Territorians Urged To Sign Up For Devil’s Claw Festival

Parks and Wildlife Minister Len Kiely today urged Territorians to sign up for this year’s Devil’s Claw Festival.

“The Northern Territory Government is determined to eradicate Devil’s Claw – a noxious weed – from Gregory National Park,” Mr Kiely said.

“Devil’s Claw out-competes native vegetation, causing the displacement of native animals within the riverine habitat

“That is why we are urging Territorians to sign up for this annual volunteer project, to be held from 12-23 May, 2008.

“Parks and Wildlife Service rangers and locally employed Indigenous groups – together with volunteers – have been essential in ensuring the ongoing success of the festival.

“Last year’s festival involved 25 people removing 2600 plants during the two-week festival.

“This is a remarkable achievement when you consider 20,000 plants were removed during the early 1990s.

“The weed control program has demonstrated that with commitment and perseverance, effective weed control can be achieved.

“Removal by hand has proven to be the most efficient, thorough and environmentally-sound technique of eradicating Devil’s Claw.”

Devil’s Claw (Martinya annua) is a fast growing plant native to Central and South America and was first introduced to Australia as an ornamental plant in the late 1860s.

“Devil’s Claw was introduced to the Territory after World War II and is now a Class A noxious weed - meaning we are legally obliged to eradicate this noxious weed,” Mr Kiely said.

The Northern Territory Government will provide volunteers with food and transport around Gregory National Park.

People keen to volunteer for this year’s Devil’s Claw Festival can contact Gregory National Park on 8975 0833.

Contact: Edwin Edlund 0401 119 563