

Fishing line units to protect river wildlife

Wednesday, 4 December 2013

An inaugural fishing line disposal unit campaign has been launched to reduce fishing line entanglements impacting on dolphins, pelicans and other wildlife in the Swan Canning Riverpark.

The Swan River Trust has joined forces with Recfishwest, Native Animal Rescue, Clean Marine (a Keep Australia Beautiful initiative) and five riverfront councils to install the units at popular recreational fishing locations throughout the Riverpark. It is hoped the project will stem the impact discarded fishing gear has on native wildlife.

Trust Riverpark manager Chris Mather said 20 dedicated fishing line disposal units were being installed at a variety of jetties, fishing platforms, traffic bridges and boat ramps as part of the 12 month pilot project.

Mr Mather said the Riverpark had a small dolphin population that was being disproportionately impacted by discarded fishing line.

“Three Riverpark dolphins have died as a result of injuries caused by fishing waste in the last five years,” Mr Mather said.

“A fourth dolphin, Fingers, which has been visiting the Riverpark for 20 years from Cockburn, has life threatening injuries caused by an entanglement of his tail fluke and he has not been sighted since July.”

Native Animal Rescue (NAR) chief executive officer Lizzie Aravidis said many waterbirds such as pelicans and other wildlife were suffering a similar fate and animal rescuers were dealing with bird entanglements on a weekly basis.

“The fishing line bin initiative is a perfect project for the NAR inflatable boat and the River Connections program, which operates in partnership with Youth Policing Operations working with at risk youth,” Ms Aravidis said.

“Emptying and auditing the fishing line units adds another dimension and important learning experience for our at risk youth who are already out on patrol removing fishing waste.”

Recfishwest chief executive officer Dr Andrew Rowland said the units would provide a cost effective solution to benefit the river environment and urged the recreational fishing community to embrace the project.

“All responsible fishers know the damage discarded fishing line can cause to wildlife and the majority of them are out there doing the right thing,” Dr Rowland said.

“Fishing line placed in bins can still find its way into the river through other means such as animals scavenging through bins and overflowing bins.

“These specially designed fishing line units will eliminate this from happening and educate the wider community about the importance of correctly disposing of fishing waste.”

Based on similar trials in the eastern states, the 20 units are expected to collect up to 4000m of fishing line per year. The units are made from 100 per cent recycled materials, are fire proof and encourage river users to correctly dispose of unwanted fishing line and tackle.

The fishing line bin project has attracted support from the Cities of Melville, Bayswater, Belmont and Canning, and the Fremantle Port Authority. The data collected will be used to evaluate the project after 12 months.

All rubbish that is collected during the project will be recorded and correctly disposed of including incinerating fishing line and hooks and recycling lead sinkers.

The fishing line disposal units have been installed at Garrett Road Bridge, Maylands Jetty, Canning Bridge, Applecross jetty and Point Walter jetty. Other units are proposed for Shelley Bridge, Riverton Bridge and a variety of fishing platforms on the Canning River.

The Fremantle Port Authority will also trial ten units at the Old Fremantle Traffic Bridge and the North and South Moles.

Students from ten River Ranger schools will adopt fishing line disposal unit sites and help audit bin contents as part of practical and applied school curriculum projects.

Major boost for school cadets with six new units

Tuesday, 26 November 2013

- Cadets WA expands across the State
- Four new River Ranger units to start at primary schools near the Swan River
- Two new Bush Ranger units to start at Kalumburu and Beagle Bay

More young people will have the opportunity to seek adventure and make new friends thanks to the Liberal National Government's expansion of the successful Cadets WA program.

Youth Minister Tony Simpson today announced funding for River Ranger cadet units at four primary schools along the Swan River, and two Bush Ranger cadet units in Aboriginal communities.

Mr Simpson said the State Government's priority was to fund programs and organisations that gave Western Australia's young people the best possible opportunities to reach their full potential.

"Cadets WA promotes a positive image of youth in the community and provides opportunities for young people to develop physically, intellectually and socially," he said.

"Cadets take part in a huge range of activities. When I meet them, they talk to me about adventure training, being leaders, camping, hiking and learning about the environment."

The Minister said about 7,000 young people were already involved with almost 200 cadet units from Wyndham to Esperance, with funding of \$3.2million for 2013-14. This announcement is part of the Liberal National Government's election commitment to expand the cadets program.

