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### **Foreword**

Volunteers dedicate their time and expertise each year to assist the Parks and Wildlife Service with the sustainable management of Western Australia's species, ecosystems, lands, and attractions. The following pages feature a small representation of the diverse range of activities undertaken by volunteers and shares their achievements and successes to provide inspiration for the future.

The Volunteer Coordination Unit supports DBCA staff and community stakeholders to manage volunteer projects across Western Australia. The work volunteers do is vital, and their efforts are strongly aligned with the department's vision to inspire, conserve, discover and protect our unique biodiversity and natural places.

DBCA acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the lands and waters it manages. All work carried out on lands and waters managed by DBCA, including by volunteers, respect and consider Aboriginal cultural values, to ensure their culture and heritage is protected now and into the future.

Throughout 2021–22, over 6,000 volunteers supported the Parks and Wildlife service to achieve its goals and objectives. Together they contributed over 800,000 hours to park and wildlife conservation, heritage values, education, research, enhancing visitor services and the overall enjoyment of national parks and the conservation estate. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all volunteers for their incredible contribution to volunteering and the staff who support them in their work. Their dedication and commitment is greatly appreciated.

#### **Volunteer Coordination Unit 2022**



# **Midwest Region**

## **Gascoyne District**

### **Dirk Hartog Island Turtle Tagging Program**

The turtle rookery on Dirk Hartog Island is one of the most globally significant in the South East Indian Ocean Basin with over 1,000 loggerhead turtles nesting there each year. A turtle tagging program was created in 1994 by DBCA as part of the Western Australian Marine Turtle Program (WAMTP) to monitor this population. During the summer months, teams of DBCA staff and volunteers intercept nesting turtles on the beach and where they have not been previously tagged, a small, uniquely numbered titanium tag is attached to each front flipper of the turtle. Measurements and observations are made for all newly tagged and previously tagged turtles and entered into the WAMTP database.

The 2021-22 tagging season was hugely successful with a whopping 733 individual turtles processed over the four weeks! Without the hard work and dedication of the volunteers, it would not be possible to continue the long-running monitoring program on the island. Under the guidance of DBCA field leaders, the volunteers work throughout the night to tag turtles and collect data before the turtles return to the water following nesting. The field location is extremely remote and working conditions are often challenging, however volunteers get the opportunity to visit a unique part of Western Australia and contribute to the conservation of these vulnerable species.

"Working with a great bunch of DBCA staff and volunteers just added to the experience as I made great friends, learnt new things, and always had a laugh!" Kendra Campbell, volunteer

**Above right** Turtle observations. **Below right** Loggerhead Turtle at Dirk Hartog Island. *Photos – Jamie Steger* 





# **Midwest Region**

# **Gascoyne District**

#### **Monkey Mia Hosts**

The Monkey Mia Host program began in March 2021 to assist with the increase in visitor numbers to the area after the expansion of the RAC Monkey Mia Resort. The main objectives of the program are to improve visitor satisfaction and decrease wildlife disturbance. Hosts also provide another set of eyes to watch over the dolphins, which means that staff can go home with the peace of mind that they are being looked after. As a bonus, hosts also help to keep everything clean and tidy and often put their skills to use by maintaining the facilities.

Over the past year, the program has proven to be extremely valuable to the department with staff reporting a reduction in wildlife regulation breaches in the area. This is a direct result of the education given to the public on the correct way to behave in the local environment. There has also been an increase in visitor satisfaction with many visitors commenting on how the helpful information they received on arrival has increased their understanding and appreciation of the region.

The volunteers thoroughly enjoy the beach patrols, chatting with the public and increasing awareness of dolphin behaviour. Currently hosts are required to be self-sufficient and provide their own caravan which they can park on-site at the local office; however, the program hopes to provide a purpose-built accommodation facility in the future so they can continue to attract volunteers to the area.



