

# LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

This PDF has been created for digital preservation. It may be used for research but is not suitable for other purposes. It may be superseded by a more current version or just be out-of-date and have no relevance to current situations.

A native land snail (*Pleuroxia ruga*)  
is found only on Cape Range.



The Lightfoot Heritage Trail is a project funded jointly by the Heritage Trails Commission and the Department of Conservation and Land Management. We hope you have enjoyed your walk.

### REMEMBER

**BE CAREFUL:** Your enjoyment and safety in natural environments is our concern, but your responsibility.

**BE CLEAN:** Put your litter in bins, or better still take it with you.

**STAY COOL:** Don't light fires.

**PROTECT ANIMALS AND PLANTS:** No firearms or pets please.

**STAY ON THE TRACK:** Follow signs and stay on the tracks marked on this brochure.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

National park rangers are always glad to help make your park visit more enjoyable and informative. Do not hesitate to contact them if you require any information or assistance.

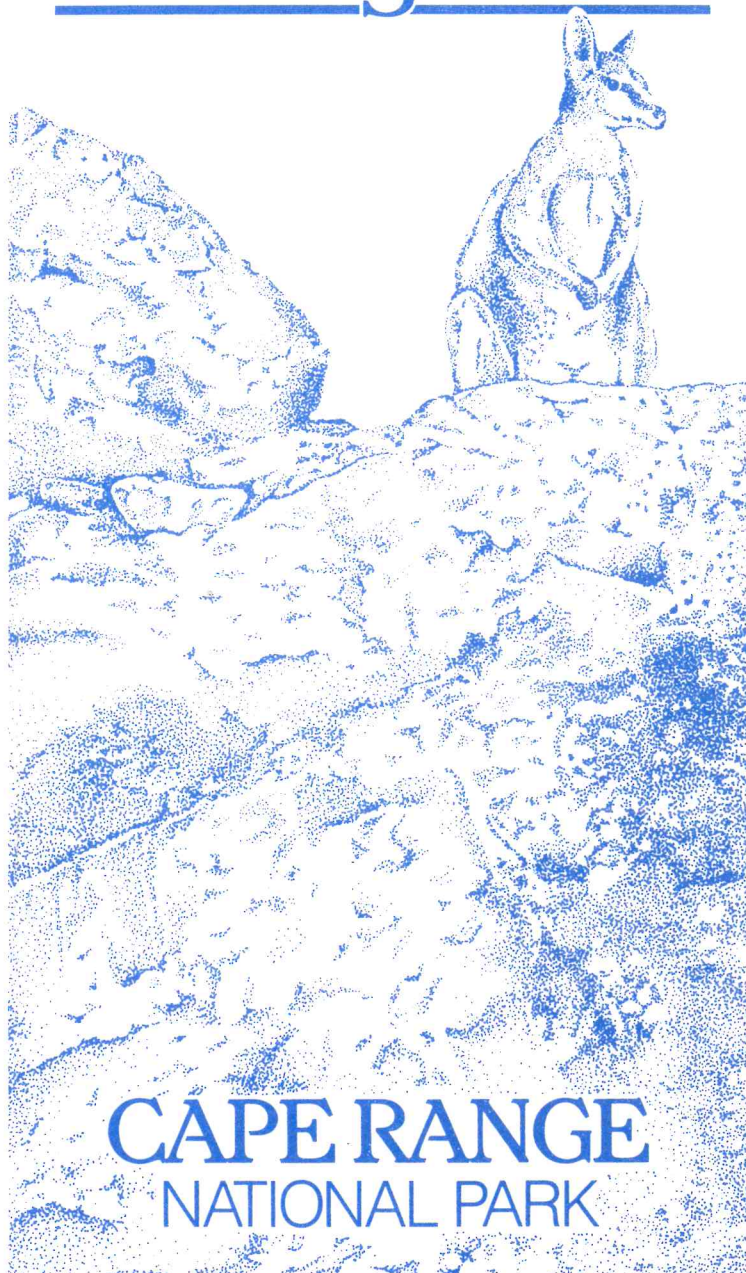
Department of Conservation and Land Management,  
PO Box 201, Exmouth, 6707 Ph: (099) 49 1676 or 49 1428

Greenough Regional Office,  
PO Box 72, Geraldton, 6530 Ph: (099) 21 5955



Department of  
CONSERVATION & LAND MANAGEMENT  
50 Hayman Road, Como, WA 6152  
P.O. Box 104, Como, WA, 6152  
TELEPHONE: (09) 367 0333

# Lightfoot Heritage Trail



## CAPE RANGE NATIONAL PARK



# Welcome to CAPE RANGE NATIONAL PARK.

Fifteen million years ago the area in which you are about to walk was flooded by a warm, shallow sea. Giant white sharks topped the food triangle over a diverse and abundant marine fauna.

