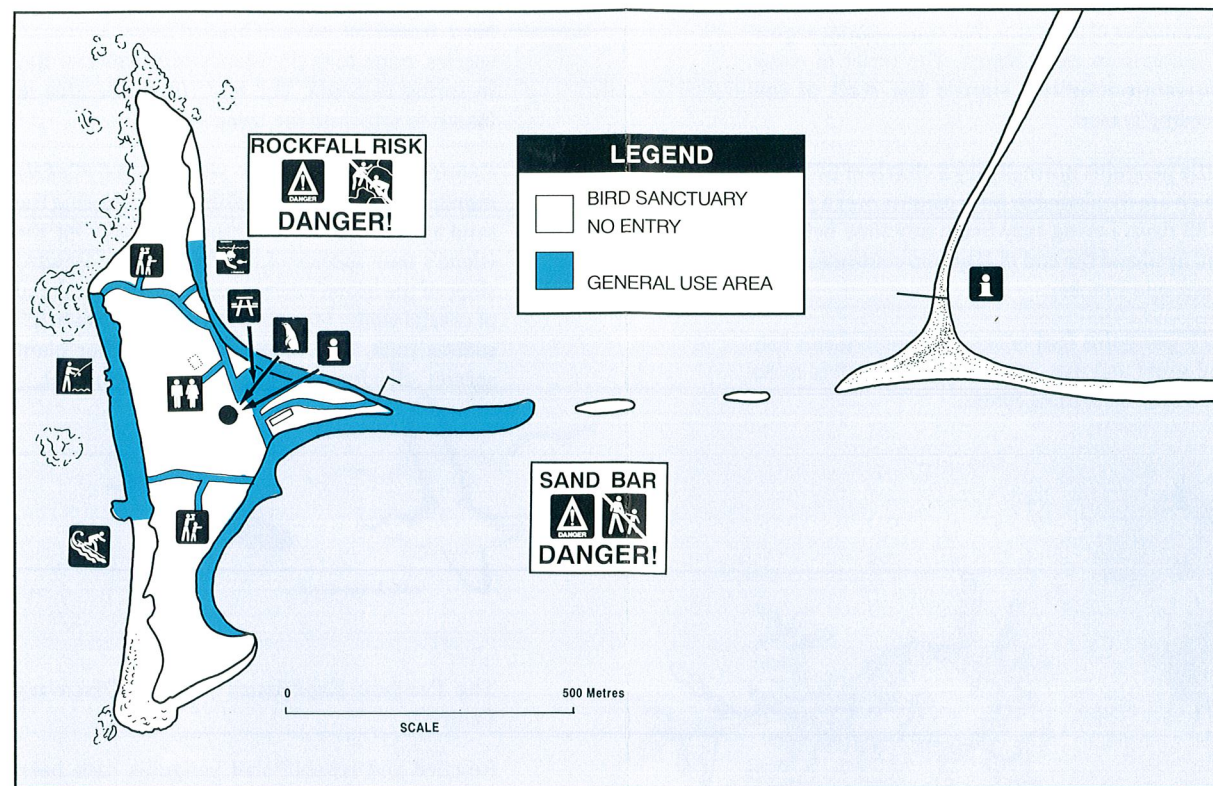


LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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WHAT TO SEE AND DO

Picnics - There are no barbecue or kiosk facilities available on Penguin Island. Gas or spirit cooking appliances are not permitted. Toilets, picnic tables, shelters and fresh water are available. Check the map for locations.

Fishing - You are welcome to line fish from the general use areas of the island and in the surrounding waters, but please be considerate of other visitors. Fisheries bag and size regulations apply. Consult the staff or volunteers at the Discovery Centre or the Fisheries Department for further information. Spearguns and gidgees are not permitted on the island or in the waters that surround it.

Diving - The reefs and seagrass beds around the island form habitats for a great variety of marine life. Examine the undersea world first-hand by diving or snorkelling. Please allow others the same experience: do not disturb the marine environment. Spearguns and gidgees are not permitted on the island or in the waters that surround it.

Surfing and windsurfing - Ideal windsurfing conditions exist in the waters of the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park. The west side of the island can produce good surfing. But please take care.

Boating - Please anchor your boat off the beach at Penguin Island, and leave the jetty clear for ferries and management vessels.

