

Newspaws

For, of and by Q.NPWS staff

December 1985

Getting on the right track



Getting the good drum on track construction were these keen Service staff who attended the walking track construction school in Townsville recently. Participants have assured non-attenders they really did not sit down on the job for the week and that this picture is not a true indication of their intentions. Doubters should now turn to page three for a report and another picture.

Staff now work 2150km apart

The Service now has two staff who work 2150km apart.

Danny Chew (and wife Donna) have taken up residence at Heathlands at the top of Cape York Peninsula, adjacent to Jardine River National Park.

This is almost as far away as is possible from Peter Haselgrove at Sundown National Park which abuts the New South Wales border.

(Almost because have you thought of being sent to Possession Island National Park?)

Danny left an electrician's job at Cape Flattery to move further north and accept new challenges.

A generator failure and insufficient windows to keep out the rain were early tests.

Cairns staff have tried to keep up necessary parts and supplies by vehicle or weekly by mail plane.

With the Wet, he's likely to be out of reach for a while.

'He's young, bright and intelligent; he loves it up there,' was the comment made to this reporter.

Welcome to other new staff: Elizabeth Tunstall (assistant personnel officer); Olwyn

Crimp (maritime estate, HO); Cherry Berney (HO typing); Lyn Gough (management services, HO); John Hows (accountant), Mike Stapleton (senior management services officer, HO) and Jennifer Lowe (Cardwell information centre).

Among transfers: Chris Turnbull (seconded to accounts, special duties); Paul Curtis, to RAO, Townsville; Julie Hampson, to clerk, Cairns; Peter Harris, now technical officer, mainland estate, Cairns.

Accouchment leave: Maureen Naylor.

From the Director

Christmas is with us once again. In this thoughtful season, it is appropriate that we take time to look at the past and plan for the future.

For me, the past year has been a challenging period. Our reorganization has been consolidated. People have learnt new jobs.

Your co-operation and enthusiasm has taken the sharp edge from what could have been a trying time.

The Service is no longer young but is 10 years old. It has stood the test of the years. Thank you for your loyalty.

I must also acknowledge my close working relationship with our Minister.

Taking time to chat

National Parks Minister Peter McKechnie has taken time recently to become more acquainted with staff of two regional offices.

He declined a GBRMPA-organized flight over the Barrier Reef off Cairns to talk with local staff over sandwiches and drinks in the Botanic Gardens for several hours.

This month, he visited the Southern Region's offices at

In looking to the future, I cannot give any assurances that things will be easier.

In our work, there will always be more to be done with limited resources. This we must accept.

Maintaining a positive attitude can make acceptance easier and the loads lighter.

I believe many of you do in fact rise above the potential difficulties where often your only reward is the inner satisfaction of a job well done.

I wish each of you and your families a very happy Christmas and all the best in the New Year.

G. W. Saunders
Director

Moggill, also to speak over a sandwich lunch.

Staff were impressed by his understanding of Service problems, and the ways in which he answered some ticklish questions quite frankly.

These are believed to be the first times that any Minister has made special efforts to have discussions at Service office level.

Psssst . . .

Head Office wildlife staff were in more than a spot of bother recently with their kangaroo data computer. The suppliers had no expert within reach. The name of a GP in a certain western town was mentioned.

Now the staff know that when their machine is having hiccups they can call the doctor. Another medifraud?

Staff in major offices by now should have received lists of the new Head Office phone numbers. If you require one, ask.

Was an electricity board conference room chosen for a review of the Service re-organization to add some spark to the debate?

Genial Jack Scott had reason to defer some callers to 16 December. That will be the first day of his retirement after 20 years in the police force. The fauna protection squad won't seem quite the same without its detective sergeant, in charge for the last three-and-a-half years.

To chronicle recent births involving Service staff and former staff seems an impossible task. It's almost as hard as keeping track of the marriage breakups and reunifications and the shades between.

Rockhampton staff celebrated Christmas early in a very wet way. They and the kids had a night out at the local waterslide.

Debbie Croft (Maryborough) took a tearful call from a little old lady who said she was being harassed further by the magpie which had so annoyed her dog it had caused its death.

Staff now have the magpie in a box waiting expectantly for it to repeat the offending action — uttering the words 'Where's the dog?'

