

PARUNA Wildlife Sanctuary

Possum Loop

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

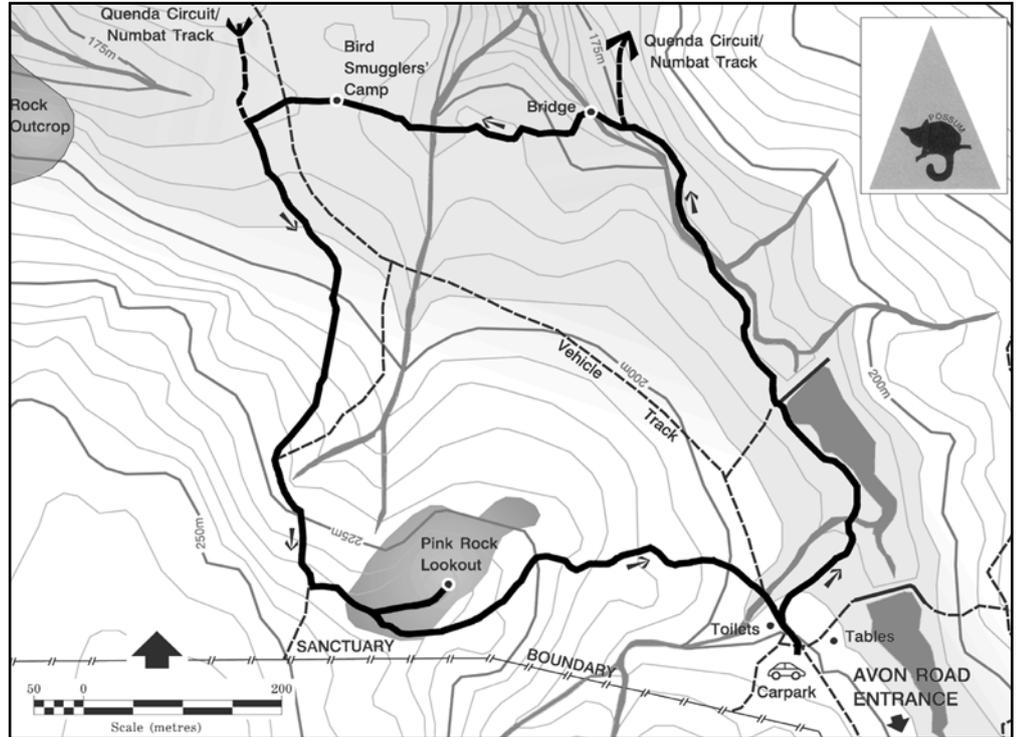
The nearest help is the Manager's residence, 1 kilometre along Ewing Road on the right.

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 Possum Loop is an easy 2.3 kilometre, one-way circuit, taking in the highlights of Paruna Wildlife Sanctuary. With creeks, views, birds and spectacular spring wildflowers, this trail is a delightful afternoon outing. The trail is marked with beige markers depicting a possum at turns and junctions. Distances in kilometres are marked in brackets in the trail notes below.



Possum Loop Trail Notes

Paruna Wildlife Sanctuary is owned by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC), a private conservation organisation that protects Australia's threatened wildlife and their habitats.

Paruna forms a vital corridor between Walyunga and Avon Valley National Parks. It has become a safe haven for many of our rare and threatened mammal species, such as the Quenda, Woylie, Tammar Wallaby and Black-footed Rock Wallaby which were reintroduced to the property during 2000-01. A 17 kilometre electric fence extends along the southern boundary to help control feral predators such as foxes and cats. It also helps

