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Conservation and Attractions

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Facilities

trail passes the remarkable Balancing Rock, a huge boulder precariously balanced on its end. Magnificent views to King George Sound to the south and the Stirling Range to the north reward the hikers when they reach any of the peaks. Although the walks are relatively short, it is wise to carry drinking water and to be prepared for rain, especially in winter. On days of extreme fire danger, signs will be erected advising visitors not to hike in the hills. For your own safety, please accept the advice.

At Porongurup, accommodation is available in the Karribank Motel/Guesthouse. Karribank is the oldest continually operating Guesthouse in the State and is ideally set at the foot of the Range. A holiday chalet complex has been developed at the Bolganup Road turn-off from the Mount Barker—Porongurup Road. Petrol and provisions are available at the shop at Porongurup. There is no formal provision for camping within the Park. Those wishing to stay overnight should contact the ranger (Tel. 098 531 095). Details of other accommodation in the area are given in the Stirling Range National Park section.



Rose Coneflower (*Isopogon formosus*) Stirling Range



Wildflowers Stirling Range



Picnic area Porongurups

National Parks are established -

- to preserve fine scenery, flora, fauna and other natural features and
- to enable people now and in the future to appreciate and to enjoy those natural features in such ways as will not damage them, and will not spoil the enjoyment of them by other people.

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 registered 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.

Approved for distribution by:-

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Stirling Range and Porongurup national parks Western Australia

Panoramic view, Stirling Range



Porongurup national park

National Park of 2401 ha is situated on the Chester Pass Road, about 40 km west of Albany and so lies about midway between the Stirling Range. Like the Stirling National Park, it is centred on a mountain range running approximately east-west. As far as the similarity goes, the Porongurup Range is only 12 km long and up to 1000 m high compared to the Stirlings' length of over 1000 m. Geologically the ranges are different but the striking difference between the ranges is their vegetation, the Porongurup Range is clothed in a luxuriant Karri forest.

The range is visible from Mt. Clarence where the first British settlement in Australia was established in 1827, and was first explored by Europeans shortly after it was not until 1829 that the name Porongurup (purported to mean "place near water") was recorded by Wilson. It may have been known as the earliest account of exploration was given by Dr. Alexander Selkirk in 1832.



Balancing Rock

The Park is accessible from Albany and the Stirling Range by the Chester Pass Road and from Mt. Barker on the Albany Highway by the Mt. Barker-Porongurup Road. These roads are sealed.



Tree in the Rock

Geology

The Range is composed of porphyritic granite that was intruded as a batholith into metamorphosed sediments, possibly derived from erosion of the archaean Yilgarn block to the north. The granite is precambrian, probably of the order of 1100 million years old. Subsequent erosion of the metamorphic rocks has resulted in the harder granites being exposed as a mountain range. The granites themselves have been eroded, resulting in steep-sided, rounded peaks interspersed by deeply incised valleys.

There are large areas of bare rock particularly on the peaks, and on steep slopes, but where soil has been able to accumulate on the upper slopes it is mostly derived from the granite. On the lower slopes there is usually a band of laterite close to, or on the surface, which developed during the widespread phase of quaternary laterization that affected much of the South West. Higher up the slopes laterization did not take place and the surface soil contains a high proportion of humus and is rich dark brown.



Tree hovea (*Hovea elliptica*)

