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Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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PARRY LAGOONS NATURE RESERVE

The wetlands of Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve are an important feeding and breeding area for many birds and a stopover point for migratory shorebirds, some from as far away as Siberia. Parry Lagoons has been listed on the Register of the National Estate and is part of the Lower Ord Ramsar wetland of international significance.

In addition to the wetlands of the Ord floodplain, the 36,000-hectare reserve includes grasslands, woodlands and rugged sandstone country. Sites of historic interest such as the Old Halls Creek Road and the ruins of a wireless station on Telegraph Hill are also found in the reserve.

What is a nature reserve?

Nature reserves in Western Australia are for the conservation of fauna and flora and are places where visitors can observe and learn about native plants and animals. Firearms, pets, camping and campfires are not permitted.

Where is it?

Approximately 20 km south of Wyndham. The main access road is signposted on the Great Northern Highway 15 km from Wyndham and 85 km from Kununurra. Roads within the reserve are unsealed and may be closed during the wet season. The Old Halls Creek Road is suitable for 4WD vehicles only.

Travelling times

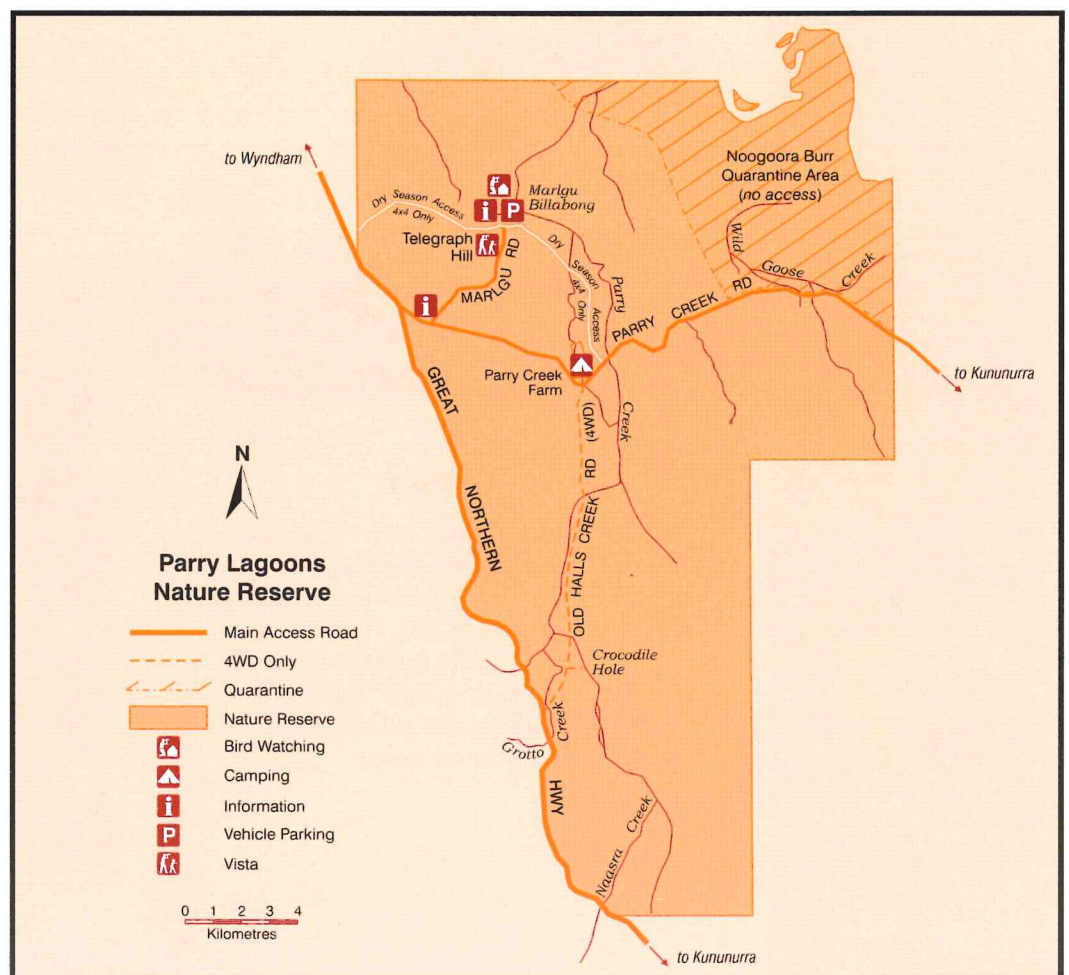
One hour from Kununurra and 30 minutes from Wyndham.

