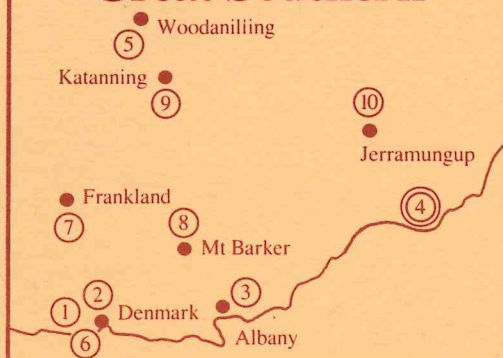


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Department of Biodiversity,
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Heritage Trails in the Great Southern

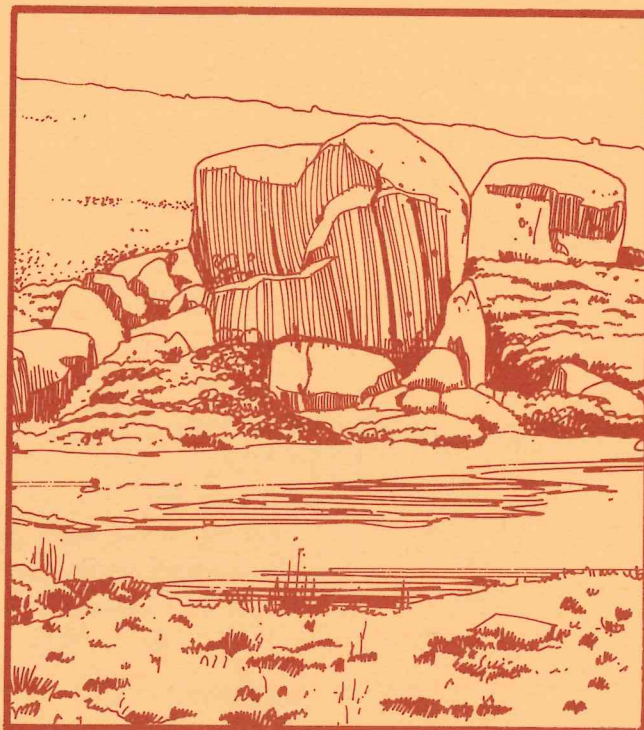


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|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Denmark Timber H.T. | 6. Wilson Inlet H.T. |
| 2. Mokare H.T. | 7. Frankland H.T. |
| 3. First Settlement H.T. | 8. Mt Barker H.T. |
| 4. South Coast H.T. | 9. Katanning H.T. |
| 5. Woodanilling Pioneer H.T. | 10. Jerramungup H.T. |



Le Grand Heritage Trail

CAPE LE GRAND NATIONAL PARK



SOUTH COAST NETWORK

W.A. Heritage Trails Network A Bicentennial Project for Community Participation

Cape Le Grand Heritage Trail is one of the South Coast Heritage Trails. The South Coast Heritage Trails Booklet, available from CALM and the W.A. Heritage Committee, explores the cultural and natural history of the area, with anecdotes and stories from past to present.

The South Coast Heritage Trails are part of the Heritage Trails Network, a project for community participation, devised by the Western Australian Heritage Committee. To commemorate the 1988 Bicentenary, the project established a statewide network of 'Heritage Trails' - routes designed to enhance awareness and enjoyment of Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

The Heritage Trails Network was jointly funded by the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Commemorative Program.



A Commonwealth/State
Bicentennial Project

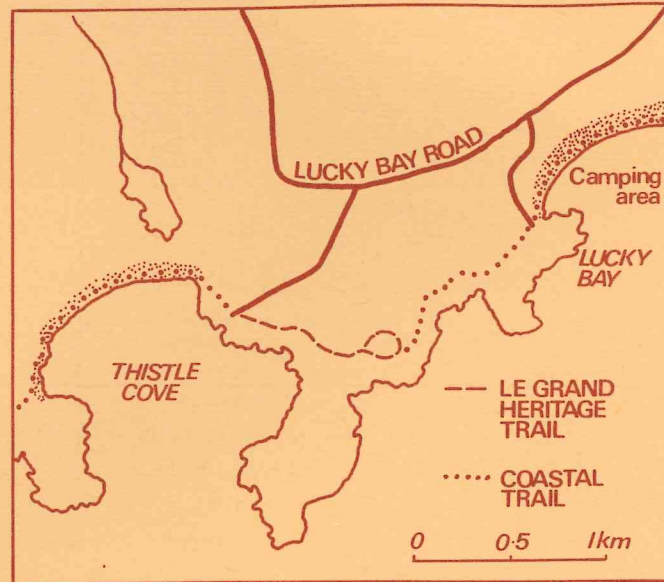
LE GRAND HERITAGE TRAIL

One of the many keys to our past lies in the names of landmarks.

Behind the names of Mt Le Grand, Lucky Bay, Rossiters Bay and Frenchmans Peak are tales of exploration, of whaling and of discovery.

