

LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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REMEMBER

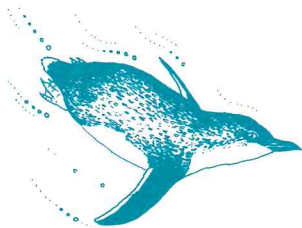
BE CAREFUL: Stay on paths and help prevent erosion. Your safety in natural areas is our concern, but your responsibility.

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

BE COOL: Light fires only in fireplaces provided. Bring your portable gas stove.

PROTECT ANIMALS AND PLANTS: Help conserve the wildlife by causing as little disturbance as possible, particularly near nesting seabirds. Pets are not permitted on the Island.

COME BACK: Conserve fish numbers by only taking what you need.



FURTHER INFORMATION

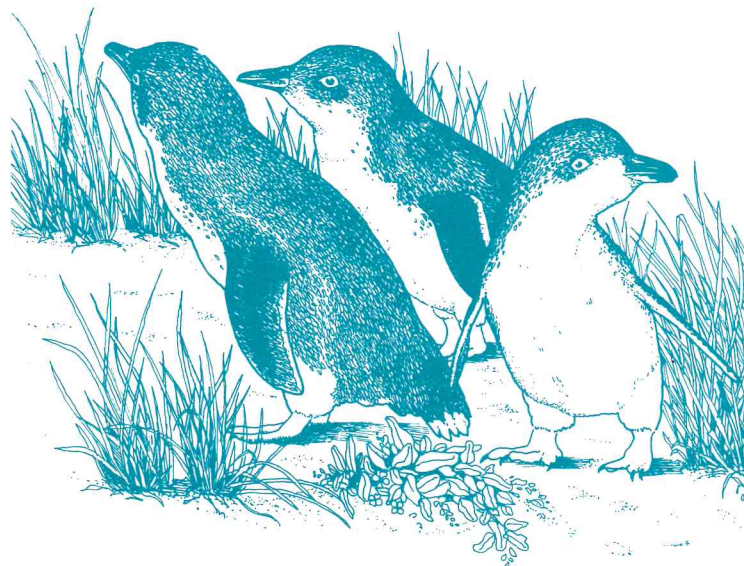
CALM officers regularly patrol the Island. Don't hesitate to contact them if you need information or assistance

Department of Conservation and Land Management

Metropolitan Region
5 The Esplanade, Mt Pleasant 6153.
(09) 364 0777

State Headquarters
50 Hayman Road, Como, W.A. 6152
(09) 367 0333.

PENGUIN ISLAND



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT W.A.

Penguin Island is the largest in a string of small limestone islands that run from Cape Peron to the southern point of Warnbro Sound.

Lying less than one kilometre offshore, these islands are among the most valuable seabird sanctuaries in the metropolitan area.

A large part of Penguin island is a wildlife sanctuary, and closed to the public, but picnic areas and beaches as shown on the map in this brochure are available for your enjoyment. When visiting the island help protect the environment and prevent erosion by keeping to the recreation areas and paths provided.

The reserve is managed by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM).

Access is by boat, or via a ferry which leaves from Mersey Point on the mainland. At the time of publication the ferry departs every hour on the hour from 10 am on weekdays, and from 9 am on weekends and public holidays.

