TRAVELS NOW AND THEN

© Christopher Earls Brennen

AUSTRALIA 2009

Sun. Mar.23 Fly to ???





STANDARD FORM RESIDENTIAL TENANCY AGREEMENT LEASING ELITE PTY.LTD (ABN 87 009 350 396) THE SCHEDULE

1. LANDLORD: Mr Richard & Ms Jillian Clark

TENANT:

Christopher & Barbara Brennen

3. PREMISES: 3/15 Burt Street, Cottesloe WA 6011

TERM:

COMMENCEMENT/EXPIRY DATES:

3rd April 2009 to 9th June 2009

Nine weeks & five days

RENT: 5.

\$675.00 per week

INTERVALS FOR RENT PAYMENT: Fortnightly in Advance 6.

MANAGING AGENT:

Leasing Elite Pty Ltd , PO Box 449, 32 Richardson Street West Perth WA 6005

OCCUPANTS: 8.

Two adults

SECURITY BOND: \$2,700.00 9.

10. WATER CONSUMPTION PAYABLE BY THE TENANT:

100% for tenancies 6 months and over

11. MONIES DUE -

RENT (2 weeks)

\$ 1,350.00

SECURITY BOND

\$ 2,700.00

TOTAL DUE:

\$ 4,050.00

Less Deposit Paid

0.00

BALANCE OWING

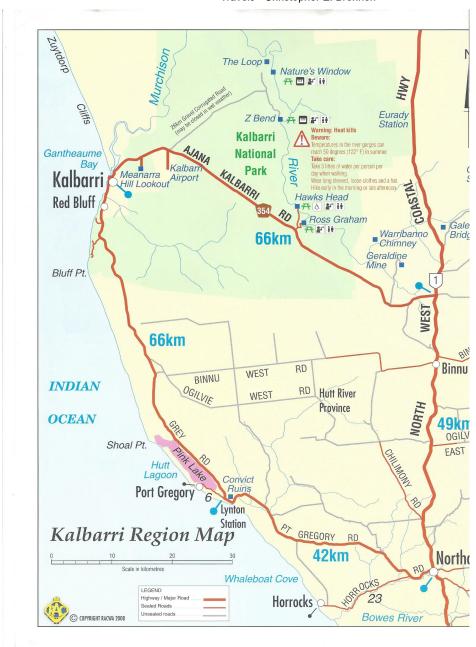
\$ 4,050.00



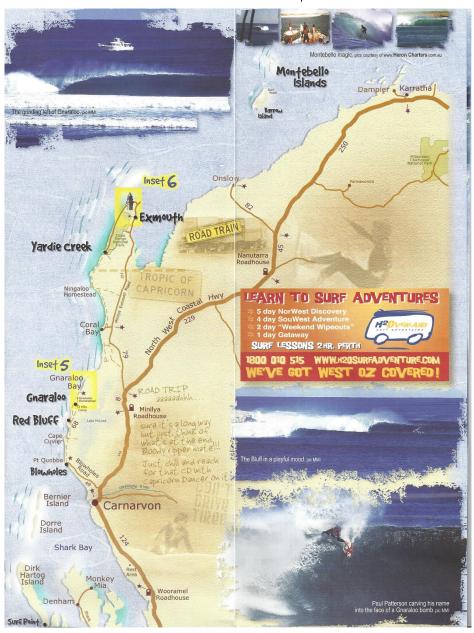




UWA and Burt Street, Cottesloe











Ningaloo Reef . Coral Bay . Western Australia





Kalbarri



Coral Bay





Coral Bay





E-Ticket Itinerary, Receipt and Tax Invoice

This document contains your flight details. Please carry it with you during your trip as you may be required to present it. We recommend that you also retain a copy for your records. International passengers will need this information for Immigration, Customs, Airport Security checks and Duty Free purchases. Thank you for choosing to fly with us and we hope you enjoy your trip.

Your Booking Reference	Your Details			
4T4O77	Customer Name	Frequent Flyer Number		
	Doctor Christopher Brennen			

Your Itinerary					
Date	Flight Number	Departing	Arriving	Status	Check-In
→ 07 May 2009	QF1806 Operated by Qantaslink - National Jet Systems	Perth 1430 Terminal 2 Domestic	Paraburdoo 1610 07 May 2009	Economy Class Confirmed	Quickcheck self service kiosks are available at Sydney(T3), Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra, Perth and Adelaide domestic airports
11 May 2009	QF1801 Operated by	Paraburdoo 0750	Perth 0930	Economy Class Confirmed	Quickcheck self service kiosks are available at

		Travele Chinesephier 2, 2, emilion			
	Qantaslink - National Jet Systems	Domestic	11 May 2009 Terminal 2		Sydney(T3), Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra, Perth and Adelaide domestic airports
→					

Your Receipt		Payment Details	E-Ticket Details
Fare	\$379.32	Payment Type Visa	E-Ticket Number
Charges/Taxes	\$20.40	Amount \$439.69	081 2481398669
GST	\$39.97	Date 29 Apr 2009	Date Issued
Fare/Tax Total	\$439.69		29 Apr 2009
Airport Levy	\$0.00		Issued by
Total Price	\$439.69 AUD	Total Balance \$439.69 AUD	QANTAS AIRWAYS

Tax Information

Tax Invoice Issue Date 29 Apr 2009

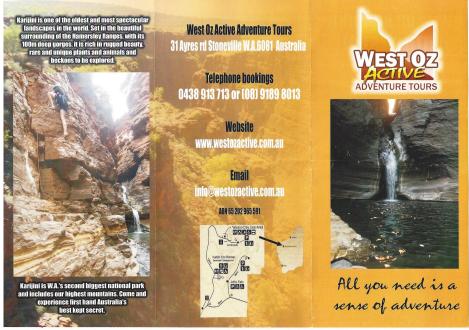
Fare Restrictions - Special Conditions Apply

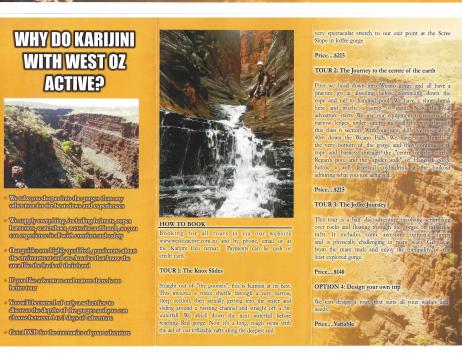
Important Information: Fees may apply to some bookings for booking changes, ticket reissues and consultant-assisted services. Details of fees are available at qantas.com. Your latest flight details are always available online at qantas.com/yourbooking. Fare conditions are based on your fare type and departure and arrival country. View the fare conditions at qantas.com.yourbooking. Fare conditions are based on your

Important Information if travelling to the USA: For travel on or after 12 January 2009, it will be mandatory for all individuals who plan to travel to the USA under the Visa Waiver Program to receive an authorisation through the ESTA website before travel to the USA.

