

# A Survey of Wildlife Tour Operators in WA



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# How has the wildlife tourism industry in WA 'developed'?

- Two Components:
  - Marine (dolphins, whales, whale sharks, turtles, manta rays).
  - Terrestrial (kangaroos, birds, koalas at Yanchep, numbats in the late 1980s)



# Who is responsible for wildlife tourism in WA?

⇒ The Department of Conservation and Land Management

- Statutory responsibility to protect wildlife under the Wildlife Conservation Act.
- Manages 22 million ha of public land for conservation and recreation purposes, attracting 9.7 million visits.



# Who is responsible for wildlife tourism in WA?(cont...)

⇒ Western Australian Tourism Commission

- Promotion of the State as a tourism destination
- Tourism development, including 'Touch Tourism'



# Who is responsible for wildlife tourism in WA? (Cont...)

⇒ Regional Tourism Associations

– Promotion of tourism at a regional level



# CALM's role in managing industry

- Tour operator licensing
  - Marine (CALM Act and/or Wildlife Conservation Act)
  - Terrestrial (CALM Act)



# Understanding the industry

- CALM and Murdoch University survey of wildlife tourism operators

## Aim

- To gain a better understanding of tour operator needs
- To assist in the development of sustainable wildlife tourism

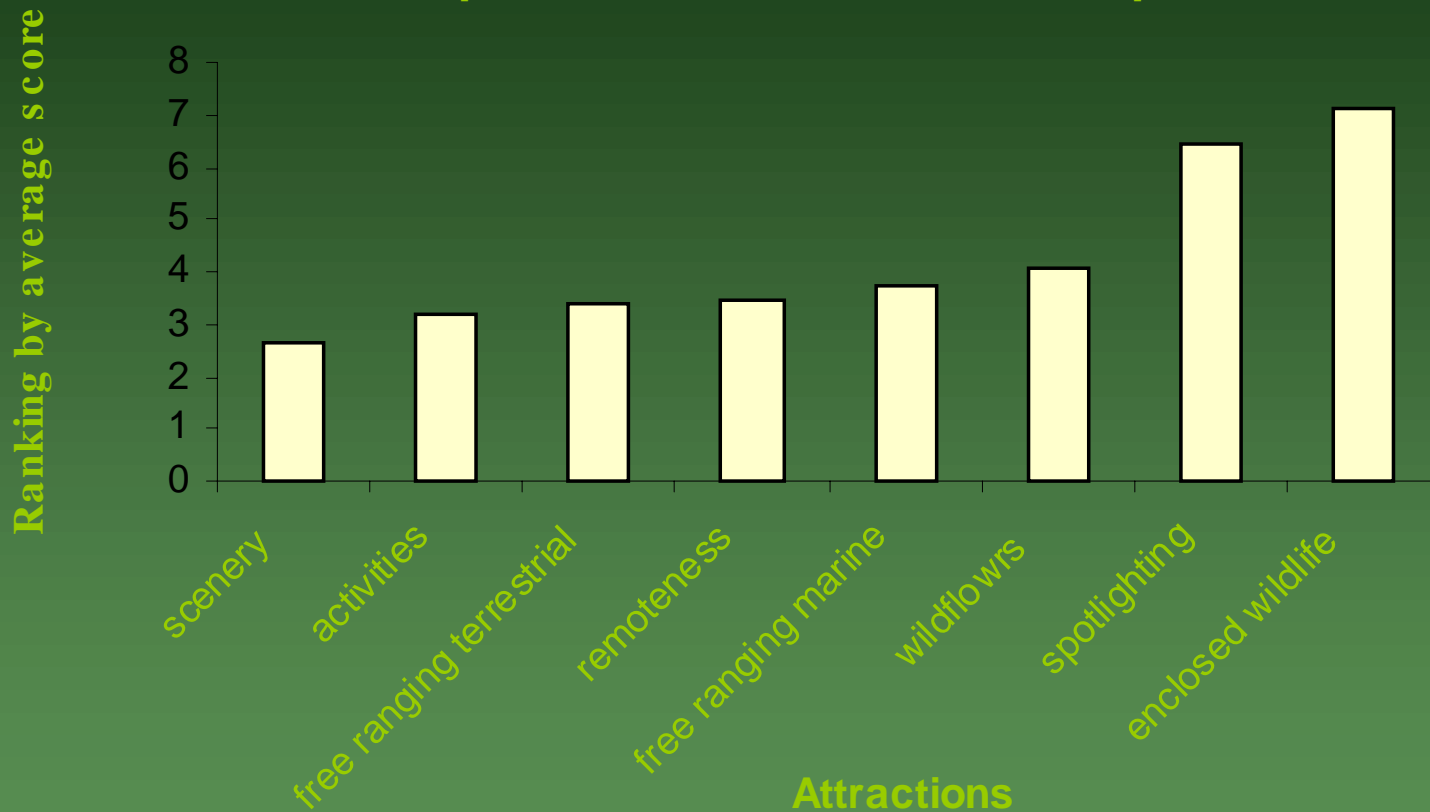


# Understanding the industry (Cont...)

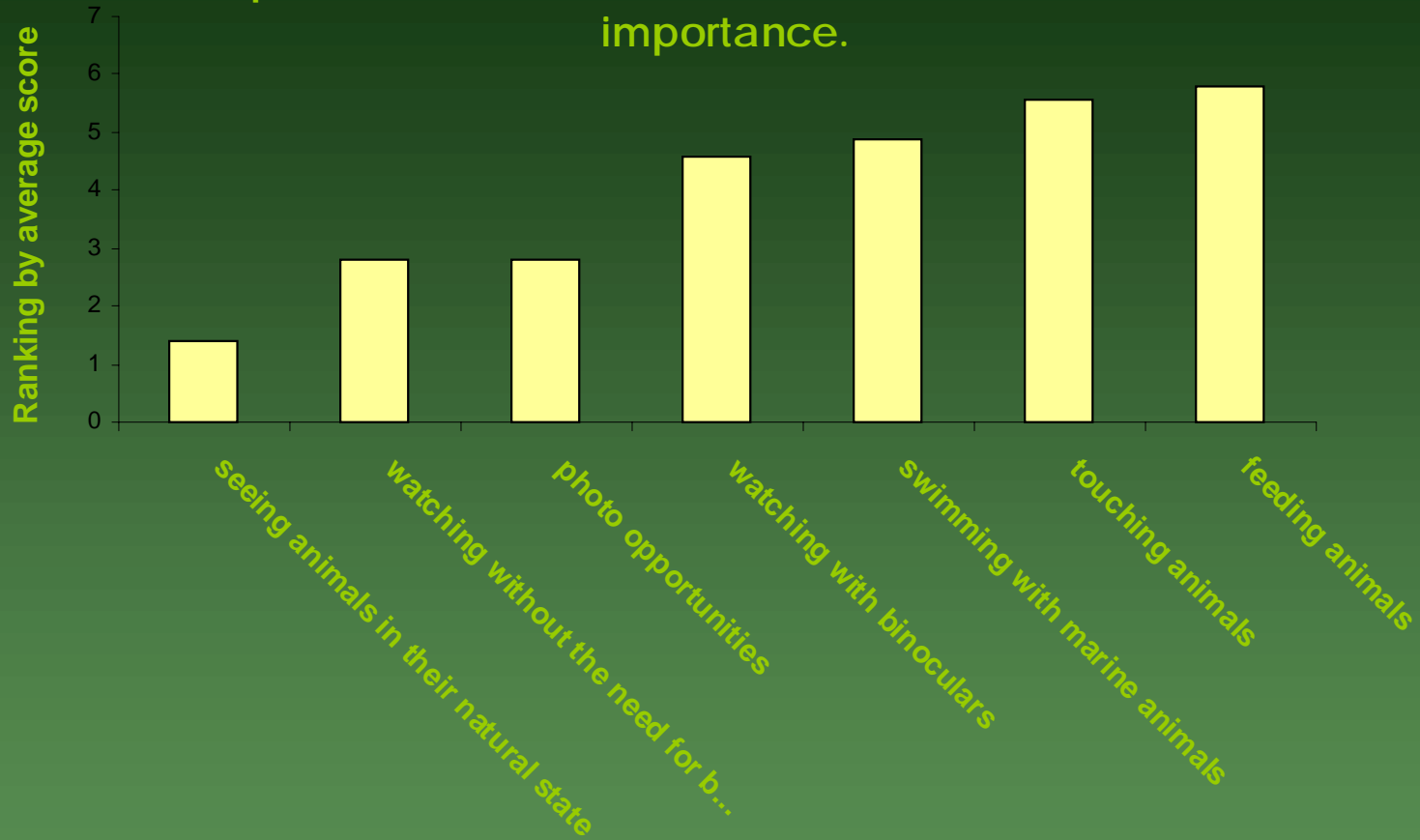
- 344 surveys - 100 returned
- 23 questions split into three parts:
  - Wildlife as part of your tour
  - Visitor characteristics
  - Operation, management and marketing

