

[View this email in your browser](#)



Issue no: 31

Friday, 13 May 2016

Welcome to Touring WA, a selection of the latest news from the Department of Parks and Wildlife for visitors to Western Australia's national parks. In this issue you can find out about things to do in parks, new and improved park facilities, camping opportunities and new publications.

- [Celebrations at The Gap](#)

- [Getting high in nature](#)
 - [Featured operator – Wharncliffe Mill Bush Retreat in Margaret River](#)
 - [Camping news, availability and campfires](#)
 - [Park openings and closures](#)
 - [Ningaloo Whaleshark Festival](#)
 - [The Whale Sharks of Ningaloo – activities and cool facts](#)
 - [National Volunteer Week](#)
 - [Discover the night life of the jarrah forest with Western Shield Camera Watch](#)
 - [Invitation to comment on the Albany coast draft management plan 2016](#)
 - [Uncovering WA's unique sense of place](#)
 - [Nominations open for the 2016 Perth Airport WA Tourism Awards](#)
-

Parks and visitor information

Celebrations at The Gap

The newly completed viewing platforms at The Gap and Natural Bridge in Torndirrup National Park were officially opened on Friday 6 May.

Since work was completed in April feedback from more than 20,000 visitors about the facilities, the views and the accessibility has been overwhelmingly positive.



The park received more than 210,000 visits a year before the redevelopment, and is now expected to attract even more. Make sure you are one of them!

Check out the latest pictures on [Explore Parks WA](#).

Getting high in nature

Spectacular lookouts in national parks are providing thrills for visitors as well as magnificent views and together provide a stunning holiday experience.

Enjoy a fun-filled circuit through WA's fabulous southwest and take in the new facilities at [The Gap and Natural Bridge](#) in Torndirrup National Park, the [Granite Skywalk](#) in Porongurup National Park, the [Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk](#) in Walpole-Nornalup National Park and the [Wilderness Lookout](#) in Mount Frankland National Park.



[Download our suggested travel itinerary](#), plan your adventure and enjoy getting high in nature!

Featured operator – Wharncliffe Mill Bush Retreat in Margaret River

Winter is a lovely time to stay at Wharncliffe Mill in Margaret River. The forest comes to life with vivid colour and gushing brooks, in the surrounding Bramley National Park.

Walk or hire a bike to explore the abundant and diverse forest trails including winding single track, riverside trails or the exhilarating creek trails. Hunt for geocaches or just sit by the campfire and enjoy the stunning starlit skies.



Situated in the forest, less than 2km from town, there are a number of restaurants, pubs, cafes, a brewery and a distillery all in easy walking distance, as well as many other attractions on the doorstep. Go on winery tours, explore the caves, take a surfing lesson or rug up for a walk along one of the region's spectacular beaches.

Bring your own van or tent, or book a huge permanent safari tent with proper beds (complete with electric heated blanket) for a more spacious and comfortable camping experience. For those who don't want to camp, the lodge and cabins all have wood fires and are fully self-contained.

To check availability and book a nature escape in the heart of Margaret River, visit www.wharncliffemill.com.au.

Special offer:

Book online for 3+ nights and get one free half day bike hire for stays between 15 May and 15 September 2016. Just write "Touring WA Free Bike Hire Offer" in the comments/requests when you book.

Camping news, availability and campfires

Camping from May to September around southern WA has its particular pleasures. There can be fewer people, cooler weather, fresh growth and flowing water. Search for a campground to suit you on [Park Stay WA](#).



If you are heading for a campground without online booking check the [Camp site availability](#) guide to see if it is expected to be busy and if there is room before you leave home.

Camping in some campgrounds at this time also means you can have a campfire. To find a campground where campfires are permitted, to find out if you can light one in your chosen spot and whether firewood is provided check [Current campfire conditions](#).

If you need to take your own firewood make sure you [do the right thing with firewood collection](#).

Park openings and closures

WA's national parks and reserves are generally open for visitors however seasonal conditions and a number of other factors can result in a park being temporarily closed.

As the annual wet season passes, parks in the Kimberley will re-open for visitors. Conditions in each park vary and they are typically opened and closed individually.



In other areas of the State, parks, trails and roads may close temporarily due to a number of reasons such as flooding or unsafe road conditions or to enable construction or maintenance works to take place.

It is advisable to check parks on your itinerary when planning, and again close to your trip, at [Parks, trails and roads closures](#).

Ningaloo Whaleshark Festival

The Ningaloo Whaleshark Festival is on again from Wednesday 25 May to Sunday 29 May 2016.

The festival's four days of activities include a free family movie night, live music, food and market stalls, a Gala Festival Opening, fun run and Aussie breakfast, kids activities and a Big Day Out on Ningaloo Reef to meet the Ningaloo whale sharks.



If you plan to be in Exmouth during the festival, visit the [Ningaloo Whaleshark Festival](#) website for program and ticket information and follow the Ningaloo Whaleshark Festival's [Facebook page](#) for updates.

The Whale Sharks of Ningaloo – activities and cool facts

The largest fish in the ocean has arrived into the clear, blue waters of Ningaloo Marine Park!

To celebrate the arrival of the majestic whale shark and share why these animals are so special Parks and Wildlife has released *The Whale Sharks of Ningaloo* activity book, full of fun facts, stickers, mazes and games for kids (and parents too). Pick up a copy from the Milyering Discovery Centre, local retail outlets or online at shop.dpaw.wa.gov.au – RRP \$6.95. It's perfect for kids to take in the car as they visit WA's parks and reserves.



