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Observation Wandu WEWS September 2016

The last demonstrator was introduced, **Paul Kenyon**, the 'Snake Whisperer'. Some people including myself felt the hairs on the back of our necks rise when it became clear that this man was bringing a large number of snakes, some poisonous into the community hall.

I am not a fan of snakes, and I am sure there were many others inside the hall who felt the same way that I did. That being best to stay well away from them regardless of what type of snake they might be.

Paul firstly introduced the king brown or mulga snake and said it could be found Australia wide. He said it was not actually brown at all and that it could grow to up to 2 metres in length. I seem to remember seeing a few in the Kimberley's that were even longer than 2 metres in length. He explained that its fangs reached 3.8 mm in length and that when it did bite something it was capable of injecting a lot of venom into the bite area.

Next, he introduced the tiger snake and advised us that this one was the most dangerous. Its venom was highly toxic and if bitten you would die a painful death. Its venom broke down your internal organs to such an extent as to make them incapable of functioning. He advised it had fangs of around 3.5 mm in length and that it too was capable of delivering a high level of venom to the bite area.

Next one introduced was the most common of all venomous snakes, the dugite. Paul advised that this snake was also very dangerous and how it could move very quickly when it wanted to. He said its fangs were smaller than other snakes and they were 2.7 mm in length.

Last of the venomous snakes to be introduced was the death adder. Paul advised how this snake was an ambush predator using camouflage to hide itself from its prey. He also advised that its rate of strike was the fastest of all venomous snakes, making it very dangerous.

To finish off Paul introduced a number of pythons. He had five in all, Stimson's, carpet, black headed and grey. He brought all of them out of their bags and people were invited to have photographs of themselves with these pythons wrapped around their bodies.

I chose not to participate in this given my dislike of snakes. Some people however were very happy in the company of snakes.

A very interesting demonstration on snakes. As a collector of wood from many areas I know how important it is to be aware of the likelihood of encountering snakes whilst collecting wood.