

LIBRARY

Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

This PDF has been created for digital preservation. It may be used for research but is not suitable for other purposes. It may be superseded by a more current version or just be out-of-date and have no relevance to current situations.

BUILDING A BETTER TRACK

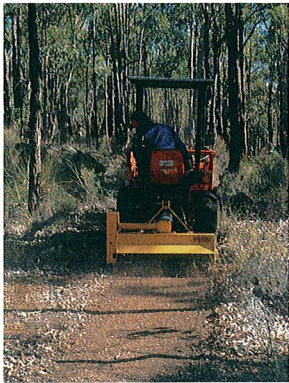
In recent years, CALM has become aware of a range of issues impacting upon the Bibbulmun Track and preventing it from fulfilling its full potential. Central among these concerns were questions of conflicting land use needs and diminishing user amenity. The Bibbulmun Track Project began in October 1993, with the goal of transforming the track into one of the world's greatest long-distance walk trails.

Major changes taking place include:

- A major realignment retaining barely 10 per cent of the 'old' route
- A 180-kilometre extension along the South Coast, from Walpole to Albany
- Construction of hundreds of kilometres of purpose-built walk trail
- Development of 46 new camp sites, between 10 and 20 kilometres apart
- Production of new maps and guide books



The first section of the 'new' track, 68.6 kilometres from Kalamunda to the Brookton Highway, was opened in August 1995 and has five redeveloped camp sites. A new, detailed map was produced for this section and published at the same time. The remainder of the northern half (450 kilometres from Kalamunda to the Blackwood River) is due to open in May 1997, and the final southern half (495 kilometres from the Blackwood River to Albany) is scheduled to open in May 1998.



New camp sites on the track set a unique standard among the long trails of Australia. They offer walkers a host of features:

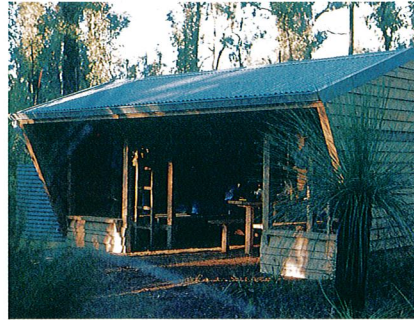
- Three-sided timber sleeping shelters, with room for 8-12 people
- 5 000-litre rainwater tanks
- Rustic bush toilets
- Picnic tables
- User-friendly fireplaces
- Tent sites

Shelters are available on a first-come first-served basis, and there is no charge for use of any of the facilities. Given the popularity of the shelters on the new northern section, walkers should not depend on space being available, and should be prepared to sleep out.

SUPPORTING THE PROJECT

The Project has attracted broad support from a wide cross section of the community. Its funding is underpinned by a major grant from the Federal Regional Development Program, together with support from CALM, the Ministry of Justice, and a range of other State Government Agencies. Further support includes contributions from bushwalking clubs, local communities and service clubs and a comprehensive range of corporate sponsors.

Should you wish to become a part of the Bibbulmun Track Project, or should you require any further information, contact the Project Office on (09) 334 0265.

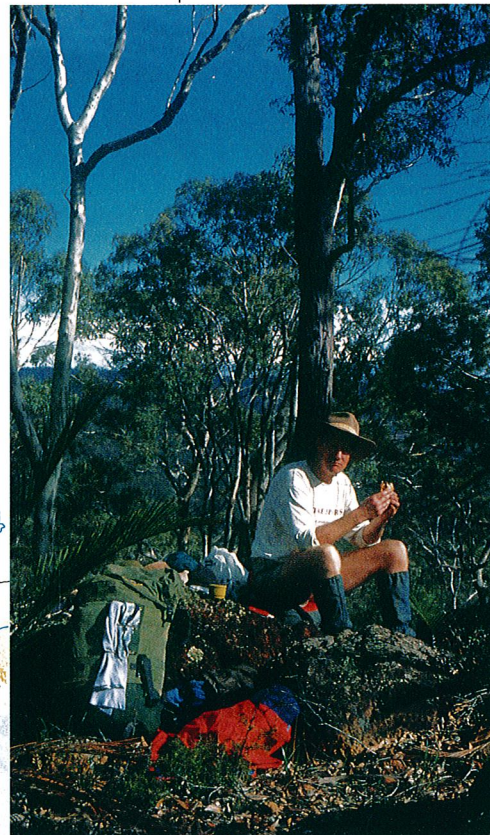
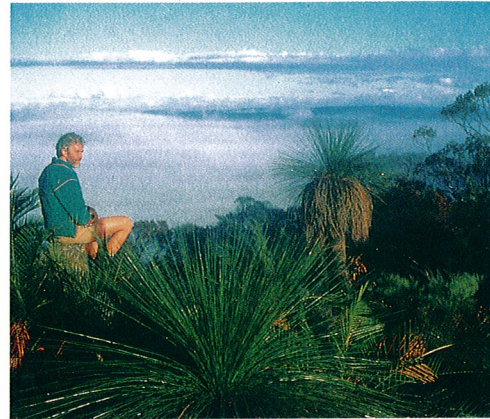


WHAT IS THE BIBBULMUN TRACK?

The Bibbulmun Track is Western Australia's only long-distance walking trail, and is one of the longest continuously marked trails in Australia. It is named after a distinct Aboriginal language group known as the 'Bibbulmun', who inhabited some of the areas on the south coast through which it passes, and is marked by a stylised image of the 'Waugal' (rainbow serpent), a spirit being from the Aboriginal Dreaming.

The Bibbulmun Track was originally the idea of Geoff Schafer, a member of the Perth Bushwalkers Club. His 1970 concept was taken up by the then Forests Department, and the first version of the track was marked on the ground in 1973. It underwent a further upgrading and realignment in 1988, as part of the State's Heritage Trail program.

Currently, the track has its northern terminus in Kalamunda, a hills suburb outside Perth. From there, it stretches some 650 kilometres to Walpole, a small town on the south coast.



GETTING ON TRACK

The track is suitable for use by a wide range of community groups, recreational walkers (day or weekend walks), experienced walkers (including long distance journeys) and tourists and travellers who may only have an hour or two to experience the natural beauty of the South West.

Late winter and spring (August–November) are the ideal times to walk and enjoy the unique wildflowers of Western Australia. Autumn and early winter (April–June) also provides fine walking conditions, while winter (June–August) suits the hardy! Summer and early autumn (December–March) is hot and very dry.

Camp sites are spaced roughly a day's walk apart, and most have a supply of water and fire-places.

A guide book and maps are available, but as local conditions can change quickly, walkers are advised to contract the CALM District Office in the area in which they plan to walk, prior to departure.

There are very few parts of the world where walkers can travel through a virtually unbroken stretch of natural environment with the length, variety and scenic qualities of the Bibbulmun Track.

