

LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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DIEBACK-HELP STOP THE ROT

Dieback is a plant disease caused by a fungus called *Phytophthora*. The fungus is microscopic and lives in the soil. Plants die when the fungus attacks their roots, because the roots rot and cannot take up water or nutrients.

Vehicles may spread this fungus, so it is essential to keep to formed roads and follow road signs in conservation reserves. By keeping out of closed areas you will help preserve the beauty of these magnificent national parks.

Bushwalkers can help by cleaning mud and soil from their boots before entering a park or reserve.

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: No firearms or pets, please.

STAY ON THE ROAD: Follow signs and stay on roads marked in this brochure. Normal road rules apply.

FURTHER INFORMATION

CALM officers are always glad to help. Don't hesitate to contact them if you need information or assistance.

Visitor fees apply to Cape Le Grand and Stokes national parks. Fees are used to improve facilities and help offset costs.



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND
MANAGEMENT

Cape Le Grand National Park, PO Box 706, Esperance
6450. Phone: (08) 9075 9022

Stokes National Park, RMB 7138, Esperance 6450.
Phone: (08) 9076 8541

Peak Charles National Park, 92 Dempster St,
Esperance 6450. Phone: (08) 9071 3733

Esperance District Office, 92 Dempster St, Esperance
6450. Phone: (08) 9071 3733 Fax: (08) 9071 3657

South Coast Regional Office, 44 Serpentine Road, Albany
6330. Phone: (08) 9842 4500 Fax: (08) 9041 3329

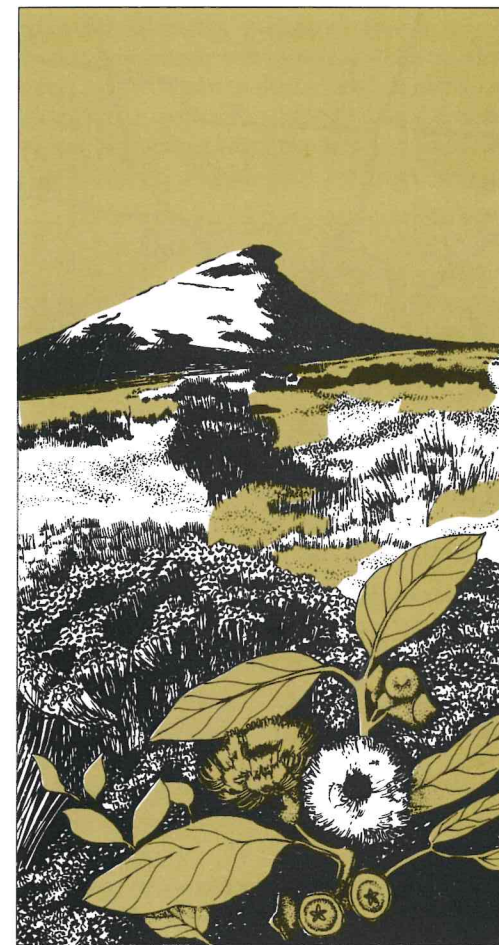
State Headquarters, 50 Hayman Road, Como 6152.
Phone: (08) 9334 0333

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ESPERANCE

Peak Charles - Cape Le Grand - Stokes

N a t i o n a l P a r k s



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND LAND MANAGEMENT



Weathered granite tor at Thistle Cove.

PARKS OF ESPERANCE

Wild coastal scenery, rugged granite peaks, and sweeping heathlands characterise the national parks of the Esperance area.

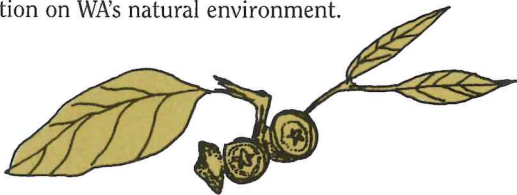
Cape Le Grand National Park, 50 km east of Esperance by sealed road, features attractive bays with wide sandy beaches set between rocky headlands. Inland, the Park protects an undulating heath-covered sandplain interspersed with swamps and freshwater pools. In the south-west corner of the Park massive rock outcrops of granite and gneiss form an impressive chain of peaks, including Mt Le Grand (345 m), Frenchman Peak (262 m) and Mississippi Hill (180 m).

Stokes National Park, 80 km west of Esperance, encompasses Stokes Inlet, and features long beaches and rocky headlands backed by sand dunes and low hills. The Inlet and its associated lakes support a rich variety of wildlife, and are an important park of this national park.

One hundred kilometres inland from Stokes is Peak Charles National Park. This ancient granite peak and its companion, Peak Eleanor, give sweeping views over the dry sandplain heaths and salt lake systems of the surrounding country. No facilities for visitors are provided in this wild area, so go prepared and carry your own water.

Warm summers from December to March are followed by cool winters. Most rain falls during the winter months between April and October.

