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FURTHER INFORMATION

Department of Conservation and Land Management staff are pleased to share their knowledge and offer helpful suggestions about places to go and things to do and see.

More information is available from the Department's Exmouth Office or Head Office in Perth.

District Manager Exmouth 22 Nimitz Street (PO Box 201) Exmouth 6707 Ph: (08) 9949 1676	Executive Director Locked Bag 104 Bentley Delivery Centre WA 6398 (08) 9334 0333
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Email: exmouth@calm.wa.gov.au

Internet: www.naturebase.net

Fisheries WA Payne Street Exmouth, WA 6707 Ph (08) 9949 2755	Exmouth Visitor Centre PO Box 149 Exmouth, WA 6707 Ph (08) 9949 1176
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EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Department of Conservation and Land Management staff: (08) 9949 1676, (08) 9949 2801 (a/h)

Exmouth Police (08) 9949 2444

Exmouth Hospital (08) 9949 1011

Milyering Visitors Centre and park staff have radio contact with the Exmouth Conservation and Land Management Office.

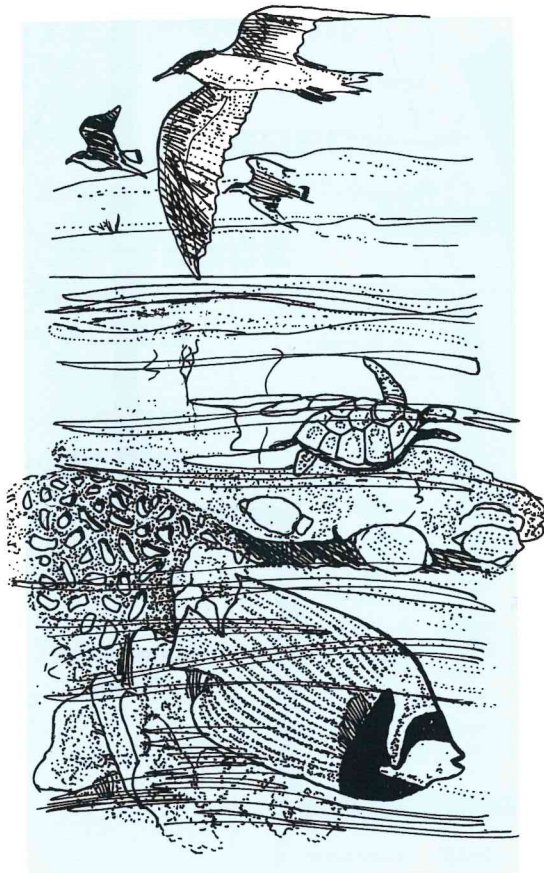


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PARKS OF THE CORAL COAST

National Parks



Visitor guide to Ningaloo Marine Park
and Cape Range National Park



PARKS OF THE CORAL COAST

Parks of the Coral Coast are ideal locations for recreational activity and learning about the natural environment. Whether you want to hike through rugged gorges, snorkel in lagoons or laze on the beach, the Coral Coast has something for everyone.

A variety of natural communities is represented in the parks. The rugged limestone landscape of Cape Range provides a stark backdrop to the turquoise waters of the Ningaloo Reef with the two features divided by coastal plains and drifting sand dunes.

Sunshine provides an energy source for aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals. The organisms of these diverse communities depend on one another to survive, with the contrasting environments providing essential habitats for a myriad of plant, animal and marine species.

Once the domain of Aboriginal people, the Coral Coast has been witness to historic expeditions, devastating tropical cyclones, military activity and a variety of maritime industries. The parks now provide an opportunity to see once-hunted whales and turtles protected in an unspoiled environment.

Today the major growth industry for the Coral Coast is tourism, with increasing numbers of visitors every year. However other industries such as fishing, wool production and oil exploration still continue.

To preserve the area's rich natural and cultural heritage, two major parks have been created. Cape Range National Park, once a pastoral lease, was declared a national park in 1964. Ningaloo Marine Park, stretching 260 kilometres along the coast, was established by State and Federal governments in 1987.

PLANNING YOUR VISIT

The Coral Coast is serviced by Exmouth and the small coastal settlement of Coral Bay. Both make an excellent base for visitors.

The Coral Coast is about 1200 kilometres north of Perth. Commercial flights arrive daily at Learmonth airport (37 kilometres south of Exmouth). Coaches and commercial tour groups service Exmouth and Coral Bay. Visitors planning to drive to the Coral Coast should be cautious travelling after sunset, when large numbers of kangaroos and other animals make driving hazardous.

The Coral Coast is in the hot and arid tropics of north-west Australia where summer temperatures can reach 40°C. Occasionally tropical cyclones are experienced from November to April and summer visitors are advised to listen for cyclone warnings.

Sea turtle nesting occurs along many of the beaches of Ningaloo Marine Park in summer. Most visitors prefer to come during the winter months where temperatures range from the low 20s to the low 30s.

Creeks entering the Coral Coast rarely flow, and visitors need to carry drinking water. Although the cloudless skies are a delight, the low rainfall supports very few trees and shade is scarce. The use of heavy duty fabrics as shade and for windbreaks is recommended.

