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Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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Below from left Little red kaluta (*Dasykaluta rosamondae*); Blue cornflower; Spintifex pigeons. Photos – Babs & Bert Wells/DEC
Left Approach to The Temple on the Temple Gorge Trail. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC

Francis Thomas Gregory explored areas of the Gascoyne and Murchison and named the Kennedy Range in 1858 in honour of the then Governor of Western Australia, Arthur Edward Kennedy. Within 20 years, pastoral leases began being taken up along the Gascoyne and Lyons Rivers. Jimba Jimba was the first station established near the range in 1878 and Lyons River Station was first taken up in the 1880s. Under the Hatch family it developed into a prosperous wool-producing station. Sections of what is now the park were progressively taken up as pastoral lease. Lease boundaries were amended through acquisition of adjoining areas until almost all the present park was under pastoral lease. Fortunately, much of the Kennedy Range National Park is waterless and during the period under pastoral operations, heavy grazing did not occur over much of the park leaving its natural systems relatively intact. In 1977 the first section of the unviable Binthalya pastoral lease was acquired to create the Kennedy Range National Park. Between 1977 and 2001, additional lands were added to form the current area.

European history

Above Native figs (*Ficus* sp) grow along the rocky water course of Drapers Gorge. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC



Below The imposing sandstone cliffs of the Kennedy Ranges. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC



The Kennedy Range appeared to separate the traditional lands of two Aboriginal tribes: the Maia to the west of the range and the Malgarnu to the east. The Maia people occupied about 12,000 square kilometres from just north of Carnarvon, to the western slopes of the Kennedy Range, where freshwater springs would have been a source of food and water for them. The Malgarnu's tribal lands covered a similarly large area, from the eastern escarpment of the range, across the Lyons River (known to Aboriginal people as Mithering) and east to the boundary with the Wadjeri tribe. To the south of both these tribal areas was country occupied by the Ingarda people. The Ingarda name for the range is Mandatharra. Artefact scatters found in many parts of the park provide evidence of the long history Aboriginal people have with the area. The range, as a very distinct landform, also plays an important part in the mythological history of the region. All Aboriginal sites in Western Australia are protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972. Visitors finding artefacts should leave them where they are found and inform either DEC or the WA Museum of their location.

Aboriginal history

Above Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) dominates the base of the escarpment. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC



Caring for the park

- Be kind** Do not disturb animals, plants or rocks. No firearms or pets are permitted in Kennedy Range National Park.
- Be responsible** Use your portable gas stove. Dead wood is habitat for wildlife.
- Be clean** Take your rubbish out of the park when you leave.
- Be careful** Stay on the paths and help prevent erosion. Look out for falling rocks. Your safety is our concern but your responsibility.
- Be prepared** The trails are rough and steep in places. Wear sturdy footwear and carry your own water at all times.
- Be considerate** Fossicking and collecting rocks, gemstones and fossils is not permitted.

Visitor information

Access
 The road to the eastern escarpment is suitable for 2WD vehicles. Assess to the western side of the park via the Gascoyne River is recommended only for high clearance 4WD vehicles. Roads may be closed after heavy rains. Watch out for wildlife.
 Flights and safari tours to Kennedy Range are available through tourist centres at Carnarvon, Denham and other local towns.

Overnight
 Bush camping is permitted at designated sites at the base of the eastern escarpment (see map). Accommodation is available at Gascoyne Junction (about 60 km from the park) and station accommodation can be arranged by contacting the Shire of Upper Gascoyne.
 Always carry ample supplies of fuel and water. Pastoral stations surround the Kennedy Range National Park and access through stations is only permitted with the manager's approval.

Further information

Department of Environment and Conservation campground hosts are usually based at the Kennedy Range during the winter months.

