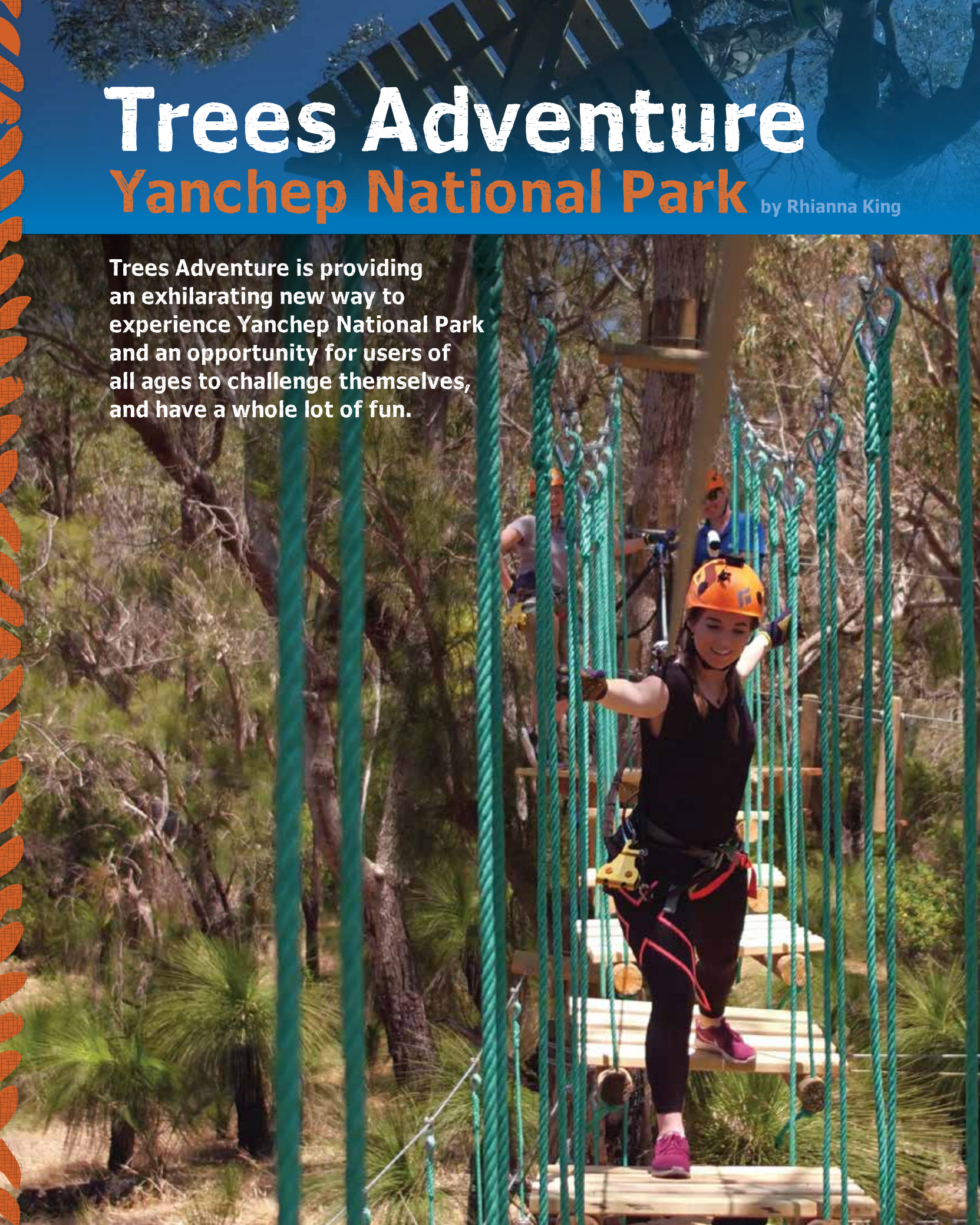


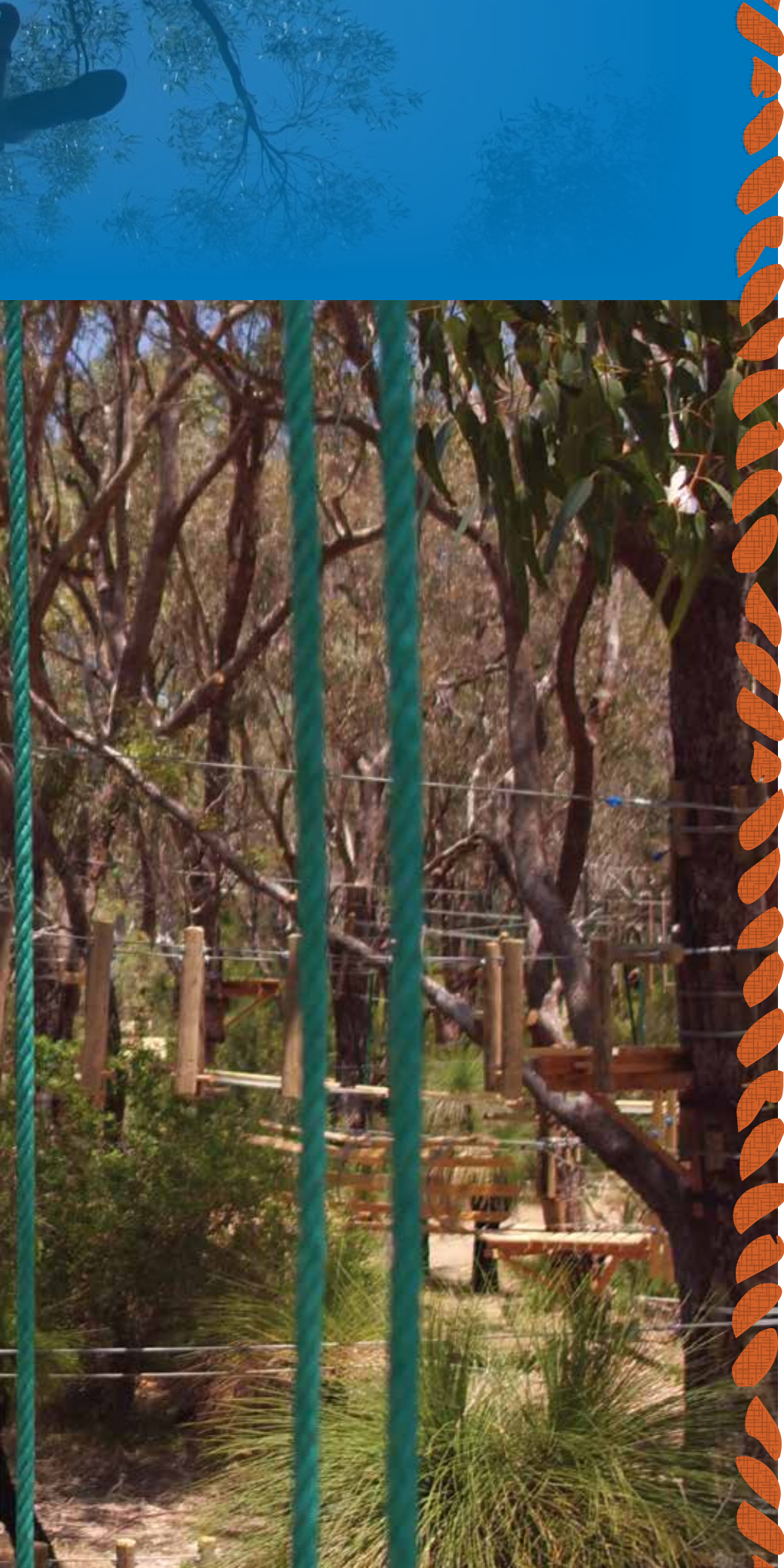
# Trees Adventure

## Yanchep National Park

by Rhianna King

Trees Adventure is providing an exhilarating new way to experience Yanchep National Park and an opportunity for users of all ages to challenge themselves, and have a whole lot of fun.





● Yanchep National Park

**N**estled in the bush behind Bull Banksia Oval in Yanchep National Park, 45 minutes drive from Perth's CBD, is a thrilling and unique way for visitors to experience the park. Trees Adventure is a network of ziplines and high ropes that ribbons through the trees like a giant spider web and looks like where Peter Pan and the Lost Boys would hang out if Neverland was in the Australian bush.

### ONE STEP AT A TIME

Once I arrived at Trees Adventure, my inner-child, which I'm sure was awoken by the squeals of "woo-hoos" and "yee-hows" coming from those on the ziplines, was chomping at the bit to start climbing and zipping through the trees. But my inner-adult, which has a healthy sense of responsibility and self-preservation, was happy to listen to the safety instruction and be fitted with a helmet and harness before we got going.

Once we were kitted up, we moved to the 'home tree', from where each of the seven colour-coded levels start. Two 'yellow' courses – designed for kids aged four to seven – run two metres off the ground at their highest point, and provide youngsters with the opportunity to use their problem-solving skills, expend some energy and challenge themselves physically across 20 challenges and four flying foxes.

The next most challenging is the 'green' course, which reaches up to four metres, and is a good way for adults and older kids to warm-up and get used to the equipment.

Two 'blue' courses up the ante, and challenge participants with less stable obstacles, including tight ropes, wooden bridges, uneven planks and cargo nets that are climbed over, clambered through and balanced on at heights of up to six metres.

Several ziplines traverse over the bush, and provide a spectacular bird's-eye view over ancient grass trees and zamia plants.

The 'red' course raises the stakes (and the distance from the ground) even further. Twelve challenging sections, including one that is notorious for transforming many participants into Cirque du Soleil-type acrobats, is open to users aged 10 and above. An 80-metre zipline is a thrilling end to this course.

The 'black' course, which soars to 10 metres at its highest point, is open to adrenaline junkies aged 13 and above. This has a number of very challenging sections, which I was happy to observe from the safety of the ground.

