



## Campus Critters

STAFF AND STUDENTS at UTAS are lucky enough to share the leafy UTAS campuses with a variety of Australian fauna.

The birch trees around Hytten Hall are home to a group of tawny frogmouth owls, who, while camera shy (look carefully through the leaves!) do not seem to be bothered by the car park that surrounds their residence.

Those resident in the Administration Building at Sandy Bay avidly watched a young family of welcome swallows grow over the spring – and hoped the fire alarm holding their nest to the wall would not be needed.

And for some time, the Optical Astronomers in the School of Mathematics and Physics have been having trouble with one of the circuits at the telescope out at Mount Canopus. This is an important circuit that allows the mirror in the telescope to be positioned remotely, by a controller back at the University.

When the circuit finally died the other day, Dr Kym Hill went out to investigate, armed with his toolbox and digital camera. The sleepy inhabitant he encountered in the circuit junction box had made an expensive nest!

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## Vital support for **Tasmania's nurses**

IN NOVEMBER, OVER 100 nurses from across the State met at the UTAS Newnham campus to hear and present their experiences and research on how best to manage the competing demands on registered nurses, to ensure new recruits get a quality introduction to nursing.

“Every year health care agencies are faced with the dilemma of how best to orientate, teach and support undergraduates, postgraduates and new nursing employees. Registered nurses have to juggle the competing demands of providing quality patient care and mentoring,” said Dr Denise Fassett, School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Tasmania's nurses are being given vital support through the Preceptor Education Program, an initiative where registered nurses provide education for nurses who assist their colleagues, nurses entering or re-entering the public, private, community and aged care sectors. Tasmania is the only State where nurses from the public, private, community and

aged care, State government, UTAS and the Nursing Board have joined forces to provide a program to prepare registered nurses for this important role.

“If new employees are not adequately prepared or supported they are likely to leave, which puts extra pressure on an already stretched workforce,” said Professor Gerry Farrell, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Feedback from those attending the conference was overwhelming, with most nurses agreeing that it is good to be acknowledged for the work they do and that they look forward to this as an annual event. A highlight of the conference was the launch of a new website, with information, resources and links for registered nurses to assist them in their mentorship role.

The new site is at:  
[www.healthsci.utas.edu.au/tson/preceptor/](http://www.healthsci.utas.edu.au/tson/preceptor/)