

Friends lend a hand

By PETER SANDERS

Wildcare and the Parks and Wildlife Service last week announced the pending formation of a new group at Freycinet National Park.

Friends of Freycinet is part of the Community Action in Reserves programme and allows volunteers to get involved in helping Parks and Wildlife to manage the park.

The inaugural meeting of the group will be held at the park's outdoor theatre at noon on Saturday, November 1.

This will be followed by sausage sizzle and working bee.

Volunteer coordinator Caroline Shemwell said that Freycinet National Park was one of Tasmania's oldest and most popular National Parks.

"It is a traditional haunt for bushwalkers, boaties and bathing beauties," she said.

"Many Tasmanian campers return year after year to walk, fish, boat and generally relax in the park and on the beaches at Freycinet.

"Freycinet is now also one of Tasmania's busiest National Parks for tourists,

with similar visitor numbers to Cradle Mountain (200,000 a year) and a faster rate of growth.

"There are a lot of people out there who are regular visitors to Freycinet and this is their opportunity to help Parks and Wildlife look after the Park."

Ms Shemwell said that volunteers could assist Parks and Wildlife in many ways.

"There's track work, park and beach care and maintenance, weed eradication, search and rescue, wildlife surveys and rescue/rehabilitation, oilspill response, bird counts, visitor education, research, historic hut care, even administration," she said.

"If any volunteer has an interest or expertise and they think it can assist us in managing the park, it will be considered."

Wildcare-sponsored whale rescue training will be held on Sunday, November 2 at 9am at Coles Bay Hall.

For further information and to allow organisers to cater for both events, call Ms Shemwell on 6256 7070.



ON THE SPOT: North-East district volunteer coordinator Caroline Shemwell.