

PARUNA Wildlife Sanctuary

Quenda Circuit

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

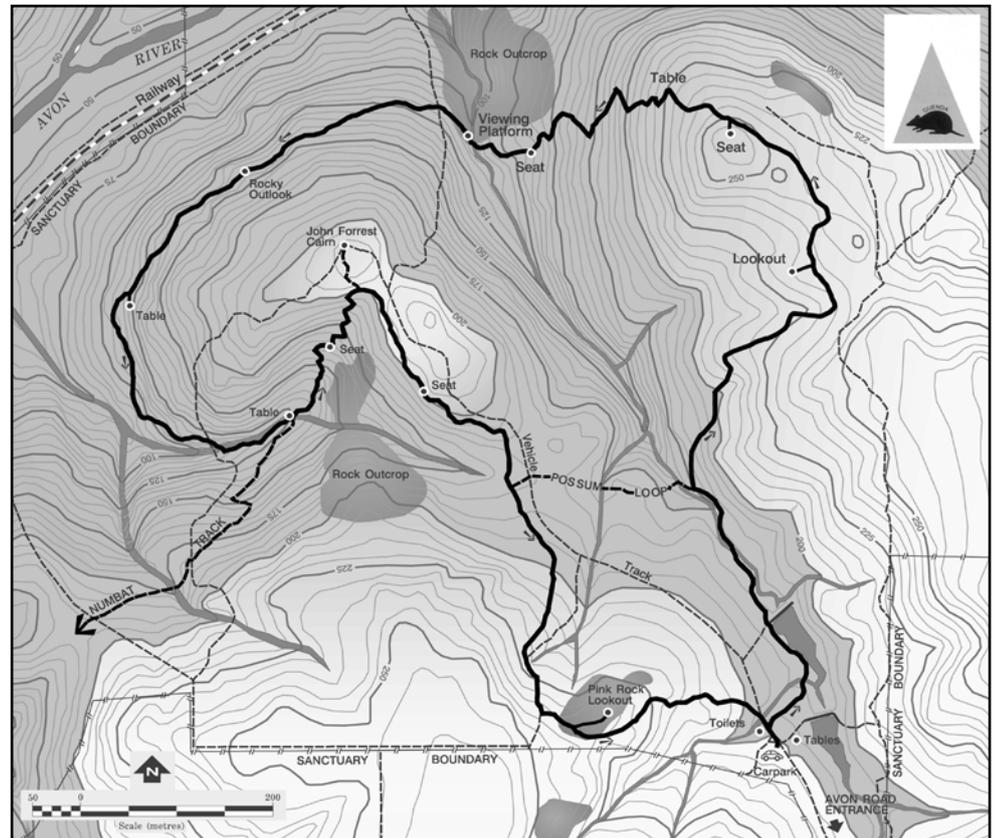
The nearest help is the Manager's residence, 1 kilometre along Ewing Road on the right.

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 Quenda Circuit is a one-way circuit taking in the best of Paruna. A very rewarding walk with creeks, views, birds, historic monuments, and spectacular spring wildflowers. Distances (in km) are marked in the trail notes. Green markers depicting a Quenda (Southern Brown Bandicoot) are located at turns and junctions.



Quenda Circuit Notes

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.

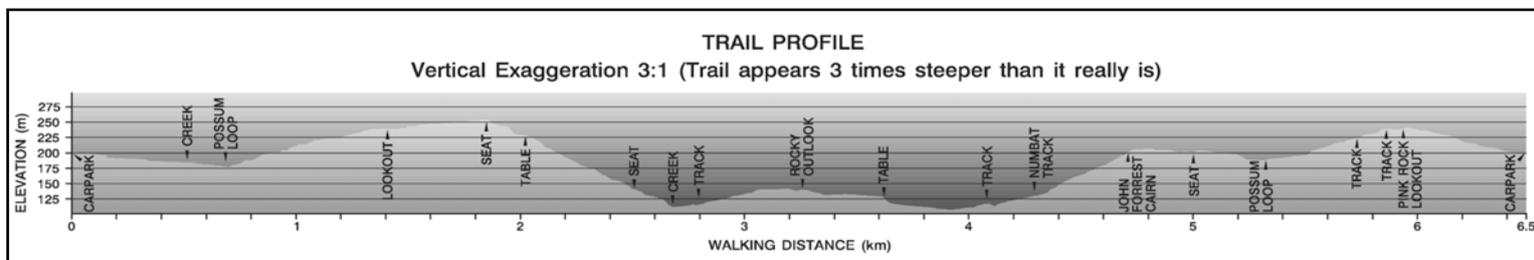
The pretty white trees surrounding the car park and trail are Powderbark (*Eucalyptus accedens*) and Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*). The two species can be difficult to separate but Powderbark has a fine powder on the bark which turns salmon pink when freshly shed.

(0.1) The vegetation quickly opens out

along a sandy trail. Picnic tables are located along the dam to the right. Straight ahead, the trail reaches a boardwalk along a granite outcrop. Look for diggings along the path, they might be from the reintroduced Woylie or the Quenda foraging for food. Devils Pins (*Hovea pungens*), a spectacular purple pea, is common in this open area in late winter.

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.

(0.3) The trail meanders along a creek, an excellent spot to listen for frogs which emerge during the wetter months when the creek is flowing. Glauert's Froglets, which sound like a pea rattling in a can, and occasional calls from the Quacking Frog can be heard during the day in the wetter months.