Bush Ranger units - which teach life skills and a range of practical and social activities - will start at the Kalumburu Remote Community School and the Sacred Heart School in Beagle Bay. Both areas have been identified as needing more youth services.

The Kalumburu community, in the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley, is the northern-most settlement in WA and home to about 500 Aboriginal people. Sacred Heart School, established in 1892, is in the Aboriginal community of Beagle Bay about 100km north of Broome.

River Ranger units will start next year at Weld Square, Coolbinia and Bassendean primary schools and Regent College in Victoria Park.

Fact File

- For information on cadets, contact the Department of Local Government and Communities on 1800 281 116 or email cadetswa@communities.wa.gov.au
- There are 10 cadet programs: Emergency Services Cadets, Bush Rangers, Police Rangers, Red Cross Cadets, Surf Life Saving Cadets, St John Ambulance Cadets, Navy Cadets, Army Cadets, Air Force Cadets and River Rangers

Wetland to reduce nutrients

Wednesday, 2 October 2013

The Swan River Trust will begin on-ground works for the first stage of an exciting project in the Ellen Brook catchment this summer.

The project, known as the Ellen Brook Wetland, will feature a staged series of seven off stream constructed wetlands to help filter the water entering the Swan River from the Ellen Brook.

Trust Drainage Nutrient Intervention manager Peter Adkins said the first stage of the project will be constructed between January and April of 2014 and will see the creation of a 0.6ha wetland as well as significant riverbank stabilisation and site revegetation works.

“In addition to these works Phoslock®, a modified clay material, is being applied to the Ellen Brook in October 2013,” Mr Adkins said.

“Phoslock® has been used in the Canning River for over 10 years and is very effective at reducing the amount of available phosphorus in waterways.”

Mr Adkins said phosphorus is the main nutrient responsible for algal blooms that can cause fish deaths. Phoslock® will be applied to the Ellen Brook upstream of the Bridge over the Ellen Brook on Millhouse Road.

If you would like any more information on this project please contact Drainage Nutrient Intervention Program Manager, Peter Adkins on 9278 0915 or Swan Canning Water Quality Improvement Plan Coordinator, Kate Bushby on 9278 0908.

New era for Swan and Canning rivers

Thursday, 26 September 2013

- Swan River Trust and Department of Parks and Wildlife to be joined
- Amalgamation will strengthen management of WA's environment and river parks
- Merge delivers on election commitment

The Swan River Trust will be amalgamated with the newly formed Department of Parks and Wildlife to provide better protection and management for the Swan and Canning river systems.

Announcing the amalgamation today, Environment Minister Albert Jacob said the move fulfilled an election commitment to strengthen the management of Western Australia's environment and river parks.

"This will greatly improve the capacity for conservation action to benefit the rivers and reduce duplication," Mr Jacob said.

"The new arrangements will improve resources for the management and protection of the Swan and Canning rivers and their catchments."

The Minister said the department already had management responsibilities over parts of the rivers and their surrounding conservation reserves, as well as responsibility for significant areas of native vegetation in the catchment.

"This Government created the Department of Parks and Wildlife to deliver better, more focused conservation services and our river conservation efforts will be significantly boosted by combining the expertise and capacity of the two agencies. It will also be enhanced by the involvement of its volunteer network of some 4,700 dedicated West Australians," he said.

"The department is already the employing authority for Swan River Trust staff and provides a range of corporate services to the trust. This change will further streamline existing arrangements and will see more than 50 Swan River Trust staff join forces with about 1,600 department staff."

Mr Jacob said the new joint workforce would bring together scientists, conservation and ecosystem management experts, planners and landscape architects as well as project managers with expertise in delivering significant capital works.

The Swan River Trust Board will remain as an advisory body to the Minister for Environment and will continue to provide high level, independent advice on the protection of the river and related developments.

Legislation to give effect to the amalgamation is currently being drafted and amendments will be made to both the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 and the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006.

Fact File

- Department of Parks and Wildlife is responsible for managing the State's national parks, marine parks, State forests and other reserves
- Swan River Trust currently manages the Swan Canning Riverpark, which comprises about 72 square kilometres of public land and adjoining river reserve along the Swan, Canning, Helena and Southern rivers

New oxygenation plant proposed for the Canning River

Monday, 26 August 2013

Submissions may be made on a development application for a proposed oxygenation plant near the Nicholson Road Bridge over the Canning River in Ferndale.

