







From the Regional Manager, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara



Welcome to the summer edition of Palya, Strong Country, Strong People, the newsletter of the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources

INVITATION
The Alinytjara Wilurara NRM
Board invite you to join us on Facebook

AW weather stationsCheck out data from the weather stations in the AW region at...

www.facebook.com/awnrm

aws.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/alinytjara-wilurara

Next AW NRM Board meeting: March 2016, Ceduna

Next Mamungari Board meeting: February 2016, on country

Next Yumbarra Co-management Board/Nullarbor Advisory Committee meeting:

March 2016, Ceduna

Visit Ceduna Arts and Cultural Centre Features genuine Aboriginal art 2 Eyre Highway, Ceduna Coinciding with the 50th meeting of the Board, I have written an article inside the newsletter which briefly summarises where the Board has come from and some of its future strategic directions. (page 2)

2015 itself has again been a successful year, despite the challenges of declining resources. Some key achievements for 2015 include:

- Seeing the Whale sculpture from the Marine Debris Surveys being exhibited across the world, now headed for Monaco
- Ongoing increases in Warru numbers inside the APY Lands' Warru enclosure, getting ready for reintroduction into the wild
- A comprehensive review and refinement of the Board's policy statements
- Working in close partnership with APY in developing sub-regional fire management plans
- Another 20% increase in Aboriginal employment in NRM – seeing a 40% increase since 2012-2013
- Development and strengthening of the APY Pastoral Working Group to see strategic and sound management of the pastoral activities in the APY Lands
- Our first school-based traineeship based in Ceduna

 The initiation and delivery of the important track rationalisation project across the Nullarbor Regional Reserve in consultation with Traditional Owners and in partnership with local Aboriginal businesses.

A particular highlight for me has been the rolling out of co-management in the Far West Coast, including the Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee and the Yumbarra Co-management Board. Working with these Native Title holders in the early stages of co-management has been a real privilege along with many of the support staff from Far West Coast and DEWNR.

The Healthy Country Planning process and alignment to the regional Board plans will be very powerful into the future as well as the parks contribution to the wellbeing of local people and the local economy.

Thank you to you and all our partners for a successful year, and we wish you a safe and enjoyable summer and look forward to continuing work with you in 2016.

Palya,

Matt Ward Regional Manager, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilu<u>r</u>ara

Where we are and what we do

The Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Region covers the northwest quarter of South Australia. In Pitjantjatjara, alinytjara means 'north' and wilurara means 'west'. The AW NRM Region spans more than a quarter of a million square kilometres and has a population of approximately 2000 people, many of whom identify with the Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra, Kokatha, Mirning or Wirangu peoples.

Natural Resources Management (NRM) is an approach to protecting land for the mutual benefit of people and the environment.

The AW NRM Board is the only all Aboriginal NRM Board in Australia.



From the Presiding Member



Welcome to the Summer edition of Palya 2015-16.

This year has, once again, proven to be both successful as well as at times

challenging. Our board however continues to meet these challenges with constructive and creative resilience.

We have had some significant "wins" this year with a 40% increase in Aboriginal employment in NRM, building important and effective relationships with the region's newly established co-management boards and advisory committees, and supporting the APY Lands in developing a viable and sustainable Cattle Business.

A number of our key strategic priorities will be focussed on through 2015-2018. These include: continued implementation of the Regional NRM Plan; investigating and building platforms for diversification of funding streams and; extending the Board's role in the region in leadership and governance.

We are also keen to support natural and cultural based tourism in the region, and have endorsed development of a Tourism Policy to guide the development of a Regional Tourism Strategy, in collaboration with key partners.

The board will continue to look at its representation in order to best reflect the views of its communities, stakeholders and government, as well as to be a leader and important backbone for the region.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season and new year.



Parry Agius
Presiding Member

Alinytjara Wilu<u>r</u>ara Natural Resources Management Board



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This December the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board is celebrating its 50th Board meeting and ten years of service to the people and lands of the Alinytjara Wilurara Region.

Established in 2004, the inaugural Board meeting was held in July 2005 and was presided over by Mr Charles (Charlie) Jackson. Mrs Marilyn Achee further advanced the board's objectives becoming Presiding Member In 2006. She was proceeded by Mr Parry Agius in 2010 who remains an insightful and influential leader as the Presiding Member today.

Initially made up of Aboriginal leaders from across the state, the current Board now has strong and well connected regional representation.

The present Board has leadership representation from:

- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara
- Maralinga Tjarutja
- Antakarinja Mantuntjara Yankunytjatjara (Coober Pedy)
- Yalata
- Tjuntjuntjara, WA
- Far West Coast and Ceduna

Some key outcomes achieved by the Board and its partners over the past 10 years include:

- Delivery of the first Regional NRM Plan that defined visions for the Board, People, Country and Water
- Board members generating a strong policy agenda, with key

- policies around community-based NRM delivery, water, economic development and employment
- Adopting an Education, Training, Employment and Procurement Strategy and achieving significant Aboriginal employment outcomes in the region, with a 40% increase between 2012/13 and 2014/15
- Ensuring sustainable water use, and protection of water for natural and cultural heritage values, through a new Regional Water Plan
- A region-wide Fire Management Plan aligned to DEWNR fire management
- Support of the long-term Warru Recovery Project with key delivery partners APY Land Management, Zoos SA and others (see page 12)
- A strong coastal conservation and management program with strong links to local communities and Ceduna Arts programs
- A long-term Yalata Beach management program including recreational fishing surveys and support of long-term scientific Mulloway tagging and monitoring program
- A large biological survey of the Nullarbor in 2011-2012, repeating the first ever comprehensive regional Bio-survey conducted by the Department in 1980
- Adoption of a bold agenda to see our next Regional NRM plan built from



Above: Yalata School, planting trees, 2009 Below: Feral animal yards installed in APY Lands, 2005



Written by Matthew Ward

- the bottom up through a process of Healthy Country Planning, ensuring strong community ownership and drive for the future of NRM in the region and inexorable links with business planning and operations
- Strong support for co-management of public lands in the region and alignment with regional scale social, environment and economic aspirations and plans

Since its establishment, the Board has achieved many significant outcomes and has matured into a strong, well governed and strategic Board with long-term and ambitious visions.

