



# TREEmendous trees

Western Australia is home to an array of tree species that can be bush walked among, picnicked under and camped near. And there is an increasing number of nature-based activities that are giving people the opportunity to turn up the adventure dial, do something a bit out of the ordinary and get a different perspective of the bush.

**by Rachel Hutton**



From the ancient giants of the south-west, to the remnant rainforests of the Kimberley, and inland to the shimmering gimlets of the Goldfields region, Western Australia is home to a staggering variety of tree species. Being among them is good for us, and not just because of the key role they play in cleaning the air we breathe. It enriches our soul to feel dwarfed by a stately tangle that is adorned with gnarls and knobs; witness one of the Goldfield's spectacular sunrises, when the trees appear to glow as if painted in glitter; or admire a lone snappy gum, which breaks up the horizon of an otherwise vast Pilbara landscape.

For some of us, being among trees elicits a child-like feeling of freedom and reminds us of days when we played in the bush until we were summoned by mum for dinner. Others enjoy watching the birds and insects that busy themselves in and around their arboreal homes. Some like to go camping and wake up to the sounds of the wind through the leaves or bush walk along tracks made slightly soft underfoot by fallen leaf litter. Many just enjoy their shade. But now Western Australia is playing host to a new generation of nature-based opportunities, which provide visitors with the opportunity to experience trees in new way, and get a slightly different perspective of WA's natural areas.



## GETTING HIGH

The **Tree Top Walk** has been delighting visitors since it was erected in 1996 at the Valley of the Giants in the magnificent southern forest on the State's south coast – an easy 18-kilometre drive from Walpole and 52 kilometres from Denmark. The universally accessible walkway, which is suitable for wheelchairs and strollers, guides visitors through the spectacular tangle canopy, and soars up to 40 metres off the ground. Meanwhile, the Ancient Empire trail on the forest floor meanders past 400-year-old red tingle trees.

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**Main** Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree.

*Photo – Cliff Winfield*

**Inset** Karri bark.

*Photo – Jiri Lochman*

**Top** The Tree Top Walk has been guiding visitors through the tree canopy for more than 20 years.

*Photo – Tourism WA*

Within the Valley of the Giants is a discovery centre, which features a range of visitor information and displays. And the on-site gift shop offers a selection of locally sourced products, artworks and souvenirs. Free guided walks are offered daily outside of school holidays, when nature-based educational holiday programs are run (except during winter).

## FIRE LOOKOUTS

Between 1937 and 1952, before aircraft fire spotters were used to detect fires, eight tall and strong trees were selected as fire lookouts for the south-west. Today, visitors can climb three of these trees.

**Diamond Tree** – located 10 kilometres south of Manjimup – is a beautiful karri tree that was pegged in 1940 and used for fire spotting until the 1970s. A cabin was built at the top to provide shelter to those who worked up there during the heat of summer. Nowadays, visitors can

climb 49 metres to the top where they'll find the views across the forest are well worth the effort. If you'd rather keep your feet on firm ground, there are plenty of beautiful picnic spots surrounding the trees to enjoy.

**Gloucester Tree** is located in Gloucester National Park and is WA's most famous karri tree. The tree soars 60 metres high and daring visitors can climb up to 53 metres to enjoy a spectacular view across the forest and adjoining farmland.

The **Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree** is the tallest of the three fire lookout trees and climbing it is not for the faint-hearted. One-hundred and sixty-five pegs ascend a nerve-racking 65 metres off the ground – just 10 metres from the top of the tree. Like the others, the view is spectacular and well worth the effort as it looks out over the stunning Warren National Park that surrounds it.

Yanchep ● ★ Trees Adventure (Yanchep National Park)

Joondalup ●

Perth ●

Mundaring ●

INDIAN

OCEAN

Dwellingup ●

Trees Adventure (Lane Poole Reserve)

Bunbury ●

Collie ●

Forest Adventures South West

Yallingup ●

Busseton ●

Margaret River ●

Nannup ●

Augusta ●

Pemberton ●

Manjimup ●

Diamond Tree ●

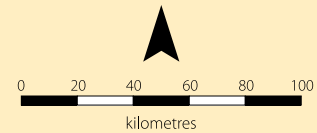
Gloucester Tree ●

Walpole ●

Tree Top Walk/  
Ancient Empire

**Legend**

- ★ Site
- Bibbulmun Track
- Munda Biddi Trail
- National park
- Reserve



## ADVENTURES IN THE TREES

Visitors to a number of natural areas are welcoming the opportunity to explore the bush on a ropes courses, which enables them to challenge themselves mentally and physically as they zip, clamber, climb, balance and tightrope their way through the bush.

**Forest Adventures South West** in Tuart Forest National Park provides thrillseekers with a unique way to explore the beautiful natural environment. The attraction spans more than 3.5 hectares and provides 77 activities, across six courses, that cater to a range of skill and fitness levels and nerve resolves. More than 500 metres of flying fox lines guide users through the forest, where they can also uni-cycle off the ground, swing through the trees on tarzan ropes, BMX on a wire and climb through spider web-type challenges.

### For more information visit:

- Tree Top Walk – [parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/tree-top-walk](https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/tree-top-walk)
- Diamond Tree – [parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/diamond-tree](https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/diamond-tree)
- Gloucester Tree – [parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/gloucester-tree](https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/gloucester-tree)
- Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree – [parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/dave-evans-bicentennial-tree](https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/site/dave-evans-bicentennial-tree)
- Forest Adventures South West – [forestadventures.com.au](https://forestadventures.com.au)
- Trees Adventure – [treesadventure.com.au](https://treesadventure.com.au)

The **Trees Adventure** has two sites in Western Australia – one in Lane Poole Reserve and the other in Yanchep National Park (see ‘Adventure out: Trees Adventure’, *LANDSCOPE*, Autumn 2019). These courses both offer a range of experiences, which cater to kids from as young as four; the difficulty and height of the challenges increases through the levels. Lane Poole Reserve boasts 89 challenges over 10 courses, while visitors to Yanchep National Park can take advantage of the 71 challenges over seven courses.

*Previous page:* 1) Gloucester Tree. Photo – Cliff Winfield 2) Ancient Empire trail. Photo – Nic Duncan 3) Diamond Tree lookout. Photo – Cliff Winfield 4) Forest Adventures South West. Photo – Forest Adventures South West

*This page:* 5) Trees Adventure, Yanchep National Park. 6) 7) Trees Adventure, Lane Poole Reserve. Photos – Trees Adventure

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