[View the application](#)

Citizen scientists honoured

Tuesday, 18 June 2013

Dolphin Watch volunteers were recently recognised for their commitment to citizen science at the Swan River Trust's annual Dolphin Watch Day.

There are nearly 600 volunteer Dolphin Watchers monitoring the Swan Canning Riverpark's dolphins and four dedicated individuals were honoured in a special award ceremony held at the Perth Convention Centre on Friday 14 June.

Swan River Trust River Guardians Program Manager Marnie Giroud said every volunteer Dolphin Watcher made an invaluable contribution but there were a number of stand-outs that deserved to be recognised.

Mt Pleasant resident Trudy Klessens received the 2013 Chief Scientist's Citizen Scientist Award, presented by WA Chief Scientist Lyn Beazley.

"Professor Lyn Beazley handpicked Trudy from hundreds of volunteers because of the detail contained in her reports," Ms Giroud said.

"Trudy's reports not only contained presence and absence data but she also went a step further to include information on weather conditions, dolphin behaviour and whether people were present."

Ms Giroud said Peter and Trita Agar were named the 2013 Dolphin Watchers of the Year and presented their award by Environment Minister Albert Jacob.

Ms Giroud said the couple had been involved in Dolphin Watch since 2009, when it began, and have been consistently reporting on dolphins.

"This year the couple contributed an incredible 222.8 hours monitoring in Shelley," Ms Giroud said.

"In that time, they reported 29 dolphin sightings and their work has been a huge help to researchers to determine dolphin movements in the Riverpark."

Ms Giroud said this year the Trust included a new category – Dolphin Watch Photographer of the Year – because Dolphin Watchers were now regularly submitting digital images in significant numbers with increasing quality.

"Susan Harper was named as the Dolphin Watch Photographer of Year," Ms Giroud said.

"Susan has been reporting for the project since 2010 and has often accompanied her reports with dolphin photos. In the last couple of years, Susan has honed her photography skills and has provided some fantastic photos for the project."

Swan Canning Dolphins Thriving in the Riverpark

Friday, 14 June 2013

The Swan River Trust is calling on West Australians to celebrate the Swan Canning Riverpark dolphins and the significant discoveries made by Dolphin Watch volunteers on Dolphin Watch Day.

There are nearly 600 citizen scientists monitoring the Riverpark's dolphins and their efforts are unlocking the mysteries behind the river's dolphins and helping scientist to understand why and how the animals are using the river.

Trust Principal Scientist Dr Kerry Trayler said the Trust collaborated with Murdoch and Curtin universities on Dolphin Watch and this year alone volunteers spent 2467 hours monitoring the river and photographing the dolphins.

She said the latest data shows 40 dolphins using the Riverpark in the past 2 years – including ten females and their calves – and at least 22 of those dolphins are thought to be resident within the Riverpark, including 4 mother calf pairs.

"This work is invaluable. Prior to Dolphin Watch starting in 2009, scientists had a limited range in data on the Riverpark dolphins and as a result we knew little about how the population interacted and used the river," Dr Trayler said.

Dr Trayler said the size of the Dolphin Watch dataset now improves our ability to detect large changes in the population and their behaviours.

"Dolphin Watch is an ongoing project, and there's much more data required before we fully understand the population but there are certain things that we do know now," Dr Trayler said.

"We know that the Riverpark is an important foraging and socialising area for dolphins and it is also an important weaning area for mothers and calves.

"There is also evidence to suggest that there are a number of dolphin hotspots in the Riverpark and scientist can now confirm Fremantle Harbour, the Canning River and the upper reaches of the Swan are frequented regularly by dolphins".

Dr Trayler said it was also important to note that yesterday the remains of a dead dolphin was discovered at Bathers Beach, south of the Swan River mouth in Fremantle.

"It was an adult dolphin in an advanced state of decomposition and investigators were unable to identify it or determine the cause of death," Dr Trayler said.

"We do not know if this dolphin was a resident from the Riverpark, but we can confirm that this it is not 'Fingers' a dolphin who occasionally makes his way into the Riverpark and who is currently experiencing a fishing line entanglement".

Community changes its ways

Thursday, 30 May 2013

The numbers have been tallied and weight of household toxic nasties removed in the RiverWise Bennett Springs behaviour change program shows the community's willingness to improve local waterways.

Bennett Springs Estate was identified as a suitable site to launch the two year pilot program after long-term water quality testing indicated that the estate, or surrounding area, was a significant source of nitrogen and phosphorus.