CARING FOR PENGUIN ISLAND

BE CAREFUL - Stay on board walks, walk trails and sandy beaches. Limestone cliffs, caves and overhangs may be unstable and prone to collapse. Obey warning signs and do not enter these areas. Crossing the sand bar to the island on foot can be extremely dangerous as conditions can change rapidly. Please take the ferry.

BE CLEAN - Please take your litter home with you when you leave.

BE CARING - Please do not disturb plants and wildlife. Feeding wildlife can alter their natural instincts and spread disease.

BE COURTEOUS - Be sure your activities do not spoil someone else's enjoyment of the island.

COME BACK: Come back with your children and friends to enjoy this magnificent environment.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For information on ferry and tour services please contact Rockingham Sea Tours.

Telephone: (08) 9528 2004

CALM officers regularly patrol Penguin Island and the other islands and waters of the marine park. Volunteers are on duty in the Discovery Centre. They will be pleased to answer any questions you have. For further information, contact:

Marine and Coastal District
Department of Conservation and Land Management
1st Floor 47 Henry Street Fremantle WA
Telephone: (08) 9432 5111

Department of Conservation and Land Management
50 Hayman Road Como
Telephone: (08) 9334 0333

4335-1097-6M



PENGUIN ISLAND



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND LAND MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Situated in the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park just 42 kilometres from the heart of Perth, Penguin Island is truly a remarkable place to visit. The island boasts spectacular coastal scenery and a diversity of wildlife that will amaze visitors. Home to the largest colony of little penguins on the west coast, the island provides a modern educational and interpretive centre, giving visitors a chance to view at close range these endearing and elusive birds. The significance of the island as a sea-bird breeding site creates a focus for wildlife and scientific research.

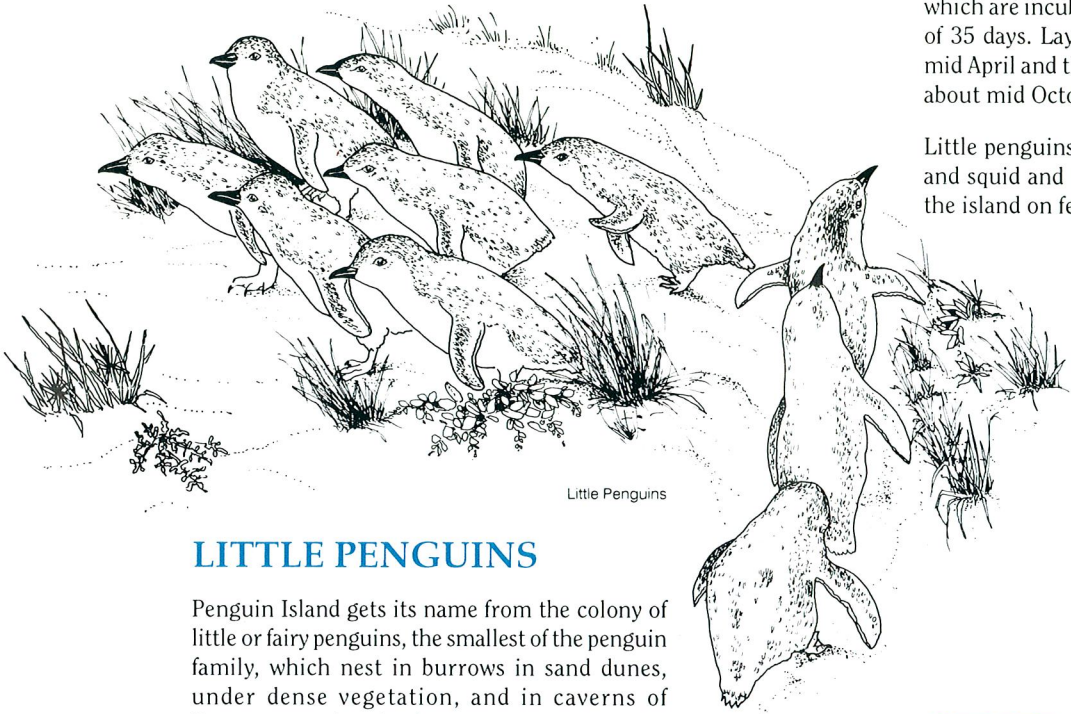
A variety of recreational opportunities and natural history attractions bring visitors of all ages to the island. Visitors arrive by ferry, or as part of a boat tour of the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park. Ferries and boat tours depart from Mersey Point on the mainland adjacent to the island.

