



Mount Augustus National Park

Drawing obvious comparisons to world-famous Uluru, Mount Augustus offers rocky creeks and gorges, open plains, Aboriginal rock engravings and a variety of wildlife – all the beauty, with only a fraction of the tourists.

Upon entering Mount Augustus National Park, a visitor sees a carpet of arid shrublands dominated by wattles, sennas and *Eremophilas* that blanket the plain and extend right up to and over the giant rock. Sporadic groves of river gums indicate water seepage from beneath the island mountain.

Visitors will encounter rocky creeks, gorges, open plains, Aboriginal rock engravings (petroglyphs) and a variety of wildlife. Mulga, gidgee and other wattles are sprinkled across the plain, and a keen eye will spot spinifex pigeons, crimson chats, mulga parrots and babbler as they forage for food.

Above Geological giant.
Photo – DBCA

At Cattle Pool on the Lyons River, permanent pools attract cormorants, ibis, heron, and a variety of ducks. The trees play home to blue-winged kookaburras, sacred kingfishers and little corellas.

Emus visit regularly to seek out fruits, while bustards sneak up on insects and small reptiles on the ground. On the plain you're likely to see bungarras and red kangaroos, and as you scale the mount, euros and birds of prey can be found.

Taking a moment to sit quietly and enjoy the serenity may afford you the added bonus of seeing some of the more shy-but-inquisitive wildlife, particularly in the early morning or late afternoon. While patiently waiting to glimpse a critter, marvel at the factors, like infertile soils and climate variability, that have shaped the thriving ecosystem.

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Mount Augustus and surrounds are the traditional lands of the Wajarri people. The Wajarri name for the site is Burringurrah, named after a boy who was undergoing his initiation into manhood. The rigours of this process so distressed him that he ran away, breaking Aboriginal law. Tribespeople chased the boy and hit him with a mulgurrah (fighting stick). Burringurrah collapsed and died, lying on his belly with his left leg bent up beside his body. You can see his final resting pose as you approach Mount Augustus from the south.

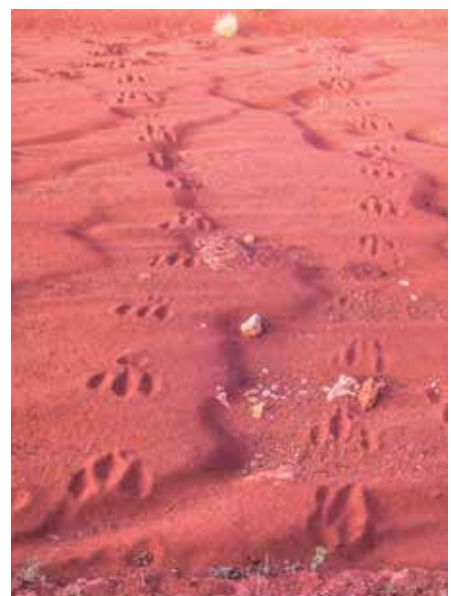
Aboriginal occupation is evidenced by engravings on rock walls at Munde, Ooramboo and Beedoboondou visitor sites, and by numerous stone tools discovered in the area.



Common plants and animals of Mount Augustus:

- Wattles (*Acacia* spp.)
- Sennas (Cassias, *Senna* spp.)
- Eremophilas (*Eremophila* spp.)
- Mulga (*Acacia aneura*)
- Gidgee (*Acacia pruinocarpa*)
- Spinifex pigeon (*Geophaps plumifera*)
- Crimson chat (*Epthianura tricolor*)
- Mulga parrot (*Psephotus varius*)
- Babblers (*Pomatostomus* spp.)
- Cormorants (Phalacrocoracidae)
- Ibis (Threskiornithidae)
- Heron (Ardeidae)

- Ducks (Anatidae)
- Blue-winged kookaburra (*Dacelo leachii*)
- Sacred kingfisher (*Todiramphus sanctus*)
- Little corella (*Cacatua sanguinea*)
- Emu (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*)
- Bustard (wild turkey, *Ardeotis australis*)
- Bungarra (goanna, *Varanus* spp.)
- Red kangaroo (*Osphranter rufus*)
- Euro (*Osphranter robustus*)
- Birds of prey



Discover more about
Mount Augustus
National Park

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



Top left Edney Springs.

Top View from Summit Trail.

