

Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park



Visitor guide



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park

Tall karri forest meets the sea at the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park.

The Walpole and Nornalup inlets lie about 450km south of Perth on WA's south coast. The town of Walpole is adjacent to the shallow (mostly about 1m deep) 100ha Walpole Inlet, which is fed by the freshwater Walpole River. The larger (1300ha) and deeper Nornalup Inlet is fed by the freshwater Deep River and the saltier Frankland River.



Top tips for enjoying the marine park

- Launch your canoe at Nornalup for a paddle up the winding Frankland River to the peace and quiet of Monastery Landing.
- Take a boat over to the mouth of the Nornalup Inlet for a picnic and a spot of fishing or bird watching. Walk over to Shelly Beach and you may be lucky enough to see a quokka.
- Walk part of the Bibbulmun Track from Walpole to Hilltop Lookout for magnificent views over the marine park. You can also stroll along the channel connecting the inlets from Rest Point to Sandy Beach.
- Enjoy a barbecue on the edge of the inlets at Coalmine Beach or Channels. Free gas barbecues and picnic shelters are provided for you.

Caring for the marine park

Please drive, walk and camp only on designated roads, tracks and camping areas. Follow the Leave No Trace principles at www.lnt.org.au.



- Fish for the future. Observe size, bag and possession limits. See the *Recreational Fishing Guide* – fish.wa.gov.au.
- Quickly return undersize and unwanted fish to the water. Use wet hands or a wet cloth when handling fish and avoid placing them on hot, dry surfaces.
- Take your litter with you and dispose of it thoughtfully, especially plastics and fishing line.
- Anchor in bare sand or mud and avoid anchoring over seagrass beds.
- Stay within the speed limit when boating in Walpole Inlet and in the Deep, Walpole and Frankland rivers.
- Please go slow near shorelines to prevent shoreline erosion, disturbance to waterbirds and disturbance to other marine park users.
- Stay on tracks when accessing the marine park to protect fragile estuarine vegetation.
- Net fishing and spearfishing (including hand spears) are prohibited in the marine park.



Left Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park. Above left Paddling in the Frankland River. Top right Eagle ray. Above right Nornalup Inlet mouth.

The marine park encompasses the Walpole and Nornalup inlets and the tidal parts of the Frankland, Deep and Walpole rivers and is surrounded by the Walpole-Nornalup National Park.

The inlets are joined by a natural 1km long and 2m deep channel, bordered by steep granite hills and rocky shores. These hills are known locally as 'The Knolls' and are covered with dense karri forest.

The Walpole and Nornalup inlets are a permanently open estuarine system – one of very few in the south-west – that experiences marine-like conditions for most of the year. The open inlet mouth, the mixing of the fresh river and salty ocean waters, healthy riparian vegetation, river deltas and two inlets result in diverse marine habitats and a high diversity of marine fauna and flora including a great range of fish species. Black bream, whiting, southern blue spot flathead and herring are just a few of at least 40 fish species that have been recorded here. Huge eagle rays and smooth rays can be seen gliding through the water. Also keep a look out for visiting New Zealand fur seals and dolphins that play with their young in these calm waters.

Black swans, ducks, swamphens, cormorants, herons, egrets, oyster catchers, plovers and pelicans are all commonly seen in the marine park. The sand flats at the mouth of the Nornalup Inlet are an especially important roosting habitat for migratory shorebirds such as stints, great knots and sand pipers. Ospreys and white-bellied sea eagles also live and fish around the marine park.

Marine and national parks together protect native plants and animals, above and below the waterline.



Far left Paddle boarding in the marine park. Top Nornalup Inlet mouth.

More information

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Parks and Wildlife Service

Walpole-Nornalup Visitor Centre
South Coast Highway
Walpole WA 6398
Ph: (08) 9840 1111

Frankland district Office
South Coast Highway
Walpole WA 6398
Ph: (08) 9840 0400
dbca.wa.gov.au

Bureau of Meteorology
bom.gov.au/weather/wa/forecasts

Marine Safety Hotline
Ph: 1300 863 308

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Fisheries Division
Ph: (08) 9845 7400
fish.wa.gov.au

Walpole Volunteer Marine Rescue
Ph: (08) 9840 1527
Mobile: 0427 770 232
Radio frequency: VHF Distress, work and call Ch 21

Download the free Emergency+ app before your visit which can be used in the event of any emergency to call for assistance. If there is no mobile phone coverage you WILL NOT be able to call 000 but the app will provide you with GPS location details.



