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Conservation and Attractions

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Below Hikers admiring the view from the Summit Trail.

Photo - Sue Hancock/DEC



Caring for the park

- Be careful** Your enjoyment and safety are our concern but your responsibility.
- Be cool** Always carry ample drinking water.
- Be clean** Please take your rubbish out of the park when you leave.
- Be responsible** Don't light fires. Use your portable gas stove. Dead wood is habitat for wildlife.
- Be kind** Do not disturb animals and plants. No firearms or pets are permitted in Mount Augustus National Park.
- Stay on track** Follow signs in the park and stay on marked trails.

Visitor information

Access

Mount Augustus is 430 kilometres from Carnarvon via Gascoyne Junction and 360 kilometres from Meekatharra. Roads are gravel but suitable for two-wheel-drive vehicles. Roads may be closed or substantially damaged after heavy rain. Seek advice from the local shires.

Carry ample fuel, water and supplies to cope with all possible occurrences.

Overnight

No camping or open fires are permitted within the national park or on Mount Augustus Station pastoral lease.

Accommodation, powered caravan sites, camping facilities, meals, fuel and water are available at Mount Augustus Outback Tourist Park, phone (08) 9943 0527 and Cobra Bangemall Inn on (08) 9943 0565.

Note: These businesses are operated privately and not by DEC.

More information

DEC volunteers are usually based at Mount Augustus throughout the winter months.

Department of Environment and Conservation
Carnarvon Office
59 Olivia Terrace, Carnarvon, WA 6701
Phone: (08) 9941 3754
Fax: (08) 9941 1801

Shire of Upper Gascoyne
4 Scott Street, Gascoyne Junction, WA 6705
Phone: (08) 9943 0988

Shire of Meekatharra
Phone: (08) 9981 1002



Information current at August 2012.

This publication is available in alternative formats on request.

Front cover Mount Augustus National Park. Photo - Tourism WA

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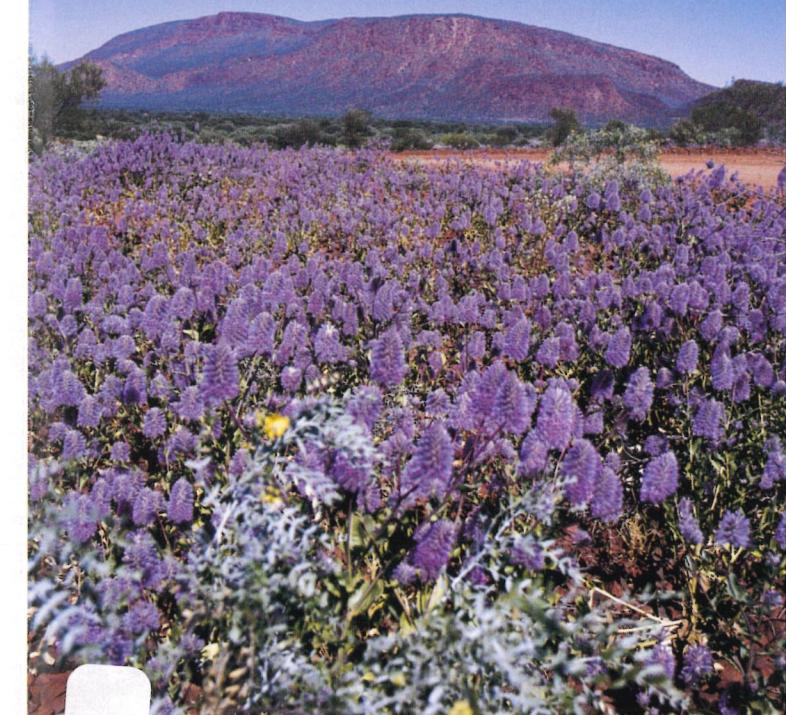
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Department of
Environment and Conservation



Mount Augustus National Park (Burringurrah)



Information and recreational guide

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Above View from Goordgeela Lookout. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC

Mount Augustus National Park

Mount Augustus (Burringurrah) rises abruptly 715 metres out of an extensive, stony, red sandplain of arid shrubland dominated by wattles, cassias and eremophilas. The mount is 1,105 metres above sea level.

Around the sandstone and quartz massif, a 49-kilometre drive provides access to rocky creek gorges, Aboriginal rock engravings (petroglyphs) and a variety of wildlife on the rocks, plains and water courses.

