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# Mount Augustus National Park

## Burringurrah



### Visitor guide



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



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Above View from Goordgeela Lookout. Photo – Scott Godley/DBCA

## Mount Augustus National Park

Mount Augustus is an 'inselberg', meaning 'island mountain', which rises 715m out of the surrounding alluvial plain. Arid shrubland dominated by wattles, cassias and eremophilas covers the inselberg and the surrounding plain.

Take the 49km drive around Mount Augustus to access rocky creeks, gorges and open plains, view Aboriginal rock engravings (petroglyphs) and encounter a variety of wildlife.

Groves of white-barked river gums indicate water seepage – so precious to the local ecology. Mulga, gidgee and other wattles are dispersed across the plain. Likewise for spinifex pigeons, crimson chats, mulga parrots, babbler, emus and bustards (or wild turkey) – often found foraging for food resources. Bungarras (goannas) and red kangaroos are common on the plain, while euros and birds of prey are found closer to the inselberg.


At Cattle Pool on the Lyons River, a tributary of the Gascoyne, permanent pools attract waterbirds such as black cormorants, ibis, heron, and a variety of ducks. In the trees are blue-winged kookaburras, sacred kingfishers and corellas.



Right Cattle Pool. Photo – Tourism WA

Far right Geological giant – Mount Augustus in the morning light. Photo – Tourism WA

### Caring for the park and your safety

**Plan ahead and prepare** – your safety is our concern but your responsibility. Always carry ample drinking water. 

**Travel and camp on durable surfaces** – There is no camping in the park. Camping is available at the nearby Mount Augustus Tourist Park. Follow signs in the park and stay on marked trails.

**Dispose of waste properly** – please take your rubbish out of the park when you leave.

**Leave what you find** – such as rocks, plants and other natural objects.

**Minimise campfire impacts** – Fires are not permitted in the park. Use your portable gas stove. Dead wood is habitat for wildlife.

**Respect wildlife** – do not disturb animals and plants. No firearms or pets are permitted in the park.

**Be considerate of your hosts and other visitors** – Petroglyph sites in the park are culturally significant to the Wajarri people. Please enjoy the privilege of visiting these sites and treat them with respect.

Below Hikers admiring the view from the Summit Trail. Photo – Sue Hancock/DBCA



### Aboriginal history

Mount Augustus and surrounds are the traditional lands of the Wajarri people. Burringurrah is the Wajarri name for Mount Augustus.

In times of plenty, the Wajarri people would roam over a wide area of the Gascoyne. In times of drought, they would return to areas where water was available, such as the natural springs along the base of Mount Augustus. Aboriginal occupation is evident by engravings on rock walls at Mundee, Ooramboo and Beedobooundu visitor sites, and by numerous stone tools discovered in these areas. Burringurrah continues to be a significant site for the Wajarri people.



Above Mount Augustus foxglove and jewel beetle. Above right Wedge-tailed eagle. Photos – Janine Guenther

Burringurrah was undergoing his initiation into manhood. The rigours of this process so distressed him that he ran away, thereby breaking Aboriginal law. Tribesmen pursued the boy, finally catching up with him and spearing him in the upper right leg as his punishment. Burringurrah fell to the ground; the spearhead broke from its shaft and protruded from his leg. The boy tried to crawl away but was hit with a mulgurrah (fighting stick).

Burringurrah collapsed and died, lying on his belly with his left leg bent up beside his body. You can see his final resting pose when you approach Mount Augustus from the south. The geological fracture lines at the western end of the inselberg indicate the wounds inflicted by the mulgurrah. Look for the spear stump in his leg that today is called Edney's Lookout.



### Visitor information

#### Access

Mount Augustus is 465km from Carnarvon via Gascoyne Junction and 345km from Meekatharra. Roads are gravel but suitable for two-wheel-drive vehicles. Roads may be closed or substantially damaged after rainfall. Seek advice from the local shires.

Carry ample fuel, water and supplies to cope with all possible occurrences.

Always stay on signposted tracks and stay with your vehicle if you break down.

#### Overnight

Mount Augustus Tourist Park provides accommodation, powered caravan sites, camping facilities, food items (no prepared meals), barbecue area and fuel.

Ph: (08) 9943 0527

mtaugustustouristpark@skymesh.com.au

mtaugustustouristpark.com

Note: this is a privately operated business.

### More information

Visitor information is available at the Mount Augustus Tourist Park shop.

**Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Parks and Wildlife Service Carnarvon Office**

Phone: (08) 9941 3754

**Shire of Upper Gascoyne** Ph: (08) 9943 0988

**Shire of Meekatharra** Ph: (08) 9981 1002

**In an emergency, dial 000**



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



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Front cover Mount Augustus National Park. Photo – Tourism WA  
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This publication is available in alternative formats on request.



