



Marion Scrymgour
MINISTER FOR PARKS AND WILDLIFE

13 NOVEMBER 2006

West MacDonnell National Park Wins WWF Award

One of the Territory's most loved national parks has received high national acclaim.

West MacDonnell National Park, west of Alice Springs, has been recognised by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) as one of Australia's top ten protected areas during the first decade of the National Reserve System (NRS).

Minister for Parks and Wildlife, Marion Scrymgour, said she was thrilled to accept the award on behalf of dedicated Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service rangers and staff.

"The West Macs is one of Australia's finest national parks with its primary function to protect and conserve its outstanding natural and cultural resources, which is done on a budget smaller by comparison to most interstate counterparts, making this achievement even more significant," said Ms Scrymgour.

"The park's outstanding biodiversity is variously under threat from fire, feral animals, weeds and to an extremely small extent, visitor activity, but I know dedicated West MacDonnell National Park rangers and staff enjoy the challenges that come with working here and today's award recognises their efforts in meeting and overcoming those challenges.

"The award also supports the NT Government's decision to seek World Heritage nomination for the West Macs.

"And let's not forget the park is also a major tourism icon with strong local, national and growing international identification, particularly in relation to the gorges and increasingly, the Larapinta Trail."

The West MacDonnell National Park is home to at least 28 native mammal species, 152 bird species, 83 reptiles, seven amphibians and more than nine fish species including the Finke River Hardyhead, a fish only found in the Finke River, and isolated populations of the central Australian form of the common brushtail possum.

The West MacDonnell National Park is the only location where the endangered Central Rock Rat (*Zyomys pedunculatus*), has been collected in almost 50 years

Plant species and communities protected in the West MacDonnell National Park include the Desert Flannel-flower (*Actinotus schwarzii*) and Minnie Daisy (*Minuria tridens*).

Contact: Nikola Lekias 0438 323660