Above Animal tracks on the red dirt.
Photos – Michael Phillips/DBCA

Left (clockwise from top) Blue-winged kookaburra; Goanna. *Photos – Sallyanne Cousins*; Red kangaroo. *Photo – Jiri Lochman*; *Acacia* sp. *Photo – Eddy Wajon/Sallyanne Cousins Photography*



STAYING SAFE

Tragically, several lives have been lost at this location in recent years, mainly on the Summit Trail and due to heat stress. Despite this, some visitors continue to arrive and go on to hike without sufficient preparation. This park is incredibly remote and even small problems can escalate quickly when far from help.

These tips will help you plan your visit and pack appropriately:

- Carry and drink a minimum of four litres per person per day when hiking, and more in hotter months. There is no drinking water in the park.
- Walk during the cooler parts of the day (there will also be more wildlife about during this time). Aim to start the longer trails soon after sunrise.
- Wear sturdy shoes, a hat, loose long-sleeved shirt and sunscreen.
- Walk in groups of three or more – in an emergency one might need to wait with the injured person while someone goes for help.
- Carry first aid kit, a personal locator beacon (PLB) or satellite phone as mobile coverage is limited.
- Beware of loose rocks, unstable surfaces and undercut cliff edges.



Top left *Acacia* plants are common in Mount Augustus.

Top right Flintstone geology.

Above right Burra or jilarnu (*Eremophila fraseri*) is a flowering plant found in WA's rangelands.

Above Goordgeela Lookout Trail.
Photos – Michael Phillips/DBCA



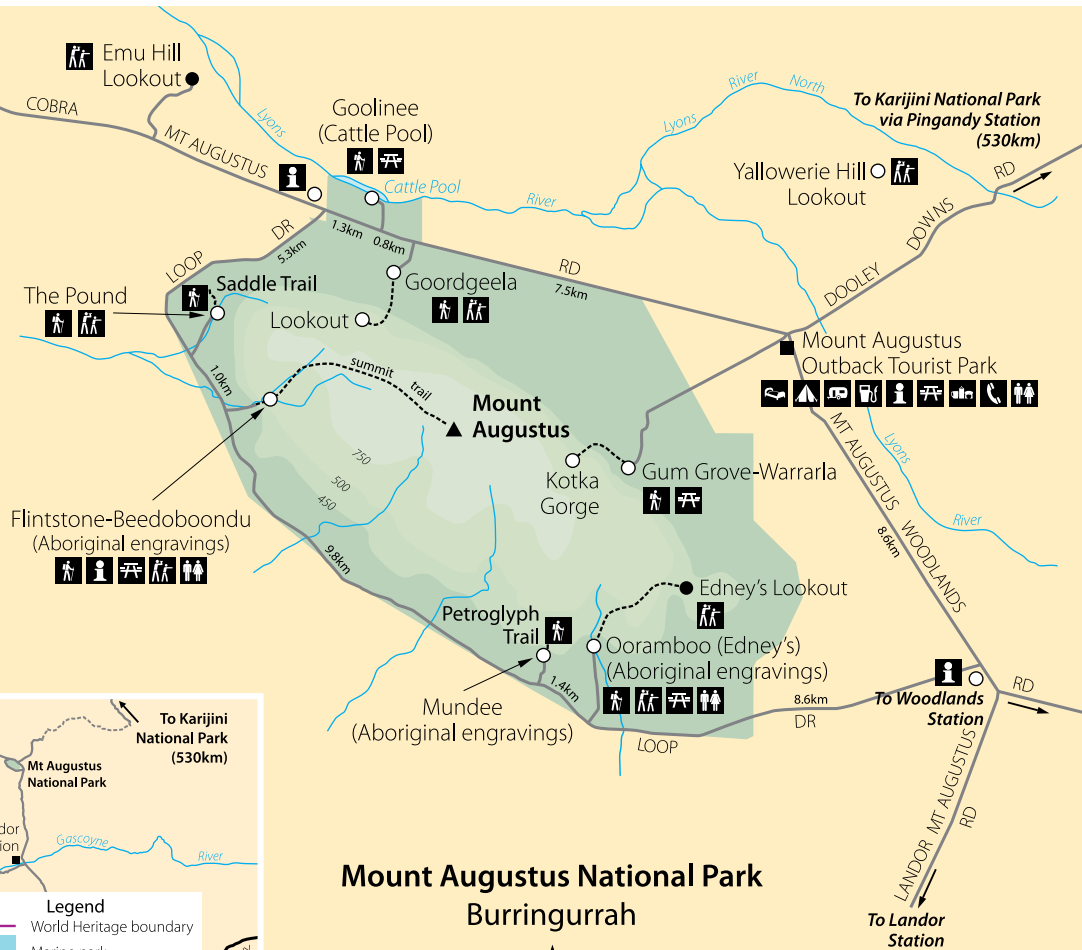
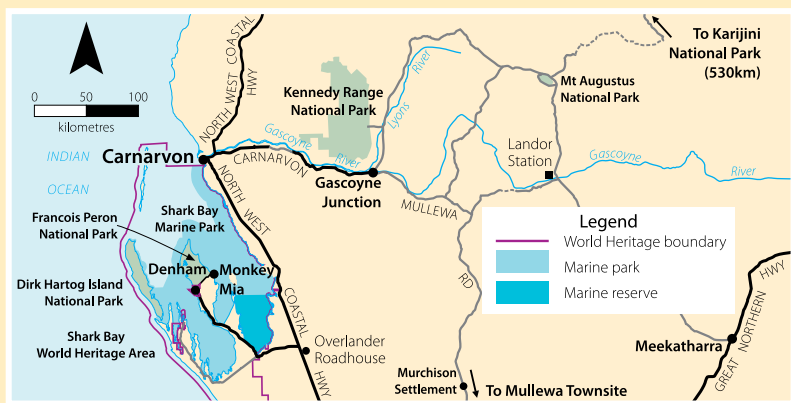
A FAMOUS COUSIN

