

Bio-blitz to take a very close look at nature

DENMARK'S first bio-blitz, of locating and gathering biodiversity data, will be held at the Mt Hallowell A-class reserve on Saturday, October 28 from 9am-3.30pm.

Zoologist Dr Phil Runham will lead the bio-blitz with citizen scientists and the Denmark Environment Centre. Groups of citizen scientists will input findings and observations into the citizen science tool, the i-naturalist app. Botanists, entomologists, ecologists and Aboriginal elders will also attend.

Among them will be Professor Stephen Hopper who will share knowledge of the reserve's biodiversity and what the community can do to help identify flowers, animals, birds and more.

The reserve is home to rare and endangered flora and fauna including the Carnaby and Baudin black cockatoo, the mains assassin spider, WA pill millipede, quendas, and the spiny shrub, *Anthocercis sylvicola*.

The bio-blitz will focus on finding and identifying as many existing and new natural species as possible, and capturing the data in a quantifiable form.

Dr Runham says the global citizen science movement has become a vital tool for governments, ecologists and decision makers to gather accurate information on mass scale to lead policy and planning.

He looked forward to partnering with the Environment Centre in observing the rare and abundant range of species and fauna on such an ecologically-diverse area as Mt Hallowell.

Dr Runham said the bio-blitz was an opportunity to learn how to interpret animal habitats, through simple methods, and to see a new layer of the bushland people looked at every day.



Dr Phil Runham.

Top: Menang man Larry Blight and Professor Stephen Hopper.

More pictures by HOLLY PEPPER in the Bulletin online.

Food sources and shelters would demonstrate how a species thrived or survived.

Mt Hallowell reserve comprises mostly virgin, unlogged, old-growth forest and has long been regarded as an area of high biodiversity in a region listed as one of the biodiversity hotspots on the planet (Myers et al 2000).

The reserve's high biodiversity is largely due to most of the area not being burnt since 1937, making it one of the longest unburnt areas in the South West.

Denmark-raised DEC project lead Holly Pepper is now raising her own children in Denmark daily spotting birds or walking through the bush.

Holly had learned how important it was for the community to connect with leading scientists and experts through events such as the bio-blitz.

"We often know a pocket of land, forest or sea is special," Holly said.

"But through new data gathering technology and citizen science activations, we can see exactly how many species are in these regions and exactly where they are."

This meant, first time, quantifying how much focus should be directed at protecting A class reserves, such as Mt Hallowell.

The bio-blitz would pave the way for further community involvement.

Both Kwoorabup Nature school and Denmark Primary School later in the year will involve students in inquiry-based learning on Mt Hallowell, data gathering through the citizen science initiative.

While this would impart knowledge to the future generation, they would learn data collection and how that could have an effect on the decisions of the world.



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Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Review

The Shire of Denmark is seeking your feedback for the development of a new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) for 2023-2028.

The DAIP is the Shire's statutory commitment to improving accessibility for people, including those with disability, and finding ways for improving access to buildings, information, feedback and complaints processes, services and employment opportunities.

We want your ideas on how we can make our organisation and Shire services and facilities more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

For more information on ways you can get involved, or to submit your feedback visit yourdenmark.wa.gov.au/daip-review or scan the QR code below.

Hard copies of the survey are also available at the Shire's Administration Centre, library, and Denmark Recreation Centre.

Submissions close at

5:00pm on Friday 3 November 2023.

For further information please contact:



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