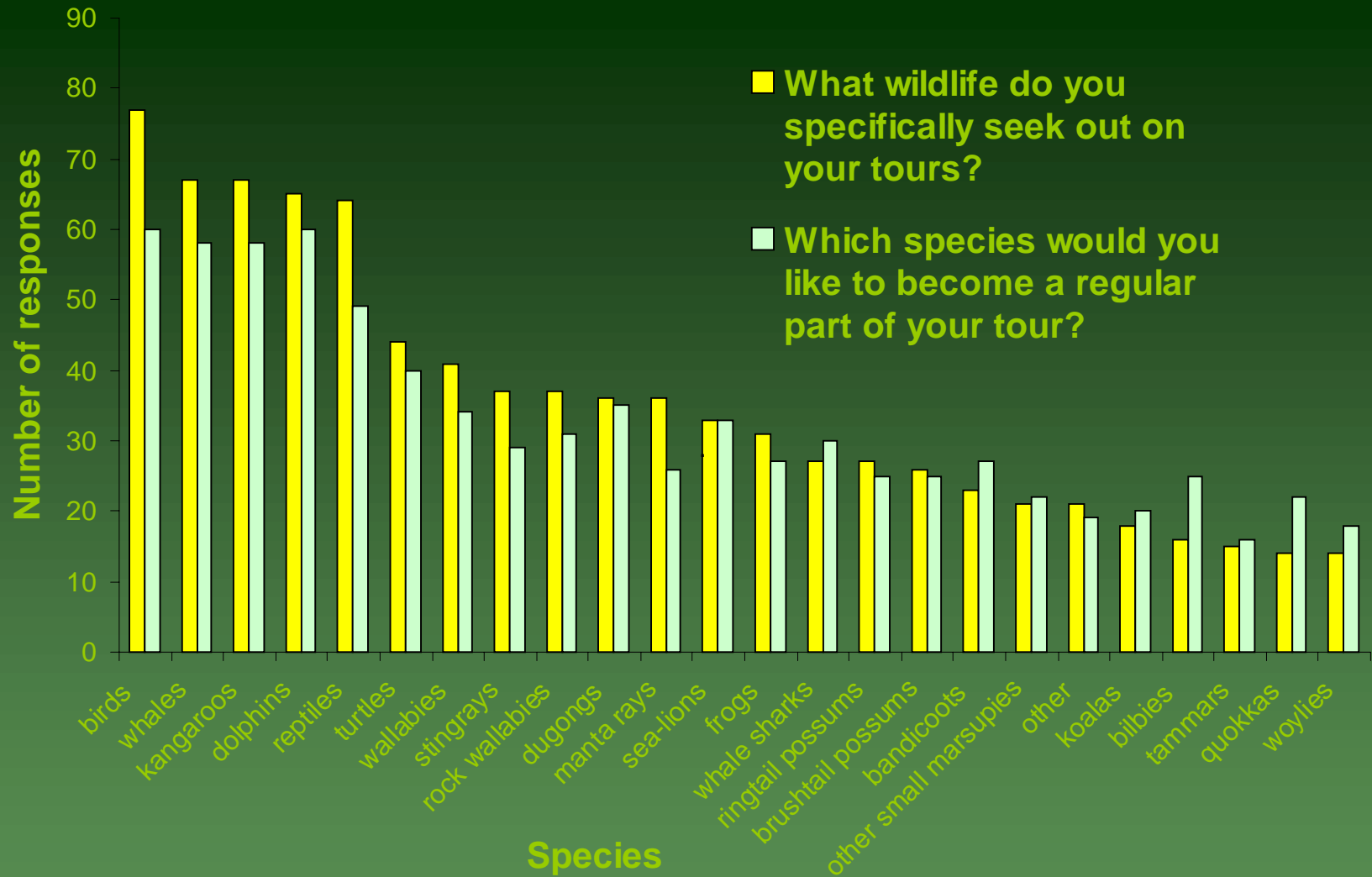


Which of the following attractions do you consider important in relation to your tours? Rank in order of importance, with 1 as most important.