Through the continued support of the AW community, the state and federal governments and the network of other partnering bodies the future of NRM in the AW Region looks bright.



Top left: Painting created by attendees of 1st AW NRM sponsored Women's Conference held in Pt Augusta 2010 Above: Community meeting to discuss NRM, 2005





Mamungari Co-management Board Managing the Park's future

The Maralinga Lands Unnamed Conservation Park Co-management Board was the first South Australian statutory Co-management Board, composed of Traditional Owners and representatives of the State Government.

It defined a framework for building long term ongoing relationships between the Traditional Owners and the State Government. The Board was established by the SA Government to administer the Unnamed Conservation Park (proclaimed as the Mamungari Conservation Park), on 24 August 2004.

The 25th meeting of the Board was held in September this year at the Oak Valley Training Centre.



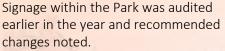
Above: Taking a lunch break at Oak Valley Store

Below: Deputy Board member Debbie Hansen ready to hit the road back to Tjuntjuntjara in WA



John Mungee, the Presiding Member and Board members Dora Queama, Keith Peters, Bruce Hogan, Josie McArthur, Mark Anderson (NR EP), Justine Graham (Ministerial representative) and Bruce Macpherson (NR AW) were joined by Deputy Members: Marjorie Kugena, Cindy Watson, Parka Hogan, Debbie Hansen and Mima Smart who interpreted.

Sam Doudle, Manager Co-management and Public Lands, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara (NR AW) provided an overview of the activities that had been conducted on Park (with the support of the compliance staff from NR EP) since the last meeting, including Ranger Compliance Training, Professional Witness Course and Do it Together - OV / Spinifex / Yalata. A Warden's Course is being considered for Rangers in the future. Buffel grass mapping and treatment of infestations is being managed by NR AW and Oak Valley Rangers. Future activities considered were annual management checks of previous infestation sites and all park tracks and talking to people in communities (and the grader driver) about ways to minimise spread of seed.





There were 102 campsites mapped within the Park, 11 campsites in areas where no is camping allowed. Proposed future actions considered include: continue big camp sites every 50 kms with shed tanks, choose some other sites in between to make smaller official camp sites, rehabilitate other camp areas, put simple maps on signs at Park entrances and on Park Permits indicating where camping sites are.

The MLUCP Board agreed to develop a Working Group to carry out the Camping and Signage Strategy.

The MLUCP Board also agreed to appoint a full time Executive Officer/ Coordinator and Trainee for a period of two years.

Various logo designs were viewed and after voting, one (shown above) was selected to represent the Board. NR AW will manage the application to signage and other materials.

Board member Bruce Hogan cooks his breakfast at Oak Valley before the meeting





Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee

On-Country Healthy Country Planning workshop

In mid August a group of Mirning People, DEWNR staff and Healthy Country Planning facilitator, Stuart Cowell braved the elements to camp at the old Koonalda Homestead in the **Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area** for their planning workshop.

Members of the Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee took this opportunity to look closely and carefully consider, management plans for the ongoing health of the Far West Coast parks.

Holding discussions on-country to talk about their vision and what's important to protect in the parks allowed those who attended to better focus on the land surrounding them.

Over 20 Traditional Owners attended ranging from teenagers to grandparents.

"It wasn't until we got out here that we realised what a significant event it was going to be... this is a historic milestone gathering, 30 years in the making" said Mirning woman April Lawrie.

Stuart Cowell talks to the group about the Heathy Planning methodology



Members of the Nullarbor Advisory Committee at Koonalda Homestead, happy with the outcomes from the Healthy Country Planning workshops

They talked about the need to protect the plants and animals that live on the Nullarbor including threatened species such as gibra (bush turkey) and other native species such as wadu (wombat).

They also discussed the various landscapes across the region from the coastal areas to the distant plains, the different challenges each presents and ways they might best be managed.

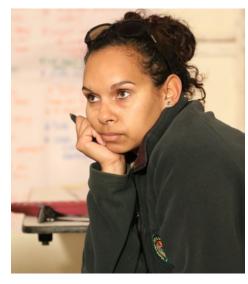
The group spoke about the significance of keeping their culture alive. It is important that Traditional Owners get out on-country as often as possible so that they can care for cultural sites and share the stories inter-generationally.

"We want to take care of the parks, not just for Aboriginal people but for all people so they can understand and appreciate the land and our culture" said Committee member and Mirning Elder Dorcas Miller.

The group considered ways that they might encourage the sharing of cultural knowledge as well as ecological information with all visitors to the region. Having simple interpretive signage throughout the Nullarbor region and perhaps establishing guided cultural tours were two options discussed.

The workshop was undertaken over three days and included a visit to the spectacular coastal regions along the

Natural Resources Eyre Peninsula Project Officer Tammy Cox takes on board Stuart's guidance







Jasmin Kerdel and her mother Kaylene standing either side of Elma Lawrie (Clem Lawrie in background)

Bunda Cliffs where current facilities and visitor safety issues were discussed such as track rationalisation, construction of barriers and camp area definition.

The group visited the world renowned Koonalda Cave famous for the ancient Aboriginal fluting patterns that scar the cave walls. They also visited Murrawijinie Caves near the Nullarbor Roadhouse. where a number of them ventured down into the eerie, cool chambers below.

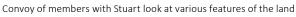
The logistics of the trip, including setting up the big marquee, organising vehicles and catering etc were kindly managed by Robbie Sleep (NR AW/EP), Tammy Cox (NR EP) and Saras Kumar (DEWNR, Far West Coast Policy and Planning).

"The ladies (and their husbands) from the Far West Coast Women's Association who took care of the catering were fabulous, the fire was always kept burning, the billy boiled and the food was delicious" said Saras.

Overall the workshop was a great success. "It's about managing the parks for all to appreciate and enjoy" said the Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee Deputy Chair, Clem Lawrie.

"I look forward to what we can achieve from working together in an enduring partnership between the Mirning Traditional Owners and Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources."

This process will see an important alignment with the future AW NRM Plan, connecting people and country across the region.







