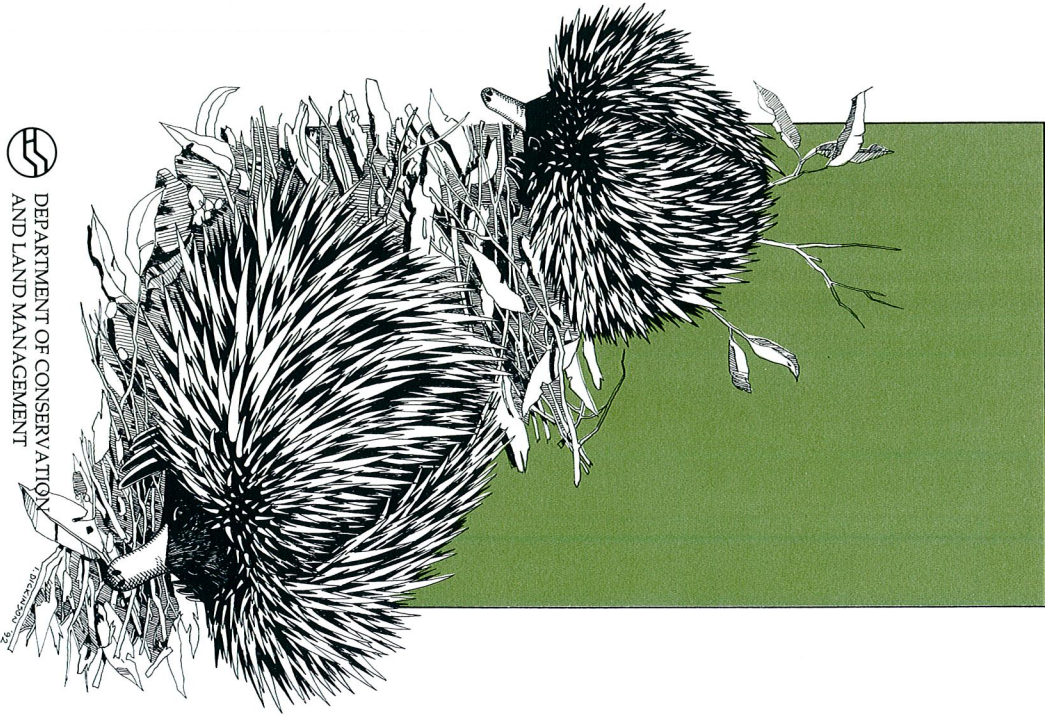


LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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National Park

WALYUNGA



WALYUNGA NATIONAL PARK

Walylunga National Park sits on the very rim of the Darling Scarp, and protects nearly 1800ha of bushland and its resident native animals. Just to the east of the Park, in the picturesque Avon Valley, the Avon River joins the Brockman River to form the Swan River.

The Walylunga National Park is situated 20km north of Midland (40km from Perth) along the Great Northern Highway.

The Park's main features are the wildflowers in winter and spring, the native animals, the rugged valley scenery and the Swan River which in summer is a string of placid pools, and in winter a raging torrent with long series of rapids. The latter provides one of Australia's best white water canoeing courses and is part of the annual Avon Descent race.

Walylunga contains one of the largest known Aboriginal campsites around Perth and was still in use by the Nyungar late last century. Archeological evidence suggests that the area has been used by regional tribes for more than 6000 years.

A vehicle entrance fee to the park is payable. There is plenty of parking available at the main picnic sites as well as gas barbecues which may be used free of charge. Camping may be arranged with the ranger.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Park hours: 8am to 6pm unless prior arrangement is made with the Ranger.