Philosophy of a frazzled Graham Hudson (Mainland Estate) — All bills should be paid on 32 May 1986.

R/S Central Ed Power to some surprised PSB industrial officers returning from Blackdown Tableland — 'Look at the clutch of emu chicks!'

Chief Planning Officer and Royal Society of Queensland president Paul Sattler has recovered after near sleepless night organizing the national symposium on mulga lands in Brisbane recently.

DOS Paul Blake back at his desk after satisfying his mechanical urges by attending the Australian grand prix in Adelaide.

Keith McDonald (Pallarenda) went to South Molle Island recently in the cause of duty. A centrifuge was used to test samples of blood from suspected diseased feral animals.

Who said red-necked wallabies can't swim? Or what happened to the nine counted ashore at St Helena?

Jono Walsh and wife Bronwyn leaving Cairns in late January for 12 months abroad including China, Britain, and France.

Peter Burke (Mainland Estate), wife and daughter off to Perth on the strength of a \$10,000 scratch casket win.

Is information officer Don Marshall guilty of receiving under section 34? While addressing a Rotary meeting recently, he was presented with a jar of Helena olives, grown from stock planted originally on St Helena Island.

Rumour has it that a certain Natural Arch staffer might be considering fitting radar to his vehicle after missing the Springbrook barracks in the fog the other day.

Denis Dray back at his beloved Main Range after a 10,500km safari through Africa. Elephants and Kilimanjaro will surprise visitors to slide nights at the revamped Cunningham's Gap camping area in future.

Recent NSW NPWS news release on survival in a bushfire must have posed some internal difficulties in presentation. The release was offered also in Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.

How does one get hold of one of those great Burleigh Head National Park t-shirts? Ask Peter Chapman.

Gerri Kluver (Gympie) still laughing about the encounter between the sugar glider she's raising from nothing and husband Barry. Sneaking into the laundry one night, Barry stopped one spread-eagled glider with two paws on his forehead, two on his face and a tail hanging below his beard.

It's only fair now that the Southern Regional office has a new phone system all should be able to try some direct lines like RD 202 0234, RS 202 0203, senior wildlife officer 202 0238 and fauna squad 202 0214, particularly at that infuriating time of 5.01pm.

Australia stops for the Melbourne Cup. Syd Curtis trusted the pilots not to when on a flight back from the north. Over the intercom he heard what's-its-name win thus giving Syd the major Head Office sweep.

The anonymous letter to the editor writer might notice certain changes to the Service goal on page one of Ringtail. They were initiated at a high level for another publication.

