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Wunaamin and Miluwindi conservation parks



Visitor guide



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



**PARKS AND
WILDLIFE
SERVICE**

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Photos –Tourism WA and DBCA

Front cover *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge)

Above *Dawungumen mindi* (Matthew Gorge)

Welcome to Bunuba and Wilinggin Country

Miluwindi Conservation Park is Bunuba country and covers the area south of the Gibb River Road. Bunuba country runs north along *Bandarl Ngarri* (Fitzroy River) to *Jijidu* (Dimond Gorge), then westward along *Wunaamin Miliwundi* (formerly the King Leopold mountain ranges) as far as the Gibb River Road, south and west to *Malaraba* (the Erskine Range), and back to *Dawadiya* (Trig Hill) near Fitzroy Crossing. The park is known for its spectacular Lennard Gorge.

Wunaamin Conservation Park is Wilinggin country and covers the area to the North of the Gibb River Road. It extends from the limestone Devonian reef of the Napier Range and the *Wunaamin Miliwundi* (formerly the King Leopold mountain ranges) in the West across to the Durack, Saw and Cockburn Ranges in the East. The park is known for its spectacular *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge), peaceful campsite at *Dulundi* (Silent Grove) and *Walarra mindi* (Mount Hart) Homestead. Refer to the map inside.



Above Lennard Gorge.

Traditional owners

Bunuba Country

"Bunuba people and country are deeply connected through their law and culture which is derived from Ngarranggani (creation time). Ngarranggani stories and Junba (song-lines, dance and song) are passed down from generation to generation. Country is believed to be kept alive through the law and cultural practices of Bunuba people, and Bunuba people are kept healthy, spiritually, physically and emotionally but practicing law and culture." (*Jalangurru Manyjawarra Bunuba Muwayi Yarrangu, Draft joint management plan 2019*)

Wilinggin Country

The traditional connection to this country is through the law of the Wanjina Wunggurr. Ngarinyin people believe that the Wanjina are their ancestors, who came and 'put themselves' in the rock when the world was soft. Wunggurr is the Rainbow Serpent, who usually lives in deep water pools and is close to the Wanjina. Wunggurr, the Rock Python/Rainbow Serpent, is most concentrated in the permanent waterholes of the area but underlies the entire country and the sea in a more diffuse way." (*Wilinggin Healthy Country Plan 2012-2022*)

A piece of history

These conservation parks offer visitors the opportunity to explore in a wilderness environment with stunning waterholes, dramatic escarpments and spectacular waterfalls, including the impressive *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge). Situated on the south-western edge of the Kimberley Plateau, the parks encompass the 560-million-year-old Wunaamin Miliwundi Ranges. The Ranges consist of long, craggy ridges and impressive escarpments that include sedimentary formations of sandstone and granite rock strata.

Planning your visit

The parks are approximately 200km east of Derby and 500km west of Kununurra on the Gibb River Road. 4WD transport is recommended as the only access is by unsealed roads. Road conditions can vary greatly, change rapidly and roads are often closed from November to April each year due to the wet season flooding. Both conservation parks are generally open to the public from the end of April to late November depending on weather and road conditions. During this time of year, it is the dry season, typified by clear warm days and cool nights. Temperatures range from about 35 degrees during the day to 15 degrees at night.

Before setting off, visitors should contact Derby and Fitzroy Crossing visitors' centres, Shire of Derby, West Kimberley or DBCA's Parks and Wildlife Service Broome office to make sure the park and roads are open. **Visitors are reminded that pets are not allowed in the parks.**

Below *Dulundi* (Silent Grove).



Services and facilities

Camping

Camping is available at both *Dulundi* (Silent Grove) and the privately operated Mount Hart Wilderness Lodge. *Dulundi* (Silent Grove) campground is the area to set up camp and to see *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge) which is about 11km north-west of this campground. This campground has shower and toilet facilities but no powered sites. Rangers are onsite from mid-April to late November. The fire rings are to be used responsibly and firewood is to be brought in from outside the conservation park. Generators are permitted from 7am to 8pm in the generator area. Campsites can be booked online at parkstay.dbca.wa.gov.au or cash can be paid on entry. It is advised to book online in advance.

Walarra mindi (Mount Hart) is on Wilinggin Country and is the area to set up camp to see *Mayal mindi* (Annie's Creek), *Nogundi* (Sunset Hill), *Dawungumen mindi* (Matthew Gorge), and *Dudungarri mindi* (Barker Pool). This campground has shower and toilet facilities but no powered sites. Campsites can be booked online mounthart.com.au or can be paid on arrival.

