



feature park by Samille Mitchell

Dryandra Woodland

Dryandra Woodland is one of the best places in the State to see rare native mammals. You can get up close to witness the little-seen antics of small marsupials at Dryandra's Barna Mia Animal Sanctuary interpretive facility and viewing enclosure.

Above Dryandra wandoo woodland.
Photo – Marie Lochman

Opposite page

Above top Numbats, Western Australia's faunal emblem.

Photo – Jiri Lochman

Above right Woodcutter's cottage.

Far right Cowslip orchids.

Right Blue beard orchid.

Photos – Sallyanne Cousans

Barna Mia Animal Sanctuary and surrounding Dryandra Woodland protects 28,066 hectares of native vegetation and threatened animals within a sea of agricultural landscape. The 17 blocks that make up the reserve provide islands of habitat for species that have been otherwise wiped out through land clearing and other pressures. Among these species is the State's faunal emblem—the numbat (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*).

Natural attractions

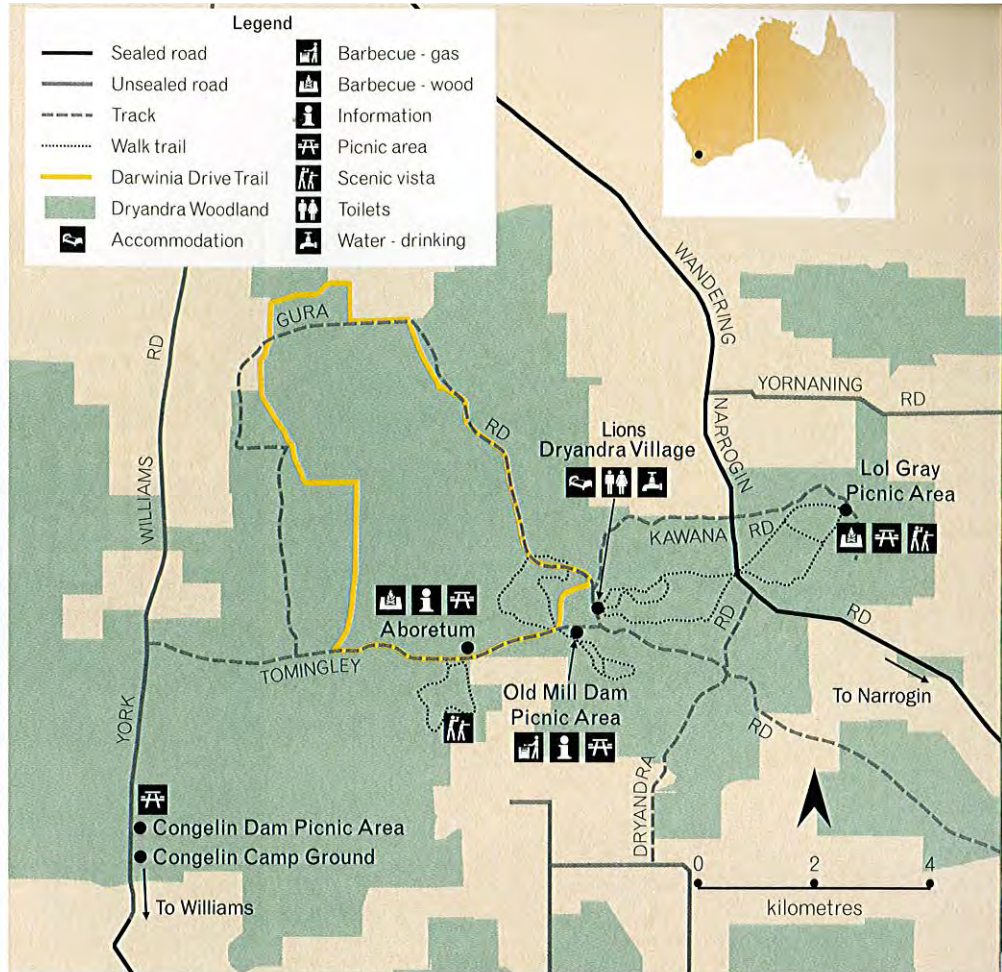
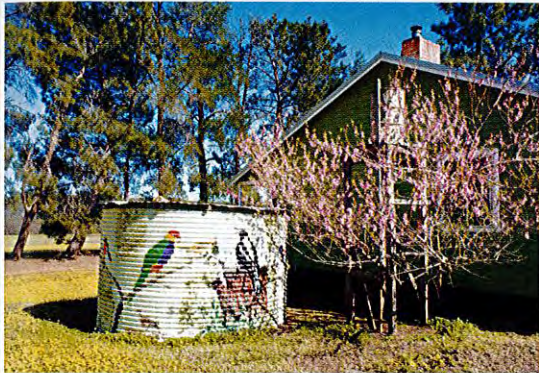
While clearing elsewhere in the area has resulted in the local disappearance of six mammal species and the presumed extinction of three mammal species, Dryandra continues to harbour 24 of the 46 species of native mammal that occur in the Wheatbelt.

