



NINGALOO COAST  
WORLD HERITAGE



Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions



Summer News | 2017-18

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## Indigenous trainee rangers set to jointly manage the Ningaloo Coast

DBCA's Parks and Wildlife Service and the Gnulli native title claim group have been working towards a shared vision of Indigenous rangers jointly managing country along the Ningaloo Coast. This vision is now a reality with the employment of three traditional owners commencing as trainee rangers with Parks and Wildlife Service at the Exmouth District.

The trainee rangers will be working along the Ningaloo Coast while undertaking nationally accredited training in Conservation and Land Management, Public Safety Fire Fighting and Maritime skillsets. The trainee rangers will be guided by cultural elders to assist with the transfer of cultural knowledge from one generation to the next.

The aspiration of traditional owners and Parks and Wildlife Service is to protect and enhance the significant cultural values along the Ningaloo Coast while increasing the profile and acknowledgment for traditional owners themselves.

After waiting many years for this dream to come true, the trainee rangers and elders wasted no time in getting out to manage country. The group recently took a trip along the coast meeting with stakeholders, inspecting cultural sites and carrying out rehabilitation works. The pride and enthusiasm demonstrated by the trainee rangers and the elders to be back on country sets a strong foundation for the future management of this important cultural landscape within and adjacent to the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area.

**Left to right:** Parks and Wildlife Service staff Ethan Cooyou, trainee ranger Sarah Johnstone, elders Deborah Dobb and Hazel Walgar, trainee rangers Jermaine Baron and Cody Farrell and Parks and Wildlife Service staff Tom Nagle.



## Shorebirds workshop 2018

The Parks and Wildlife Service and BirdLife Australia recently held a shorebird workshop in Exmouth. Thirty-three community members attended, taking away with them bird identification skills for the resident and migratory shorebirds they are likely to see along the Ningaloo Coast and Exmouth Gulf.

The aim of the workshop was to provide community members with skills to correctly identify birds and provide the opportunity to be part of ongoing bird surveys within the area. So much information is still unknown about the migratory shorebirds that call Exmouth home for six months of the year and the surveys are a great way for us to learn more about their behaviour. Parks and Wildlife Service and BirdLife are planning on running another workshop later this year to provide more community members with the opportunity to learn about the shorebirds on our doorstep.



Above: Community members surveying the Exmouth Gulf. Photo – Grant Griffin/DBCA



Did you know?

...migratory shorebirds travel up to 30,000km return each year to nest in the arctic tundra in Siberia and Mongolia for six weeks. They then begin their return trip back to Australia, including the Ningaloo Coast and Exmouth Gulf.

Exmouth Gulf is nationally and internationally significant for many migratory shorebirds. Four critically endangered shorebirds are found within the area: the curlew sandpiper, bar tailed godwit, great knot and eastern curlew. The greater sand plover, grey-tailed tattler, ruddy turnstone, sanderling, and the pied and sooty oystercatchers are also found here.

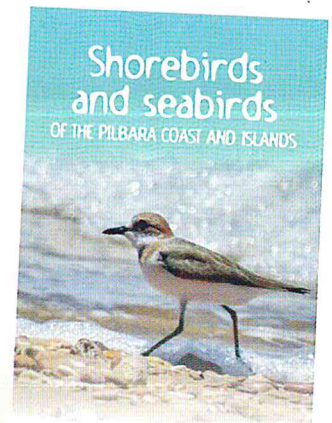
Above: Bar-tailed godwits and great knots were recently recorded in great numbers in the Exmouth Gulf. Photo – Grant Griffin/DBCA

## Summer visitors are flocking to the North West Cape

Around 30 species of shorebirds feed and rest along the shores of the Ningaloo Coast and the Pilbara Inshore Island Nature Reserves. These protected areas provide important habitat for migratory shorebirds, free from many pressures that can impair their survival, including human disturbance, feral animals and marine debris.

Parks and Wildlife Service staff are working to manage threatened and migratory shorebirds and seeking to protect important habitat. Actions include developing the *Pilbara Inshore Islands Management Plan*, installing interpretive signage at boat launching facilities and distributing education information. Staff are currently developing a curriculum-based Threatened Species Statewide education resource.

Drop into the Parks and Wildlife Service Exmouth office for your copy of the newly developed *Shorebirds and seabirds of the Pilbara coast and islands* guide.