Le Grand Heritage Trail, in Cape Le Grand National Park, takes a closer look at the spectacular landscape and exciting history of the Park, using landmarks as guides and the words of the first visitors as teachers. The map and pictures are your guide for making discoveries.

This trail is 2 km return but may be completed by continuing on to Lucky Bay (2 km). Some portions of the trail pass over uneven rock but the grade is always easy and the route marked.



ONE-Cape Le Grand National Park

Cape Le Grand takes its name from the southern cape, named in 1792. As you walk along the trail Mt Le Grand will appear behind these hills.

"The 'Esperance' was driving toward the land so rapidly that she was on the point of being stranded when Citizen Le Grand...went to the masthead in the very midst of the tempest and almost immediately came down, explaining with enthusiasm that the ship was out of danger! He then pointed out the anchoring place...This discovery saved both the ships (L'Esperance and Le Recherche)...We gave it (the cape) the name of Citizen Le Grand".
Labillardiere, Naturalist 1792

This French expedition under the command of Admiral Bruni D'Entrecasteaux marked the beginning of French exploration on the south coast and provided the first written accounts of this area.

After spending a few days around Esperance, Labillardiere noted:

"...the interior country was interspersed with sandy downs which had the appearance of great sterility..."

The colours and forms of the sandplain heaths promised no agricultural prospects to European eyes accustomed to bright greens. But the wildflowers delighted the naturalist, and amongst Labillardiere's discoveries was creeping banksia (*Banksia repens*), whose ground hugging flowers rely on pollination by mammals such as the honey possum.



Banksia repens

TWO-Thistle Cove



Thistle Cove

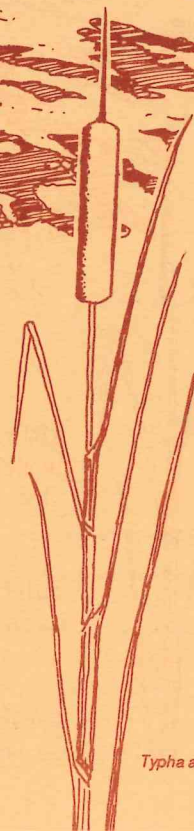
"...a small but useful find", noted Captain Matthew Flinders in 1802 after naming the bay after Mr Thistle, who discovered it. With both wood and water here Flinders thought it superior to Lucky Bay.

Thirty-nine years later explorer Edward Eyre headed for this bay on his near disastrous land crossing from South Australia to Albany:

"...we commenced our journey without breakfast. Being near Thistle Cove where I intended to halt for some time...I was anxious to husband our little stock of flour in the hope

that at the little fresh water lake described by Flinders...we should find abundance of the flag reed for our support..."

He previously described this reed (*Typha angustifolia*) as an: "...excellent and nutritious food...of agreeable flavour wholesome and satisfying to the appetite".



Typha angustifolia

THREE-Lucky Bay

Whilst exploring along the south coast in 1802, Flinders was determined to travel through the islands which D'Entrecasteaux skirted in 1792.

"...no prospect of shelter under any of the islands. I found myself under the necessity of adopting a hazardous measure...we steered directly before the wind for the main coast, where the appearance of some beaches behind other islands, gave a hope of finding anchorage. At seven in the evening we entered a small sandy bay, and finding it sheltered everywhere except from south west...the anchor was dropped.

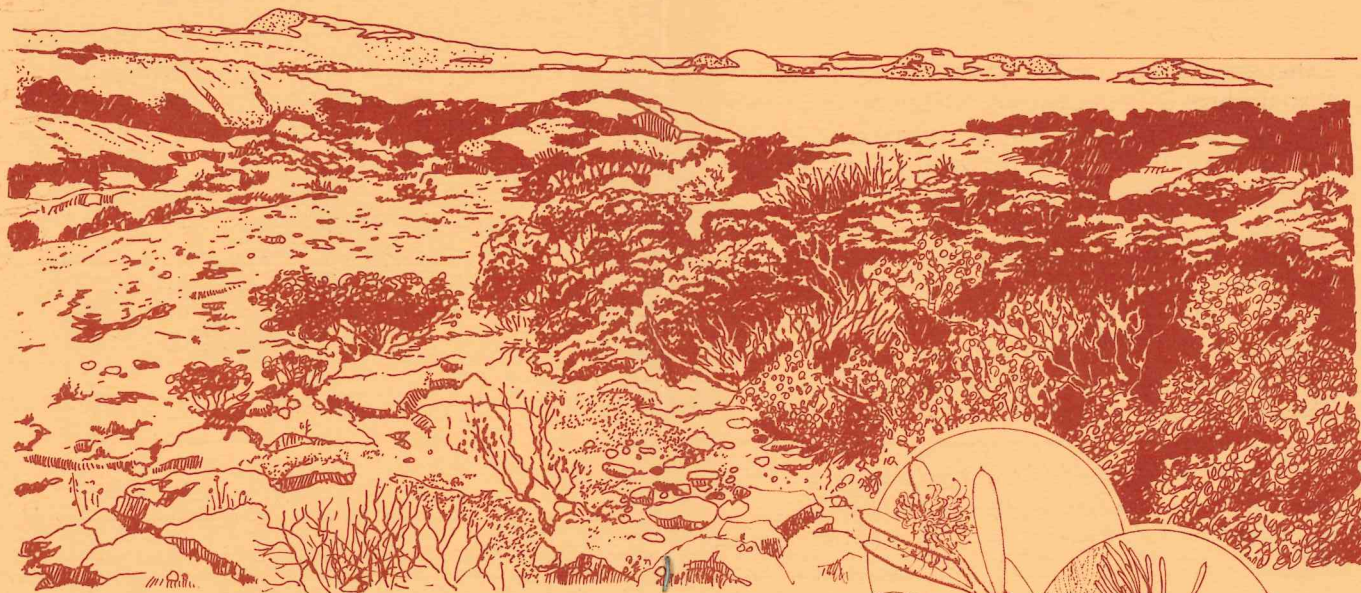
"The critical circumstance under which this place was discovered, induced me to give it the name of LUCKY BAY".

