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Above Little Tagon Bay, Cape Arid National Park. Photo - Gordon Roberts/DEC

Remember

Be careful

Caution is required in any natural environment with potentially hazardous terrain. Your safety is our concern but your responsibility.

Be clean

Please take your litter with you.

Be cool

Don't light fires. Bring your own portable gas stove.

Stay on the road

Follow signs and keep to roads shown on this brochure. Be aware that some tracks may be closed during wet conditions.

Protect animals and plants

No firearms or pets are permitted in national parks or nature reserves.

Be CoastSafe

Choose fishing or swimming sites with great care. The Southern Ocean is unpredictable, making fishing from rocks and swimming especially dangerous.

Huge waves and swells can occur suddenly, even on calm days. Rocks become slippery when wet. Riptides are common along the coastline.

Below Red wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*). Photo - Babs and Bert Wells/DEC



Above Kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos rufus*). Photo - Gordon Roberts/DEC

More information

National park rangers are always glad to make your visit more enjoyable and informative. Don't hesitate to contact them if you need information or assistance.

Senior Ranger

Cape Arid National Park
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Please heed warnings shown on signs that display this symbol.



Information current at October 2012

This document is available in alternative formats on request.

Front cover Cape Arid NP. Photo - Ian Hughes/DEC

Cape Arid and Eucla national parks

Israelite Bay/Nuytsland Nature Reserve



Information and recreation guide



Department of
Environment and Conservation



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Landscape features

Cape Arid National Park, located 125 kilometres east of Esperance, encompasses nearly 280,000 hectares of native vegetation and is best known for its stunningly beautiful beaches, clear blue seas and rocky headlands.

Low granite hills extend inland and in the northern part of the park the jagged Russell Range rises to its highest point at Tower Peak (594 metres).

Southern sandheaths and mallee extend inland to Mount Ragged, after which the vegetation transforms into woodlands dominated by saltbush and bluebush.

Cape Arid National Park and Nuytsland Nature Reserve to the east form a continuous protected area reaching from east of Esperance almost to the South Australian border.

Nuytsland Nature Reserve features a mallee landscape north of Wylie Scarp, which marks the start of limestone cliffs that extend eastwards for more than 100 kilometres and include the 90-metre-tall Baxter Cliffs.

Heath-covered sandplain stretches to the east and west of Israelite Bay. To the east, the landscape between the scarp and coastline is broken by a series of salt lakes and clay pans.

Point Malcolm and the eastern group of islands of the Recherche Archipelago can be seen as you drive down Wylie Scarp, just west of Tookle Jenna Rock and about 25 kilometres west of Israelite Bay.

Eucla National Park features 3,340 hectares of mallee scrub and heathland near the Western Australian and South Australian border.

The park's most significant features are Wilson Bluff, a high limestone cliff that provides a vantage point for viewing the spectacular sea cliffs of the Great Australian Bight, and the Delisser Sandhills, which are clearly visible from Eyre Highway.



Above Thomas River and Yokinup Bay. Photo - Gordon Roberts/DEC

Wildlife

Life in **Cape Arid National Park** is ruled by scarce water. Granite outcrops and the occasional pool of permanent water form micro-habitats that support plants and animals not found elsewhere in the park.

On and near Mount Ragged, many species of orchid and several ferns have been identified, together with a small population of the sticky-tail flower (*Anthocercis viscosa*), which previously has only been found near the coast.

Animals found throughout south-west WA inhabit Cape Arid National Park, including the southern bush rat, western brush wallaby, quenda, several species of small marsupial predators, plus reptiles and amphibians.

Flora in **Eucla National Park** includes common South Australian species that have followed the sea cliffs into WA.

Templetonia retusa, found in limestone rich areas, typically has red flowers that are the reason for its common name of 'cockie's tongue,' yet it can also be found with pink or yellow flowers.

During winter and early spring, whales are regularly spotted off the coastline of both parks. Seals occasionally visit beaches in Cape Arid National Park.

Threatened birds

Cape Arid National Park is an important conservation area for birds, as it protects a broad range of habitats that support more than 160 bird species. Sixteen of the 18 species of honeyeater found in southern WA are found here.

Several threatened bird species visit the park including the Australasian bittern, Carnaby's cockatoo and the Cape Barren goose. The park is also home to the critically endangered western ground parrot.

Feral animal control

One of the biggest threats to native animals is the European fox. Due to the success of DEC's ongoing *Western Shield* baiting program, which targets foxes and feral cats, the chuditch has been reintroduced into Cape Arid National Park.

