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FORESTS and FLOWERS

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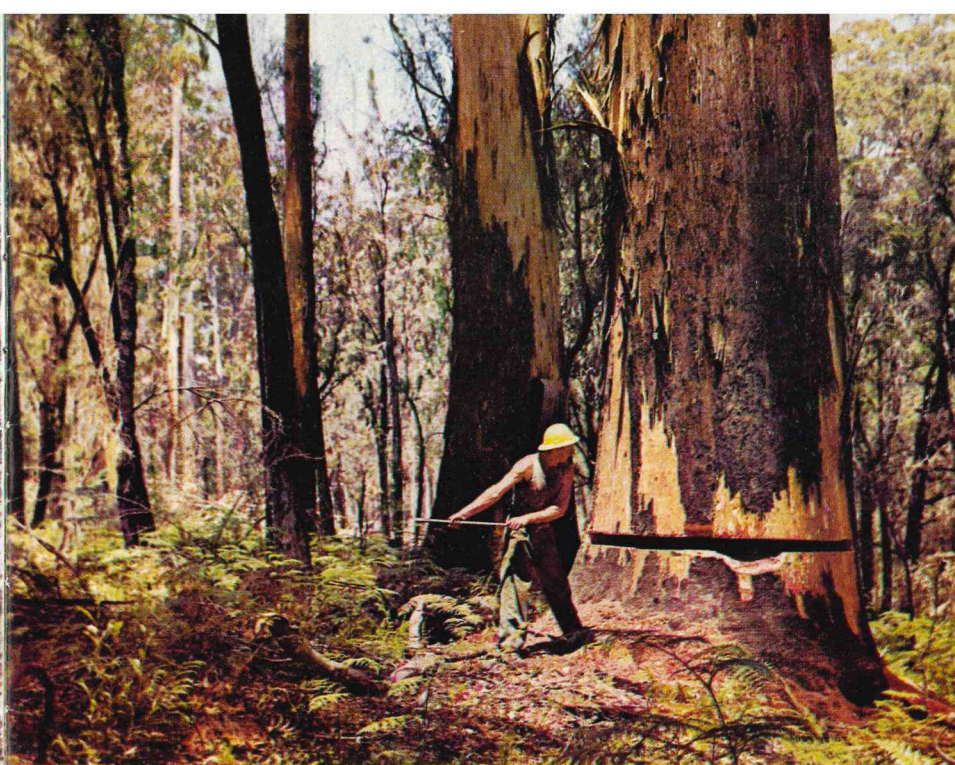
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Story of Timber

Deep in the rain-soaked region of the lower south-west of Western Australia are vast karri forests where tall regal trees with straight, smooth almost limbless trunks tower majestically to great heights. Karri, the aboriginal name for these noble trees, is botanically known as *Eucalyptus diversicolor* because of the difference in colour of the two sides of the leaves—the under surface being a paler green.

Karri is the largest tree in Western Australian forests and ranks second in commercial importance to another hardwood — jarrah. Long straight boles 120-160 feet free from side limbs tower skyward, supporting a wide spreading crown of 60 feet or more. Trees up to 286 feet in height with girths at axe handle height of 24 feet have been measured. Girths of 38 feet 6 inches have been measured on shorter trees. The bark is a smooth, greyish-white when old, but in late summer this splits and exposes a new, fresh salmon-yellow coloured bark beneath.

Regal karri giants stretch skywards.



Cutting a "scarf" to direct the fall of the tree.

Seen with the slanting rays of the morning sun piercing the dew spangled vegetation, the karri forest presents a beautiful sight not readily forgotten.

Karri prefers an acid soil, together with an annual rainfall in excess of 40 inches, and thrives in the south-west of the State mainly in an area between Nannup and the upper waters of the Donnelly River and Denmark.

TIMBER

The timber of karri is reddish brown, closely resembling jarrah in appearance, although generally lighter in colour. Karri can be distinguished from jarrah by burning a splinter of the woods, karri giving a white ash, whereas jarrah burns slowly to a black charcoal.

Moderately heavy in weight, with long grain, karri is stronger and tougher than jarrah. Weight per cubic foot (green) 73 lb., transverse strength 19,200 lb. per sq. inch, tensile strength 18,750 lb. per sq. inch.

BUSH OPERATIONS

Until recent years, the axe and crosscut saw were exclusively the tools used by the faller to fell and prepare the tree for transport to the mill. The axe was employed to cut a scarf into the front of the tree and to trim off side limbs. The crosscut saw was used on the back of the tree, opposite the axe scarf, to back the tree down and to cut the trunk into suitable log lengths. Today the motor powered circular saw and one-man and two-man chain saws do in much shorter time the work previously done with the axe and crosscut.

Chain sawing a log into suitable lengths for hauling.