They are difficult to tell apart, but the Australian sea-lion has a blunter nose and a lighter colour.

Like D'Entrecasteaux, Flinders was unimpressed with the appearance of the land, though astonished at the variety of wildflowers:

"The vegetation indeed consisted of an abundant variety of shrubs and small plants and yielded a delightful harvest to the botanists, but to the herdsman and cultivator promised nothing, not a blade of grass, nor a square yard of soil from which the seed delivered to it could be expected back, was perceivable to the eye in its course over these arid plains."

This 'harvest' is indeed a treasure for tourist, gardener and scientist alike, with many of these plants unique to the area.



Sealers, many of whom were from Van Diemens Land (Tasmania), soon arrived to hunt for furs and by the 1840s W.A.'s first industry had collapsed with the decimation of the seal populations.

Today, though, both Australian sea-lions and New Zealand fur seals are occasionally seen resting on the shores of these bays.

Hakea clavata

Calothamnus villosus

Borya nitida

FOUR-Rossiters Bay



Exhausted, and in circumstances far more extreme than those of D'Entrecasteaux or Flinders, Edward Eyre approached this bay from the east whilst attempting to become the first to cross from South Australia to Albany by land in 1841.

"...upon looking towards the sea I thought I discovered a boat sailing in the bay. Having hastily made a fire...we fired shots, shouted, waved handkerchiefs and made every signal we could to attract attention, but in vain...we stood silently and sullenly gazing after the boats as they gradually receded from our view. Whilst...brooding over our disappointment we were surprised to see both boats suddenly lower their sails...Poor Wylie's joy knew no bounds and he leapt and skippered about with delight...I was no less pleased...(soon) we were domiciled on board the hospitable Mississippi - a change of circumstance so great, so sudden, so unexpected that it seemed more like a dream than reality".

The Captain of the Mississippi, a whaling boat, was Mr Rossiter, after whom Eyre named the bay. Once recuperated and loaded with stores, Eyre and Wylie continued their journey and reached Albany a month later.

Eyre considered the whole south coast "arid and barren in the extreme" which no doubt delayed interest in this coastline. However he noted the Cape Le Grand area:

"Altogether...seemed a most favourable place and had we not met with the vessel it would have held out to us the prospect of obtaining an abundant supply of food for ourselves..."

Like sealers, whalers were amongst the first non-Aborigines to benefit from the 'discovery' of this coastline. The Mississippi had arrived a few weeks earlier for the whale season and one chase was made whilst Eyre was on board but was abandoned when they realised the whale was a humpback. Eyre noted that the whaling life was "one of regularity but considerable hardship".

The preferred target, as the name implies, was the southern right whale. Fortunately, today these whales have increased in numbers from near extinction in the late 1800s and in winter right whales are frequently sighted along this coastline when females come close to shore to give birth.

A double 'spout', lack of a dorsal fin, and squarish flippers distinguish the right whale from others.

Remember

Be careful: Your enjoyment and safety in natural environments is our concern but your responsibility.

Be clean: Put your litter in bins, or better still take it with you.

Stay cool: Don't light fires.

Protect animals and plants: No firearms or pets please.

Be aware: Persons using this Heritage Trail do so at their own risk.

For further information

For further information on the National Park see the Park Ranger or contact:
Department of Conservation and Land Management,
Wallace Way
ESPERANCE 6450
(090) 71 3733

The Heritage Trails Committee (09) 322 4375



Department of Conservation and Land
Management
P.O. Box 104, COMO WA 6152
(09) 367 0333

We hope you have enjoyed this Heritage Trail. Keep this pamphlet if you wish, but if you have no further use for it please return it to the box for other visitors to use.