

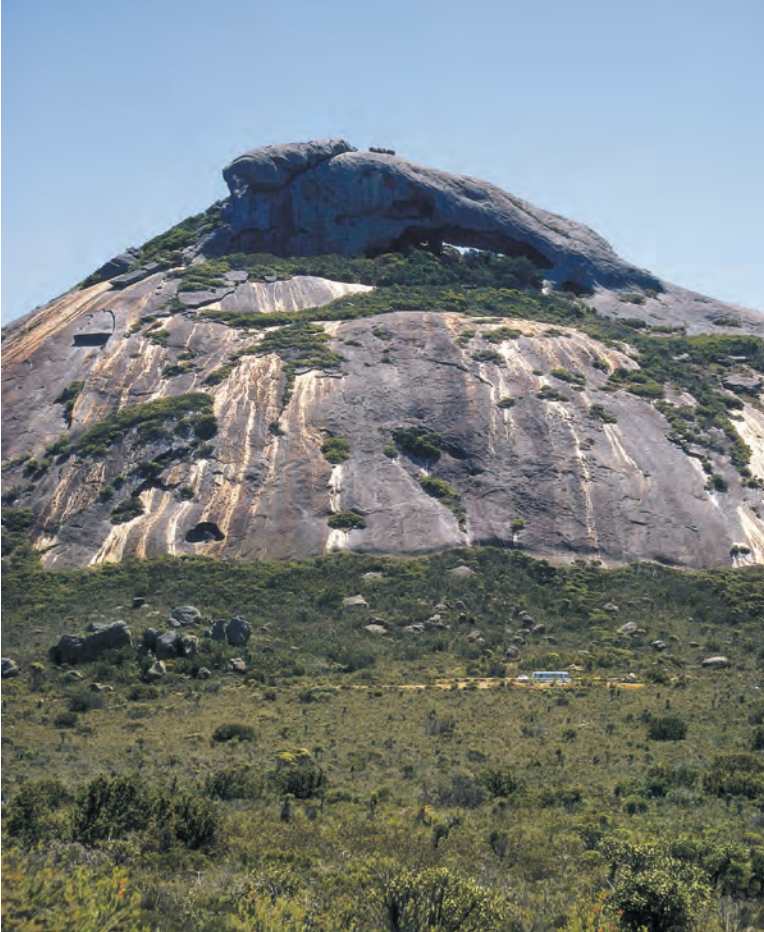


Below Cape Le Grand. Photo – Tourism WA

environment.
into our office for more information on WA's natural
Conservation. While you're in the Esperance area drop
Western Australia by the Department of Environment and
throughout the State are managed for the people of
National parks, State forests, nature reserves and wildlife
between April and October.
by cool winters. Most rain falls during the winter months
Warm summers from December to March are followed
prepared and carry your own water.
There are limited visitor facilities in this wild area, so go
heaths and salt lake systems of the surrounding country.
Peak Eleanor, give sweeping views over the dry sandplain
National Park. This ancient granite peak and its companion,
One hundred kilometres inland from Stokes is Peak Charles
wildlife and are an important park of this national park.
inlet and its associated lakes support a rich variety of
encompasses Stokes Inlet and features long beaches and
Stokes National Park, 80 kilometres west of Esperance,
metres) and Mississippi Hill (180 metres).
including Mt Le Grand (345 metres), Frenchman Peak (262
of granite and gneiss form an impressive chain of peaks
south-west corner of the park massive, rock outcrops
interspersed with swamps and freshwater pools. In the
the park protects an undulating heath-covered sandplain
wide sandy beaches set between rocky headlands. Inland,
Esperance by sealed road, features attractive bays with
Cape Le Grand National Park, 50 kilometres east of
Esperance area.
Wild coastal scenery, rugged granite peaks, and sweeping
heathlands characterise the national parks of the
Parks of Esperance

Esperance national parks

Peak Charles – Cape Le Grand – Stokes



Information and recreation guide



Department of
Environment and Conservation



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Above Lucky Bay, Cape Le Grand National Park. Photo – Tourism WA

The environment

The national parks and nature reserves of the Esperance
region form a network of conservation areas that protects
a wide variety of native plant communities and landscapes.
At Cape Le Grand, the peaks of the park's south-west
corner are formed from massive outcrops of Precambrian
granite and gneiss, exposed by erosion and movements in
the Earth's crust during the past 600 million years.
During the Eocene period, some 40 million years ago, sea
levels were at least 300 metres above their present level
and these peaks would have been largely submerged.
The caves and tunnels found in the peaks are thought to
have been either formed or enlarged by wave action and
underwater currents.
The sandplains which cover much of the park, support a
great variety of plant and animal life. Flowers are those
typical of the south-west. In areas of deep sand, dense
thickets of *Banksia speciosa* thrive, growing to three or
four metres tall. On gravel outcrops and in areas where
the soil is shallow, *Banksia pulchella* may be found. When
in flower, the banksias are a source of nectar and insects
for the tiny honey-possum, while after dark the quenda, or
southern brown bandicoot, forages in the understorey for
grubs and worms.

Stokes National Park protects the wildlife habitats of Stokes
Inlet and the surrounding heathland and lake systems.
Yate, swamp yate, and paperbark form dense low forests
near the wetlands, which in turn support a great variety
of waterbirds. Keep a wary eye open for tiger snakes
when walking in the wetlands. In autumn look out for
the magnificent yellow flowers of the bell-fruited mallee,
Eucalyptus preissiana, which only grows to about one metre.
Peak Charles National Park protects a pristine area of dry
woodlands, sandplain heaths and salt lake vegetation, in
the middle of which rise Peak Charles (651 metres) and Peak
Eleanor (501 metres).
The Peak Charles walk leads from the car park to a point
on the south-east ridge, from which extensive views of
Peak Eleanor are obtained. Beyond here, the walk to the
summit is only suitable for experienced bushwalkers or rock
climbers, as it involves exposed rock scrambling.
Like the peaks at Cape Le Grand, both peaks were islands
during the late Eocene, and wave-cut platforms can be seen
on their upper slopes.