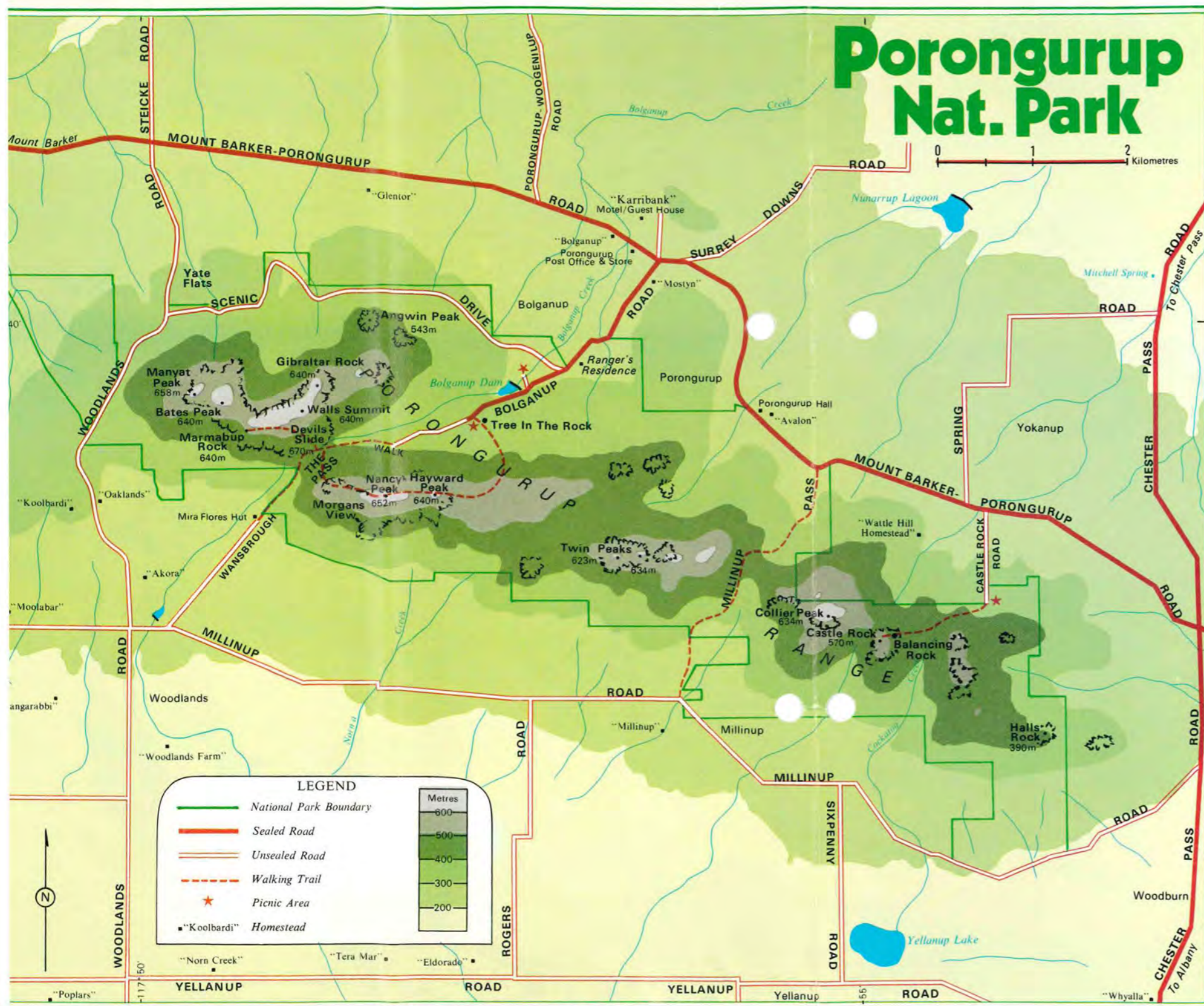
Flora

Much of the Range is covered in a luxuriant forest of huge smooth-barked Karri *Eucalyptus diversicolour*. Studies of fossil pollen have shown that in earlier wetter times Karri was far more widespread than it is today. As the climate became drier, its distribution contracted westward to its present stronghold between Manjimup and Walpole, but where the rainfall remained high enough it has persisted as small outliers. The Karri forest that clothes all but the lower slopes of the Porongurup Range is an isolated remnant of a former forest that has managed to persist because of the high rainfall that the Range attracts.

Along with the Karri itself, many of the undergrowth species of the Karri forest have survived as well. Thus in spring the forest is spangled with the blue of the tree Hovea, *Hovea elliptica*, the Native Wisteria, *Hardenbergia comptoniana*, and the yellow of the Water Bush, *Bossiaea aquifolium*. Probably the most common species is Hazel, *Trymalium spathulatum*, a shrub or small tree. However, there are some interesting absentees such as the Karri Oak, *Casuarina decussata* and the Karri Wattle, *Acacia pentadenia* which are so prevalent in the main Karri block between Manjimup and Walpole. On the lower slopes, usually coinciding with the ironstone, there is a change to a Jarrah/Marri *E. marginata/E. calophylla* forest. Although the trees lack the grandeur of the Karri, they are impressive. It is in these areas that the wildflowers are most diverse and colourful.

