

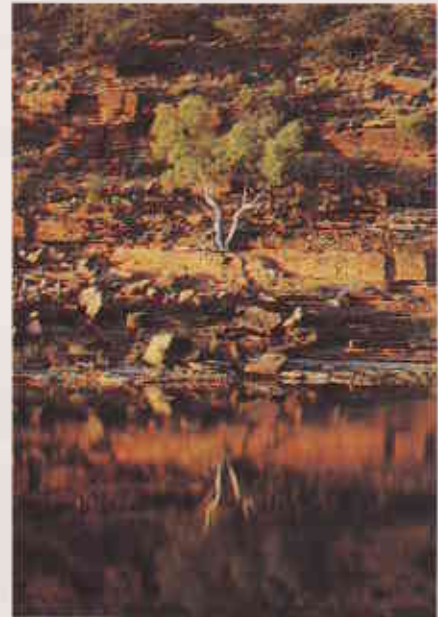
W I L D F L O W E R

From its windswept coastline to its rugged interior, the Greenough/Gascoyne region of Western Australia is an area of remarkable diversity.



Everlastings (*Helipterum roseum*) flower between August and November around Northampton.
Photo - Phil Roberts ▲

Kalbarri National Park is centred on the Murchison River Gorge, shown here, but also has picturesque coastal cliffs and gullies.
Photo - Jiri Lochman ▲▲



Yellow bells (*Geleznovia verrucosa*) is a relative of the boronias and grows on northern sandheaths.
Photos - Phil Roberts ▲

The first European visitors to these shores were the fated victims who tragically misjudged the notorious "Roaring Forties" that swept their ships towards the coast; many shipwrecks abound in this part of the State.

From the coastal city of Geraldton through to the rolling green hills of Greenough and Dongara, and the vivid wildflowers further inland, the landscape tells much about the variety of the natural environment and the ways settlers shaped the environment.

There are deserted towns, stock wells, buildings, rivers and streams, shipwrecks and saltpans.

In late winter and early spring magnificent sweeps of wildflowers bloom, even in the most arid regions. Large tracts of sandy or lateritic plain support a scrubby vegetation known as kwongan.

The undulating country, mostly below 300 m in altitude, has only a few rivers, such as the Murchison. This drains a large area extending inland almost to Meekatharra. In its lower reaches, within Kalbarri National



Photo - Jiri Lochman



Custard orchid (*Thelymitra villosa*) is confined to damp depressions in the region. The degree of spotting varies from region to region. ▲

W O N D E R L A N D



Daisies (*Brachycome species*) make a striking display at Nanga, not far from Shark Bay.

Photo - Phil Roberts ▲

The owl-like Tawny Frogmouth favours open forests and woodlands. It relies on camouflage for protection and does not move when approached.

Photo - Phil Roberts ►

There are only eight known populations of *Eucalyptus synandra*, a wispy, delicate mallee, with a smooth red and white trunk.

Photo - Phil Roberts ◀



Blue spot butterfly fish (*Chaetodon plebeius*) at Osprey Bay in the Ningaloo Marine Park have snouts well-suited to pecking at polyps of coral.

Photo - Phil Roberts ▼



Honey possum (*Tarsipes rostratus*).

Photo - Jiri Lochman ▲

Park, the river has carved a deep, winding gorge into colourful sandstone rock.

The soils of the coastal plains are mostly sands and gravels lacking nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, yet some of the richest flora abounds on these sites.

Many species are indigenous to the northern sandplains. The vegetation is typically low scrub, but in places it includes mallee eucalypts. There are some areas of low woodland and, especially north of Moora, some large salt lakes.

The most prominent plant families are the Proteaceae, Myrtaceae and Leguminaceae. Many species of *Banksia* and *Dryandra* grow there and produce copious nectar. Although birds and insects are attracted by this, it is believed that small marsupials are the true pollinators of these native flowers.

Wildlife Officer and keen photographer Phil Roberts has captured many of the region's scenic features, including its flora, while working in the area.



LANDSCOPE

VOLUME FIVE NO 1 SPRING EDITION 1989



Perth people were devastated when a fire tore through their favourite bushland retreat. But, with Spring, new life and colour is returning.



Rottneest isn't the only unspoilt island on Perth's doorstep- what about Penguin, Garden, Seal and Carnac Islands? They are steeped in history and provide a haven for some unique wildlife.



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Explore the waterways of the South-West by canoe.



Jarrah dieback- the word strikes fear into any forester's heart- but research is fuelling the fight against the killer fungus.

C O V E R

What's new in Kings Park this spring? Artist, Susan Tingay, couldn't resist this magnificent collection of spring orchids. From left- cowslip orchid (Caladenia flava), jug orchid (Pterostylis recurva), King spider orchid (Caladenia huegelii), donkey orchid (Diuris longifolia), rabbit orchid (Caladenia menziesii), and pink fairy orchid (Caladenia latifolia).

*Back Cover: Stimson's python (Morelia stimsoni)
Photo-Jiri Lochman*



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