



In good hands: June Butcher with a bilby.

Bilbies star in WA tale

IT'S morning. Lloyd Butcher hovers in the background making a cup of tea while his wife June sits watching live sex on TV.

Actually, she's watching infrared pictures of nearby bilbies. The native marsupials have been at it non-stop for almost 18 hours and she exclaims: "They haven't eaten or drunk or even done a poo."

It's one of several nice human touches in the nature documentary *True Stories: Return To Eden* (ABC, 10pm), which shows ordinary WA people doing extraordinary work to save a threatened species.

The Butchers, a retired couple who this year were made members of the Order of Australia for their work in running the Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre at Gooseberry Hill, maintain a bilby breeding program for the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

Return To Eden, by Celia Tait and Brian Beaton, shows their bilbies being released at the Peron Peninsula in the Shark Bay World Heritage Area as part of CALM's Project Eden and also in Dryandra State Forest in the South-West.

We see the war on the peninsula against introduced predators such as foxes and cats. Feral cats are hard to eliminate and cat lovers won't enjoy seeing a moggy come to a sticky end. But immune as we are to wild reality, we need this jolt.

We also need to see the nocturnal bilby running free, as we do here, because its low visibility has fuelled our ignorance of WA's natural wonders.

It would be nice to hear more of the Butchers' personal story and to have a David Attenborough figure on camera, but these are minor quibbles. The program uses the magic of TV to bring an important WA story to life.

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