

PARUNA Wildlife Sanctuary

Numbat Trail

NOTES FOR WALKERS

Please carry sufficient water. 2-3 litres per person is recommended.

Please bring sturdy walking shoes or boots, hat, sunscreen and a first aid kit.

You may also wish to bring insect repellent as mosquitoes, ticks and other biting insects can be prevalent at different times of the year.

No open fires permitted in the sanctuary.

Please walk on the trail you have booked.

Please take all rubbish with you, including food scraps. There are no bins available.

Composting toilets are available near the Avon Road entrance.

Picnic tables are provided along the trail for your enjoyment.

Please stay on the trail at all times as many of the areas are very fragile.

Please use the Visitors' Book to sign in and out.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Emergency Services: 000
 Booking office: 9572 3169
 Manager's residence: 9572 9078
 Manager's mobile: 0429 912 862
 Karakamia manager: 0400 249 809

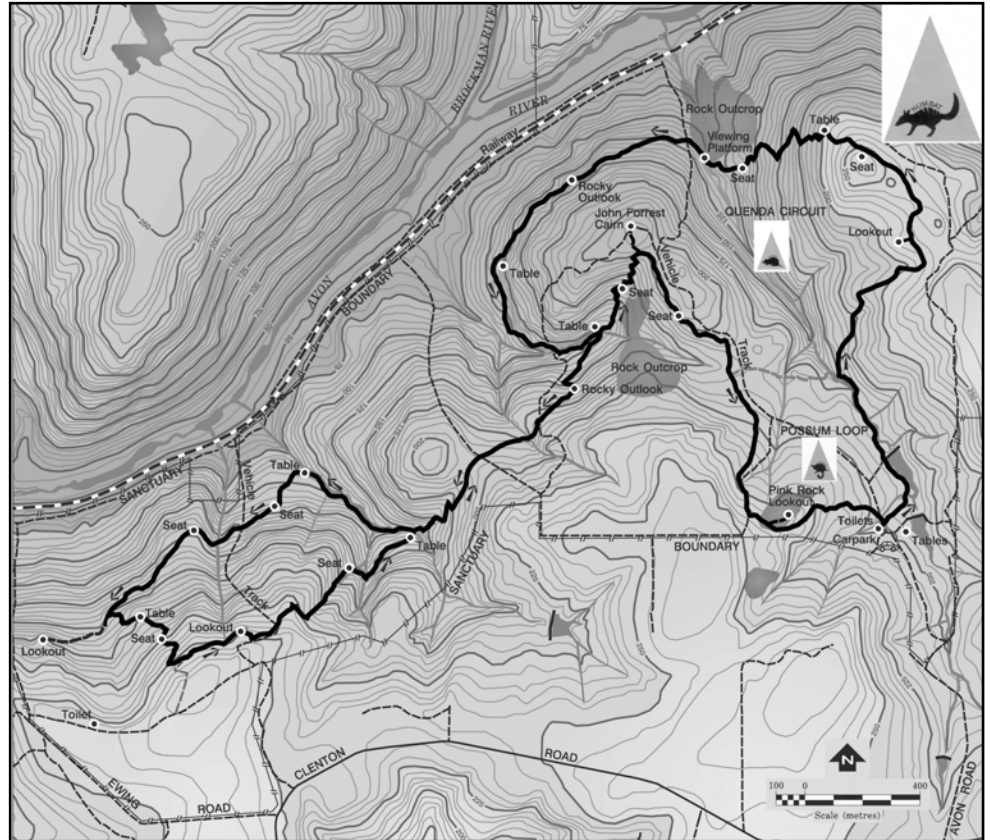
The nearest help is the Manager's residence, 1 kilometre along Ewing Road on the right.

Mobile phones on some networks will work intermittently along the trail.

PARUNA FIELD FACTS

21 Mammal species
 12 Amphibian species
 124 Bird species
 43 Reptile species
 5 Threatened species
 353 Plant species

The Numbat Trail is a very challenging but rewarding day's walk through the western part of the sanctuary. The trail notes are provided to guide walkers through some of the natural beauty of Paruna such as wildlife, streams, wildflowers, lookouts, and waterfalls along the way. Distances in kilometres are marked in brackets in the trail notes below.



Numbat Trail Notes

To commence the trail, follow the short path located to the right of the vehicle track. Toilets are to the left.

The pretty white trees surrounding the car park and trail are Powderbark (*Eucalyptus accedens*) and Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*). The two species can be difficult to separate but Powderbark has a fine powder on the bark which turns salmon pink when freshly shed.

(0.1) The vegetation opens out along a sandy trail. Picnic tables are located along the dam to the right. Look for the

Rufous Treecreeper, a bird that has just about disappeared from the Perth region. This reddish-brown bird is often sighted perching or spiralling up the side of a tree and has a distinctive piercing call. It occasionally visits the picnic tables.