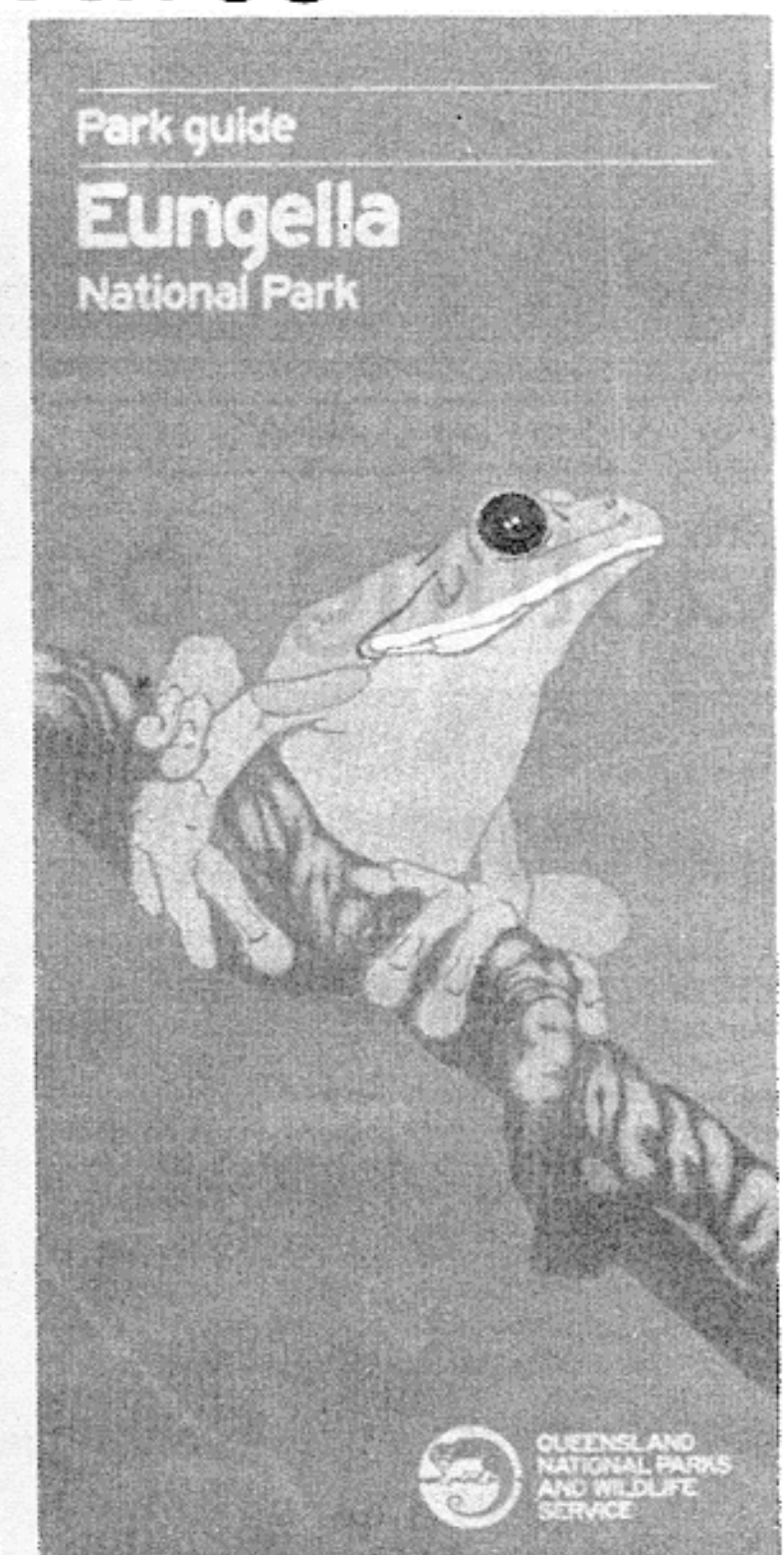
Australian Ranger Bulletin readers should notify the Queensland editor at Head Office of address changes and new listings. A revised listing will be going to Canberra early in 1986.

Which unclassified clerk passed out on the night of his 21st to be carted off to a motel room to spend the night alone?

'Companion deer' means a female farm deer kept for the personal enjoyment of its owner . . . — Deer Farming Act 1985. Truly!



Interleaves



Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery — Charles Caleb Colton 1780-1832.

This year's Service calendar will be impressive. It will feature 13 pages of photographs representing different habitats found between the Simpson Desert and the Great Barrier Reef.

Photographer Paul Candlin took the photographs using new camera equipment providing high quality, large format material.

The calendar format will allow for posters to be produced at a later date, making use of the colour separations.

Marc Hockings has been flat out preparing the ground work for the display to be mounted in the Cardwell Information Centre.

The display in preparation to a budget of \$80,000 will feature rainforest as a theme. Design work will occupy Service designer Maria Wrench and Lenore Wedgwood full-time until next March or April.

The Annual Report was tabled in Parliament this month.

The design this year is a break from tradition. It features a bright pink cover and a Major Mitchell cockatoo.

Over 45 forms have had to be designed to coincide with the introduction of the Fauna Conservation Act regulations.

Form design is an on-going,

often unrecognized activity for Technical Services Branch. Jenny Schultz is becoming something of an expert at this work.

A complex form could take a week's work to get it ready for printing.

Filming for the children's nature program Bush Beat has continued with assistance from Dave Batt at Cooloola.

Over a week was spent in gathering television footage of wetland wildlife.

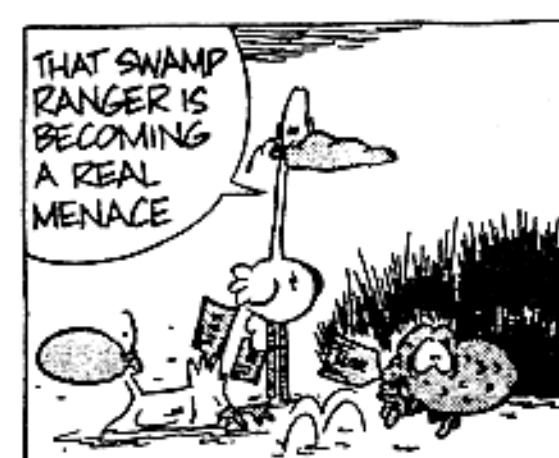
Bush Beat is being co-produced by the Service and Channel 9, Brisbane. Its 26 half-hour programs should go to air next year.

