

WELCOME TO THE DARTER TRAIL

Canoeing is a delight all year round on this tidal trail. Meander through the Murray River delta via river branches, pass bushland islands and holiday homes and watch for dolphins and the abundant bird life. The trail stays close to the inlet shore, and there are beach landings at the Peel Inlet end of the trail. You may have a short walk with your canoe in the shallows. The Murray River is a mix of riverbank vegetation and unique waterside residences with boatsheds and jetties. Power boating is popular during holiday periods and warmer months on this river.

Coopers Mill, which dates from 1843, was the first flour mill in the region and is located at the mouth of the river, on Cooleenup Island. The mill was constructed by Joseph Cooper using limestone believed to have been carried across the inlet by boat. Joseph rowed with the easterly winds in the morning and returned with the westerly winds in the afternoon. Joseph Cooper was a wheelwright and he died when he was crushed under his wagon during a trip to Fremantle in 1847, but his sons completed construction of the mill.

This guide has an 'indicative map' only. For detailed maps, please contact Canoeing WA at: www.wa.canoe.org.au or: ph 9285 8501.

When you explore and enjoy this trail, please respect private and public property.

The Darter (Anhinga melanogaster), also known as the snake bird, is a common sight on this trail. The Darter is a large bird which measures between 85 and 90 centimetres in length. The males are predominantly glossy black with some chestnut on the throat. The females are greyish-brown above and greyish-white below. On both sexes, a long white strip extends from the bill, below the eye and along part of the neck. The upper wings have decorative grey streaks. During courtship, both sexes develop a green upper beak.

With only its head and neck rising from the water, the Darter resembles a snake. The Darter submerges its body, quietly stalks its prey and then suddenly strikes with its S-shaped head and neck. Small fish, insects and other small aquatic animals are the prey of the Darter and are speared with the sharp, pointed bill.

The Canoe and Kayak Guide to Western Australia by Martin Chambers covers trips from Esperance to Exmouth. Copies are available from canoe retailers, outdoor suppliers and direct from the author, ph: 9385 8371.

3/09

TRAIL HINTS

Before using this trail guide, canoeists and kayakers should:

1. have received instruction from a qualified instructor (contact Canoeing WA for details of instructors);
2. be familiar with the Boating Rules and Regulations contained in the official *Western Australian Boating Guide* produced by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, copies available from the department's Marine Office in Mandurah and from boating retailers;
3. know their capabilities, as paddling on calm waters does not qualify anyone to undertake more difficult paddling tasks;
4. be able to swim confidently wearing paddling attire;
5. keep to the right in boating channels and canals;
6. check weather reports, as wind can create hazardous waves, especially on inlets, estuaries, lakes and pools;
7. use open canoes only in the calmest of conditions;
8. be aware of submerged or semi-submerged hazards such as trees and logs;
9. in summer months check with the Shire of Murray or the Mandurah City Council for information about algal bloom;
10. be careful when rivers are flowing fast as more effort is then required to paddle, particularly upstream, and not paddle rivers when they are in flood;
11. watch out for and avoid any snakes swimming rivers or other waterways;
12. take care if using boat ramps as they can be very slippery;
13. recognise that paddling conditions are generally calmer in the morning than in the afternoon;
14. let a responsible person know of their trip plans;
15. when planning trips on calm waters allow for a speed of 4km/h for adults and less for young or inexperienced canoeists; and
16. use insect repellent and/or cover up to protect against mosquitoes.

Phone Contacts

Police:

Life-threatening emergency only 000
Non-emergency 13 1444

Hospitals:

Mandurah, Peel Health Campus 9531 8000
Pinjarra, Murray Hospital 9531 7222

Local government

Mandurah City Council 9550 3777
Shire of Murray 9531 7777

DEC 24 Hour Wildcare Helpline 9474 9055

(for sick & injured wild life, including birds)

MURRAY RIVER CANOE GUIDE NO. 1

The Darter Trail

Compiled by

Canoe Trail Friends of
Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc.