Above The Gully Trail. Photo – DBCA

### Geology

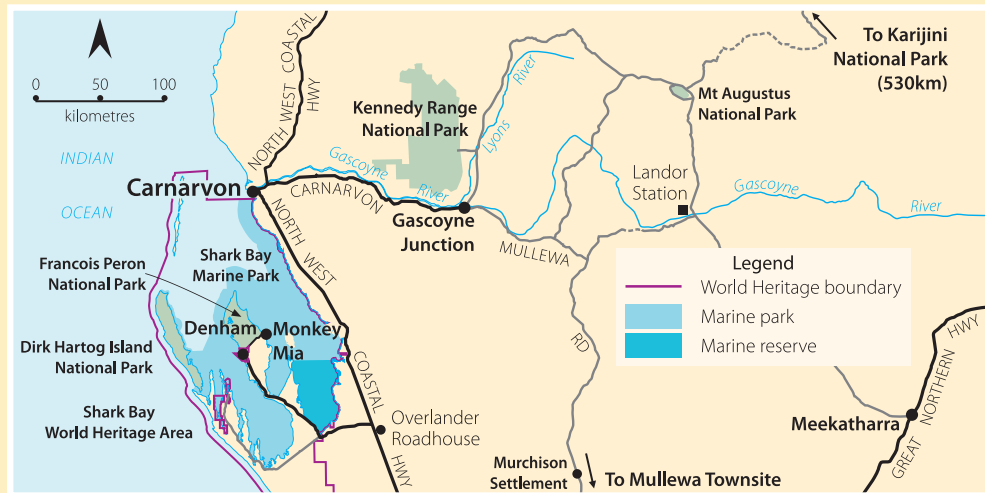
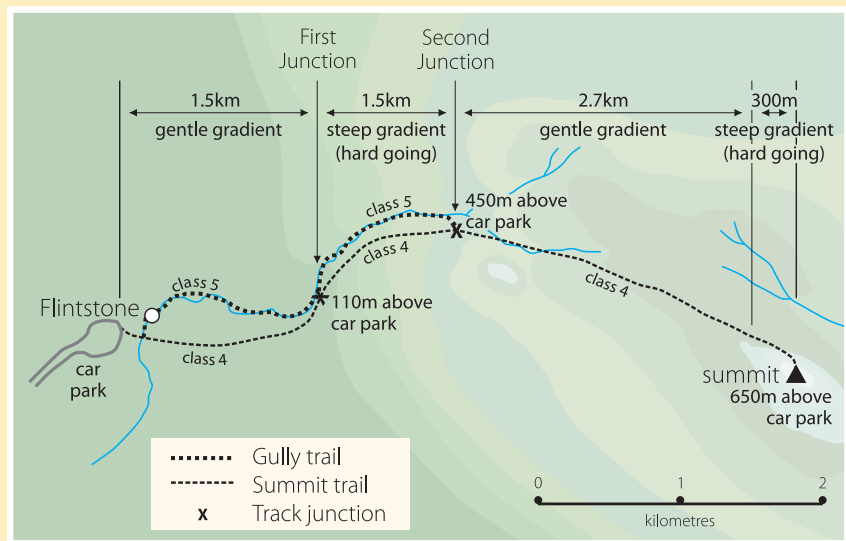
Mount Augustus is an asymmetrical anticline (rock layers that have been folded into an arch-like structure), which is steeper on its north-eastern side than the south-west.

The rocks consist of sand and gravel deposited by an ancient, south-easterly flowing river system that drained the region about 1600 million years ago. This river system flowed over a faulted and eroded surface of 1800–1620 million-year-old granitic and metamorphic rocks. The river deposits consolidated to form sandstone and conglomerate, and were then buried beneath younger marine sediments, which were laid down when shallow seas covered the region between 1600–1070 million years ago.

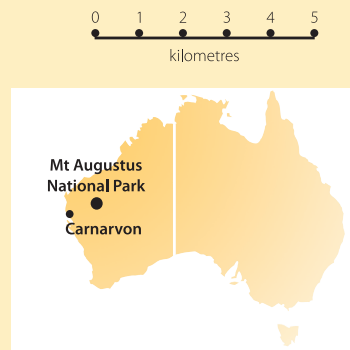
The rocks were buckled into their present-day structure about 900 million years ago when movement along faults in the underlying granitic and metamorphic rocks caused localised, strong, north-east directed compression. The marine sedimentary rocks that overlay the sandstone and conglomerate have since been eroded from Mount Augustus, but now form the hills around Cobra and Mount Augustus homesteads. Erosion has also removed sandstone and conglomerate from the north-western end of Mount Augustus to expose the underlying granitic rocks at The Pound.



Enlargement of summit trail with shaded areas showing variation in contours in greater detail



## Mount Augustus National Park Burringurrah



Legend	
	National park
	Sealed road
	Unsealed road
	Walk trail
	Accommodation
	Camping
	Caravan park
	Fuel station
	Hiking trail
	Information
	Picnic tables
	Scenic vistas
	Store supplies
	Telephone
	Toilets



**Advice to walkers** - Take care on escarpment slopes and cliff edges as the rock surface can be crumbly and unstable. Heat stroke can kill. Summer temperatures are extremely hot. To avoid dehydration, carry and drink 3-4 litres of water per person per day. Walk in the cooler times of the day. There is no drinking water in the national park.

## Walking in Mount Augustus National Park

From the climb to the summit to short walks visiting Aboriginal sites, there are a wide variety of trails to choose from. All trails in the park are essentially unmodified with only basic marking. Walkers should read the accompanying information on each trail, and take particular note of the difficulty rating.

