



# A Day in the Life of...

## Geoff Scales, Graphic Designer

**After working in the corporate sector for over 25 years, Graphic Designer Geoff Scales decided to make a change. Geoff is now part of the marketing team working behind-the-scenes, coming up with bright ideas to show everyone what Perth Zoo has to offer.**

Before he started at the Zoo, Geoff ran his own graphic design business, doing a wide range of jobs from magazine design to annual reports. After working in the corporate sector in Perth and Sydney, Geoff realised he wanted to work with other people who shared a common cause.

Although he started working part-time at the Zoo in November 2004, he quickly moved into full-time work.

"I wasn't interested in working in the corporate sector where I didn't believe in the products I was promoting," he says. "I wanted to work somewhere more humane and ethical where everyone had a common focus. The Zoo is ideal. I get to work with a range of interesting people with a common focus of conservation."

Collaborating with other Zoo departments is a major aspect of Geoff's job. "I'll attend a meeting with marketing, fundraising or education staff to understand what they require. We discuss the design options and I will provide guidance on what will work best before starting the artwork."

Geoff's team spends countless hours designing everything from temporary signs in and around the Zoo to event promotion and education material. "A lot of work goes into each project. When a new event comes up, we have to create artwork for everything from brochures and newspaper ads to billboards."

While Geoff's job means he spends a lot of time in the office, he does get to roam around the Zoo. "If new signs have to be made for an exhibit, I'll go to the site with the keepers to see what design would best suit the environment. We aim to make the signage informative but not block the visitor's sense of immersion."

So while he doesn't work directly with the animals, Geoff certainly doesn't have a regular office job. "Everyone here has the same goal and we all get to see the results of our hard work. I think this is the best place to work."

### A Day in Geoff's Diary

I never have a regular day at the Zoo. Most days I'll be working on a few projects at a time. I might be working on a brochure and advertising in the morning and then learning a new computer program in the afternoon. My job constantly changes.

I visit different sites around the Zoo when new interpretive signs have to be created. I work closely with the Publications Officer and keepers so I know the environment where the sign will go. I have to make sure the sign is not the most prominent aspect of an exhibit but that it's put somewhere safe and practical.

Back at the office, I start designing the signs. I use colours and shapes that are evocative of each particular section of the Zoo like the Asian Rainforest and Australian Bushwalk. We try to create a different look and feel for each section so we have to make the signs reflect that.

Most of my projects are ongoing and some jobs are a lot bigger than others. Directional signs around the Zoo are small day-to-day tasks while an event such as the Frogology photographic exhibition requires a lot more time and a greater collaborative effort all round. Recently, the design office was engaged in the Zoo Shop name change to Zoo-nique. For that, we created new banners, swing tags and postcards which reflected the Zoo's purpose of engaging the community in global conservation action.

There's always something for me to work on, from exhibit signs to photography. I'm never short of work.