National parks, State forests, nature reserves and wildlife throughout the State are managed for the people of WA by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM). While in the Esperance region drop into our office for more information on WA's natural environment.



THE ENVIRONMENT

The national parks and nature reserves of the Esperance region form a network of conservation areas that protects a wide variety of native plant communities and landscapes.

At Cape Le Grand, the peaks of the Park's south-west corner are formed from massive outcrops of Precambrian granite and gneiss, exposed by erosion and movements in the earth's crust over the past 600 million years.

During the Eocene period, some 40 million years ago, sea levels were at least 300 m above their present level and these peaks would have been largely submerged. The caves and tunnels found in the peaks are thought to have been either formed or enlarged by wave action and underwater currents.

The sandplains which cover much of the Park support a great variety of plant and animal life. Flowers are those typical of the south-west. In areas of deep sand, dense thickets of *Banksia speciosa* thrive, growing to three or four metres tall. On gravel outcrops and in areas where the soil is shallow *Banksia pulchella* may be found. When in flower, the banksias are a source of nectar and insects for the tiny honey-possum, while after dark the quenda, or southern brown bandicoot, forages in the understorey for grubs and worms.

Stokes National Park protects the wildlife habitats of Stokes Inlet and the surrounding heathland and lake systems. Yate, swamp yate, and paperbark form dense low forests near the wetlands, which in turn support a great variety of waterbirds. Keep a wary eye open for tiger snakes when walking in the wetlands. In Autumn look out for the magnificent yellow flowers of the bell-fruited mallee, *Eucalyptus preissiana*, which only grows to about one meter.

Peak Charles National Park protects a pristine area of dry woodlands, sandplain heaths and salt lake vegetation, in the middle of which rise Peak Charles (651 m) and Peak Eleanor (501 m).

Peak Charles track leads from the carpark to a point on the south-east ridge, from which extensive views of Peak Eleanor are obtained. The walk to the summit is only suitable for experienced bushwalkers or rock climbers, as it involves exposed rock scrambling.

Like the peaks at Cape Le Grand, both peaks were islands during the late Eocene, and wave-cut platforms can be seen on their upper slopes.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Basic facilities such as toilets, fireplaces, tables and rubbish bins are provided at places shown on the maps. Information shelters on site will tell you more about these national parks.

CAMPING

Two camping grounds are situated at Cape Le Grand National Park, one at Lucky Bay, and the other at Le Grand Beach (see map). Facilities include septic toilets and showers.

Camping fees apply to both Cape Le Grand and Stokes National Parks. Wood fires are not permitted. Free gas BBQs are provided.

At Stokes National Park two campsites are located on the shores of the inlet. Please be sure to bring sufficient fresh water as there are no available water supplies in the park. Simple bush toilets are provided.

Peak Charles National Park has an area designated for camping, but there are no facilities of any kind. For most of the year there is no fresh water, so if you intend to visit, make sure you are totally self-sufficient.

BOATING

In Cape Le Grand National Park, boats are best launched at Lucky Bay. Small boats can also be launched from Cape Le Grand Beach. Launching at Rossiter Bay is not recommended. These beaches are notoriously treacherous for vehicles and it is easy to become bogged in the most innocent-looking wet or dry sand. Ask the ranger about surface conditions and tides.

Stokes Inlet is also popular for boating and canoeing, and it is possible to launch small boats near the campsites. The capacity of the Inlet for sailing is limited. Although the area of water looks large there are extensive areas of shallows and rocks.

FISHING

Normal fisheries regulations apply in national parks. Fishing is popular at both Cape Le Grand and Stokes National Parks. Many species can be caught, including Australian salmon, whiting and black bream.

LEGEND

Sealed Road

Unsealed Road

Track

PARK PASSES

Visitor fees apply in Cape Le Grand and Stokes National Park. Passes can be obtained at the park or from the CALM District Office.

BUSHWALKS

Footpaths have been established at national parks to help you explore the environment. Here is our selection of walks for you to enjoy.

STOKES NATIONAL PARK

Heritage Trail

Allow 45 minutes for this easy walk. The trail has on-site plaques describing changes which have occurred to the inlet environment. The path gives magnificent views of the inlet and surrounds.

CAPE LE GRAND

Frenchman Peak - 3 km return

A track leads from the car park, up the gentle east slope of the peak, to the summit. Features great views over the Park. Allow 1.5 hrs hard walking.

Coastal Track - 15 km one way

The track runs from Le Grand Beach via Hellfire Bay to Rossiter Bay, and features excellent coastal views. Always carry drinking water with you.

The track falls into shorter sections. All times are one way:

- Le Grand Beach - Hellfire Bay: allow 3 hours hard walking.
- Hellfire bay - Thistle Cove: allow 2 hours hard walking.
- Heritage Trail - Thistle Cove: allow 45 minutes easy walking.
- Lucky Bay - Rossiter Bay: allow 2.5 hours medium walking.

