

Desert Habitat Method facilitator training

Purpose of this update

- 1 To share feedback on the first facilitator training for the Desert Habitat Method, or DHM.
- 2 To explain how IDA delivers Desert Habitat Method workshops for ranger teams.
- 3 To invite expressions of interest to become Desert Habitat Method facilitators.

What is the Desert Habitat Method?

Since 2018, the IDA has been developing a way, or method, to help ranger teams measure how their land management programs affect desert habitats. This is especially focused on the impact of fire work on native animals and plants. It is called the Desert Habitat Method, or DHM.

We hope the Desert Habitat Method will allow Indigenous land management organisations to access nature markets in the future.

First, the IDA developed the Desert Habitat Method based on:

- ranger knowledge and experience
- Healthy Country Plans
- Indigenous Protected Area management plans
- fire management plans
- other documents.

Now, the IDA is testing the method with 4 desert ranger teams.

Desert Habitat Method workshops for ranger groups

The 4 ranger teams are participating in workshops with the IDA to:

- make sure the Desert Habitat Method includes the local values, cultural practices and expertise of rangers and Traditional Owners
- learn about nature markets
- learn how ranger teams could use the Desert Habitat Method to access nature markets
- help ranger teams make informed decisions about using the method.

The Desert Habitat Method facilitators include:

- IDA staff
- ranger team support staff
- scientists.

In the future, we hope to offer the Desert Habitat Method workshops to any interested ranger teams. We want these workshops to be free and easy to access.



Desert Habitat Method trial workshop, Kiwirrkurra IPA, 2024

The first facilitator training workshop

To support future Desert Habitat Method workshops, we are building a team of skilled facilitators. These facilitators will deliver workshops with ranger teams across the desert. In February 2025, we held the first facilitator training in Alice Springs. This was not a Desert Habitat Method workshop for ranger groups. It was training for people who want to help facilitate those workshops.

What was covered in the training?

The training focussed on 3 main areas.

- 1 How the Desert Habitat Method works.
- 2 What to observe and evaluate during workshops.
- 3 How to run engaging, collaborative workshops that respect Indigenous knowledge.

IDA staff led sessions on the Desert Habitat Method. Fiona Walsh, a respected ethno-ecologist and facilitator, led sessions on participatory facilitation techniques. Participatory facilitation uses hands-on, physical activities to help participants and facilitators share ideas and learn from each other in a respectful, supportive way.



Scott West and Yukultji Ward, Kiwirrkurra Ranger Team, Dannica Shultz, ranger coordinator, Mantua James Nangala, Kiwirrkurra Ranger Team, Desert Habitat Method trial workshop, Kiwirrkurra IPA, 2024

Evaluation of the facilitator training

The training was a success. Participants gained confidence to help deliver Desert Habitat Method workshops and shared valuable ideas to improve both the facilitator training and the workshops.

What did participants say?

- "It is valuable for staff to have this training and know about the DHM so they can share with rangers."
- "This is an ethical way to work."
- "It was most useful to learn the ideas/methods for enhancing engagement from a group and making sure individuals in the group all have a chance to participate."
- "I liked the sense of working togetherness that emerged due to the openness required in the sharing of experiences and the participatory nature of it all."

Participants also helped test and improve the Desert Habitat Method workshop activities. Their feedback will make future workshops more useful for ranger teams.

Do you want to facilitate a Desert Habitat Method workshop?

DHM facilitators:

- help tailor the workshop to suit each ranger team
- support delivery alongside IDA staff
- build ranger teams' confidence to keep using the Desert Habitat Method after the workshop.

If you want to take part in a facilitator training, email the IDA at info@indigenousdesertalliance.com

IDA nature market fact sheet series

These documents contain general information only. Groups should seek their own legal, technical and financial advice before making any decisions regarding nature markets.

See more fact sheets [here](#)

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