Dieback - help stop the rot

Dieback is a plant disease caused by a waterborne mould known as *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which is lethal to hundreds of plant species. Dieback kills plants by destroying their root systems and places many of the park's plant species at risk.

The climate of the south coast favours the spread of dieback, which thrives in wet soil and can easily be spread in mud or soil that adheres to vehicle tyres or bushwalkers' footwear. Because of this, it is sometimes necessary to close roads and tracks or temporarily restrict access to certain areas.

To avoid spreading dieback when driving in the park, it is essential to keep to established roads and tracks and obey all 'ROAD CLOSED' signs. Bushwalkers can help by cleaning mud and soil from their boots before entering a park or reserve. By washing the tyres and underbody of your car before and after a trip to a park or reserve, you can help preserve WA's natural areas.

Below Tagon Beach, Cape Arid National Park. Photo - Allan Rose/DEC



Below left Banksia. Photo - Gordon Roberts/DEC
Centre Chuditch. Photo - Babs and Bert Wells/DEC
Right Cockie's tongue. Photo - DEC



Below Mount Ragged, Cape Arid National Park. Photo - Allan Rose/DEC



Things to do and see

Camping

- See map for locations.
- Bring a portable gas stove for cooking.
- Always carry your own water supply.
- Generator running hours – 8am to 1pm and 5pm to 9pm.

Cape Arid National Park

Unsealed roads lead to camp sites at Seal Creek and Thomas River. Mount Ragged and Jorndee Creek are accessible by four-wheel-drive vehicle only.

Nuytsland Nature Reserve

Camping is permitted in the Shire of Esperance Israelite Bay Recreation Reserve, access is by four-wheel-drive vehicle only.

Eucla National Park

No camping is permitted within the park. Facilities are located at Border Village and Eucla Pass.

Fishing

Coastal fishing is excellent all year round. Recreational fishing regulations apply. Ask a park ranger or call the Fisheries WA office in Esperance.

Be aware. The Southern Ocean is unpredictable. Fishing from rocks is extremely dangerous.

Four-wheel driving

Please keep to designated four-wheel-drive tracks to avoid spreading plant disease and causing erosion.

Some tracks may be closed during wet conditions including Telegraph Track, Thomas Fishery Track, Balladonia Track, Pasley Track and Gora Track.

Contact the ranger for details.

Some beaches may be inaccessible. Consider the conditions on the day. Remember that beach sand can be treacherous. Check tide charts when planning your trip and remember to adjust your tyre pressure.

Closest fuel outlet is Condingup (55 kilometres from Thomas River camp site) or Esperance (130 kilometres from Israelite Bay).

Birdwatching

All walks in the park offer good opportunities for spotting birds.

Thomas River camp site's banksia woodland is home to many species of honeyeater when banksias are in flower.

Thomas River estuary is home to waterbirds and waders, including pied oystercatchers and crested terns.

Yokinup Bay is a breeding area for hooded plovers.

Poison Creek Road's roadside heath is home to Australian bustards, brown falcons, rufous fieldwrens and southern emu-wrens.

Mount Ragged and its surrounds feature mallee scrub and woodlands, home to malleefowls, mulga parrots, chestnut quail thrushes, shy heathwrens, purple-gaped honeyeaters, yellow-plumed honeyeaters and crested bellbirds.

Historical sites

Cape Arid National Park

You can see ruins of homesteads, buildings and dams constructed by pioneer graziers in the early 1870s around Thomas Fishery and Pine Hill. Gravesites of early travellers can be seen near the water hole at Pine Hill and the grave of an early settler is viewable in a deep valley near Hill Springs east of Mount Arid.

