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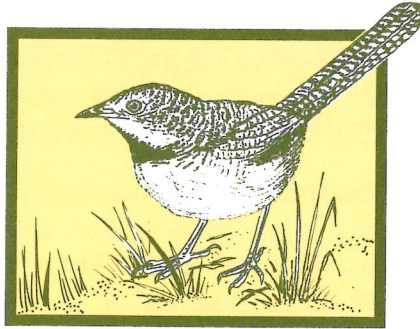
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WALPOLE-NORNALUP NATIONAL PARK

the key issues



*A Summary of the
Draft Management Plan*



Department of Conservation and Land Management
July 1990

PAM00766

Walpole-Nornalup National Park Draft Management Plan

Copies of the Walpole-Nornalup National Park Draft Management Plan are available from the following CALM offices:

Operations Headquarters
50 Hayman Road
Como 6152
Phone (09) 367 0333 Fax 367 0466

Southern Forest Region
Brain Street
Manjimup 6258
Phone (097) 711988 Fax 712855

Walpole District Office
South Western Highway
Walpole 6398
Phone (098) 401027 Fax 401251

Copies of the draft plan can be viewed at the Denmark and Manjimup Shire council offices and at local libraries.

For further information contact Rod Annear on (098) 401027.

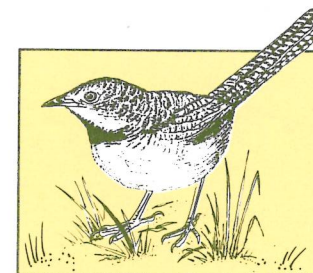
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We would like to know what you think about the proposals in the Draft Management Plan.

Why not take the opportunity to express your views or provide information in a submission? You may choose to make a joint submission with others.

Guidelines for making submissions are available at the above CALM offices.

the key issues



Values of Walpole-Nornalup National Park

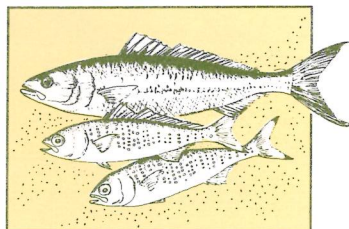
Walpole-Nornalup National Park is located on the south coast of Western Australia, surrounding the towns of Walpole, Nornalup and Peaceful Bay. It covers an area of 18,390 ha.

The Park has diverse plant and animal communities and includes a number of native plants that are restricted to high rainfall areas. It is particularly rich in orchids, has four species of eucalypts only found in the Walpole area, including the large Tingle and Red-flowering Gum, and has 30 as yet unnamed plant species, some of which have not been collected elsewhere.

Of the 21 species of mammals found in the Park, two are gazetted as rare as are four of the 109 species of birds recorded there. One species of frog is confined to a 12 km radius of Walpole.

The Park has spectacular landscapes encompassing estuaries, forested hills dissected by rivers, extensive areas where there is little or no evidence of human activity, and is the only place in Western Australia where the forest meets the coast.

Walpole-Nornalup National Park provides a range of activities for tourists and visitors that will be expanded with the inclusion into the Park of the Valley of the Giants, a major south-west forest attraction.



Management Goals for the Park

CONSERVATION

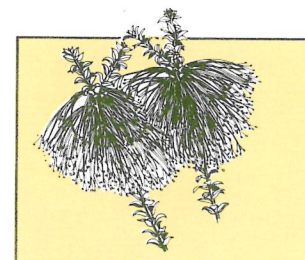
Conserve the Park's plants and animals and the ecological processes that sustain them, and protect the Park's unique landscape.

RECREATION

Ensure that the recreational requirements of visitors to the Park are met and that they are compatible with the conservation goals.

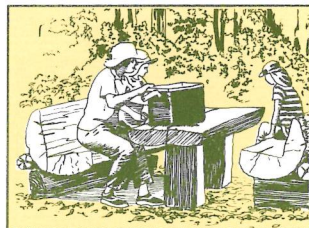
EDUCATION

Foster a sense of community stewardship in the Park through its conservation, landscape, recreation, cultural and historic values.



Key Issues

- ❖ Prevent the further introduction or spread of dieback or any other plant diseases.
- ❖ Protect native fauna, particularly from predation by foxes and cats.
- ❖ Secure the Park and its plants and animals, adjacent private properties and nearby towns from uncontrolled fires.
- ❖ Develop management strategies to cater for expected increases in visitors to the Park especially to popular recreation sites like the Valley of the Giants.
- ❖ Protect the coastal dunes and dune vegetation from disease and degradation, while maintaining access to the coast.



