

Species detecting dog heads to Fitzroy Falls



Scientist Nicholas Carlile with dog trainer Steve Austin and their dog, searching for penguins. Photo: Kylie McClelland, Office of Environment and Heritage

A UNIQUE four-legged friend will be at the Fitzroy Falls Visitor Centre on Monday, August 18.

Eco, the species detector dog, will accompany NSW Office of Environment and Heritage senior research scientist Nicholas Carlile to the centre.

To celebrate National Science Week, Mr Carlile will discuss the roles he and Eco play in seabird research and management.

The free talk, *Seabird Islands of the South Coast - haven or hard place?* will begin at 11am.

Mr Carlile will explore the changes in local seabird populations, the challenges of managing a seabird breeding habitat and the role of species detector dogs, like Eco.

He has worked for the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for more than 25 years, studying and protecting seabirds along the coast.

Mr Carlile has undertaken a long-term project on the recovery of Australia's rarest endemic seabird, the Gould's petrel, which has become a model for island restoration in NSW.

NPWS senior information officer Beth Boughton said the event would be the first in a series of talks at the Fitzroy Falls Visitor Centre.

"We are very pleased to offer the community a chance to hear about the work and research behind the scenes of our national parks," she said.

"We have many clever scientists who are dedicated to understanding, and our environment and Science Week is the perfect time to celebrate their contribution."

Regular talks will be held on the first Friday of each month.

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