Qantas Airways Limited ABN 16 009 661 901 qantas.com







Page 1 of 3

You replied on 5/05/2009 11:07 PM

Brennen, Christopher E

From Danny Francis [danny.francis@westozactive.com.au] Sent: Tue 5/05/2009 10:15 PM

To: Cc:

Subject: Re[6]: Order Number: Web00473 West Oz Active Website Booking From Christopher Brennen Attachments

G'day Chris, yeah can confirm that we are doing 2 trips one on friday and one on saturday. We meet for the tours at the reception building of the eco retreat at 7.30 am and return back around 4.30pm. I will most likely be around the reception/restaurant area on thursday evening if you want to meet when you arrive.

----Original Message--

Cheers Dan

From: "Brennen, Christopher E"

From: "Brennen, Christopher E"

From: "Danny Francis" <danny.francis@westozactive.com.au>

Date: 06-05-2009 09:48

Subject: RE: Re[4]: Order Number: Web00473 West Oz Active Website Booking From Christopher Brennen

Just to confirm my trips for Friday and Saturday. Where and when will we meet up on Friday morning? At

Eco-retreat where I will be staying? (I have arranged with Fiona that someone will pick me up in Tom Price when I take the shuttle there from the airport tomorrow after the 4.10pm flight arrival from Perth).

Since I will not have access to my email after about 4pm today could you possibly either email me before that to confirm or call me at home in Perth at 93831231 early tomorrow?

Chris Brennen

From: Danny Francis [mailto:danny.francis@westozactive.com.au] Sent: Mon 27/04/2009 8:35 PM

To: Brennen, Christopher E

Subject: Re[4]: Order Number: Web00473 West Oz Active Website Booking From Christopher Brennen

G'day I have given those dates to fiona and she will be in contact and ive pencilled those dates in for you on my tours

Dan

west Oz Active

-----Original Message---From: "Brennen, Christopher E" < brennen@caltech.edu >
To: "Danny Francis" < danny.francis@westozactive.com.au >
Date: 27-04-2009 11:28
Subject: RE: RE[2]: Order Number: Web00473 West Oz Active Website Booking From Christopher Brennen

Danny:

I would prefer to arrive on Thurs, May 7, and leave on Mon., May 11 (maybe Sunday) - perhaps doing one of your two suggested trips on the Friday and the second on the Saturday or Sunday. I would therefore need to find a bed for the nights of May 7, 8 and 9 (I will probably drive to Tom Price for the night of May 10). If you or Fiona could find me a bed for those three nights that would be great. Please let me know asap so that I can proceed to buy the airline ticket.

Many thanks for your help - and my dates are fairly flexible if you want to make a suggestion.

Chris

PS I have my own tevas and a small drybag.

From: Danny Francis [mailto:danny.francis@westozactive.com.au] **Sent:** Thu 23/04/2009 6:12 AM

https://outlookweb.caltech.edu/exchange/brennen/Inbox/Re[6]:%20Order%20Number:... 6/05/2009

Karijini Eco Retreat C/- Hospitality Pty Ltd

ABN 83 514 057 096

PO Box 63 Tom Price WA 6751 Phone: 08 9425 5591

Fax: 08 9425 5566

reservations@karijiniecoretreat.com.au

www.karijiniecoretreat.com.au

Date: 9/05/2009 7:49 pm Mr Chris Brennan AreaType: ETD King

360 Olive Tree Lane Sierra Madre UNITED STATES

Area: 041 Snap Adults / Children: 1 / Arrival Date: 7-May-09 Departure Date: 10-May-09

Internet Ref No: Account No: 39274 ervation No:

Receipt# 20729

11000.01.1.20			Nescivation No. 24020			
Date	Tax Inv	Description	Charge	Payment	Balance	
08/05/2009	9 0	Continental breakfast	\$12.00	\$0.00	\$12.00	
09/05/2009	9 0	Dinner	\$30.00	\$0.00		
09/05/2009	9 . 0	Liquor Sales	\$5.00	\$0.00		
09/05/2009	9 0	Continental breakfast	\$12.00	\$0.00		
09/05/2009	9 0	Cooked Breakfast	\$16.00	\$0.00		
09/05/2009 0	Cash Rec#20729	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$0.00		
		Tendered \$600.00 - Change \$0.00				

Thankyou for staying at Karijini Eco-Retreat, we hope you have enjoyed the experience and look forward to seeing you again

Kariiini: A CANYONING ADVENTURE

Elspeth Callender escapes the Western Australian sun and heads deep into the gorges of Karijini **National Park**



EIGHT PEOPLE BOARDED ONE RENTAL VAN AND headed north from Perth at an hour of the morning normally reserved for those in the morning normally reserved for those in the mining industry and people keen to go on holidays. The organiser, van driver, everyone's mutual friend and official team leader, Louis, eventually pulled up at Bindoon Bakery so we could have breakfast. 'Are you greenies?' the pastry chef asked after we'd ordered eight different versions of coffee. 'Nope', answered the one in the group who looked most like one, 'We're canyoners!'

It's not just about where you go but who you go with. I was constantly reminded of this on our trip up through Western Australia to canyon the gorges of Karjinin National Park and back again. It's an important consideration when you're planning on abselling down a waterfall on someone else's knots and under someone

on someone else's knots and under someone else's instructions. It's also highly applicable when you're about to spend 17 hours travelling 1400 kilometres in a van.

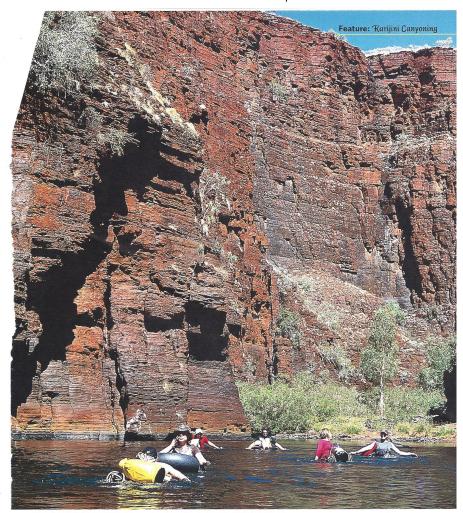
Standing outside Bindoon Bakery drinking our coffee, we were already all friends but were not all canyoners. Some of us had only met for the first time that week at an indoor climbing centre to brush up on old

first time that week at an indoor climbing centre to brush up on old skills. Five days and many gorges later, however, we would hardly remember when travelling backwards on an inner tube between towering vertical walls hadn't been normal.