A boardwalk runs along a granite outcrop to protect this fragile habitat.

(0.42) The trail meanders along a creek, an excellent spot to listen for frogs during the wetter months. Look for diggings along the path - they might be from the reintroduced Woylie or the Quenda.



One of the sundews (*Drosera erythrohiza*) appears in the sandy soil after rain. These carnivorous plants have red or green rosette leaves. They are covered by a sticky coating that traps small insects which are digested by the plant to gain important nutrients.

The vegetation returns to trees again with excellent wildflowers especially the widespread yellow feather-flower *Verticordia acerosa* during spring. This is an excellent area to see birds as they feed on nectar and insects attracted to the flowers. Look out for the Splendid Fairy-wren with the male's brilliant blue plumage.

(0.59) At the junction, the Numbat Trail (and the Quenda Circuit) turns to the right and heads up a Wandoo slope. During spring, there is a strong smell from the tiny white flowers of *Trymalium* that grows thickly in this area.

(1.11) Come into an excellent stand of Wandoo and Powderbark. The understory of the Wandoo is fairly sparse as the leaves contain a growth inhibitor, effectively sterilising the soil and reducing competition with other plants. There is a good stand of the grass tree *Xanthorrhoea acanthostachya*, distinguished by the distinct separation of the brown skirt from the green crown.

(1.31) There are a large number of orchids found at Paruna, a spectacular group of plants with some unusual names and pollination habits. Look out for the Donkey, Pink Fairy, White Spider and Snail Orchids to name a few.

(1.59) There is a massive Powderbark with unusual growths on the trunk called burls, caused by insect or fungal attack. They are highly prized for woodwork and are sometimes stolen from live trees.

(1.92) Enjoy a picnic on the table provided. The Avon River and the main east-west railway line can be seen. Just past the table, there is a small but

dense patch of Tea Tree with small white flowers.

A series of switchbacks lead down the steep hill.

(2.58) The main creek flows down the hill leading into the Paruna Gorge seen from a large viewing platform. Please stay on the trail and viewing platform as the surrounding area is slippery and fragile.

(2.70) Ascending through a stand of Wandoo in early spring, the bright yellow wattle, Prickly Moses (*Acacia pulchella*) is in full flower. This is one of a number of wattles at Paruna.

(2.94) A patch of prickly Parrot Bush (*Dryandra sessilis*) has died in shallow soil over granite. This bush is common in disturbed areas such as roadside verges and sometimes mistaken for a weed and destroyed.

(3.27) Observe the shiny leaves of Jam Wattle (*Acacia acuminata*), an acacia usually found in the Wheatbelt, commonly used for making fence posts. This is the most western population of this species.

(3.5) The understory has disappeared after 30 to 40 years of grazing and frequent fires. It is a good area to see a number of small birds flitting around. Look for the Grey Fantail, a small inquisitive bird displaying its fan-like tail as it forages for insects.

As you continue along the trail you will come across a rocky outcrop where you can sit at the picnic table and take in the magnificent vista to the west and across Walyunga National Park.

(3.90) The trail skirts around a sharp rocky point with a steeply incised watercourse and a massive exposed granite slab on the valley across to the south. Follow the trail alongside a steep vehicle track crossing a creek and through some dense vegetation which is excellent habitat for the re-introduced

Quenda.

(4.20) The Numbat Trail turns off at this point leading into thick prickly scrub, mainly Honeybush (*Hakea lissocarpha*) and One-sided Bottlebrush (*Calothamnous quadrifidus*) which looks spectacular in spring.

If the trail is more of a challenge than expected, take a shortcut at this point. Move to 9.60 in the trail notes and follow the Quenda signs back to the carpark.

(4.47) An impressive granite wall is alongside the trail.

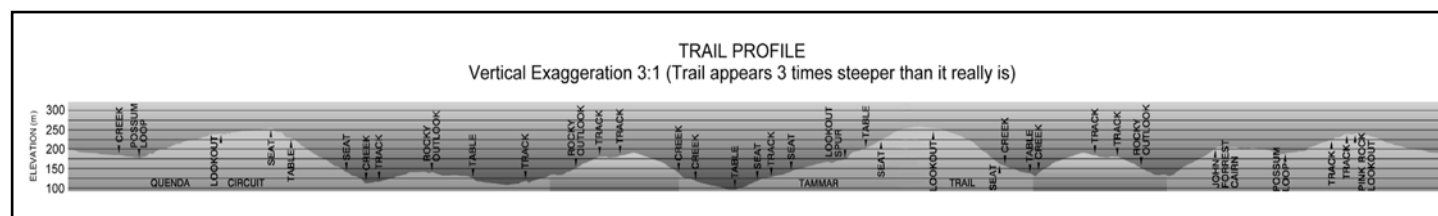
In spring and early summer there is a great diversity of insects and spiders. Admire the magnificent colouration of the green and gold dragonflies and camouflaged grasshoppers, including one that is easily mistaken for a leaf. Look for the spectacular Christmas spider a small spider often flecked with green, yellow or orange. Orb-weaver spiders, with magnificent webs, are also seen.