Return to the trees with excellent wildflowers in the understory, especially the widespread, yellow feather-flower *Verticordia acerosa*. Look for the Couch Honeypot (*Dryandra nivea*) as well as small pink, white and yellow everlastings. 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 Fairy-wren with its brilliant blue plumage or listen for the Western Warbler that has a melodious, persistent, and somewhat mournful call.

(0.69) At the trail junction, the Quenda trail turns to the right and heads up a Wandoo slope. During late winter and spring, the smell of the tiny white flowers of *Trymalium* can be rather strong as it grows thickly in this section.

In spring and early summer, walkers can enjoy a large diversity of insects. Some have magnificent colouration, such as a green and gold dragonflies and brilliantly camouflaged grasshoppers, including one that is easily mistaken for a leaf. Look for the iridescent Christmas Spider, a small spider often flecked with green, yellow or orange. Orb Weaver spiders with magnificent webs are also often seen.

(1.21) Moving along the trail, walkers 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 a rare grass tree, *Xanthorrhoea acanthostachya*, distinguished by the distinct separation of the brown skirt from the green crown.

The Wandoo woodland is a good area to hear the Rufous Tree-creeper, a bird that has just about disappeared from the Perth region. This reddish-brown coloured bird may be sighted clinging to the side of a tree and has a distinctive piercing call.

(1.41) A spur trail to the left leads to a lookout to an expansive view unfolding to the west. The orange/brown clumps of Mistletoe (*Amyema miquelii*), a semi-parasite, can be seen growing from branches of many trees from the lookout. The seeds are spread from tree to tree by the Mistletoebird.

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

(1.61) There is a massive Powderbark with a series of unusual growths on the trunk called burls. Insect or fungal attack causes these formations which are highly prized for woodwork and have sometimes been stolen from live trees.

(2.02) The main trail descends down to a picnic table with a spectacular view of the Avon Valley including the Avon River and the main east-west railway line. There is a small but dense patch of Tea Tree (*Leptospermum erubescens*) with small white flowers along the path, just past the table.

The trail becomes a series of switchbacks down the steep hill. The vegetation changes completely with trees becoming sparse and stunted. One-sided Bottle Brush (*Calothamnus quadrifidus*) is very dense in places along with the Lemon-scented Bell (*Darwinia citradora*). Dense thickets of the prickly Parrot Bush (*Dryandra sessilis*) are also evident. These plants' flowers attract a variety of birds, particularly honeyeaters.

(2.68) The main Paruna creek flows into the Paruna Gorge seen from a large viewing platform. A small trail leads down to the gorge where a large pool forms in the wetter months. Please be careful and stay on the trail and viewing platform as the surrounding areas are slippery and fragile.

(2.80) 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.

The rocks along this section are very red with green streaks as the trail crosses a dolerite dyke. Dolerite is volcanic rock like granite formed when lava cools.

(3.04) A short boardwalk leads to a lookout over the Avon River. This fragile area has a very shallow layer of soil on granite.

(4.00) The trail comes around a sharp rocky point with a stream below the steep slope and a massive exposed granite slab on the valley across to the south. Once again there are large areas of dead Parrot Bush. Wedge-tailed Eagles may be seen high in the sky as they ride the thermals.

(4.08) The trail goes alongside a steep vehicle track crossing a creek and through some dense vegetation. The nocturnal Quenda is often found in these areas.

(4.29) 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 which is a dolerite boulder.

(4.71) The trail reaches a junction with a spur trail climbing a further 100 metres to the John Forrest Cairn. 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 the Avon Valley National Park.

After enjoying the views, follow the trail back down to the junction and continue straight ahead along the ridge enjoying some spectacular Avon Valley views.

There are a number of parrots seen frequently at Paruna including the threatened Carnaby's Cockatoo, a large, black noisy bird often seen in flocks. The green Twenty-eight or Port Lincoln Ringneck are always around, feeding in the trees. The name Twenty-eight is misleading as they have a wide variety of calls, very few actually saying "28".

(4.99) Pass beneath a large Christmas Tree (*Nuytsia floribunda*) to a stone seat looking over the valley. The tree is spectacular in December with brilliant orange flowers. It is a semi-parasitic plant relying on surrounding trees or shrubs for water and nutrients.

(5.20) Make your way out of the Parrot Bush thicket and continue down some stone steps. Observe the soil and vegetation along this section of the trail as it changes from a red pebbly soil to white sand over a short distance.

(5.33) The trail joins up with the Possum Loop just past a sandy stream. Reach a stand of *Zamia* (*Macrozamia reidleyi*), an ancient Gondwanan relict which have 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.

(5.57) The trail becomes increasingly steep and gravelly as it enters another stand of Powderbark and Wandoo. Powderbark favours the ridges while Wandoo cover the slopes.

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 leads onto a vehicle track for a short distance.

(5.73) The trail turns off the track and the vegetation opens out again onto a massive granite outcrop called 'Pink Rock'. In late spring, a pink feather flower (*Verticordia plumosa*) covers the area.

(5.94) Keeping strictly to the boardwalk in this fragile area, make your way 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. This is a good place to see Tree Martins as they swoop low over the rocks feeding on small flying insects.

The granite, in places, has 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.

The trail goes down towards the vermin-proof fence to another stand of Powderbark and Wandoo where another spectacular wildflower display occurs during spring. 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 in this section 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 in tunnels on the slopes.

(6.49) 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 AWC, 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.*