These populations are supported by the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) nature conservation project *Western Shield*, which involves baiting the area for foxes which prey on native animals. As

a result of this work, threatened species such as the numbat, woylie (*Bettongia penicillata*), bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*), tamar wallaby (*Macropus eugenii*), chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroyi*) and red-tailed phascogale (*Phascogale calura*) survive here. Numbat populations here represent nearly half the total number of the species. The woodland also has populations of rarely seen species such as honey possums (*Tarsipes rostratus*) and western pygmy possums (*Cercartetus concinnus*).

A sub-program of *Western Shield*, *Return to Dryandra*, has also resulted in the construction of a predator-proof compound containing populations of western barred bandicoots (*Parameles bougainville*), boodies (*Bettongia lesueur*), bilbies and rufous hare-wallabies (*Lagorchestes hirsutus*). These animals can safely breed in the compound and their offspring are released into the wild at Dryandra and other DEC reserves in the south-west and further north, to help establish new populations.

In addition to the mammal species, 98 species of birds occur in the area,



including two species that are threatened and two others that are gazetted as specially protected. Carnaby's black cockatoo, the bush stone curlew and the rufous tree creeper are among them. There are also 51 species of reptile and eight frog species.

Exploring the park

The Barna Mia Animal Sanctuary's viewing enclosure enables you to see some of the State's rarest mammals, up close in a natural setting. The four-hectare sanctuary is fenced to exclude predators and is now home to populations of threatened marsupials.



You can join a night walk here in a natural setting to see these nocturnal mammals. A guide will lead you on the spotlight tour, scanning the heath and woodlands for sights of the captivating marsupials.

Visitors can also make use of picnic and barbecue facilities at Lol Gray, Lions Dryandra Village, the Old Mill Dam, the Arboretum, Giles Park, Congelin Dam and Contine Hill. Drivers can set out on the 25-kilometre radio drive trail, known as Sounds of Dryandra Woodland, which enables you to tune in your radio to hear voices from the past sharing tales of Aboriginal culture, forestry, railway history and wildlife.

Another 23-kilometre drive trail features interpretive signage along the way which reveals the wonders of the woodland's natural environment and the intricate relationships between species.

The energetic can set out on a series of walk and cycle trails that cater to all fitness levels. One of the most interesting walks is the five-kilometre Ochre Trail, which describes some of the modern and ancient Nyoongar culture of the Dryandra area and features an ochre pit used by Aboriginal people for decoration. Scarred trees and stone arrangements provide more clues about traditional Aboriginal lifestyles.



park facts

Where is it? 164 kilometres south-east of Perth and 22 kilometres north-west of Narrogin.

What to see and do: Picnicking, scenic driving, bushwalking, cycling, Barna Mia Animal Sanctuary guided tour, camping, group educational activities.

Facilities: Interpretive centre and animal sanctuary, toilets, picnic tables, barbecues, walk trails, drive trail, Lions Dryandra Village (08) 9884 5231.

Camping: Yes, fees apply.

Entry fees: No park entry fees apply but fees must be paid to enter Barna Mia Animal Sanctuary.

Nearest DEC office: Hough Street, Narrogin, phone (08) 9881 9200.

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