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People Working Together for a Healthy Environment

Media release

21 October 2015

S.H.A.R.E. PRESENTERS SPEAK FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES



The speaker line up at Peel-Harvey Catchment Council's recent S.H.A.R.E. Tegan Douglas, Professor Stephen Hopper, Peter Lacey and Dr Steve Fisher

Threats to endangered species and ecological communities in the Peel-Harvey catchment were presented by eminent guest speakers at the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council (PHCC)'s recent S.H.A.R.E. (Social Help, Action & Resources for the Environment) community event.

The topic was chosen to help inform the PHCC's involvement in the State Threatened Species Forum being held in Geraldton on the 30 October. Guests were briefed on the uniqueness of our landscape and the special animal and plant species and communities that live here. Programs to support citizen science and action on ground to reduce some of the threats were discussed and information is available on the PHCC's Facebook and website.

The keynote speaker was Western Australian botanist Professor Stephen Hopper AC FLS FTSE. A former director of Kew Royal Botanic Gardens in London following development of the Kings Park and Botanic Gardens and an internationally renowned plant conservation biologist, Professor Hopper is currently Foundation Professor of Plant Conservation Biology at The University of Western Australia.

Professor Hopper told the audience community-led conservation would continue to play a key role in threatened species and communities, and emphasised the significance of the Peel-Harvey catchment within the South-West biodiversity hotspot.

“It’s about letting your country ‘speak’ to you. Today, people are realising more and more that a healthy environment makes for healthy communities. Here in the South West, long-term survival of threatened species has occurred despite major historical climate change in older, infertile landscapes. Through understanding this, evolutionary science may help to plan future conservation efforts. Caring for biodiversity, involving the whole community including cross-cultural learning, is the way forward,” said Prof. Hopper.

Western Australia’s black cockatoos *Cockies in Crisis Project* was the subject of an address by Birdlife WA’s Tegan Douglas. “All three of West Australia’s black cockatoo species are affected. Through *Cockies in Crisis*, we are building awareness of onground conservation initiatives private landholders can do such as protecting habitat trees, establishing food plants and installing nest boxes,” said Tegan Douglas.

Peter Lacey of the Department of Parks and Wildlife detailed the Numbat/Woylie Predator Control Project underway in the Dryandra Woodland, one of only two sites in the world where Numbats still naturally exist. “As well as habitat loss, a major factor impacting their decline is introduced predators – feral cats and foxes. Our program raises awareness and engages the wider community in predator control,” said Peter Lacey.

Dr Steve Fisher, science advisor at the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council, also spoke at S.H.A.R.E. on the impact of climate change on the distribution of species. He said the information shared by the other speakers would prove to be highly valuable to take to the WA Threatened Species Forum where he is presenting on the topic *‘Endangered Species and Ecological Communities in the Peel-Harvey Catchment’*.

“PHCC board member Michael Schultz and I will be taking the learnings from S.H.A.R.E. about the Peel-Harvey catchment’s threatened species and communities directly to the Forum,” said Dr Fisher.

This project is supported by the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council through funding from the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme.

More about the WA Threatened Species Forum:

The WA Threatened Species Forum, in Geraldton on 30 - 31 October 2015, is a collaboration between Western Australia's seven regional NRM groups (NRM WA), together with the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

The inaugural event will bring together a cross-section of society with a common concern for Western Australia's animals and plants to explore solutions, and promote practical and effective ways of tackling threats to their survival, while also building and enhancing networks of support in the field of threatened species conservation.

With special guest Gregory Andrews (Australia's Threatened Species Commissioner) the forum will seek alignment and synergies between policies and practices at multiple levels of government, businesses, research institutions, scientific and conservation management experts, non-government organisations and others active in threatened species conservation.

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