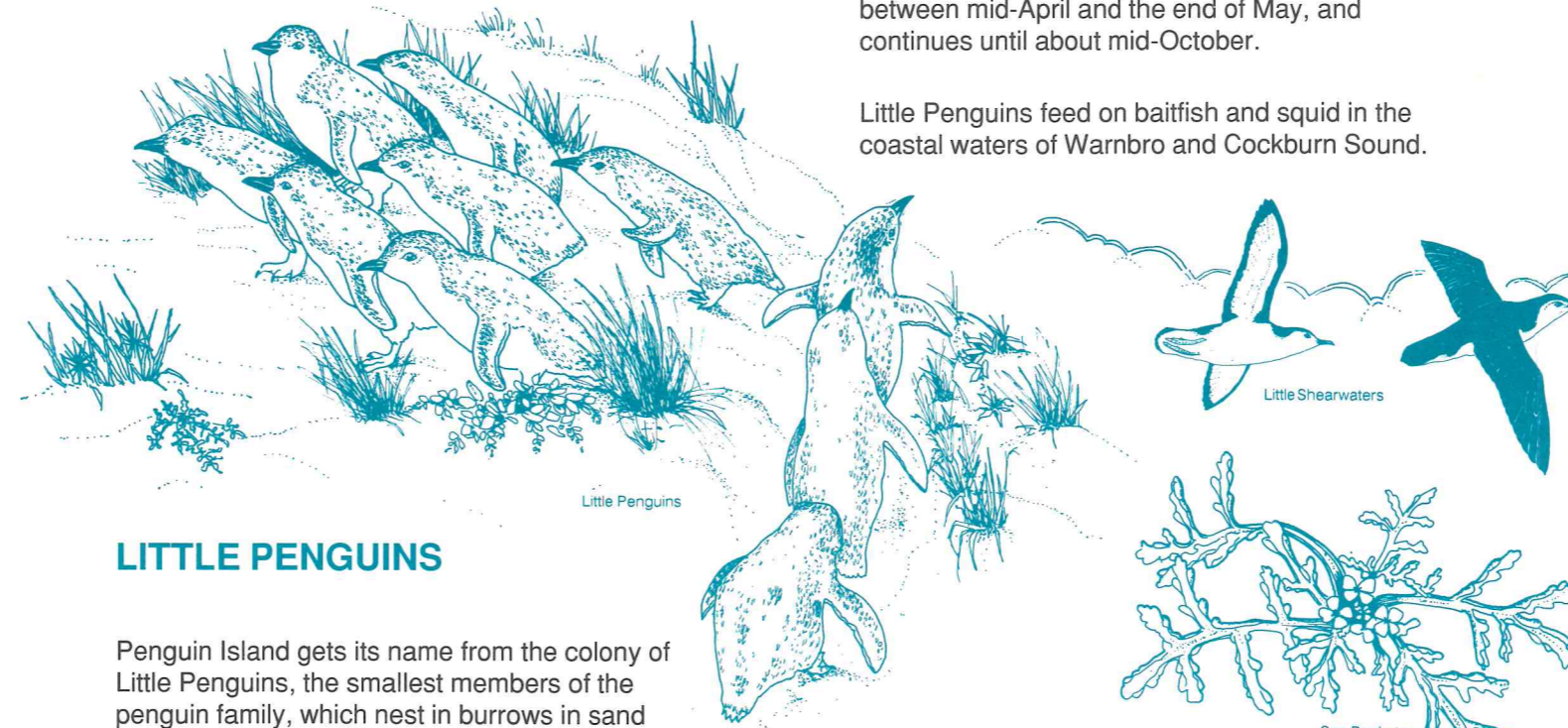
Trying to walk to the island across the sandbar from the mainland is extremely dangerous. Tides and unpredictable currents have swept away and drowned a number of people attempting this crossing.

ISLAND HISTORY

The first known occupant of Penguin Island was Seaforth McKenzie, an eccentric mining engineer, who lived in hollowed-out limestone caves on the island between 1918 and 1926.

Since 1935 a variety of organizations have governed the Island for many different uses. In 1966 Penguin Island was gazetted as an 'A' class reserve and vested in the National Parks Authority.

The National Parks Authority became part of the Department of Conservation and Land Management in 1985, and the island is now managed as a reserve for the conservation of flora and fauna, and for public recreation.



Little Penguins

LITTLE PENGUINS

Penguin Island gets its name from the colony of Little Penguins, the smallest members of the penguin family, which nest in burrows in sand dunes, under dense bush, and in the crevices or caverns of the limestone rock.

This is the largest colony of Little Penguins in W.A., and is estimated to contain 700 breeding pairs. The penguins are nocturnal and make their landfall at Penguin Island in small flocks after sunset.

Penguins are the most specialised of all birds for life in a marine environment. Their feathers have evolved into a dense covering of pin-like structures which resist water and maintain the bird's streamlined contours, while ancestral wings have been modified to form flippers for underwater propulsion.

The number of penguins that comes ashore begins to increase in early March, and the onset of courtship signals the start of the breeding season.

Little Penguins normally lay a clutch of two eggs, which are incubated by both parents over a period of about 35 days. Laying may begin any time between mid-April and the end of May, and continues until about mid-October.

Little Penguins feed on baitfish and squid in the coastal waters of Warnbro and Cockburn Sound.