Special mention must be made of the granite rocks, for if one looks carefully there are numerous pockets of vegetation clinging to life where a little soil can accumulate in cracks, on ledges or where runoff permits beds of moss to develop. Many of these plants are specialised, allowing them to withstand the rigours of their precarious positions.

Porongurup Nat. Park



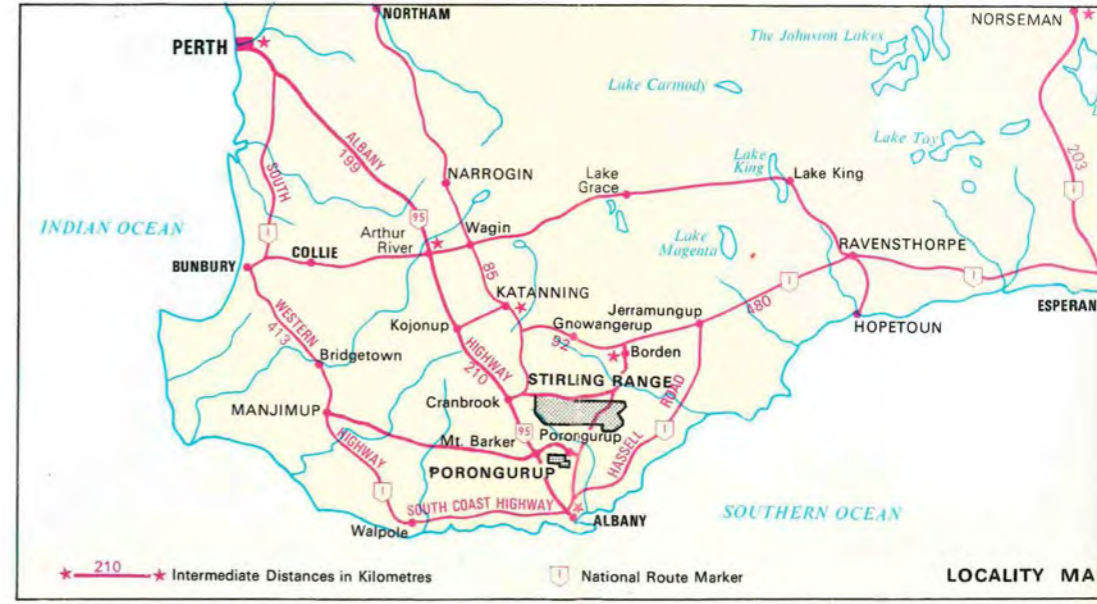
Porongurup national park

This beautiful National Park of 2401 ha is situated to the west of the Chester Pass Road, about 40 km by road north of Albany and so lies about midway between Albany and the Stirling Range. Like the Stirling Range National Park, it is centred on a range of mountains running approximately east-west, but that is as far as the similarity goes, for the Porongurups are only 12 km long and up to 670 m high compared to the Stirlings' length of 65 km and height of over 1000 m. Geologically the two areas are different but the striking distinction between the ranges is their vegetation, for the Porongurup Range is clothed in a luxuriant forest of huge Karri trees.

Since the Range is visible from Mt. Clarence at Albany, where the first British settlement in Western Australia was established in 1827, it was probably explored by Europeans soon afterwards, but it was not until 1829 that the Aboriginal name Porongurup (purported to mean "meeting place near water") was recorded by Dr. T. B. Wilson. It may have been known earlier. One of the earliest account of exploration of the Range was given by Dr. Alexander Collie who visited the area in 1832.



Balancing Rock
The Park is accessible from Albany Stirling Range by the Chester Pass I from Mt. Barker on the Albany Highw Mt. Barker-Porongurup Road. These I sealed.



Fauna

Western Grey Kangaroos, *Macropus fuliginosus* and possibly Brush Wallabies *M. irma* are the only mammals that the visitor is likely to see, and they are more prevalent in the Jarrah/Marri forests. However, there are many other species of mammal such as possums, native rodents and marsupial mice that live in the forests and come out at night.

It is the birds that will be most evident to visitors and those keen on birdwatching should have a rewarding experience. Indeed, one can often see a dozen or more species ranging from Scarlet Robins, Yellow Robins, Western Rosellas and Tree Martins to Wedge-tailed Eagles soaring overhead. Nowhere else will one be able to study Rufus Tree-creepers more easily for they have become remarkably tame around the picnic area, cheerfully hopping up the the picknickers for crumbs. They even nest in tree holes around the picnic area.