Wooden it?

Every park manager should heed this advice from Brushtale, the Southern Region's newsletter:

- Conserve firewood by hosing the woodpile every day;
- Then make a fortune selling kero;
- Place total fire ban signs at the picnic area entrances;
- This may be suspect in the rain but then you don't have to hose the woodpile.

PS. Against the odds of time and typing, the latest edition has appeared.



Non-readers of the Brisbane Telegraph will appreciate seeing this recent excerpt from cartoonist Gary Clark's Swamp comic strip series. Gary gave the Service special permission to reproduce it. He says he gets out to a swamp now and then for some ideas. While he is never short of topics, he would appreciate any bright ideas from Service staff.

Facts on fax

Facsimile machines have now been installed in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns offices.

These are for transmission of urgent correspondence between the centres, but is not meant to supplant the overnight bag system.

A4 is the standard size for all matter. The machine accepts typing plus a range of ballpoint colours and pencil.

Check in each centre for the person in charge.

Note the numbers: Brisbane (07) 221 5718, Rockhampton (079) 27 9808, Townsville (077) 71 1464, and Cairns (070) 51 4732.



Entrance to Warrie National Park, Springbrook, which is a memorial to Clarence John Melrose Trist. The Gold Coast skyline may have changed markedly but the park hasn't since this picture was taken in June 1968.

On another occasion he said:—

"By reservation as National Parks, areas of scenic, scientific or recreational interest can be maintained as nearly as possible in their original condition so that some fragments of Australia will be kept unspoiled and untouched, not only for our enjoyment, but that of our children and their children for all time. It is easy to realise that with the passing of time and the increasing destruction of natural vegetation by fire and the axe these remnants of Australian bushland and the denizens who find sustenance and sanctuary in them will be of great and evergrowing delight to, and value for the community."

Under the late Mr. Trist's guidance, the Department invested £300,000 in improvements on the National Parks, principally in the shape of graded access tracks which, whilst not interfering with the woodland beauty, afford easy access for persons of all ages.

His name will live forever in the National Parks annals of this State.

Extract from the 1955 Forestry Department report to Parliament which recorded the death of C. J. Trist.

Influence remains



C. J. Trist, the first Secretary of the Queensland Forest Service, played a major role in shaping the future of national parks in Queensland.

He joined Forestry in 1919 and died in 1954.

He had a deep and abiding love for the things of nature and focused his attention on national parks.

He guided their early development overseeing the walking track systems development, the first picnic areas and above all protecting them from exploitation.

He was committed to the national parks as outlets for the cares of everyday life.

He resolved and was an early proponent that national parks should be dedicated to the people and kept for all time in their natural condition.

C. J. Trist was an idealist who set a pattern of national park management in Queensland respected around Australia for its protection and sensitive developments.

His influence is still felt in our legislation.

School given tough lessons

Poor location and bad construction will haunt the Service into the future through high maintenance costs and less than best visitor experiences.

This was the message of the first Service's walking track construction school held in Townsville recently.

Fifteen overseers from Northern and Far Northern Regions attended the school. Instruction was given by Trevor Vollbon, Manager, Technical Services Branch; John Johnston, overseer, Tamborine, and Nev Abbey, overseer, Townsville.

The school included instruction on the aesthetic factors which can distinguish a good walking track, track location, construction and maintenance, stone pitching, stair construction and use of bush materials.

John and Nev, track builders from the good old days, shared their experiences, particularly in the ways of pegging a track to a gradient and the best ways to use stones for stairs and walls.

Bruce Lofts and Don Ringuet (age and experience) also assisted the others (youth and enthusiasm) in a greater appreciation of the finer points of building a track and bush skills.

The school combined lectures and field inspection of old tracks on Magnetic Island. This was followed by two days on the Townsville Common locating, pegging and constructing a walking track.

