



Serpentine National Park

Waterfalls, creeks, wildflowers and walks combine to make Serpentine National Park a favoured natural retreat about an hour's drive south of Perth city.

Above Serpentine Falls.
Photo - Dennis Sarson/Lochman
Transparencies

Opposite page
Top right Matted triggerplant
(*Stylidium repens*).
Photo - Jiri Lochman

Above right Kittys Gorge Track follows
Gooralong Brook.
Photo - Dennis Sarson/Lochman
Transparencies

Right The Darling Scarp is rich
in plant life.
Photo - Bill Belson/Lochman
Transparencies

Serpentine National Park is renowned for the Serpentine Falls, which tumble down 15 metres of sheer granite rock into the swirling waters of the Serpentine River.

History

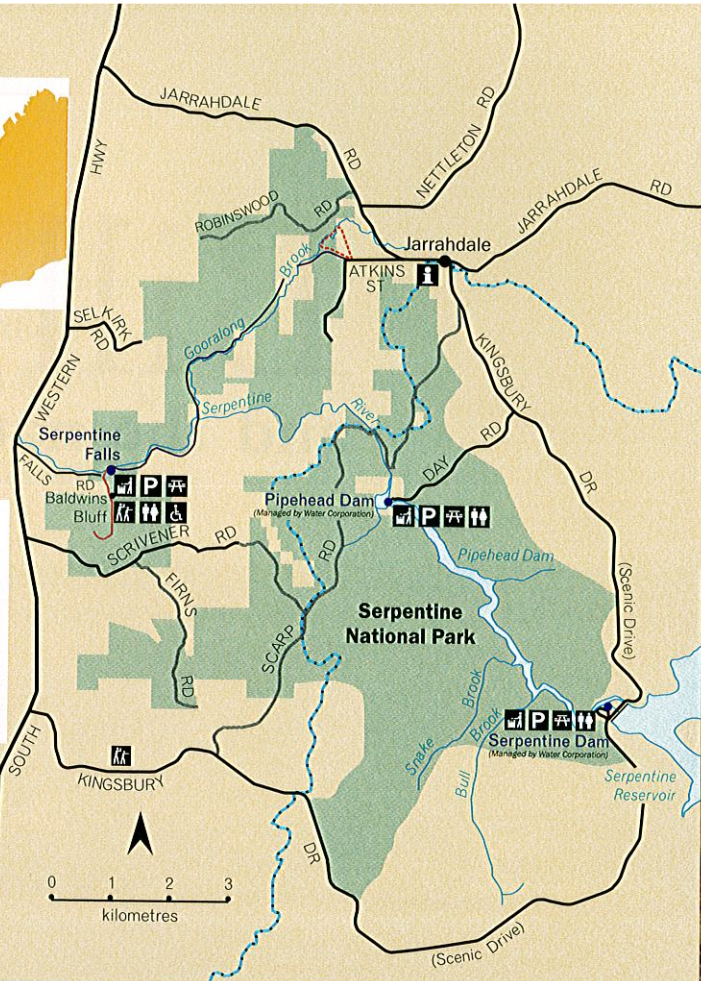
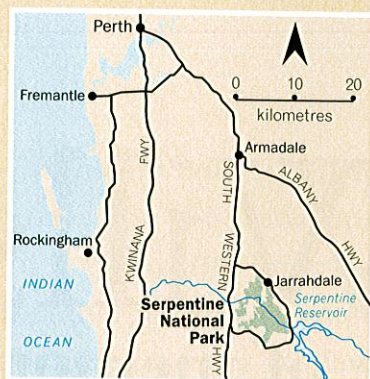
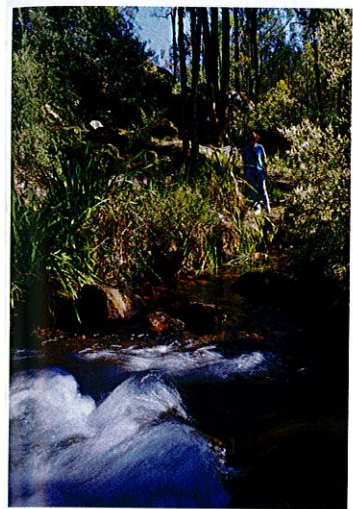
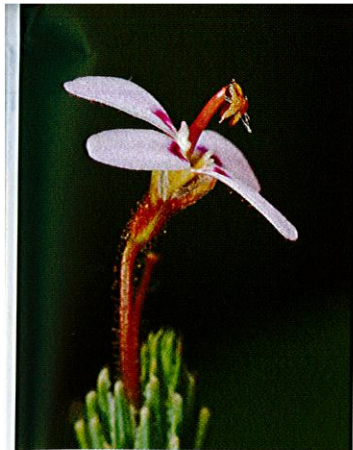
The Serpentine River and surrounding wetlands provided fresh water, fish and other foods for the Aboriginal people of the area, the Whadjuk and the Bindjareb. These people constructed fish traps downstream from the falls to catch fish that were driven down by the fast-flowing water.