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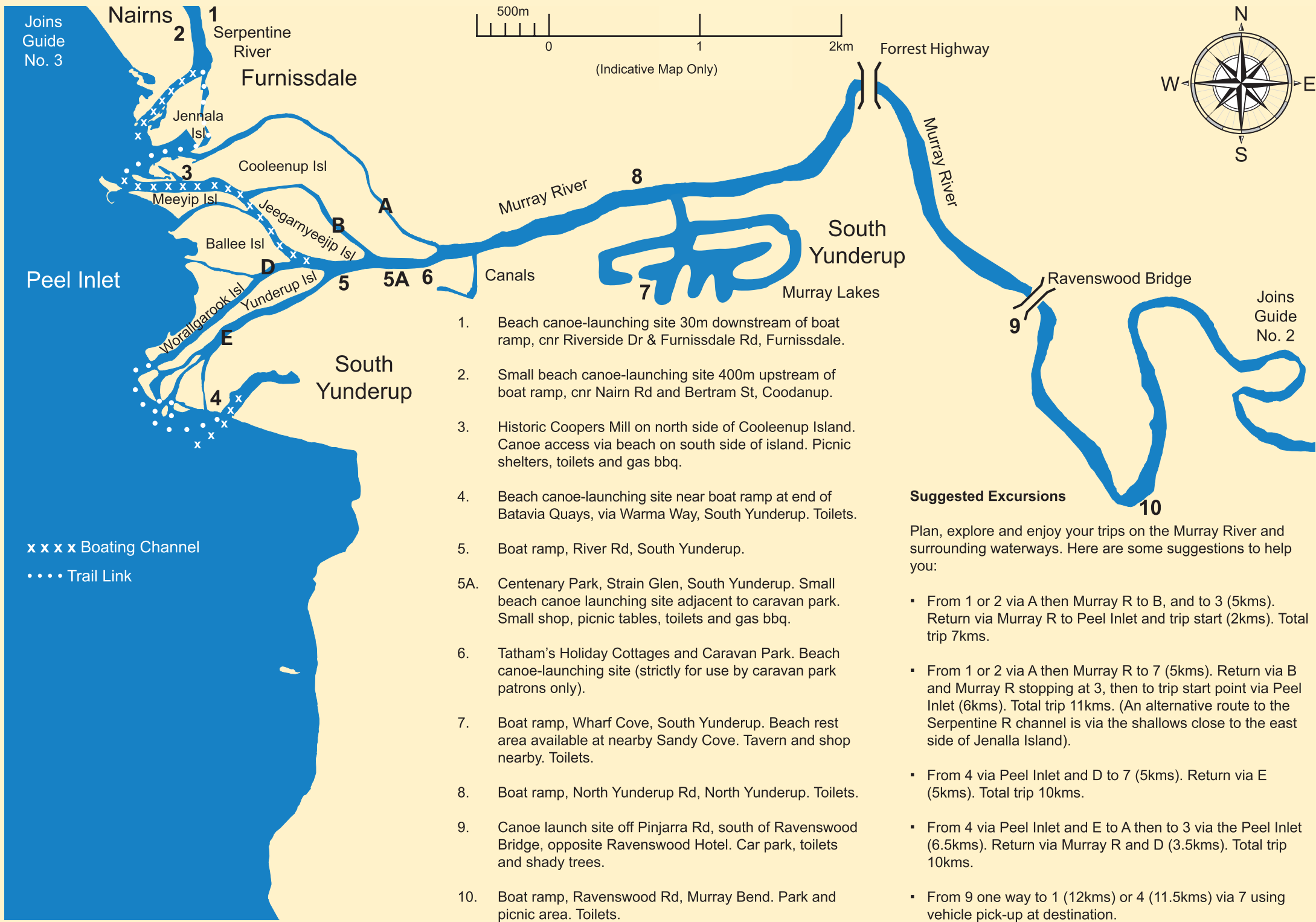


The Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc. is a non-profit organisation run by volunteers who wish to promote the establishment and maintenance of recreational canoe trails on the waterways of the Peel Regional Park and to advocate awareness of and care for the natural environment.

The Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc. does not accept any responsibility or liability for any loss, injury, death, damage, liability, cost or expense that may be suffered, sustained or incurred by any person relying on any aspect of this guide or making use of any trail named or described herein.

Inquiries: send a **stamped** self-addressed envelope to:
PO Box 3188, Mandurah East, WA 6210 or visit:

<http://canoetrailfriendsmandurahandpinjarra.blogspot.com>



1. Beach canoe-launching site 30m downstream of boat ramp, cnr Riverside Dr & Furnissdale Rd, Furnissdale.
2. Small beach canoe-launching site 400m upstream of boat ramp, cnr Nairn Rd and Bertram St, Coodanup.
3. Historic Coopers Mill on north side of Cooleenup Island. Canoe access via beach on south side of island. Picnic shelters, toilets and gas bbq.
4. Beach canoe-launching site near boat ramp at end of Batavia Quays, via Warma Way, South Yunderup. Toilets.
5. Boat ramp, River Rd, South Yunderup.
- 5A. Centenary Park, Strain Glen, South Yunderup. Small beach canoe launching site adjacent to caravan park. Small shop, picnic tables, toilets and gas bbq.
6. Tatham's Holiday Cottages and Caravan Park. Beach canoe-launching site (strictly for use by caravan park patrons only).
7. Boat ramp, Wharf Cove, South Yunderup. Beach rest area available at nearby Sandy Cove. Tavern and shop nearby. Toilets.
8. Boat ramp, North Yunderup Rd, North Yunderup. Toilets.
9. Canoe launch site off Pinjarra Rd, south of Ravenswood Bridge, opposite Ravenswood Hotel. Car park, toilets and shady trees.
10. Boat ramp, Ravenswood Rd, Murray Bend. Park and picnic area. Toilets.

Suggested Excursions

- Plan, explore and enjoy your trips on the Murray River and surrounding waterways. Here are some suggestions to help you:
- From 1 or 2 via A then Murray R to B, and to 3 (5kms). Return via Murray R to Peel Inlet and trip start (2kms). Total trip 7kms.
 - From 1 or 2 via A then Murray R to 7 (5kms). Return via B and Murray R stopping at 3, then to trip start point via Peel Inlet (6kms). Total trip 11kms. (An alternative route to the Serpentine R channel is via the shallows close to the east side of Jenalla Island).
 - From 4 via Peel Inlet and D to 7 (5kms). Return via E (5kms). Total trip 10kms.
 - From 4 via Peel Inlet and E to A then to 3 via the Peel Inlet (6.5kms). Return via Murray R and D (3.5kms). Total trip 10kms.
 - From 9 one way to 1 (12kms) or 4 (11.5kms) via 7 using vehicle pick-up at destination.

Joins Guide No. 3

Joins Guide No. 2