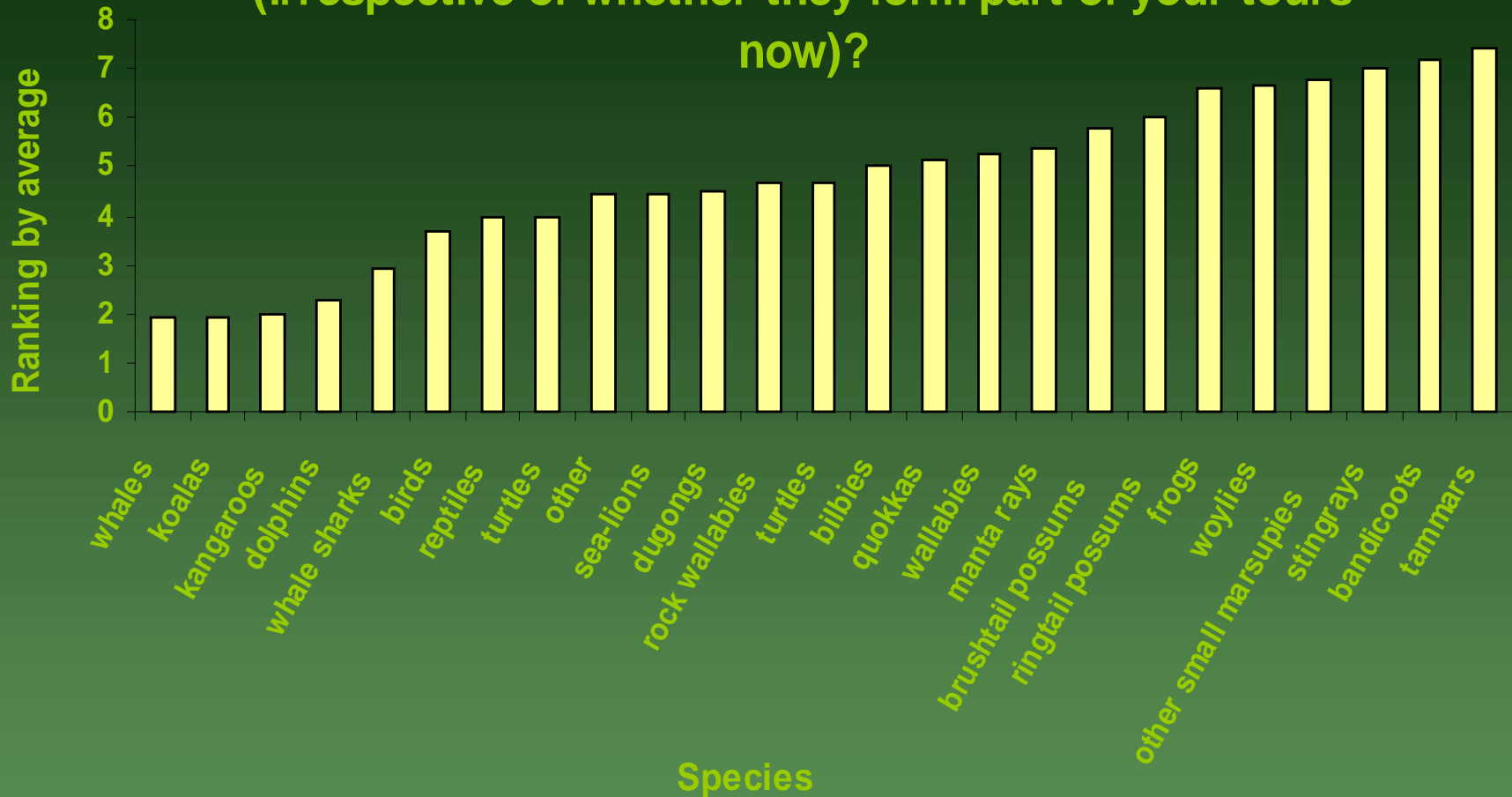


Which of the following do you consider to be important parts of wildlife tourism? Please rank in order of importance.

