

Media Release:

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Alice Springs Desert Park Creates Bush Tucker and Medicine Garden

A specialised garden created by the Alice Springs Desert Park (ASDP) that will provide bush tucker and bush medicine to chronic renal patients was officially launched today.

ASDP Nursery Manager Tim Collins said they were extremely proud to be involved with the project as it supports and promotes Indigenous health and culture as well as the use of Central Australian plants.

“The garden was created for the Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku (WDNWPT), a local charity that supports renal patients from remote communities who have had to relocate to Alice Springs for lifelong dialysis treatment,” Mr Collins said.

“The ASDP developed a plan to create a bush food and bush medicine garden so that resources are more readily available for the patients and visitors to use, as well as having a beautiful garden to improve the aesthetics of the house.

“The bush onion (Yalka) and Quandong (Pmwerlpe) are some of the plants to be used for bush tucker.

“Some of the plants being used for bush medicines include *Stemodia viscosa* (Pintye-pintye) used as a compress to relieve colds and flu, *Eremophila freelingii* (Arrethe) used as a skin wash to treat scabies, and *Cymbopogon ambiguous* (Ilintjii) used as a drinking medicine or rubbing medicine for colds and flu.”

WDNWPT Manager Sarah Brown said the organisation was extremely grateful to everyone involved in creating the garden and they were overwhelmed by how magnificent it looks.

“When we first walked out into the garden it felt like ‘Backyard Blitz’ Desert Park style; the transformation was truly amazing and brought tears to our eyes,” Ms Brown said.

“It means a lot to WDNWPT to have received such tremendous support towards the project and that the garden will help our patients and their families.

“WDNWPT, whose name means ‘keeping all our families well’, was formed from the Western Desert Dialysis Appeal, which raised over \$1 million dollars in 2000 when Indigenous painters from the Western Desert painted pictures and auctioned them off at the Art Gallery of NSW.

“The aim of the Appeal was to support patients in town and set up dialysis out bush, with the money raised used to help WDNWPT buy a house in Alice Springs, which now has two dialysis machines and acts as a meeting place for patients and their families.”

Ms Brown also thanked the Australian Government youth initiative Green Corps, Alice Springs Town Council and pharmaceutical company Amgen for their contributions towards the project.

The WDNWPT hosted a morning tea earlier today to say thank you to everyone for their contribution, and to officially launch the “Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Garden”.

Ends



DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS

Media Note – for more information contact Sarah Brown (WDNWPT) on 0448 685 610 or Tim Collins (ASDP) on 8951 8757

Image - L-R Tim Collins (ASDP), Marina Alice (WDNWPT Career), Norah Nelson (WDNWPT Patient) and Gary Dinham (ASDP).

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