Proposed Management Strategies

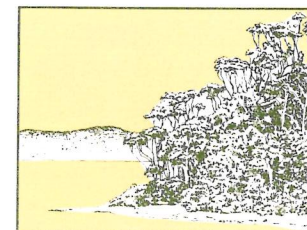
PARK ZONES

Management zones are proposed to protect the Park's environment, particularly sensitive areas, and also meet the needs of Park visitors in an equitable way, to provide the largest possible range of activities and minimise conflicts. The zoning plan proposed for Walpole-Nornalup National Park reflects detailed study of the Park's vegetation, particularly the identification of species vulnerable to dieback disease and areas susceptible to erosion.

The proposed zones are:

Special Conservation - These zones contain plant and animal communities that require careful management and protection. Access will not be encouraged although some activities that are compatible with the zone's values may be acceptable. Six areas in the Park have been proposed as special conservation.

Wilderness - An area of about 4500 ha is designated wilderness. Vehicles are not permitted in this zone and facilities will not be provided. The area will be managed so that its "wilderness quality", that is its remoteness and solitude, will be retained.



Natural Environment - It is proposed to retain extensive areas of the Park in their natural state. Vehicle access to these areas will be limited and facilities and activities will be kept to a minimum. Walk trails will be provided in some areas.

Recreation - Two types of recreation zones are proposed. One is the moderate-use areas that are accessible to 2WD vehicles and have basic facilities and walk trails. The other is the high-use areas that are accessible to all traffic including tourist buses and caravans. Facilities will include barbecue sites, toilets, information shelters and walk trails.



Proposed Natural Environment Strategies

FLORA

For its size Walpole-Nornalup National Park is one of the richest areas for plants in Western Australia. Of its 640 species of plants, 38 are geographically restricted to the area, and two are gazetted as rare.

The plan recommends that populations of all native species be protected from disease and unsuitable fire regimes, that areas of the Park be surveyed before any development is undertaken, and that key species are protected. The plan also recommends that information on the Park's flora be provided to users, and that parking be provided on some roads where the wildflowers can be viewed.

FAUNA

Walpole-Nornalup National Park is rich in wildlife although the number of species of mammals found in the Park has declined since European settlement. All native animals in the Park are protected. The plan given priority to the protection of particular mammals

such as the Chuditch, Common Ring-tailed Possum, and Honey Possum, which are declining in numbers, and the rare and endangered Noisy Scrub-bird and Bristlebird.

The plan also recommends the re-introduction of animals that were once found in the Park.

DIEBACK DISEASE

Dieback disease is a major concern in Walpole-Nornalup National Park and has been found in coastal areas in the Park, including at Peaceful Bay, along Conspicuous and Ficifolia roads and Long Point track, and in the Nuyts Wilderness area. Most infections occur along roads and tracks. Dieback is spread by vehicle and foot.

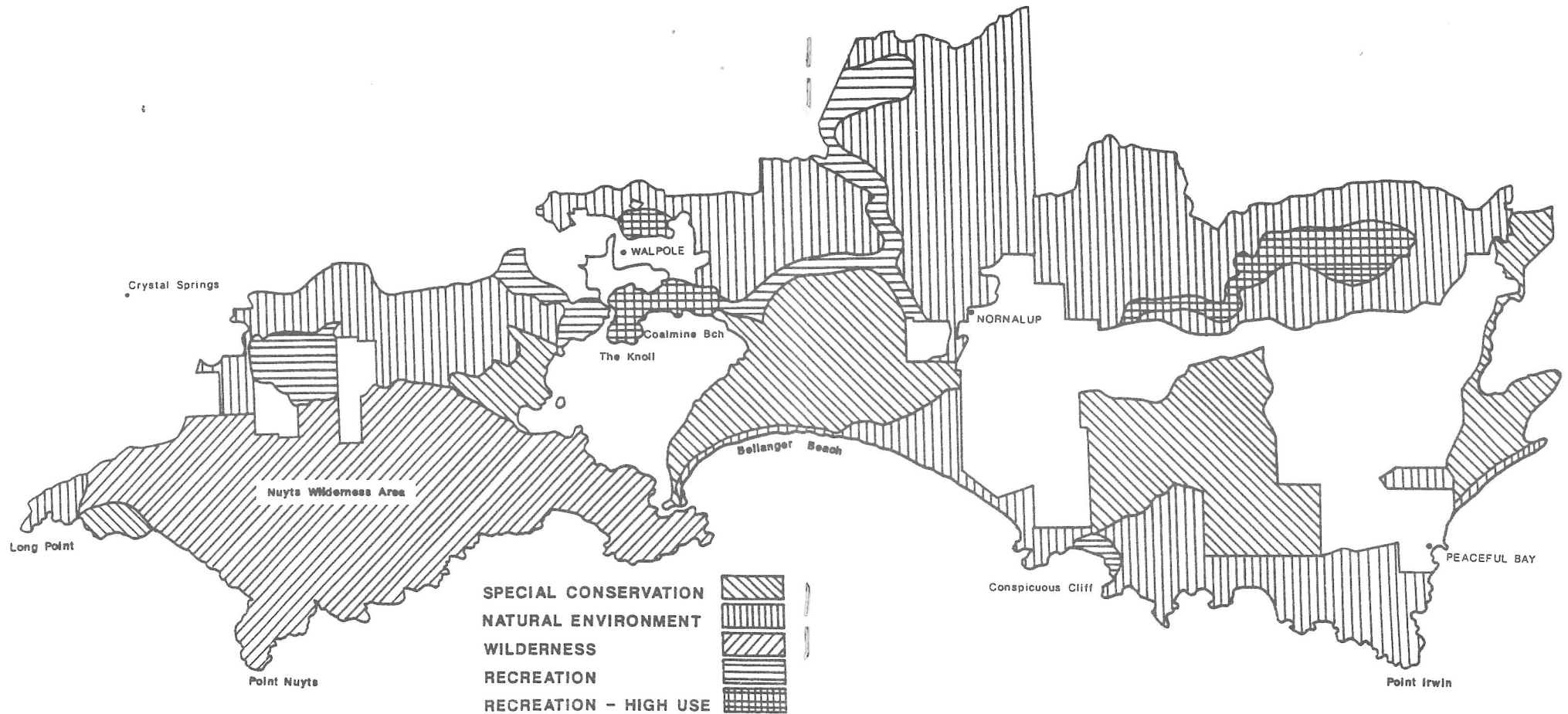
The draft plan recommends that dieback surveys of the Park continue, so that areas free of the disease can be identified and given priority for protection. It also proposes a study of susceptible plant species, starting with the rare and priority species, be undertaken.

