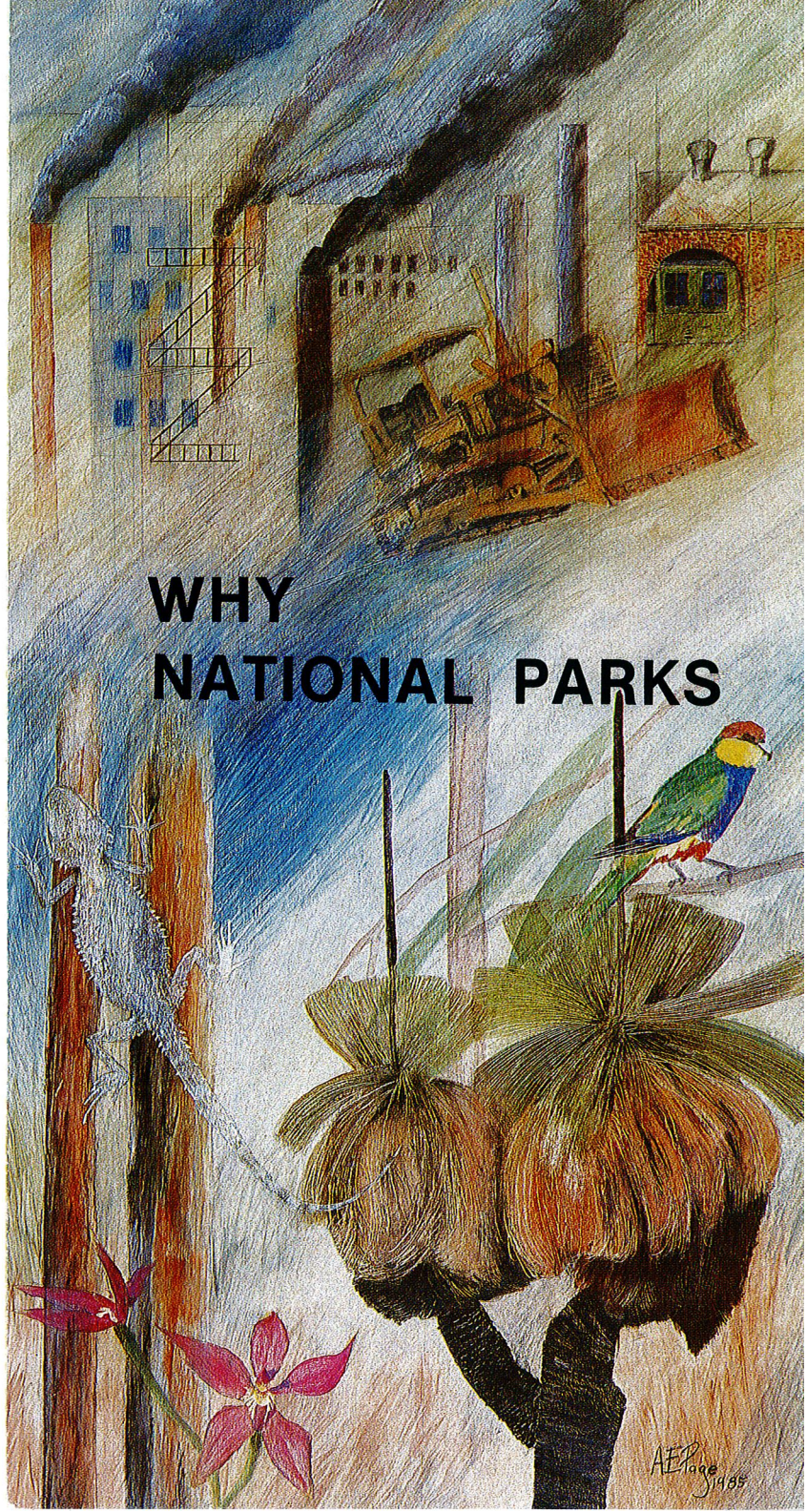
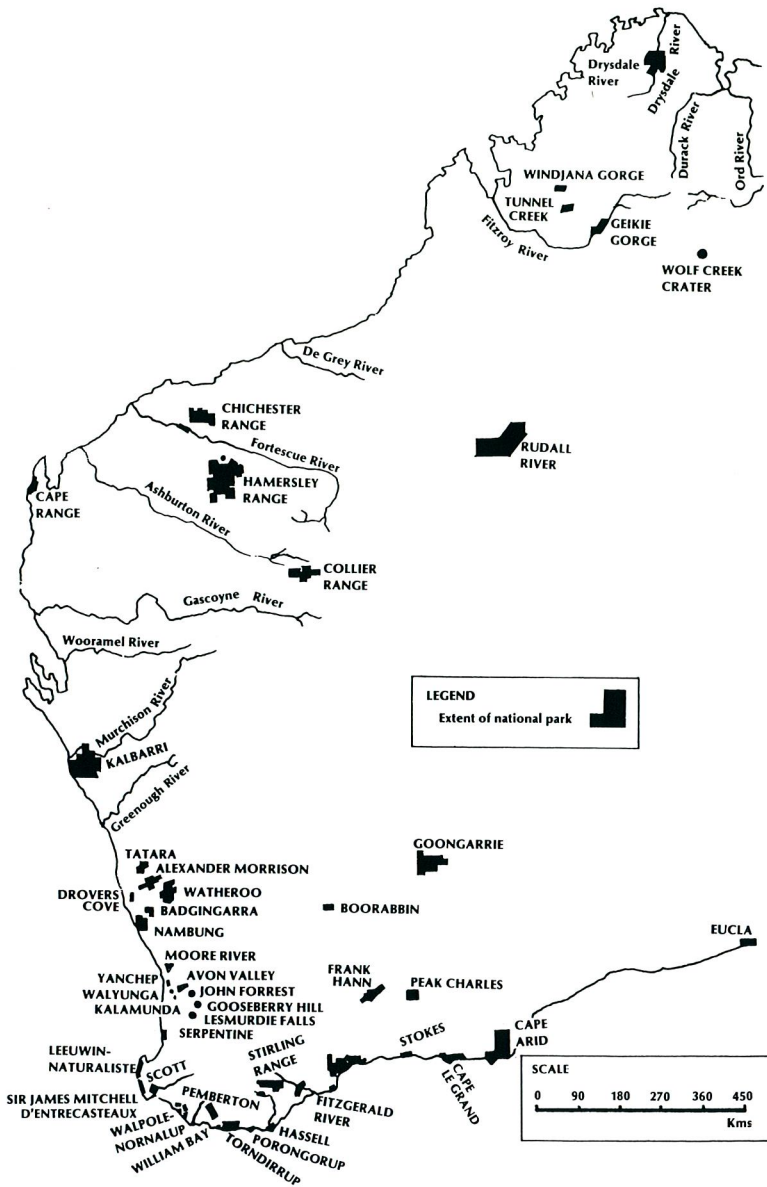