A short walk in the forest will reveal many others that prefer to keep to the security of thick bushes, like the Scrub Wrens, White-breasted Robins and Thornbills. When the Karri is flowering the air is full of the screeches of Purple-crowned Lorikeets. You will be lucky if you gain more than a glimpse of a flock of these tiny parrots rocketing through the tree tops, but there are plenty of other birds to watch.

The Porongurups provide a home for a multitude of other animals such as lizards, frogs and even snakes, but the latter are secretive and seldom seen. Then too there are all the invertebrates, such as insects, snails, millipedes and many more. To the enthusiast they will give untold interest and pleasure, while to those not inclined towards searching on hands and knees there is the knowledge that they are there, each one playing its role in the cycle of life in the forest.



Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*)

Activities

Undoubtedly the best way to appreciate the splendour of the forest, the panoramic views and the wildlife, is to walk. But many people simply enjoy a leisurely picnic at one of the picnic sites (marked on the map). All but the one below the Bolganup Dam (where there are toilet facilities) are at the start to walking trails, so any members of a group who do not wish to climb can relax in the shade of the forest trees to await the return of the others.

Because the hills are so steep there is no road access to the peaks but all the picnic areas are accessible to vehicles and the scenic drive from Bolganup Road to Woodlands Road provides an insight into the forest and panoramic views of the Stirling Range to the north.

Two walking trails, the Wansbrough Walk and Millinup Pass, traverse the Range while other trails lead to some of the peaks. The main walks with approximate distances and estimated return walking times (including rests but not time on the top), are as follows—

Devils Slide (2 km, 2 hours)

Marmabup Rock (2.5 km, 3 hours)

The trail climbs through Karri forest from the end of Bolganup Road along Wansbrough Walk to the Pass then up a steep granite hillside to the Devils Slide and along the ridge to Marmabup Rock.

Hayward Peak (1.5 km, 1 hour)

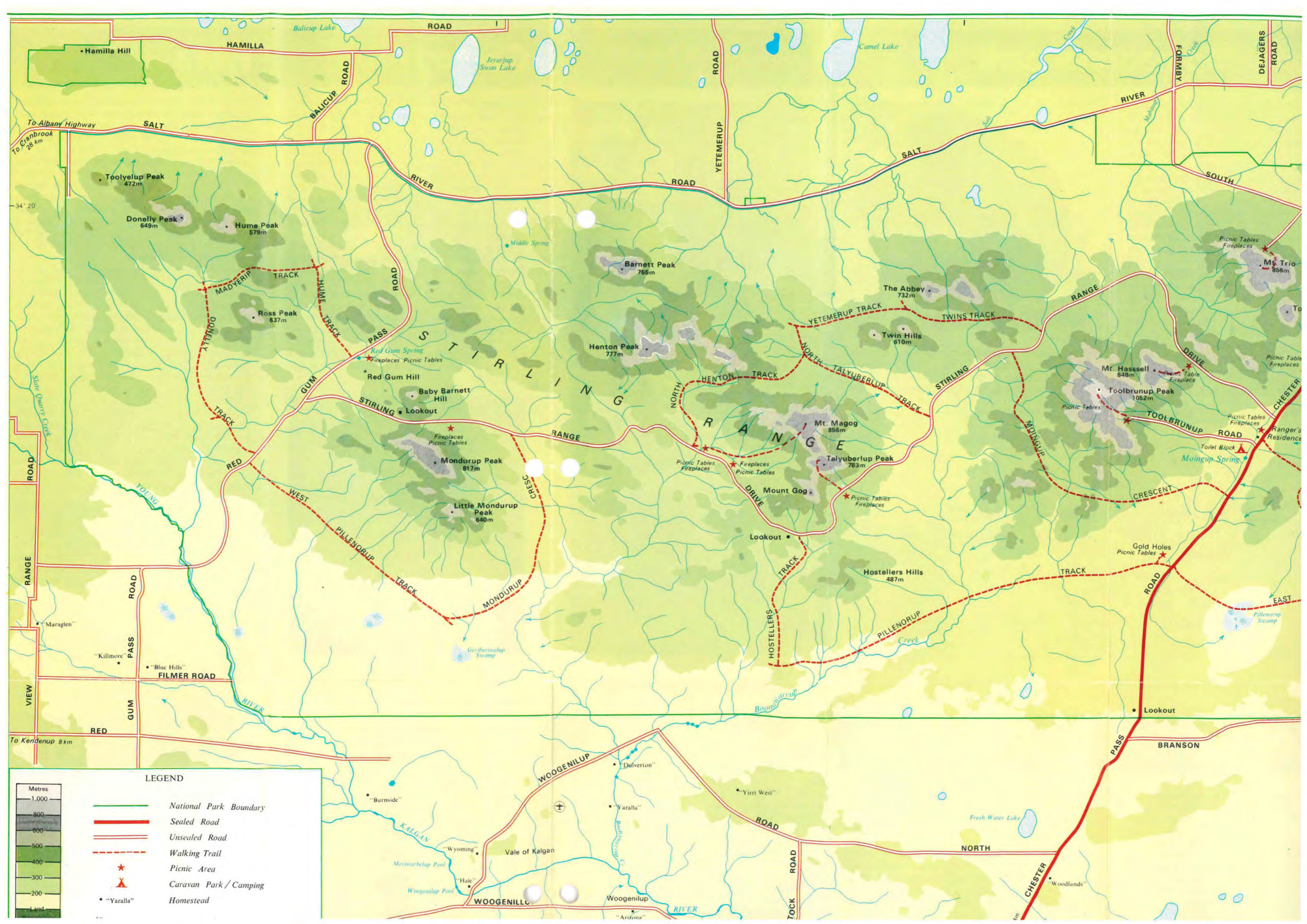
Nancy Peak and Morgans View (2 km, 1½ hours).