COMFORT AND SAFETY

- Hot dry weather dehydrates your body quickly, so always carry plenty of water.
- Protect yourself from the sun, whether in or out of the water. Remember to always wear sunscreen and a hat.
- Take adequate fuel supplies when driving and boating (fuel supplies can only be obtained at Exmouth and Coral Bay).
- When boating, swimming and snorkelling remember that ocean conditions can become hazardous quickly, especially near gaps in the reef. If in doubt don't go out.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Exmouth offers a range of shops, caravan parks and other accommodation, entertainment and services including limited banking, post office, hospital and police station. Contact the Exmouth Visitor Centre for more information and for accommodation/tour bookings (9949 1176).

Coral Bay has two caravan parks, chalets, hotel/motel and a range of other accommodation. Public telephones, fuel, food and other supplies are also available.

Milyering Visitor's Centre in Cape Range National Park is open on most days. Contact the Exmouth Visitor Centre or the Department of Conservation and Land Management office in Exmouth for opening times. Displays, brochures and videos explain the natural communities of the Coral Coast, and a small library provides information for those with special interests. Light refreshments and souvenirs are available from the adjoining shop or the Centre. A public telephone is located next to the Centre.

Park tours are conducted in both Cape Range National Park and Ningaloo Marine Park from the towns of Coral Bay and Exmouth. Activities include snorkelling, diving, glass bottom boat tours, sea kayaking and 4WD tours. Contact the Exmouth Visitor Centre for more information (9949 1176).

Boat ramps are located in the Exmouth marina, Bundegi and Tantabiddi. Unsealed boat launching areas for smaller vessels can also be found at Coral Bay and several locations in Cape Range National Park (see map for details).

Diving is a great way to experience Ningaloo. Instruction, compressed air and equipment hire are available at both Exmouth and Coral Bay. Contact the Visitor Centre for more details.

NINGALOO MARINE PARK

Ningaloo Marine Park protects Australia's largest and most accessible fringing reef system. The shallow lagoons formed by the reef, and the deeper offshore waters create a diverse array of habitats for a multitude of colourful corals and more than 500 species of fish.

Many other creatures are found in the Park, including whale sharks (the world's largest fish), turtles, dugongs, dolphins and humpback whales.

Ningaloo Marine Park provides an excellent opportunity to fish (outside sanctuary zones), swim, snorkel, dive, observe marine life and relax on the beach.

Where is it? Access points include several concrete boat ramps at Bundegi Beach, Tantabiddi and Exmouth Marina. Unsealed boat launch areas are available at various locations as detailed on the map overleaf.

Ningaloo has been divided into management zones (see map) to reflect the distribution of natural resources and separate conflicting recreational uses.

Sanctuary zones are 'no take' zones, offering special protection to all organisms, plants and animals - including fish, corals and shells which must not be disturbed or removed.

Recreation zones provide for recreational uses that are consistent with conservation of the environment.

General use zones provide for both recreational and commercial uses.

Fishing is permitted in General use and Recreational use zones in accordance with fishing regulations. **Exmouth Gulf Landing zone** applies to the Landing of rock lobster. Special fishing rules apply in order to conserve fish stocks. Daily bag limits apply as does possession by limits. Make sure you have a copy of the fishing guide for Ningaloo Marine Park before wetting a line. Copies are available from the Department of Conservation and Land Management and Fisheries WA offices.

Remember - No fishing is permitted in sanctuary zones.

CAPE RANGE NATIONAL PARK

Cape Range National Park is dominated by a rugged limestone range, the remains of an ancient sea floor thrust upwards by movements of the earth's crust. The range descends to sea level along the coast with arid coastal plains and sand dunes predominating.

This diverse landscape is rich in wildlife. Kangaroos, euros, emus and large lizards are common, along with many smaller mammals and reptiles. More than 100 species of bird have been recorded in the area.

The Park provides the opportunity to walk, camp, canoe, observe nature, picnic, take photographs and much more.

Where is it? The northern entry point provides the main access to Cape Range National Park and is about 36 kilometres from Exmouth. Entry from the south is via Ningaloo Station and requires a four-wheel drive in order to cross Yardie Creek.

Roads The major access road into and through the park (south to Yardie Creek) is sealed. Access roads to individual sites comprise both sealed and unsealed roads. Most of these access roads are suitable for two-wheel drive vehicles. However road conditions deteriorate rapidly with rain and access may become restricted.

To protect wildlife the maximum recommended driving speed is 80 kilometres an hour, and night driving should be avoided.

Campsites can be found at selected locations along the length of Cape Range National Park (see map). All sites have limited facilities, with no power or water. The maximum time that campers may stay in the National Park is 28 days. Camping fees apply and visitors must vacate sites by 10am on the day of departure.

To camp outside the park on pastoral lands, you should contact the station manager. Camping or entry fees apply in many of these areas.

Water is available in very limited amounts from one bore in the National Park. However this water supply is not suitable for human consumption and visitors must bring their own drinking water.

Visitor Fees are payable and can be paid at the park entry station, Milyering Visitor's Centre or the the Department of Conservation and Land Management office in Exmouth. If you are planning to visit the park more than once, or intend to visit other national parks in the state then please ask about the various extended park pass options available.

Walktrails are established throughout Cape Range National Park. For more information contact the Milyering Visitor's Centre, Department of Conservation and Land Management's office in Exmouth or ask a park ranger.

