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REMEMBER

Stay on the paths. Please stay on the roads and walk tracks throughout the Park. Dieback is prevalent in some areas so walking off these tracks may spread the soil borne disease.

Be cool. Because of the fire risk, no fires are permitted. Please bring your own portable gas stove if you wish to barbeque, or use the BBQ facilities provided.

Protect animals and plants. Pets and firearms are not permitted in the Park. All native animal and plant species are protected.

Be clean. Please put all rubbish in bins provided, or better still, take it with you.

Be aware. The river, and upper and lower rock pools contain water that is untreated.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Serpentine National Park is open between 8.30am and 5pm daily.

Further information can be obtained from the rangers in the Park or the District Office.

Serpentine National Park
Falls Road
SERPENTINE WA 6205
Telephone: (08) 9525 2128

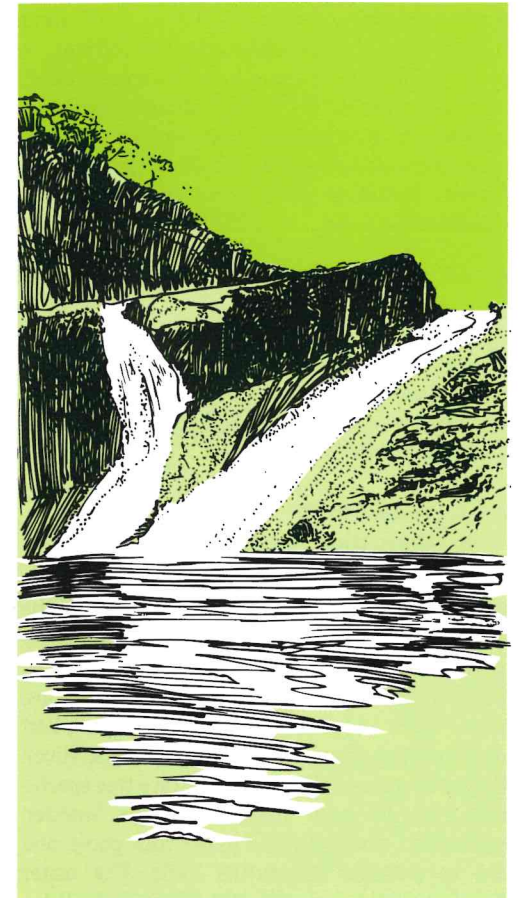
Mundaring District Office
Weir Road
MUNDARING WA 6073
Telephone: (08) 9295 1955

Visit NatureBase at www.naturebase.net



SERPENTINE

National Park



DEPARTMENT OF
Conservation
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Conserving the nature of WA

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Conserving the nature of WA

Serpentine National Park is approximately 50 kilometres south-east of Perth off the South Western Highway.

The name 'Serpentine' has its origins from the early settlers of the region. The area was named after the Serpentine in England. The shape of the river, which reminded the early settlers of a serpent, also contributed towards naming the general region where the Park is located.

The Park is on the Darling Scarp, the western edge of a huge, tilted ancient plateau. Past weathering has resulted in distinct landscapes of lateritic uplands, minor and major valleys, and abrupt scarps. The Serpentine River contributes to the landscape with the steep slopes of the river valley and resistant granite outcrop giving rise to the unique feature of the Park, the Serpentine Falls. In winter, the river rushes down a sheer granite face, polished by past rushing water, cascading 15 metres into the rock pool below.



FACILITIES

There are three recreational areas within the Park.

The Serpentine Falls area is at the base of the Darling Scarp within an incised river valley. The area can be reached from the main entrance off the South Western Highway. There is a sealed loop road and car park, a large lawned picnic area with tables, barbeques and toilets with access for people with disabilities.

Gooralong is in the north-east of the Park and can only be reached from Jarrahdale, off Jarrahdale Road. Gooralong has a large, shaded picnic area surrounded by jarrah and pine forest. Western grey kangaroos and a number of bird species are regularly seen. Facilities by the Gooralong Brook include an oval, toilets, barbeques, tables and chairs.

The Pipehead Dam area is part of the Metropolitan Water supply. The site has picnic and BBQ facilities including tables and chairs and a playground.

Note: Recreational areas at Serpentine Dam and Pipeline Dam are managed by the Water Corporation.

WILDLIFE

Serpentine has diverse vegetation ranging from jarrah-marri to wandoo woodland, scarp heath and specialised granite outcrop communities. The area of virgin jarrah forest near Gooralong is a good example of typical Darling Range plant communities.

Spring is the best time of year for wildflowers with common species including spider orchids, greenhoods and trigger plants. Other abundant species include the giant sundew, dryandras and grevilleas.