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Department of Biodiversity,
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WHY NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES?

Since European settlement the combined effects of clearing, grazing, salinity, logging, mining and many other destructive practices have altered the landscape and dramatically reduced the area of natural vegetation.

Without adequate National Parks and Reserves, and strong laws to protect them, the remaining forests, heath, grasslands and wetlands and all they contain have little chance of surviving intact.



WHY CONSERVE SPECIES ?

We, together with all plants and animals are a part of a complex web of life. It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that we reduce our impact on other species and on our physical environment.

- More than 800 species of plants are at risk in South West of W.A.
- 80 species of animals are rare or endangered in the State as a whole.
- 18 species of animals have become extinct in the wheatbelt since 1829.



WHAT'S A NATIONAL PARK FOR?

Conservation of habitats:

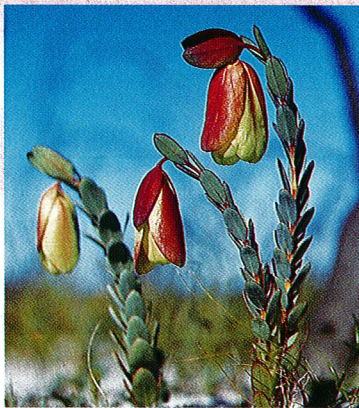
Different values are placed on National Parks by a wide range of people, but the primary value is conservation of a representative ecosystem. Many species require sizeable natural areas capable of supporting large populations. Without a sufficiently large population to retain adequate genetic diversity, species do not have the resilience to survive threats such as fire, disease, or climatic change. A 1985 survey of public attitudes to National Parks found that 60.3% of West Australians nominated conservation as the primary role of National Parks.