Department of Environment and Conservation
 Carnarvon Office
 59 Olivia Terrace, Carnarvon, WA 6701
 Phone: (08) 9941 3754, Fax: (08) 9941 1801
 Web: www.naturebase.net
 Postal address: PO BOX 500, Carnarvon, WA 6701

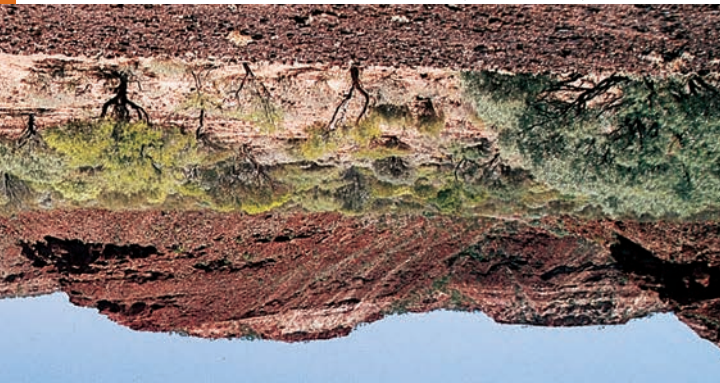
Shire of Upper Gascoyne
 4 Scott St, Gascoyne Junction, WA 6705
 Phone: (08) 9943 0988

Front cover Honeycomb Gorge. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC

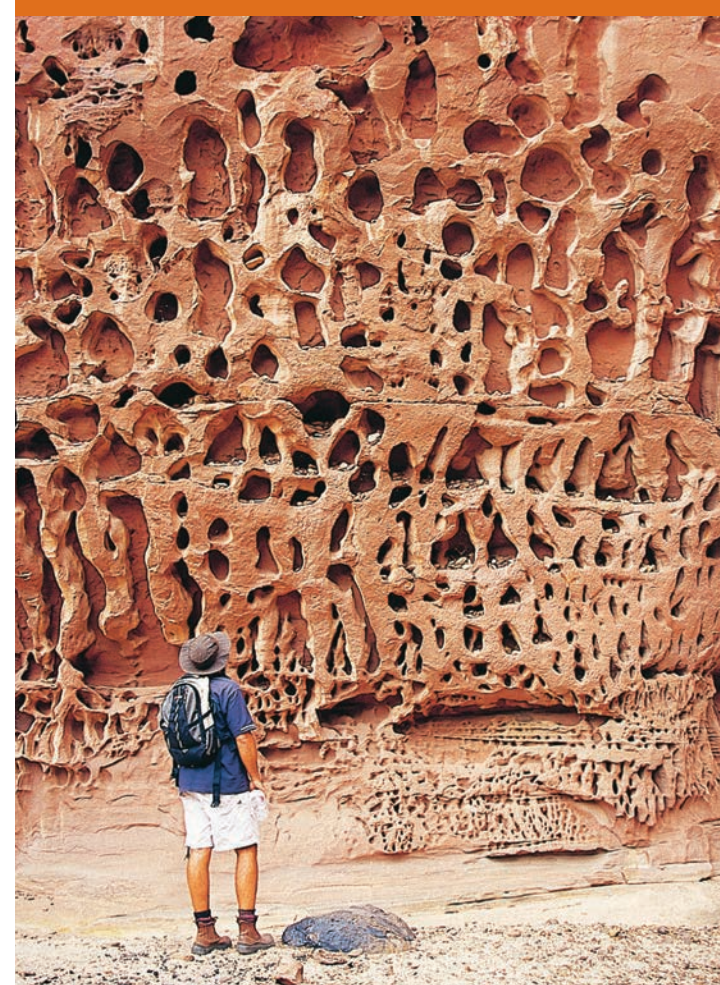
The Kennedy Range is an eroded plateau located just south of the Tropic of Capricorn on the rim of the Gascoyne River catchment about 160 km from the coast. The range experiences a desert climate. Some 250 million years ago, the Gascoyne region was a shallow ocean basin off the edge of the ancient Australian continent. It filled with sediment, which later became compressed to form layers of sandstone and shale. Movements in the earth's crust brought these above the sea level where erosion has stripped away much of the rock. Today, marine fossils can be found in the range's sandstone strata. The Kennedy Range is a remnant of the land surface that elsewhere has been worn away but here forms a huge mesa some 75 km long and up to 25 km wide that runs north to south. The southern and eastern sides of the range have eroded to form spectacular cliffs that rise up 100 m above the Lyons River Valley plain. These are dissected by a maze of steep-sided canyons, which have running streams after rain. Much of the range's western boundary is a strong fault system and springs are common along its base. Rows of waterless red sand dunes dominated by spintifex with scattered wattie, mallee and other small shrubs are found on the top of the plateau. More than 400 plant species have been recorded in the park, including 80 species of annual wildflowers such as the mulga mulla and everlasting daisies. After good rains wildflowers flourish in August and September. Euros are the most visible native animal within the park, but there are 19 other mammal species, including nine bat species. More than 100 bird species have also been observed, including the splendid fairy-wren and the rufous-crowned emu-wren, and some 33 reptile species.