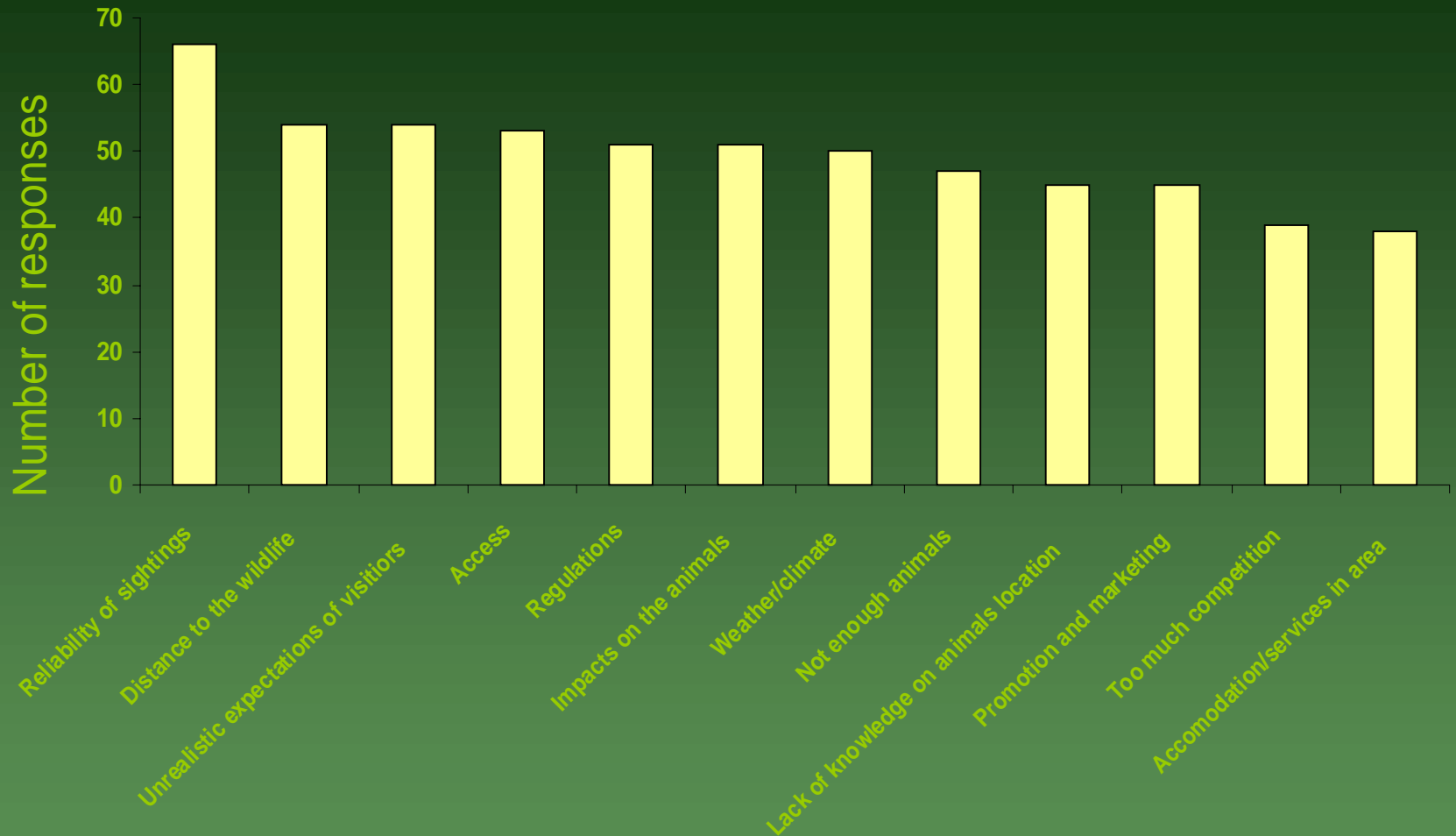




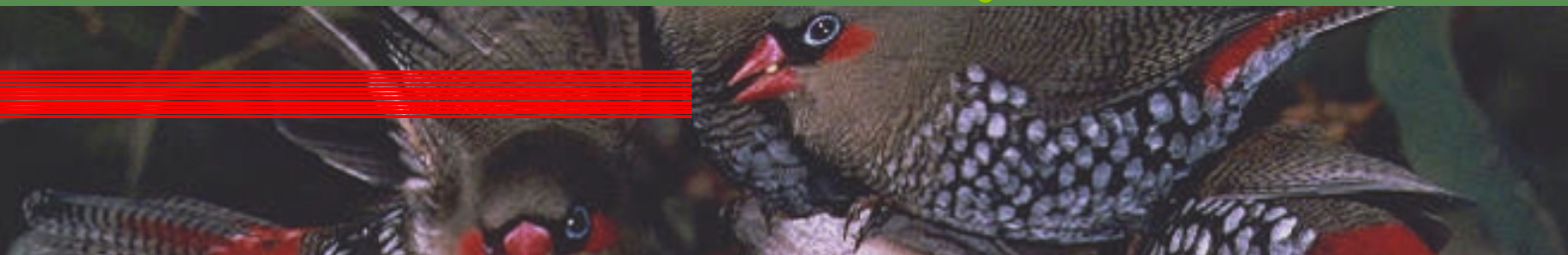