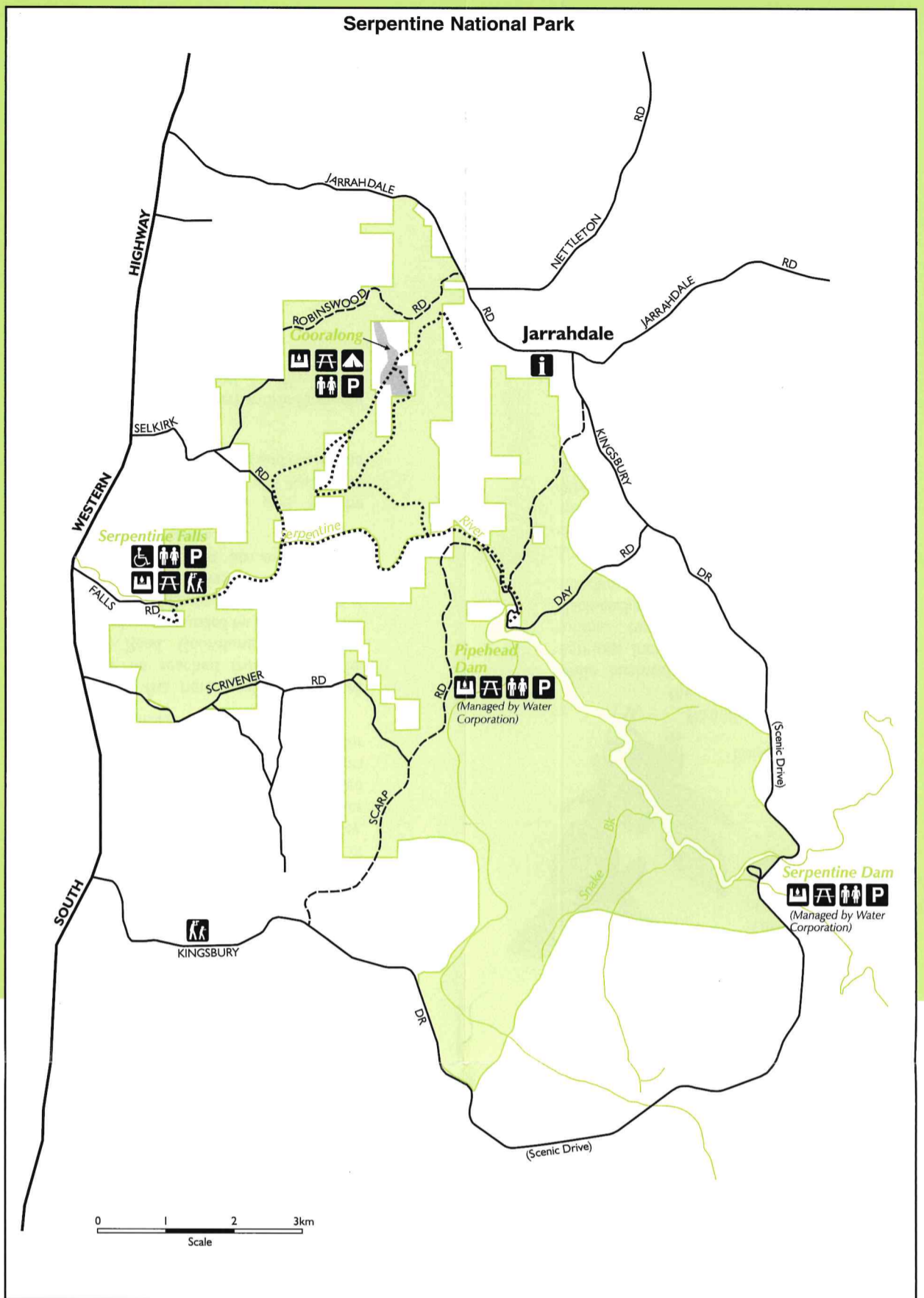
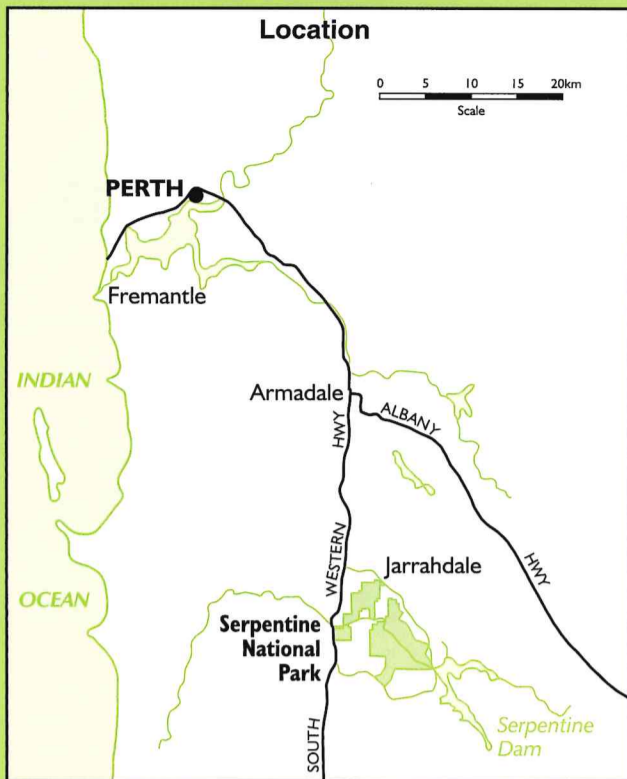
Serpentine supports a representative sample of the animal species and their habitat, which has disappeared or been highly disturbed on the Coastal Plain and on the Scarp by human development.