Somewhere along the Great Northern Highway between Bindoon and Mt Magnet, Robin, who'd been the one handing out ginger tablets so that we would all avoid carsickness, got a headache. By Meekatharra, the headache was a migraine. It was nearly midnight by the time we arrived at Karijini and stopped the van at Dales Camping Area. Someone unfolded a tarp, and we slipped into thermals and sleeping bags to the sad sound of Robin dry retching and crying. We awoke the next day on the red dust of the Pilbara, with the early morning sun beating down on us through the gums, to find that Robin was dangerously dehydrated. Louis drove Robin and her partner, Simon, to Tom Price for a shot of Stemetil and the quietest, darkest motel room in town. And then there were five. Louis's partner and co-organiser of the trip, Bec, pulled Plan B out of her sleeve and we all eased ourselves into Karijini by walking down into Dales Gorge and lolling around the swimming holes of Fern Pool and

Dales Gorge and lolling around the swimming holes of Fern Pool and Fortescue Falls for the day. After Ashlee, a Canadian now living in Fremantle, had recovered from the fact that Australians sometimes

WILD SUMMER 2009



change into their swimmers where they're standing for the sake of speed and ease, she declared Fern Pool a paradise.

Ironically, the one in the group who looked most like a greenie works in the mining industry as a geologist. Although he may not be helping to save the forests, he could tell us that the exposed rock of the gorges would originally have been fine iron—and silica-rich sediment on the sea floor about 2.6 billion years ago. These iron—rich deposits would, over a few more millions of years, have gradually become rock and then buckled, cracked and been raised to the surface. A drop in sea levels and millions of years of erosion would have shaped the rocks with the shale and dolomite—softer rock types beneath the main iron formation layers—allowing a more rapid erosion process.

On the morning of our second day, Louis and Bec drove back to Newman to pick up the now recovered Robin. And then there were four. Nikkl, Kieron, Ashlee and I walked from our campsite down into Joffre Gorge and stood gazing in amazement at the natural amphitheatre of the dry Joffre Falls. In just our cossies, we swam north through deep 18–22°C water, chatting and stopping to perch on sunny rock ledges. Sometimes I dropped out of the conversation and sculled backwards with my ears in the water, wending my way through the narrow parts of

Sedately tubing down Red Gorge. Opposite page, Robin at Junction Pool Lookout. All photos by Kieron Hayter

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the gorge while I stared as if hypnotised up at the line of blue sky between the towering red walls. After a few hundred metres we reached a huge mound of boulders with trees growing up between them and stopped there. Even in the midday sun Nikki never quite warmed up. It reminded us that going even a short distance in the gorge was reason enough to take a dry

bag with a change of clothes, a first aid kit and some food. We swam back to find Robin, Simon, Louis and Bec at the amphitheatre, and from then on the eight of us stayed together. Robin were all assembled at the top of Knox Gorge. made up for her absence with a personality big enough for an army.

That afternoon we undertook two separate trips, into Weano and then Hancock Gorge. Weano

the walking track.

On day three we woke early and by 5.30 am were all assembled at the top of Knox Gorge. Everyone was full of muesli and coffee and wore swimmers under wool and polypropylene cloth-ing or a rash vest. We each wore a climbing har-ness, walking shoes and a hat and had an

Canyoning Karijini—fact file

Camping Grounds

Camping in Karijini National Park is permitted at Dales Camping Area and Savannah Camp-ground. Dales is a fairly shady camping ground with a multitude of sites. Savannah was opened with a multitude of sites. Savannah was opened in the last few years as an alternative to the now day-use only Weano Camping Area. Approximately ten kilometres back up Weano Road from the old campsite, Savannah has been developed in an open area of hummock carefulad caregoly deltad with some, which grassland sparsely dotted with gums, which backs on to Joffre Gorge. The sites are large

backs on to Joffre Gorge. The sites are large and well spaced, giving the sense that you are not in a camping ground. Basic camp fees of \$6.50 per night for an adult apply at Dales (further information on park passes and fees can be found on the CALM web site), while Savannah costs \$25 per night for up to two people.



Karijini National Park Visitor Centre: o8 9189 8121 or karijini@calm.wa.

Karijini National Park: 08 9189 8157 (rangers based in the park) or 08 9189 8013 (Savannah camp-

ground) CALM: 08 9143 1488 (Pilbara Regional Office)
CALM's web site: www.naturebase.net

Safety warnings

The emergency services for Karijini carry out a disproportionately high number of rescues from the gorges compared with the rest of the state. As a result, a trail classification system has been implemented and some sections of the gorges, classified as Class Sky, require formal qualifications in abselling and climb-

tormal qualifications in assetting and culmo-ing. Speak to he rangers to find out more. Being aware of the weather conditions will contribute enormously to the safety of your party. Hypothermia is a risk all year round in these gorges, which carry cold to freezing water and catch a limited percentage of the day's sunlight.

When to go

The Pilbara region of WA is semi-arid, with high temperatures, especially between October and April, and low and variable rainfall. During April, and low and variable raintail. During the wet season (summer months), the gorges are susceptible to flooding, roads in the area maybeinaccessible and daytime temperatures in the mid to high 30s or above. Our trip took place in October and I would suggest that the spring months may be the most suitable.



Clockwise from the left, the group in Red Gorge with a long day ahead: Elspeth (the author), Nikki, Louis, Ashlee, Robin, Bec and Simon. Sleeping out at Savannah Camp. The author sliding into Red Gorge. Ashlee abseiling into Red Gorge.

Gorge opens up, at one section, into Handrail Pool. Here we swam and lunched, then left our food and clothes and waded, walked, swam, scrambled and balanced our way to the lookout overlooking Red Gorge. Hancock Gorge was also sweet relief from the head our way along the Spider Walk as far as Kermits Pool. We used our common sense and experi-

ence, and the park's track classifications, to decide as a group how far we were comfortable to traverse these gorges without climbing

equipment.
Called the Hamersley Range by explorer FT Called the Hamersley Hange by explorer F1 fregory, the park, traditional home of the Bany-jima, Kurrama and Innawonga people, is now called Karijini, which is the Banyjima's name for the range. 'Hello peoples!' Nikki, who had spent over seven years living in an Aboriginal community in morthern WA, called out in acknowledgement of this in each new place we visited.
The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and the traditional owners of the area manage the park, the second largest in WA at 627 000 hectares, through the Karijini Park Council. Maitland Parker, an elder of the Banyjima tribe, is the ranger in charge. In addition to the track classification system, there are very clear signs at the start of each gorge. are very clear signs at the start of each gorge. Otherwise, the park is generally left unspitt by fences or warning signs, even in places where people may take risks they don't even seem to know they're taking. Like a bloke we met who was driving around Australia in a Barina and free-climbed down the 24 metre dry waterfall from Weano into Red Gorge and back again in

inflated car inner tube and a dry bag full of clothes, water and food. We also carried a couple of cameras, first aid supplies and climbing equipment. The eight of us filed down the scree slope into Knox Gorge, passing tubes between us when negotiating harder parts of the track and chattering and laughing under the blue

and cnattering and laughing under the blue cloudless sky and already hot sun.