## **South West Region**

## **Bunbury District**

#### **South West Regional Herbarium**

The South West Regional Herbarium commenced in 1995 when the Bunbury Naturalists Club was awarded a starter kit to begin a herbarium in the Bunbury region. Volunteers continue to meet every Tuesday morning with field trips often taking all day. They spend time completing a variety of tasks including specimen collection, identification and pressing, mounting, cataloguing, flora surveying, including threatened species, and vegetation mapping of reserves. The group is a reference point for botanical information in the area and they have created individual herbaria for the Wellington Discovery Centre, Peppermint Grove Beach group, local schools, and several private properties.

The South West Region Flora Conservation Officer, Andrew Webb, credits the group for their preservation of collections that otherwise may have been lost over the years, particularly the Graham McCutcheon collection, which has recently been relocated to the WA Herbarium over 25 years since it was first preserved by the group. The current Herbarium collection is captured on an Excel database which is regularly updated as new specimens are added and when new information becomes available. The group is working towards making this database available to other organisations via the internet. They would also like to make the Herbarium more well-known and available to the public to increase the knowledge of local flora.

**Below** South West Regional Herbarium Volunteers. *Photo – Andrew Webb* 



## **South West Region**

## **Bunbury District**

#### Kalgulup Regional Park - Friends of Manea Park

Manea Park is located within Kalgulup Regional Park in the Bunbury District of the South West Region of Western Australia. The park hosts a unique range of flora and fauna, however it is constantly under threat from weed invasion, dieback infestation and illegal activities, such as woodcutting, four-wheel driving, and illegal flower picking. The Friends of Manea Park volunteer group was formed in 2007 by residents who were dedicated to protecting the area and its natural beauty.

Over the past year, the group have helped DBCA staff identify areas of parkland for revegetation, planted seedlings, cleared weeds along Pultanaea Loop, installed signage and tape to help protect the flowers along the loop, conducted tours and educational talks and continued with their phosphite stem injection program to help reduce the impact of Phytophthora dieback on the local trees.

A recent assessment of dieback in the park reported that disease activity was significantly less in areas of long-term phosphite application. This highlighted the importance of the program and the vital role of volunteers in ensuring its success. The group will continue to monitor and control Phytophthora dieback and other weeds and encourage new members to get involved by joining the group so their work can progress in the future.

"Volunteering has brought us a sense of achievement, enjoyment, and satisfaction. Knowing that we are preserving this beautiful part of the world for current and future generations to enjoy."

Julie and Barry Clarke

**Below** Phosphite stem injections to reduce the impact of dieback on the local trees. Photo – J.Hugues-dit-Ciles



## **Warren Region**

#### **Frankland District**

#### William Bay National Park - Coastal Rehabilitation

The William Bay National Park Association has been in operation since March 1995 with a strong membership working on projects in and around William Bay National Park. The current coastal rehabilitation project started in early 2021 with a view to propagate and plant local native species into areas disturbed by the recent upgrade to roads and car parks within the area. One of their key objectives is to encourage the conservation of plants and animals within the national park and the ecosystems on which they depend.

The main achievement of the volunteers in the last financial year involved setting up a nursery which aided in the propagation and planting of over 5,000 seedlings into car park beds and road verges within the park. They would like to continue the project for at least another four years with the aim of propagating over 10,000 plants each year. This work will help to restore the natural beauty of the verges within William Bay National Park.

The Volunteer Coordination Unit (VCU) at DBCA was able to provide funding for the group to purchase seed sieves for separating seed from debris for the efficient collection of local native seed and tables for working on when transplanting tray stock into pots. They also purchased new coffee cups and chairs to upgrade the morning tea area for their volunteers. These volunteers contribute significantly to the department's nature conservation and recreation objectives, and they are becoming increasingly recognised for their efforts within the wider community.

**Below** William Bay volunteers propagating native seedlings for coastal rehabilitation. *Photo – Chris Goodsell* 



## **Pilbara Region**

#### **Karratha District**

#### **Rosemary Island Marine Turtle Tagging Project**

Over a two-week period in October each year, DBCA staff and a team of volunteers record individual Hawksbill turtles and other turtle species along four kilometres of coast, incorporating five beaches, on the west side of Rosemary Island Nature Reserve as part of the Rosemary Island Turtle Monitoring Program (RITMP). Staff and volunteers set up camp and work through the night tagging and recording details about the turtles and their nesting activity.

