areas and swamps where the plant grows. As they wake from their winter slumber they can be seen sunning on the bridges on the northern end of the lake.

If you've walked the wetlands trail recently you are sure to have spotted a monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) or two.

These vivid orange butterflies have striking black markings and while they may be seen all year round are most commonly spotted in spring. Monarch butterflies were introduced to Australia but have been sighted in WA since the

The annual Hot Rods event will return this year with another impressive collection of cars expected to roll into Yanchep National Park delighting spectators and enthusiasts alike. More information will follow in a special Hot Rod edition of our e-newsletter in early November but for now mark Sunday 13 November in your diary as it's an event not to be missed!

To keep updated with all news and events don't forget to 'Like' Yanchep National Park on [Facebook](#).



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