Jasmin Kerdel talks about the coastal landscape



Richard Peel and James Peel Jnr inside Murraeijinie Cave



Taking stock of the day, NR EP staff and Committee members Mark Anderson and Sophie Keen

Neville Miller by the fire at sunset





Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board



Photos courtesy of Robbie Sleep

Yumbarra Co-management Board met at Scotdesco Community following the Nullarbor workshop to discuss Healthy Country Plans for the Greater Yellabinna Parks (including Yumbarra Conservation Park and Yellabinna Wilderness Protection Area) and the Wanna Munda Parks. This includes all the conservation parks along the coastline from Wahgunyah (south of Yalata) to Acraman Creek (just south of Smoky Bay.)

They were the first group to use the brand new accommodation facilities with the final coat of varnish was being put on the deck railings as they arrived! Scotdesco was a gracious host to the workshop participants and it proved to be an excellent base to visit nearby parks to look at the important sites and issues affecting them.

Leonard Miller Senior, Deputy Chair of the Yumbarra Co-management Board explained that co-management was about, "shared learning and sharing knowledge".

Like the Nullarbor workshop, they talked about the plants and animals that needed protecting, as well as the cultural sites like soaks, rockholes and salt lakes. They talked about the need to protect European heritage like the whaling station ruins at Fowlers Bay.

Kokatha woman and board member, Sue Haseldine explained that for Aboriginal People, "The land around is school, church, pharmacy, supermarket, butchers and cemetery". Wanda Miller spoke of the importance of working together. "We need to look after these

Back L-R Edward Roberts, Kenny Roberts, Matt Ward, Kelly Miller, Wanda Miller, Ollanta Lipcer, Tammy Cox, Sophie Keen, Aaron Binell, Kirsty Sansbury, Wayne Haseldine, Randy Gray, Stuart Cowell, Hayden Coleman, Leonard Miller Senior,

Middle L-R: Justine Graham (seated), Georgina Stockfish, Ester Miller, Marcina Richards, Sue Haseldine, Wendy Ware, William Newchurch, Sam Doudle

Front L-R Robbie Sleep, Saras Kumar, Belinda Margan, Estelle Miller

places, for all Australians, we don't want to stop people enjoying this beautiful place but we do want them to respect the country and respect our culture".

The information provided at these workshops will also be used to inform the next Alinytjara Wilurara and Eyre Peninsula Natural Resource Management plans. This process will

Randy Gray







People: working together







Above: Spending time on country is important to insightful planning - convoy of members visit the coast

see an important alignment with the future AW NRM Plan, connecting people and country across the region.

The group visited the nearby Tuckamore Beach and travelled down to Fowlers Bay to discuss track rationalisation and camping facilities.

The Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee and Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board invite members of the public to provide information for the development of the park management plans by emailing DEWNRProtectedAreas@sa.gov.au.





Left: Saras Kumar facilitates a break out group Top: Sue Haseldine takes a tea break

Above: Leonard Miller Senior, Deputy Chair of the Yumbarra Co-management Board

Bottom left: the group workshop at Scotdesco meeting rooms

Bottom left: William Newchurch discusses some of the points recorded during the workshop





Keeping it Clean



With an increase in visitors to the region, the management of effluent at Gilgerabbie hut and Koonalda as well as at a number of other sites is an ongoing issue. Currently a local effluent contractor drives out to the sites from Ceduna to pump the toilets at those sites.

Future management of visitor facilities including toilets is something that has been discussed during the recent Healthy Country Planning workshops. Options around the installation of larger capacity, more suitable toilets placed in a couple of high-use locations through the southern AW and western EP regions is being explored. The installation, and possible locations of new toilets will be guided by the appropriate boards and advisory committees and will be subject to native title clearance.



Feral horses removed from AP

When the AW NRM Board's Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands' representatives were alerted to problems caused by increasing numbers of feral horses around APY communities, a management plan was developed in consultation with Traditional Owners and later undertaken in collusion with APY Pastoral Management.

The decision to target the rapidly expanding herd of over 500 horses that frequented the remote Indulkana Community and surrounds was primarily based on the significant dangers they presented to the health and safety of community members. Additionally their prolific numbers

Feral animals wandering along the roads are a serious safety concern



were seen to negatively impact on the region's biodiversity and sustainability.

Horses coming into the Community every day searching for water during the drier months deposited faeces throughout common areas as well as in private yards presenting serious public health concerns. Flies drawn to the faeces were seen to contribute to eye infections such as conjunctivitis particularly amongst the children. Additionally, the very real risk of being trampled threatens vulnerable members of the community (young and old). The deep concerns about personal health and safety felt by community members, manifested as a drain on local health services and dissuaded children from attending school.

Feral animal carcasses attract scavengers to the roads



Written by Tim Moore Photography by Mark Piovesan Above: Feral horses congregating in the community public areas looking for water present a real danger

(horses fighting in background) as well as spoiling the grounds with faeces.

Horses also present an issue on the local roads where it was reported that at least 1 fatality was caused by crashing into horses at night and that horse collisions had caused numerous other serious road injuries over the past few years.

A horses needs at least 45 litres of water per day to survive (4 Olympic swimming pools per year). With the only water available being in the community this large herd were a drain on water for human consumption. On the lands they also compete with stock for water.

Where horses cannot access water from towns or pastoral assets (tanks/ bores/troughs) they take or degrade important and transient surface waters. Many of these surface waters are of special cultural and spiritual significance to the Traditional Owners. When horses develop an expectation of surface waters being at particular locations, they often do not move on in dry times and perish in their thousands of thirst, their carcasses fouling these sacred sites.

Supported by the Federal Government's National Landcare Programme, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara, under the direction of the AW NRM Board.

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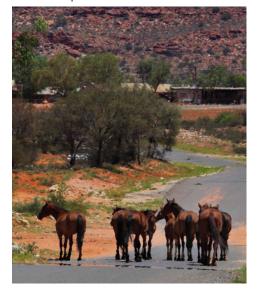
worked with the APY Lands Pastoral Manager and Traditional Owners on a Property Development Plan for ongoing management of feral horses. Various infrastructure options were considered within the plan, however the construction of permanent watered yards and mobile trap yards were considered the best solution. As a first step after construction was completed, the APY Pastoral Manager and the Indulkana community mustered 200 horses. These were later trucked to an abattoir. The permanent infrastructure and yards will allow for ongoing opportunistic trapping as the need to manage feral herbivore populations continues to arise.

