

Proposed Credo Conservation Park

The proposed Credo Conservation Park is steeped in Aboriginal heritage and European pastoral and mining history and provides an important environment for waterbirds. Nowadays the area also offers a place for people to visit and connect with nature, and a new campground gives travellers a spot to stop and rest their heads.

Set about 100km north-west from Kalgoorlie and 65km north-west of Coolgardie in the heart of the Goldfields, the proposed 212,126ha Credo Conservation Park operated as a pastoral lease from the early 1900s. It is believed 'Credo' was named by a Benedictine monk from New Norcia and is a Latin verb meaning 'I believe' or 'I trust'. In 2007, the State Government purchased the area for its conservation value and as an important water catchment area for Rowles Lagoon.

NEW CAMPING OPTIONS

More recently, \$250,000 from the State Government's Royalties for Regions program has funded a new campground under the \$21.05 million *Parks for People* initiative. As part of the development, 16 new camp sites have been created to accommodate caravans, camper trailers and tents 800m north of the Credo Homestead complex – accessible by a new road. Each site is 12 by 7m wide and offers campers space to enjoy the bush. Each site is fitted

with a picnic table and a campfire ring, and the campground has a double toilet block. The development also includes upgrades to the homestead, shearers' quarters and other facilities at the site including signage. The new development is already proving popular among visitors.

NATURAL BEAUTY

The beauty of the area strikes you as you enter the campground and pass the gimlet trees which light up and shimmer at sunset and sunrise – definitely worth getting up early for. As you move into the campground, which is elevated in the landscape, you're treated to sweeping views of the salt bush shrublands and woodlands of giant mallee (*Eucalyptus oleosa* subsp. *covina*), yorrel (*Eucalyptus yilgarnensis*) and Victoria Desert mallee (*Eucalyptus concinna*).

Kangaroos abound in the area and bobtails and a number of gecko species can also be spotted. And it's not uncommon to see bats that take to the night skies. But it's the birds that are drawn to the water of

Rowles Lagoon Conservation Park, which is encompassed in Credo, that make this area really special. Thousands of aquatic waterbirds flock to the area including the rare freckled duck, malleefowl, Australian shelduck, blue-billed duck as well as cormorants, ibis, herons, grebes and bronzewings.

FUN TO BE HAD

There are many opportunities for visitors to explore the area on one of the many bushwalking or 4WD tracks. Sites

Above left Rowles Lagoon is a haven for waterbirds.
Photo – Vanessa Jackson/Parks and Wildlife

Top Credo Homestead and field study centre.
Photo – Mike Bream/Parks and Wildlife

Above The new campground facilities at the proposed Credo Conservation Park are already proving popular among visitors.
Photo – Vicky Winfield

on Credo are part of the Golden Quest Discovery Trail – the primary mining history self-drive trail which takes in Rowles Lagoon and Ullaring Rock and many of the ghost towns and mines that dot the landscape. In particular, it's worth visiting mining towns such as Ora Banda with the Ora Banda Hotel, and abandoned town sites of Callion, Siberia and Davyhurst with the remnants of old buildings and cemeteries that give clues into the life of yesteryear.

Other attractions in the area that are worth visiting include the historic woodlines in the south and to the west of Credo, Goongarrie National Park and Lake Goongarrie. The area's large rocky outcrops give variation to the landscape and there are several dams in which yabbies can be collected. There are also beautiful wildflowers in season and photography enthusiasts will find plenty of inspiration.