(4.63) The bush completely changes from pristine bush to modified vegetation. Extensive grazing at the western end of the sanctuary has left a parkland area of trees with little understory.

(5.52) Use the small footbridge to cross the creek and follow the trail to the right along the stream. You will come across a picnic table on the right about 250 metres down the track, where you can enjoy the sounds of nature.

(6.01) At the top of a short climb is a seat with good views of the Avon Valley. The hill on the opposite valley is Jumperkine Hill.

(6.11) Near the top of the climb is a stone seat built into the side of the trail. Another seat is located 50 metres further on, at the top of the ridge. Rapids down in the Avon River can be seen and heard in winter.





As walkers climb the hill it is a good area to see Wedgetail Eagles as they glide over the valley. The Greygongone is another common bird often heard though rarely seen with a melodious, persistent, and somewhat mournful call.

(6.96) After returning to the trail, follow a series of switchbacks up the hill in open Jarrah/Marri woodland.

(7.48) As you make your way down the hill, you can take a rest on the seat. Just a little further is an amazing rock formation, paving a path across a small stream which flows during winter.

(7.55) The trail reaches the Bilu Lookout (Noongar for river) where the Sanctuary was opened on 4th November 1998. Extensive stonework was done in the area by the previous owner which is seen along sections of the trail.

(7.81) At the end of the revegetation plot, follow the trail down a series of switchbacks to a small stream fed by a spring. Glauert's Froglets, which sound like rattling a pea in a can, and the Quacking Frog can be heard during the day in the wetter months.

(8.42) At the base of the hill is a picnic table near a stream with rock pools and a pretty waterfall during winter.

Look for lichens on rocks along the trail. Lichens are not plants but a combination of fungi and algae growing together often on bare rock. Neither fungi or algae can survive separately in this harsh environment.

The Numbat Trail reaches the junction encountered earlier. Continue over a small footbridge back along the trail, which rejoins the Quenda Circuit near the creek.

(9.60) A picnic table is provided before the climb up a series of steep

switchbacks. Seats are provided along the climb including a green stone seat from a dolerite boulder, a type of volcanic rock.

(10.03) The trail reaches a junction with a spur trail climbing a further 100 metres to the John Forrest Cairn and some spectacular views. This cairn, still in excellent condition, was built in 1879 during the original survey trip through the valley. There is a series of these cairns from Walyunga through Paruna and Avon Valley National Parks towards Toodyay.

Follow the trail back down to the junction and continue straight ahead along the ridge to enjoy the Avon Valley scenery.

(10.51) As you make your way through another Parrot Bush thicket and down the stone steps, observe the soil and vegetation along this section of the trail as it changes, over a short distance, from a red pebbly soil to white sand.

(10.64) The trail joins up with the Possum Loop just past a sandy stream. Reach a stand of Zamia, an ancient Gondwanan relict, which has separate male and female plants. The bright red seeds on the female plant are highly toxic. The Noongar people have a special preparation technique making the seeds an important food source.

In the small hollows of the Wandoo nests a bird called the Striated Pardalote, which is often heard though rarely seen, with its "peep peep" call repeated constantly.

The trail follows a vehicle track for a short distance.

(11.18) The vegetation opens out again onto a massive granite outcrop called 'Pink Rock' named after the pink Feather-flower, *Verticordia plumosa* that flowers in late spring.

(11.26) Follow the boardwalk in this fragile area to the viewing platform for a well-earned rest and a spectacular view. The Avon River can be seen in the centre and the Brockman River valley to the north.

The granite in places is cracked to form sheets, a natural process of weathering caused by the heating and cooling of the rock. Many reptiles, such as the Ornate Dragon and the Barking Gecko, live under these sheets.

Follow the trail along the fence for a short distance to another beautiful spring wildflower display. Look for the Yellow Buttercups, Common Forest Heath, which has tiny white furry flowers, and the White Myrtle.

Late in spring, the Rainbow Bee-eater migrates to the south and is often seen at Paruna through spring and summer. Walkers may be lucky to see them emerge from their nests in tunnels on the slopes.

There are toilets located to the right of the trail as walkers come towards the Avon Road gate. (11.83)

AWC would like to thank you for visiting Paruna Wildlife Sanctuary. Paruna was chosen as a safe haven for wildlife because of its location between two national parks, and the incredible diversity of habitats within the boundaries. We hope you enjoyed some of the natural beauties of Paruna.

If you would like further information on AWC, please take a copy of *Wildlife Matters*, visit us online at www.australianwildlife.org, or contact our booking office on 9572 3169.

Please recycle your trail notes by returning them to the box by the gate. *Thank you.*