Swan River Trust Community Engagement Manager Jason Menzies said the community had proven it was open to change and team had removed a total of 89 products from 123 households.

"More than 112 kg of fertiliser, nearly 9 kg of granular insecticides and herbicides and 27.5 litres of the liquid variety were handed in during the April home visits by the Garden Advice Team."

Mr Menzies said in return, residents were given practical demonstrations – the most popular being soil building, garden and lawn maintenance – and safe gardening products.

"The product swap was successful with fertilisers accounting for one third of the removed product," he said.

"We also saw a positive trend with many residents opting to take RiverWise products focused on improving soil quality rather than reaching for fertiliser."

"It was a great outcome because fertiliser use in residential areas has been identified as one of the main sources of nitrogen and second highest source of phosphorus entering our river system."

Number of RiverWise Products Distributed - Autumn

GP Fertiliser	120
Lawn Fertiliser	117
Soil Improver/Compost	234
Wetting Agent	120
Pest Control	24

Number of Products Removed – Autumn

GP Fertiliser	23
Lawn Fertiliser	9
Soil Improver/Compost	0
Wetting Agent	0
Pest Control (insecticide/Herbicide)	1
Engine oil	1

The project starts again in spring. For more information visit www.riverguardians.com.au

River Prawn Stock Enhancement Underway

Thursday, 23 May 2013

Scientists are celebrating a world first after successfully culturing Western School Prawns.

The breakthrough achieved by project partners the Swan River Trust, Challenger Institute of Technology, Murdoch University, Recfishwest, WA Fish Foundation and the Department of Fisheries could signal a welcome return to recreational prawning in the Swan Canning Riverpark.

Swan River Trust Principal Scientist Dr Kerry Trayler said culturing the Western School Prawn (*Metepeneus dalli*) was the first step in the restocking program and researchers believe large numbers of juvenile river prawns could be released into the Riverpark in April 2014.

"This is the first time Western School Prawns have been cultured anywhere in the world and we have learnt a lot along the way," she said.

"The road to successfully culturing Western School Prawns has been difficult and the Challenger Institute research team had to overcome major hurdles including sourcing gravid prawn brood stock in a narrow time frame and working with tiny river prawn larvae.

"Once females were collected, they were kept in tanks and allowed to spawn naturally and the hatched larvae were grown out to the size where they were ready to bury into the riverbed.

"It takes about a month to grow the prawns to a stage where they can be released. Once they can bury themselves in the shallows of the river they are less vulnerable to a range of pressures."

Dr Trayler said the Western School Prawns are comparatively small and their tiny juveniles were more difficult to culture than other prawn species. Researchers had to experiment to find the right conditions and diet to raise the juveniles.

"The river prawns were fed a special algae paste and subjected to a variety of temperatures and other controls to determine ideal culturing conditions," she said.

"The next important phase will be to up-scale the culturing process and build in a monitoring and research framework for identifying the key environmental factors that impact on Perth's river prawns."

Dr Trayler said historically fishing pressure and environmental change had been blamed for the river prawns decline and scientists were keen to determine what was limiting the prawns' natural recruitment.

"We hope to answer a question that has baffled West Australians for more than 20 years and discover the key to river prawn survival and growth for future generations of fishers," she said.

"At this stage it is difficult to predict how abundant Western School Prawns might become as that is dependent on a range of environmental factors.

"The river prawn restocking will need to be sufficient to overcome both predatory and environmental pressures before we will see a significant improvement and we are aiming to get a better understanding of those variables as part of this project."

Swan River Trust recognises the value and commitment of volunteers

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

The Swan River Trust salutes the dedicated volunteers that give up their time and energy to make the Swan Canning Riverpark and catchment a better place.

Trust general manager Rod Hughes said programs like Dolphin Watch and the Swan River Trust and Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP) relied on the commitment of volunteers and National Volunteer Week was a great opportunity to say thanks.

“These programs depend on volunteers and we cannot thank them enough,” he said.

“Dolphin Watch has 600 volunteers monitoring the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins in the Riverpark for the Coastal and Estuarine Dolphin Project.

“Since the project started in 2009, there have been 7181 reports from volunteers and thousands of hours spent monitoring dolphins in the Riverpark,” he said.

“It has provided invaluable data for researchers and made some outstanding discoveries such as finding that dolphins are present well upstream in the Swan River in the Guildford area.