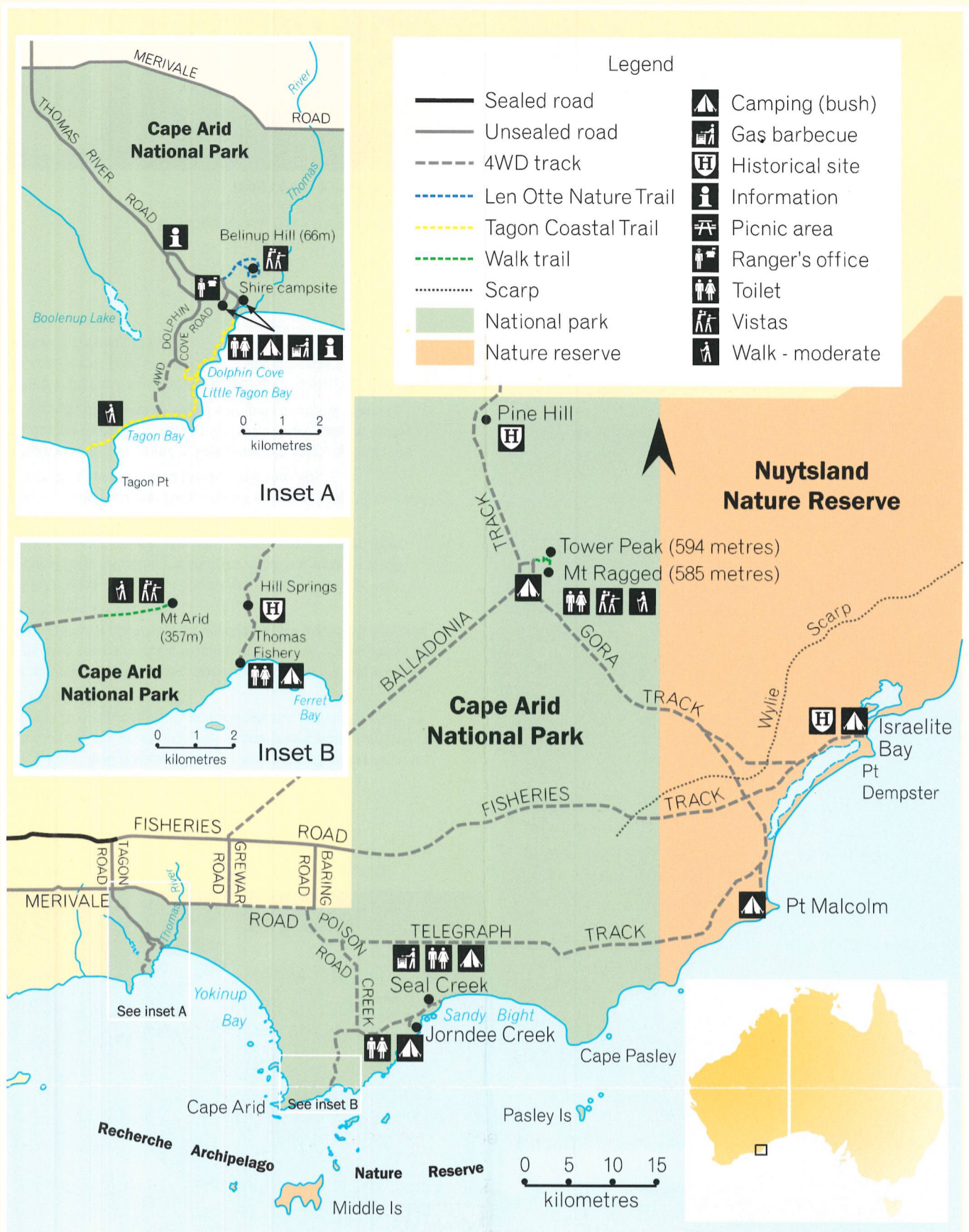
Nuytsland Nature Reserve

Ruins of the National Trust – classified Post Office and Telegraph Station (built in 1895) are located within the National Trust historical reserve at Israelite Bay.

Eucla National Park

Near the western boundary of the park, the ruins of the Eucla Telegraph Station and original Eucla township can be found, gradually being buried by encroaching sand dunes. These ruins date from the construction of the original transcontinental telegraph line. Ask DEC staff for details.

Below Old telegraph station, near Eucla National Park. Photo – Tourism WA.



Walking

Bush walks and beach walks offer scenic vistas and close-up views of the natural beauty of the park. **Carry ample drinking water.**

Cape Arid National Park

Len Otte Nature Trail (1km return) – Allow one hour. This easy to moderate (class 3) walk features views over the park and a close look at the varied plant and animal life of the area.

Tagon Coastal Trail (7km return) – Allow four hours. A moderate (class 3) track featuring views over the wild coastline. In winter, you may spot a southern right whale visiting the bay.

Mount Ragged Walk (3km return) – Allow three hours. A difficult (class 4) walk to the top of Tower Peak (594 metres). Mount Ragged is a steep-sided ridge surrounded at about one-third height by a wave-cut platform.

Mount Arid (2km return) – Allow two hours. A moderately difficult (class 5) climb to the summit provides magnificent views of the coastline, Recherche islands and the park's interior landscape. Access is by four-wheel drive only along the beach during suitable tide and swell conditions.

There are no formal walk trails in the western section of Nuytsland Nature Reserve or Eucla National Park.

