

## Club cleans up at Wungong

### FOUR WHEEL DRIVE

ROB ROBSON



The Mitsubishi 4WD Owners Club of WA is well known for its voluntary work with the Department of Environment and Conservation on the Leschenault Peninsula.

Planting trees and cleaning up rubbish are just a couple of jobs its members do to help DEC staff.

Wanting to do more, and with the help of the club's environmental officer, members donned gloves and workboots to lend a hand in the beautiful Wungong Regional Park in the Darling Range behind Byford.

They started a year ago by removing more than 12 tonnes of

rubbish from the area during a weekend working bee attended by more than 30 club members.

Since then, they have worked closely with DEC staff and, in particular, regional parks ranger Tony Eddleston, to carry out work that otherwise may have not been done.

Recently, a group of 32 Mitsubishi owners joined Mr Eddleston and his staff to fence a revegetation area the size of a small football field.

The fence was erected to keep kangaroos away from the new seedlings. Unfortunately, within a week of erecting it, the gate and several of the posts had been torn out of the ground by thoughtless vandals.

"It is such a pleasure to work with these volunteers," Mr Eddleston said. "They are all so eager and enthusiastic and get many of the

tasks completed that we would otherwise have to postpone until we got sufficient funding and staff to do them.

"It is so disheartening for them to see their hard work ruined for no reason — this was an act of blatant vandalism."

Vehicles, bikes and quads are not permitted in the park, but because it is so close to built-up areas, it is under enormous pressure — especially since the closure of popular areas such as Kwinana and the tracks near Mundaring where drivers and riders were able to test their skills.

"Along with the police and the shire, we conducted a blitz in the park recently where we confiscated more than 12 bikes that were being ridden illegally," Mr Eddleston said.

"I think we are slowly getting the message across."

Mr Eddleston showed me around some of the areas of the park where environmental damage has been inflicted on the landscape. It was pretty obvious it wasn't just bikes and quads doing the damage, with unthinking or ignorant off-road drivers also at fault.

"It may well only be a handful of irresponsible off-roaders doing the damage, but unfortunately, it is all of us who get locked out of an area that could have remained open if used responsibly," Mr Eddleston said.

The Mitsubishi group and other 4WD clubs, plus organisations such as Track Care WA, are desperately



**Tidy team:** Club members removed more than 12 tonnes of car bodies and rubbish on their weekend working bee with DEC staff.



**Helping hands:** Members of the Mitsubishi 4WD Owners Club erect a temporary fence to aid plant rehabilitation in Wungong Regional Park.

working with the managing authorities to repair track damage and keep areas open for off-road driving.

Supporting their work hopefully will see us retain, and perhaps regain, access to other areas in spite of an uncaring few.

**Vandalised:** The recently erected gate and fence were torn out of the ground within a week.