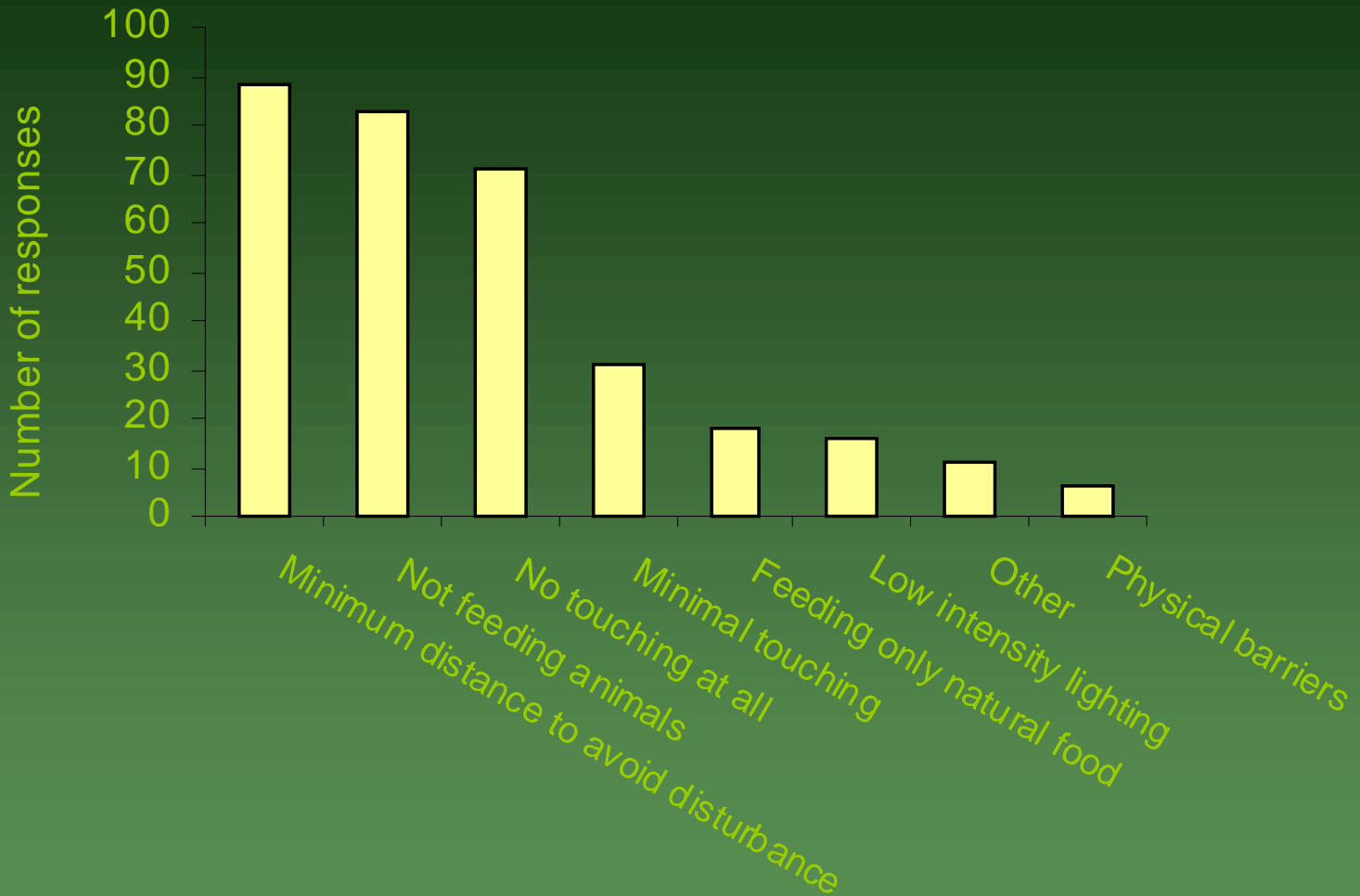
# Which animals do you think visitors find most appealing (irrespective of whether they form part of your tours now)?