In 2021–22, ten volunteers contributed nearly 850 hours of intense fieldwork effort. During this time, 1,018 observations of turtle nesting activity were made, and 469 turtles were encountered. Their identifying tag numbers were recorded, measurements taken, and any new turtles were tagged. The team also studied nest success by recording how many hatchlings made it out of the nest alive. This involved marking 37 nests during the October tagging program and then returning in January 2022 to excavate and assess the success of these nests.

The program was started by locals in 1986, who committed many valuable volunteer hours over the years, however since 2014 it has been run as a partnership between DBCA and Rio Tinto. The partnership with Rio Tinto has been renewed to 2025, and the program will continue to benefit from working with volunteers to collect this valuable data as well as to raise awareness of marine turtle conservation in the Dampier Archipelago. It brings together government, industry, and the community in what is now the longest running turtle tagging program in Western Australia.



## **South Coast Region**

## **Albany District**

#### **Campground Hosts**

Across the Albany District there are many campground and day use locations where rangers need seasonal assistance to manage the increasing number of visitors each year. In 2008, they introduced a formal Campground Host program and many of the volunteers return each year to lend a hand.

The work of the volunteers complements the ranger's work, and they are extremely grateful for the support. Volunteers work hard to keep the facilities clean and undertake any task that needs completing, including litter collection, and providing park visitor information. Their backgrounds are as varied as the caravans they tow and the cars they drive, and they bring with them a wealth of life experience and knowledge.

The Campground Host program is a very positive way for volunteers to contribute to the visitor experience within our national parks. The volunteers find it rewarding to meet and interact with a wide variety of people who help them to have a positive experience in nature. They also appreciate the opportunity to stay in some of the most beautiful locations in the world. DBCA staff within the Albany District are keen to continue with the program and are seeking more opportunities for training and development for their volunteers in the future.

# "Campground Hosts are superheroes and we are extremely grateful for their support."

Ingrid Hunt, DBCA Ranger

Below Volunteer appreciation picnic lunch at Middleton Beach, Albany. Photo – Ingrid Hunt



#### **Perth Observatory Volunteer Group**

The Perth Observatory entertains and educates the public through space and astronomy. For over 125 years they have been Western Australia's gateway to the universe and regularly host night sky tours, school day tours and guided day tours for all to enjoy. Their dedicated volunteers fill roles ranging from administration, maintenance, and heritage, right up to astronomers, telescope operators and tour guides. They are also working on preserving the Observatory's historical records and continuing the strong legacy of exciting and innovative astronomical research. Together they promote an all-inclusive and supportive environment and are like one big family sharing a passion for astronomy.

In the past year alone, their 158 volunteers contributed over 24,000 volunteering hours to the Observatory across 225 events, entertaining over 20,000 visitors. Special events included a Total Lunar Eclipse and the Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn which last occurred when Galileo Galilei was still alive. The group is always looking for ways to improve their events and tours to deliver outstanding experiences for the public. They continue to build upon their status as the oldest operating scientific observatory in Western Australia through excellent research, STEM, and educational programs.

"I really enjoy being around like-minded people and helping to inspire the public to look up. There's nothing like seeing the excitement from someone seeing Saturn for the first time through a telescope."

John Tuffin, volunteer

**Right** Perth Observatory Night Sky Tours. **Below left** Volunteers sharing their knowledge.

**Below right** Educating students during a school day tour. *Photos – Matt Woods* 





#### **Swan Coastal District**

#### Forrestdale Lake Cygnet Rescue

Forrestdale Lake is a seasonal wetland that dries out over summer. The water level falls rapidly, meaning cygnets that are not yet able to fly are at risk of fox attacks and would be unlikely to survive if not relocated. The Friends of Forrestdale volunteer group monitor weather conditions, lake water levels and cygnet numbers so that the relocation can be carried out at the most appropriate time. In January 2022, the water levels started to fall, and the call went out to volunteers who had participated in previous rescues to be ready for a 5.30am start. As the word was passed around, a record number of 191 volunteers signed on to help.