Drainage lines from the rocks seep beneath the surrounding sands to feed groves of white-barked river gums. Elsewhere mulga, myall, gidgee and other wattles are dispersed across the red sandplain. Here honeyeaters, babblers and galahs forage for food. Nearby emus seek fruits, and bustards snatch insects and small reptiles from the ground. Bungarras (goannas) and red kangaroos are common on the plain, while euros and birds of prey are found closer to the rock.

At Cattle Pool on the Lyons River, a tributary of the Gascoyne, permanent pools attract waterbirds such as black cormorants, swans and ducks. In the trees are corellas and blue-winged kookaburras.



Far right View of the north-east face of Mount Augustus from Emu Hill Lookout. Photo – Sue Hancock/DEC

Centre left Mt Augustus foxglove (*Pityrodia austroensis*). Photo – Rory Chapple/DEC

Centre right Pink and grey galahs. Photo – Janine Guenther

Right Cattle Pool. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC

Aboriginal history

The area around Mount Augustus is the traditional lands of the Wajarri tribe. Burringurrah is the Wajarri name for Mount Augustus.

In times of plenty, the Wajarri people would roam over a wide area of the Gascoyne. In times of drought, however, they would return to areas where water was available, such as the natural springs along the base of Mount Augustus. Aboriginal occupation is evident by the engravings on rock walls at Mundee, Ooramboo and Beedoboondoo visitor sites, and by numerous stone tools discovered in these areas. Burringurrah continues to be a very significant site to the Wajarri people, many of whom live at the nearby Burringurrah community.



The Burringurrah story

In the Dreaming, a boy called Burringurrah was undergoing his initiation into manhood. The rigours of this process so distressed him that he ran away, thereby breaking Aboriginal law. Tribesmen pursued the boy, finally catching up with him and spearing him in the upper right leg as his punishment. Burringurrah fell to the ground; the spearhead broke from its shaft and protruded from his leg. The boy tried to crawl away but was hit with a mulgurrah (fighting stick).

Burringurrah collapsed and died, lying on his belly with his left leg bent up beside his body. You can see his final resting pose when you approach Mount Augustus from the south. The geological fracture lines at the western end of the mount indicate the wounds inflicted by the mulgurrah. Look for the spear stump in his leg that today is called Edney's Lookout.



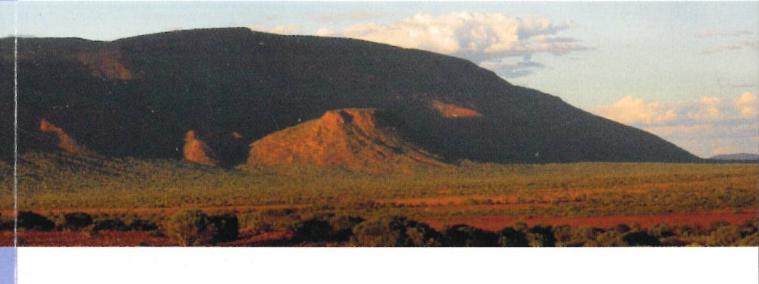
Above View from Goordgeela Lookout. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC

