

Porongurup National Park



Caring for Porongurup National Park

- Protect habitat and wildlife by leaving rocks and plants undisturbed. Do not bring pets into the park.
- No camping or cooking fires are allowed in the park.
- Bins are not provided so please take your rubbish out with you, including food scraps and toilet paper. Make sure toilet waste is buried to 15cm deep.



For more information

Parks and Wildlife Service officers are always willing to help. Don't hesitate to contact them.

Parks and Wildlife Service

South Coast Regional Office

120 Albany Highway, Albany WA 6330

Ph: (08) 9842 4500

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

State Operational Headquarters

17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington WA 6151

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Front cover Granite Skywalk. Photo – Andrew Halsall



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



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Department of **Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions**



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This publication is available in alternative formats on request.

Plan ahead and prepare

**Your safety in natural areas is our concern
but your responsibility.**

- Bushwalking is not recommended in hot and windy conditions due to the risk of bushfire.
- Carry and drink plenty of drinking water – 3-4L per person per day.
- Wear sun protection, boots or sturdy footwear, and clothing that is weatherproof and scratchproof.
- Be prepared for unexpected changes in the weather.
- Sloping, rough and uneven surfaces exist throughout the park.
- Take extra care near rock edges as they can crumble without warning or be very slippery.
- Let someone know where you are going, what you are doing and when you expect to return.
- Check exploreparcs.dbca.wa.gov.au/alerts for any park or trail closures.
- Falling branches – eucalypt trees, especially karri, can shed branches at any time. Be extra aware on windy days.



The Porongurup Range

The 12km long Porongurup Range lies 48km north of Albany, approximately halfway to the Stirling Range. At 670m high, Devils Slide is the highest of the Porongurup's round-topped peaks.

The range's distinctive granite domes are the remains of the ancient Porongurup pluton, a massive bubble of molten rock that rose from deep in the Earth's core and pushed upwards into the overlying base rock of the continent.

Over millions of years the softer rock lying above the pluton weathered away to expose the giant granite mass. Changes in temperature and in the weight of the overlying rock caused the granite to fracture.

The relentless natural forces of sun, rain and wind wore away the square edges of the fractures, slowly sculpting the exposed pluton into the rounded shapes and deeply incised valleys that exist today.

Granite Skywalk

The Granite Skywalk is a suspended walkway around the huge granite outcrop of Castle Rock with two lookouts.

The upper lookout requires scrambling over rocks and climbing a ladder. There are spectacular views of the park and across undulating farmland to Albany on the south coast, with views to Mount Gardner and Mount Manypeaks to the south-east.

Visitors can enjoy the feeling of being perched on the edge of a massive granite outcrop, and grid flooring provides a thrilling perspective of the forest below.

Above Spectacular views from the Granite Skywalk. *Photo – Andrew Halsall*



Flora

Surveys conducted in the past years have identified 700 species of plants growing in Porongurup Range, including 10 endemic species.

The majority of Porongurup plant species have adapted to fire. After a severe fire in 2007, new growth quickly sprouted from seeds stored in the soil, from roots under the soil and from buds hidden beneath the scorched tree bark.

Karri forest and open jarrah/marri woodlands are the dominant forms of vegetation in the park.

On the lower slopes, marri (*Corymbia calophylla*), jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) and yate (*Eucalyptus cornuta*) trees grow in poorer soils that have formed from weathered layers of laterite (red, iron-rich rock) and sand.

Karri (*Eucalyptus diversicolor*) trees are found high on the peaks where the granite-based soils are deep and loamy (rich in organic matter).

Karri needs at least 750mm of rainfall per year. The average annual rainfall for the Range falls short at about 700mm. Run-off from non-porous granite surfaces supplements the rainfall allowing karri trees to survive in this drier area.

The Porongurup's karri trees became separated from the rest of WA's karri forest about 5000 years ago and have evolved to become slightly different genetically.