Volunteers, along with DBCA staff, were separated into three groups, and armed with nets and wellington boots, headed off to their designated area of the lake. The groups moved slowly forward, ushering the herd of swans and cygnets into an area where they could be safely gathered up. Enough space was given to those swans and juveniles that could fly to do their run up and fly away. Ninety-eight cygnets were transferred to Darling Range Wildlife Centre; and ten went to Kanyana Wildlife where they will be cared for until they are able to fend for themselves; the remaining cygnets were released at Lake Joondalup and Lake Mealup.

In total, a record 171 cygnets were successfully rescued. The day was a collaborative effort by volunteers and staff with everyone coming together to help wildlife in need.

**Below** Volunteers working together to relocate swan cygnets. **Inset left** Juvenile swans. **Inset right** Transporting juvenile swans for relocation.

Photos - Mark Griffin/Jacaranda Photography





# **Swan Canning Catchment**

#### **Swan Canning Riverpark Seagrass Monitoring**

Monitoring of seagrass in the Swan Canning Catchment was initially a research project that transitioned into routine monitoring by DBCA in the summer of 2018–19. Staff quickly identified that with the help of volunteers they would be able to achieve much more vital research in this area. The volunteers assist with the field and lab work, including helping to maintain light and temperature sensors, assisting with quadrat surveys, seagrass coring and the processing of seagrass cores in the lab. In the past, they have also assisted with mapping the seagrass in the river system.

Last year, the volunteers helped to power through the processing of core samples fast enough that the freezing of samples was not required. Freezing samples means they are harder to process and therefore slightly less accurate, so being able to get through them rapidly was extremely beneficial. The group would like to continue to build on the success of the program and have been exploring the idea of allowing volunteers to adopt a sensor. This would enable them to take ownership of the checking and reporting of sensor conditions, as well as data downloading and would provide DBCA staff with more time to analyse the data.

**Below left** Seagrass bed in the Swan River. **Below right** Light and temperature sensor nestled amongst the seagrass. *Photos – Jeff Cosgrove* 



## **Regional Parks**

#### **Beeliar Regional Park – Friends of The Spectacles**

The Spectacles is 360 hectares of natural bush and wetlands that form part of the eastern chain of Beeliar Regional Park. The area is a significant site for Aboriginal people, being part of the Whadjuk people's traditional land situated in the greater Nyoongar language group that encompasses the south- west of Australia. It is on the ancient trade route that follows the freshwater lakes system connecting the people of the Murray and Swan Rivers and has cultural significance as a ceremonial, camping and food gathering site.

During the 2007 Christmas period, devastating bushfires swept through Kwinana destroying a lot of the local bushland areas. A group of residents banded together to help with the rehabilitation efforts and their work has continued in the area. They regularly carry out revegetation projects as well as tree planting, weeding, seed collecting and educational events. In the past year, with the help of the local community and Alcoa Kwinana staff, the group was able to plant over 4,500 seedlings. They also conducted a macroinvertebrate workshop and continued with their ongoing weed control efforts, including the removal of a large area of Victorian Tea Trees. Their aim is to continue to engage with and educate the local community and ensure the environment at The Spectacles continues to improve for both flora and fauna.

"I enjoy spending time with people from all walks of life who have a shared passion for this area of bushland. Through my involvement, I have made some fabulous friends and at the end of each activity day I feel a sense of pride and achievement."

Anne Allen, volunteer

**Right** Tree planting. **Below** Installing tree guards to protect the new plantings. *Photos – Gary Allen* 



## **Regional Parks**

#### Friends of Banyowla Regional Park, Clifton Hills

Friends of Banyowla grew out of the Friends of Wright Brook group in 2020 to increase the reach of their revegetation and maintenance efforts. The group is committed to maintaining the diversity of all areas of the park with weeding, planting and cleanup events organised at regular intervals.