Maintaining such programs is vital, not only to the health of the country and the biodiversity it supports but to the health, cultural and economic wellbeing of the community members.

The condition of feral horses deteriorates drastically when food and water become scarce



Feral horses wandering on the roads around the communities present a serious traffic hazard





The last few months has seen work pick-up again for the Murputja rangers. In May this year, Shane Doudle, who had been working on the project over the last year took up a new job in Tjuntjuntjara WA with their ranger team. Everyone was sad to see Shane leave, he made a great contribution to the program!

Will Powrie has now joined the team for a few months and work has commenced on further developing the AW NRM ranger work shed located next to the school. In May it was built by Wiltja Constructions, an Anangu owned business operating on the APY Lands. The shed will be used for training and storing of equipment. Currently, the rangers are working on welding benches for the shed.

We also have ladies from Kanpi community learning to weld, maybe in the future these ladies will be building the fences and camel yards on APY... go girls!

From left: Justine Mitchell, Edna Ingangka Yaltjangki, Regina Baker and Barbara Baker



Traditional Owners Keith Stevens and Ricky Kemp, Anthony Windy, Shaun Kemp and Carl Warren at Piltarti rock hole

Over the coming months work will be focused on a significant rock hole near Nyapari community called Piltarti. There have been multiple trips to the area with Traditional Owner Keith Stevens to talk about work. It is planned for the road to be re-graded, as it is currently only accessible by 4WD. They would like the site accessible to 2WD as it is regularly visited by families.

Keith Stevens also talked about other work for the rangers including building a shade shelter, placing bins and erecting a sign that explains the significance of the area. Keith hopes that in the future tourists may be able to visit guided by the rangers. Additionally, the rock hole needs to be cleaned and strategies for minimizing the impacts of camels could be implemented.

We also revisited sites of historical malleefowl recordings. There are four sites in the area where malleefowl tracks, mounds or sightings have been recorded over the years. These areas were surveyed in 2013, however the ladies wanted to check these areas again. Two days was spent checking for recent tracks, however unfortunately no tracks were recorded.





Photography by Mark Piovesan

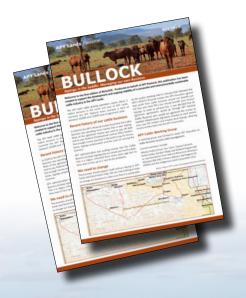
Plans to reform the Cattle Business in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands into a viable and sustainable enterprise are off to a good start with the development of new communications written in both English and Pitjantjatjara.

The APY beef cattle grazing operation covers about 2 million hectares in the north and east of APY Lands. Currently the APY Pastoral team oversees a herd of between 10,000 and 13,000 head of agistment cattle.

The APY Executive agreed that profit from Cattle Business should not benefit just the few who held PDLs but should benefit tjuta (many) Anangu. In order to achieve this, it was decided that all agistment agreements would go through APY Pastoral (Cattle Business) who would use agistment fee money to maintain infrastructure (eg bores, fences) on each licence area, pay PDL holders and employ local Anangu allowing money to flow back into the APY community.

A working group was formed to assist APY Executive to make decisions around cattle management.

APY Pastoral's newsletter BULLOCK, Anangu in the Saddle: Managing our own Business is being produced on behalf of APY Pastoral, with the support of Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara (NR AW). It will provide relevant and timely information to support the development and ongoing viability of a successful and environmentally sustainable cattle industry in the APY Lands.



Current members include:

Milyika Paddy (Chair), Rex Tjami, Tapaya Edwards, Arnie Franks, Gordon Inkatji and Richard King as well as representatives from Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara (NR AW), Primary Industry and Regions SA (PIRSA) and the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC).

APY Pastoral Partners

Aside from Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara, partnering groups helping to support the Cattle Business reforms include the Indigenous Land Council and PIRSA. NR AW provides technical and scientific expertise such as planning, mapping and research. Indigenous Land Corporation are partnering with NR AW and APY to create a Sustainable Pastoral Development Plan (SPDP).

Purpose of the Sustainable Pastoral Development Plan

The SPDP will provide a 10 year strategy for the holistic development of Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) cattle business that takes into consideration sustainable management principles for people, land and livestock. The SPDP will clearly describe a new way to run the cattle business that will avoid past problems.





McCaul's bore with solar power

Some factors to be considered as part of developing the SPDP include: availability of water; availability of feed; the seasonal condition of the land; access and; maintenance requirements for infrastructure.

The environmental impacts of cattle on the land will also be considered in the planning stage including the possible effects that cattle business may have on threatened and/or feral species.

Mapping infrastructure and important places

The first major activity will be visits to each licenced site to gather current information about existing infrastructure and land condition. This information will be recorded and used to develop a series of reference maps.

Maps of water assets, fences and pastoral resources, including existing lease boundaries will help inform development plans for new waters and fencing and help business make more



Amata south loading ramp and stock yards

money and increase its capacity to employ Anangu from the region.

Natural Resources Audit

The purpose of developing a Natural Resources Audit (NRA) is to ensure the sustainable long-term use of natural resources does not negatively impact on environmental, social or economic conditions of the APY grazing lands.

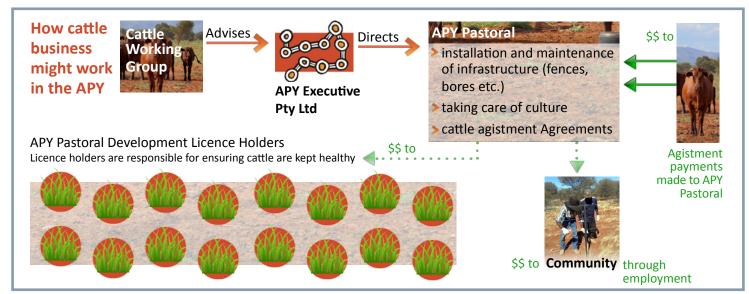
The NRA uses a scientific approach to examine the natural resources of areas that currently allow pastoral enterprise and considers areas that may, in the future, carry a pastoral opportunity, potentially including areas that are currently under the Indigenous Protected Areas management program.