Above Moir Homestead, Stokes National Park. Photo – Tourism WA

More information

Department of Environment and Conservation officers are
always glad to help. Don't hesitate to contact them if you
need information or assistance.
Visitor fees apply to Cape Le Grand and Stokes National Parks.
Fees are used to improve facilities and help offset costs.

Cape Le Grand National Park
PO Box 706, Esperance WA 6450
Phone (08) 9075 9072
Fax (08) 9075 9073
A/H (08) 9075 9027

Stokes National Park
RMB 7138, Esperance WA 6450
Phone/fax (08) 9076 8541

Peak Charles National Park
92 Dempster St, Esperance WA 6450
Phone (08) 9083 2100

Esperance District Office
92 Dempster St, Esperance WA 6450
Phone (08) 9083 2100
Fax (08) 9071 3657

South Coast Regional Office
120 Albany Highway, Albany WA 6330
Phone (08) 9842 4500
Fax (08) 9841 3329

State Operations Headquarters
17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington WA 6151
Phone (08) 9334 0333

www.dec.wa.gov.au

Information current at June 2010

Front cover Frenchman Peak, Cape Le Grand National Park. Photo – Tourism WA



Above Shoal Cape in Stokes National Park. Photo – Klaus Tiedemann/DEC

Stokes National Park

Stokes Inlet Trail – Allow 1.5 hours for this 3.8-kilometre
easy walk.
The trail has on-site plaques describing changes which
have occurred to the inlet environment. The path gives
magnificent views of the inlet and surrounds.

Cape Le Grand

Frenchman Peak – 3 kilometres return

A track leads from the car park, up the gentle east slope of
the peak, to the summit which features great views over the
park. Allow 1.5 hours hard walking.

Coastal Track – 15 kilometres one way

The track runs from Le Grand Beach via Hellfire Bay to
Rossiter Bay and features excellent coastal views. Always
carry drinking water with you.

The track falls into shorter sections. All times are one way:

- **Le Grand Beach – Hellfire Bay:**
allow three hours of hard walking.
- **Hellfire Bay – Thistle Cove:**
allow two hours of hard walking.
- **Heritage Trail – Thistle Cove:**
allow 45 minutes medium walking.
- **Lucky Bay – Rossiter Bay:**
allow 2.5 hours of medium walking.

Below Granite landscape taken from Frenchman Peak. Photo – Klaus Tiedemann/DEC



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Things to see and do

Facilities such as toilets, gas barbecues, tables and rubbish bins are provided at places shown on the maps. Information shelters on site will tell you more about these national parks.

Camping

Two camping grounds are situated in Cape Le Grand National Park; one at Lucky Bay and the other at Le Grand Beach (see map). Facilities include flushing toilets, showers and campers' kitchens.

Camping fees apply to both Cape Le Grand and Stokes national parks. Wood fires are not permitted. Free gas barbecues are provided.

At Stokes National Park the main campsite is located on the shores of the inlet. Please be sure to bring sufficient fresh water as there are no available water supplies in the park. Basic bush toilets are provided.

Peak Charles National Park has an area designated for camping, but facilities are very basic. There is no fresh water so, if you intend to visit, make sure you are totally self-sufficient.

Boating

In Cape Le Grand National Park, boats are best launched at Lucky Bay. Small boats can also be launched from Cape Le Grand Beach. Launching at Rossiter Bay is not recommended. These beaches are notoriously treacherous for vehicles and it is easy to become bogged in the most innocent-looking wet or dry sand. Always check beach surface conditions and tides.

Stokes Inlet is also popular for boating and canoeing, and it is possible to launch small boats. However, the capacity of the inlet for sailing is limited. Although the area of water looks large there are extensive areas of shallows and rocks.

Below Peak Charles. Photo – DEC



Above Looking west over Lucky Bay. Photo – Klaus Tiedemann/DEC

Normal fisheries regulations apply in national parks. Fishing is popular at both Cape Le Grand and Stokes national parks. Many species can be caught, including Australian salmon, whiting and black bream.

Fish safe, be coast safe. Your safety is your responsibility.

Park passes

Visitor fees apply in Cape Le Grand and Stokes national parks. Passes can be obtained at the park or from the Department of Environment and Conservation District Office.

Bushwalks

Footpaths have been established at national parks to help you explore the environment.

Below Path to Whistling Rock Cape Le Grand NP. Photo – Tourism WA



Remember

Be careful

Stay on paths and help prevent erosion. Your safety in natural areas is our concern, but your responsibility.

Be clean

Put your litter in bins or, better still, take it with you.

Be cool

Fires are only permitted at Peak Charles during the cooler months. Firewood is not to be sourced from within the national park.

Protect animals and plants

Firearms and pets are not permitted within these national parks.

Stay on the road

Follow signs and stay on roads marked in this brochure. Normal road rules apply.



Above Coastal walking trail, Cape Le Grand NP. Photo – Tourism WA

Dieback – Help stop the rot

Dieback is a plant disease caused by a waterborne mould called *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. The fungus is microscopic and lives in the soil. Plants die when the fungus attacks their roots, because the roots rot and cannot take up water or nutrients.

Vehicles may spread this pathogen, so it is essential to keep to formed roads and follow road signs in conservation reserves. By keeping out of closed areas you will help preserve the beauty of these magnificent national parks.

Bushwalkers can help by cleaning mud and soil from their boots before entering a park or reserve.

