



Top marks for KINGS PARK

Western Australians were asked for their thoughts on Perth's largest inner-city park and the results are in. Kings Park was rated 4.7 out of five stars by the WA public, and their views have contributed to a plan to ensure the iconic park and its incredible biodiversity will be enjoyed for years to come.

by **Scott Heffernan**

Western Australians have returned a glowing report card for Kings Park and Botanic Garden in a community survey conducted in 2020, with clear expectations for the park's role in conserving the State's flora and supporting the health of the community in its future management.

Much loved by visitors from all over the globe, Kings Park or Kaarta Koomba is one of the world's largest inner-city parks, covering 400 hectares and located 1.5 kilometres from central Perth. It sits on Mount Eliza, a major topographical



feature of Perth, and provides spectacular views over the city, the Swan River (Derbarl Yerrigan), Canning River (Djarlgarro Beeliar) and the Darling Range (Katamordo) further east.

GLOWING REPORT

More than 4500 survey respondents rated the park an average 4.7 out of five stars as a Perth visitor attraction. A desire for biodiversity conservation in line with remaining a safe and welcoming place for people of all ages and abilities ranked as top priorities for the community.

“There is an expectation that Kings Park will continue to provide high quality open spaces and amenities for recreation, play and community activities,” Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) Executive Director, Alan Barrett said.

“Many people are interested in learning about Whadjuk Noongar connections to Kings Park as well as receiving credible, locally relevant information on how to take action for the environment and improve their understanding of local biodiversity issues and sustainability,” Alan said.

Main Kings Park Festival.
Photo – Jason Thomas

Top View of Perth from Roe Memorial.
Photo – Dave Blumer

Above Kings Park education programs are very popular.
Photo – Jody D’Arcy



When asked to prioritise Kings Park's most important roles, survey respondents ranked the top five in the following order:

- 1) Sanctuary for native plants and wildlife
- 2) A place for WA families and the community
- 3) Environmental research and conservation
- 4) A significant place for Noongar people
- 5) A tourist attraction.

FUTURE PLANNING

The survey was timed to inform the drafting of the next management plan for

Kings Park and Botanic Garden. The plan considers the need to respond to population growth and urban infill as well as environmental challenges, the State Government's tourism goals, mobile information technology and community appetite to connect with nature for physical and mental health.

With all these factors considered and the results of the survey analysed, BGPA developed the *Kings Park and Botanic Garden Management Plan 2021–2025*. It outlines the activities and strategies 'to practise and inspire environmental conservation and celebrate local

identity by immersing and empowering communities in world-recognised botanic gardens, parklands and urban bushlands.'

While BGPA has statutory responsibility for the management of Kings Park, stewardship of its inherent values and cultural heritage is a role shared with the community.

"Strengthening community engagement and the participation of traditional custodians, key stakeholders and the broader community to achieve a shared sense of place, identity and belonging is a priority," Alan said.



Discover more about visiting Kings Park

Scan this QR code or visit Kings Park and Botanic Garden YouTube channel.