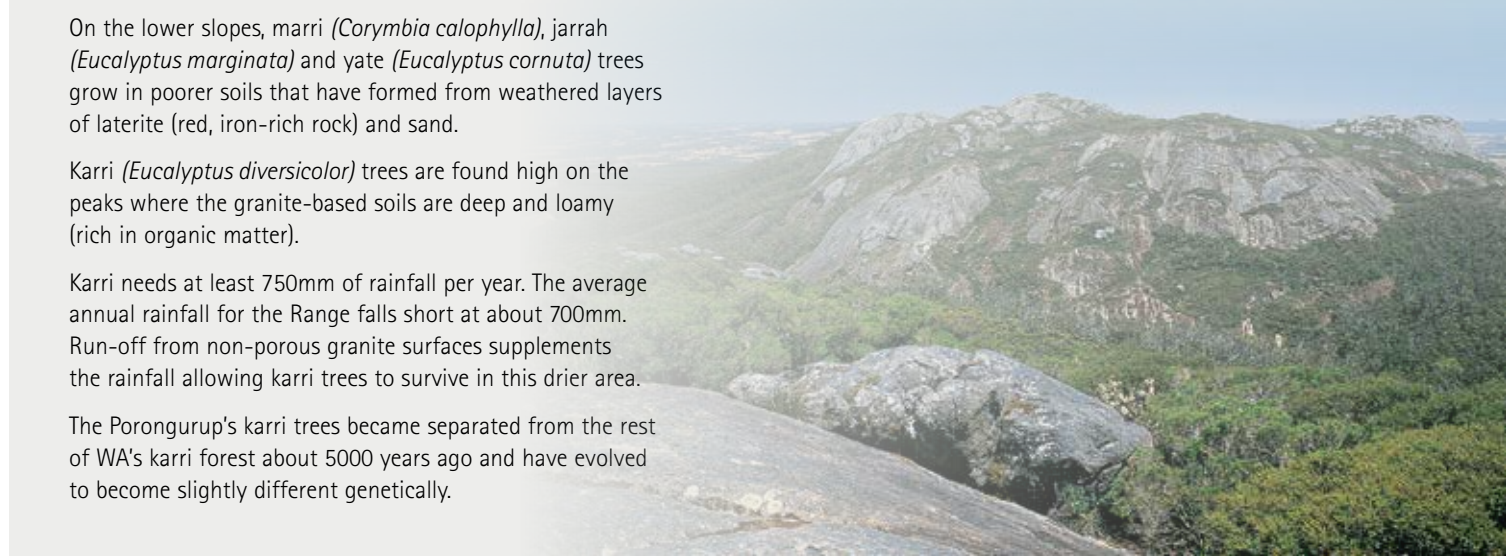


Fauna

As a biodiversity hotspot of international significance, Porongurup National Park is home to a rich array of wildlife including western grey kangaroos, brush tail wallabies, bandicoots, brushtail possums, honey possums, pygmy possums and bush rats.

Since being vested as a national park, more than 80 species of birds have been identified in the range, including the rufous tree-creeper and scarlet and yellow robins. Carnaby's cockatoo, Baudin's cockatoo, and the forest red-tailed black cockatoo – all threatened species – have also been sighted.

In moist habitats on the forest floor, frogs, echidnas, goannas and carpet pythons plus a multitude of invertebrates, including a number with links to the Gondwanan supercontinent, can be found.



Facilities and things to do

Scenic drives – Enjoy impressive views by taking a drive around the entire range using Bolganup Road, Angwin Park Road, Woodlands Road, Millinup Road, Chester Pass Road and Mount Barker-Porongurup Road. The route can be taken in either direction – 23km, mostly unsealed with steep sections.

For a shorter drive, Angwin Park Road between Bolganup Road and Woodlands Road offers outstanding views of granite outcrops and Stirling Range in the north – 5km, unsealed with steep sections.

Picnic and barbecue – Gas barbecues are provided for your use free of charge at Tree-in-the-Rock and Castle Rock picnic areas. No wood fires are allowed in the park.

Toilets – Toilets are provided in both Tree-in-the-Rock and Castle Rock picnic areas.

Access – Toilet facilities at Castle Rock and Tree-in-the-Rock picnic areas are designed for use by people with disabilities.

Camping – Camping is not provided in the park. Accommodation is available in the surrounding community.

Park entry fees

Visitors are required to pay a fee at an entry station. Your fees help to protect the park and improve visitor facilities.

Current Holiday, Annual All Parks, Annual Local or Goldstar Passes can also be used (available at Parks and Wildlife Service offices, many tourist and visitor centres in Western Australia and online at *WA Naturally* – shop.dbca.wa.gov.au).

Display your pass on your vehicle dashboard or windscreen.



Walking in Porongurup National Park

Walking is a great way to discover the park. All trails lead up hill, with the exception of Bolganup Trail. Stay on pathways to prevent damage to plants. See the 'Plan ahead and prepare' section on the back panel of this brochure.

Walk trail classifications

Parks and Wildlife walk trails are assigned a 'class' to indicate degree of difficulty. The walk classes range from Class 1 (universal access), which is suitable for wheelchairs, to Class 5, which require walkers to be fit, experienced and suitably equipped. Check trailhead signs at the start of walks for specific information.



Bolganup Trail
(Class 2, 600m loop)

Start at Tree-in-the-Rock car parking area. Walk through karri forest along a path that crosses a small creek.



Walitj Meil Walk Trail
(Class 3, 1km return)

The Walitj Meil walk is an easy to moderate interpretative loop walk. Start from the Castle Rock picnic area and follow the trail markers along the edge of the karri/marri/yate forest to a scenic view across to the Stirling Range National Park. Return to the picnic area by following the trail through the forest, all the while learning about the local plants and animals, colonial history, as well as Noongar culture.



Devils Slide Trail
(Class 4, 5km return)

Follow Wansbrough Walk from Tree-in-the-Rock for 1600m, then turn to the right. Magnificent views from the summit.



Hayward Peak and Nancy Peak Walk
(Class 4, 5.5km loop)

Start from Tree-in-the-Rock. The path climbs steeply, passing Hayward Peak, to reach the crest of the range at Nancy Peak lookout. Also leads to lookout at Morgans Peak. Return via Wansbrough Walk. Can be walked in opposite direction.



Wansbrough Walk
(Class 4, 4km one way)

Walk through karri forest along a gully between Devils Slide and Nancy Peak. Wansbrough Walk intersects with Nancy Peak Walk and Devils Slide Trail. It then continues to the park's southern boundary and becomes a road that connects with Millinup Road. Some visitors leave a second vehicle at the southern end of the pathway and start at Tree-in-the-Rock.



Granite Skywalk
(Class 5, 4km return)

Walk upslope through jarrah and marri forest to reach karri forest and the intriguing Balancing Rock.

To reach the Granite Skywalk, less than 100m further, requires scrambling over rocks and climbing a ladder. Moderate to good fitness is required, plus a head for heights.



Fighting dieback

Caused by a introduced microscopic water mould that dwells in the soil, *Phytophthora* dieback kills plants by rotting their roots.

You can help to prevent the further spread of dieback

- Clean mud or soil from footwear at the start and finish of any walks you do in natural areas.
- For regular bushwalkers, a small spray bottle of 100 per cent methylated spirits is ideal for cleaning footwear.
- Stay on designated tracks and trails and avoid wet soil conditions.
- Abide by management signs and do not enter restricted areas.