SNIGGING

Crawler tractors with logging arches pull the logs from the stump to a central dump or landing for loading on to rail or motor trucks. Steam driven winches are used to move logs from the ramps (referred to as bush landings) onto vehicles for haulage to the mills.

HAULAGE

Steam locomotives and motor trucks are both used for transporting logs from the landings to the mills. Advantages of road transport over rail transport are : (1) Steeper grades can be worked, (2) sphere of operations can be changed quickly and with little expense, and (3) construction of suitable haulage roads presents no problems as gravel is readily available.

Snigging (or hauling) with a crawler tractor and logging arch.



MILLING

Timber milling is the conversion of raw log material into sawn products suitable for marketing. In general there are two classes of mills : (1) The large general purpose mill cutting scantling, sleepers, flooring and



Logs being loaded onto rail trucks at bush landing.

Bush train hauls its heavy load to mill.

joinery materials, and (2) the smaller special mill which includes the railway sleeper mill, the sheoak mill, and the case mill.

At the general purpose mill the log is crosscut into suitable lengths for orders held. Following docking (or crosscutting) the log is broken down by passing between two circular saws mounted vertically one above the other to enable cutting of large girth logs. The "fitches," as the sawn pieces are then called, pass to the saw benches where further cutting reduces them to required sizes.

Small special mills cut timber along similar lines to general mills but for specific purposes, such as sleepers, staves for barrels and case timber.

USES

A superb structural timber of great strength and available in large dimensions, karri is used extensively for mine guides, railway wagon scantling, telegraph crossarms, wharf and bridge timbers. Beautiful karri timber polished floors and interior panels are becoming increasingly popular.

Karri is the main source of peeler logs used in the plywood industry in Western Australia and sawn timber is exported for sleepers and other railway purposes.

Flowering of karri spreads over many months, the heaviest being from January to April. When flowering, the karri forests are bountiful honey yielders producing a high grade produce widely recognised as the best honey produced in the State. It is a light clear honey with a delicate flavour and excellent consistency and usually contributes about 25 per cent. of all the table honey produced in Western Australia.

A popular use of karri timber.



Male Banded Blue Wren—
Found only in South-West of
Western Australia.





FIRE PREVENTION

Ninety-six per cent. of all fires which occur in Western Australian forests are man-made and most are caused through thoughtlessness or carelessness and are thus largely preventable. Uncontrolled fires are always destructive, often disastrous, and the major cause of timber waste within the forest.

Fire weather forecasts are given twice daily by the Meteorological Bureau. This information is relayed over the Forestry Department telephone system to all control centres.

To spot fires skilled observers work from specially constructed lookout towers which have been established throughout 2,000,000 acres of forest. From low towers on high ground or cabins built in the tops of giant karri trees, Forestry Department observers, aided by powerful binoculars, scan the tree tops for the warning signs of smoke. Throughout the fire season the towers are manned from early morning until after dark.

BEAUTY SPOTS IN THE KARRI COUNTRY

Pemberton is situated in the heart of the karri country. Its many places of interest include the Gloucester Tree fire lookout, swimming pool, trout hatcheries, Rainbow Trail and Beedelup Falls.

Other places to see include Warren National Park, Brockman Forest, Fonty's Pool at Manjimup, and the Valley of the Giants at Nornalup.

Perched 200 feet from the ground, Western Australia's tallest fire lookout on Gloucester Tree, 3 miles from Pemberton.



Wildflowers

It's wildflower time all the year round in Western Australia. Never is the bushland entirely without native plants in bloom although of course springtime, from August to October, is more favourable and spectacularly provides what is probably the most beautiful and lavish natural display in the world.

The South-West of Western Australia is geologically the oldest part of the continent and for hundreds of years this region was undisturbed and remained a separate entity bounded by the natural barriers of the broad ocean and desert of the interior. Native plant life therefore progressed unmolested without intrusion from plants of other areas.

Over the years this plant life adapted itself to suit the hot gravelly soil of the sun-baked hills and the poorer sandy soils





Mangles Kangaroo Paw.
Anigosanthos manglesii D. Don.

Western Australia's Floral Emblem. It is the most widely distributed of all the Kangaroo Paws. It occurs in the South-West of the State and is one of the most spectacular species in the flora.



Cowslip Orchid.
Caladenia flava R.Br.

One of our best known orchids. Found in sandy soils in the coastal plain and inland as far as Mullewa and Merredin. The flowers are pure yellow or frequently have prominent red markings on the upper petals.



Blue Leschenaultia.
Leschenaultia biloba Lindl.

The gravels of the Darling Range are the true home of this beautiful plant, but it is also found in certain wheatbelt areas. The flowers vary considerably in intensity of blue.