National Park rangers and forest officers are always glad to help. Don't hesitate to contact them if you need information or assistance, at:

Walylunga National Park
P.O. Box 54
Bullbrook 6084
Telephone (09) 571 1371

The Department of Conservation
and Land Management
Mundaring District
Weir Road
Mundaring 6073
Telephone (09) 295 1117

John Forrest National Park
c/- P.O. Glen Forrest 6071
Telephone (09) 298 8344

CARING FOR WALYUNGA NATIONAL PARK

- **Be careful:** Stay on paths and help prevent erosion. Your safety in natural areas is our concern but your responsibility.
- **Be prepared:** The walk trails are rough and steep in places so please wear sturdy footwear. There is no water along the trails so you are advised to carry your own, particularly along the longer routes.
- **Be clean:** Put your litter in bins, or better still, take it with you. If you no longer require this brochure when you have completed your walk, please recycle it by putting it in the box provided.
- **Be cool:** Please use the gas barbecues on site, or bring your own portable gas stove.
- **Protect animals and plants:** No firearms or pets. All native plants and animals in the Park are protected.
- **Be aware:** The river is a water risk area. It is untreated and may contain snags.



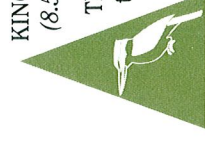
KANGAROO TRAIL (4km loop, allow 2 hours)

Millions of years before the first Aboriginal people occupied this country, the granite outcrops overlooked the landscape. These rocks have specially adapted plants, and animals like geckoes and lizards, which can be discovered as you follow this trail.



KINGFISHER WALK TRAIL (8.5km loop, allow 4 hours)

The varied and abundant plant life is the feature of this trail. Discover the many species of dryandras, melaleucas, acacias, hakeas, and banksias. The latter are often so full of nectar that the Aboriginal people used to soak the flowers in water to produce a refreshing honey drink.



ECHIDNA TRAIL (10.6km loop, allow 5 hours)

If ever one of those first Aboriginal people wanted to survey the magnificence of the Swan Coastal Plain, he must surely have chosen one of the places along this trail for the view. There are breathtaking panoramas across the Swan and Avon valleys, and the whole breadth of the Park.



NOTE: Walk times are generous to allow maximum enjoyment.

BUSH WALKS

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE TRAIL (1.2km return, allow 3/4 hour)

Step back 6000 years to a time when the abundance of food in the area caused it to be a major Nyungar site. Discover some of the myths and legends associated with the park, and the traditional uses of some of its plants and animals.

SYD'S RAPIDS (5.2km return, allow 2.5 hours)

Meander along the grassy flood plain of the Swan River under the shady wandooos and flooded gums. Aboriginals walked this river bank thousands of years ago, and if you walk quietly, you too may see the kangaroos and waterfowl that attracted them to this area.



ENCOUNTERERS OF THE BEST KIND

Some of the most fascinating encounters you will have in the Park are with the local plants and animals. You may be interested to know some of their names and characteristics.

TREES

WANDOO (*Eucalyptus wandoo*)

Named by the Aboriginal people, the majestic whitish, smooth-barked trees that are commonly seen along the walk trails are wandoos. The creamy flowers are a favoured food for the many nectar-sipping birds of the Park. Check beneath the tree for the tall-tale fruits.

JARRAH (*Eucalyptus marginata*)

The stringy grey bark and pea-sized fruits are the identification marks of our jarrah trees. Look for the ridge around the edge of each leaf. It is this which gives the tree its scientific name. Usually found in Walyunga on the higher ridges.

MARRI (*Eucalyptus calophylla*)

The red sap that oozes out of any injuries of this tree has provided its common name. 'Marri' is the Aboriginal word for 'blood'. Look for the large fruits called 'honkey nuts' beneath the tree. You may find some that have been chewed. This could have been caused by parrots, cockatoos, or brush-tailed possums - all of which find the green nuts irresistible.

FLOODED GUM (*Eucalyptus rudis*)

The grey-barked trees which usually grow along the river's edge are 'flooded gums'. Look for the stars in the small semi-circular fruit that you will find on the ground around them. Because of their proximity to the water, these trees are favoured resting and nesting sites for the myriad of birds which drink from the river.