For information about whale shark tours or how to see these beautiful animals from your own boat contact the Parks and Wildlife Exmouth office on 9947 8000.

National Volunteer Week

It's National Volunteer Week and time to thank more than 4000 active volunteers who last year contributed more than 600,000 hours to support, be involved in, and contribute to, the work of the department and helping our part of the planet – thank you all so much!

If you are not involved yet and helping with turtles, dolphins, shorebirds, wildlife rehabilitation, Munda Biddi Trail, campground hosting or preserving bushland appeals to you, download the Autumn 2016 issue of [Volunteer News](#).

You might find the opportunity you have been looking for.

Discover the night life of the jarrah forest with *Western Shield Camera Watch*



An online citizen science project is set to enhance Parks and Wildlife's successful [Western Shield](#) wildlife recovery program.

Western Shield is a vital tool in managing foxes and feral cats and recovering and maintaining populations of threatened species.



More than 200,000 images from 90 automated wildlife cameras set up in the northern jarrah forest will be classified by volunteers registered on the Zooniverse website. The huge task of identifying and recording animal sightings from the images will help scientists measure the effectiveness of the baiting program and adjust it accordingly.

The website provides a step-by-step guide to correctly identifying animals by their shape, size, colour and markings. Volunteers don't need scientific knowledge, just a keen eye and a willingness to learn.

To participate in the *Western Shield Camera Watch* project visit zooniverse.org/projects.

Invitation to comment on the *Albany coast draft management plan 2016*

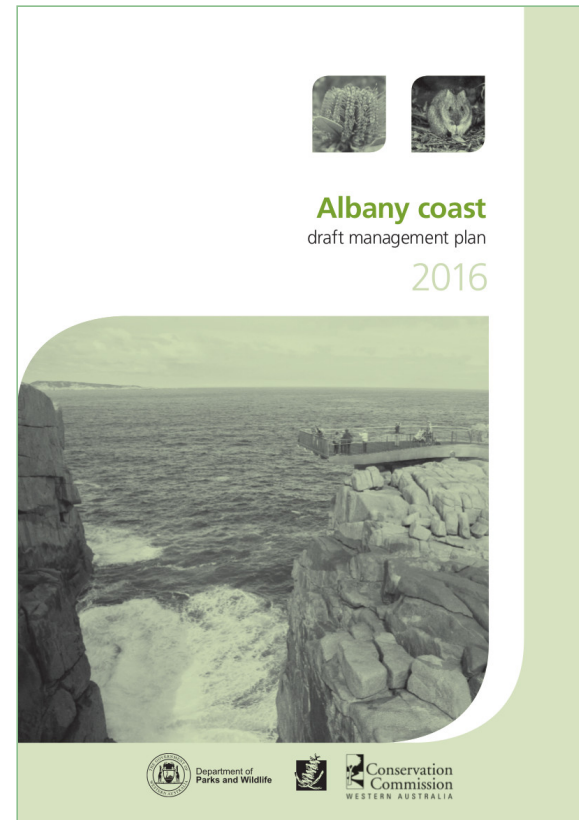
Interested people are invited have their say on how 56 parks and reserves on the Albany coast will be managed during the next 10 years.

The planning area incorporates some of WA's most stunning coastal landscapes, important recreation and tourism destinations and significant conservation reserves. Some of these reserves are key refuges for threatened animals, including the critically endangered Gilbert's potoroo, and protect areas of high plant species diversity and threatened flora and ecological communities.

The Albany coast is highly valued by the community for its beauty and recreational experiences. It is rich in history with significant Noongar heritage sites and other cultural heritage sites associated with early exploration, whaling, settlement, convicts and shipping.

The plan considers management issues such as Phytophthora dieback and other diseases, bushfires, weeds and feral animals.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 8 July 2016. [Click here](#) for more information.



Industry news

Uncovering WA's unique sense of place

Experts on nature, culture, heritage, the arts, community development and urban activation will come together at the ***Sense of Place*** forum on 13 and 14 June at venues in Fremantle and Perth.

Speakers will share lessons from success stories and start the conversation about what makes WA unique. The event will be presented by FACET (Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco-Tourism Inc).



For more information and to register visit www.facet.asn.au/.

Nominations open for the 2016 Perth Airport WA Tourism Awards

The Western Australian Tourism Awards have been recognising excellence within the tourism industry for more than 40 years. Participants benefit from public recognition of their achievements and commitment to excellence, greater exposure within the industry and to the public and a chance to represent Western Australia at the National Tourism Awards!



There are 32 categories covering all facets of the industry and Tourism Council WA will

provide assistance with submissions.

Nominations close June 8, 2016. For information on how to nominate, visit [Tourism Council WA](#).

Image credits

All Parks and Wildlife except:

Featured operator – Wharncliffe Mill Bush Retreat in Margaret River – Wharncliffe Mill;

Park openings and closures – Tourism WA, Uncovering Western Australia's unique sense of place – FACET.



Department of
Parks and Wildlife



[Follow on Twitter](#)

[Friend on Facebook](#)

[Forward to a friend](#)

If you would like to contact us, provide feedback or are experiencing problems opening stories please email the Touring WA Team at:

touring.wa@dpaw.wa.gov.au.

Copyright © 2016 Department of Parks and Wildlife, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

<http://us5.campaign-archive2.com/?u=517dd10f77c668193ebf249c0&id=758bb1e7b9&e=2954b5e6c8>