The trail begins from the picnic area close to the Tree in The Rock, passes this curious Karri which has found a foothold in a crack in a large granite boulder and then wends upwards through forest past Hayward Peak and then along the crest of the Range to Morgans View via Nancy Peak. A pleasant alternative return route from Morgans View is to follow the continuation of the trail down to the Pass and return to the picnic area via Wansbrough Walk.

Castle Rock (1.5 km, 2 hours). The trail leads off from the end of Castle Rock Road through the forest to Castle Rock, a large granite block which can be climbed by more adventurous people. Just before reaching Castle Rock the



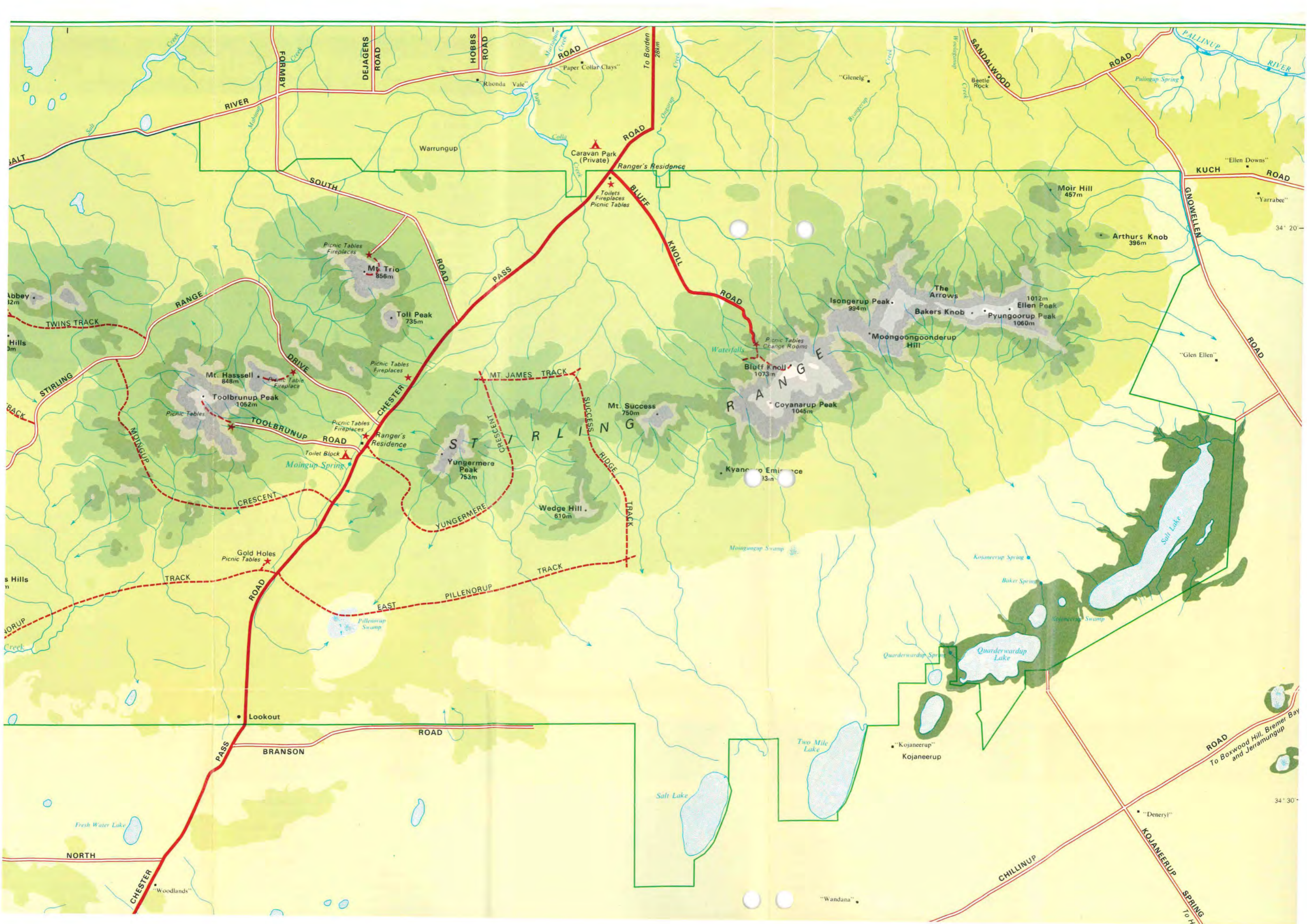
Western Grey Kangaroo (*Macropus fuliginosus*)