Camping

Camping is not permitted in the reserve. Accommodation and camping are available at Parry Creek Farm on privately owned land within the reserve. Phone (08) 9161 1139.

Caution

Both estuarine (saltwater) and freshwater crocodiles inhabit creeks and waterholes within the reserve. Take care and stay back from the water's edge.



Quarantine

No access is permitted to the Noogoora Burr Quarantine Area in the north-eastern section of the reserve. As well as altering the diversity and ecological balance of natural habitats, Noogoora Burr is a weed that would seriously impact on the wool industry in the south of western Australia if it spreads.

Facilities

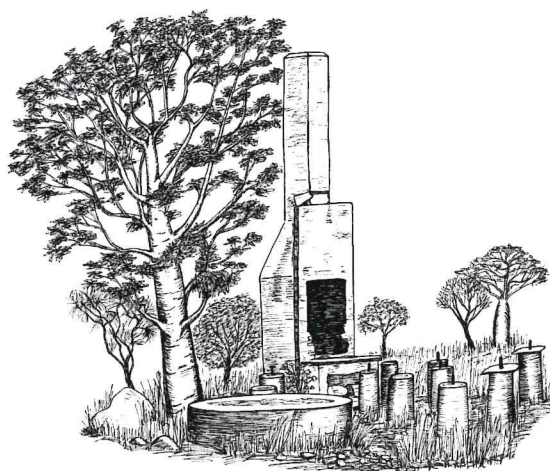
An information bay is located at the intersection of Marlgu Road and Parry Creek Road. A birdhide and boardwalk provide opportunities for birdwatching at Marlgu Billabong.

Nearest Department of Conservation and Land Management office

Kimberley Regional Office, Messmate Way, Kununurra.
Telephone (08) 9168 4200

What to do?

Birdwatching, sightseeing, photography.



Old Halls Creek Road

This road was built around 1894. It superseded the original track that was blazed from Wyndham to Halls Creek following the discovery of gold at Halls Creek in 1885. The stones that were painstakingly laid by hand to line the road edges can still be seen in places. This road is negotiable by 4WD vehicles only and may be impassable during the wet season.

Marlgu Billabong

Marlgu is an Aboriginal name meaning wild bird, a name now given to the pool where many birds gather. For thousands of years Aboriginal people camped beside the waterholes to fish, collect birds eggs, and to hunt waterbirds, crocodiles and wallabies.

When pastoralism came to the Kimberley, mobs of cattle driven overland from pastoral leases were rested and fattened near Marlgu. Some two million cattle passed through en route to the Wyndham meatworks up till 1962, when trucks finally replaced the last of the drovers.

In 1972 the importance of the wetlands for birdlife was recognised with the creation of Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve. To help visitors appreciate this important wetland, a boardwalk and birdhide have been constructed at Marlgu with the assistance of the Commonwealth Department of Tourism.

Telegraph Hill

The main access road in the reserve leads to Telegraph Hill, one of several small basalt hills on the floodplain. Here wide vistas of the floodplain and distant hills can be enjoyed.

In 1914 a wireless station was built on Telegraph Hill to assist ships entering Wyndham Port. During World War I, it was also used by naval intelligence to intercept radio traffic. The station played a vital role in the tracking and sinking of the German warship, *Emden*. The ruins of the wireless station are still evident today.