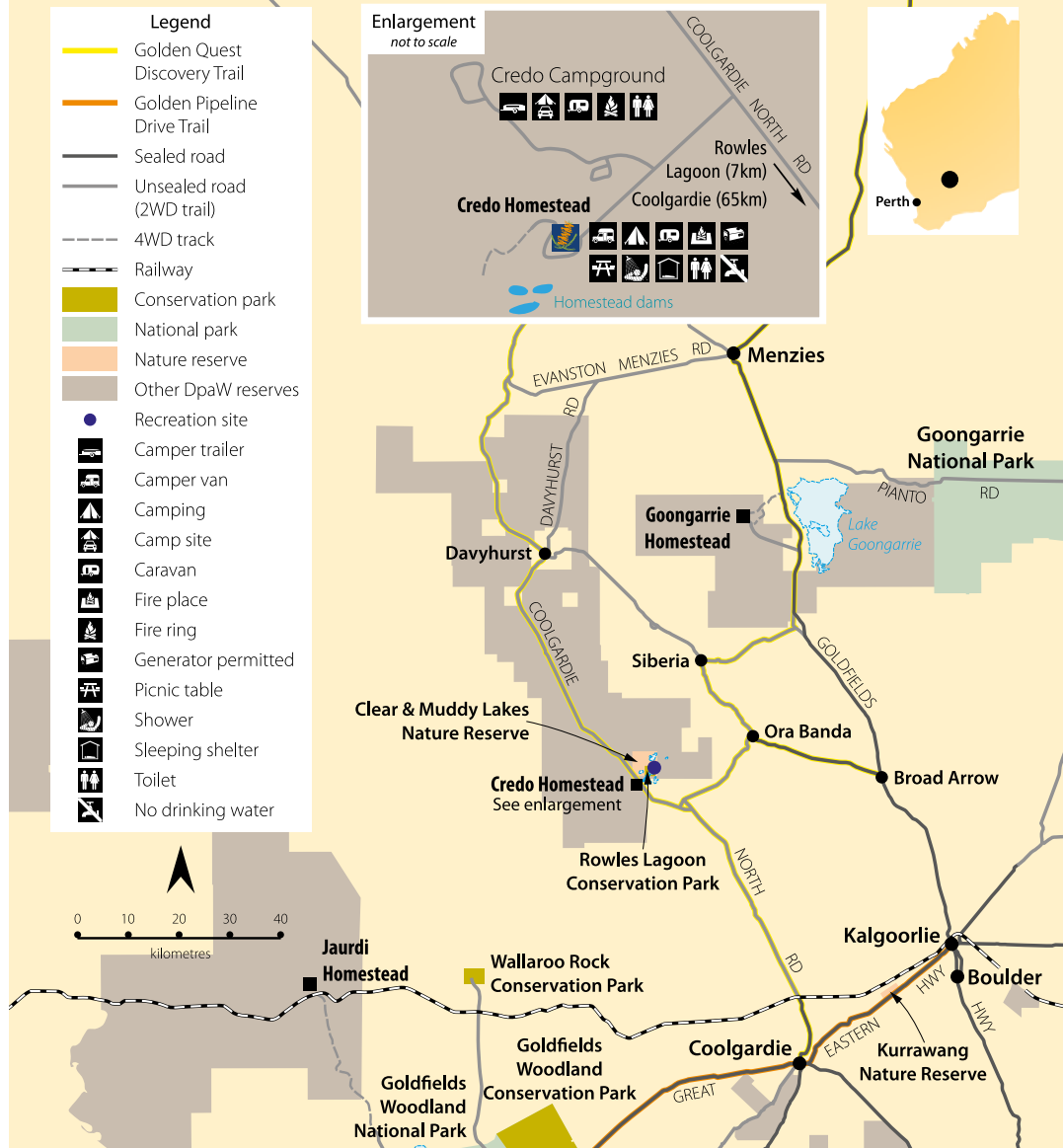
PARTNERSHIPS

The area is important for local Aboriginal people. The lagoon is a significant area for Aboriginal people who worked on the station and whose ancestors camped at Rowles. Parks and Wildlife actively engages with local Aboriginal people directly through the Goldfields Land and Sea Council including organising cultural trips and monitoring, and maintaining significant sites.

Credo is also host to an exciting science partnership between Parks and Wildlife and CSIRO with a new multi-purpose field study centre established there for educators and scientists working on environmental research programs and the Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) supersite.

Visiting this area helps Western Australians get an appreciation of the State's cultural and natural heritage, while making new memories of their own. And multiple uses of the area are creating a vibrancy that benefits the local economy.

Right Emu tree (*Hakea francisiana*).
Photo – Ann Storrie



Do it yourself

Where is it?: The homestead is 65km north-west of Coolgardie along Coolgardie North Road. Most of the tracks on the former pastoral property are for 4WD vehicles only, however access to Rowles Lagoon and Credo Homestead complex is open to all vehicles during dry soil conditions.

What to do: Camping, birdwatching, four-wheel driving, bushwalking, photography.

Facilities: Camp sites; fire rings; shearers' quarters with kitchen, toilets and showers and field study centre; signage, Campground Host volunteers, Credo Homestead complex.

Nearest Parks and Wildlife office:
32 Brockman St, Kalgoorlie, (08) 9080 5555
or email kalgoorlie@dpaw.wa.gov.au.

