



Volunteers in Parks NEWSLETTER

August 2005

Welcome to another edition of the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Volunteers in Parks Newsletter.

A hearty welcome to those of you who have registered since our last newsletter and thank you to all who have volunteered your time and skills to help look after our parks and reserves. Your efforts are truly appreciated.

Although the weather will soon start to warm up, there are still projects going on throughout the Territory's Parks and Reserves that our staff would appreciate volunteer help with.

If you have any comments, queries or questions about this newsletter or the volunteer program in general, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'd love to hear from you.

Kath Jefferies.

Volunteer Coordinator

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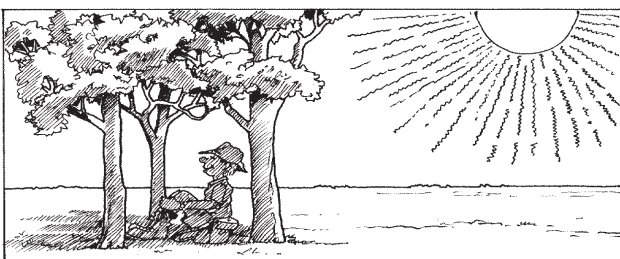
- Ⓞ Walking track construction
- Ⓞ Trephina Gorge update
- Ⓞ *Mimosa control - Mary River*
- Ⓞ **Data entry - Nitmiluk**
- Ⓞ Helping to protect Darwin Palm
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- Ⓞ *Alice Springs Desert Park*



By the way...

In July, the Chief Minister announced a restructure of the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Environment.

The Parks and Wildlife Service now falls under the banner of the Department of Natural Resources Environment and The Arts.



Northern Territory Government

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts

Thankyou



As I have already mentioned, thanks to all of you who have offered your time and expertise to assist the staff in keeping our Parks a great place to visit.

The staff at Trepina Gorge Nature Park would like to acknowledge the work done by **Colin and June Chandler**, from Aberffoyle, SA and **John and Judith Ryan**, from Salisbury in Queensland who worked with them during May, and also **Jack and Sue de Niet**, from Bayswater, WA who have just finished two weeks work out there. The Chandlers, Ryans and de Niets worked on a variety of projects from welding and painting of signs to fence line clearance.

Walking track construction

Mary River National Park is situated 150km east of Darwin along the Arnhem Highway. It features freshwater billabongs, paperbark and monsoon forests that provide visitors with great opportunities for wildlife watching, fishing, bushwalking and photography.

The rangers out there are looking for volunteers to assist with Mimosas control on the Mary River flood plain during August and September.



There are also projects involving construction of walking tracks at Jimmy Creek Reserve and Point Stuart Coastal Reserve.

Accommodation is provided and pick up from Darwin can be organised on request.

For further information contact **Peter Ross** or **Nathan Connor** at Wildman Ranger Station on **08 8978 8986**.



Spraying for Mimosa during the wet season

Data entry - Nitmiluk

This National Park is owned by the Jawoyn Aboriginal people and jointly managed with Parks and Wildlife. It features impressive sandstone country, broad valleys and many significant cultural sites.

The deep gorge carved through the ancient sandstone by the Katherine River is the main attraction of the Park.



Cruise along Katherine Gorge

If you are planning a trip to the Katherine region and would like to get involved in some data entry, image labelling and data sorting, beautiful Nitmiluk National Park would like to hear from you. Accommodation is available.

For more information please call **Adam Northey** or **Norm Greenfield** on **08 8972 1886**.

Helping to protect Darwin Palms

Ptychosperma bleeseri is a rare and endangered palm species restricted to monsoon vine forests that fringe the floodplains of Top End wetlands. There are *Ptychosperma bleeseri* populations within the Adelaide River catchment which have been managed by Parks and Wildlife rangers for a number of years. This has included intensive weed management within fenced off enclosures, with these enclosures minimising feral animal disturbance, in conjunction with regular flora surveys to monitor the population dynamics of this sensitive palm species.



The rangers at Fogg Dam will be conducting such programs during the month of October. If you are into biological

conservation and are interested in on-the-ground land management, we would like to hear from you.

Contact **Adrian McKenzie**, Fogg Dam Ranger Station. Ph. **08 8988 8009**



Turtle release program

Over the years, the Turtle release program has grown into a much anticipated annual event and this year has been no exception. This year, for the first time, we have had to put a limit on bookings as the response has been overwhelming.

We have a staggering 1800 people on our list who all want to be at the beach when Parks and Wildlife staff help the hatchling Flatback turtles make their way to the water.

If you have your name on our list—please be patient, we will get to you soon!





Alice Springs Desert Park

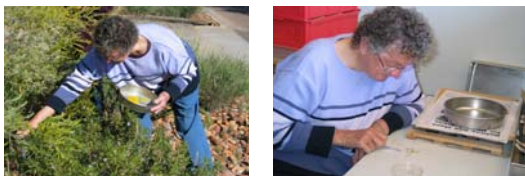
*What are the
Volunteers doing at the
Alice Springs Desert
Park?*

Botany Unit

The Alice Springs Desert Park has a number of Friends who regularly volunteer in the botany section. Affectionately called the "Thursday Terrors", Margo Trigg, Betty Thompson, Nancy Hall, Barb McIlvain and Frankie Bongers donate a few hours of their time every Thursday doing a number of tasks.

The Friends make pot pourri from materials collected at the Desert Park and sell the product in the gift shop. Margo, Betty, Nancy and Barb collect flowers, seed pods and eucalypt leaves - dry, press and packaged it ready for sale. The ladies also collect seed from a number of plants on the Park such as Sturt's Desert Pea, package and sell these in the Desert Park gift shop as well.

When the plants aren't flowering or seeding, the ladies will clean seed collected by the Desert Park staff which is used in the propagation of the plants on Park. Frankie also volunteers in the herbarium, helping to prepare specimens for the herbarium. These ladies have been volunteering at the Desert Park since the early days of the Desert Park.



Betty Thompson hard at work

Guest Services

Since the introduction of the Adelaide to Darwin Ghan rail service, the Desert Park has been host to the Gold Kangaroo passengers who have a four hour stopover in Alice Springs.

We are lucky to have two very enthusiastic volunteers, Nola Leybak and Sharon Zweck who assist the guides in handing out maps, giving directions, chatting to visitors, and generally ensuring that visitors are aware of what Park facilities are available to them during their time here. We have a small transit vehicle which they also drive to and from the Nocturnal House to assist people who are a little less mobile.



Our thanks go to all our volunteers including **Nola Leybak** (left) and **Sharon Zweck** (right)

Guest Guides

Ho Jin Hwang did a week of work experience in Guides - all the way from South Korea. Ho Jin translated the general Desert Park information sheet and Nature Theatre species information sheets into Korean and turned the inventory of Park signs into an interactive database with pictures of each sign.



Ho Jin Hwang

- now back home in South Korea

Matthew Turner commenced work experience in Guides from Alice Springs High School. Matty has a keen interest in and knowledge of central Australian animals. On his second day of work experience he stole the show with his enthusiasm from Vincent Forrester while touring a group of medical students through the Nocturnal House.



Matthew Turner