The Lightfoot Heritage Trail will take you on a 7 km walk through the rugged limestone formations of Cape Range, and return you to your starting point.

Cairns of rock mark the trail. Each one is numbered, and alongside it is a marker giving the direction and approximate distance to the next cairn. Some of the cairns are named after the people who helped build the trail. Why not help future travellers, and add a rock to each cairn as you go past?

BEFORE you set off wear walking shoes or boots. The ground is very rough in places and great care needs to be taken. If it is hot, postpone your walk for a cooler day, conditions can be very harsh.

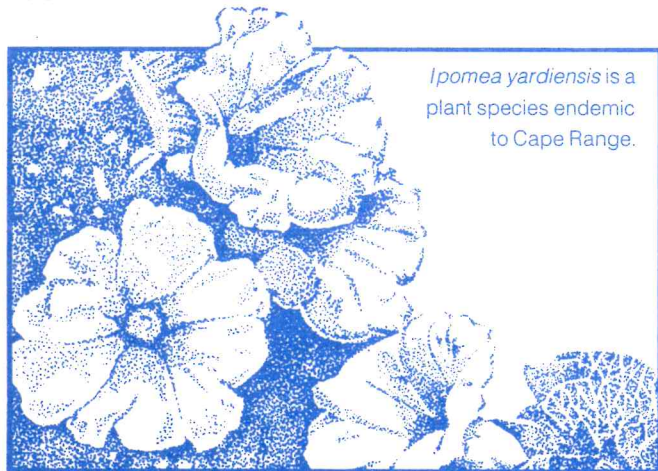
ALWAYS carry plenty to drink. The trail is clearly marked, but do not stray or you may lose it.

---

## Cairn ONE

The trail partly follows roads put in by companies exploring for oil in the 1950s. Some of these are still visible, but most have been overgrown and can only be traced from the air.

From here you can see the 'christmas tree' that caps the Cape Range No. 2 oil well. The well was drilled by WAPET in 1954, and the cap indicates that there is still oil or gas in the hole.



*Ipomea yardiensis* is a plant species endemic to Cape Range.

---

## Cairn TWO

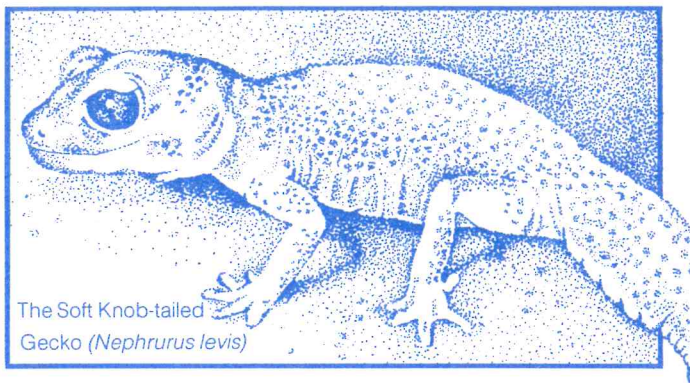
Look for signs of oil exploration near here. This was once a camp for the exploration crews.

North West Cape is part of a trough in the Earth's crust known to geologists as the Carnarvon Basin. The trough extends from Geraldton to Onslow, and most of the rocks on the Cape originally formed under water. Here the Earth's crust buckled millions of years ago, thrusting a huge fold of limestone up out of the ocean bed. This formation, known as an 'anticline', is now the Cape Range.

---

## Cairn THREE

Cape Range was probably first sighted by Europeans in 1618, when it was recorded by Claeszoom van Hillegom and Pieter Dirkszoon of the Dutch East India Company, on board the 'Zeewolf', en route to Batavia in Indonesia.