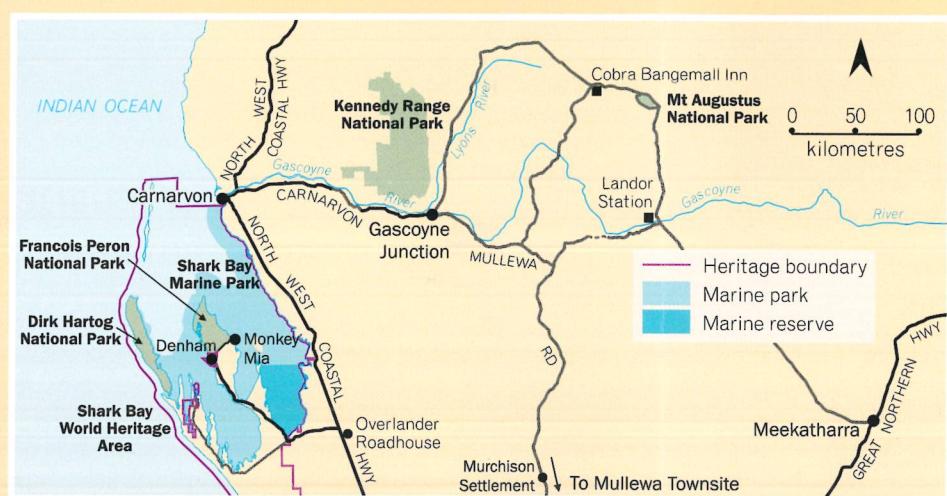
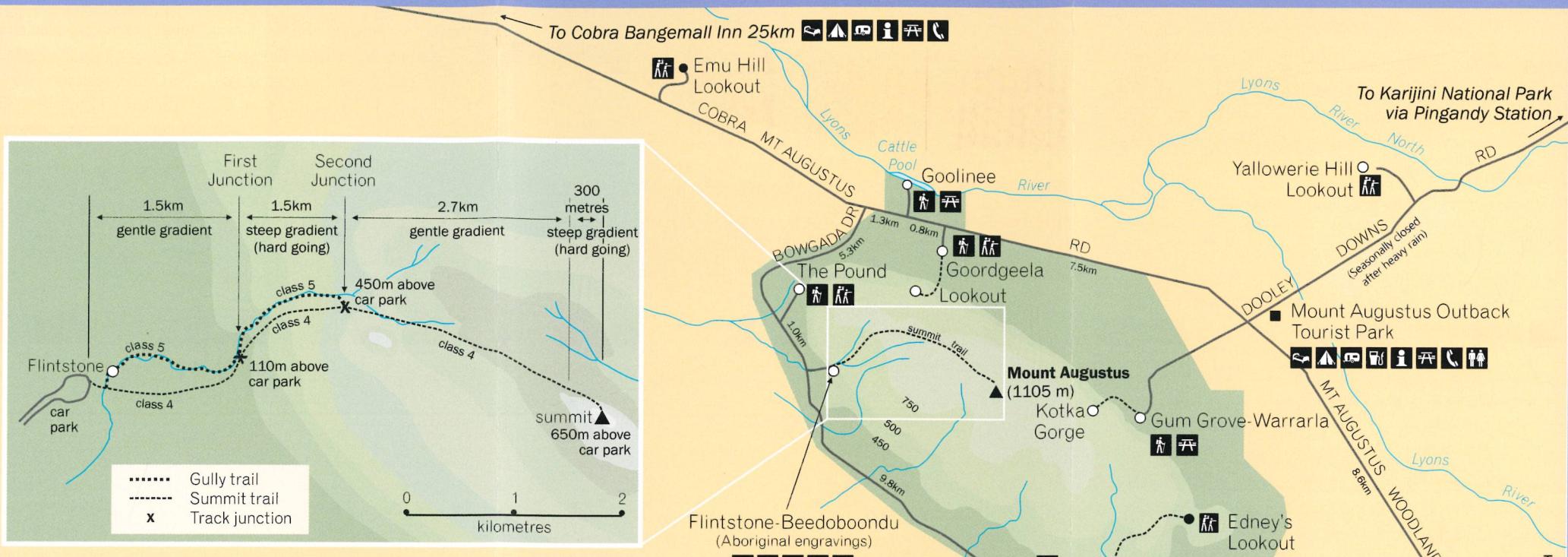
Geology

According to the Geological Survey of Western Australia, Mount Augustus is an asymmetrical anticline (rock layers that have been folded into an arch-like structure) which is steeper on its north-eastern side than the south-west.

The rocks consist of sand and gravel that were deposited by an ancient, south-easterly flowing river system that drained the region about 1,600 million years ago. This river system flowed over a faulted and eroded surface of 1,800–1,620 million-year-old granitic and metamorphic rocks. The river deposits consolidated to form sandstone and conglomerate, and were then buried beneath younger marine sediments, which were laid down when shallow seas covered the region between 1,600–1,070 million years ago.

The rocks were buckled into their present-day structure about 900 million years ago when movement along faults in the underlying granitic and metamorphic rocks caused localised, strong, north-east directed compression. The marine sedimentary rocks that overlay the sandstone and conglomerate have since been eroded from Mount Augustus, but now form the hills around Cobra and Mount Augustus homesteads. Erosion has also removed sandstone and conglomerate from the north-western end of Mount Augustus to expose the underlying granitic rocks at The Pound.

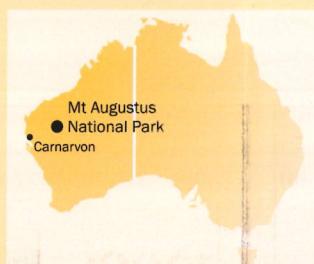




Advice to walkers - Take care on escarpment slopes and cliff edges as the rock surface can be crumbly and unstable. To avoid dehydration, drink three to four litres per day when walking. There is no drinking water in the national park.

Mount Augustus National Park Burringurrah

0 1 2 3 4 5
kilometres



Legend	
National park	Fuel station
Sealed road	Hiking trail
Unsealed road	Information
Walk trail	Picnic tables
Accommodation	Scenic vistas
Camping (bush)	Telephone
Caravan park	Toilets

Walking in Mount Augustus National Park

All trails in Mount Augustus National Park are essentially unmodified with only basic marking. Walkers should read the accompanying information on each trail, and take particular note of the difficulty rating.