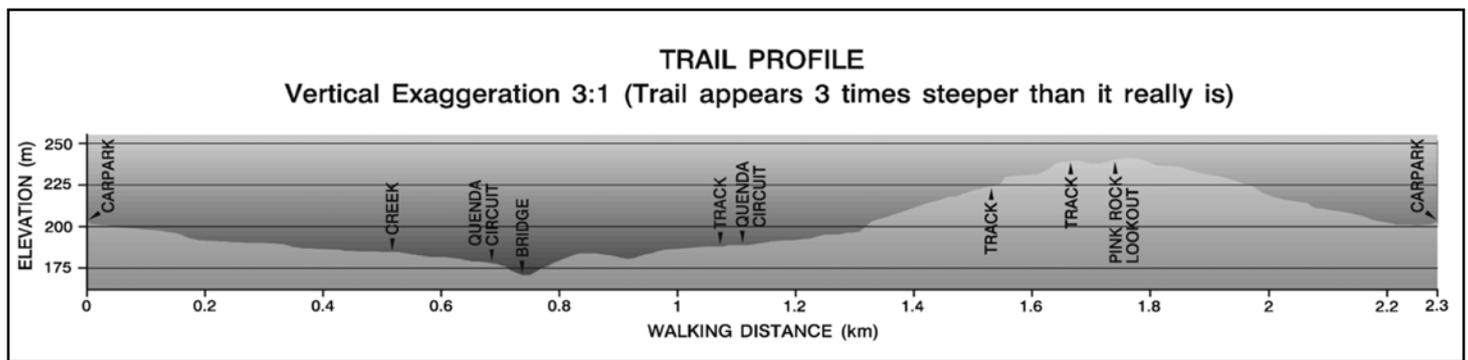
control vermin, such as rabbits.

Enter at the Avon Road gate and follow the short path to the start of the trail, located to the right of the vehicle track. Toilets are located straight down the vehicle track 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.

Devils Pins (*Hovea pungens*) is a spectacular purple pea, common in this open area in late winter. The sandy soil is also a good area to look out for diggings which might be from the reintroduced Woylie or the Quenda foraging at night for food.

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.

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

(0.3) The trail meanders along a creek, an excellent spot to listen for frogs during the wetter months. Glauert's Froglet, which sounds like a pea in a can, and occasional calls from the Quacking Frog can be heard.

The vegetation returns to trees again with an array of spectacular spring wildflowers, especially the widespread yellow feather-flower, *Verticordia acerosa*. This is an excellent area to see birds as they feed on nectar as well as insects attracted to the flowers. Look out for the Splendid Wren with its brilliant blue plumage, or listen for the Western Gerygone that has a melodious, persistent and somewhat mournful call.

(0.7) The trail forks and the Possum Loop continues down the slope to a bridge over the creek where there is a good view of the Avon River Valley.

Walking up past the bridge, there are a number of interesting plants including *Xanthorrhoea acanthostachya*, a rare grasstree distinguished by the distinct separation of the brown skirt from the green crown.

(1.02) There is an old bird smugglers camp thought to have ceased operation 20-30 years ago. Examples of cages, feeding trays, incubators, watering systems and even what appears to be an old gassing chamber can be seen in the area. This illegal practice attracts high penalties. Up to 90 per cent of birds usually die in smuggling operations.

(1.07) Just past a vehicle track is an enormous Christmas Tree (*Nuytsia floribunda*), which around December becomes a blaze of orange. It is a parasitic plant relying on surrounding trees for

water and nutrients.

(1.11) The track turns left as it rejoins the Quenda Circuit. Reach a stand of *Zamia (Macrozamia reidleyi)* an ancient Gondwanan relict that have a separate male and female plants. The bright red seeds on the female plant are highly toxic. Indigenous Australians have a special preparation technique making the seeds an important food source.

(1.37) The trail becomes steep and gravelly as it enters another stand of Powderbark and Wandoo.

It follows a vehicle track for a short distance then turns off towards a massive granite outcrop called 'Pink Rock', named after the pink feather-flower *Verticordia plumosa* that flowers in late spring. Follow the boardwalk (1.74) 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 with the Brockman River valley to the north.

(2.08) The trail follows the vermin-proof fence for a short distance to another stand of Powderbark, Wandoo and spring wildflowers. Look for the Yellow Buttercups (*Hibbertia sp.*) - there are several species throughout Paruna.

Along this section there is also the Bearded Heath (*Leucopogon polymorphus*) which has tiny, white, furry flowers. The beautiful White Myrtle (*Hypocalymma angustifolium*) is also common here in early spring.

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 which are constructed in tunnels on the slopes.

(2.28) The trail soon reaches the end, near the Avon Road gate.

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 the 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.*