Mount Augustus is often — and mistakenly — referred to as a monocline (one sided slope) or monolith (one rock), and frequently compared to Uluru. Both consist of sedimentary rock, but they differ in almost all other aspects including dimensions, geological evolution, and ages of both the landforms and the underlying rocks (see 'Mega Geology'; *LANDSCOPE* Winter 2021). The Mount Augustus sandstone is estimated to be about 1.6 billion years old and thought to be about three times older than the sandstone of Uluru.

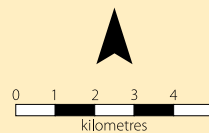
Mount Augustus is in fact an 'asymmetric anticline' because of the arch-like shape it is folded into, which is composed of multiple rock types. The mount can also be described as an inselberg, meaning 'island mountain', and rises 715 metres out of the surrounding alluvial plain.

Legend

National park	Hiking trail
Sealed road	Information
Unsealed road	Picnic tables
Walk trail	Scenic vistas
Accommodation	Store supplies
Camping	Telephone
Caravan park	Toilets
Fuel station	



Mount Augustus National Park Burringurrah



THINGS TO DO

The park has 11 trails in total, from short hikes to moderately difficult hikes through to the extremely challenging Summit Trail, which is a five-to-eight-hour hike and requires a high level of fitness and preparation.

All hike trails in the park are essentially unmodified and ground-level trail markings should be followed. Hikers should read the information and classification for each trail and choose hike trails suitable to their capabilities. In case of emergency, it is strongly recommended you carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) or satellite phone as mobile phone coverage is extremely limited.

Carry and drink a minimum of four litres of water per person per day of hiking, wear sturdy shoes and protection from the sun, wind and rain. The area experiences extreme heat in the warmer months (September to March), so hiking is not recommended. If you do walk in the heat, extra water is essential.

The Wajarri Traditional Owners request that visitors complete all their hiking during daylight hours and be off the mount by nightfall.

The 49-kilometre Loop Drive around Mount Augustus allows access to all visitor sites within the park. The Loop Drive and all access roads are generally two-wheel-drive friendly.

Do it yourself

Where is it? 465 kilometres north-east of Carnarvon via Gascoyne Junction

Total area: 9168 hectares

Recreational activities: Hiking, appreciation of nature and culture

Nearest Parks and Wildlife Service office: Shark Bay District office, Knight Terrace, Denham 6537. Phone (08) 9948 2226

Where to stay: Mount Augustus Tourist Park adjacent to the national park offers camping, accommodation and basic supplies.

Before your visit: Check alerts.dbca.wa.gov.au for current park alerts and download the free Emergency+ app.