



## Coalseam Conservation Park

*Famed for its spectacular wildflower display, Coalseam Conservation Park – located in the heart of the Midwest – comes alive with colour in late winter. A redeveloped campground is catering to those keen to experience ‘wildflower country’ and discover all the other surprises this park has to offer.*

Coalseam Conservation Park’s annual wildflower display is quintessentially Western Australian, with the beautiful white, pink and yellow flowers of the everlasting daisies transforming the landscape after the winter rains. The papery flowers densely carpet the valley slopes and provide a visual feast for the thousands of people who come to the area each wildflower season to enjoy them. But there is a plethora of other species that occur in the park year round which contribute to it being one of the most botanically diverse areas in the region. There are also a number of birds – such as galahs, nankeen kestrels, black-faced woodswallows, black-faced cuckoo-shrikes, crested and common bronzings, red-capped robins and Australian ringnecks – that occur in the area and add to the sounds of the bush.

Wedge-tailed eagles can also be spotted soaring in the skies above. Many of the area’s mammals can be difficult to spot during the day as they are nocturnal. However, a search of the bush around the campground, particularly in the early morning or late afternoon, may reveal echidnas and western grey kangaroos.

### CAMPING

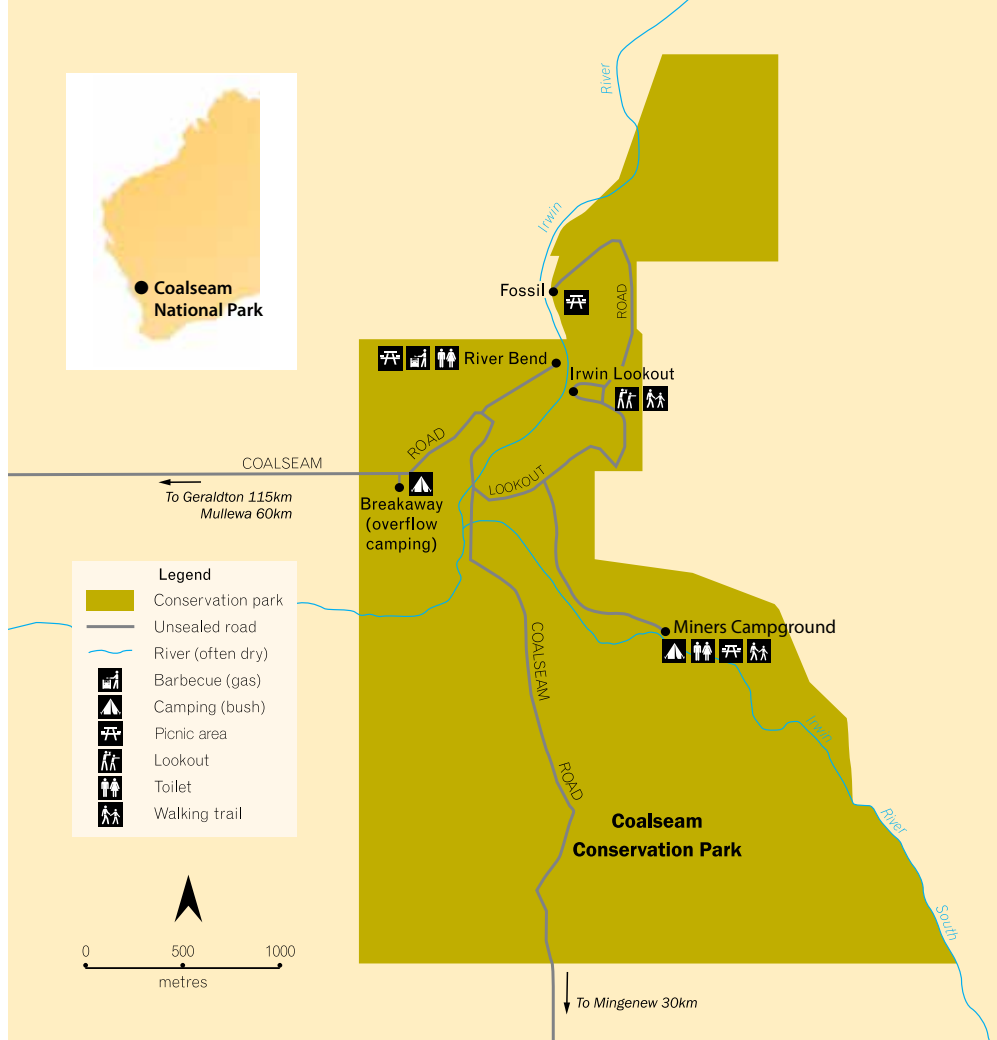
Coalseam Conservation Park has long been popular for campers – particularly during the wildflower season – however the existing campground lacked well-defined sites and only had 14 bays. Thanks to a \$302,500 investment as part of the State Government’s \$21.05 million Royalties for Regions *Parks for People* initiative, a new campground is catering to more visitors and providing better facilities. Campground Host