Bird life abounds and these are the most likely animals seen while bushwalking or picnicking. Common sightings include splendid fairy wrens, scarlet robins, twenty-eight parrots, white-tailed black-cockatoos and red-tailed black-cockatoos, a declared endangered species.

A number of native mammals have also been recorded in the Park. Western grey kangaroos are often seen grazing in the recreation areas. Other mammals that are rarely seen include the short-beaked echidna, chuditch, brush-tailed phascogale, mardo, dunnart, quenda (southern brown bandicoot) and the western brush wallaby.

Reptiles include lizards, especially bobtails, and carpet pythons, a species in need of special protection. Long-necked tortoises may also be seen.





GRANITE OUTCROPS

Granite outcrops are associated with diverse and unusual plant and animal species and have a high conservation value. They are a refuge for fire sensitive plants, some of which are rare and restricted. The outcrops act as water catchments to support lush moss mats and flower gardens in winter and spring. In the dry season, the flowers hide in the shallow sand and pincushions, a prickly, clumpy perennial herb, appear dead. A resurrection of the plants occurs when rain revives them the following winter. Donkey orchids are also associated with the outcrops, and lizards, including geckos and dragon lizards, inhabit these areas.

WALK TRAILS

The best time of year to walk is from late autumn to mid-spring, when temperatures are cooler. Spring is a peak walking period because of the spectacular wildflower displays.

FALLS WALK TRAIL

400m return, takes 15 minutes

The most popular walk in the Park, this wheelchair-accessible trail is easy. It begins at the Falls car park and passes by the pipes that supply water to the Metropolitan area from the Pipehead Dam. Notable features are the granite outcrops, with their specialised animal and plant communities (see above), the Serpentine River, the Darling Range Ghost Gum (a rare tree species that can be seen just before the wooden boardwalk), the lower and upper rock pools, and the spectacular Serpentine Falls. The water gauging station and weir, at the base of the Falls, were constructed in 1911 by the Public Works Department and are heritage listed.



BALDWINS BLUFF NATURE TRAIL

6km return, takes 2 hours

The walk begins behind the toilet block in the Falls picnic area. A medium level of fitness is required as a steep gravel track has to be overcome to reach the top of the Bluff. The ascent of the hill sees the vegetation change from red gum forest to wandoo with a variety of bird life including twenty-eight and western king (red-capped) parrots and splendid fairy-wrens. At the top of the hill, the path turns right past granite outcrops. Lizards are commonly seen here and diverse wildflower displays can be viewed in spring. At the summit, spectacular views of the Serpentine Falls and a vast area of the Park can be enjoyed. To the west, there are views of the coastal plain to the ocean and to the north, the Perth skyline.

KITTY'S GORGE WALK TRAIL

11km return, takes 5 hours

Named after a cow called Kitty, which wandered away from home and was found months later beside the gorge, the trail begins at the Falls car park. A short, steep climb leads to an easy walk along the Serpentine River and Gooralong Brook into Kitty's Gorge. A series of markers (pine posts with orange triangles on them) should be followed. Early into the walk, Spencers Mud Cottage, a heritage building, originally built by the pioneering Spencer family, can be seen. Once in Kitty's Gorge, there is a series of waterfalls leading to the gauging station and weir. Highlights of the walk are the granite outcrop plant communities in the gorge, and the jarrah forest.

STACEY'S TRACK

3km return, takes 1 hour

This easy trail, starting at Gooralong, runs through virgin jarrah forest where a number of bird species including white-tailed and red-tailed black-cockatoos, are commonly seen. The trail passes by the historic Jarrahdale cemetery before returning to Gooralong across the Gooralong Brook.