These walk trails have been graded in difficulty according to *Australian Standards for Walking Tracks*. The following three classes apply to the walks described here.

**Class 3** Users require a moderate level of fitness. Trails may be slightly modified, and can include unstable surfaces.

**Class 4** Trails are in relatively undisturbed environments and are often rough with few, if any, modifications. A moderate to high level of fitness is required. Users should be prepared and self-reliant. Weather can affect safety.

**Class 5** Mostly indistinct trails through undisturbed natural environments. Terrain is rough. A high level of fitness is required. Users must be prepared and self-reliant. Weather can affect safety.

**CAUTION** - Wear sturdy footwear and protective clothing. There is no drinking water in the park. Do not expect to find water in natural watercourses, even in winter, so always carry enough for your own needs. Heat stroke can kill and summer temperatures are extremely hot. Carry and drink 3-4 litres per person per day. Be aware that if a natural water source is available, it will need treatment to make it safe to drink. Treatment can be boiling for at least one minute, mechanical filtration or chemical treatment.

## Visitor sites and trails

### Loop Drive

A 49km circuit provides views of the changing faces of the rock and access to all feature sites. This road is suitable for conventional two-wheel-drive vehicles.

### Emu Hill Lookout

Turn north about 6km north-west of the park boundary on the Cobra-Mount Augustus Road, and drive 1.5km along a track suitable for two-wheel-drive vehicles. The lookout is a good location to take photographs of the inselberg; at sunset it is usually most colourful. This site is managed by the Shire of Upper Gascoyne.

Right Wildflowers on the plains surrounding Mount Augustus. Photo - Rob Britza



Left Summit Trail. Photo - Albert and Patricia Chandler

### Goolinee-Cattle Pool

A permanent pool on the Lyons River. This site is particularly picturesque after rains have filled the pool to capacity.

### Corella Trail (Class 3) 1.2km return, 30 minutes-1 hour 15 minutes

This easy trail begins mid-way along the south bank of Cattle Pool. Quiet and observant walkers are rewarded with tranquil scenes of waterbirds. Corellas and other species forage in the river gums.

### Goordgeela

**Goordgeela Lookout Trail (Class 4) 3km return, 1-3 hours**  
This trail follows a rocky creek for part of the way, becoming steeper as walkers approach the lookout. From the lookout there are views of the Lyons River meandering through the plain and the Godfrey Range to the north.

### The Pound

Earlier last century, this natural basin was used for holding cattle before moving them on hoof to Meekatharra. Droving to Meekatharra would take 10-12 days.

**Saddle Trail (Class 3) 1km return, 20 minutes-1 hour**  
The saddle area has views back into The Pound and over the Lyons River valley to the north.

### Flintstone-Beedoboondy

**Flintstone Rock (Class 3) 500m return, 15-30 minutes**  
Following the first section of the Gully Trail, this short walk will bring you to Flintstone Rock. This large slab of rock bridges the rocky stream. Walkers can crawl under Flintstone Rock to view engravings by Aboriginal people.

**Summit Trail (Class 4) 12km return, 5-8 hours**  
This trail is the easier and more popular route to the summit. It is still a difficult walk, so it should only be undertaken by prepared and experienced bushwalkers. The climb to the top of the inselberg provides extensive views over the vast surrounding plain and drainage basin to distant ranges. An early start is recommended, and please advise someone of your plans. Seek advice at the Mount Augustus Tourist Park. See inset map for a more detailed route description.

### Gully Trail (Class 5) 12km return, 5-9 hours

This more challenging trail links into the Summit Trail after 1.5km and again after 3km. This gives several alternate route options in the first half of the summit trail. The first junction of the Summit and Gully trails allows for a shorter loop walk. From Flintstone Rock, continue up the Gully Trail for 1.5km, then at the first junction, walk back down to the car park via the Summit Trail.

### Munde

**Petroglyph Trail (Class 3) 300m return, 10-20 minutes**

This easy walk to an engraved wall is a place to quietly ponder the Wajarri culture.

### Edneys-Ooramboo

**Ooramboo Trail (Class 3) 500m return, 15-30 minutes**  
An easy walk to view Aboriginal engravings along an escarpment. An extra walk of 100m will bring you to Edney Spring.

### Edney's Trail (Class 4) 6km return, 2-5 hours

This well-defined trail will lead you to Edney's Lookout (a peak that is visible from the tourist park). The trail is suitable for people seeking elevated views but who don't want to tackle the more strenuous Summit Trail.

### Gum Grove-Warrarla

**Gum Grove Trail (Class 3) 1km return, 20 minutes-1 hour**

This easy trail takes walkers through a shady grove of river red gums. The return point for this trail is at the Kotka Gorge sign.

### Kotka Gorge Trail (Class 4) 4km return, 1.5-3 hours

This trail incorporates the Gum Grove Trail. Walkers then continue along a dry, rocky creek bed before moving above the creek line until just before the main opening of Kotka Gorge. This marks the end of the trail. There are views to the east of Mount Augustus from this point.