



Dryandra Woodland

A new campground in the Dryandra Woodland has been named Gnaala Mia, which is Noongar for “Our Home”. When it opens in June it will provide a home-away-from-home for people who come to the area. The best thing about this place is that it’s a comfortable two-hour drive from Perth. So with an early start on Saturday morning, you can stay the weekend and be back at work on Monday feeling recharged having spent a night in the bush.

As the sun streams through the mallet woodlands and hits the brown bark of the trees, the Dryandra Woodland shimmers and sparkles. Come spring, the landscape erupts in colour as flowers of as many as 800 native plant species bloom.

Above Gnaala Mia is a perfect spot to relax in the bush.

Photo – Sallyanne Cousans

Above right Bush stone-curlew.

Photo – Jiri Lochman

Opposite page

Top A kangaroo in the tranquil mallet woodlands at Dryandra Woodland.

Photo – Sallyanne Cousans

Left Kawana Trail is an easy 3.3km walk.

Right A numbat, WA’s mammal emblem.

Photos – Parks and Wildlife

If they’re in the area, it’s hard not to notice the Carnaby’s cockatoos, which screech through the sky in flocks. Or you may spot the more elusive bush stone-curlew and the rufous tree creeper or another of the 100 bird species found in the area. On a clear night, the open woodlands offer an uninterrupted view to the glistening stars above. If you’re really lucky, you might see the State’s mammal emblem – the numbat – foraging for termites, or some of the other remarkable nocturnal animals including red-tailed phascogales, woylies, tamar wallabies or possums. Whatever piques your interest, or grabs your attention, it really is a beautiful part of the world.

TRACKS AND TRAILS

The area can be explored on one of the many walk trails that range in length from one to 12.5km, or an easy 40-minute stroll

to a more challenging four-hour hike. The walks take in a number of recreation and cultural sites, including dams, rail sidings, telegraph lines and Aboriginal cultural sites. They are marked with signage to offer information along the way.

For those travelling by car, the 23km Darwinia Drive Trail uses interpretive signage to explain complex natural relationships such as those between woylies and sandalwood. A slow daytime drive through the established tracks may be enhanced by a chance spotting of an echidna.

CAMPING AND ACCOMMODATION

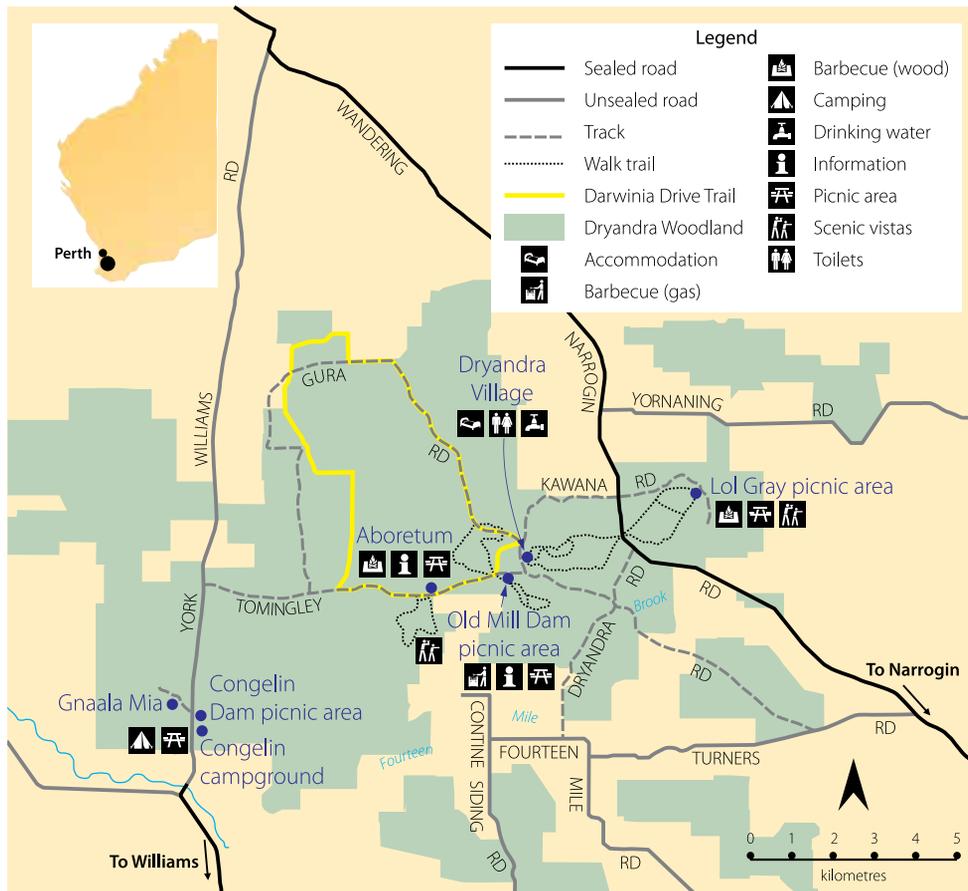
Dryandra Woodland has long been popular for camping among people who are drawn to the area for a quick, weekend getaway or as part of an extended trip through the Wheatbelt. As part of the \$21.05



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Parks for People Dryandra Woodland



million *Parks for People* initiative, which provides a range of affordable camping and caravan options to ensure people have access to enjoy and experience WA's natural and iconic areas, visitors will have another accommodation option.

Chosen in partnership with the local Noongar elders, the new campground is separated into two 'loops' and will be constructed in two phases. The first loop will open in June 2015 and the second is expected to be completed by July 2016. When finished, the campground will provide 17 caravan sites, 12 tent sites, four toilets and two camp kitchens.

What's really special about the new campground is that it takes advantage of the open woodlands with each camp site separated by about 20m. This gives campers the feeling of isolation while still having the convenience of nearby facilities.

If camping is not your style then the Dryandra Village is the place to stay. Run as a not-for-profit business, the Lion's International host several different

accommodation packages for individuals through to large family groups at budget prices. Bookings can be made by contacting the caretaker on (08) 9884 5231.

BARNA MIA

About 20 minutes' drive away from the Gnaala Mia campground is Parks and Wildlife's Barna Mia animal sanctuary – an introduced predator-proof animal sanctuary with a difference, and a 'must-do' while you're here. Visitors can discover threatened native animals such as the bilby, boodie, woylie, quenda and marla during tours that are held after dark using special red spotlights. Tour guides enthusiastically share information about these special animals, giving visitors a unique and memorable experience. Schools and special interest groups can also arrange tours.

So, if you're in Perth and looking for a quick weekend escape where you're sure to enjoy getting up-close to some of Western Australia's most endearing native animals, then Dryandra Woodland is just a short drive away.

Top A group tour at Barna Mia animal sanctuary.
Photo – Michael James/Parks and Wildlife

Above *Conospermum*.
Photo – Parks and Wildlife

Do it yourself

Where is it? 164km south-east of Perth and 22km north-west of Narrogin.

What to do: Picnicking, scenic driving, camping, bushwalking, a visit to Barna Mia animal sanctuary, group educational activities.

Facilities: Interpretive centre and animal sanctuary, toilets, picnic tables, barbecues, walk trails, drive trails, camping.

Nearest Parks and Wildlife office: Great Southern District Office, Hough Street, Narrogin, phone (08) 9881 9200.

parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au

