

NATIONAL PARKS BOARD OF W.A.

REPORT BY BOTANIST ON FITZGERALD RIVER RESERVE.

Floristically the area contains a very large assemblage of species of wildflowers, and it is probably next to the Stirling Range in concentration of species.

It embraces the pick of the south coastal wildflower country, and covers the overlap of the Albany type flora and that of Esperance.

It includes a great variety of habitat types, including coastal (both sandy and rocky), sandheath, riverine, swamp and mountain (this latter of great importance floristically).

Culham Inlet is included, and this is a very important botanical area.

Within the reserve are some of the most spectacular coastal and mountain scenery to be found on the south coast, and includes very fine river gorges.

It contains formations of great geological interest and it is the fossiliferous beds composed of sponge spicules in which the river gorges have been cut.

The area is potentially one of the outstanding tourist areas of the State.

Botanically the area is highly endemic. From the present state of our knowledge there are:

7 species new to science and as yet not scientifically described.

27 other species of plants restricted in distribution to this area.

3 species of Banksia family

2 species of the Pea family

11 species of the Myrtle family

4 species of the Leschenaultia family

7 species from other families

Preservation is urgent, since the local shire has already constructed a road in to the heart of the endemic area - to the base of East Mt. Barren.

Recent reports indicate a great deal of bulldozer activity (possibly oil or mineral search) in the area.