Recreation:

National Parks are used for a wide range of recreational activities which cannot be adequately provided for elsewhere. Bushwalking, camping, painting, photography, flora and fauna study, geological appreciation and picnics are all part of the "bush experience".

Scientific research and education:

Native plants have proved invaluable in various fields of research. For example, the Qualup Bell, found in Fitzgerald River National Park, is being tested in cancer research. With 51% of Australian farmland degraded, plants unnamed or unstudied, and long lists of endangered species, National Parks and Reserves become ideal places to study the structure and functioning of various ecosystems.



The Qualup Bell

Tourism:

There are considerable economic benefits generated from National Parks, especially to surrounding areas. For example, visitors to Coolooloa National Park in QLD spent \$2,970,000 in 1982 on accommodation, tours and camping.

DEFINITIONS YOU ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU KNEW

NATIONAL PARKS: are large areas established to conserve native flora and fauna, special landscapes wilderness and areas of scientific importance. As a consequence they provide public enjoyment, education and inspiration.

NATURE RESERVES: are areas ranging in size from a few hectares to many thousands of hectares, set aside for the protection of a representative example of natural ecosystem or threatened types of plants and animals. They differ from National Parks in that they are not managed for recreation, though some are open to visitors on foot, and they need to be scenically attractive.

STATE FORESTS: are managed for timber, water catchment protection, recreation and conservation. In the majority of State Forests the emphasis is on timber production.

MANAGEMENT PRIORITY AREAS (MPA's): are areas of State Forests zoned according to the primary purpose of management. Two categories similar to National Parks, are Nature Conservation Forests and Recreation Forests. However, their purpose can be easily changed to timber production or some other use.

WORLD HERITAGE SITES: are cultural or natural sites accepted by the World Heritage Committee as being important to the entire world. They are exceptional examples of an evolutionary stage of human interaction with the natural environment (such as Kakadu in the Northern Territory, with its Aboriginal sites), or unique systems such as the Barrier Reef. Western Australia is preparing to nominate the Shark Bay region.

BIOSPHERE RESERVES: are part of UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme. The aim of the Programme is to identify areas and provide baselines so that research and education programmes on the interactions between man and various ecosystems occurs in a framework of international co-operation. Fitzgerald River National Park and Prince Regent River National Park are the two Western Australian areas in the Programme.

WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES: are private refuges, either in a natural habitat or specially created for the protection of one or more species. Many different ways of assisting farmers to set up such areas in Western Australia are being considered. For example, it has been suggested that the Government could grant the farmer exemption from rates or taxes in return for a legal agreement that the land will not be cleared.

WILDERNESS: is a primitive and remote area, not noticeably changed by the activities of settled people. The few wilderness areas left should be incorporated into National Parks, but zoned so that access is by foot or non-motorized vehicle.



★ NATIONAL PARKS ARE FOREVER — OR ARE THEY? ★

In Western Australia the various parks and reserves are divided into two categories based upon how secure they are from development. In all other states, National Parks and Nature Reserves are automatically 'A' class.

'A' Class Reserves cannot be revoked or allocated to another purpose without the consent of both Houses of Parliament.

'B' Class Reserves can be revoked or allocated to another purpose by the Minister for Lands, but only if he notifies Parliament of his reasons. The Drysdale River National Park in the Kimberley is scenically beautiful and diverse, with gorges, cliffs and waterfalls. It does not have the protection that an 'A' class reserve affords.

'C' Class Reserves can be revoked or allocated to another purpose by the Minister for Lands, without notification of Parliament or the public. Collier Range National Park, north of Meekatharra, and Peak Charles National Park, south-west of Norseman, are both 'C' class National Parks. 'B' and 'C' class National Parks and Nature Reserves are not necessarily of any less value for conservation than other areas. All National Parks and Nature Reserves should be 'A' class.

Further information about Western Australian National Parks can be found in the other brochures in this series, "Whats Happening in our National Parks", and "A Better System of National Parks for W.A."

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