The area was named by early settlers after Serpentine in England. By 1850, settlers were beginning to establish at nearby Pinjarra and along the Serpentine and Murray rivers. Logging began in the area in 1879 and continued for 50 years. But the falls area was largely protected when it was gazetted for public recreation in 1900. It was declared a national park in 1957.

Natural attractions

Serpentine National Park lies on the Darling Scarp, the western edge of a huge ancient plateau that is the foundation of much of the south-western part of Australia. The ravages of time have weathered this ancient landscape into a series of uplands, valleys and escarpments. The flow of the Serpentine River further sculpted the land, creating steep slopes along the river valley. Babbling streams trickle through the trees creating enchanting scenes of verdant, mossy growth.

The park features jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*), marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) and wandoo (*E. wandoo*) trees, and erupts with splashes of vivid colour during the wildflower season. During this time you can see species including triggerplants (*Stylidium* spp.), sundews (*Drosera* spp.), banksias (*Banksia* spp.) and grevilleas (*Grevillea* spp.). The park is also home to two rare tree species, the Darling Range ghost gum (*Eucalyptus laevis*) and the salmon



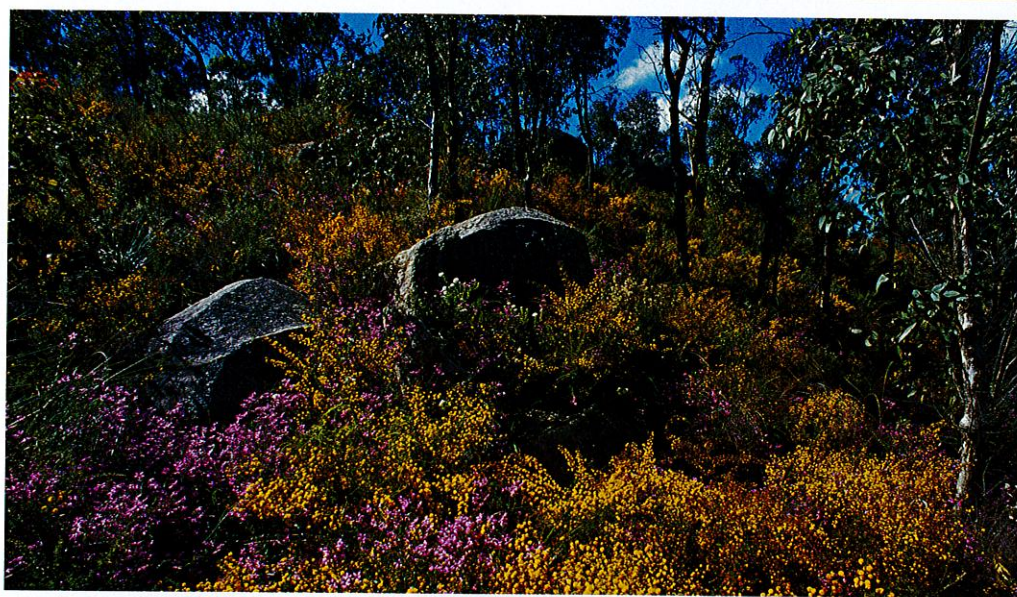
white gum (*E. lane-poolii*). The Darling Range ghost gum occurs in the north of the park above the falls while the salmon white gum grows at the foot of the scarp.