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Photos – Michael Hemmings, Gary Muir and DBCA
Front cover Mouth of the Nornalup Inlet.

Information current at March 2020

What you need to know

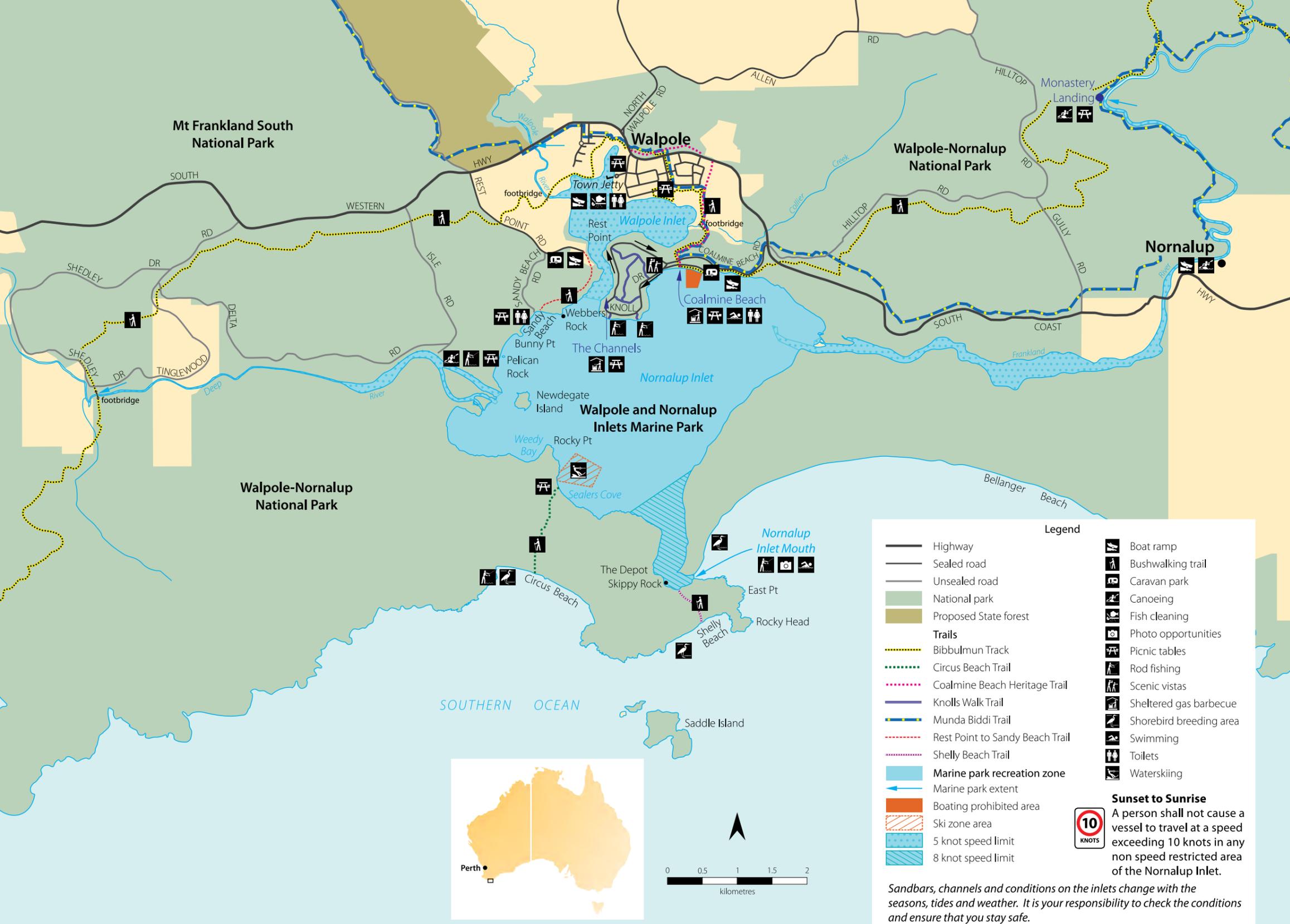
- The entire marine park is zoned for recreational fishing. Size and bag limits apply – visit fish.wa.gov.au.
- You can take your dog on board your vessel but dogs are not permitted within the surrounding Walpole-Nornalup National Park, exposed sand banks or in the waters of the marine park.
- All moorings are privately owned and you need permission to use them.
- There are many accommodation options around Walpole and you can camp near the shore of the Nornalup Inlet at the Coalmine Beach Caravan Park.
- If you don't have a boat, you can still enjoy the marine park from many recreation sites in the surrounding Walpole-Nornalup National Park. You can also take a tour – contact the Walpole-Nornalup Visitor Centre for details.
- Water skiing is only allowed in the gazetted ski area in the south-western corner of Nornalup Inlet, indicated by four yellow marker buoys.
- For the safety of swimmers, there is a boating exclusion area adjacent to Coalmine Beach.
- Small vessels up to 5m long can be launched at Coalmine Beach and Rest Point. Larger vessels over 5m long should be launched at Town Jetty.