The path eventually led down into a narrow, steepish polished chute, along which we all balanced while Louis set up an anchor point on the existing bolts. Simon abseiled down to check the water depth and act as brakeman and dodged our tyre tubes, which we flung over the edge. This descent is locally known as 'the slide',

but Louis forgot to mention this until after Nikki, Ashlee, Bec and Robin had all abseiled down much to their disgust. I was given the option of either abseiling or sliding as the water below was deep enough, and when everyone was out of the way, I went whizzing over the edge and of the way, I went whitzing over the edge and down a five or six metre drop into the pond below. The next descent we all abseiled due to shallow water. We then climbed out of the pool we'd landed in and dropped a couple of feet into a much larger pool, which was part of Red Gorge. Ashlee, freezing cold from being the first to descend each time and waiting in cold water in a rash vest for so long, led the way across and lay alone in the sun for as long as it took her to regain a sociable body temperature. Let's get you out of those wet things is a much

Let's get you out of those wet things is a much Let's get you out of those wet things is a much more practical strategy than it's often credited for. I was learning that it's far better to strip off to as little as possible and dry your body than to stay in wet clothes (in other words, nude and dry is incomparably better than clothed and wet). We all stood in the sun admiring the vertical

Feature: Karijini Canyoning

liffs of Red Gorge, which are up to 100 metres high in some sections, as we stripped down to our swimmers, devoured oranges and drank

water replenished from a waterfall.

From there we paddled in our tubes, then walked over rocky sections of land, then paddled, then walked, then paddled, then walked for about a kilometre until we arrived at Junction

capsicum, tinned tuna, chocolate and an orange in the sun—and felt much better. I considered then how hard it would have been for him and

then how hard it would have been for him and Ashlee to warm up if it hadn't been sunny. We only passed one party the entire day, and the situation was reminiscent of being the only car on an empty country road except for a police vehicle with a radar. Three people were

frocks and a full dinner suit to a Year 10 formal dress from the 1980s and a shirt and tie—with shorts. When Bec arrived, we jumped out from behind the tent and presented her with a cake. Then we spent the evening sitting on the tarp eating, drinking, singing along to Kieron's guitar and talking about the amazing day we'd had. When we couldn't keep ourselves awake any







Pool, where Red, Weano, Hancock and Joffre Gorges meet up. There's a tree hanging over Junction Pool that everyone climbed up, balanced their way out along and jumped off, making up in some way for the earlier injustice of the slide's Robin jumped off a few extra times to make up for her day in the dark. Just after we left Junction Pool in our tubes, Kieron started to shake from cold. There'd alexach beam gumpurs of hunger from the greath hade murgungs of hunger from the greath.

ready been murmurs of hunger from the group and this seemed like the right time to stop There was some discussion as to whether we should just push on and eat further along, as originally planned, but we quickly realised that eating later would not make our progress any faster and the right time to fuel up was when the group was hungry and cold. Kieron changed immediately into dry thermals and shorts, laid his wet clothes out on the hot rocks and ate cheese, cucumber, tomatoes, bread, pesto dip, crackers, travelling in a similar manner but the opposite direction to us in Red Gorge. At the back of the group, a CALM ranger fixed his eye on us from under his hat and asked if any of us were nationally accredited to abseit and climb on natural surfaces. 'Yes', answered Louis truth-fully. The ranger seemed satisfied with this and waved us on our way.

The act of alternately walking and paddling The act of alternately walking and paddling was a revelation. Our dry bags, except for Simon's, were awkward to carry, but as soon as they got really uncomfortable it was time to jump on to the tube. All the gorges in Karijini changed from one section to the next, and there was much to look at as we walked or floated. Everyone slipped and fell at some stage (Ashlee managed an unintentional Eskimo roll after jumping on to her inner tube from a rock shelf), but serious injuries were avoided. Thanks shell, but senous injuries were avoided. Trains to some inbuilt reaction, we always managed to position our inner tubes under us to break our fall. The only person injured was Kieron, who sat with his knee bent the wrong way in the van on the drive back to Perth and had to

the van on the drive back to Perth and had to have physio on it for the next two months. We began our climb out of Joffre at a section you'd probably use ropes to get down. We made a snake of bodies, passing up gear and giving each other a boost—I recall standing on Simon's each other a boost—I recall standing on Simons shoulder at some stage. When we emerged into the full sunlight, I recognised where we were—it was the pile of rocks and trees the four of us had swum to the previous morning. I realised we'd traversed the entire length of Joffre that we of traversee or ne entire lengtn or jointer that day. The distance is around five or six kilometres, and it took us about ten hours, but the last group Louis had led through this same route hadn't emerged from the gorge until after dark. It was Bec's birthday, and Louis had organised a surprise formal (do: While Bec and Louis

walked the five kilometres to collect the van from the top of Knox Gorge, we had bucket showers and threw on everything from designer

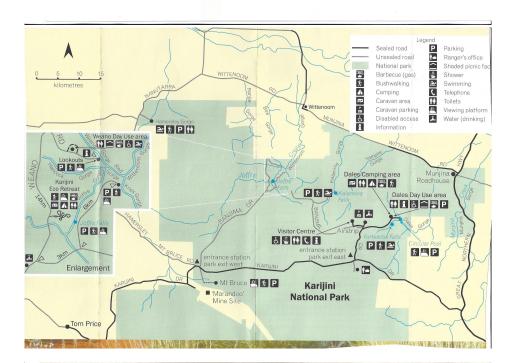
more we just crawled into our sleeping bags. I woke the next morning still in a hot pink dress. A visit to the Karijini National Park visitor centre on our way back to Perth was a great way to confirm that the magnificent brown-col-oured snake we had seen curled up on a canyon shelf was a Pilbara olive python (balkumarra), a non-venomous snake unique to the Pilbara. a non-venomous stake unique or ide Ploara. Inhabiting gorges and river systems, this reptile, which can grow longer than six metres, feeds mainly on bats, birds and rock wallabies when they come to drink. We could also identify the restless colony of bats we'd passed under in Joffre Gorge as Gould's wattled bats, which roost Jorne Lorge as Goulas watteel oats, winter loost among leaves and in tree hollows until sunset. The eucalypts perched on rocky gorge ledges, which Simon had recognised as snappy gums, are one of its species of eucalyptus found in the area. We travelled back to Perth over two days,