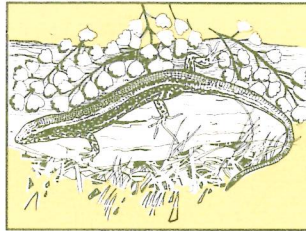
Roads and tracks that pass through infected areas or high risk areas will be re-developed or closed. Roads may be temporarily closed when the risk of spread of disease is high, like after summer rainfall. An education program will be undertaken to inform Park visitors about dieback and the need to stay on well-formed roads. Vehicle washdown facilities may be provided, when appropriate.

WEEDS

Sixty species of introduced plants have been found in Walpole-Nornalup National Park. Some are a potential threat. The draft

PROPOSED PARK ZONES





management plan recommends the identification and mapping of locations of weeds, and that controls and eradication programs based on the area's importance be continued.

FERAL ANIMALS

Feral animals, such as foxes, cats and rabbits, are a major concern in the Park. The long-term survival of some native species requires the control of feral animals. Rabbit control is needed to control degradation, particularly in coastal areas.

The plan proposes increased control and monitoring of feral animals, close liaison with the Agricultural Protection Board, and the investigation of cheaper, more efficient means of control.

FIRE

Wildfires pose a major threat to Walpole-Nornalup National Park, surrounding towns and private property. To protect life, property and conservation values and to manage natural ecosystems, it is proposed that a system of three different fire regimes be applied in the Park.

NO PLANNED BURN REGIMES

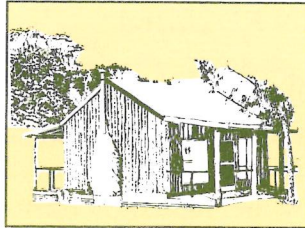
Prescribed burning will not be carried out in parts of the Park during the life of the management plan. These areas are located away from possible fire sources, such as roads and recreation sites, and will be protected by fuel reduction burning of adjacent areas.

INTERMEDIATE FREQUENCY REGIME

Intermediate frequency burns that aim to achieve ecological diversity will be carried out every 10 to 20 years. Parts of these areas may be burnt earlier if they are considered a major fire threat to other values.

FUEL REDUCTION BURNS

Fuel reduction will be carried out to provide buffers and minimise the threat of wildfires to private property, towns and recreation facilities. A prescribed burning program will be undertaken in specified areas every six to eight years depending on the growth of vegetation.



Proposed Recreation Management Strategies

Walpole-Nornalup National Park was one of the first national parks established in Western Australia. Its landscape, plants and animals are unique to the south-west, and visitors have long admired the Park's tranquillity, timelessness, beauty and wildness.

Recreation activities that are compatible with conserving the Park's values will be encouraged. Activities that have an adverse effect on those values will be encouraged in areas outside the Park that are able to sustain them. Areas within the Park that have been degraded because of recreation activities will be redesigned and rehabilitated.