During the winter months of 2021, the group embarked on a project to start the removal of invasive *Watsonia* along the Turner Road boundary and revegetating the newly cleared area with local native plants. They began the arduous task of removing the *Watsonia* by hand with gardening forks and shovels by turning over the soil and removing the stems and remnant bulbs. After four successive weekends of hard labour, the group had effectively cleared approximately 250 square metres of land which was subsequently replanted with local, regionally specific natives that were selected for their diversity and suitability to the soil and the rainfall of the local area.

The Watsonia removal will be a long-term project over the coming years to regenerate the native habitat. The work is currently being undertaken by local volunteers who are passionate about the bushland and its biodiversity. Together they are committed to continuing the removal of all invasive species in the area, rubbish control, revegetation, fencing upgrades and other necessary tasks that will protect the area for future generations to enjoy.

**Below** Friends of Banyowla Regional Park Volunteers after a long day removing Watsonia bulbs. *Photo – Tony Mingo* 



## **Long Trail Projects**

#### **Bibbulmun Track Foundation**

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation (BTF) is a not-for-profit organisation which has been a community partner of DBCA since 1997, mobilising and directing the strong community support for the management, maintenance, and marketing of the Bibbulmun Track. There are currently 460 registered Foundation volunteers who regularly give their time and energy to multiple roles within the organisation including track maintenance, office administration, guiding for walks and workshops, supporting promotion and marketing initiatives, data entry from the campsite log books, and providing governance via the Foundation's Board. Although most volunteers are based in Perth, the Bibbulmun Track extends over 1,000km between Kalamunda and Albany; hence many of the maintenance volunteers travel substantial distances to look after their allocated section several times a year.

This varied work continued throughout 2021-22 with volunteers contributing over 30,000 hours this financial year alone. Highlights have included the development of an Introduction to Trail Maintenance course, restoration of the River Road Bridge, completion of several Track realignments and updated facilities at numerous campsite locations. The commitment of BTF volunteers is driven by a shared love of the Western Australian environment, attachment to the Track, and a desire to help maintain it as a world class trail to be enjoyed by local, interstate, and international walkers for many years to come.

Top right Track Signage Maintenance. Photo – Ross Bernardin
Top left Volunteers help promote the Track to the public at festivals. Photo – A Gibson
Below right Reoiling the Torbay shelter. Photo – H Grimm
Below left Volunteers repair water bars near William Bay. Photo – B Hutchinson







# **Long Trail Projects**

#### **Munda Biddi Trail Foundation**

Formed in 2001, the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation (MBTF) was initially a collaboration between the Friends of the Hardwood Trail and DBCA. In 2002 the fledgling trail was renamed to reflect the profound indigenous connection to the land the Trail traverses. The Munda Biddi Trail (*path through the forest* in the Nyoongar language) is Western Australia's preeminent off-road cycling trail running 1060km from Mundaring to Albany. The MBTF currently has 120 active volunteers who assist with trail maintenance, administration, events, marketing, and advanced maintenance projects through their Rover Task Force (RTF) team. They also have a devoted Board of volunteers that oversees the governance and leads the strategic direction of the organisation.

Over the last year there have been multiple RTF deployments, including the much-appreciated alignment from the Mundaring Weir Hotel into Helena Valley. The Foundation also launched a new website and membership model, partnered with a range of aligned businesses and were able to employ a second staff member, thanks to support from Lotterywest. The MBTF is now in an exciting growth phase, with a marked increase in patronage, volunteering, and community engagement.

"I know I'm making a difference to my community and the many adventurous cyclists that enjoy the Munda Biddi Trail. Volunteer now. You won't regret it!"