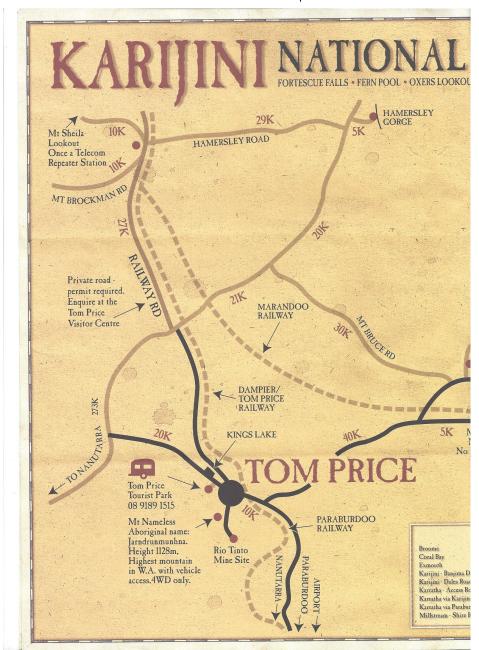
stopping overnight somewhere off the highway stopping overnights omewhere off the highway after Louis and I, up the front on animal patrol, started to mistake rocks for roos and cows for rocks. We pulled off down a side road, rolled the tarp out and soon were all lying under the Milky Way. The stars seemed to shine just as brightly way. The stars see filed to simile just as originly right down near the horizon out there and we all watched them shooting across the sky until we fell asleep. Not one car passed us in the night. As we drove back to the city the next day, I

had an overwhelming sense that I didn't want this trip to end. 'It'll never end', I was reassured when I announced to the van how I was feeling. They were right. The red dust of the Pilbara got vacuumed out of the van before we returned it to the rental company, it soon disappeared from under my nails and the content of my nose is no longer tinged with red, but it remains under my skin and I can't imagine it will ever come out.

Originally from NSW, Elspeth Collender became deepl originally from now, expert contended recently electry enthralled by the varying landscapes of Western Australia, just as she was leaving the country to live overseas, as so often happens. The love affair was immediately reignited on her return.

WILD SUMMER 2009





IL GUIDE

HANCOCK AND WEANO

JOFFRE AND KNOX GORGES

Appreciate the power of water shaping the landscape. There are impressive waterfalls. and deep, cold pools. See for yourself how the gorges were formed.

Joffre Lookout

100 metres - 10 minutes return

Rock steps take you down to the lookout to view this spectacular curved waterfall forming a natural amphitheatre, which is especially impressive after rain.

Knox Lookout

300 metres - 15 minutes return

As you take the steps down to the lookout, watch the view spread out in the distance. It's spectacular in the early morning or late afternoon light.

ox Gorge kilometres – 3 hours return

GORGES

From the Weano Recreational Area follow the trail to Junction Pool Lookout for breathtaking views into Hancock Gorge 100 metres below you. If continuing to Oxer Lookout, please see below.

Experience the spectacular views, precipitous

cliffs and narrow passages. Banded iron rock

formations tower over the valleys far below.

Oxer and Junction Pool Lookouts

800 metres - 30 minutes return

Oxer Lookout

From Junction Pool Lookout to Oxer Lookout the trail is narrow with loose rocks in patches. Please take great care.

Handrail Pool 1 kilometre - 1.5 hours

From the Weano car park, follow the trail to the edge of the Weano Gorge, then down the steps to the bottom. Here, high walls of rock will tower above you.

Please note: As the gorge narrows, the trail changes to a Class 5. Take care as you negotiate the slippery rocks on your climb down into the chilly waters of Handrail Pool

Hancock Gorge 135 metres – 10 minutes return From the car park to the top of the ladder in Hancock Gorge. Turn back now if you don't want to negotiate the ladder.

Handrail Pool

KALAMINA GORGE

This is great introduction to the gorge system with its delightful trail and picnicking area.

HAMERSLEY GORGE

This gorge has dramatic colours, textures and reflections.

Kalamina Gorge 3 kilometres - 3 hours return

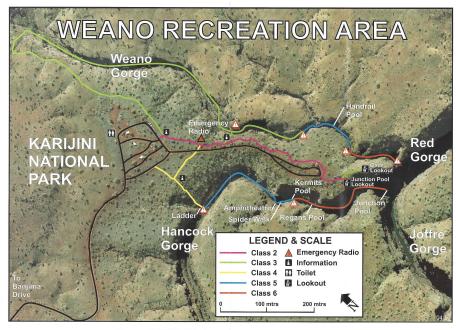
Descend the steps into the gorge to explore the waterfall upstream, or stroll quietly beside the stream, covered with lemonscented grass; you may see fish in the rock pools. The trail ends at Rock Arch Pool.

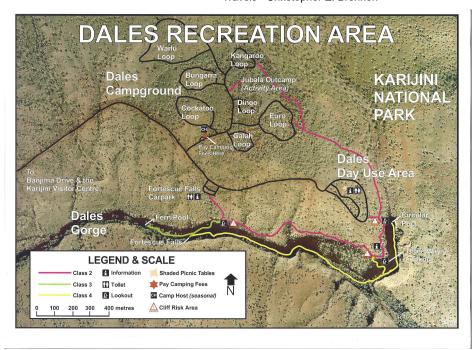
Hamersley Waterfall 400 metres -1 hour return

This track begins as steps, allowing access for most visitors. Ever-changing light and astonishing colours and reflections highlight the complex geological forces in this spectacular landscape.

Hamersley Gorge 1 kilometre 3 hours return







From "Karijini Grace":

Back in the time known as Nhulyugama when the earth was soft Thurru, the great sea-serpent, emerged from the sea and, in the way of Warlu, moved through the country we know as northwestern Australia creating rivers and carving out gorges. The most awesome of these works lay in the country of the Banyjima people, country they called Karijini or "hilly land". In the words of singer Wobby Parker, a Martidja-Banyjima Elder, ".....we call this place a name. We belong in this country. This country belonged to my dead fathers and mothers, grandfathers. We're still here today and my sons, sons-in-laws and daughters will be taking over when I can't walk any more in this land." In modern times, it has been named the Karijini National Park by the Australian government but once it was the territory of the Banyjima, Kurrama and Innawonga Aboriginal peoples who have been there for a least 20,000 years. It is also the home of red kangaroos, euros, wallaroos, echidnas, geckos, goannas, and a large variety of birds and snakes including pythons. Most of the Aboriginal people are now gone, the victims of the white invader, his diseases, his inhumanity and his greed. Even most of the kangaroos have left, driven away by the avaricious mining operations, the explosions, trains and vehicles. Yet down in those gorges, in the silence of the depths and the isolation of the cliffs, there remains an untouched wonderland of rock and water and trees. It takes some effort to get there but it is effort richly rewarded. Water is the essence for it etched out the canyons and nourishes all the life within and around the gorges. It falls as tropical rain during the winter and trickles down through the layers of rock to emerge as spring water centuries later. And so the streams run year round in most of the gorges. In some like the Red Gorge and Joffre Gorge the water rests as great deep pools that span all the way between towering red walls. In others it creates magnificent cascades that sparkle in the glinted sun. Fern Pool in Dales Gorge, known to the Aboriginals as Jabula, the serpent's pool, is particularly revered; two lovely streams tumble over a ledge into a beautiful fern-ringed pool that provides a truly delightful swim. But the Aboriginal people for whom this place has very special meaning ask that you slip into the water as quietly as you would enter a church. Moreover you should pause to take in a mouthful of water and spray it gently back again as a symbol of reverence. In the words of Darren Injie of the Yinhawangka Language Group, "You must always do it when you come to the waterhole. People ask me why Aboriginal people do it and I ask them why do people say grace?"