These walk trails have been graded in difficulty according to Australian Standards for Walking Tracks. The following three classes apply to the walks described here.

- **CLASS 3** Users require a moderate level of fitness. Trails may be slightly modified, and can include unstable surfaces.
- **CLASS 4** Trails are in relatively undisturbed environments and are often rough with few, if any, modifications. A moderate to high level of fitness is required. Users should be self-reliant, because there are few encounters with others. Weather can affect safety.
- **CLASS 5** Mostly indistinct trails through undisturbed natural environments. Terrain is rough. A high level of fitness is required. Users must be prepared and self-reliant. Weather can affect safety.

CAUTION – Wear sturdy footwear and protective clothing.
DANGER To avoid dehydration drink three to four litres of water per day when walking. There is no drinking water in the national park.

CARING FOR CULTURE – Petroglyph sites in the park are culturally significant to the Wajarri people. Please enjoy the privilege of visiting these sites, but treat them with respect.

Visitor sites and trails

Bowgada Drive

A 49-kilometre circuit provides views of the changing faces of the rock and access to all feature sites. Suitable for conventional two-wheel-drive vehicles.

Emu Hill Lookout

Turn off north about five kilometres west of the park boundary on the Cobra Station Road, and drive 1.5 kilometres along a track suitable for two-wheel-drive vehicles. The lookout is a good location to take photographs of the mount; at sunset it is usually most colourful.

Goolinee – Cattle Pool

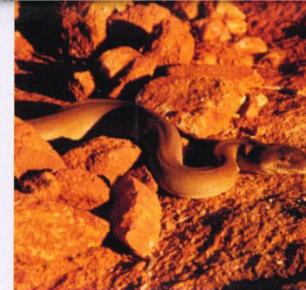
A permanent pool on the Lyons River. A day-use area only. Particularly picturesque after rains have filled the pool to capacity.

Corella Trail (CLASS 3) 1.2km return, 45 minutes

This easy trail begins mid-way along the south bank of Cattle Pool. Quiet observant walkers are rewarded with tranquil scenes of waterbirds. Corellas and other species forage in the river gums.

Right Mount Augustus marks the southern most habitat of the Pilbara olive python (*Liasis olivaceus barroni*). The snake can grow to 6.5 metres and is most often seen close to water. While it is not considered a threat to people, it will defend itself if provoked. Walkers encountering it should maintain a safe distance. *Photo – Scott Godley/DEC*

Below Cattle Pool.
Photo – Rory Chapple/DEC



Left Gully Trail.
Photo – Scott Godley/DEC

Gully Trail (CLASS 4 and 5) 12km return, 4 to 9 hours (average 7 hours)
This more challenging trail links into the Summit Trail after 1.5 kilometres and again after three kilometres, providing a number of alternate route options to and from the summit. Walkers using the Gully Trail option in either direction should add an extra hour to the standard six-hour summit walking time. For more information refer to the inset map.

The first junction between the Summit and Gully trails provides an opportunity for a shorter loop walk. Walkers continue up the Gully Trail from Flintstone Rock for 1.5 kilometres, at the first junction cut across to the Summit Trail and return down to the car park.

Mundee

Petroglyph Trail (CLASS 3) 200m return, 20 minutes
This relatively easy walk to an engraved wall is a place to quietly ponder the Wajarri culture.

Edneys – Ooramboo

Ooramboo Trail (CLASS 3) 500m return, 30 minutes
A relatively easy walk to view Aboriginal engravings along an escarpment. An extra walk of 100 metres will bring you to Edney Spring.

Edney's Trail (CLASS 4) 6km return, 2 to 3 hours

This well-defined trail will lead you to Edney's Lookout (a peak that is clearly seen from the tourist park, south-east of the mount). The trail is suitable for people seeking elevated views but who don't want to tackle the more strenuous Summit Trail.

Gum Grove – Warralla

Gum Grove Trail (CLASS 3) 1km return, 30 minutes
This easy trail takes walkers through a shady grove of river red gums. The return point for this trail is at the Kotka Gorge sign.

Kotka Gorge Trail (CLASS 4) 2km return, 2 hours

This trail incorporates the Gum Grove Trail. Walkers then continue along a dry, rocky creek bed before moving above the creek line until reaching the main opening of Kotka Gorge. This marks the end of the trail and provides views to the east of Mount Augustus. More adventurous hikers who want to continue further up the gorge should be prepared for a CLASS 5, unmarked trail that involves rock scrambling.