Accommodation

Mount Hart Wilderness Lodge offers homestead and safari tent accommodation. Visit mounthart.com.au for more information.

Fees and park passes

Visitor fees apply at *Dulundi* (Silent Grove) and *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge) which help maintain and enhance the park. Please pay entry fees at the entrance station, by either paying a ranger or depositing the fee in the collection box. If you have paid online, please write the number on your self-registration envelope. A range of park passes are available online at shop.dbca.wa.gov.au/park-passes, Parks and Wildlife Service offices and Derby and Fitzroy Crossing visitor centres.

Recreation sites

Miluwindi Conservation Park

Lennard River Gorge

This gorge includes both Leopold sandstone and dolerite and has a lookout where the falls can be viewed.

Wunaamin Conservation Park

Dalmanyi (Bell Gorge)

Following wet season rains, great volumes of water cascade from the Wunaamin Miliwundi Ranges. In the dry, the spectacular cascading waterfalls are a sight to see and a relaxing place to swim. *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge) is 11km from *Dulundi* (Silent Grove) Campground, at the head of the Silent Grove Valley. An information shelter, tables, toilets and picnic areas are available at the entrance to the gorge. Walk trails provide opportunities to view the gorge.

Walarra mindi (Mount Hart)

Mayal mindi (Annie's Creek)

A pleasant picnic spot with a short walk crossing the creek where you can view a boab tree entwined with a strangler fig.

Nogun di (Sunset Hill)

This is the best place to head after a long day exploring. Catch the sunset over the Wunaamin Miliwundi Ranges with 360-degree views.

Dawungumen mindi (Matthew Gorge)

The Barker River flows through the centre of *Dawungumen mindi* (Matthew Gorge) steep granite cliffs past outcrops of dolerite. You can rock-hop your way to where the gorge narrows into a small swimming hole, passing giant paperbark trees along the way.

Dudungarri mindi (Barker Pool)

A delightful swimming and fishing spot where the Barker River widens at the base of a beautiful granite escarpment. You can go for a swim and enjoy a picnic under the trees or go for a walk.



Below Bell Falls Trail.

Walk trail classifications

Parks and Wildlife Service walk trails are assigned a 'Class' to indicate degree of difficulty. The walk classes range from Class 1 (universal access), which is suitable for wheelchairs, to Class 5, which require walkers to be fit, experienced and suitably equipped. Check trailhead signs at the start of walks for specific information. The walk trails in this brochure are Class 4 and Class 5.

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. You need to be prepared and self-reliant.



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



Safe walking tips

Plan ahead and choose your walks and activities to match your level of preparedness, experience and fitness. Daytime temperatures are extremely hot. To protect yourself from heat stroke, carry enough water, minimum of 4L per person when walking. Walking during cooler times of the day is recommended.



Above Lennard Gorge.

Walk Trails

Explore the dramatic and beautiful landscapes of the Miluwindi and Wunaamin Conservation Parks on a variety of the below walk trails:

Miluwindi Conservation Park

Lennard River Gorge Trail

Class 4, 3km return (approx. 2 hours)

The walk from the carpark takes you along the creek line and up on to the King Leopold sandstone before culminating in a lookout where the falls can be viewed. It is recommended that you do not swim in this pool.



Wunaamin Conservation Park

***Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge) Trail**

Class 4, 1.5km return (approx. 1 hour)

The walk to Bell Creek and the top of the gorge will reward you with spectacular views of the gorge and waterfalls. From here you can see the creek spill down into the gorge to form a waterfall that cascades over the layered sandstone rocks. Be careful not to get too close to the edge as there is a significant drop to the pool below. The trail can become slippery during certain times of the year so please take your time and tread carefully.



Bell Falls Trail

Class 5, 2km return (approx. 2 hours)

As an extension of the *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge) trail follow the trail markers to the creek crossing and descend to the pools below. The base of the falls is a superb spot for swimming. There is a deep pool sheltered by rocky walls and surrounded by ledges. However, getting to the pool is the most difficult part of the trail and is steep and rocky in places, so be cautious. Water-washed rocks can be wet and slippery.



***Dawungumen mindi* (Matthew Gorge) walk trail**

Class 4, 2km return (approx. 2 hours)

This walk trail traverses rocks, uneven surfaces and can be slippery in places. The rocky gorge has areas for swimming with fast flowing water in some places.



***Mayal mindi* (Annie's Creek) Trail**

Class 4, 400m return (approx. 20 mins)

This compacted earth trail has some slippery rock sections and a creek crossing with stepping stones. Follow the trail along *Mayal mindi* (Annie's Creek) to discover the large boab tree and the strangler fig (ficus sp.) before returning via the same route.





Above Antilopine wallaroo and joey.