ACCESS

A range of different standards of roads and tracks will continue to be maintained in the Park to provide visitor access to a wide range of activities.

Road maintenance will be a priority, particularly to popular locations, and most areas now accessible by road will remain so. Bushwalking opportunities will be substantially increased.

COASTAL AREAS

The coastal areas of Walpole-Nornalup National Park are easily eroded and are susceptible to dieback.

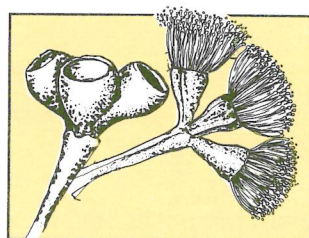
The draft management plan proposes that access to the coast for 4WD vehicles be substantially improved to reduce the risk of spreading disease and to provide good quality tracks. Most existing tracks to fishing spots will remain. Unnecessary ones will be closed. Parking will be encouraged in areas not prone to erosion and walk tracks provided between parking areas and fishing spots.

There is no vehicle access to many beaches in the Park. Elsewhere, vehicles will only be allowed onto beaches where environmental damage, safety risks and conflicts with other users is minimised. On the beaches vehicles will continue to be restricted between the high and low water marks.

RECREATION SITES

In 1989 about 78,000 people visited Walpole-Nornalup National Park, treble the 1978 number. The draft management plan proposes that most of the existing recreation sites be progressively re-designed to ensure that they can sustain increased use, that they are compatible with the natural environment, have a minimal impact on the Park's values, and provide a variety of experiences.

Sites that cater for large numbers of visitors will have relatively high levels of development. Natural environment zones will have minimal facilities and development.



The draft plan proposes that more recreation facilities be provided at some sites, particularly picnic areas and walk trails in recreation zones. At some recreation sites a wide range of activities will be possible.

VALLEY OF THE GIANTS

The Valley of the Giants is Walpole-Nornalup National Park's most popular destination. However, the main recreation site in the Valley, Big Tree, was not designed to cater for the large number of visitors it now attracts.

The draft plan proposes that a new high quality recreation area be developed to cater for large numbers of vehicles, including tourist buses and caravans. Special consideration will be given to parking areas, picnic sites and bushwalks. The Big Tree site will be rehabilitated and redeveloped as a picnic area with walk trails.

COALMINE BEACH CARAVAN PARK

Coalmine Beach Caravan Park, located in the Park adjacent to Nornalup Inlet, was established in 1960. It is a small park with 55 sites for tents and caravans, ablution block, and barbecue and picnic facilities.

A number of options have been considered for the Coalmine Beach Caravan Park, ranging from extensive redevelopment and the leasing of the caravan park to private enterprise, to the closing of the caravan and camping facility. The recommended option is to redevelop the park as a low-key caravan and camping area with minimal facilities provided. This will include powered sites, improved ablution block and a camper's kitchen.

HILLTOP

Hilltop is the second most popular area in the Park after Valley of the Giants. Hilltop includes Hilltop Lookout, Tingle Tree recreation site and Circular Pool. Though accessible from the South-West Highway, the narrow one-way gravel road into Hilltop precludes caravans and large tourist buses.

The central forest area between Hilltop and the Valley of the Giants is relatively undeveloped, and has been zoned "natural environment". The draft plan proposes that the Hilltop area be managed as a medium-use recreation zone. Access will not be developed for tourist buses and caravans ensuring that the unique experience of Hilltop is retained and that the limited capacity of Circular Pool is not exceeded.

NUYTS WILDERNESS AREA

It is proposed that the existing wilderness area at Nuyts be retained.

The draft plan proposes that degraded areas of the Nuyts Wilderness Area be rehabilitated, and that action is taken to prevent erosion and the spread of dieback. The number of paths will be reduced and visitors will be encouraged to use existing ones.

The area has special biological values, which include Noisy Scrub-bird habitat, and adjoins private property. Some prescribed burning will be required to minimise the likelihood of the entire area being destroyed by a single fire.

Other management suggestions include:

- ❖ Introduce a “Code of the Wilderness” that promotes minimum impact activities.
- ❖ Provide information on fire safety.
- ❖ Ban wood fires and encourage the use of fuel stoves.
- ❖ Limit the number of people in a group, and limit overnight stays at each campsite at peak times.

Management Plans

The Walpole-Nornalup National Park Draft Management Plan sets out strategies and guidelines for the management of the Park for the next 10 years.

Preparation of the draft plan involved extensive consultation with Park users and the community, and the plan largely reflects the needs and aspirations of those involved.

The plan is released as a draft to allow the public to comment on the proposals it contains before the final plan is drawn up.

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