

# Ningaloo Coast

## World Heritage area

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### World Heritage area

**World Heritage areas are exceptional, unique and irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.**

World Heritage status is awarded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee to sites that are deemed to possess 'Outstanding Universal Value'. This means cultural and/or natural significance so exceptional that it transcends national boundaries and is of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.

World Heritage began in 1972 in response to worldwide concern over the potential destruction of the worlds' cultural and natural heritage. UNESCO developed the World Heritage Convention and World Heritage Operational Guidelines for World Heritage listing and protection.

### World Heritage status can be awarded to:

Natural sites which are: globally unique; of exceptional natural beauty; represent major stages of Earth's history; and/or provide habitat for threatened species. Cultural sites which are: of human historical value; represent masterpieces of creative genius; testimony for past cultural traditions; and/or symbolic representations of human nature.

### Sites around the World

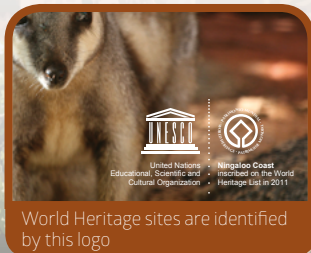
In 2016 there were 1,031 World Heritage sites in 163 countries; 802 cultural; 197 natural; and 32 mixed. Australia has 19 sites, Western Australia has four sites.



Some well-known international sites include the Grand Canyon, East Africa's Serengeti and the pyramids of Egypt.



Australia's World Heritage sites include: the Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park, and the Tasmanian Wilderness.



World Heritage sites are identified by this logo

Credit: Tony Howard

Western Australia's World Heritage sites are: the Ningaloo Coast; Shark Bay; Purnululu; and Fremantle prison (part of the Australia Convict Sites).

### Our World Heritage Neighbourhood

The Gascoyne region is truly remarkable having two World Heritage areas in close proximity - the Ningaloo Coast and Shark Bay. Both sites are renowned for their incredible natural environments, wildlife and wilderness tourism experiences.

### The Ningaloo Coast

Listed as a World Heritage site in 25 June 2011, for its Outstanding Universal Value, the Ningaloo Coast will take your breath away. It is one of the most unique, naturally beautiful and biologically diverse places on earth.

The Ningaloo Coast World Heritage area covers 6045km<sup>2</sup> and stretches more than 300km along the coast, from the Muiron Islands Marine Management Area in the north through to its southern most point at Red Bluff. The area encompasses the Bundegi and Jurabi coastal parks at the tip of the North West Cape, Ningaloo Marine Park, Ningaloo Commonwealth Marine Reserve (which extends up to 22km offshore), the adjoining Learmonth Air Weapons Range and Cape Range National Park, including Shothole and Charles Knife canyons on the eastern side.

Nearly 85% of the property is the marine environment and the remaining is terrestrial including Cape Range National Park.





# More on Ningaloo Coast

## World Heritage Area

### Key values:

#### Coastal and marine habitats

The rare mix of intact, diverse and large scale terrestrial, coastal and marine habitats form and incredible interconnected ecosystem.

#### Exceptional natural beauty

The stark and striking contrast of the rugged, arid Cape Range, the sparkling white beaches and the clear, turquoise colours and underwater scenery of Ningaloo Reef.

#### Ningaloo Reef biodiversity

Ningaloo Reef is one of the longest and most pristine fringing reefs in the world. Over 200 coral species and 500 fish species; plus hundreds of other life forms including crustaceans, molluscs, echinoderms and sponges.

#### Turtle nesting

The Ningaloo Coast is one of the most important turtle nesting rookeries in the Indian Ocean for three turtle species: the loggerhead; the green and the hawksbill turtle. The area provides a large stretch of natural and undisturbed nesting sites.



Feral animals impact native wildlife. Foxes dig up turtle nests and consume turtle eggs and hatchlings.

Credit: Parks and Wildlife

#### Whale Sharks

Ningaloo has one of the largest, most reliable and best managed Whale Shark aggregations in the world (estimated 300-500 whale sharks).

#### Mega Marine Life

Globally important and threatened mega marine life are also found here including whales, dolphins, manta rays, dugongs, orcas, sharks, turtles and large fish such as tuna and billfish. The Ningaloo Coast is a migratory route for humpback whales and other whales. The Exmouth Gulf is a key humpback whale nursery with the highest density in the southern hemisphere.

#### Cape Range plants and animals

Cape Range hosts a remarkable array of plants, birds, reptiles and other wildlife, a high proportion of which are found nowhere else in the world.

#### Cape Range karst system

Under the Cape Range Peninsula lies a complex limestone karst system that is home to a high diversity of unique subterranean fauna. Some species are found nowhere else in the world.

### Protecting our Ningaloo Coast

We must protect and preserve the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage area to ensure that our children can come and visit and still do all the things we love to do along the Ningaloo Coast; camp next to the beach; swim with a whale shark, humpback whale or a manta ray; swim amongst the corals, fish and turtles; walk along the beach; kayak the coast; and catch a fish for dinner.

Our Ningaloo Coast is facing pressure from increased visitation, introduced animals such as foxes and cats, oil and gas extraction, overfishing and climate change including coral bleaching. Government, scientists, traditional owners, tourism operators, volunteers and the community.

### You can help

There are many volunteer conservation programs which you can get involved in along the Ningaloo Coast:

- During turtle season become a turtle volunteer, monitoring beaches looking for turtle nests  
[www.ningalooturtles.org.au](http://www.ningalooturtles.org.au)
- During peak visitor season become a camp host and manage a campsite in Cape Range National Park  
[www.dbca.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/100-campground-hosting](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/100-campground-hosting)
- Throughout the year there are various wildlife and marine life monitoring projects. Enquire at your local Parks and Wildlife Service.

### Be a Ningaloo Coast Guardian



Fish outside Sanctuary zones, take only what you need adhering to bag and size limits.



Look after our living coral – don't stand on or kick coral.



Observe all wildlife and marine life from a distance to ensure they are not disturbed.



Let shells stay on the beach to provide homes for other creatures.



Let animals and fish find their own food – feeding them can make them sick and become aggressive towards humans.



Watch for turtle nests when walking or driving on the beach and give turtles space and darkness when nesting.



Put rubbish in the bin so animals don't think it is food or get entangled.



Mind what your boat propellers do – marine life have feelings too!