It is not easy to get to Karijini National Park. One way is to drive about 750 miles north from Perth (one of the most isolated major cities in the world), mostly along the lonely Great Northern Highway. On the way you cross the Tropic of Capricorn. Another way is to fly from Perth to Paraburdoo, a small mining town whose airport terminal consists of toilets, a check-in desk and an x-ray machine all crammed into a small, temporary shack. Usually there is just one flight a day each way and the passenger list consists almost entirely of miners. All the beer on the plane is consumed before the plane reaches its cruising altitude. When you land in Paraburdoo you realize that the terminal shack is lost amidst line after line of 4WD off-road trucks for rent, at least one per miner. These are not only equipped in the front with massive kangaroo-guards, probably made from titanium, but they also have a large aerial or mast and a very large orange light on top of the cab. I mention these matters just to warn you that there is not much else to rent and these tanks of the desert are expensive. There is also a shuttle bus to the slightly larger mining town of Tom Price some 50 miles to the north but that may leave you without transportation since there is no vehicle rental place in that metropolis. However you manage it the next stop is Tom Price and there you may need to find a bed for the night. The only option is the Tom Price Motel which I had some difficulty locating until I recognized that the pub filled with miners lined up along the long wooden bar was also the check-in location. Moreover, once checked-in it was necessary to exit the bar, navigate your way through the drive-in vehicle repair station and then go round the back to locate your room. However, once found, the rooms are comfortable. Trouble is even if you get to Tom Price, you are only part of the way there for it is another 50 miles to the center of activity at Karijini National Park, namely the Ecoretreat owned by the Gumala Aboriginal Corporation. This is also the only place where you can get a meal or a bed for the night within easy distance of the Park. Note that the road from Tom Price to the Eco-retreat begins as asphalt but is dirt for most of the

At 6274 square kilometers, Karijini National Park is the second largest Park in Western Australia. It is a jewel hidden away in a part of the northwestern Australian outback known as the Pilbara. The almost featureless desert landscape is covered with grass called spinifex, sprinkled with a variety of trees and dotted with huge termite mounds. In the cooler months the land is covered with yellow-flowering cassias and wattles, northern bluebells and purple mulla-mullas. After rain many of these plants bloom profusely. The area was first explored in 1861 when F.T.Gregory led a party inland from a landing point at Hearson Cove near Dampier. The first settlers arrived two years later and by 1899 700,000 sheep were being grazed in the region and much of the Aboriginal land had been taken from them often with much loss of life.



Upper Knox Gorge

Karijini is special because here the Joffre River and its tributaries have sliced deep, vertical gorges into what is otherwise a flat and quite featureless desert landscape. During the summer, rains fill the aquifers in the ancient rock of this land and the resulting springs cause water to flow in the gorges for most of the year. This water has cut narrow and crennelated canyons that provide a number of spectacular canyoneering adventures. About a mile-long stretch of the main canyon is known as the Red Gorge though the watercourse further downstream is known as the Wittenoom Gorge. The Red Gorge lies at the heart of the canyoneering adventures in the Park and, like its major tributary, Joffre Gorge, it contains long cold pools bounded by red, vertical walls. The principal tributary gorges that feed into the Red Gorge are Joffre, Hancock, Weano and Knox Gorges. Only Joffre and Hancock can be ascended (though, in the case of Hancock, this requires some technical equipment); consequently all canyoneering adventures consist of a descent through one of these gorges and an end-of-day ascent through either Hancock or Joffre.





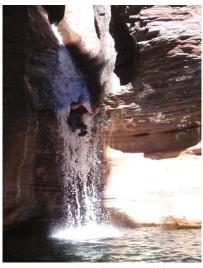
Karijini room and canyon

In March of the year 2008, I learnt of the existence of Karijini National Park by coincidence. One day a particular shop window caught my eye while I was strolling through the old markets of Fremantle early in my three month sabbatical at the University of Western Australia. The window displayed a large photograph of a spectacular, red-walled canyon complete with a series of lovely pools interspersed with sparkling cascades. I had to find out where this magnificent place was located and was fortunate enough to find the owner and photographer within. He told me of his fascination with a place called Karijini and filled me in on how to get there. I left the store not only with a book of his photographs but also with a determination to get to Karijini National Park. Later that day I discovered the Park website and learnt of the only place to stay in the Park, namely the Eco-retreat. Moreover, my excitement grew when I found a link to an outfit called West Oz Adventure Tours (http://www.westozactive.com.au) who ran canyoneering adventure tours in the deep canyons of the Park. West Oz Adventure Tours was run by a guide by the name of Danny Francis and was also based at the Eco-retreat. I immediately emailed Danny (info@westozactive.com.au) with an inquiry about his canyoneering

trips into the gorges of Karijini. The upshot of all this was that several days later, after figuring out some of the logistics, making a reservation at the Eco-retreat and receiving an offer from Danny to collect me from Tom Price, I was ready for Karijini. I caught the early flight from Perth to Paraburdoo on May 7, 2009, met with Danny in Tom Price that evening and arrived at the Eco-retreat ready for some great canyoneering. Unfortunately Danny had broken his collar bone a couple of weeks before so we were to be accompanied on our hikes by his assistant Brydie O'Connor.