volunteers are on site from August to October to make your stay even more enjoyable.

Miners Campground now provides 25 full-size camping bays that cater for small to large vans and camper trailers. The spacious sites are designed so visitors can enjoy privacy but still have access to a communal fireplace where campers can enjoy a yarn and a cup of tea around the fire at night. Picnic tables are also provided. A new toilet features a privacy screen that is constructed out of anodised aluminium featuring cut-outs of flowers.

### GO EXPLORING

Visitors to the area can use Miners Campground as a base from which to explore the park. The area is steeped in European history which began when three brothers and explorers – Augustus, Frank



and Henry Gregory – discovered exposed coal seams along the banks of the Irwin River in 1846. This was the first discovery of coal in WA and resulted in the area being declared as a reserve. A number of shafts were excavated and can be seen today from the Johnson Shaft Viewing Platform, which can be accessed on the 700-metre-return Miners walk trail. The walk takes about 30 minutes from Miners Campground. The Gregory brothers’ exploration made way for pastoralists and farmers who cultivated the land for sheep and wheat farming, which now surrounds the park. The park itself was unsuitable for farming and became a refuge for native plants and animals, which led to it eventually being protected as a conservation park.

Another lookout can be accessed by a 560-metre-loop walk in the northern part of the park. This lookout provides views along a cliff edge above the Irwin River, where you’ll enjoy dramatic views of the valley below and learn about the fascinating geology of the area.

During your journey around the park, you may see artefacts such as stone flakes,

scar trees and grinding stones that give insight into the traditional uses of the area. The region is significant for a number of local Aboriginal groups and its plants and animals provide important sources for food and medicine.

Even more ancient are the marine fossils that can be seen on the edges of the Irwin River. The fossils have been exposed over time by erosion but you’ll need a keen eye as many of them are quite small. That’s the thing about exploring our natural areas – sometimes you’ve got to adjust your focus from the spectacular vistas of the stunning wildflower displays to also enjoy the hidden gems.

*Opposite page* Coalseam Conservation Park features a newly redeveloped campground.  
*Photo – Peter Nicholas/Parks and Wildlife*

**Top left** Everlasting daisies bloom in abundance during wildflower season.

**Above left** Irwin River Lookout.  
*Photos – Sally Bostwick/Parks and Wildlife*

## Do it yourself

**Where is it?** 30 kilometres north of Mingenew and 115 kilometres east of Geraldton.

**What to do:** Camping, birdwatching, bushwalking, photography, wildflower appreciation, picnicking.

**Facilities:** Campground, toilets, short walking tracks, communal fireplace, gas barbecues.

**Nearest Parks and Wildlife office:** Midwest Regional Office, 201 Foreshore Drive, Geraldton, phone: (08) 9964 0901.



Discover more about Coalseam Conservation Park

Scan this QR code or visit Parks and Wildlife’s ‘LANDSCOPE’ playlist on YouTube.