Natural history

Above Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) dominates the base of the escarpment. Photo – Scott Godley/DEC



Kennedy Range National Park



Information and walk trail guide

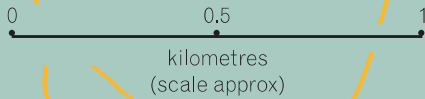


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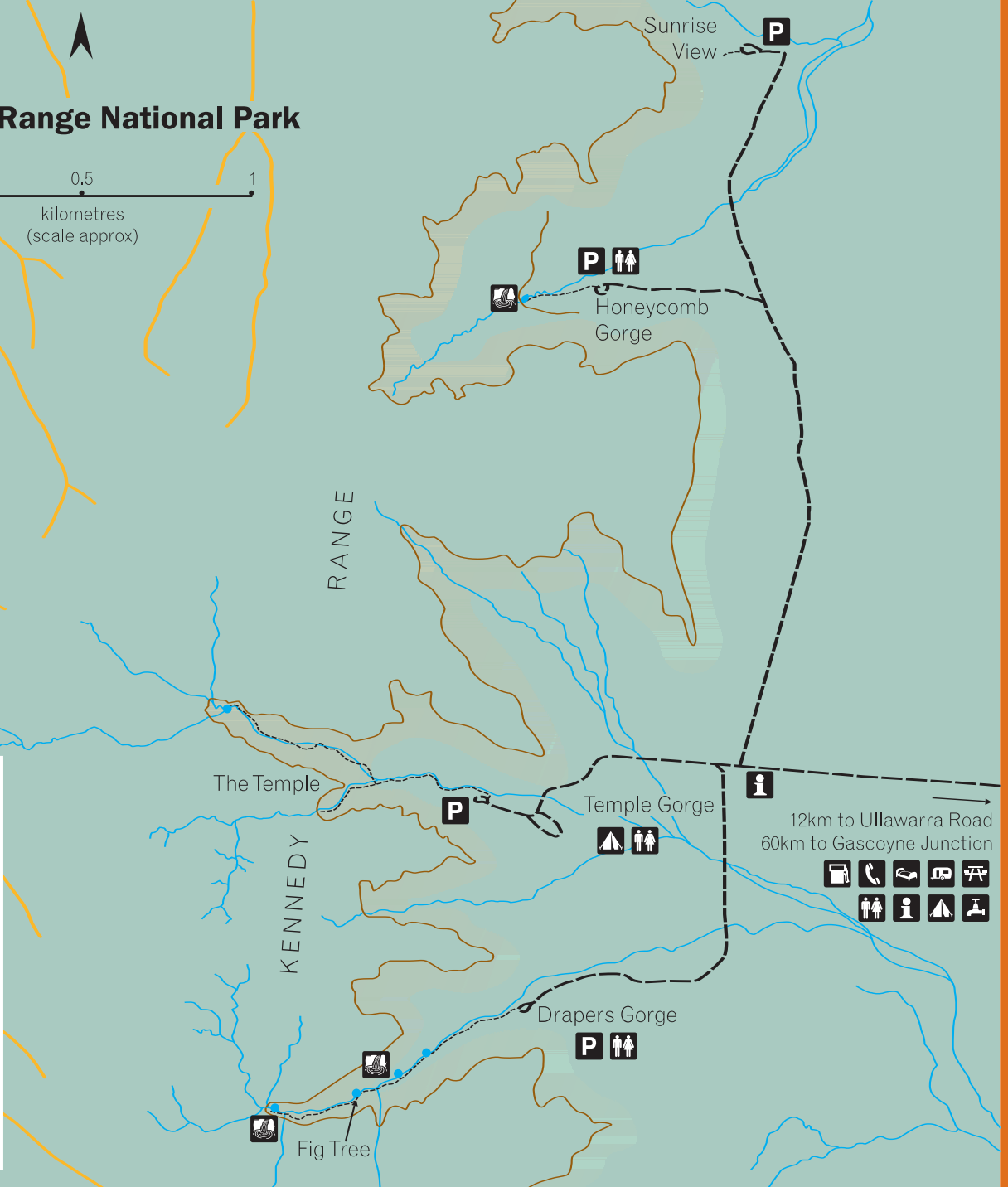
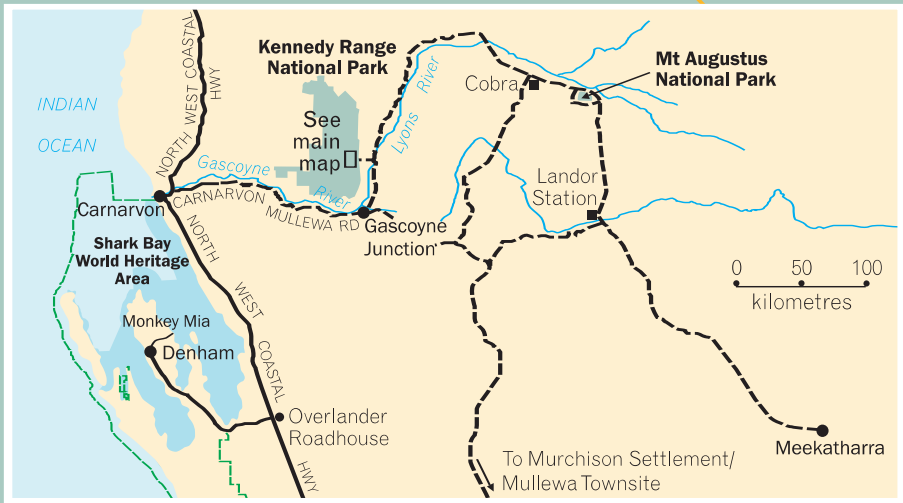


