



**Marion Scrymgour**

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS



March 23 2007

**HELP CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT AT THE DESERT PARK**

NT Parks and Wildlife Minister Marion Scrymgour is inviting Central Australians to help celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Alice Springs Desert Park on Sunday - at a free open day.

"In the 10 years since the Alice Springs Desert Park (ASDP) first opened its door, it has established itself as one of the major tourist attractions in Alice Springs," Ms Scrymgour said.

"Every year more than 90,000 people visit the Park, which is internationally renowned as one of the best facilities of its kind and it has won more than 15 international, national and Territory awards for excellence.

"Visitors who go to the Park learn stories and secrets of the Central Australian deserts which help them to enjoy their holidays and stay longer in Central Australia all of which results in more money for the local economy."

Ms Scrymgour said just 12 months before the ASDP first opened, the area was bare ground with just the frames of the buildings going up.

"Now visitors stroll through three stunning desert habitats where animals and plants are displayed in spectacular settings," Ms Scrymgour said.

"The Nocturnal House and the Nature Theatre allow visitors to see animals close up that are difficult to see in the wild and the park's professional Guides put on many different presentations so that visitors can learn about the desert and its peoples.

"For locals, the Park's program changes every day and during school holidays and other special periods, new themes are explored so that each visit is different, with more than 2,250 locals taking advantage of the Territorian Pass in the first year alone. "

Ms Scrymgour said behind the scenes, ASDP is involved in important conservation work, and research, managing colonies of a number of endangered species including bilby and mala colonies in support of National Recovery Programs.

"The park educates the community about plant conservation, through encouraging them to plant local arid zone plants in their gardens, to reduce the amount of water they use on their gardens and help to preserve this important resource.

"The park is free to local schools and over the last year every school in Alice Springs visited the Desert Park.

The Park will host a wide range of free and entertaining activities for the whole family as part of the open day.

Visitors will have the opportunity to dance with Imparja's Yamba the honey ant, listen to one of the Park's local guides telling unique stories from the deserts.

Schedule for the day attached:

### **So many things happening**

7.30am	Park opens
7.30-10.00	Yamba episodes in the Cinema
7.30-6.00	Alice Springs High School documentary in the Nocturnal House
8.00-12.00	Sun FM live radio broadcast
8.00-9.30	Roving Guide presentations
8.00-10.00	Hannah Morrison
8.00-10.00	Christopher Brocklebank in the Courtyard
9.00-9.30	Yamba and ASDP Characters in the Courtyard
10.00-10.30	Nature Theatre Presentation
10.15-10.35	Changing Heart Movie in the Cinema
10.30-11.00	Cake Cutting and DVD launch in the Courtyard
10.30-2.30	Fly 990
11.00-11.30	Launch of DVD in the Cinema
11.00-6:00	Wild Australasia DVD in cave TV in the Exhibition Centre
11.00-12.30	Roving guide presentations
11.00-1.00	In Tatters in the Courtyard
11.30-11.50	Training session in Nature Theatre
12.00-12.30	Nature Theatre Presentation
12.15-12.35	Changing Heart Movie in the Cinema
1.00-2.00	Drum Atweme in the Courtyard
1.00-2.30	Roving guide presentations
1.00-2.00	David Curl DVD in the Cinema
1.30-1.50	Training session in Nature Theatre
2.00-4.00	Tashka Urban and Jacinta Castle in the Courtyard
3.00-3.20	Changing Heart Movie in the Cinema
3.00-5.00	Jeff Robinson in the Park
3.30-4.00	Nature Theatre Presentation
3.30-6.00	Yamba episodes in the Cinema
4.00-4.45	Scott Dawson in the Courtyard
4.00-5.30	Roving guide presentations
6.00pm	Park closes

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