

# Forest vital for rare creatures

## Julimar Conservation and Forest Alliance

Sharon Richards

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THE 28,000ha Julimar Conservation Park with its diverse forest and majestic wandoo, marri and jarrah trees has played an important role in conserving a number of vulnerable species over the years.

An intensive fox eradication program led in 1992 to the release of more than 40 Chuditch (Western Quoll or Native Cat) bred at Perth Zoo to re-establish a population in the area.

This native species forages and hunts over a large area.

Julimar has one of the few remaining forested areas in the Wheatbelt and provides the diversity of habitat needed to support a thriving population.

A number of the Julimar animals have since been relocated to the Flinders Ranges in South Australia.

Nevertheless, the Chuditch continues to be listed as a vulnerable species.

An even lesser seen marsupial, the Woylie (also known as the Brush-tailed Bettong) has also been reintroduced to Julimar.

Woylies are rarely seen because they are very shy, active only at night and use thicker forest undergrowth for protection.

Its diet of small insects, bulbs and underground fungi means it plays an important part in maintaining the forest health spreading healthy

fungi spores across the area.

The Woylie was showing a strong comeback in the 1990s but numbers have declined in recent years.

This is due to loss of habitat and possibly a growing number of feral cats.

From forest floor to canopy, the Julimar forest provides a wide range of opportunities for a diverse habitat.

WA's massive loss of mature trees for agriculture, roads, housing and other uses has also decreased the number of suitable breeding hollows for cockatoos.

It has resulted in a decline in numbers for all three types of black cockatoos found in WA.

Trees need to be at least 300 years old to form suitable nesting for black cockatoos.

The Julimar forest provides not only tree hollows and healthy foraging sites but also hosts a significant number of artificial 'cockatubes' or nesting boxes, many of which have successfully housed breeding pairs of various cockatoos.

The Chuditch, Woylie and Black Cockatoos are just a few of species which have benefitted from Julimar Conservation Park.

Better protection as a national park will benefit all species that currently call Julimar home.

You can find out more about us at the Toodyay Agricultural Show on Saturday October 8 at the 'Environment Matters' marquee with the Toodyay Naturalists' Club and Toodyay Friends of the River.