In the early stages, the NRA will be used to collate existing data on the natural resources of the area, and compile information on the current condition and composition of pastures in all land types present including and analysis

of previous data collected in the area. APY Anthropologists have identified who the right people are to be involved in mapping sites of cultural significance in the various grazing areas.



Interested in working in the APY Cattle Business? Drop by the Pastoral Office or call on (08) 8954 8111.







Photos and Report by Yasmin Wolf

The Nullarbor is a vast and fragile landscape steeped in the history and culture of the Traditional Owners and home to an array of uniquely adapted plants and animals.

Supported through the Federal Government's Coastal Fund, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara, along with the Nullarbor Advisory Committee, maintain the Nullarbor Conservation Park and its surrounds.

With an ever increasing number of visitors travelling through this remote arid region there are certain risks and environmental impacts that must be taken into consideration.

Earlier in the year, five Aboriginal contractors spent four days working with Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara's Yasmin Wolf to undertake works in response to public safety issues and to protect sensitive species and their habitats. These included: containment of vehicle traffic with fencing barriers, measures to reduce off-road vehicle and pedestrian damage, and the provision of public education information about the regional and its cultural heritage.

The visitor management upgrade and repair project works included signage upgrades, rubbish removal, fencing and barrier repairs.

Damaged warning signs replace at cave



Warning signs along Eyre Highway



Protecting damage to fragile vegetated areas



The area had been mapped in 2007 by the Department of Environment and Heritage staff and NR AW. It had originally been planned to refer to this mapping data to inform the Nullarbor Plain access management works.

However on re-evaluation of the mapping data set and after discussions with members of the Nullarbor Advisory Committee (Park comanagement arrangement) it was decided that further mapping of the area was required before planned works could begin.

The previous mapping data had not captured cultural site information and risk assessments had not been undertaken.

An experienced GIS mapping expert was contracted to undertake mapping and risk identification of the entire Nullarbor National Park zone in the coastal section South of the Eyre Highway.

This mapping was followed up by trained DEWNR risk assessment staff who undertook risk assessments at each of the 55 risk sites identified along the 200 km section to determine appropriate risk mitigation actions. The



risk sites were classified into a high. medium or low category. The Nullarbor Advisory Committee was heavily involved in planning the overall project and facilitated the transfer of cultural information between Traditional Owners and Natural Resources AW staff.

Cultural Site Advisors

Three local Traditional Owners were employed for four days to provide cultural advice and to help NR AW identify significant cultural sites within the project area. The cultural site mapping will be used with the track mapping data to inform works.

By undertaking cultural site mapping with Traditional Owners of the area, Natural Resources staff are ensuring that impacts to cultural sites from the project is minimised and that planned works will not cause damage to any significant cultural areas. Cultural site access restrictions have also been rationalised for implementation in the near future.

On the advise of Nullarbor Advisory Committee, quotes will be requested from all Aboriginal organisations within the local area to undertake the labour component of the works.



Cleaning up around Koonalda Homestead



Warru population on the re-bound in the APY Lands



Recovering the black-footed rock wallaby (warru) population in the APY Lands is tricky work. Eighty years ago their numbers were plentiful, now this threatened species resides in two small local populations in the APY Lands and in one predator free enclosure near Ernabella.

Supported by the Warru Recovery Team since 2007 (APY Land Management, Australian Government, DEWNR and the AW NRM Board, ZoosSA and scientists John Read and Rebecca West), indigenous rangers working for APY Land Management are working together to recover

In 2011, around 6 Warru were released into the Warru fence, free of predators, to provide an area learn to live in local conditions. In a recent trapping trip in the APY Lands at the Warru fence, there were 11 new wallabies and probably over 40 Warru now living in the important safe haven. A large team of Anangu rangers are employed in Ernabella and in the west near Kalka and Pipalyatjara to implement the Warru

On a recent radio interview, Ethan Dagg, Anangu Field Officer with the Warru recovery project, (APY Land Management) explained:

"We use padded Soft Traps to catch warru (inside the enclosure). We put when they go in, a door falls down behind them.

"Anangu don't eat warru now days. My mother told me that my grandparents saw lots of warru but I'd

"They're breeding well now – they're good and healthy."

Part of Ethan's job is to check for sure the water points are filled up.

"We track them to their dens using radio tracking and use mortality collars that give off signals.

a warru, Ethan said "a warru is like a teddy bear to hold, but some are feisty especially those that might be protecting little ones, they do bite but the little ones are really cute and we

planning to take some of the Warru out of the fenced area and into the Plan 2010-2020 adopted by the team,

To learn more visit: www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/alinytjara.../warru-recovery-program





On the western side of Mabel Creek Station, about 100km from Coober Pedy lies Tallaringa Conservation Park. This vast wilderness of vegetated dunes and gibber rises is home to an incredible array of wildlife species uniquely adapted to their arid environment.

Local Antakirinja Matuntjara Yankunytjatjara, Barney and Joseph Lennon, and Andrew and Joash (Paul) Dingaman recently spent five days working with Dave Armstrong from the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) and Steve Eldridge and Andrew Schubert (Desert Wildlife Services) on a biodiversity survey in the northern part of Tallaringa Conservation Park. Janet Walton (Arid Lands, DEWNR), Shontelle Lennon and Connie Taylor also spent some time on Park helping out.

The Biodiversity survey is part of the healthy country planning process that the AW NRM Board is rolling out across the region which incorporates TO engagement into long term planning and ownership of implementation.

'We were really happy to find there were no weeds where we surveyed. We didn't do the central part of the park though, along the Ann Beadell Highway. We'll have to keep an eye around there to make sure Buffel grass and other weeds don't spread into the park' said Joseph Lennon.

The survey was also practical and beneficial for the Traditional Owners who were undertaking a Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management.

'The Traditional Owners were able to use the survey to complete some of their course requirements including establishing the pitfall trap lines and setting Elliot and Funnel traps, as well as handling captive animals and rehabilitating the survey site afterwards. We really appreciated how keen, enthusiastic and conscientious they all were' Steve said.

The DEWNR team went on to spend another five days in the southern part of Tallaringa where heavy rains had fallen in late May. This produced an abundance of bird-attracting flowering annual plants.

