



Speakers at the Forum (left to right) Dr Liz Kingston, Greg Warburton and Ron Johnstone.  
Photo: Kim Sarti.

## Julimar Forest wildlife decline points to future extinctions

**Toodyay Friends of the River**  
Bridget Leggett

MORE than 50 members of the Toodyay community attended the "Catchments, Carnabies and Chuditch of the Julimar Forest" forum at the Toodyay Community

Pavilion last month.

Chittering Landcare Group community rivercare officer Dr Liz Kingston spoke about how the Julimar Forest contributes to the Brockman River and Julimar Brook catchments which ultimately feed into the Avon and Swan rivers.

Although Julimar Brook only flows for part of the year, its water quality was such that it was considered a potential source for Perth in the early 2000s.

In his comprehensive talk on the black cockatoos of Western Australia, WA Museum curator of ornithology Ron Johnston noted a worrying decline in all three black cockatoo species due to the loss of traditional food sources and nesting hollows.

Ron, who has been researching the cockatoo species since 1979, estimates 54 per cent of suitable nesting sites are being lost per decade.

The survival of each of the three black cockatoo species is dependent on access to trees at least 250 years old, as well as fresh water.

The Bindoon Training Area and adjacent Julimar Forest provide a major breeding ground for the endangered Carnaby's cockatoo, which competes with feral bees and galahs for nesting hollows.

Numbers of the critically endangered Baudin's cockatoo, which was recently recorded in Julimar, are likely to be less than 10,000 within 10 years.

At this rate of decline it will be extinct within 50 years.

The last speaker at the forum was Shire of Toodyay reserves management officer and local resident Greg Warburton.

Greg spoke about WA's largest marsupial carnivore, the chuditch, *Dasyurus geoffroi*, easily identified by its distinctive white spots.

This solitary, nocturnal hunter is equally at home on the ground or in trees.

The territorial males will forage areas of up to 15sqkm and can weigh up to 2kg.

The chuditch population has declined to such an extent that it is listed as a threatened species.

Also known as the Western quoll, the chuditch previously inhabited areas across inland Australia, but is now confined to parts of the South West, with the Julimar forest one of its last strongholds.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management successfully introduced specimens bred in captivity to the forest 30 years ago in a bid to conserve the species.

The Toodyay Friends of the River thank the forum speakers for their excellent talks.

The film "Cockatoo Crisis", which features footage from Julimar State Forest, screens on Saturday April 22 at the Town Hall in Toodyay.

Working bees resume in April, with the May working bees scheduled for Sunday May 14 and Monday May 15.