Descending the Knox Slide
(Photo by Brydie O'Connor)

Early the next morning, I met the other individual who had signed up for the adventure that day, a young man named Phil, who, amazingly, also hailed from County Londonderry in Northern Ireland. We walked over to Danny's headquarter tents and got outfitted with wetsuits, harnesses, Tevas and large inflated inner tubes whose value I questioned, wrongly it turned out for they later proved essential. We loaded all our gear into Danny's bus and drove about 14 miles over rough dirt roads (probably impassable after rain) to the Knox Gorge overlook and trailhead. After a brief stop at the overlook where we peered down into the 300 feet deep Knox Gorge, Danny left us to drive back to camp and we hiked down the steep trail to the bottom of Knox Gorge with the inner tubes around our shoulders. In the canyon we walked a short distance upstream to see a beautiful, verdant pool decorated with Native Fig trees and Paper Bark Gums. Then, turning downstream, we passed other small pools as the gorge began to narrow and the vegetation disappeared. It was only a few hundred yards to the start of the serious narrows where we first climbed down into a waist-deep pool to progress. Here, nailed to the left wall, was a notice warning the casual hiker of the extreme dangers immediately ahead. A shoulder-wide, steep and slippery section about 30 yards long followed before the bottom dropped out and we could only peer forward through a narrow slot down to a deep grotto pool. It seemed far below us but was probably only about a 35 feet drop. We had arrived at the top of the much discussed Knox Slide where we had been told of two options, namely a controlled rappel or a free, uncontrolled slide. Almost all the young people who pass this way are into adventure and excited about the doing the slide. I really could not chicken out and so, with some trepidation, resolved to also slide. So the inner tubes were flung down and the guide descended with her camera. In fact, the slide was easier than I anticipated. It involved a smooth slide of about 25 feet before being launched into a free-fall of another 12 feet into the deep, cliff-ringed pool about 35 feet in diameter. An easy swim took one to the slot exit from this pool. Here we paused to take pictures and to enjoy this remote and pristine crystal grotto buried deep in Karijini National Park. I doubt the Aborigines ever came this way but it is still pleasant to think that they would have appreciated its grace.

The exit slot from the Knox Slide was only about 30 feet long and, at the end of it, we encountered another vertical drop of about 20 feet into a second cliff-ringed pool. The pool was only knee-deep in the landing area and so we needed to use the bolts installed in the left wall for a rappel descent. However, the pool deepened near the exit slot so it was necessary to swim to the narrow slot exit. Logs caught in the short exit slot eased the climb out of the pool and suddenly we were standing in the sunshine on a low ledge at the edge of a huge pool that almost spanned the Red Gorge.

From the low ledge we awkwardly sat down in our tubes and began the first of many paddles up through the Red Gorge. The water was surprisingly cold and without the inner tubes the long swims in the shade would have left us chilled to the bone. Instead, floating mostly above the water we could stay fairly warm especially when taking advantage of the places where the sun reached into the bottom of this deep gorge. The water was not continous but rather consisted of five pools (all over 100 yards long and one over 300 yards long) seperated by short boulder-strewn sections of flat canyon bottom. The third and longest pool was particularly beautiful, decorated with small patches of greenery, native fig and gums trees, below the red, iron-rich cliffs. We lingered here in the silence and the sun, listening only for the occasional call of the? bird echoing down the canyon.

After the fourth pool the spectacular, 120 feet Weano Falls were passed on our right. We looked forward to that vertical rappel descent a couple of days later. Just beyond Weano Falls we arrived at the shore of Junction Pool that encompasses the exits of both Joffre Gorge and the much smaller Hancock Gorge. It took us about 3.5hrs to get to this point and we paused here in the sun to enjoy a delightful lunch on the rocky beach of Junction Pool. High above Hancock Gorge we could see the Junction Pool overlook that is as close as most tourists get to the marvellous Red Gorge.





The Chute in Hancock Gorge

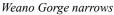
In Hancock Gorge

Revived by a good lunch, we paddled across Junction Pool to the very narrow opening leading into Hancock Gorge. Inside we paused at a flat area to deflate our inner tubes and prepare for the ascent ahead. About 20 yards further into the narrow and deep gorge a left turn brought us to the bottom of the long narrow cascade known as the Chute that drops about 100 feet down through some of the oldest rocks in the world. The climb up the Chute was quite straightforward and we paused to inspect the layers of rock some 2.5 billion years old. At the top we turned left and arrived at a much wider and flatter section with a large pool that was passed on the left. This was followed by a small cascade that led up to the bottom of the beautiful, cliff-ringed Regan's Pool. This canyon jewel is named after the volunteer rescue team member, Jim Regan, who was swept to his death in the Chute by a flash flood that occured while he was participating in a rescue in Hancock Gorge. The other rescuers (and the injured person) survived the flash flood by being beached before the Chute. To ascend Regan's Pool we needed to climb to a high ledge on the left that is equipped throughout its length by secure bolts. The guided tours set up a safety line here and provide each customer with cowtails to secure themselves as they traverse about 60 feet above the pool. Care was needed here since the much-used footholds were wet and slippery.

Above the short cascade that led down to Regan's Pool we came to another lovely pool known as Kermit's Pool, the point where tour groups and other hikers must halt during a descent of Hancock Gorge if they are not equipped with technical gear. We encountered a large group of young people who had many questions about what lay below this, their furthest point of descent. Bypassing Kermit's Pool, we came to a narrow slot section known as the Spiderwalk that ends in a broad amphitheater. Here the raw rock of the gorge ended and the canyon became more open and greener. We reached this point about 5 hours after the morning start.

Upstream of the amphitheater, we passed several moderately long pools by contouring around on narrow ledges on the left (they could also be swum or waded) and just upstream of these came to a ladder on the right that marked the start of the trail climb out of Hancock Gorge. Above the 20 foot ladder a steep trail led up to the plateau above and to the Hancock Gorge trailhead and Weano Picnic area where Danny was waiting with the bus to take us back to the Eco-retreat. It had been a spectacular day with 5.5 hours of adventure during which we travelled 1.8 miles.







Entrance to Jade Pool in Weano Gorge

A day and a half later I was back at Danny's tent in the early morning preparing for another great day in the gorges. Our starting point would be the same as the end point of the first adventure, namely the Weano Picnic Area. But this time our route led down into Weano Gorge and, after a brief easy descent, we paused at the bottom to enjoy some lovely, verdant pools before starting down the canyon.

Just a short distance downstream, the gorge began to deepen and narrow and we came to the first canyon-spanning pool where we needed to wade. Beyond this was a short section with trees and greenery but the canyon soon narrowed further to a dark slot only about 4 feet wide. After about 100 yards this slot suddenly opens up to a large cliff-ringed, circular pool known as Handrail Pool that gets its name from the short section of railing that aided our short descent from the slot to a ledge on the left that runs most of the way around the pool. The footing here was very slippery and, in spite of the handrail, I slipped and hurt my elbow. Falls seem a frequent occurence at this spot. Indeed, later in the day as we were returning to the trailhead we learnt that someone had fallen at Handrail Pool and that a rescue was in progress.

Handrail Pool is deep and made for a most pleasant swim on a hot day but other swims lay ahead. The exit from Handrail Pool is also a slot and involved a deep wade and swim through a dark narrow section of the canyon. At the end of the swim the gorge continues narrow, turns and drops steeply to the narrow gate that marks the entrance to another magical place called Jade Pool. Care is needed here for, again the footing is slippery and, just beyond the entrance, there is a drop of about 10 feet to the surface of Jade Pool. There are bolts placed in the wall of the slot leading to the Jade Pool entrance and we rigged a rope handrail to avoid an accident. The bolts extended through the entrance gate and around to a wide ledge on the right about ten feet above the surface of the pool.