“It has also played a vital role in increasing public awareness of the dolphins in the Riverpark and the importance of maintaining a healthy estuary.”

Mr Hughes said the work done by SALP volunteers provided great environmental outcomes and their commitment to restore natural bushland and native species would be enjoyed by generations into the future.

“Over the years, SALP volunteers have generously contributed more than 155,000 volunteer hours, worth more than \$3 million,” he said.

“These landcare initiatives prevent erosion, reduce the spread of invasive species, create native animal habitats and in doing so, these volunteers are creating new recreational areas for children and families.”

Mr Hughes said it was also important to recognise the Trust’s River Guardians.

“We have more than 1700 River Guardians committed to improving and protecting the Swan Canning Riverpark,” he said.

“When there is planting to be done and riverbanks to be cleaned of litter, you can always rely on our River Guardians to step up and lend a hand.”

RiverWise Workshop

Tuesday, 14 May 2013

The Swan River Trust recently hosted its latest RiverWise training day as part of an ongoing program to reduce nutrient inputs into the river.

The half day program – which included a trip on the Swan River and a home visit to a RiverWise garden – focused on teaching the 55 participants about how the river system worked and practical ways to reduce nutrient inputs.

River Guardians Program Manager Marnie Giroud said the half day course was funded by the Federal Government's Caring for our Country initiative in partnership with the Trust's Swan Canning Water Quality Improvement Plan.

Ms Giroud said the RiverWise workshops gave people the tools to make everyday changes that provided significant benefits to the environment.

"The day started on the river and the Trust's Principal Scientist Kerry Trayler explained how the river system worked, the issues it faced and the simple ways people can help the Riverpark by reducing nutrients entering the waterways," she said.

"This was followed up with water testing and a number of samples were taken around the catchment and tested for salinity, turbidity and pH."

Ms Giroud said the workshops help the community understand how nutrients impact the rivers through practical demonstrations. The workshops also teach people how they can make changes at their home, in the garden and while they are out and about.

"During the RiverWise at home part of the training day, Amy Krupa and Deb Taborda from South East Regional Centre of Urban Landcare taught people how to make cleaning agents from basic ingredients," she said.

"This helps save money and save the environment by eliminating chemicals that affect the rivers. The RiverWise in the Garden section, hosted at Chris Ferreira's home in Hamilton Hill, taught people about soil amendments and waterwise gardening using river friendly products."

Ms Giroud said nutrient inputs were one of the most serious threats facing the Swan Canning Riverpark and it was important people acted on the messages learnt in the training day and encouraged family and friends to stop and think about the impact they may be having on the rivers.

"At the end of the session, everyone was asked to pledge to change one thing at home to help keep the rivers healthy," she said.

RiverWise behaviour change program launches in Bennett Springs

Friday, 12 April 2013

The Swan River Trust has launched an innovative program to help home owners and businesses change how they use fertilisers and reduce damaging nutrients entering the Swan and Canning rivers.

Launching the RiverWise Bennett Springs behaviour change program, the Trust has revealed a series of free initiatives including personal home coaching visits, fertiliser swap-meets, a RiverWise garden competition, and a plan to work with businesses to promote RiverWise gardening products.

Swan River Trust Community Engagement Manager Jason Menzies said it was critical that residents across the Swan Canning catchment realise home fertiliser use was a major source of nitrogen and phosphorus contamination in Perth's rivers.

"That kind of contamination damages water quality and can lead to algal blooms and low dissolved oxygen levels that can affect fish and other animals," Mr Menzies said. "Long-term water quality monitoring around the Bennett Springs estate has revealed significant fertiliser contamination in near-by Bennett Brook, that's why we have prioritised the suburb for this 12-month trial."

"As the city and surrounding suburbs grow, there's an urgent need to change the way communities and businesses use fertilisers."

"We have been researching and developing this program with input from some of the best scientific, educational and community engagement leaders in the State. Our goal was to create a practical, user friendly behaviour change program for local residents."

Joining forces with the City of Swan, Department of Water, and the Bennett Springs community, the Trust through the Great Gardens expert team, will conduct a one year pilot program providing local home owners with free, personalised garden advice service.

The behaviour change initiative will also offer a fertiliser swap to exchange harmful fertilisers with more environmentally friendly products and an education strategy for local businesses and schools to adopt more sustainable RiverWise gardening practices.