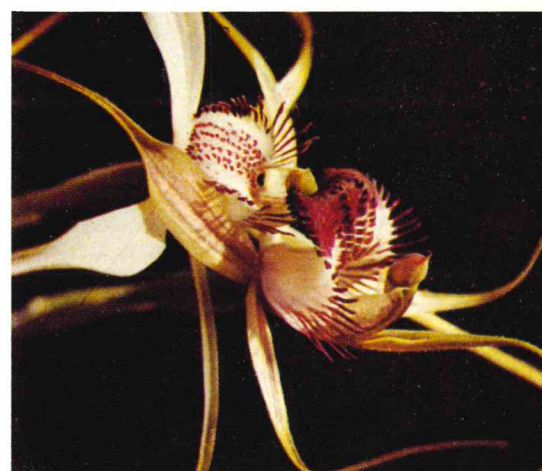
Star of Bethlehem.
Calectasia Cyanea, R.Br.

This unusual-looking lily, is widely distributed in this State, and extends into South Australia. In the south coastal areas the flowers are larger and of a deeper shade of purple.



Red Flowered Gum.
Eucalyptus ficifolia F. Muell.

Perhaps the most colourful of our Eucalypts, this species is native to the Denmark Region. The flowers vary considerably in colour, and are produced in the early summer months.



Spider Orchids.
Caladenia pectinata Rogers. Front.
Caladenia patersonii R.Br. var.
longicauda (Lindl.) Rogers. Behind.

These are amongst the largest of the Spider Orchids native to Western Australia. They are widely distributed in the south-west and flower during the spring months.



of swamplands and inland tracts and today presents richly developed seas of wildflowers stretching in some places as far as the eye can see.

Of the 7,000-odd species blue is the most prominent colour, ranging from the rich ultramarine of the wildflowers called "Dampiera" to the delicate cerulean tones of the "Leschenaultia." The delicately petalled flowers of the leschenaultia, among the loveliest of Western Australian shrubs, are seen not only in blue but in scarlet and pure yellow. Heavy with nectar, leschenaultia may often be seen crowned with flickering canopies of feeding butterflies that seem to prefer blue and purple flowers.

Nature has also endowed wattles, hibbertias and other trees and shrubs with brilliant yellows which in spring, particularly the fragrant fluffy blossoms of the wattles, drench the green countryside with a wash of colour.

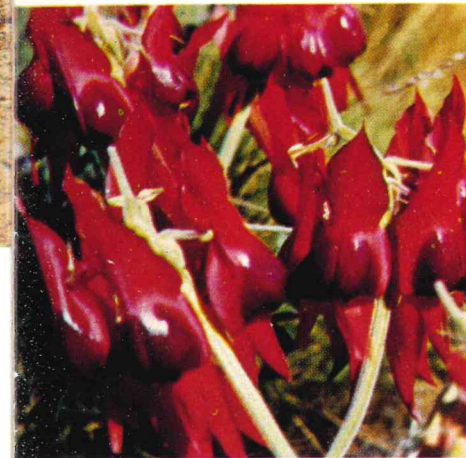
A typical sandplain common to the Carnamah, Three Springs and Wongan Hills districts.



Pink Mulla Mulla.



Scarlet Featherflower.



Sturt's Desert Pea.



W.A. Christmas Tree.

The State floral emblem, the unusual red and green kangaroo paw *Anigosanthos manglesii* D. Don), perpetuates a remarkable plant. Exclusive to South-Western Australia the species of the kangaroo paw group are nine in number and are amongst our strangest plants because of their curiously-shaped flowers and coloured vestiture of plume-like interlocked hairs. Gradations in colour of red and yellow or yellow and green of some varieties contrast sharply to others employing opposite colours of red and green, green and purple and even green and sooty black.

Red flowered gum trees with filaments of rich vermilion, scarlet and red, and the bottlebrush—which belongs to the myrtle family with heads of cream or red fluffy

flowers packed so closely together they look like a brush—give an abundant display of colour in any bushland setting. Another lovely member of the myrtle family is the Geraldton wax plant with its wide-open pale pink flowers.

Small, rather delicate plants with ingenious mechanisms are the trigger plants (*Stylidium*) and the pitcher plant (*Cephalotus follicularis*). The trigger plant has a column which is irritable, and has a trigger-like action which can be operated artificially, but which naturally is engaged in dusting pollen onto the backs of insect visitors and receiving pollen in exchange, the head of the column descending with a blow like a miniature hammer. The pitcher plant has strange metamorphosed leaves, remarkably like a household jug in form, complete with lid and are in reality lethal traps into which unsuspecting insects are lured and trapped to be slowly digested in the liquor of this strange vessel.

The bushlands of Western Australia when in flower present a kaleidoscopic effect which is bewildering to the visitor, and a never-ending source of delight to the botanist.

BOTANIC GARDENS—KING'S PARK

A Botanic Garden of 25 acres, featuring the wildflowers of Western Australia in cultivation is situated in Forrest Drive in King's Park and is open at all hours. Seeds of native plants may be purchased on a mail order basis from the Director—King's Park.

