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Shark Bay World Heritage Notes



ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION DISTRICT OFFICE, DENHAM, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SHARK BAY'S WORLD HERITAGE VALUES

Outstanding examples representing the major stages of the earth's evolutionary history.

- Stromatolites and microbial mats of Hamelin Pool
- Hamelin Pool and L'hardian Bight and Holocene deposits

Outstanding examples representing significant ongoing geological process, biological evolution and man's interaction with his natural environment.

Marine Environment

- Unique hydrological structure, banks and sills, steep salinity gradients, three biotic zones
- Faure sill
- Hypersaline environment of Hamelin Pool
- Microbial communities
- *Fragum eragatum* shell deposits
- High genetic biodiversity (eg snapper, venerid clams, bivalves)
- Seagrass meadows, and their role in the evolution of the marine environment
- Wooramel seagrass bank, expanse of meadows and diversity of seagrass species
- Carbonate deposits and sediments
- Northern limit of transition region between temperate and tropical marine environments, resulting in high species diversity (eg 323 fish species, 218 bivalve species, and 80 coral species)

Terrestrial Environment

- Botanical province transition zone, most pronounced in the southern parts of Nanga and Tamala
- Range limits (145 plant species at northern limit, 39 species at southern limit, and 28 vascular plant species endemic)
- Isolation of fauna habitats on islands and peninsulas resulting in survival of threatened species
- Range limits and fauna species richness (100 species of herpetofauna – 9 endemics, 230 species of birds representing 35% of Australia's total species)
- Species evolution illustrated in rufous Hare Wallaby and Banded Hare Wallaby.

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Superlative natural phenomena, formation or features, for instance, outstanding examples of the most important ecosystems, areas of exceptional natural beauty or exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements.

- Stromatolites
- Hypersaline environment of Hamelin Pool
- Faure sill
- Wooramel seagrass bank
- Coastal scenery – Zuytdorp cliffs, Dirk Hartog Is, Peron Peninsula, Heirisson and Bellefin Prongs
- Fragum beaches of L'hardion Bight
- Inundated birridas and lagoons such as Big Lagoon
- Strongly contrasting colours of the dunes/cliffs, beaches and adjacent ocean of Peron Peninsula
- Abundance of marine fauna (dugongs, dolphins, sharks, rays, turtles and fish)
- Annual wildflower season display

The most important and significant natural habitats where threatened species of animals or plants of outstanding universal value still survive.

- Five out of Australia's 26 endangered mammals (Shark Bay Mouse, Banded Hare-Wallaby, Rufous Hare-Wallaby, Western Barred Bandicoot and Burrowing Bettong) survive in Shark Bay.
- Bernier Island subspecies of Ash-grey Mouse
- 12 threatened reptiles (eg Baudin Island Skink and Woma)
- Endemic Sandhill Frog
- 35 migratory bird species
- Threatened Thick Billed Grasswren
- Endemic Dirk Hartog subspecies of the southern emu-wren
- Dugong (approx ten percent of the world's population)
- Humpback Whales
- Loggerhead and Green Turtles
- Some threatened flora species