OTHER INHABITANTS

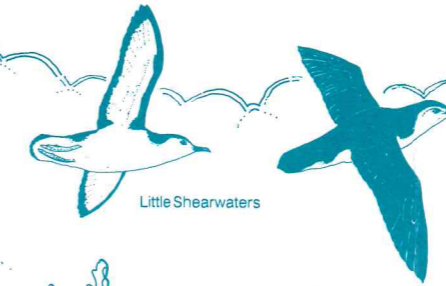
The plant communities of Penguin Island are adapted to a harsh coastal environment and provide the habitats needed by breeding colonies of seabirds.

On the 12.5 ha of the Island more than 30 species of birds have been observed. Seabirds on the Island include the Little Penguin, Silver Gull, Little Shearwater, Pied Oystercatcher, and Little Pied Cormorant, and several terrestrial species such as the Little Eagle, Singing Honeyeater, and Welcome Swallow.

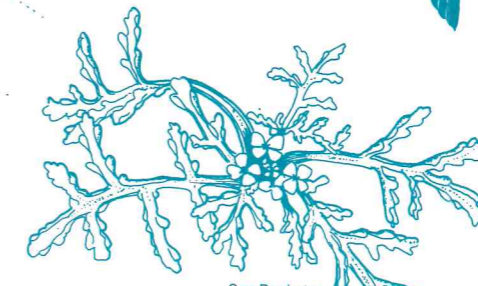
Up to several hundreds pairs of Bridled Terns, a tropical species, migrate to the islands of Shoalwater Bay arriving in Spring to breed. They have been recorded breeding on Penguin Island. The bird leaves the area in March to return to the tropics.

Ground covers such as sea rockets (*Cakile maritima*) cover the coastal dunes, anchoring the sand against erosion and providing cover for the Island's four species of reptiles and other small creatures. On the leeward slopes of the Island's central dunes a low woodland of coastal wattle (*Acacia rostellifera*) grows to 2.5 m high.

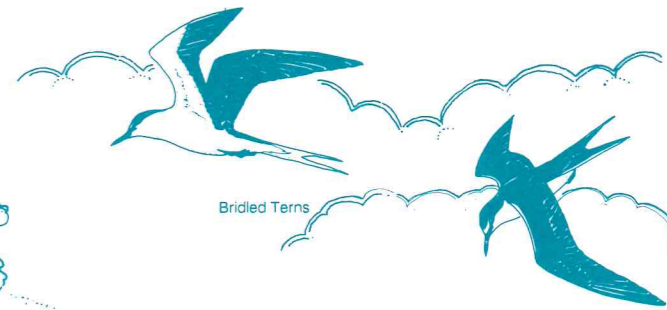
Although no native species of mammals live on the island, Australian Sea-lions which occupy nearby Seal Island occasionally visit the beaches.