LEGEND

	National Park Boundary
	Sealed Road
	Unsealed Road
	Walking Trail
	Picnic Area
	Caravan Park / Camping
	Homestead

Metres
 1,000
 800
 600
 500
 400
 300
 200
 Land

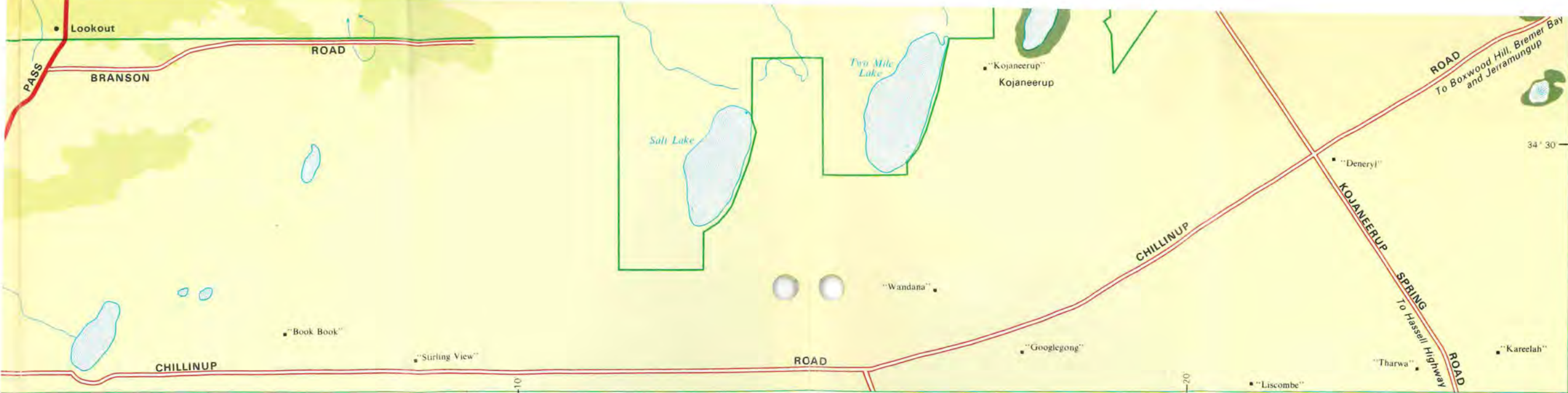


34° 20'

34° 30'

115° 00'

115° 30'



Activities

The rolling plains and rugged hills of the Stirlings lend themselves to a variety of activities. Walking is an excellent method of discovering a park, whether just a short stroll or an organised overnight hike. Most peaks have tracks leading from parking areas to the top and offer magnificent views to the walker.

