

## **LANDSCOPE Expeditions Media Release For Immediate Release**

### **Explore the Outback Skies**

Travellers can revel in the magic of outback night skies on a LANDSCOPE Expeditions trip to Ninghan Station in the Murchison this May.

Participants on the “Moon over the Murchison” tour will help conduct ground-breaking astronomical research with scientists from Perth Observatory.

Expedition leader and Perth Observatory Director Dr James Biggs says the region’s clear outback skies provide ideal viewing conditions and give astronomers optimum conditions for conducting astronomical research.

“The night skies in the Murchison are simply dazzling,” Dr Biggs says.

“It really is mesmerising to learn some of the secrets of the universe in such an isolated and beautiful setting.”

Participants will be given tours of the night sky and the chance to view stars, constellations, star clusters, moons and gaseous nebulae through the latest astronomical viewing equipment

They will also be able to delve deep into the rich Aboriginal culture of the region by joining Conservationist Peter Curry and members of the Pindiddy Aboriginal Corporation who manage the Indigenous Protected Area of the station.

Mr Curry says Ninghan is significant to Indigenous people, because it was once a meeting place for the Nyoongar peoples of the south-west, the Budemia and other Yamatji people of the mid-west and of Wongai people from the arid inland areas.

Research carried out by participants on this expedition will help Pindiddy Aboriginal Corporation to management this culturally rich area.

By day, expeditioners will explore Ninghan Station searching the area for rare and endangered plants.

The area has one of the highest biodiversity levels in Western Australia with over 730 plants species identified. Led by botanist Daphne Edinger, expeditioners will identify and record plant species and help document plant names.

You don’t have to be a scientist to join - *LANDSCOPE* Expeditions are available to anyone over the age of 13. You will return with a broader understanding of the natural world and the reward of knowing that you have contributed to pioneering studies in remote locations. Your valuable contribution of time, funds and personnel make the research possible, in fact many important projects would simply not go ahead without the community’s assistance. Participants’ funding helps support nature-conservation research across the state.

The expedition runs from 20 – 26 May 2007, costs \$2420 and includes meals, transport, basic accommodation, all scientific equipment.

*LANDSCOPE* Expeditions are offered by the Department of Environment and Conservation in association with UWA Extension.

For a free brochure please contact UWA Extension on 6488 2433, email [extension@uwa.edu.au](mailto:extension@uwa.edu.au) or visit [www.naturebase.net](http://www.naturebase.net). Go to “Document Downloads” and click on “*LANDSCOPE* Expeditions”

For project details, please call Rohan Swan or Kevin Kenneally on 9335 0561 or email [rohan.swan@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:rohan.swan@dec.wa.gov.au)

ENDS...

Media contact: Dr James Biggs 0407 977 747