## Access at Mesa Campground

The newly redeveloped Mesa Campground in Cape Range National Park offers access for everyone. This includes toilets for people with a disability and hard surface pathways leading to views overlooking the spectacular Ningaloo Coast. The recent upgrade is in line with DBCA's *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan* to improve access and inclusion for people with disability. The campground was tried and tested by campers over the Christmas period.

Left: Holiday makers enjoy the weather and the availability of beach wheelchairs at Mesa Campground, Cape Range National Park. The Coral Bay information hut and the Milyering Discovery Centre both have beach wheelchairs for visitors, available to hire free of charge. This enables access to the ocean with the assistance of a carer. If you wish to book a beach wheelchair, contact the Milyering Discovery Centre on (08) 9949 2808 or visit the Coral Bay information hut.







## Upcoming Cape Range National Park closures for feral animal control operations

Feral goats are a serious threat to the unique flora and fauna communities found within the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area. A reduction of their numbers is critical for the conservation of threatened species such as the black-flanked rock-wallaby.

In the interest of public safety, sections of Cape Range National Park and adjacent Unallocated Crown Land will be closed from Sunday 4 March to Friday 9 March 2018 while goat control and other feral animal control activities targeting introduced predators (foxes and feral cats) are undertaken.



Left: Feral goats.  
Photo - DBCA

Closed sections will include Charles Knife, Mandu Mandu and Yardie Creek. All access points into the control areas will be closed and signposted during the operation. Closures will not affect beach access, and Yardie Creek Road will remain open for the duration of the operation. The Sandy Bay Track will be closed for the majority of the month of March.

Please check out our Facebook page for more updates:  
[facebook.com/WAParksWildlifePilbara](https://www.facebook.com/WAParksWildlifePilbara)

Above: Charles Knife Canyon, Cape Range National Park. Photo - Jennifer Eliot/DBCA

## Coastal recovery and improved access at Bruboodjoo

Projects to rehabilitate degraded areas along the Ningaloo Coast and provide much needed protection to sensitive cultural sites are underway.

Parks and Wildlife Service and the Baiyungu Aboriginal Corporation have recently improved access to the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area and rehabilitated degraded areas such as minor tracks, sand dunes and coastal vegetation adjacent to the Bruboodjoo Camp, north of Coral Bay. Works included site protection fencing, signage and the 'ripping and moon-scaping' of areas identified for rehabilitation.

New boat launching and trailer parking areas have been designated to improve access for visitors to the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area.



Above: Bruboodjoo, Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area. The method of 'ripping and moon-scaping' duplicate tracks will improve the success of rehabilitation, allowing native plant seeds and moisture to be trapped in the swales of soil mounds which will provide wind protection for plant germination. Without this, tracks that have become compacted over time from heavy vehicle use offer little chance of recovery.

### Did you know?

Ningaloo Marine Park and the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area extends 40m above the high water mark for the majority of the coast from Winderabandi Point to Amherst Point in the south. This provides protection for coastal values such as sensitive ecological communities, shorebirds and nesting turtles.



## Ningaloo Coast In Focus

The Ningaloo Coast was inscribed on the World Heritage list for its outstanding natural beauty and exceptional biological diversity. Covering 6045km<sup>2</sup> and stretching more than 300km along the coast the rare mix of intact, diverse and large-scale terrestrial, coastal and marine habitats form an incredible interconnected ecosystem.

These diverse habitats are protected by a marine park, national park and many other reserves.

Each issue will feature one of the many reserves we manage within the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area.