L-R Setting small animal traps Barney Lennon constructing a line of pitfall traps Joseph Lennon setting a funnel trap Andrew Dingaman constructing a pitfall fence Joash (Paul) Dingamen preparing a fly-wire drift fence, part of a pitfall trap line

'We were excited to discover that we had found seven bird species and at least four reptiles not previously recorded in Tallaringa. This included the rare Chestnut-breasted Whiteface which is seldom observed and one of only two bird species endemic to South Australia,' said Steve.

'Although some of the flora specimens are still to be identified, it appears that a number of them had not previously been found on Tallaringa. There were also at least seven species of mulga found co-existing in the park... diversity in one area like this is very rare', Steve said.

The project was funded by Australian Government's National Landcare Program and delivered in partnership with the AW NRM Board, the Tallaringa Advisory Committee and Antakirinja Matu Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation.







In mid-August this year, Paul Gregory, Ceduna-based Project Officer with Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilu<u>r</u>ara (NR AW) partnered with Traditional Owner Dennis Hocking from the West Mallee Protection Group (WMPG) to monitor and maintain various sites within the Yellabinna and Yumbarra parks.

The spread of Buffel grass into the pristine AW landscapes requires constant monitoring and treatment, particularly after winter rains. Trains travelling through Buffel grass infested areas inadvertently spread the seed across along the East-West rail corridor. Funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, NR AW monitor the line and destroy outbreaks before any infestations become unmanageable and cause irreversible ecological damage.

"It was good to see some real progress from our treatment programs, we found there was hardly any mature Buffel grass compared to past inspections at this time of year" said Paul.

In May last year, Paul worked with a team of Traditional Owners and other volunteers and staff establishing camp sites and access roads around the popular destination of Mount Finke, within the Yellabinna Regional Reserve. Together with Dennis he revisited the area to assess how effective their work

had been at decreasing erosion and the destruction of fragile vegetation caused by visitors.

"With the expectation of an increase in nature-based tourism, it was rewarding to find that the work we had carried out appeared to have been respected by visitors to the area. Instances of driving off track and informal camping had significantly decreased.

Above: One of a number of established revegetaion sites under threat around Goog's Lake

Below: Dennis Hocking digging a trench across the track to discourage entry to revegetated areas



"At Googs Lake, over the past few years various groups of volunteers joined NR AW and EP staff in establishing camp sites, disguising unnecessary tracks and clearly identifying access routes. Local farmers, Traditional Owners,

including members of the West Mallee Protection Group and other community members, who camped out together for 5 days in 2014 and again in 2015 did an incredible job of transforming this area. Their help was invaluable.

"On this trip however, we were disappointed to find that about 300m of track leading to a revegetated area that had previously been closed off, appeared to have been re-opened and used with some frequency. Without heavy equipment on hand, all we could do was dig a deep trench across it to deter visitors from continuing to use this route and from destroying the 200 ha of revegetation work" said Paul.

In 2013, 600 native trees were planted to promote re-vegetation in the Googs Lake area.

"Given the harshness of the conditions and the failure of some visitors to respect the revegetation areas, it was pleasing to find that about 20% of the trees planted had survived."

The team also visited areas around Nalara and Lois granite out-crops where they mapped existing tracks and noted their condition. This will be used to inform plans for future access management work and environmental preservation.



Written by Rob Harcourt, Professor of Marine Ecology, Macquarie University

Every July southern right whales arrive in the sheltered inlets of southern Australia to breed. These endangered whales were severely depleted by whaling, with up to 150,000 killed between 1790 and 1980.

After more than a century of protection they are recovering well in parts of their range. Off south west Australia their numbers are increasing at nearly 7% each year. The population found in the New Zealand sub-Antarctic is also looking robust. But the population found in south east Australia and mainland New Zealand does not seem to be faring so well.

In a study published today in Nature Scientific Reports we looked at the migration routes of these whales, which may help explain why they have been so slow to recover.



Where do the whales go?

Southern right whales migrate between their breeding grounds off the coast of Australia and New Zealand and feeding grounds in the Southern Ocean.

For a long time we have suspected that these whales show fidelity to their breeding grounds, as individuals return each year to popular tourist sites such as The Head of the Bight in South Australia and to Warrnambool in Victoria. But where exactly they feed has remained a mystery.

For more than 20 years we have studied these whales using small skin biopsies. We looked at genetic evidence and analysis of stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen. Carbon isotopes provide an indication of where animals are feeding. Combined with genetic evidence, this provides clear insights into who is feeding where, and in part with whom.

We found evidence of genetic structure at both ends of the migratory network of southern right whales. That is animals showed high fidelity and bred within the same populations returning to familiar calving sites in Australia and New Zealand over many years. These animals also showed distinct separation when feeding in the southern ocean.

This suggests that whales that follow different migration routes belong to different subsets of the population, because if whales were moving between routes we would see more genetic mixing.

Migratory culture

Our data suggest that these whales pass on their migration routes culturally - particularly from mothers to their daughters.

Fidelity to migratory routes is widespread in the animal kingdom, from eels and the Sargasso Sea, through Pacific Salmon returning to spawn in only a single river catchment, the great migrations of the African savanna, to the annual migrations of the great whales.

In the marine environment returning to the place of your birth can have an enormous influence on population structure, and is important for assessing stocks of commercial species such as Pacific Salmon, as well as in conserving endangered species.

For long-lived animals, passing on knowledge of migration routes may be more successful than leaving offspring to fend for themselves. If behaviour is socially transmitted and then shared within subsets of a population, it is called culture.





Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara has undertaken annual Whale Surveys along the Nullarbor cliffs near the Head of Bight for over 5 years.

The mass migration of Southern Right Whales to the pristine waters of the southern ocean at the base of the Bunda cliffs has occurred since time immemorial. The AW NRM Board will continue to strive to support these precious breeding grounds remaining as a safe, healthy refuge into the future.

2016 Whale of a Day



Therefore, in species with long periods of parental care the transmission of parental preferences for breeding or feeding grounds to offspring is termed migratory culture.

Threatened by loyalty

Migratory culture could help explain why some populations of southern right whales are recovering and others aren't.

When animals that show fidelity to a particular migratory destination are lost, the "memory" of that migratory destination is also lost. The effect is exacerbated when animals are lost across the migratory network, as was the case with whaling. These losses due to rapid reductions in populations can mean that safe havens may remain lost to a population for generations.

