



Issue 2 – Winter 2019

Welcome to the second issue of *Ngari Capes Marine Park News*

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Right: *Yellow and black spotted nudibranch.*

Whales arrive early in Geographe Bay

By Professor Chandra Salgado Kent

In April, SouWEST researchers saw the earliest humpback and southern right whales arrivals since they began consistent monitoring in Geographe Bay 14 years ago*.

Southern right whales are listed as endangered in Australia.

Researchers Mr Chris Burton, Assoc Prof Chandra Salgado Kent, Ms Brodee Elsdon, and local citizen scientists Mr Ian Wiese and Mr Blair Ranford are, for the first time, presenting evidence that southern right whales use Geographe Bay in a manner consistent with criteria for a nationally recognised Southern Right Whale Emerging Aggregation Area.

They presented their findings in early July at the Australian Marine Science Association conference in Fremantle.

DBCA continues to use whale monitoring data to inform management.

**South-western Whale Ecology Study* souwest.org



Southern right whale. *Photo - Blair Ranford*

Penguin release

Three northern rock hopper penguins were released in waters off Augusta on Sunday 31 March. These penguins had spent several weeks with wildlife carers after surprising beach-goers with a visit to the south-west.

The penguins came ashore along the beaches of Ngari Capes Marine Park in autumn seeking refuge while completing their three-week moulting period.

During the winter months, the three penguins should travel to their usual feeding grounds before returning to islands in the Indian and Southern Atlantic oceans to breed.

The department would like to thank Western Australian Seabird Rescue and local FAWNA volunteers Linda Moyle and Margaret Lerner for the assistance in housing and feeding the penguins during their vulnerable moulting period.

During this moulting period, penguins remain out of the water, making them vulnerable to injury and predation from dogs and foxes. Due to this risk, the penguins were placed in temporary care to ensure their safety, before being released.

People can report sick, injured, orphaned or displaced wildlife to the Wildcare Helpline on 9474 9055.



Top DBCA staff and FAWNA volunteers off the coast of Augusta with the recently released penguins.

Bottom On board the PV Leeuwin with the penguins.

Whale disentanglement training

In early May, 10 DBCA staff were nominated by their districts to attend large whale disentanglement training, taught by Senior Marine Operations Officer John Edwards.

The practical component of the course comprised multiple realistic scenarios of large whale entanglements. Cutting techniques were practised on land with the help of an artificial whale tail to simulate rope entanglement, followed by lengthy scenarios on the water within Geographe Bay.



Above Whale entanglement scenario within Geographe Bay.

The updated training has increased Blackwood District's capacity to perform entanglement rescues and with whale season in full swing, this training

If you should ever see a whale entangled in ropes or fishing gear, please call the Wildcare Helpline on 9474 9055 or the Busselton Parks and Wildlife Service office on 9752 5555, so trained departmental staff can help. Please do not attempt to free the whale or partially cut any ropes yourself, as this can be dangerous.



Above John Edwards teaching cutting technique.



Above Grapple throwing by Steve Mills. Photos - Miecha Bradshaw/DBCA

Tangled humpback freed

On Sunday 2 June at 2pm a local whale watching charter vessel reported an entangled whale to the Parks and Wildlife Service via the Wildcare Helpline.

The whale was an 8-metre humpback whale entangled in rope near St Alouarn Island, Flinders Bay, Augusta. At 4.30pm on Sunday afternoon Marine Rangers Eden Baxter and Fiona Graham boarded the Water Police vessel with a satellite whale tracking buoy and

It was located approximately 13km south-west of Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse at approximately 12:30pm by Parks and Wildlife Service vessel *Leeuwin* with the assistance of WA Water Police.

The whale was moving slowly northwards at about 2 knots when the team began the disentanglement. Two hour later, they had safely freed the whale from heavy ropes entangled around its tail.

successfully attached the tracker to the trailing line just before sunset.

The whale was tracked overnight by officers from the Parks and Wildlife Service and Fisheries Research, John Edwards and Jason How.