Wildlife

The park is home to many mammals, including sugar gliders, *wijingarri* (northern quolls), the northern brown bandicoot, and the little-known rock ringtail possum. Unlike its tree-dwelling relatives, the rock ringtail possum lives exclusively in rocky outcrops sleeping during the day venturing forth at night to feed on blossoms and fruit.

Macropods found in the ranges include the antilopine wallaroo, short-eared rock wallabies and the agile wallaby. Small nocturnal animals include the stripe-faced dunnart, the long-tailed planigale, Forrest's mouse and the delicate mouse. As well as the dusky leaf nosed-bat and the common bent-wing bat, the little-known yellow-lipped bat has been found in the wetter areas of the ranges.

Johnston's (freshwater) crocodiles and the abundant northern long-necked turtles live in the creeks within the park. Merten's water monitors are often seen swimming and basking in and around *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge). Ta-ta lizards, blue-tongue lizards, geckos and sand monitors are all part of this rich area.



Above Purple crowned fairy wren.

The various species of snakes found in the region include Stimpson's, water, olive and *dumladnardi* (the black-headed python). Snakes of the Elapidae family; that is front-fanged snakes, include the venomous mulga, western brown snakes and the black whip snake, reputed to be the fastest species of snake in Australia! Remember snakes are a vital part of the ecosystem and if you leave them alone, they will leave you alone.

Numerous species of frogs can be seen and heard along watercourses at night. Campground toilets are a favourite haunt of the green tree frog. Rocket frogs inhabit the edges of the streams and the rock overhangs at *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge).

You may be lucky enough to see the threatened, purple-crowned fairy wren along the creek systems.

Dulundi (Silent Grove) Campground and *Dalmanyi* (Bell Gorge) have riverine plant systems that support a wide range of plants. Some of the most common trees include the boab, green plum, turkey bush, woollybutt, corkbark and the quinine tree. You may also see the beautiful water lillies with attractive purple flowers that open in the sunlight and close in the evening.



Above right Oriental pratincole.

Caring for the park

Every year more than two million visitors make their way to visit the Kimberley's protected areas. A few simple measures can help conserve the environment and keep it beautiful for years to come.

Plan ahead and prepare Your enjoyment and safety are our concern but your responsibility.

Travel and camp on durable surfaces Stay on the roads and tracks to protect the park.

Respect wildlife Do not disturb or take any animals, plants or rocks. Pets, firearms and fishing are not permitted.

Reduce contamination Do not contaminate water with soaps or sunscreen as they can affect aquatic life.

Minimise campfire impacts Avoid the risk of bushfire. Use your own portable cooking appliance. Only light fires in the fire rings located at *Dulundi* (Silent Grove) campground.

Dispose of waste properly Please take your rubbish with you and dispose of it appropriately in the next town. No bins are provided in the park.

Leave what you find Leave things as you find them for all to enjoy.





Above Freshwater crocodile.

Visitor Safety

Freshwater crocodile risk

When you are entering the Kimberley, you are entering crocodile country. Johnston's (freshwater) crocodiles live in the waterways of the *Wunaamin Miliwundi* ranges. They can become aggressive and cause injury if disturbed. For your safety please do not approach or interfere with these animals.



Heat risk

Extreme heat can be experienced when walking in the Kimberley. Temperatures can exceed 40°C. It is recommended you walk during cooler times of the day. Protect yourself from the sun by wearing sunscreen, a long-sleeved shirt and hat. Carry enough water, minimum of 4L per person. There is no water suitable for drinking in the gorge, avoid dehydration by drinking small amounts regularly.



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app that
could save
your life**



emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au

Download the free Emergency+ app before your visit. Use the app in an emergency to call for assistance. If there is no mobile phone coverage you **WILL NOT** be able to call **000** but the app will provide you with your GPS location.

For further information

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Parks and Wildlife Service

111 Herbert Street, Broome

Ph: (08) 9195 5500

dbca.wa.gov.au

Derby Visitor Centre

Ph: (08) 9191 1423

Fitzroy Crossing Visitor Centre

Ph: (08) 9191 5355

Shire of Derby/West Kimberley

Ph: 9191 0999

Main Roads Western Australia

Ph: 1800 013 314

(24-hour road condition report)

Mount Hart Wilderness Lodge

(For enquiries and bookings for accommodation)

mounthart.com.au

Ph: (08) 9191 4645



Check for alerts and updates directly related to parks and major trails at alerts.dbca.wa.gov.au and for all emergency information in Western Australia at emergency.wa.gov.au.

Find more park visitor information, book campsites and share your experiences at exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au.

@waparkswildlife



@exploreparkswa



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