Kennedy Range National Park



Legend			
	National park		Caravan area
	Escarpment		Drinking water
	Sealed road		Fuel
	Unsealed road		Information
	Walk trail		Parking
	Sand dune		Picnic table
	Seasonal waterhole		Seasonal waterfall
Key to Symbols			Telephone
	Accommodation		Toilets
	Camping		

Advice to walkers - Please take care on escarpment slopes as the rock can be crumbly and unstable. There is no drinking water in the National Park.



Walking in Kennedy Range National Park

All trails in Kennedy Range National Park are unmodified, with only basic marking. Most of the walk trails follow creek lines and can be quite rocky. Rock pools are only seasonal and not fit to drink. Walkers should read the accompanying information on each trail, taking particular note of the difficulty rating.

These walk trails have been graded according to the Australian Standards for Walking Tracks. The following two 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 prepared and self-reliant.

Above Looking downstream to the east on the Drapers Gorge Trail.

Above right Seasonal waterfalls like this one at Drapers Gorge only flow rarely after rain.

Far right View of the eastern scarp of the Kennedy Range.
Photos - Scott Godley/DEC

Right Long-tailed dunnart.

Below Western euro.

Below right Ashby's banksia.
Photos - Babs & Bert Wells/DEC



Visitor sites and trails

Temple Gorge Trail (CLASS 3 and 4) 2 km, 2 hrs return

Follow the road from the Temple Gorge campsite to the vehicle terminus where the main trail starts. The first part of the trail is a CLASS 3, and takes people to a fork in the creek underneath a prominent rock face referred to as The Temple. The left fork is a short picturesque walk, and apart from a few step-ups, is relatively easy. The right fork is rated at CLASS 4, and is a longer, tougher, boulder-strewn walk up to a small seasonal rock pool. Care should be taken scrambling up and around large boulders on this section.



Honeycomb Gorge Trail (CLASS 3) 600 m, 30 mins return

This fairly easy, but rocky trail takes walkers to a large amphitheatre containing a seasonal waterfall and pool. Marvel at the incredible honeycomb cavities that have been eroded into the cliff face.

Drapers Gorge Trail (CLASS 4) 2km, 2 hrs return

A progressively harder, but popular, route that features a series of seasonal waterfalls and small rock pools along its length. Walkers completing the whole walk will have to scramble up escarpment slopes and along rock ledges in some areas.

Caution should be used in these areas because of loose and crumbly rock.



Sunrise View

This raised viewing area, only a short walk from the car park, provides good views of the battlement-like front of the range - especially at sunrise.

Right Distinctive erosion effects on the rock along the Temple Gorge Trail.
Photo - Scott Godley/DEC