Migratory traditions can be a big advantage to long-lived animals by providing young with ready access to proven feeding areas and safe breeding habitat. But in a rapidly-changing environment, such as hat we face today, previously productive feeding grounds may become less productive.

Loyalty to their migration routes might then mean these animals are pushed back to the brink of extinction.

Written by Rob Harcourt, Professor of Marine Ecology, Macquarie University. Published in the "Conversation" November 2015.

Nullarbor Cliffs looking south



On a sunny mid-September day the children from Yalata School headed down to the Head of Bight for a day of fun learning about Whales and their marine environment.

Organised and run by the Ceduna AW and EP Natural Resources Centre's Yasmin Wolf, Tammy Cox and Latisha and Amanda Richards the 2016 Whale of a Day involved a range of educational activities, whale spotting and a barbecue.

The Yalata school children and community members were fortunate to see 20 whales frolicking around in the waters below the viewing platform.

Despite being a bit windy the children happily immersed themselves in creating an "Ocean in Jar" (with little fish, seaweed, blue and green colouring, glitter and sea shells in a jar); building window aquariums; learning about the texture and purpose of whale blubber and; playing with bouncy balls.

With a barbecue lunch and prizes for the children the day was a great success both as an opportunity to learn more about coastal NRM and to share in community knowledge.

Thanks for making this annual event so successful once again Yasmin.



Photos courtesy of Andrew Sleep

The annual Shorebird Survey undertaken in December this year once again highlighted the importance of remaining vigilant in monitoring these remote coastal locations.

Although numbers of threatened bird species numbers have not varied greatly, there was evidence of an increase in habitat degradation.

Resident Shorebirds

The team were pleased to find that the threatened species Hooded Plovers (rated Vulnerable in both the **Environment Protection and Biodiversity** Conservation Act and the National Parks and Wildlife Act) numbers appear to have remained stable and apparently unaffected by any immediate threats.

Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers (both rated as *Rare* in the NPW Act) numbers fluctuated a bit more but overall remain quite steady.

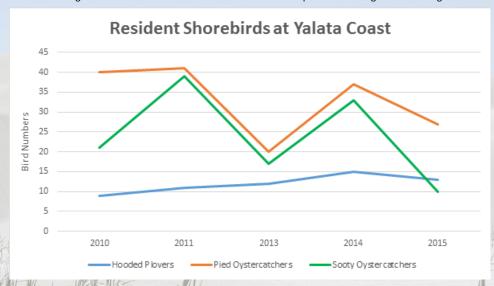
Red-capped Plovers (not listed as threatened) have been steadying increasing in numbers during the 4 year period despite a small drop in 2015. Refer to (blue) chart on opposite page showing actual figures.

Shorebird Monitoring and Threat Assessment

In early December 2015, Natural Resources Alinytjara Wilurara's Adam Wood, Nathan Williams and Casey Reynolds joined Andrew Sleep and Tayla Bowden (NR EP) and bird experts Christine Taylor and Lachlan Duncan to survey the windswept beaches and dunes along the Yalata coastline.

After travelling from Ceduna and establishing a campsite the team spent two days surveying 35.25km of shoreline and dunes (a total of 352 hectares).

Chart illustrating the fluctuations in numbers of rare or threatened species inhabiting the coastal region





Bird experts Lachlan Duncan and Christie Taylor

Data Analysis

Threats within 100m of the resident birds have been captured over the 4 year period. The column chart opposite shows the fluctuations of each threat, 2013 showing an abnormal high number of dog prints which have thankfully have subsided. This correlates with anecdotal evidence of dog population explosion in 2013 from locals and staff from Yalata Land Management.

stage of monitoring.





L-R The Shorebird Team: Casey Reynolds, Christine Taylor, Tayla Bowden, Lachlan Duncan, Adam Wood, Nathan Williams and (behind the camera) Andrew Sleep

Bird species recorded at Yalata Coastal Beaches in 2010 - 2015

Albatross Australian Raven Australian Shell Duck Bar-tailed Godwit Brown Falcon Caspian Tern Common Greenshank Common Sandpiper Common Tern Crested Tern Curlew Sandpiper Darter Double-banded Plover Eastern Reef Egret Fairy Martin Fairy Penguin Fairy Tern

Great Egret Great Knot Grey Plover Grey Teal Grey Teal (duck) Hooded Plover Little Black Cormorant Little Penguin Little Pied Cormorant Little Raven Major Mitchell's

Cockatoo

Great Cormorant

Oriental Plover Osprey Pacific Gull Pelican Pied Cormorant Pied Oystercatcher Red knee Dotterel Red-capped Plover Red-necked Stint Richard's Pipit Ruddy Turnstone Sanderling Sharp-tailed Sandpiper Short-tailed Shearwater Silver Gull Singing Honeyeater Small Waders Sooty Oystercatcher Starling Tern Wedge-tailed eagle Welcome Swallow Whiskered Tern White belliedsea eagle White-faced Heron White-winged Fairy-wren Willy Wagtail

Nankeen kestrel

			111111	
Year	Hooded Plover	Red- Capped Plover	Pied Oyster- catcher	Sooty Oyster- catcher
2010	9	251	40	21
2011	11	295	41	39
2013	12	414	20	17
2014	15	643	37	33
2015	13	523	27	10
Harman Street				

A small number of fox prints have been recorded in most years. Vehicles on the beach have steadily increased due the growing popularly of ATV vehicles used by people fishing.

December 2015 is the last of the annual Shorebird monitoring within the Australian Government's current 3 year funding grant. A full analysis of the 4 years of data in consultation with Birds Australia will be done before deciding

for making themselves available for the trip and for providing knowledge and expertise to the monitoring party. Also many thanks to Andrew Sleep

Many thanks to "Birdy experts" Christine Taylor and Lachlan Duncan

on the recommendations for the next

from NR EP for taking over as party leader at short notice and for ensuring the trip and objectives were completed in a smooth and safe manner.