The Soft Knob-tailed  
Gecko (*Nephurus levis*)

---

## Cairn FOUR

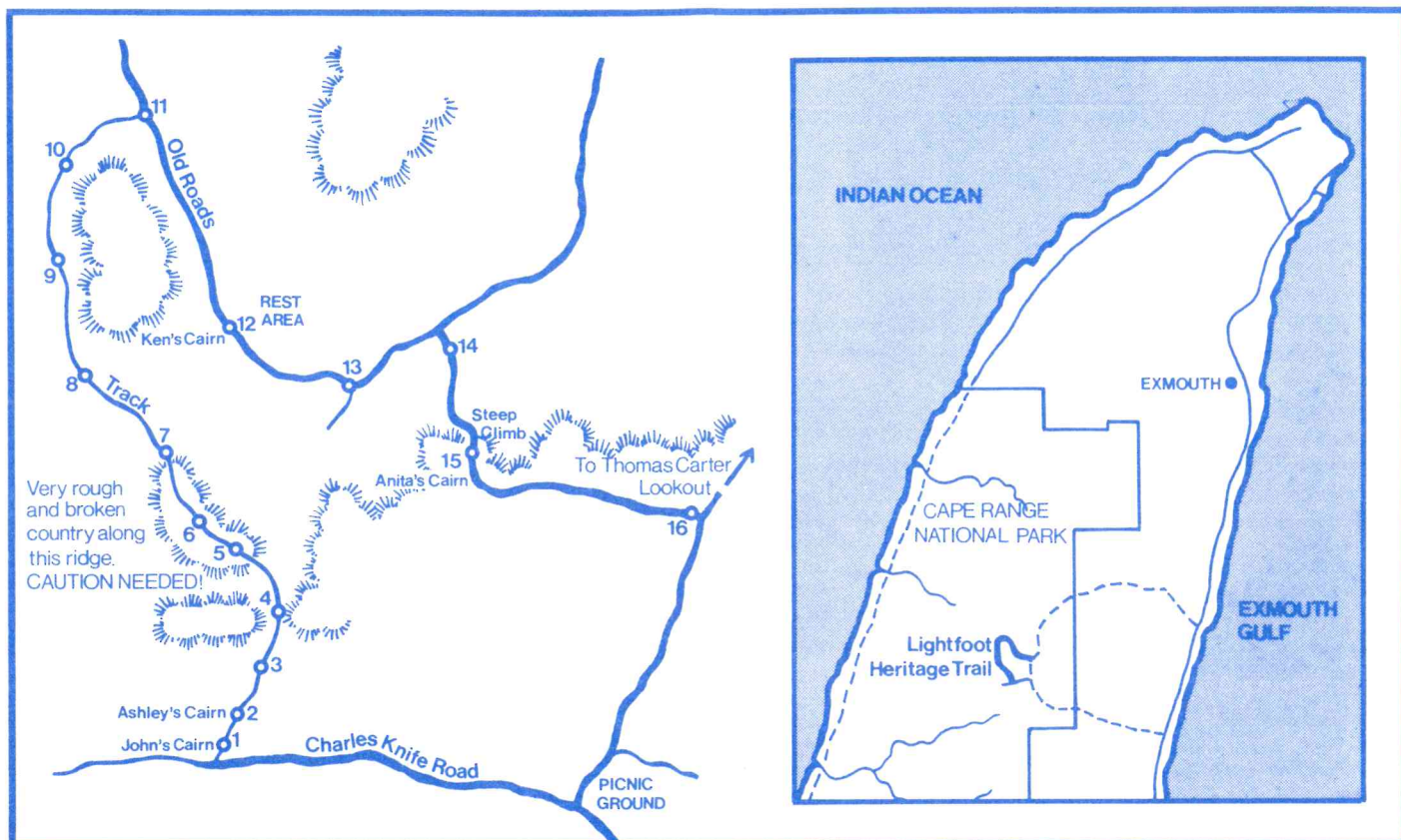
The first landing recorded on the Cape appears to be by Captain L. Jacobez of the ship 'Mauritius'. Jacobez noted that he landed on an island, and there is some mystery as to where he actually did land. Doubtless other visitors sighted and landed on or near the Cape, but it was not charted until Lieutenant King arrived in 1818 to complete the survey of Australia's coastline started by Matthew Flinders.

---

## Cairn FIVE

Part of this cairn is natural rock formation. Take great care when walking along the ridge which the trail follows. Stay on the highest ground until you reach the next main cairn, which is at the other end of the ridge. A number of small cairns placed along the top of the ridge will help guide you.





## Cairn SIX

From here you can see across a plain to a gully about 500m away. The trail leads to, and across, this gully.

'Anticlines', such as Cape Range, are often signs of oil or gas-bearing rock formations. In 1940 geological surveys of the Range indicated that there might be oil in the region, but World War II postponed further exploration.

