

Citizen scientists give Mt Hallowell a health check

By ANGELA TILLIER

DENMARK'S first bioblitz was held on Saturday, October 28 in the Mt Hallowell A-class Reserve and was modelled on the three-year-old Walpole National Park Association bioblitz.

The bioblitz aimed to show the area's biodiversity to the community with findings documented by uploading images into the iNaturalist for species identification.

The app can be downloaded to access images and information.

Bioblitz events allow citizen scientists to document the health and diversity of various species of flora, insects, birds, fungi, mammals, trees, etc, in a particular area with the help of experts.

About 70 participants met at Maloney Close, Ocean Beach, on Saturday morning to split into nine groups.

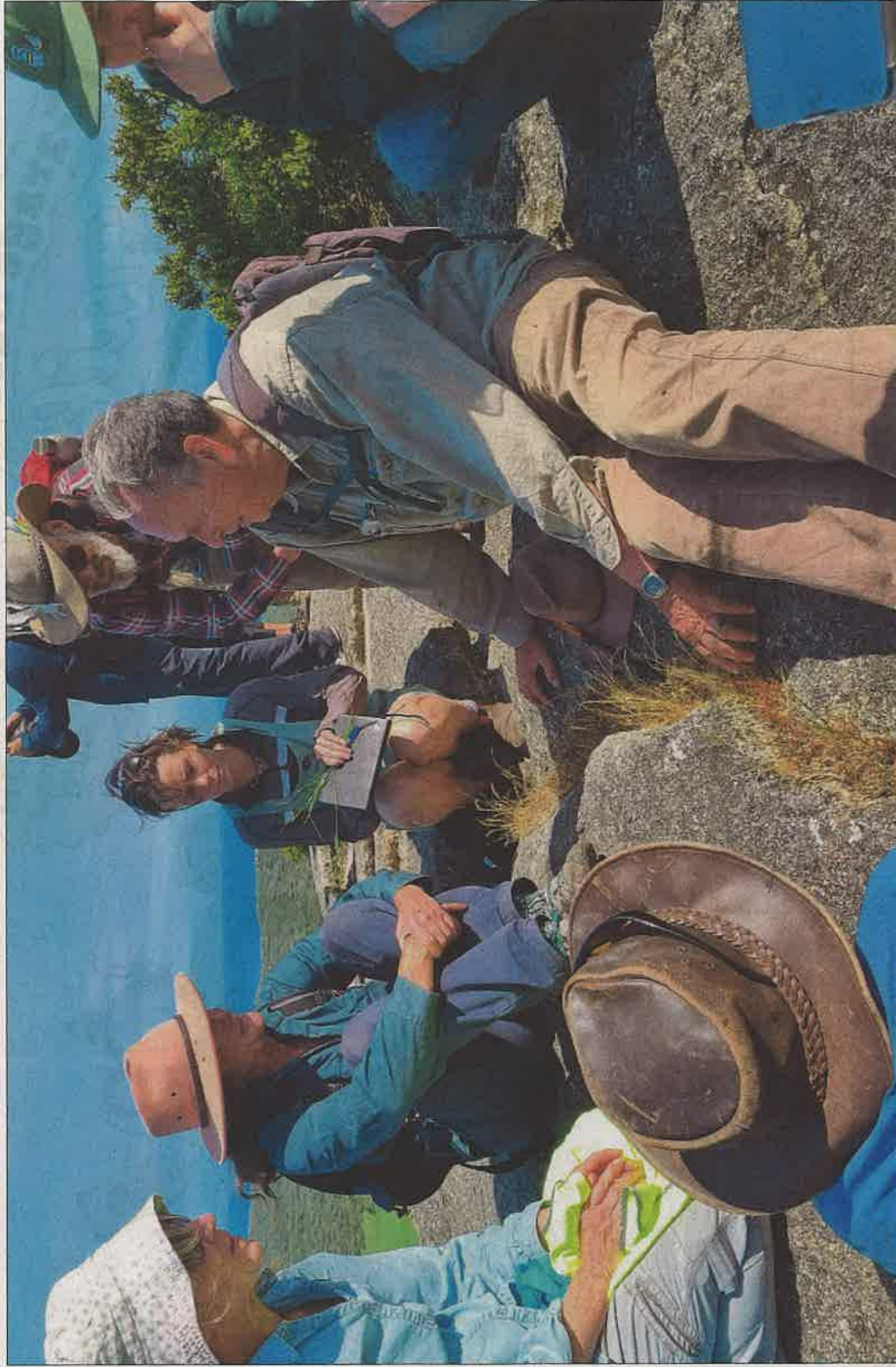
Local scientists including entomologists, botanists, zoologists, ecologists and Menang Elder Larry Blight took the groups into pre-determined areas and helped people to learn about the native flora, weeds and fauna and Noongar traditions.

Groups were split into low, medium and high-level fitness and ages ranged from four-year-olds to people in their

80s.

Afterwards attendees all said they had learned something and had enjoyed the walk in nature and the special knowledge of their group leaders.

The previous night about 80 people attended an introductory talk to hear Profes-



sor Stephen Hopper and Mr Blight tell of Mt Hallowell Reserve's history and what to look out for.

They highlighted the importance of respecting nature, observing but not disturbing and being aware of the cultural significance of the area to Noongar people, as

well as potential dangers or hazards.

Denmark Environment Centre-organised event was funded via a Synergy Community Giving Fund and Denmark Community Foundation grant with support from Friends of Mt Hallowell.

The Denmark Environment Centre is a

not-for-profit organisation which advocates and educates the community about the local environment.

Everyone can become a member to keep up to date with events and assist by supporting raffles and donating, as the group receives no ongoing funding.

Susan Jane Morison, Vivienne Robertson, Lotta Ramrath, Stephen George and leader Stephen Hopper.