"We don't want people to feel overwhelmed or be out of pocket for doing the right thing, so we have put a lot of time and effort into developing a program that is cheap, easy and practical," Mr Menzies said. "By making the changes simple and providing free hands-on face to face service and advice, we are confident homeowners and businesses will be inspired to change their behaviour."

The Bennett Springs estate was established in 1999 and now boasts more than 1600 houses, an 8000 m² shopping complex, and several schools.

"It's a great community in a beautiful spot, and through this tailored behaviour change program government, industry and the community will work together to ensure it stays that way," Mr Menzies said.

The Behaviour Change Strategy is a key project under the Trust's River Guardians program that was established in 2008 to help Perth communities participate in free RiverWise activities and events.

For more information, people are invited to visit www.riverguardians.com, or call Swan River Trust Community Engagement Manager Jason Menzies on 0428 206 133.

Healthy dolphin population residing in Riverpark

Friday 18 January 2013

- Report sheds new light on river dolphin population
- Reveals steady numbers and first reported case of third generation river dolphin

A new report on dolphins in the Swan Canning Riverpark has revealed a healthy, stable population of at least 20 permanent residents and 16 visitors.

Environment Minister Bill Marmion said the report, prepared for the Swan River Trust by Murdoch University, revealed 36 individual dolphins - including nine mother-and-calf pairs - used the river system in 2011-12.

During 248 hours of survey time, it found 16 adults and four calves were 'resident' most of the year, although they also ranged into coastal areas. Another five adults and two calves made repeated visits to the river and a further six adults and three calves were occasional visitors.

"The research offers valuable insights into dolphin society, finding that both males and females form relationships with dolphins of the same sex but that the male alliances appear stronger," Mr Marmion said.

"It found male dolphins tend to associate as 'constant companions' while the females have a looser network of 'casual acquaintances' with other females. Two visiting males, Backpack and Fingers, have been constant companions for more than 20 years.

"The report found the resident dolphins associate preferentially with each other in distinct groups but they also form consort relationships with visiting dolphins. At least two visiting females with calves were in consort relationships with resident males."

This report shows the population has recovered well from the events of 2009 when six river dolphins died. It completes a series of studies into the deaths and confirms that cetacean morbillivirus, which weakens the immune system, was present in the population and played a role in the death.

The report notes that a spike in mortalities and strandings of whales and dolphins was also reported along the Western Australian coast that year, suggesting the virus may have affected other cetacean populations in 2009.

The first case of a known third generation river dolphin was also documented by Murdoch researcher Delphine Chabanne. Resident dolphin Moon, who was first recorded with her mother Socket in 2001, now has her own calf, Night, aged about three years.

Fact File

Report can be accessed at <http://www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au/dolphinhealth>

Liberal National Government has invested much effort into protecting our rivers, including allocating \$4.69m to build four oxygenation plants and \$3.29m to reduce nutrients entering the Swan and Canning rivers

Insights from the dolphin population data

- 20 dolphins (16 adult/sub-adults; four dependent calves) are considered to be 'resident' in the riverpark
- The current 'resident' population is similar in size to the population in 2001-03, when the last comprehensive survey was conducted. This suggested a resident community (excluding calves) of 17-18 adult dolphins
- The river dolphins displayed strong association patterns and bonds within small groups
- Seven of the 20 resident dolphins have frequented the river for at least a decade, including:
 - Three males (Hii, Bottomslice and Blackwall)
 - Four females (Highnitch, Moon, Tupac and Tworakes), who each have dependent calves (Highhope, Night, Gizmo and Zari)
- The three long-term resident males (Hii, Bottomslice and Blackwall) were close associates in both the 2001-03 and the 2011-12 studies

- Males and females do not associate randomly within or between the sexes. Four groupings were particularly apparent, including:
- A group of adult males (Extreme, Print and Pebbles)
- A group of adult females and not yet sexed adults and sub-adults
- Four males (Arrow, Hii, Bottomslice and Blackwall) - who were also sometimes seen with two females (Tworakes and Lucky)
- Fingers and Backpack - a male alliance from Cockburn Sound
- The nine calves seen in the riverpark in 2011-12 were Night, Gizmo, Zari and Highhope (residents) and Hugs, Jungle, Soul, Garden and Product (visitors). The group ranged in age from approximately 15 months to three-four years.

