

Alice Springs Desert Park

Environmental Policy

Alice Springs Desert Park recognizes that all activities, products and services within and extending from the Desert Park can impact upon the environment, especially in the areas of waste production, water and energy use.

Alice Springs Desert Park is committed to managing existing and new practices so as to minimise the environmental impact of these activities and to support the principles of sustainable development. This will be achieved by investigating and establishing the best available *and most cost effective* techniques (in terms of environmental and monetary cost) and will, within the Park's ability to do so, allocate sufficient resources of time and money to achieve these goals.

In the course of our operations and within resource constraints, we will improve our environmental performance by committing to:

- complying with or exceeding applicable legal requirements and other requirements relating to our environmental aspects
- implementing pollution prevention projects and programs where practical
- minimising consumption of resources and the production of waste by purchasing recycled content products, encouraging recycling and the re-use of goods and materials used by and within the Desert Park
- improving the Desert Parks environmental performance over time by setting and achieving objectives and targets
- minimising any significant adverse environmental impacts of new developments through the use of integrated environmental management procedures and planning
- practicing efficient energy use, incorporating the most energy efficient facilities and sustainable forms of energy where practical
- conserving water through implementing water efficient facilities and sustainable water use
- purchasing environmentally-preferable goods and services where appropriate
- encouraging public awareness and participation by providing unique learning experiences that connect people with the natural world
- setting an example of leadership in the field of environmental management.

Minimising impact

- Onsite function room and café provide recycling bins for aluminium cans and glass bottles. Recycling is collected by Friends of the Desert Park.
- Waste disposal is located in key areas across the Desert Park. Contract cleaners dispose of waste.
- Maps and flyers are printed on 100% recyclable material. Printing has been reduced since the implementation of an interactive digital map.
- Onsite catering concessionaire and kiosk use 100% recycled biodegradable coffee cups, stirrers and napkins.
- Sacred sites mapped and managed for fire and weed prevention across the Desert Park.
- The Park's collection policies for botanical and zoological collections ensure it does not introduce weeds, pathogens or animal species not endemic to the area. These rigorous policies rival those in other zoos and botanic gardens, and meet United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- We want visitors to leave the Park with an increased desire and ability to *respect, Enjoy* and *Look After* the desert environment and its inhabitants. These three key values underpin all activities that the Park undertakes.
- Installation of a digital e-cinema, reducing running costs and energy use.
- Reduced the Park's fleet by two vehicles, ensuring the Park's most visible vehicle is a hybrid model, and mandated the use of opal fuel in all compatible fleet vehicles.
- A fleet of ten electric shop-riders and an electric vehicle are used to assist with visitor services around the park and minimise the production of air pollutants.
- Increased the number of staff bicycles for use around the Park to reduce traffic and impact on the paths.
- Maintained pathways to control the movement of visitors around the Park to reduce the impact on the broader environment.
- Removed buffel grass to protect significant trees and assist in the recruitment of the next age of floral species and ameliorate the risk of wild-fire.
- Removal of feral and domestic animals from the Park and prevented re-entry by declaring the area as protected land, excluding non-native animals.
- Local plants used to feed the animal collection are grown to reduce the financial and environmental costs of purchasing food from interstate.
- Replaced the Park's aged irrigation system to minimise water loss and maintained a computer controlled low pressure drip irrigation system to reduce water consumption.
- Rock mulching in gardens to reduce water loss.
- Public toilets that incorporate biocycle technology which makes use of effluent water.
- Use of a biological cleaning system for urinals to reduce water consumption.
- The efficient use of electrical power is managed by the following measures:
 - Solar water heating and solar powered electric fence for the animal breeding facility.
 - Light timers and movement sensors in all offices, and all security lights on movement sensors.
 - Light coloured roofing to reflect heat and reduce air-conditioning requirements.

- Installation of LED lighting in the Nocturnal House to reduce electricity use.
 - Installation of electronic ballasts on diurnal lights on animal enclosures to minimise heat production thus minimizing pressure on air-conditioning units.
 - The following environmental management practices have taken place in regard to administrative services:
 - Use of both sides of paper when printing documents and paper is recycled for internal and informal memos.
 - Used paper shredded and used for animal bedding.
 - Glass, tin, aluminium and printer cartridges are recycled and staff encouraged to bring recycled materials from home.
- Participate in conservation and recovery programs for arid fauna and flora:

Cross border collaboration projects

Participated in a number of national recovery programs including those for the Greater Bilby, Mulgara, Mala, and seed collection through *Australian Seedbank Partnership*.

Assisted Australian Wildlife Conservancy with fauna surveys at Newhaven Reserve, 360km north west of Alice Springs.

Continued participation in the Kew Gardens England Millennium Seed Bank Project for long term seed conservation.

Collaborative research of the Red-tailed Phascogale on experimental translocations, habitat utilisation and sustainability.

NT collaboration projects

Supported Parks & Wildlife in conducting Arid Zone fauna surveys.

Held *Egernia slateri* Floodplains Skink, an endangered arid zone lizard species to educate rangers in identification of species.

The Mulga Walk area has been developed to allow visitors a nocturnal experience with rare and endangered animals such as the Bilby.