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) has progressively undertaken work to enhance the natural environment and provide, essential facilities to make it one of the State's premier ecologically sustainable tourism destinations.

HISTORY

The first known occupant of Penguin Island was Seaforth McKenzie who lived in a shack he called his manor and in hollowed out limestone caves on the island. McKenzie used the island extensively between 1918 and 1926, encouraging holiday makers who camped on the beach or in the roughly furnished caves. Since 1935 a variety of organisations have managed the island for a variety of uses. In 1966 Penguin Island was gazetted as an A Class reserve and vested in the National Parks Authority. Part of the island was leased to a private company that operated a number of small shacks as a holiday resort.

The National Parks Authority became part of CALM in 1985 and in 1987 CALM negotiated the surrender of the private lease. CALM now manages the island as a conservation park for its plants and animals, and for public recreation.



Little Penguins

LITTLE PENGUINS

Penguin Island gets its name from the colony of little or fairy penguins, the smallest of the penguin family, which nest in burrows in sand dunes, under dense vegetation, and in caverns of limestone on the island.

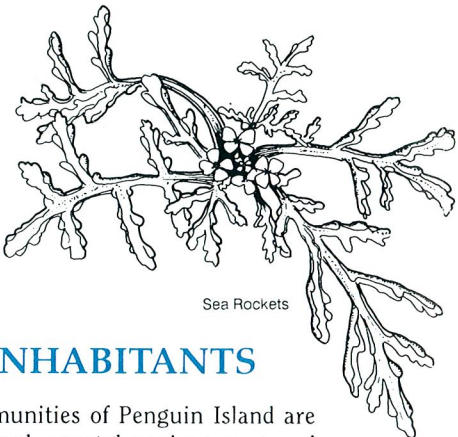
This is the largest colony of little penguins in WA and is estimated to contain 500 to 700 breeding pairs. The penguins are nocturnal on land, and make their landfall at Penguin Island in small flocks after sunset.

Penguins are the most specialised of all birds for life in the marine environment. Their feathers have evolved into a dense covering of pin-like structures that resist water and maintain the birds streamlined contours, while ancestral wings have developed into flippers for underwater propulsion.

The number of penguins that come ashore begins to increase in early March. The onset of noisy courtship activities 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 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 small-schooling bait fish and squid and may range many kilometres from the island on feeding forays.



Sea Rockets

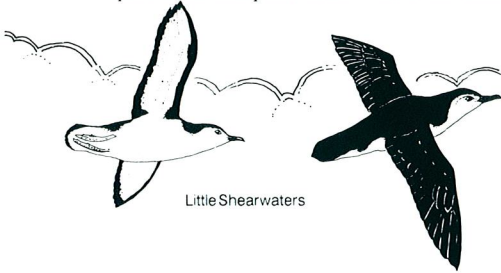
OTHER INHABITANTS

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 bird's have been observed. Seabirds breeding on the island include the little penguin, silver gull, little shearwater, little pied cormorant and bridled tern. Terrestrial species include the little eagle, singing honeyeater, welcome swallow and buff-banded landrail,

More than 1200 pairs of bridled terns, a tropical species, migrate to the islands of Shoalwater Bay in spring to breed. The birds leave 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. On the leeward slope of the island's central dunes a low woodland of coastal wattle (*Acacia rostellifera*) grows to 2.5 metres high. The island boasts 73 other plant species all adapted to this harsh environment.



Little Shearwaters

The Penguin Experience - Island Discovery Centre

Rescued and rehabilitated penguins have been placed in a viewing enclosure in the heart of the discovery centre. The enclosure gives visitors a superb opportunity to see these animals, which are normally quite secretive and rarely seen in the wild. Penguins are regularly fed at the centre throughout the day. The glass walls to the pool provide an unrestricted underwater view of these delightful birds. Information panels and presentations let visitors discover the intriguing life of Penguin Island's little penguins. The verandah of the discovery centre boasts a touch-table display to challenge the mind, and information panels to help you plan your day on the island and learn more about its inhabitants and history. Volunteers are on duty at the centre from spring to autumn, to answer any questions you have about the island and its inhabitants. Guided tours are sometimes offered.