

SWAN RIVER TRUST - RIBBONS OF BLUE PROGRAM

Statement by Minister for the Environment

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for the Environment) [12.08 pm]: I wish to inform the house of yet another way the Carpenter government is acting to protect our unique environment for future generations. One of the best ways to engage the community in protecting our environment is through education. This year, the Swan River Trust's Ribbons of Blue program designed and delivered a new event called a catchment activity day to assist delivery of the trust's environmental education focus on high-priority areas of the Swan-Canning catchment.

In March 2007, the Ribbons of Blue program ran its first catchment activity day for primary school students living in and around the Bayswater main drain catchment. In celebration of World Environment Day on Tuesday, 5 June, I was delighted to open the second catchment activity day for 2007 at Whiteman Park. The day focused on schools in the high-priority Ellen Brook catchment. Due to the overwhelming response from schools in that area, this event had to be held across two days, 5 and 6 June. Eleven schools were represented, with more than 450 students from around the Ellen Brook area. Although Whiteman Park is not in the Ellen Brook catchment, the Mussel Pool area provided a highly relevant venue, with foreshores similar to the Swan and Canning rivers. The location was also selected for its accessibility for schools and because of its suitability for large groups. During the day the children rotated through a range of environmental activities, including water testing, macro invertebrate sampling, stormwater and habitat games, art activities, catchment model demonstrations, water conservation talks and Indigenous activities.

The World Environment Day theme this year was "Melting Ice", and it was highly relevant for the students to learn about keeping the rivers healthy. Climate change is a very real issue for our rivers and one that we are addressing. The young people I met at Whiteman Park on World Environment Day were eager to learn about what can be done. They understood that if we all start changing our behaviours today, the future of our waterways will look much brighter. I commend the Swan River Trust for its valuable work in educating our young people on what they can do to play a part in helping keep our waterways healthy.