



## Lesueur National Park

*With more than 900 known plant species, Lesueur National Park erupts into colour from late winter, delighting its visitors with a stunning floral display.*

Located just a three-hour drive north of Perth and 20 minutes from Jurien Bay, Lesueur National Park is a must-see for wildflower enthusiasts. In late winter and early spring, many of the park's 900 species, including acacias, hibbertias, leschenaultias, melaleucas, gastrolobiums and orchids bloom and blanket the landscape with a riot of colour. Remarkably, 111 species that occur in the park are found nowhere else, and 81 species are at their northern limit. The park's species richness has led to it being named a biodiversity hotspot and it ranks as one of the State's most important reserves for flora conservation. It has also been registered on the National Heritage List.

**Above** The Lookout at Lesueur National Park.  
*Photo – Marie Lochman*

### DIVERSE LANDSCAPE

The diversity of plants found in Lesueur National Park is caused in part by the park's variety of geological formations, landscapes and soil types. At 26,987 hectares, the national park is made up of salt lakes and remnant coastal dunes in the north-west, and laterite ridges and hills and gullies in the east.

The park's abundant and diverse plant life also provides habitat for the 29 species of jewel beetle, which occur in the area. These stunning insects can be spotted by their bright metallic colours of yellow, blue, red and orange.

As well as being a stronghold for jewel beetles, the park is home to 52 species of reptiles, including 41 lizard species such as the western bearded dragon (*Pogona minor minima*) and the western spiny-tailed gecko (*Strophurus spinigerus*), and 11 species of snake, including Gould's hooded snake

(*Parasuta gouldii*) and the western brown snake (*Pseudonaja mengdeni*). The range of reptiles found in Lesueur National Park is believed to be the world's highest reptile diversity of any Mediterranean climate ecosystem.

The park is also rich in birdlife, with 122 native species and two introduced species known to occur there. The park's sandplain area attracts honeyeaters, thornbills, fairy-wrens, southern emu-wrens, white-breasted wrens and field wrens. The woodlands also provide one of the region's last breeding habitats for Carnaby's cockatoos. The park is the northern limit of the known range for many other species, including the western rosella, the little wattlebird and the shy hylacola. In summer, the salt lakes and freshwater springs come alive as several species of water bird, including waders, which migrate from the northern hemisphere, descend on the area.



Discover more about Lesueur National Park

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

**Top left** Twenty-nine species of jewel beetle occur in the park.  
*Photo – Marie Lochman*

**Left** Wandoo woodlands in Lesueur National Park.  
*Photo – DBCA*

**Above** Forty-one species of lizard are found in the park, including dwarf bearded dragons.  
*Photo – Jiri Lochman*

**“The Lesueur area has long been known to the Yued people, who are believed to have lived there for tens of thousands of years.”**

The park is also home to 15 species of native mammals, including four species of dunnart (*Sminthopsis* spp.), ash-grey mice (*Pseudomys albocinereus*), honey possums (*Tarsipes rostratus*) and bush rats (*Rattus fuscipes*). Unfortunately, feral cats, European foxes and house mice have also taken hold in the park and threaten native populations.

### BECOMING A NATIONAL PARK

The Lesueur area has long been known to the Yued people, who are believed to have lived there for tens of thousands of years. The Yued people refer to Mount Lesueur as Koomba Chiler and used it as a landmark for people who travelled there to trade shields, flint spearheads, stones, shells, animal skins and even women’s hair.