By Thursday afternoon, after heated activity in the noon-day

sun, 50 metres of track were completed with a maximum grade of 1 in 10, stairs, stone pitching and toe stones.

Even though the track had no start and finish it will ultimately form part of a much longer track to be used by the public.

The inspections highlighted drainage as a critical factor in track maintenance. Poor drainage and too few water bars will cause a track to erode.

The correct positioning of water bars must be checked as a routine part of maintenance.

It was also obvious that a little maintenance often is preferred to a lot of maintenance infrequently applied.

The week had its other moments. A dreaded northern stomach wog threatened to lay low Trevor Vollbon and Barry Lyons.

There were self-indulgent displays of eating garlic prawns by Bruce and others following on the example set by Mark Planck.

The work was a good opportunity for the participants to get together, swap woes and generally get to know each other.

A similar school for Central and Southern Region overseers will be held next March.



Rocks and pickwork, all part of a day's work for those attending the walking track construction school at Townsville recently.

More films available

The Service Library based at Head Office has a collection of about 60 films which are available for loan for interpretive programs on parks, visits to schools etc.

If you do not have a list of these and a set of booking forms, make a request to the Library now.

Librarian Kathy Buckley reports though that as more and more staff are using films, the resource is becoming strained, especially during holiday periods.

This results in disappointment when the choice is limited, and often preferred films cannot be supplied.

Arrangements have been made for Regional Centres to be registered as borrowers with the National Film Lending Library, Canberra, and the Queensland Education Department Film Library.

Contact officers in the regions are Barbara Blackman (Cairns), Jan Weir (Townsville), Dana Kelly (Rockhampton) and Liz Naumann (Moggill).

They should have catalogues and booking forms before Christmas.

If you wish to borrow films other than ours, direct requests to the contact officer in your region.

After a trial period, other field centres may be registered.

Snakes alive! Staff have scaly friends



Snakes! Do we get snakes? Service staff need not answer.

Our cameras caught the action in several spots.

Eungella worker Craig Norman (left) smiled at the green tree snake but the park visitors were not so keen.

Tina Dalton (media unit) brought this python to show Ian Skippen, co-presenter of the TVQ Channel 9 Living program (picture above).

Ric Nattrass (Moggill) made friends with another before making a school visit.



Challenges over mulga

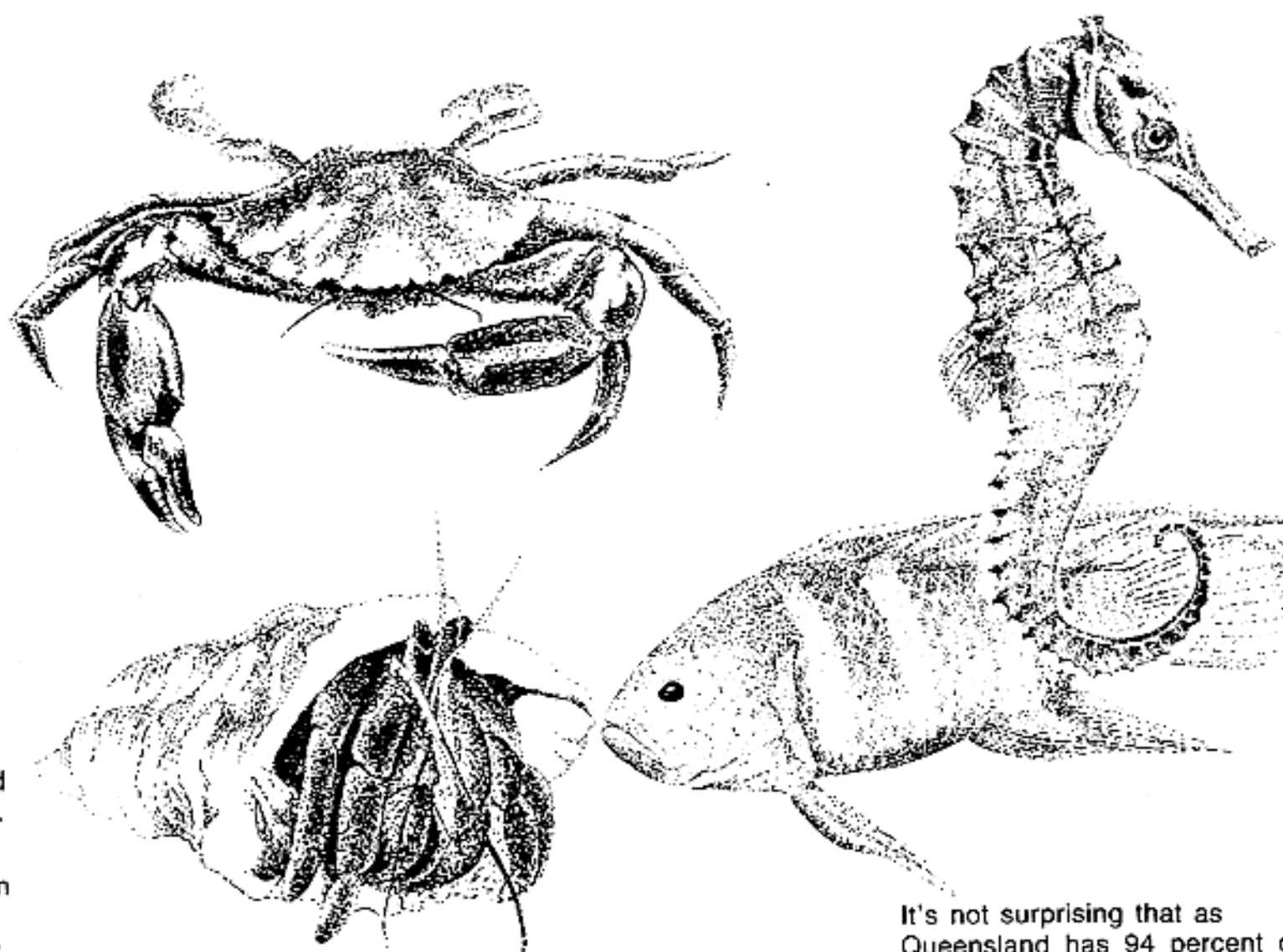
Governments and the community are challenged by recommendations of a national symposium on Australia's mulga lands.