ANIMALS

The Park is still home to many animals, but many are difficult to see as they are active at night. You can find it just as fascinating, however, to search for the various signs of their individual activities when you visit the Park during the day. You will find tracks, scats ('droppings'), scratchings, and chewed remains, all of which provide an insight into the activities and characteristics of the many and varied animals which live in this area.

WESTERN GREY KANGAROO (*Macropus fuliginosus*)

This is the largest of the residents of the Park. You may see them at morning or evening grazing on the open grassy flood plains. During the day, you can see their tracks in sandy patches, or in shady well-screened areas, bared places where they have rested. Their scats reveal their grassy diet. They were a favoured food of the Aboriginal people and their skins were used as cloaks for warmth.

ECHIDNA (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*)

These prickly monotremes (mammals that lay eggs) are particularly shy and difficult to spot. However, half-moon shaped holes in the side of anthills will show their presence in an area.

BLACK GLOVED, or BRUSH WALLABY (*Macropus eugenii*)

This wallaby was also sought as food when the Aboriginal people roamed this area. The clearing of the surroundings has caused serious depletions of the populations, but you may see some signs of this pretty animal with the white face stripe, black 'gloves' and the distinctive hopping motion of holding their heads low as they jump.

SACRED KINGFISHER (*Halcyon sanata*)

The flash of turquoise that you may see is probably one of these beautiful birds. Despite their name, they generally feast on insects and only occasionally revert to their ancestral habit of aquatic feeding. They are smaller than their eastern states cousin, the Laughing Kookaburra.

GREY FANTAIL (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*)

The cheeky little grey bird that may entertain you with his antics of spreading and waggling his fan-like tail, is a Grey Fantail. His friendly nature was actually regarded with suspicion by the local Aboriginal people. They would abandon an undertaking if a fantail appeared in camp immediately beforehand. It was considered to be a bad omen.

TWENTY EIGHT, or PORT LINCOLN PARROT (*Barnardius zonariius*)

The friendly green parrot which may greet you at your picnic table is the Twenty Eight Parrot. Named for its distinctive call, the Avon aboriginals called it 'dum-ul-uk'.

