



**Marion Scrymgour**

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS

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## **NEW MANGROVE PLANT IDENTIKIT FOR TERRITORY**

A new mangrove plant identikit produced by Parks and Wildlife Service and Greening Australia will be released this month, Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour announced today.

The *Mangrove Plant Identikit for North Australia's Top End* details the diversity of Top End Mangroves and describes the range of Aboriginal uses and knowledge associated with these plants.

Ms Scrymgour said the identikit will be a "must have" item for all Top End fishermen or anyone else who spends time in coastal areas.

"It will allow you to identify all the plants in the mangroves and find out which ones can be used as food, medicine and even mosquito repellent," she said.

"The book has been prepared to promote an awareness and understanding of the importance of mangroves in the NT."

Ms Scrymgour said this comprehensive guide contains detailed descriptions, colour photos and keys so people can identify all of the 51 mangrove species that occur in the Top End.

She said the guide could be used by community groups, schools and researchers to discover these unique ecosystems that have huge cultural, environmental and economic significance for the NT.

"The Territory has the most pristine mangrove communities in Australia and probably the world," she said.

"We have 35 per cent of Australia's mangrove communities and are second behind north Queensland in species diversity.

"Mangrove ecosystems in the NT are key drivers of nursery sites for many fish species and for the commercially important delicacy, mud crabs and the health promoting mangrove worm, which is a key food resource for all coastal Aboriginal groups."

Ms Scrymgour said each plant played a part in the very important ecosystem and some had many uses.

“Mangrove worms are also usually found in the wood, but are considered ‘too cheeky’ to eat by most Aboriginal people, though they can be used as medicine. Its leaves can also be used as medicine to treat various marine stings or as flavouring when cooked with mussels.”

The book will retail; for \$9.95 and is available from the Greening Australia Office on 8981 1344 and Parks and Wildlife on 8999 4795, or by calling at the Greening Australia office at Dinah Beach, the Botanic Gardens in Stuart Park or the Goyder Centre in Palmerston.

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