The symposium in Brisbane recently was hosted by the Royal Society of Queensland.

Society president Mr Paul Sattler said later it was widely agreed that the mulga lands covering 20 percent of Australia (12 percent of Queensland) was one of the most fragile of the semi-arid and arid parts of Australia, that substantial impacts from overgrazing by domestic animals and rabbits have occurred, that the land must be used only within its capability, and that other uses of mining, tourism and national parks could make substantial contributions to western communities.

Specific conclusions and recommendations included:

- Federal Government financial incentives were essential to achieve objectives of the National Conservation Strategy. Incentives should encourage sustained land use and implementation of nature conservation strategies.
- Land administration, including property size, tenure review, and lease conditions should reflect land care and stewardship as its basis.
- Rural stock routes represent an important land resource for multiple land use including nature conservation and recreation. Policies should be developed for their long-term retention and protection.
- Drought relief subsidies did not encourage sympathetic land management and should be reviewed so as to provide an incentive for good management.
- Land zoning and clearing guidelines should be established to protect marginal and fragile lands.
- Land care and stewardship should become part of school curricula, the basis of extension services, and rangeland management should be introduced into university and college courses.
- Protection of the natural resource to achieve sustained use must be the paramount consideration to government and industry — land stewardship.
- Greater effort must be made to facilitate extension of management research information to landholders to assist in management.
- Nature conservation, the establishment of national parks and the promotion of tourism must be planned as a legitimate use of the mulga lands.



One may ask why?

These fine drawings of marine creatures are one reason for the publication of two volumes listing declared marine and estuarine protected areas in Australian waters

The others are more obscure other than the undertaking by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service to compile such an inventory.

Such a comprehensive reference might assist policy makers and managers, enforcement, technical and education officers, researchers and teachers as claimed.

The irony of the project is that while the coastline is 36,800km long and MEPA's as they are known extend to nearly 37 million hectares, they represent less than 0.06 percent of the total marine area for which Australia is responsible.

It's not surprising that as Queensland has 94 percent of such areas, its listings take one volume less a couple of pages.

Surprise! Hinchinbrook Channel and Nypa Palms National Parks rate a mention for they extend below high water.

So do Green Island reef and Heron-Wistari reef.

The legalities of overlapping jurisdiction of the State Marine Parks and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park are passed over in a few words.

No check was made to see if such areas were counted twice!