

Media Release:

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Easter-Features Galore at Owen Springs

Easter at Owen Springs Reserve will feature the first '*Territory Parks Alive*' Ranger guided walk and talk for 2008, along with the launch of the new 'Owen Springs Self Drive Information Sheet' aimed at giving visitors a greater appreciation of the Reserve's History.

Parks and Wildlife Service Interpretation Officer Kylie Cowan said the 'Self Drive Information Sheet' provides information for tourists travelling along the 50km stretch, between Larapinta Drive and the Stuart Highway.

"In addition to maps and safety information, further detail with interesting historical facts on the attractions encountered is provided," Ms Cowan said.

"Many people aren't aware that the explorer John McDouall Stuart passed through Owen Springs on each of his expedition attempts to cross the continent from the south to north, and it was only on his third attempt in 1862 that he succeeded and was paid £2,000 pounds for his efforts," Ms Cowan said.

"Another interesting historical fact is that the Overland Telegraph Line originally ran through Owen Springs Reserve, and it wasn't until 1898/99 that it was re-routed to a more direct route through Heavitree Gap at Alice Springs."

Ms Cowan said Owen Springs is a popular location for 4WD visitors going on a day trip or overnight bush camp over the Easter break, and safety precautions are paramount.

"Access to Owen Springs is 4WD only and visitors are advised to follow all safety advice, including always leave travel plans, including estimated time of return with a reliable friend or family member," Ms Cowan said.

"When driving through sandy river beds be sure to engage 4WD and maintain a steady speed in a low gear, if you get bogged always stay with your vehicle and wait for assistance.

"Also take plenty of extra food and water in case of any emergencies and if possible travel in convoy with another vehicle."

The '*Territory Parks Alive*' Ranger guided walk and talk will take place between 1-2pm, Sunday 23 March at the Old Homestead Ruins, located 18km from Larapinta Drive, Owen Springs Reserve.

To get a copy of the new information sheet call Parks and Wildlife on 89518250, visit <http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/find/owensprings.html> or call into the Tourism Central Australia office on Gregory Terrace.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Kylie Cowan on 8951 8208. A number of photo opportunities are available upon request.

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