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Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

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PLEASE take particular note of the following points that apply to ALL NATIONAL PARKS in Western Australia.

1. Fire should be confined to the use of portable stoves or the barbecues provided. Open fires are dangerous. Always keep an eye on any fire or stove when it is alight.
2. All vehicles are required to remain on approved tracks, as shown on this brochure, or indicated by directional signs. All vehicles in the park are required to be licensed and to comply with the requirements of the Road Traffic Act.
3. All native plants and wildlife are protected, and therefore no firearms or domestic animals are permitted in the park, so please, NO DOGS.
4. Please exercise caution in natural environments — your safety is your responsibility.

**NATIONAL PARKS AUTHORITY**

Hackett Drive, Nedlands  
Western Australia, 6009  
10M 10 84 11



# KALBARRI NATIONAL PARK



NATURES WINDOW LOOKOUT AT THE LOOP

## FACILITIES

In order to reduce congestion of the parking areas at the viewpoints and picnic sites we ask that you leave caravans and trailers at the temporary parking areas provided for this purpose.

You are invited to contribute to the upkeep of the park through the honour boxes installed on some roads. We regret that camping is now allowed within the National Park. There are six very attractive camping and caravan parks in Kalbarri, all with water, toilets, laundry, hot and cold showers and electricity. There are also cottages, units and on-site caravans plus Motor Hotel and Motel accommodation.

Groceries (including perishables), petrol and many other services are available. The Kalbarri Travel Service will be glad to advise you on accommodation services and tours of the National Park.

The picnic sites along the Murchison Gorge all have tables, car parking spaces and toilet facilities. Firewood is not readily available, please bring your own portable stove.

Along the coastal cliffs car parking facilities are available at each of the features depicted on the map. Toilet facilities are located near the Natural Bridge. Fresh water is **not** provided at any of these sites and you should ensure that you have sufficient for your needs.

All the roads depicted on the map are negotiable for conventional traffic (other tracks within the park are for park management and are not open to public vehicles).

Regular coach tours to the scenic features of the Park are conducted from Kalbarri.

## HIKING

Organised parties wishing to hike or canoe overnight down the river gorge are required to apply in writing to the National Parks Authority, Hackett Drive, Nedlands, 6009, for permission to do so.

Because of the dangerous terrain, parties wishing to hike overnight must consist of an absolute minimum of "5" people, as this is the minimum considered self-sufficient in the event of an accident.

For safety purposes, anyone proposing to hike or canoe in the river gorge should inform the national park ranger before undertaking such a trip and report to him again on completion of the journey.

Hiking times are, Ross Graham to Hawks Head (2 hours), Hawks Head to Z Bend (2 days), Z Bend to The Loop (2 days — first day hard going) and Round the Loop (6 hours).

Should you encounter any problems the park rangers will always be glad to assist you and may be contacted 1 km out of Kalbarri townsite on the main road or on telephone (099) 37 1140, 37 1192 and 37 1178.

## SCENES TO SEE

The vast sandplains hold a charm of their own that can be seen while travelling along any of the National Park roads but which may be appreciated best from the top of Meanarra Hill. From the top of the hill one can look across rolling country stretching as far as the eye can see to the north, east and south while to the west one has a grandstand view of Kalbarri town which nestles alongside the still waters of the river estuary, protected by a long sandbar from the onslaught of the sea beyond.

The most spectacular scenery however, is undoubtedly along the Murchison Gorge and the towering sea cliffs. The former can be viewed from excellent points as follows:—

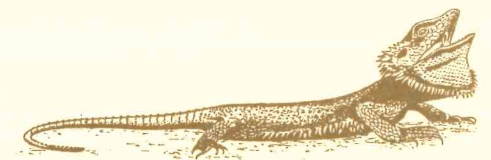
The Loop and the Z Bend are excellent examples of the ancient meanders of the river, now entrenched by multi-hued cliffs 150 metres high. From the picnic area at the Loop, a 10 minute walk leads to the narrow ridge that impedes the course of the river directing it in a great circle. At the end of the trail is a magnificent view upstream, framed by a natural arch called Nature's Window.

From the Picnic site at the Z Bend the 15 minutes walk down a dry creek bed to the gorge is rewarded by a breathtaking spectacle of the river, sparkling blue in the sunlight, fringed by great Rivergums, running below the towering multi-coloured cliffs.

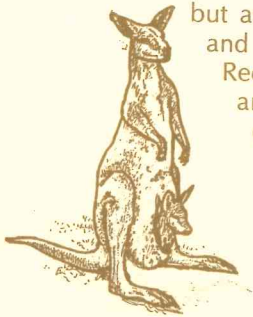
Further upstream are the Hawks Head and Ross Graham lookouts, the former so named because of the great slab of sandstone projecting from the cliff edge which to the imaginative resembles a hawk's head. At the Ross Graham Lookout, named after the first school teacher at Kalbarri who did so much for the area, the gorge is not so deep and a scramble will lead the adventurous down to the water's edge.