The following morning the disentanglement team was mobilised. The team, comprising Steve Mills, Eden Baxter, Fiona Graham, Julian Harrison and Sue Trigwell, used the positions obtained from the satellite whale tracking buoy to locate the whale.

The department would like to thank All Seas Whale Watching and Naturaliste Charters for reporting the whale and remaining with the whale on Sunday until Parks and Wildlife Service staff were able to attach the satellite tracker.

The department would also like to thank Jaimie Edwards and Shaun Ukich from WA Water Police for their assistance on Sunday and Monday.



Above The rope entangled around the humpback whale tail.

Below The disentanglement team at Augusta boat ramp.



Augusta Whale Song Festival

Ngari Capes Marine Park rangers were pleased to take part in this year's Augusta Whale Song Festival.

Marine park rangers had the opportunity to engage with the community and share information about the park's sanctuary zones.

These events are important for NCMP rangers to attend as they provide a platform to discuss the marine park and gauge any concerns the public may have. NCMP rangers said it was a wonderful day and look forward to next year's event.



Above Marine Rangers Ed and Fiona at the Ngari Capes Marine Park stall at Augusta Whale Song Festival.

BEN signs

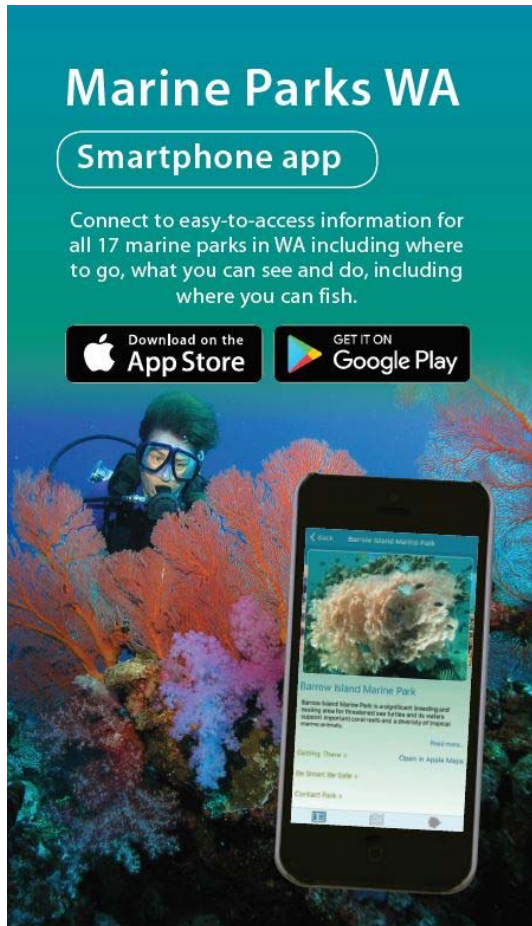
If you have visited coastline recently there is a good chance you have seen the new Beach Emergency Numbering (BEN) signs. Keep an eye out for these BEN signs and make yourself familiar with the information on them, especially the unique code.


This code, when provided to emergency services, will give responders specific beach access location information.

For more information on BEN signs please visit the [Shark Smart Website](#).



Do you know about marine park sanctuary zones?




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 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