## Cairn SEVEN

In front of you is one of numerous gullies found across the top of the Range. Some of these lead to the gorges, but others, like this one, are blind. When it rains, water runs into and along the gully, but it soaks into the porous limestone before reaching a gorge.

## Cairn EIGHT

The limestone of Cape Range is honey-combed with sink-holes and caves. Many of the caves contain saline waters, which at some stage have been invaded by marine creatures. These animals have adapted to a life in complete darkness, and have become true troglodytes: colourless and blind. One species of fish, an eel, and two species of shrimp are likely to appear in the bottom of any newly-dug well in the flanks of the range.

## Cairn NINE

WAPET drilled the first wells into Rough Range at the base of the Cape in 1953. Their first well struck oil, but seven other wells drilled nearby were dry. They then moved exploration to Cape Range, and No. 2 well, which you passed at the start of this trail, showed gas, but not in commercial quantities. In 1958 exploration in the area was terminated.

---

## Cairn TEN

---

The trail now leads across a flood plain. Here the ground is not as porous and with heavy rain this whole area is covered with water. The water however quickly disappears, although the ground may be very soft and boggy for some time.

---

## Cairn ELEVEN

---

Back to the road again. From here on you are on old roads made during the oil exploration days. These roads were made throughout the ranges and indicate how important it was considered to drill in exactly the right spot.

No matter how rough the going, the road was constructed so that the big trucks could haul in a whole drill rig, and when the job was finished, haul it out again. Many subsidiary roads, of which this is one, were bashed through the bush for exploration purposes and simply fade out.

---

## Cairn TWELVE

---

A place to rest. In the grove of trees near this cairn are a number of seats. Take a rest and a chance to look at the rugged scenery. Please remember that this area is not visited by the rubbish collector. Look after your national park by carrying your rubbish to the next bin.

---

## Cairn THIRTEEN

---

Evidence of the long period of time that the Cape was under the sea can be found even on the highest points of the range. Look for fossilized shell and coral as you walk. In places the fossil teeth of giant white sharks have been found.

---

## Cairn FOURTEEN

---

Take this right turn. A few hundred metres ahead you will encounter a fairly steep ascent, but don't despair! You are now about half way along the trail.

---

## Cairn FIFTEEN

---

### THE VIEW FROM THE CAIRN

Stand near the cairn and look north. You are looking across the flat country you have just walked over. If the day is clear you will be able to see the communications towers at the tip of N.W. Cape and the water on both sides of the Cape. Just below you and to your left is the track you have just walked

along, (1) on the diagram.

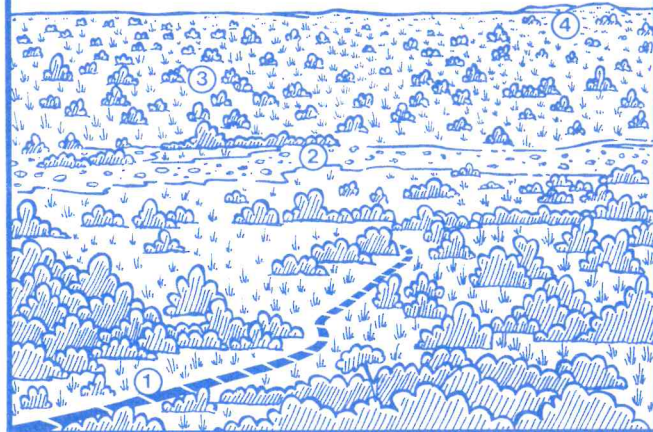
(2) Further out is the clay pan which holds water after rain. This appears as a brownish patch.

(3) Behind this lies the flat looking country, which is in fact intersected with shallow gullies and covered with flat hills which make it very difficult to travel across.

(4) On the horizon lie some flat hills. Straight out and slightly to the east is a quite noticeable hill. The broken ground in front of this hill is approximately where Shot Hole Canyon ends.

To the left of the diagram is another quite prominent hill. From here the canyon runs west to the Indian Ocean. This formation with the two way slope is part of the anticline which favours the trapping of oil and gas, and which led to the early oil exploration in this region.

The view from Cairn Fifteen.



---

## Cairn SIXTEEN

---

Nearly back again! Turn North and you will finish up at the Thomas Carter Lookout. Turn South and you arrive back at the picnic ground and rest area. From here it is only a few hundred metres back to the oil well where you started.

In 1899 Thomas Carter leased about 60,000 ha of land near Point Cloates. His land incorporated almost all the Cape and his name is now given to the lookout.