

Media Release:

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Junior Rangers Camp Out amongst Desert Wonders



The Alice Springs Junior Rangers and their families finished off an action packed year with a barbecue and camp night at the Alice Springs Desert Park nocturnal house last Saturday 13 December 2008.

Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service Community Education senior ranger Michael Barritt said 78 junior rangers and family members attended the barbecue where certificates were presented to all the Junior Rangers along with a calendar featuring beautiful images of Central Australia plants and animals.

“Everyone had a fantastic evening and the children were really excited about camping out amongst some of the Northern Territory’s most threatened species including the mala and the bilby,” Mr Barritt said.

“It is a rare opportunity to see the nocturnal house overnight in its daylight mode, and the children were fascinated to see many of the species were still quite active.

“The children woke up early and were lucky enough to have a special treat – watching zookeepers feeding some of the animals and discovering about the different dietary requirements.

Mr Barritt said the 2008 Junior Ranger Program in Alice Springs was jam packed, with 45 activities scattered over almost every weekend from February to December.

“Some of the highlights this year included visiting and cleaning up the Alice Springs bat caves, a visit to the Alice Springs Reptile Centre and night time spotlighting for mammals and frogs,” Mr Barritt said.

“Another highlight was the fauna survey at Simpsons Gap and although we were unable to capture any mammals this year, everyone is eagerly awaiting next year’s survey, which should result in a higher catch following the recent summer rainfall.

Mr Barritt said members of the School of the Air Junior Ranger Program also enjoyed their end of year celebrations and certificates were presented at the school in Alice Springs last Wednesday 10 December 2008.

“We constructed nest boxes which the Junior Rangers will take back to their homes on pastoral properties and communities to see what local birdlife they attract over summer,” Mr Barritt said.

The free Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service Junior Ranger program offers local children the opportunity to learn more about our local environment and to participate in conservation action.

There are still places available for the 2009 program in Alice Springs, contact Michael Barritt on 8951 8247 for more information about the program and to collect the 2009 registration forms.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Michael Barritt on 0401 112 525
Image – Alice Springs Junior Rangers with their certificates

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