The following peaks are the easiest to ascend and provide some of the best views in the range. Average return time, including rests, is shown below and is calculated from the parking area unless otherwise stated:—

Bluff Knoll: 3 hrs

Toolbrunup Peak: 3 hrs

Mt. Trio (sometimes referred to as Warrangup): 2 hrs

Mt. Hassell: 2 hrs

Mondurup Prak: 3 hrs from Stirling Range Drive, no path except on top.

Mt. Magog: 2 hrs, no path.

Talyuberlup Peak: 2 hrs

Yungermere Peak: 3 hrs from Chester Pass, no path.

Ellen Peak: 8 hrs from north boundary of park no path.

Bluff Knoll is the highest peak and Toolbrunup Peak gives the best all round views.

If hot, carrying a pack or unaccustomed to hill walking, increase these times considerably. Tracks are easy to follow but are often rough and steep and, if there is no track, it is essential to wear stout shoes, long sleeved shirts and trousers for protection. The bush looks smooth from a distance but is extremely thick and prickly, particularly in gullies. In hot weather it is advisable to wear a hat and carry water. Creeks are generally dry after November and sources of permanent water are few. However, in winter and spring, walkers should be aware of the possibility of sudden cold changes in the weather. Within a few hours temperatures may drop,



Mt. Success, Yungermere and Toolbrunup Peaks.

clouds form and rain set in. Light snow or hail often fall on the peaks and to be caught out in the open in such conditions without adequate protective clothing is not advisable.

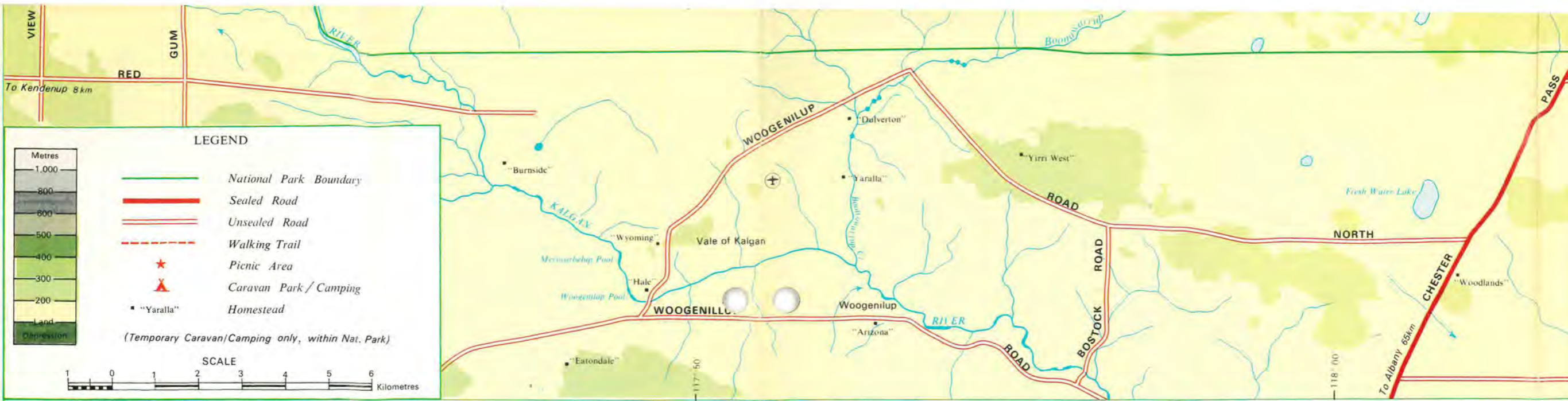
The stark cliff faces present a challenge to experienced rock climbers and often their tiny figures can be seen from a distance. Many climbs, varying in difficulty, have been named and a detailed guide book is available from the Climbers' Association of W.A. It is requested that anyone contemplating rock climbing or long hikes should contact the Rangers beforehand. Photography, landscape painting and birdwatching are other activities which fit in with National Park concepts.