The slopes above the falls are covered in spindly grevillea (*Grevillea endlicheriana*), which is restricted to the scarp between Bindoon and Serpentine. Donkey orchids (*Diuris* spp.) are often found around the granite outcrops, and spider orchids and greenhoods (*Pterostylis* spp.) are abundant in other areas.

Those with keen eyes may also be lucky enough to spot some of the animals in the park, which include water rats (*Hydromys chrysogaster*), western grey kangaroos (*Macropus fuliginosus*) and echidnas (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*).

Exploring the park

You can access Serpentine Falls from the main entrance to the park off South Western Highway. You'll find a sealed loop road and car park, a grassy picnic area, shaded picnic tables, gas barbecues and universally accessible toilets. Most of the walks in the national park leave from the Serpentine Falls



car park. They range from the 200-metre one-way walk to Serpentine Falls to the seven-kilometre one-way Kittys Gorge Track by the Serpentine River and Gooralong Brook.

The park is best visited after winter rains when the falls are in full flow, or in spring when wildflowers are in bloom.

Please take care when visiting the falls area and follow directions on signage to ensure your safety.

park facts

Where is it? 26 kilometres south of Armadale, off South Western Highway.

Total area: 4,300 hectares.

What to do: Hiking, picnicking, birdwatching, seeing wildflowers and viewing the waterfall.

Facilities: Toilets, free gas barbecues, picnic areas.

Park fees: Entry fees apply.

Nearest DEC office: Perth Hills District Office, 51 Mundaring Weir Road, Mundaring, phone (08) 9295 9100.

- 46 Bill Wills and the nature of memory
Memories of life on the Nullarbor Plain reveal a once-thriving suite of mammals that has now all but disappeared.
- 52 Controlling cats: the work continues
Controlling cats to protect our native animals is proving no easy task, so research into baiting programs continues.
- 59 An extraordinary story of a rock-wallaby colony
A rock-wallaby population clings to life in an unlikely setting.

Regulars

- 3 Contributors and Editor's letter
- 15 Bookmarks
The Canoe and Kayak Guide to Western Australia
Biodiversity monitoring in Australia
Guide to the Great Western Woodlands
- 44 Feature park
Serpentine National Park
- 31 Endangered
Quindanning spider orchid
- 62 Urban Antics
Mozzies

Publishing credits

Executive editor Madeleine Clews.

Editors Samille Mitchell, Joanna Moore.

Scientific/technical advice Kevin Thiele, Lachie McCaw, Keith Morris, Michael Rule.

Design and production Gooitzen van der Meer, Lynne Whittle, Peter Nicholas, Natalie Curtis.

Illustration Gooitzen van der Meer.

Cartography Promaco Geodraft.

Marketing Cathy Birch.

Phone (08) 9334 0296 or fax (08) 9334 0432.

Subscription enquiries

Phone (08) 9219 8000.

Prepress and printing GEON, Western Australia.

© Government of Western Australia

March 2013

All material copyright. No part of the contents of the publication may be reproduced without the consent of the publishers.

ISSN 0815-4465

Please do not send unsolicited material, but feel free to contact the editors.

Published by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), 17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, Western Australia.

Visit DEC online at www.dec.wa.gov.au to search the LANDSCOPE catalogue.



Department of Environment and Conservation