Turning now to the sea cliffs, the tireless processes of erosion have fashioned a bewildering array of features. Runoff from the land has carved numerous coastal gorges which break the continuity of the cliffs, while classical features such as sea arches (the Natural Bridge) and sea stacks (Island Rock) never fail to inspire the visitor. No less interesting are the multitude of smaller curiosities such as the Mushroom. It is possibly along the coastal gorges that the most interesting layering effects of different coloured rocks can be seen, Layer Cake Gorge being a fine example.

A separate document is available on the Mushroom Rock Coastal Nature Trail.



## FAUNA



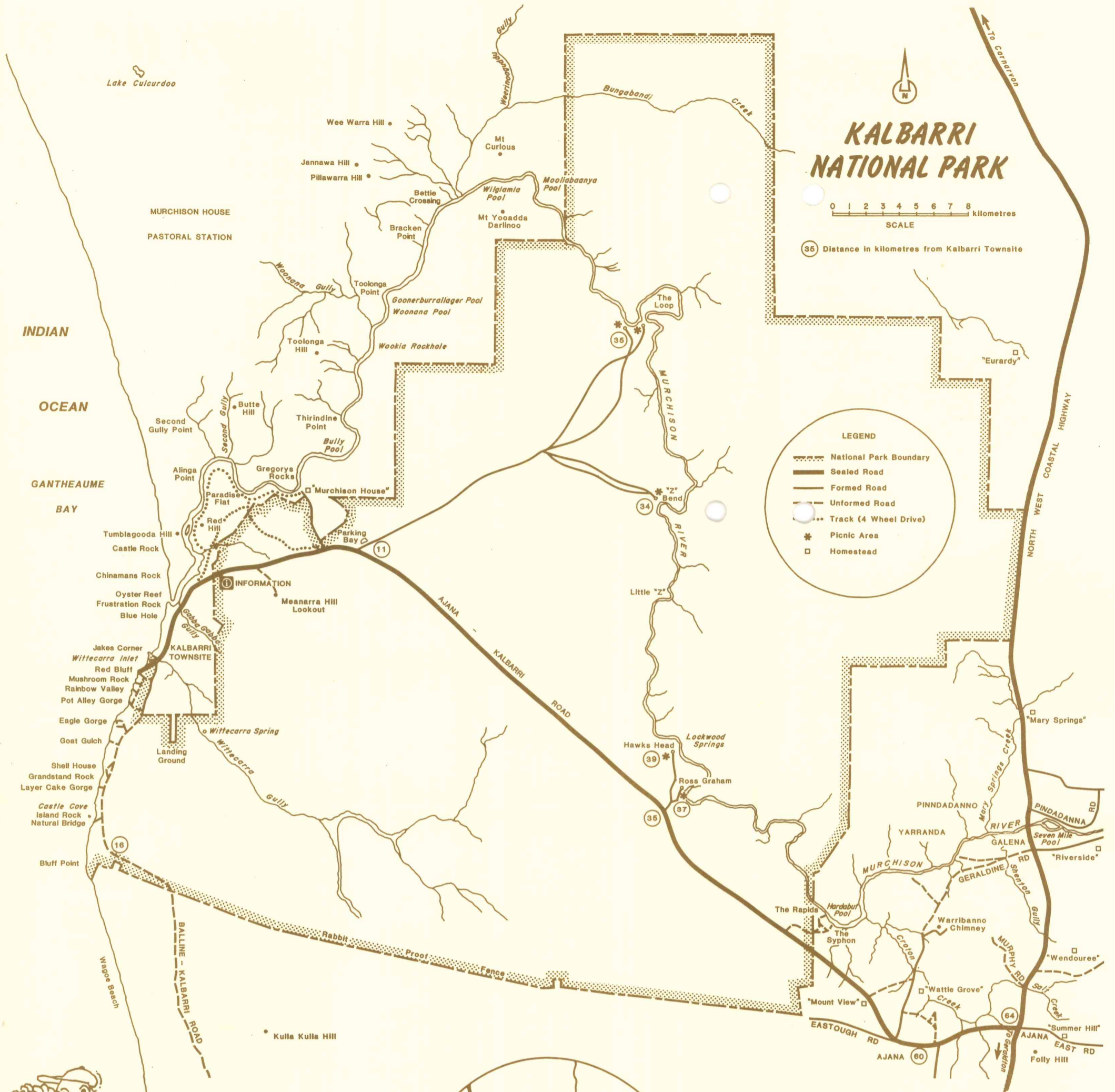
The observant visitor will be able to see a wide range of the fauna of the park, but as is the case everywhere, patience and perseverance are required. Euros, Red and Western Grey Kangaroos and Rock Wallabies together with 9 other species of indigenous mammals are known to occur here. Emus are frequently seen on the sandplains while over 170 other species of bird have been recorded.

Some of these are easily observed and common, but many stay well hidden in the thick scrub while others are rare, many also are migrants or nomads, particularly the waterbirds such as waders and ducks. For further information a list of the birds and mammals of the park may be obtained from the park rangers.