Mark Shrimpton, volunteer

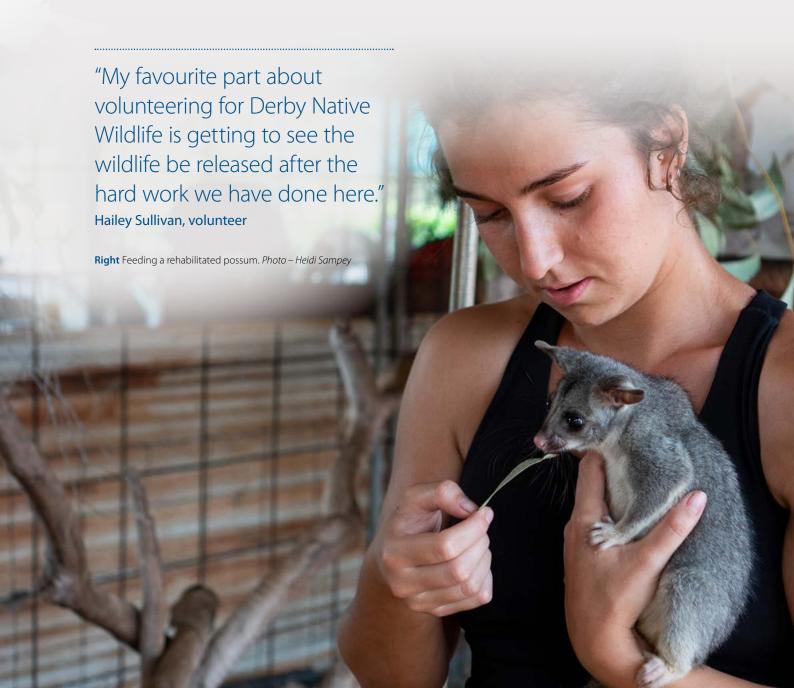




#### **Derby Native Wildlife**

Derby Native Wildlife was created by Heidi and Ray Sampey in 2018 when Heidi became a licensed wildlife rehabilitator with DBCA. Since that time, they have been able to purchase property where they created a sanctuary for orphaned and injured wildlife. The organisation is committed to the rescue, rehabilitation, release, and relocation of sick, injured, orphaned, and displaced native wildlife in the Derby Region in the West Kimberley District. They are also looking to expand their education opportunities within the local and wider community about the benefits of their work and would like to work with local Indigenous organisations to educate others.

Over the past financial year, they have been involved in many projects including the relocation of 136 agile wallabies that had been stuck inside the West Kimberley prison compound. The population had grown substantially from the five wallabies that resided there 12 years ago when the compound was constructed. A team of volunteers worked through the night for six nights to successfully relocate them to a more suitable environment, and they are now thriving in their new habitat. Another highlight was the building of a macropod release pen 200kms from Derby in a remote location and then being able to assist with the transportation of animals to the pen for release.



#### River Wren Rescue

River Wren Rescue officially began in 2017 when its founder Selina gifted part of her property for wildlife rehabilitation. Their conservation efforts are driven by a passion for wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, conservation, and education and their volunteers spend thousands of hours rescuing, feeding, cleaning, treating, and caring for wildlife in need. The group regularly hosts educational workshops and training for volunteers and school groups, as well as children's workshops and volunteer days for teens to inspire the next generation of wildlife advocates for the future.

The team maintains great working relationships with over ten veterinary hospitals within their region and has recently completed upgrades to their hospital and treatment facilities. They are currently working on increasing their conservation efforts and are building relationships with Perth Zoo and the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia (ZAA) to maximise their rehabilitation efforts.

"I love all aspects of being a River Wren wildlife rescue volunteer. I get great pleasure volunteering, working as a team, and the friendships I have made with like-minded volunteers. I will cherish these moments."