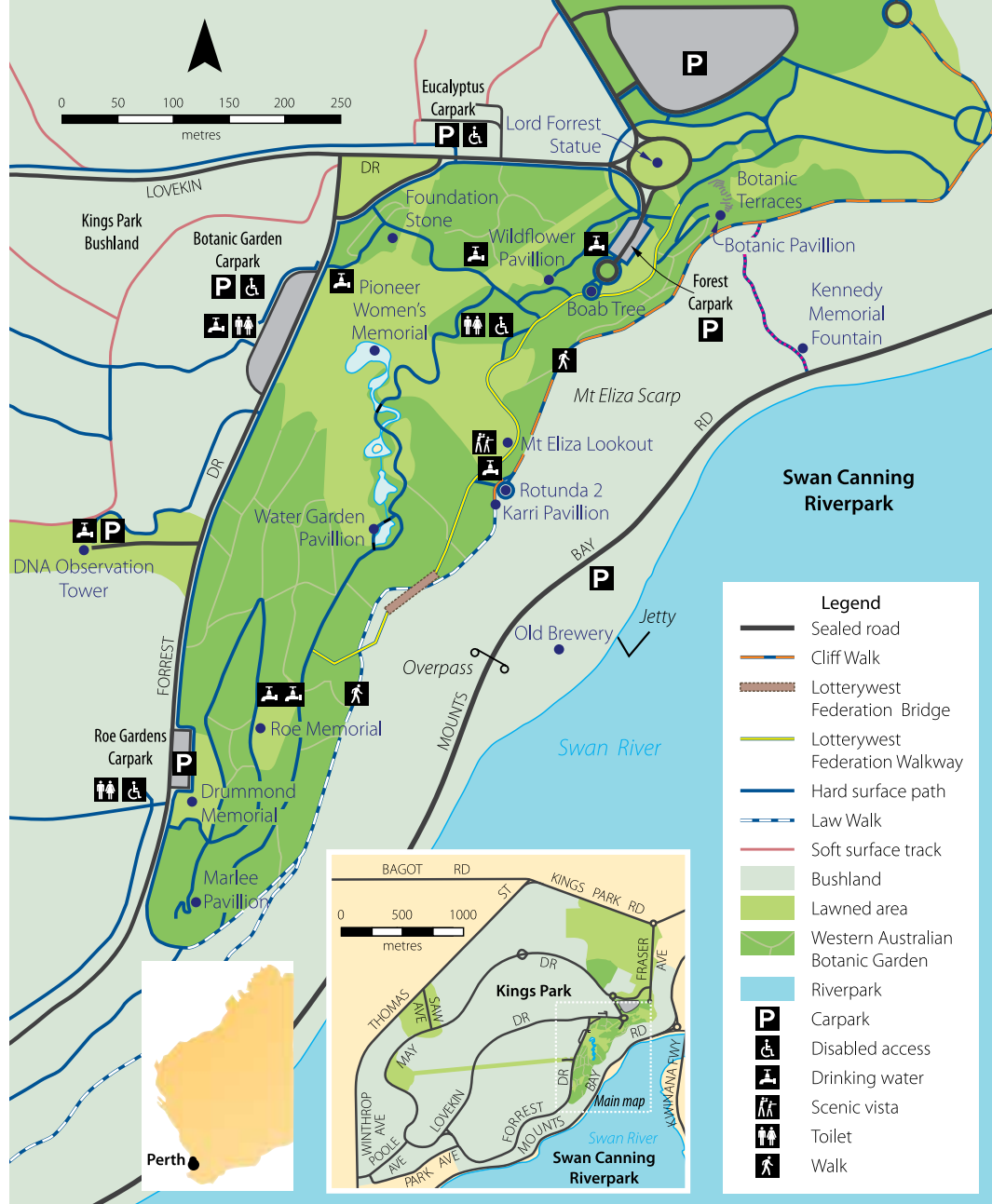
LIVING MUSEUM

The Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation are the traditional custodians of the land referred to as Kings Park and Botanic Garden. It is also known as Kaarta Koomba and Mooro Katta. The cliff face of Mount Eliza is also known as Kaarta Gar-up. The land has historic and continuing cultural significance to Aboriginal people and contains significant sites actively used today. These elements contribute to the rich cultural fabric of the park and underline its importance as a significant place for all Western Australians.

The area of the park was set aside for public purposes in 1831, and first gazetted as a public park in 1872. It was officially created as a class A reserve in 1900, affording it the highest level of protection available for public land under Western Australian law.

Today, more than two thirds of Kings Park is comprised of remnant banksia and tuart woodlands. The bushland is an important refuge for 327 native plant species, providing habitat for around 80 bird species, 20 reptile species, more than 300 species of fungi and an unknown number of different invertebrates.

BGPA's scientists are an important part of DBCA's Biodiversity and Conservation Science, and contributes valuable data on plant research and evidence-based outcomes. Survey respondents agreed protecting native biodiversity was the most important priority for Kings Park



in the next five years, with 87 per cent rating it as very important. The majority of respondents also regard BGPA's role in plant conservation and research as being very important.

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Displays and interpretation feature strongly around the park and promote Western Australian flora, conservation and the significance of plants to life on earth, making this living museum an environmental educational resource.

More than 1000 volunteers and supporters help to maintain Kings Park, which is a reflection of the great sense of community and connection between the park and the people of Perth.

Opposite page

Above left Rio Tinto Naturescape, Kings Park.
Photo – Jason Thomas

Far left Kings Park's dedicated volunteer guides.

Photo – Dave Blumer

Left Picnics near Pioneer Women's Memorial.
Photo – Jason Thomas

Above left Ceremonial dance in Kings Park.
Photo – Mark Griffin

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