## FLORA

Kalbarri National Park is justly famous for the diversity and brilliance of its wildflowers. To the botanist it holds a special interest as it is near the head of a narrow neck of the south-west botanical province that stretches north along the west coast. While many of the species that grow here are restricted in distribution the genera and families are typically those of the south-west. Thus Banksias, Grevillias and other members of the Proteaceae are abundant as are members of the Myrtaceae such as Melaleucas and Clawflowers. Blackboys and Kangaroo paws also reflect this affinity with the flora of the south-west.

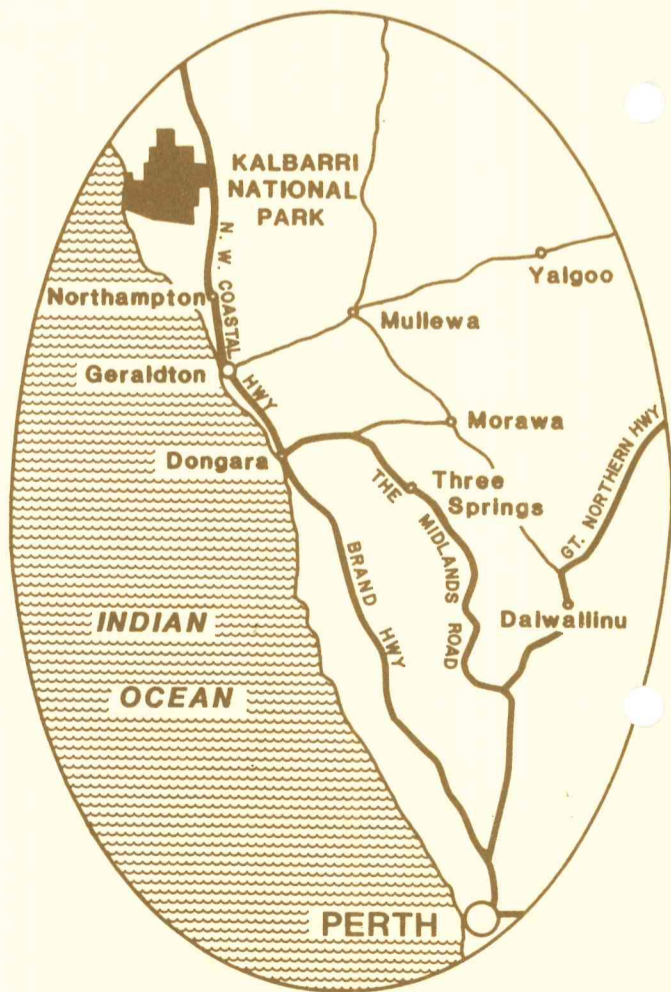
Ubiquitous groups such as the Native Cypress, Eucalypts and Acacias are common, the latter two being represented by many different species. While the Eucalypts typify the Australian landscape, the Acacias provide the greatest spectacle in spring time when, in full bloom, they paint the countryside a brilliant yellow.



**KALBARRI** conjures up different things to different people, brilliant wildflowers, spectacular gorges, awe inspiring sea cliffs, exciting fishing, enthralling history or just the chance to relax in one of this state's most attractive settings.

Although the townsite on the mouth of the Murchison River was proclaimed only as recently as 1951 and the National Park in 1963, it was near here (possibly at the Wittecarra Creek) that in 1629 Commodore Pelsart marooned the two conspirators from the *Batavia* who became the first known European inhabitants of Australia. Another Dutchman, Vlamingh, replenished his fresh water supplies from Wittecarra Creek in 1696 and here too, in 1832 Lieutenant Grey was shipwrecked, following which he and his party walked back to Perth.

Today Kalbarri is a day's drive (about 590km) from Perth on sealed roads.



Kalbarri National Park, which now covers 186 096 ha, is centred on the lower reaches of the Murchison River which originates near Peak Hill, 80 km north of Meekatharra. Until late Tertiary times (about 2 million years ago) the lower reaches meandered gently across a bed of red sandstone. The Tumblagooda sandstone is at least 1060 m, possibly up to 3000 m thick and was deposited in Ordovician or Silurian times, about 400 to 500 million years ago. At the end of the Tertiary or in the early Pleistocene period there was a rapid uplifting of the earth's surface in this area. The river cut down through the rising sandstone entrenching its course complete with meanders, in a spectacular gorge about 80 km long.

Small tributaries following the jointing of the sandstone have cut their own side gorges in a remarkable, geometric pattern. The end result, carved into a vast rolling sandplain that stretches to the north and south, is one of the most spectacular features of Western Australia.

South of Kalbarri town the Tumblagooda sandstone is overlain by a series of much thinner layers of younger sandstones, capped near the coast by very recent limestone derived from wind blown sands rich in lime. On the coast itself these layers exposed in cross section present awe-inspiring sea cliffs up to 100 metres high.