### Bundegi Coastal Park

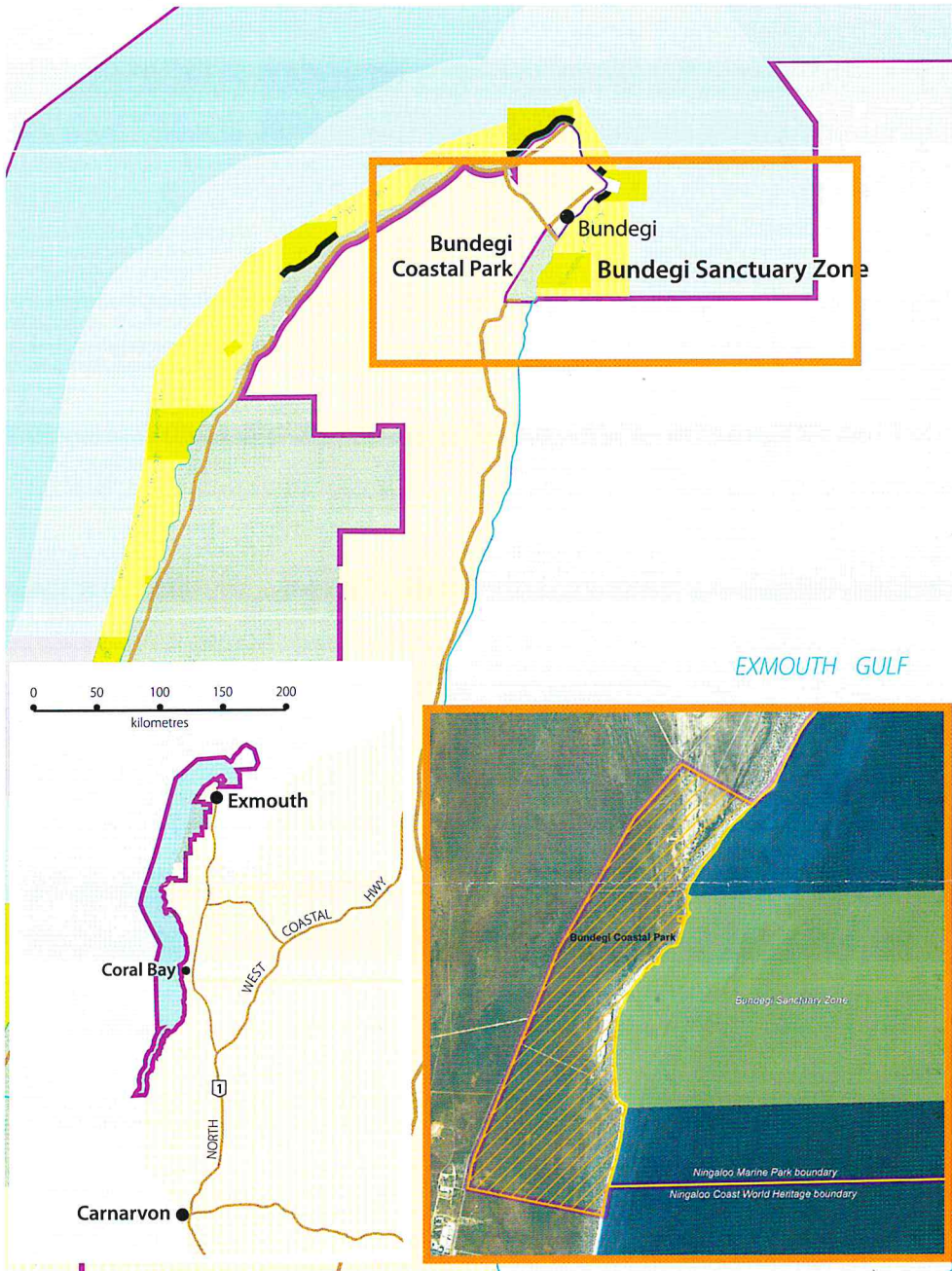
Bundegi Coastal Park is located 7km north of Exmouth and to the east of Murat Road. Surrounded by Commonwealth Defence land, the coastal park is jointly managed by DBCA's Parks and Wildlife Service and the Shire of Exmouth. Here you'll find terrestrial and coastal habitats including spinifex and scrubland, samphire flats and intertidal mangroves of high conservation value. Adjacent to the coastal park lies the Bundegi Sanctuary Zone, an important shorebird feeding and resting area.

The coastal park is a popular destination for recreational four-wheel and beach driving. Lately there has been an increase in damage to the coastal environment and salt flats caused by off-road vehicle and motorbike use.

Staff are installing new signage to assist managing tracks and increasing their presence to raise public awareness of the importance of this coastal park.

As a community we can all help ensure the Outstanding Universal Value of the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area is conserved for future generations, including the diverse habitats that lie within the property.

We welcome any feedback or comments regarding management of the Bundegi Coastal Park, [exmouth@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:exmouth@dbca.wa.gov.au) or (08) 9947 8000.



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