Weano Falls, Red Gorge

Looking downstream at Regan's Pool

This deep and lovely swimming hole is surrounded, almost enclosed, by towering rock walls that glint with red. Whatever sun filters down turns the water to a shade of gorgeous pale turquoise and hence the name, Jade Pool. A high ledge on the right about 10 feet above the water surface provides the launching point for a jump into the jade pool followed by a mystical swim out through the narrowing exit to another short section of slot. More short cascades follow and then we used small ledges on the right to descend to another large open area and pool with broad rock flats to the right. As we emerged onto these rock flats we saw ahead a window through which we could see the far side of Red Gorge. We were almost at the end of Weano Gorge. The water exits this last big, unnamed pool, proceeds through the window and drops 120 feet down Weano Falls to the bottom of Red Gorge. Ledges on the right allow passage through the window to the rappel anchor, 2 solid bolts joined by a chain, positioned above the drop down the line of the falls. From this anchor we rappelled 120 feet down the very slippery face of Weano Falls to a pool with a swimming disconnect. It was a short swim to the rocky beach beside Junction Pool where we again had lunch. Though it was an option to ascend by one of several possible routes in Joffre Gorge, we chose to ascend the magnificent Hancock Gorge for a second time. It was a good choice for it seemed even more beautiful second time around.

So it was that I satisfied the irresistable impulse that had transfixed me the moment I passed that Fremantle shop window. Karijini would be a great memory to carry away with me from my time in Western Australia. Not just the gorges but the kindness of the people at the Eco-retreat and especially of Danny Francis and Brydie O'Connor. There was a tough and essential grace about these people that matched their environment.



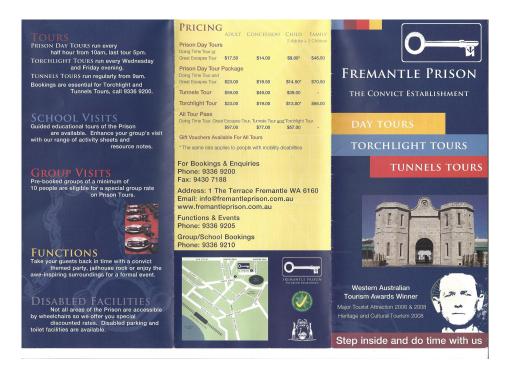


Fremantle Prison

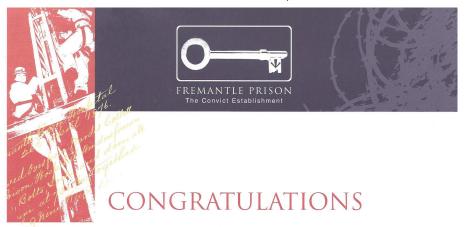




Fremantle Prison







Christopher Brennen

ON THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE

FREMANTLE PRISON TUNNELS TOURS

EXTREME HERITAGE EXPERIENCE

GUIDE Tara









Margaret River area



Park Facts

Where is it? 26km south of Armadale, off South West Highway

into Falls Road

1 hour 10 min from Perth.

Traveling time: Fees:

Entry fees apply.

Bushwalking, picnicking, wildlife observation, photography. What to do:

Electric barbecues, toilets.
Spring for wildflowers, winter for the waterfall Facilities: Best Seasons:

Rangers, information shelter, trailside signs, Park Notes. On -site information: 2007 Streetsmart:

Map 646, Ref C4

The proximity of Serpentine National Park to Perth has made it a popular day visit area. The park was increased in size to 4500 hectares in 1988. The name 'Serpentine' has its origins from the early settlers of the region. The area was named after the Serpentine in England. The shape of the river, which reminded the early settlers of a serpent, also contributed towards naming the general region where the park is located.

The park is on the Darling Scarp, the western edge of a huge, titled ancient plateau. Past weathering has resulted in distinct landscapes of lateritic uplands, minor and major valleys, and abrupt scarps. The Serpentine River contributes to the landscape with the steep slopes of the river valley and resistant granite outcrops giving rise to the unique feature of the park – the Serpentine Falls. In winter, the river rushes detune a best granite of the park of

down a sheer granite face, polished by past running water, cascading 15 metres into the rock pool below.



Healthy Parks

Healthy People



Facilities

The Serpentine Falls area can be reached from the main entrance off the South West Highway. There is a sealed loop road and carpark, a large lawned area with shaded picnic tables, gas barbecues and toilets with access for people with

Picnic areas can also be found at the Serpentine Dam and Pipehead Dam areas, with picnic and barbecue facilities. These water supply dams and the picnic areas are managed by the Water Corporation.

Caring for Serpentine National Park



Be Careful: Your safety in natural environments is our concern, but your responsibility.

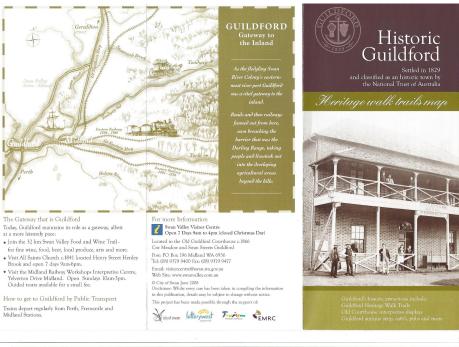
Be Clean: Put your litter in bins, or better still take it home with you

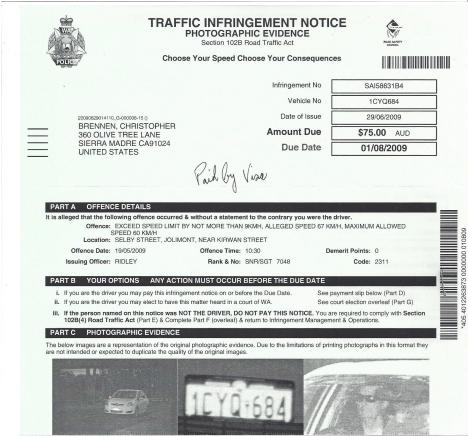
Be Cool: Because of the fire risk, no fires are permitted in the park. Please use the barbeques provided, or bring your own portable gas stove if you wish to barbeque.

Protect Animals and Plants: Dogs, cats and firearms are not permitted in national parks.

Stay on the paths: Please stay on the roads and walk trails throughout the park. Dieback is prevalent in some areas so walking off these tracks may spread the soil borne disease.

Be Aware: The river, and upper and lower rock pools contain water that is untreated.





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Last updated 7/30/99. Christopher E. Brennen