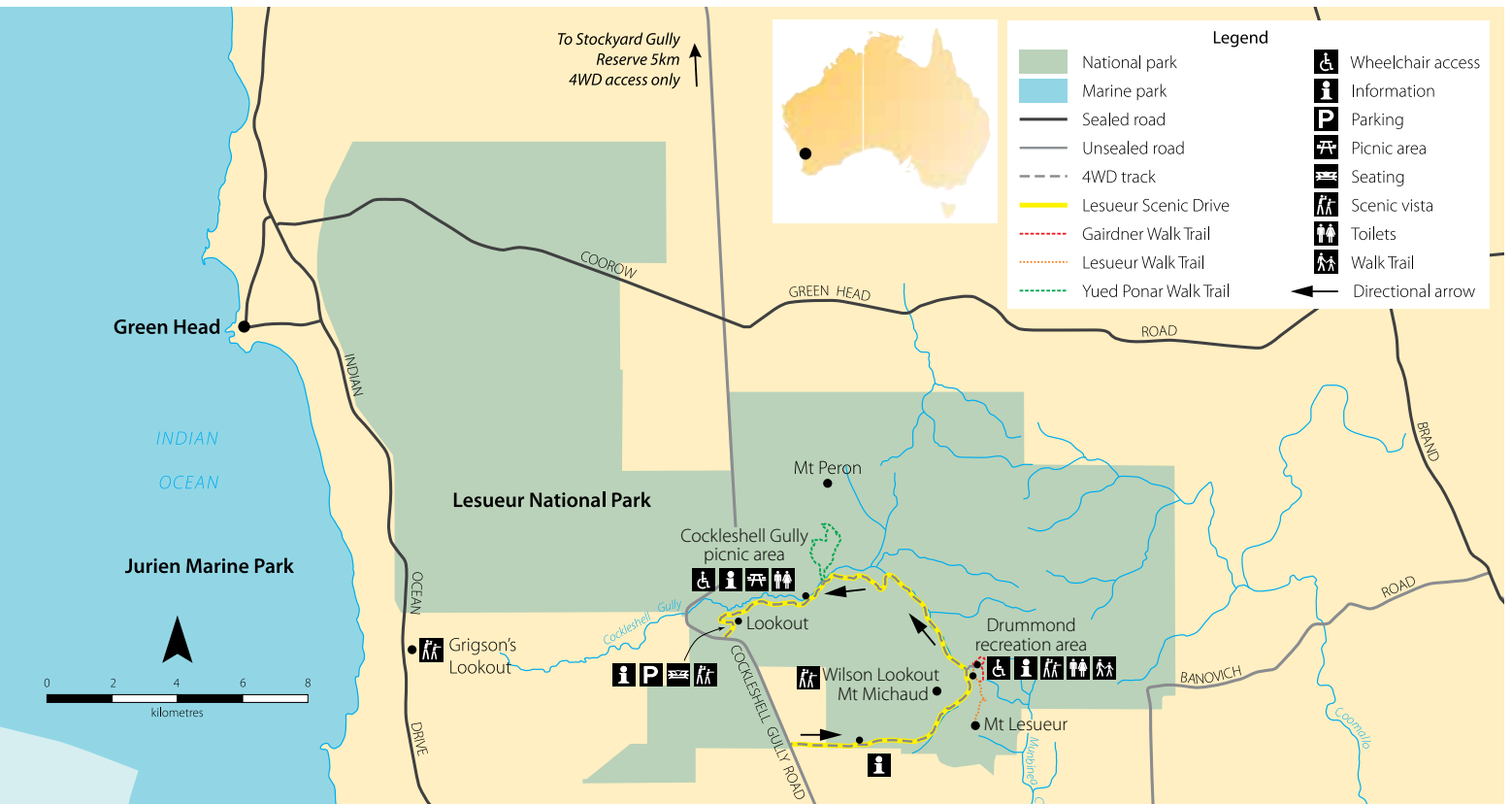
The area was named by Europeans in 1801 as part of the expedition led by French navigator Nicolas Baudin to map the coast of Australia, which was known at the time as New Holland. The Lesueur area was surveyed by those aboard the *Naturaliste*, captained by Jacques Hamelin, and named after Charles-Alexandre Lesueur – one of the natural history artists travelling on the voyage.

In the 1950s, government botanist Charles Gardner recommended the area be protected, as he was concerned about the effects of agriculture on native vegetation. No action was taken, apparently because the area contained a reserve for horse breeding, which dated back to the early 1900s when horses were bred for the Australian army in WWI. However, Mount Lesueur itself

was afforded protection for ‘educational purposes’.

In 1962, a review of WA’s national parks and reserves by the Australian Academy of Science Committee on National Parks identified that the area deserved protection as a national park. This was endorsed again as part of another review in 1974, however was not progressed because it was believed that coal deposits in the area should have been available for exploitation. A compromise was reached in 1983 when a ‘C’ class reserve was agreed upon, which protected the area but allowed access for mineral and petroleum exploration, but the reserve was never created. Finally, in 1992, Lesueur was gazetted as a national park, following public pressure to stop a major coal mining development.

# Parks for people Lesueur National Park



## EXPLORING THE PARK

One of the best ways to explore the park is on the 18.5-kilometre one-way bitumen road, which loops from Cockleshell Gully Road. This road provides users with several pull-over bays to stop and get up close to wildflowers. The Drummond recreation area and Wilson Lookout provide views through the valley, which is bound by the Gairdner Range, to the Indian Ocean. Visitors should look out for wedge-tailed eagles that cruise on the updrafts adjacent to the ridgelines. From here you can learn about the park from informative signage and use the toilets, before embarking on either the

2.5-kilometre loop class three Gairdner Walk Trail or the four-kilometre-return class three Lesueur Walk Trail, which provides spectacular views across the national park.

North-west from there is the Cockleshell Gully picnic area, where you can enjoy a picnic and set off on the 7.1-kilometre Yued Ponar Walk Trail. This provides a good leg stretch to the top of Mount Peron, taking walkers through the species-rich Kwongan heath, up to the top of the scarp and breakaway country where

.....  
**Below** The park can be explored on one of the walk trails.

*Photo – Marie Lochman*

magnificent views of the park can be seen. Interpretive signage along the way tells the story of the six Yued seasons.

These walks are most beautiful in spring when the wildflowers are blooming, but there is plenty to see and enjoy during other times of the year as well.

## Do it yourself

**Where is it?** 250 kilometres north of Perth along the Brand Highway, 20 kilometres from Jurien Bay.

**Total area:** 27,987 hectares.

**What to do:** Walking, scenic driving, photography, birdwatching, wildflower appreciation.

**Facilities:** Toilets, picnic tables, information shelters, seating, parking.

**Nearest Parks and Wildlife Service office:** Moora District Office, 67 Bashford Street, Jurien Bay, phone: (08) 9688 6000 or [jurien@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:jurien@dbca.wa.gov.au).

Please note that entry fees apply.

For more information, visit [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au).