Other cultivated beds of wildflowers are at Yanchep Park, National Park and Serpentine Dam.

SEED SUPPLIES

The simplest method of establishing wildflower plants is by seeds and these are available in quantity from :

- Forests Department, Todd Avenue, Como.
- Wilson & Johns Pty. Ltd., 74 Barrack Street, Perth.
- Roselea Nursery Ltd., 26 Forrest Place, Perth.
- Director, King's Park Botanic Gardens, Perth.
- Dawson Harrison Pty. Ltd., 122 Barrack Street, Perth.
- Djin Djin Seeds, Post Office, Darlington.

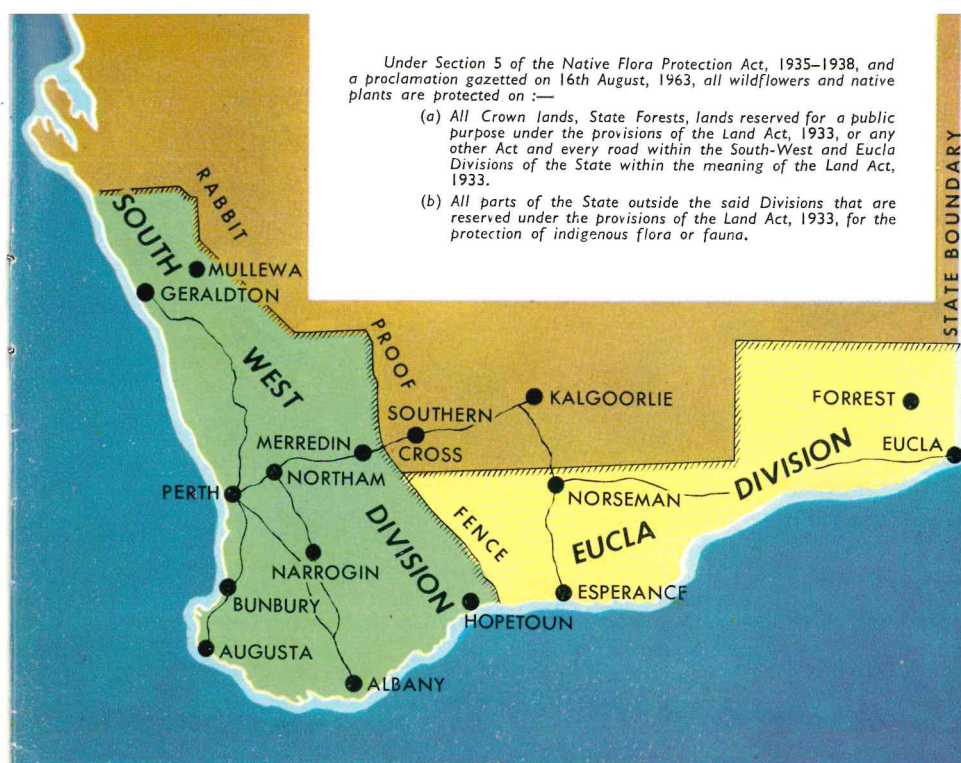
PLANT QUARANTINE

To prevent the introduction of plant pests and diseases from overseas, and to check the spread of pests and diseases already here, people travelling to other districts or other States are asked not to carry with them fruit, flowers, vegetables, seeds or plant materials.



Under Section 5 of the Native Flora Protection Act, 1935-1938, and a proclamation gazetted on 16th August, 1963, all wildflowers and native plants are protected on :—

- (a) All Crown lands, State Forests, lands reserved for a public purpose under the provisions of the Land Act, 1933, or any other Act and every road within the South-West and Eucla Divisions of the State within the meaning of the Land Act, 1933.
- (b) All parts of the State outside the said Divisions that are reserved under the provisions of the Land Act, 1933, for the protection of indigenous flora or fauna.



If you do wish to carry these articles, first check with your State Department of Agriculture or the Commonwealth Department of Health, Canberra.

In Perth, the State Department of Agriculture is in Jarrah Road, South Perth.

TOURS TO WILDFLOWER AREAS

Each year during the wildflower season tours operate to beauty spots near Perth and to country areas. Wildflowers can be seen on short tours to Yanchep and National Parks, Mundaring Weir, Canning Dam, Serpentine Dam, Lake Leschenaultia and other interesting places.

Further afield 3 to 6 day wildflower tours include travel over many miles of wildflower bushland.

For further information on wildflowers, travel bookings and details on Western Australia contact Western Australian Government Tourist Bureau Offices located at :

- 772 Hay Street, Perth.
- 22 Martin Place, Sydney.
- 34 King William Street, Adelaide.
- 2 Royal Arcade, Melbourne.