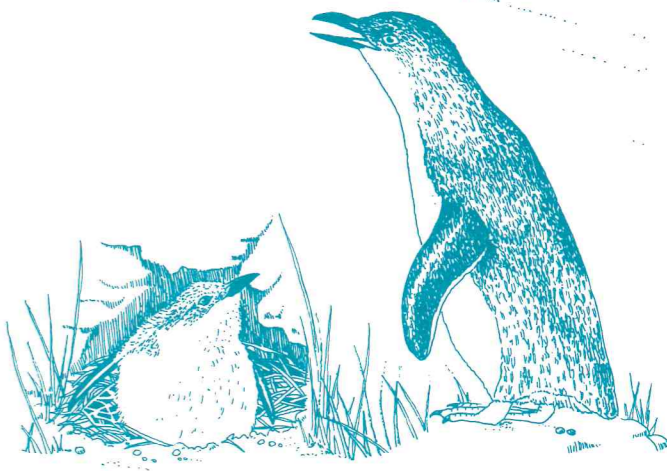
Little Shearwaters

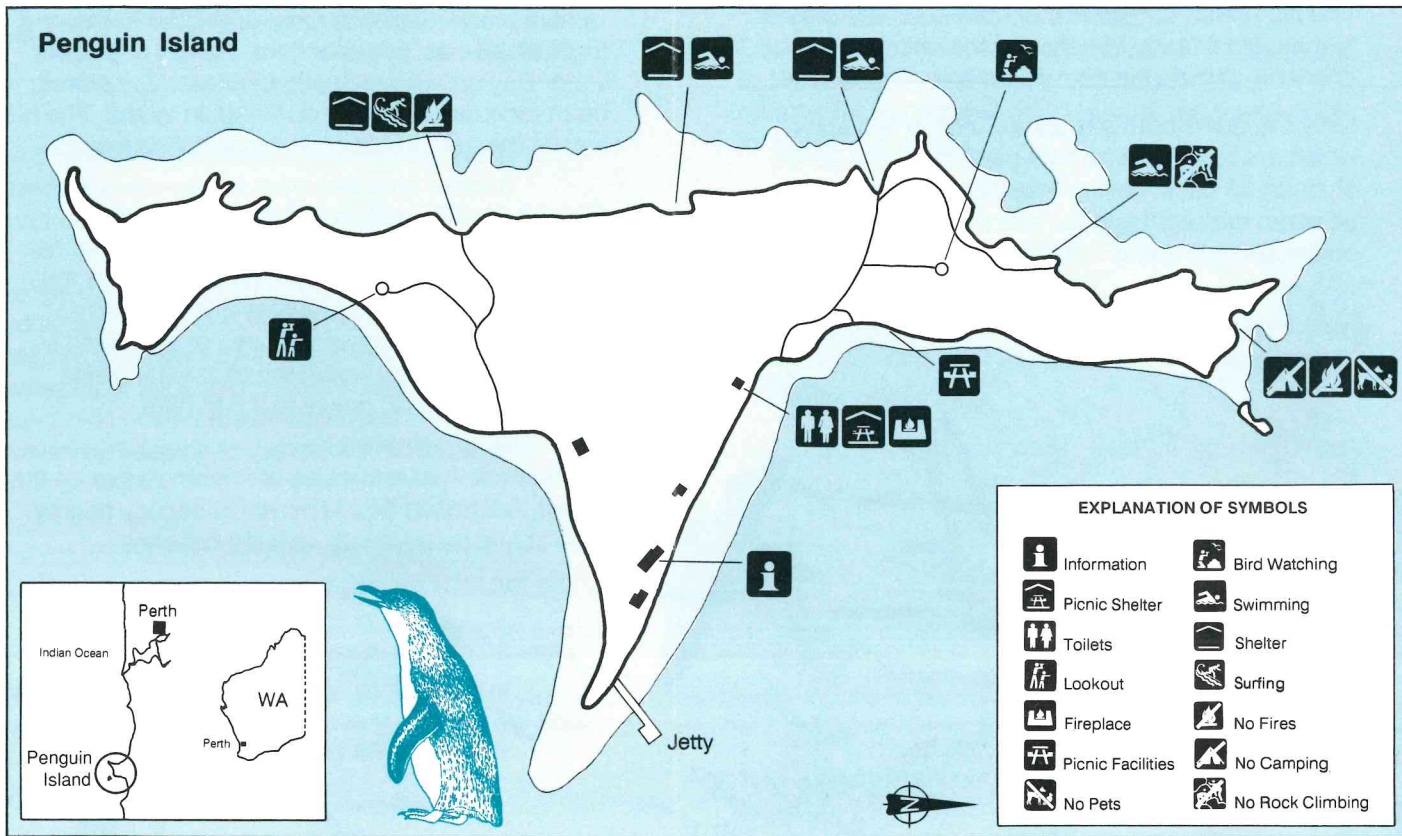


Sea Rockets



Bridled Terns





THINGS TO SEE AND DO



Boating

Public boat ramps are available at Safety Bay. Launch your boats here to visit the Island.



Fishing

You are welcome to line-fish from the Island and in the surrounding waters. Fisheries regulations about size and bag limits apply in the reserve. See Department of Fisheries for details if in doubt.



Picnics

Barbecues, wood, fresh water and toilets are provided on the Island for your outing. Please make sure your fire is out before leaving. See map for locations.



Diving

The reefs and seagrass beds that surround Penguin Island form habitats for a great variety of marine life. Examine the world undersea at first hand by diving or snorkelling. Look but don't take in the conservation reserve. Spearguns and gidgies are not permitted on these reserves.



Surfing and Wind-surfing

Ideal conditions exist on the mainland side of Penguin Island for wind-surfing, and good surfing conditions exist on the western side of the Island which is open to the ocean.