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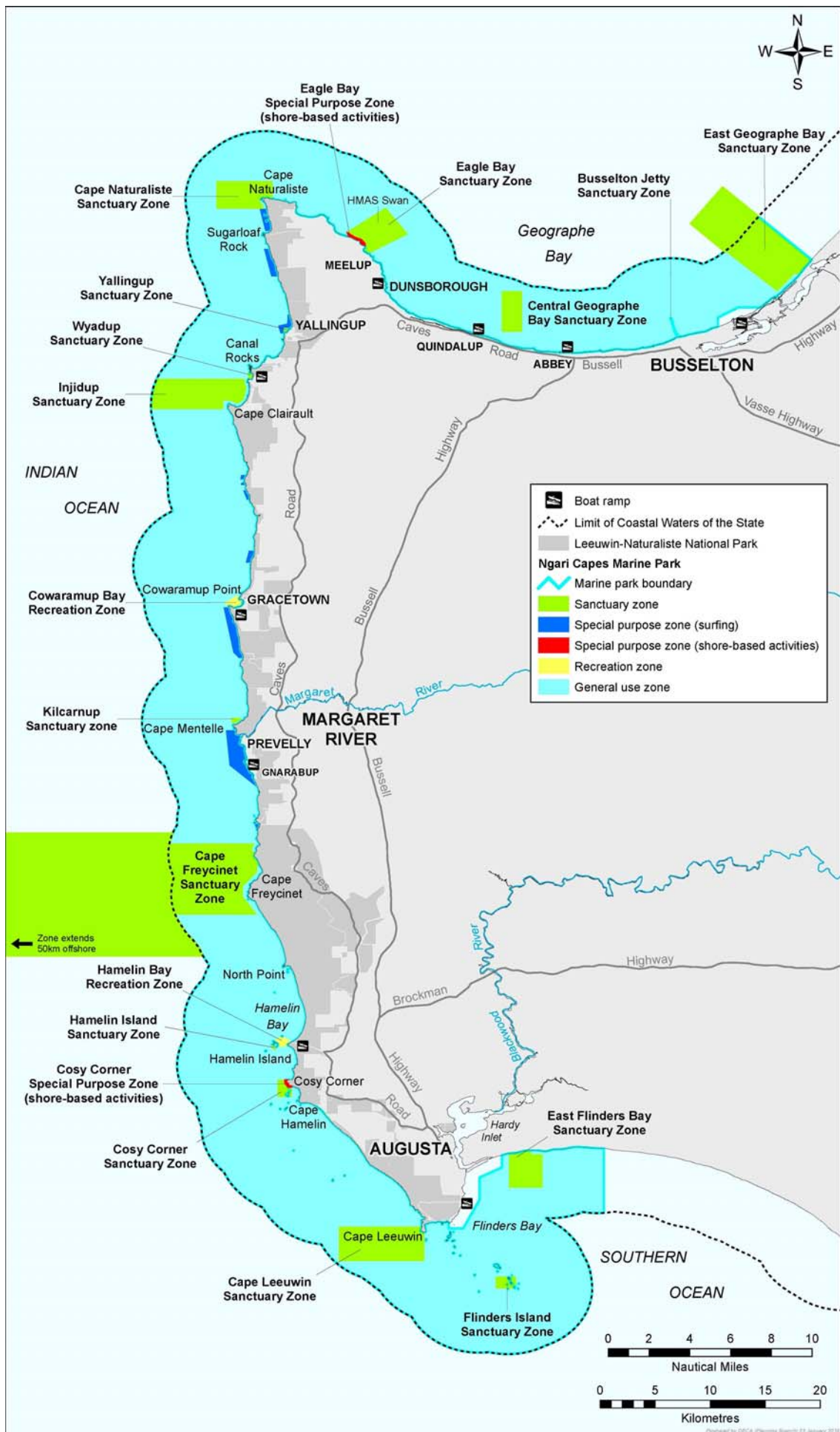
Before visiting any marine park, it's important to always 'know your zones' and find out what you can do in each zone. Since 10 April the Ngari Capes Marine Park zones have been enforced.

These zones cater for a wide range of user groups from fishers, scuba divers and snorkellers to surfers and kayakers. While allowing sustainable recreational and commercial activities, zoning also provides for conservation. By establishing sanctuary zones for undisturbed nature study and passive enjoyment of the natural environment.

The map below is a great guide, however if you require more information about the zones and what activities are permitted, please download the Marine Parks WA App or call the DBCA Busselton office on 9752 5555.

Get the app on iTunes

Get the app on Android



Above Map of Ngari Capes Marine Park showing zones.



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