For public comment: proposed hotel development

Thursday, 17 January 2013

The public is invited to comment on a proposed 10-storey hotel development including a mezzanine and roof terrace.

The proposed hotel comprises 230 rooms to be built on a concrete platform in an existing waterbed lease within the Swan River between Barrack Street Jetty and the WA Rowing Club building.

The proposed development requires approval pursuant to both the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority Act 2011 and the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006.

The plans can be viewed below or in person at any of the following offices:

Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority (MRA) at 12 Lindsay Street, Perth

Swan River Trust at Level 1, Fortescue Centre, 20 Terrace Road, East Perth

[» Perth Waterfront Hotel development application - Part A](#) [PDF 5.6MB]

[» Perth Waterfront Hotel development application - Part B](#) [PDF 4.0MB]

How to make a written submission

Written submissions should be received by the MRA by 11 February 2013.

Submissions can be made online at www.mra.wa.gov.au or mailed to:

The Chief Executive Officer
(Attention: Director Statutory Planning)
Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority
Locked Bag 8, Perth Business Centre
WA 6849

Historic river race attracts hundreds of swimmers

Sunday, 13 January 2013

Congratulations to the hundreds of swimmers – including our inaugural Swan River Trust swim team - who braved choppy conditions in the Swan River to compete in Australia's oldest open water swim, the Xstrata Nickel Swim Thru Perth, held at Matilda Bay on Sunday. The Swim Thru was first held in 1912 and taking account of the few years when it was missed due to world wars and the polio epidemic, this year's river race was the 94th time the competition has been held. The event was organised by Claremont Masters Swimming Club and included both a 4km race and a 1.6km dash.

UWA Uniswim member Rhys Mainstone (22) took out line honours for the seventh year in the 4km race, blitzing the field in a time of 48:01 minutes. He was followed by fellow UWA swimmer Paul Laver (28) in 49:18 and Tim Hewitt (39) in 51:49. The first female was Jaime Bowler (31) in a time of 53:48 ahead of Sacha Downing (15) in 56:51 and Allison Hass (44) in 58:40. Twelve-year-old Niamh Brogan was awarded the Ron Grannery Trophy for the youngest swimmer to complete the 4km course and she did so in a speedy time of 1:06:26.

A Swan River Trust swim team of river scientists and environmental officers - Jeff Cosgrove, Aaron Schonberg, Bart Peters and 7-time world champion marathon swimmer and Trust Board member Shelley Taylor-Smith - raced into Trust history by taking out 2nd place in the 1.6km Charity Dash, behind the winning Liver Foundation of WA team of Vic Paul, Gerry Macquillan, Briohny Smith and Colin Plant. The team results are determined by combining the times of each team member. The event helps raise funds for the Spine and Limb Foundation.

Solo results in the 1.6km swim saw Paul Blackbeard (54) take line honours from his much younger rivals in a time of 19:41. There was a tight tussle for 1st female across the line with nothing separating Carolyn Gorrick (32) and Jiorja Ralston (17) both crossing in 22:19.

Seal pup in the Swan River

Wednesday, 9 January 2013

The Swan River has been hosting a very special visitor over recent weeks.

The subantarctic fur seal pup arrived in the river a week before Christmas and has been sighted several times since.

Department of Environment and Conservation wildlife officers are monitoring its health and say that while the seal is very young, it is capable of surviving on its own. They have decided not to intervene as catching the pup could cause serious stress and it is feeding well and will hopefully return to the ocean when it is ready.

It is very important that people do not approach it. If you see the pup please keep your distance and report sightings to the Wildcare hotline on 9474 9055 so officers can continue to monitor its whereabouts.

River wall replacement complete

Sunday, 6 January 2013

A \$200,000 project to replace a 45-metre section of river wall at Green Place Reserve in Mosman Park has been completed.

The previous structure was more than 50 years old and its poor condition was threatening adjoining parkland and making riverbank erosion an issue.

Trust Riverbank Manager Stephen Lloyd said the replacement wall and associated repairs were designed to withstand the wash generated by vessels and had greatly improved the amenity of the site.

A grassed area immediately behind the wall will be reinstated with new turf shortly.

Mr Lloyd said he was pleased that the work was able to be completed with minimal disruption to the public.

“Access to the local jetty was maintained throughout the works period and the remainder of the reserve was restricted for just two weeks,” he said.

The project was jointly funded by the Swan River Trust and State Land Services as the wall adjoins an area of unallocated crown land.