Experience the marine park

- Indulge in water sports – canoeing, boating, fishing, sailing, jet skiing, wind surfing, swimming or stand up paddle boarding.
- Appreciate nature – birdwatching, bushwalking or wildlife spotting. You might see dolphins, seals and stingrays in the water and animals such as quokkas, bandicoots and water rats on the banks of the inlets.
- Join the Walpole 'In the Trees' Sailing Regatta which is held on the Labour Day long weekend in March every year.
- Get scientific – volunteer your time on projects such as water monitoring, bird counts and beach clean-ups. Contact the Parks and Wildlife Service on (08) 9840 0400 for details.



Right Fairy tern.



Top Monastery Landing. Above left Nornalup Canoe Launch. Above right Town Jetty.

Bushwalking information

Coalmine Beach Heritage Trail
Class 2 (3km one way, 1 hour)
This walk trail is suitable for all levels of experience and fitness and starts at the Walpole Nornalup Visitor Centre. It leads you through wetlands and forest to Coalmine Beach. Interpretive signs along the way will help you imagine what life was like in this area in the 1930s.

Rest Point to Sandy Beach
Class 4 (1.2km one way, 1 hour)
This path guides you around the edge of the Western Knoll and provides you with glimpses of the Nornalup Inlet through the undergrowth of the karri forest. This is a narrow trail with steep drops to the side and it can be slippery.

Circus Beach
Class 3 (1.5km one way, 30 minutes)
This is a moderate walk through peppermint groves, jarrah forest and low coastal heath to Circus Beach. Listen for frog calls as you pass by the freshwater Crinia Lake. A good level of fitness is recommended for this walk.

Shelly Beach
Class 4 (700m one way, 20 minutes)
This steep trail provides you with magnificent views over Bald Head, the Southern Ocean and the Nornalup Inlet. Keep a look out for the quokkas and chuditch which are known to live in this area on your way down to the beach. A good level of fitness is recommended for this walk.



Monastery Landing
Paddle up the Frankland River from Nornalup to experience the serenity of Monastery Landing.

Knoll Drive
This short drive has something for everyone – lookouts over the water, fishing spots, picnic areas and tall karri and marri forest.

Circus Beach
Walk from Sealers Cove through a grove of peppermints and past the freshwater Crinia Lake to the long, sandy Circus Beach.

Shelly Beach
This short walk offers views of Bald Head, the Nornalup Inlet and the Southern Ocean and you may even see a quokka or a chuditch.

Nornalup Inlet mouth
This is a spectacular place to spend a day – fishing, birdwatching, swimming, walking or just sitting back to enjoy the scenery.

Coalmine Beach
Coalmine Beach is a great place for a swim in the shallow, calm waters of the Nornalup Inlet.

Town Jetty
Situated right in the middle of Walpole, this is the perfect place to launch your boat to explore the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park.

Nornalup Canoe Launch
Launch your canoe here for a paddle up the winding Frankland River, which flows through dense karri and tingle forest.

Far left Nornalup Inlet. Left Circus Beach. Right Knoll Drive.