Looking west, Stirling Range

Facilities

Throughout the park at various points picnic areas have been constructed. Within the boundaries of the park, camping and caravans are permitted ONLY at Toolbrunup turn-off. A nominal fee is charged per unit per night and permits should be obtained from the Ranger. This area has seats and tables, barbecues, water and toilets but no showers. Adjacent to the northern boundary, opposite Bluff Knoll turn-off, is the Stirling Range Caravan Park. This has full facilities with 40 bays for caravans and camping. Power is 240 volt to 24 bays. On site vans are available, with a large laundry and modern ablution block and public telephone. Eight kilometres north of the park on Chester Pass Road is Amelup Service Station where fuel and oils and basic provisions may be purchased. Check on trading times locally. Thirteen kilometres south of the park on Chester Pass Road is Kamballup Roadhouse, where fuel and oils, liquor, basic provisions, gas refills, and a public telephone are available, open 8.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. Monday to Saturday. Caravan Parks, Motels and Hotels are available at the surrounding towns of Albany, Mt. Barker, Cranbrook, Gnowangerup and Ongerup.



Stirling Range national park

The rugged peaks of the Stirling Range rise abruptly (five to over 1000 metres above sea level) from the great southern agricultural area of Western Australia. Situated some 80 km north of Albany the first recorded sighting was from the sea by Matthew Flinders in 1802. The range was named by the surveyor J. S. Roe in 1835 after Capt. James Stirling, the first Governor of Western Australia.

The Stirling Range National Park is reached by a good sealed road from Albany, known as Chester Pass Road. Visitors from the north are most likely to approach the area through Gnowangerup and Borden and from the east by way of Jerramungup and Borden. Gravel roads lead from Cranbrook (Salt River Road) and from Mount Barker (See location map). There are two rangers resident in the Park at Bluff Knoll Road turn-off (Tel: 098 27 9218) and Toolbrunup Road turn-off (Tel: 098 27 9230).

The Stirling Range National Park encloses the entire Stirling Range mountain system. This system is comprised of Upper Proterozoic metasediments, quartzite and sandstone in its upper members with shales and slates in the lower. The Range was formed over 1000 million

years ago when this area was a shallow sea and sediment was deposited on the granite lowland. After the sea receded the area of the Range sank, due to faulting. Sometime after, the surrounding area was eroded back to the basic granite, the Range was slowly uplifted and has weathered to its present form. The Chester and Red Gum Passes mark the courses of rivers that flowed south during the early stages of formation. Ripple marks, similar to those found on the beach, can be seen on the exposed rock.



"On The Arrows"



Bluff Knoll

Flora

Due to the height of the Ranges—Bluff Knoll 1073 metres—and close proximity to the south coast, the climate differs from that of the surrounding area and this has produced a great variety of wildflowers. The park is known as one of the outstanding botanical reserves in Australia, with numerous species of wildflowers of which many are unknown elsewhere. This flora ranges from tiny orchids and heaths to the beautiful flowering eucalyptus trees. The area is mainly covered by dense shrubs varying in height from 1 to 3 metres. There are small forests of Jarrah, *Eucalyptus marginata*, Wandoo, *E. redunca* and Western Australian Red Gum or Marri *E. calophylla*, on the low lying areas of sandy soil between the mountains. The Park contains many species of orchids, particularly spider orchids *Caladenia* sp. and greenhoods *Pterostylis* sp. Dwarfing the small plants are many species from families such as the Proteaceae (e.g. *Banksia* sp., *Dryandra* sp. and *Grevillea* sp.) Mimosaceae (e.g. *Arcacia* sp.) and Papilionaceae (the pea family). Notable among the species unique to the area are the mountain bells *Darwinia* sp., seven of which are found only in the park—some being confined to specific peaks.

Fauna

The most common wildlife sighted in the park are parrots, magpies and currawongs. Common but only occasionally seen in the developed areas are Western Grey Kangaroos, Black-glove or Brush Wallabies and Emus. Over 100 species of birds have been recorded in the park the most colourful of these being the Western Rosella, the Red-capped Parrot, the Golden Whistler, the Splendid Wren and the Western Spinebill. When climbing most peaks magnificent Wedge tailed Eagles can be seen soaring on the wind. For the keen naturalist there is the possibility of finding Quokkas, Honey Possums and Pigmy Possums. The park also has unique species of trapdoor spiders and remarkable occurrences of frogs and land snails. Reptiles are part of the park fauna, the most common types seen being the Bobtail, or Sleepy Lizard and the Racehorse Goanna. Poisonous snakes such as Tigers, Dugites and Death Adders are present but rarely seen. Insects abound in the park and a great variety of moths and beetles can be found.