**Right** Volunteers keeping the facilities maintained. **Below** Young volunteers helping with meal preparation for the animals. *Photos – Selina Thompson* 

Brittany - volunteer

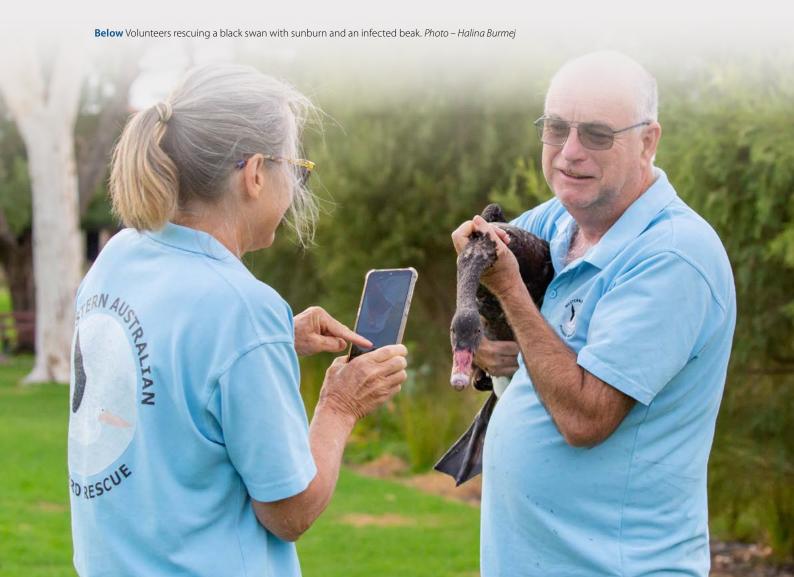


#### Western Australian Seabird Rescue

Western Australian Seabird Rescue (WASR) is a non-profit, 100 percent volunteer organisation formed in Mandurah in 2003 in response to the huge rates of fishing line entanglements of pelicans and cormorants. WASR volunteers rescue and rehabilitate all species of seabirds and waterbirds in coastal south-west WA, concentrating on the Perth to Peel area and Albany District. They network with other wildlife groups to provide training and information on seabird rescue and rehabilitation to achieve the best outcome for each bird that comes their way.

Over the last year, WASR have been able to expand their geographical reach due to an increase in volunteer numbers, which has directly resulted in the rescue and rehabilitation of more seabirds. Their volunteers are called upon to rescue birds in all sorts of tricky situations, but they are not afraid to get in there and get the job done. Last year a team of volunteers rescued pelicans at Herdsman Lake that were victims of a mystery oil spill. Their feathers were so oil-soaked they could not swim or feed, however they still proved to be a handful to rescue.

They continue to expand their volunteer workforce, concentrating on south-west coastal towns that have more recreational fishing (mostly holiday makers), but no skilled rescuers and offer free rescue training to other volunteer organisations. Currently they are working on reducing the number of birds entangled with fishing lines and hooks by increasing their engagement with the recreational fishing community.



#### Kanyana Rehabilitation Centre - Volunteer Education Team

Kanyana Rehabilitation Centre helps more than 3,000 wildlife patients each year. They also partner with universities and vets to research diseases affecting local wildlife, participate in captive breeding programs and support a diverse range of volunteers with their social and mental wellbeing. The Kanyana Rehabilitation Centre Volunteer Education Team was formed nearly 40 years ago to teach the public about the amazing work done at Kanyana by describing and demonstrating the uniqueness of the local wildlife, discussing why flora and fauna matter, and promoting the idea that everyone can do something to help our wildlife.

The team have recently restructured how they contribute, which has resulted in more interest and participation by volunteers, upskilling of some members to leadership positions and a general rise in excitement and engagement. They have also successfully added a Kanyana Kids program with a different topic each term for primary school age children. The future goals of the program are to further expand their programs to reflect the needs of the Western Australia school curriculum and general interest of the public; to provide birthday packages to families; to form a digital database of organisations who book their services; and to upgrade their Discovery Centre and make it more interactive. By educating future generations on how to care, conserve and connect with nature, the team hopes to create a more sustainable future for us all.

**Below left** Kanyana volunteers educating the public at a local shopping centre. **Below right** Kindergarten children meeting the resident bobtail "Smuggles". *Photo – Christine Bazen* 









For more information about volunteering with DBCA, please visit dbca.wa.gov.au/volunteering or email pwsvolunteers@dbca.wa.gov.au.

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