Australian Bustards on the back dunes



Chart showing main threats to the shore bird's habitat	ASSESSED
Threats within 100m of Resident Birds	
70 ————————————————————————————————————	
60 ————————————————————————————————————	
50	
40	
30	
20	
Dune use People Human Vehicle Vehicle Vehicles Dog prints Fox Prints Cat Pr and access Present on footprints Tracks - Tracks - present beach above high Beach Dunes tide	rints
■ 2010 ■ 2011 ■ 2013 ■ 2014 ■ 2015	
Crested Tern on Yalata Beach Pacific Gull flying – photo courtesy of Tayla Bo	owden







About our Whale... an amazing journey

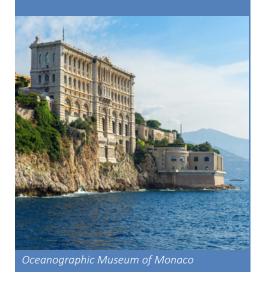
It appears that the spectacular four metre long Southern Right Whale sculpture created in Ceduna by Aboriginal artists through the Marine Debris Sculpture project, will spend its future with an exotic sea view.

The "whale" was recently purchased by the prestigious Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, a breathtakingly beautiful building built on the cliffs over looking the Mediterranean Sea.

It will begin being exhibited at the museum in March 2016.

Congratulations to all those involved, from concept to the collection of beach debris, and through to the creation of the sculpture itself.

It has become a powerful international ambassador for our region, its people and their talent and tenacity in caring about the environmental issues that need to be managed in their country.





Year 11 student Latisha Richards has almost completed the first year of her School-based Traineeship and what a year it has been. Working at (and often out of) the Ceduna Natural Resource Centre (NRC) she has done everything from counting invasive snail species and cleaning rockholes to writing reports and articles and roaming beaches recording shorebird data.

Exciting plans for 2nd year of School-based Traineeship

To support her Certificate 3 studies in Conservation and Land Management Latisha has selected four Year 12 SACE subjects which directly relate to her work at the NRC in Ceduna.

In successfully achieving all the requirements of Certificate II equivalent she will be awarded the equivalent of 1 Year 12 subject... a great way to maximise her SACE credits.

Natural Resources AW have a number of projects planned for 2016 that she will be involved in delivering. These will support both her school studies and her Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management.

Most recently she has been working on the Mexican Hat Marine Debris Survey which, in addition to recording the amount and type of debris collected, provided her with the opportunity to discuss the 2016 Marine Debris Arts Project with the women and young people from Yalata who are also working on the survey. The collected

debris will provide the materials for the 2016 artworks.

Latisha has also been given responsibility for co-organising the 2016 Marine Debris Arts Project along with Minnie Ackland from the Ceduna Arts Centre. In preparation Latisha has already spoken with Greg Adams from the Ghost Nets Arts Project in Cairns to request a quote and suitable date. She has met with Minnie, the acting Coordinator Ceduna Arts Centre, to view the Workshop where construction will occur and begun to research the issue of ghost nets and marine debris for her major Year 12 Research project.

"Latisha has embraced every opportunity to extend her experience and capabilities both in the field and in the office environment. This is a great credit to her particularly when considering the demands of staying on top of her school studies" said Bruce Macpherson NR AW's Community Engagement Manager.

"Being involved in the Marine Debris Beach Survey at Mexican Hat has involved her undertaking a whole range of tasks including undertaking risk assessments, vehicle checks, and writing project and communications reports" he said.

The AW NRM Board also extend their congratulations to Latisha on completing her first year and wish her the best in undertaking Year 12 and her 2nd year of her School-based Traineeship.

Well done Latisha!



Farewell

Jessica, Penno, Paul, Sam and Graeme

Its been a dynamic last 6 months for the AW team with a number of our much treasured colleagues moving on to pastures and loved ones far afield.

Love takes all...



Paul Gregory, who had been with NR AW for over 5 years consistently proved himself to be an invaluable asset to the team. His hard working, intelligent, hands-on

approach and his efforts and success in gaining his Diploma in NRM while working for AW in Ceduna represent just a modicum of his capabilities. But Love wins all! He has followed his heart (and an irresistible job offer) to Yalata Community where his wife of just over 12 months is working.

Good luck Paul, we look forward to continuing working with you in Yalata (albeit in a different capacity)



Sam Doudle has also left to be with her husband after spending 6 months as AW's Co-management and Public Lands Manager.

She did a fantastic job of supporting the fledgling co-management groups in establishing themselves and their purpose. With her husband Shane (who has also undertaken considerable work for AW) taking up a new position in Tjuntjuntjara (just over the WA border) she has decided to join him. All the best Sam, it was great working with you.



Another casualty of love was AW's Fire Management and Planning Officer, **Dr Graeme Armstrong**. After 3 years as a valued

member of our team he has decided to move to Queensland to join his partner

Lynda Marshall (previously AW's Buffel Grass Project Officer). Graeme's contribution to fire planning and management in the region through his practical and knowledgeable approach was significant. His skills and madcap sense of humour will be greatly missed. All the best mate!



Adam Pennington

(up until recently, AW's Landscape Ecologist) has followed a different kind of love. His love of living and working in

remote Aboriginal Communities. Sadly for us, he and his family have headed to remote Western Australia where he will be taking up a new position. Adam displayed exceptional skills in project management and his knowledge and understanding, not only of ecological matters but also of the people from the communities, was outstanding. A nicer guy you'd be hard pressed to meet.

All the best Adam, to you and your beautiful family.

And last but definitely not least...



Jessica (Jessi) Koncz

Jess started with AW as a temp three and a half years ago and quickly earned follow-up contracts through her fantastic

organisational skills and attention to detail. Always ready to offer her support and share her knowledge she was a valued member of the AW Administration team. Her wonderful sense of humour and caring nature made her a great person to have around no matter what she was working on. Her colleagues (mates) were very sad to see her go... and have had trouble finding anything without her help since she left.

Thanks Jess for all you brought to the team and all the best for a brilliant future in whatever you chose to pursue.

Welcome Casey...



Casey Reynolds I from the Kakadu area. I moved to

different manual jobs up until I had to

a Certificate III in Government

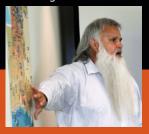
Welcome little Oliver



Hooray for Leah! Together with her lovely partner Simon she has managed

we look forward to you sharing your

Parry Agius Presiding Member



AW NRM Board

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PEOPLE, COUNTRY, WATER of the Alinytjara Wilurara Region

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