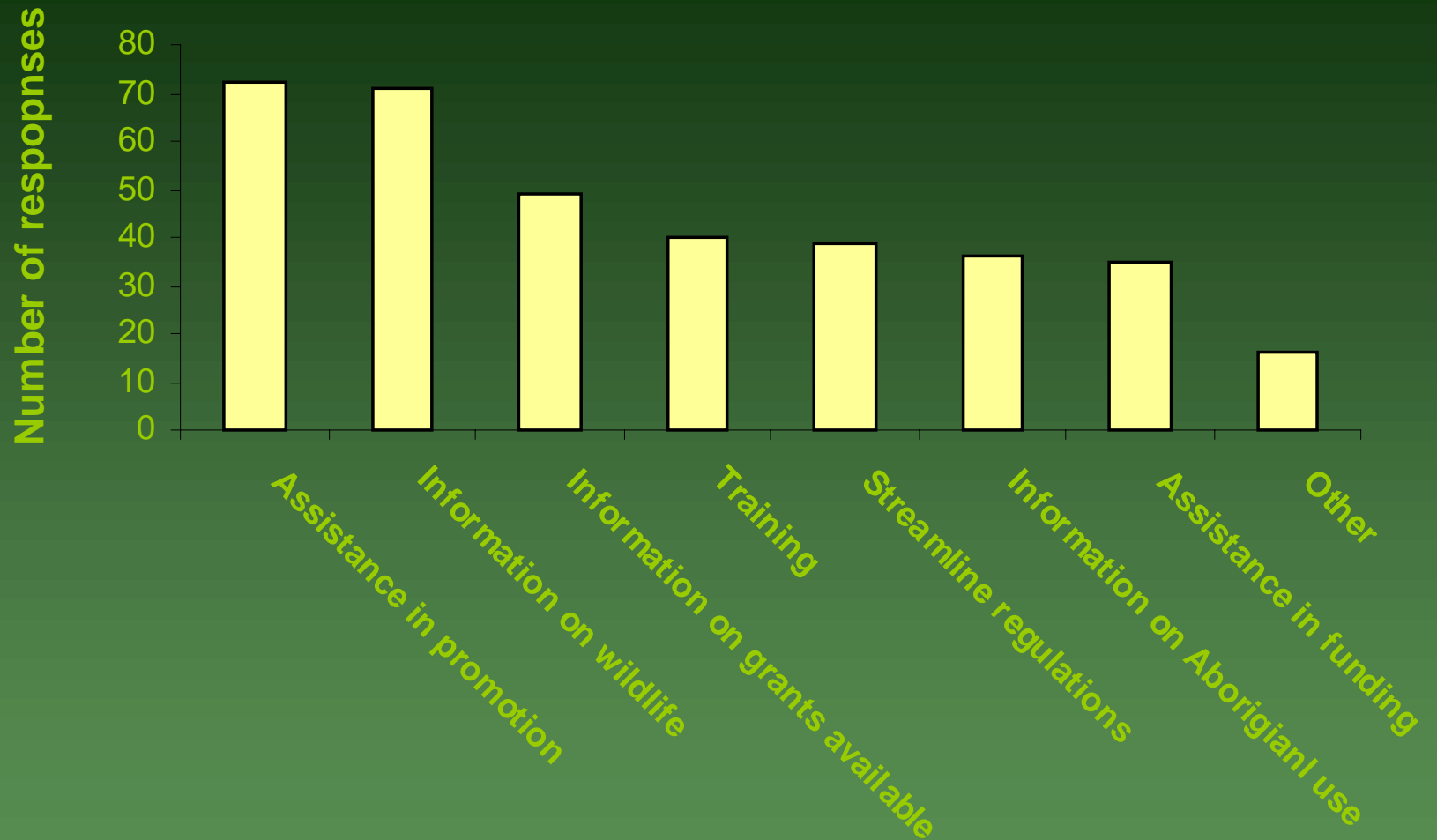
## What do you see as the impediments to these species becoming a regular part of your tour?



# Do you use certain precautionary measures to protect the wildlife?



## What assistance do you think you need to help develop a more sustainable wildlife tourism?



# Conclusions

- Much more can be done to improve the industry. Requires co-operation between all parties. Operators want to be involved.
- Critical weight range mammals ranked very low in terms of visitor appeal
- Apparent lack of knowledge about opportunities. Information not readily shared by CALM.
- Interactions between visitors and terrestrial mammals may require specific conditions.