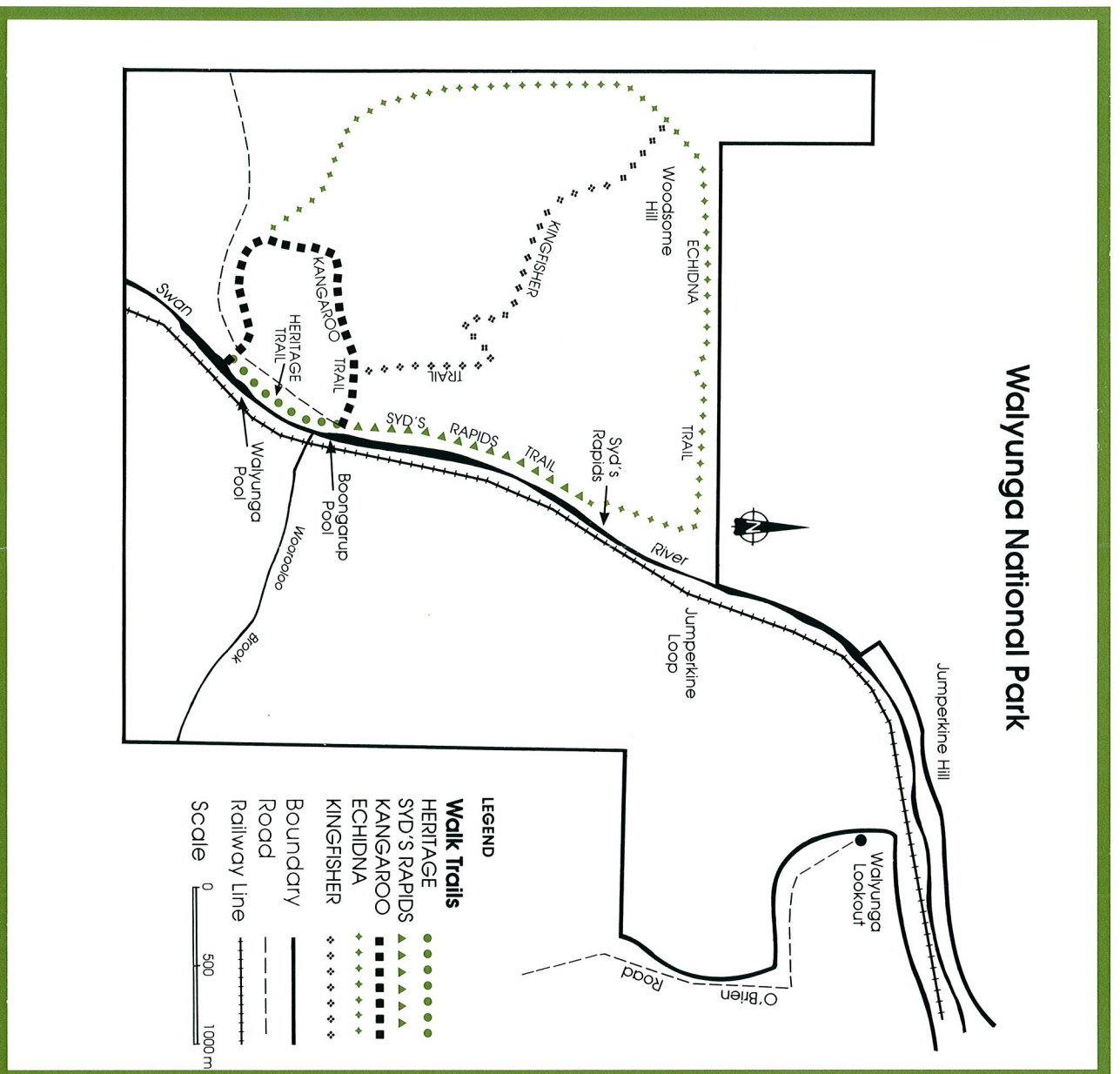
BLUE TONGUED SKINK, COMMONLY KNOWN AS 'THE BOBTAIL' (*Tachydosaurus rugosus*)

You are quite likely to have an encounter with this chap on warmer days. Although he may look aggressive when he opens his mouth and exposes his red gums and vivid blue tongue, he prefers to feed on flowers, fruit and insects, and shelter under the leaf litter.

CARPET PYTHON (*Morelia spilota*)

Snakes and lizards were also an important part of the earliest Australians' diet. The carpet python with its large size and nonvenomous nature was probably one of the most hunted. Check for signs of their progress along the sandy tracks.

Walyunga National Park



ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

- January** - Come out early before the heat sets in and have breakfast with the birds. The Park opens at 8am.
- February** - It's high summer and hot in the city - but a breeze cools the Avon River valley. Come and enjoy its tranquility.
- March** - The river is low. Consider a late afternoon barbecue near one of the pools, and watch the birds come in to drink.
- April** - The weather is usually dry and pleasant. Good picnicking time.
- May** - The river is still low but it's a great time to explore the trails, and then enjoy a family picnic.
- June** - Wet and cool, with some sunny periods. Good for barbecuing and walking - with a raincoat.
- July** - It's wet and the river is rising. Watch the water roar over the rapids.
- August** - Wildflowers are starting to bloom, and there is occasional good walking. First weekend of the month is the Avon Descent white water race.
- September** - This is the perfect month to visit for walking, picnicking, canoeing, and photographing the profusion of wildflowers.
- October** - The weather is warming, so it's great for picnicking, walking, canoeing, and the wildflowers are still plentiful.
- November** - The river is dropping and the weather warming. Still good recreational opportunities.
- December** - Warm to hot weather. Walking less enjoyable, canoeing long sections difficult. Still good picnicking.