## ALL IN THE PLANNING

The Trees Adventure in Yanchep National Park is one of seven across Australia with the others located in Lane Poole Reserve and in Victoria, NSW and Tasmania. It is run through a lease arrangement with DBCA and was opened in November 2018 following the success of the one located in Lane Poole Reserve (see also 'Canopy capers', *LANDSCOPE*, Winter 2016).

The course was carefully and thoughtfully designed to make use of existing trees, avoid the removal of any native plants and include other natural features. The platforms, which separate each challenge (and provide an opportunity to pause and catch your breath), and other infrastructure, are secured to the trees without any penetrating fixtures such as nails or screws. Instead, each one is fastened to the tree using a three-tonne strap, which securely holds it in place but enables the tree to continue to grow. Daily checks of the entire course ensures the safety of participants and maintains the well-being of the bush in which its set.

## WHAT THE PEOPLE ARE SAYING

Trees Adventure park manager Matt Baker said the attraction was growing in popularity with thousands of people doing the course since it opened last year.

"We get lots of visitors to WA coming through the course, but it's great that



### Journey to the Trees Adventure

Scan this QR code or visit Parks and Wildlife Service's '*LANDSCOPE*' playlist on YouTube.



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**Main** Trees Adventure users make their way over tight ropes, wooden bridges, uneven planks and cargo nets.

*Photos – Peter Nicholas/DBCA*

**Above** Safety harnesses, gloves and helmets offer protection while on the course.

**Right** The age of users ranges from four to 77-plus.

*Photos – Trees Adventure*



we're seeing locals come to try it out as well," he said.

He also said that he had observed an increase in voucher sales, as people are moving towards 'experience' gift-giving.

Yanchep National Park manager Julia Coggins said she had received positive feedback from park visitors about the Trees Adventure and inquiries from schools planning their excursion programs.

"The Trees Adventure provides park visitors with yet another nature-based opportunity, which caters to people of all ages," she said.

"There is already so much to do and see at Yanchep, but the Trees Adventure is attracting new visitors to the park who, when they get here, are experiencing all the other wonderful things that are on

offer. And many returning visitors are 'rediscovering' the park.

"This is especially true for campers, who can easily fill several days with fun and unique nature-based opportunities."

## THE HIGHS AND HIGHLIGHTS

There's no question that spending time in nature nourishes our soul, but for at least one Trees Adventure user – nine-year-old Justin – the course represented a much more character-building experience. Justin spent 30 minutes gathering the courage to step off a platform to zipline into the arms of his waiting mother, who patiently and lovingly offered words of encouragement to coax him along. By the time he did take the plunge, Justin had a community of people rooting for him and he made the



“... it was a reminder of how important it is for kids to be given opportunities to challenge themselves physically and emotionally so they can experience the satisfaction of doing something they didn’t think they could.”

journey to the platform on the other side accompanied by the sound of heartfelt cheering and clapping. While the zipline was about 20 metres of moderate incline, it seemed to be light-years outside Justin’s comfort zone. He had every reason to be proud of himself for facing his fears, and the smile on his face as he reached the other side was priceless. For those of us watching Justin’s personal triumph, it was a reminder of how important it is for kids to be given opportunities to challenge themselves physically and emotionally so they can experience the satisfaction of doing something they didn’t think they could.

For me, one definite highlight was spotting a kangaroo and her joey feeding in the undergrowth beneath the course; which came towards the end of my session and was a welcome distraction from my tiring arms. And I always enjoy hearing the raucous screeches of the endangered Carnaby’s cockatoos, which roost in the park, echoing through the sky.

## CLIMB ABOARD

Bookings are required for the attraction and tickets provide participants with 2.5 hours on the course, which includes a safety briefing. The safety equipment includes a robust harness and helmet, and it was reassuring to know that I would only fall as far as my harness would let me. And I was grateful for the special gloves that protected my hands from rope burn and provided much-needed grip. It was also comforting to know that Trees Adventure staff, who are constantly roaming around the course, are never far away to offer words of encouragement, tips to make the experience easier and even rescue those who need it.

**Above** Straps are used to ‘fix’ the course to existing park trees to avoid the need for any penetrating fixtures.

*Photo – Rhianna King/DBCA*

**Above right** The highest course reaches up to 10 metres.

*Photo – Brandon Boyd/Trees Adventure*

**Right** Ziplines provide users with a bird’s-eye view of the bush.

*Photo – Peter Nicholas/DBCA*



## Do it yourself

**Where is it?:** Yanchep National Park is 51 kilometres north of the Perth CBD.

**What to do:** Cave tours, bushwalking, culture appreciation, picnicking, camping, wildlife appreciation.

**Contact:** Yanchep National Park, corner Indian Ocean Drive and Yanchep Beach Road, Yanchep, Western Australia, 6035

**Phone:** (08) 9303 7759 **Fax:** (08) 9561 2316

**Email:** [yanchep@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:yanchep@dbca.wa.gov.au)

**Camping:** For campsite bookings visit [parks.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://parks.dbca.wa.gov.au). Visit [www.parks.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.parks.dbca.wa.gov.au) for more information.

*Bookings can be made and gift vouchers purchased at [treesadventure.com.au](http://treesadventure.com.au). National park entry fees also apply.*