



11 Day Wildflowers of WA Photography Tour

Day 0 – Wednesday 16th Sept 2020 - arrival day into Perth (D)

Upon arrival into Perth, please call our Perth Airport hotel for a complimentary pick up to the hotel.

The rest of the day is at your leisure until dinner this evening, which will be our first as a group. Your driver guide and tour escort will run through the itinerary with you for the next week and this is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow travellers.

Overnight accommodation- The Ingot Hotel at Perth Airport- motel room with en-suite

Day 1 – Thursday 17th Sept (B,L,D)

We depart the hotel at 7am to begin our 11 day Wildflowers Photo tour.

The wildflower collection in Western Australia is the largest on Earth. With more than 12,000 species, over 60% of which are found nowhere else on Earth, they colour the landscapes from coast to forest and city to outback.

The six-month flowering season begins in the north in June and July on the vast outback plains of the *Pilbara*, *Goldfields* and *Coral Coast* where vibrant blooms contrast with pindan earth, rugged canyons and turquoise sea.

By September, it has moved south and reached *Perth*'s botanical gardens, nature reserves and national parks, finishing with a flurry in October and November throughout the forests and coastal heaths of the *South West*.

Our first stop is the town of Moora, approx. 2 hours from Perth and situated on the banks of the Moore River in the Wheatbelt Region. Rare and beautiful species can be found along the Moora Wildflower drive, with nice views and plenty of excellent photo opportunities.



We now travel west to Badgingarra NP, renowned for its incredibly diverse bushland that becomes ablaze with the brilliant colours of wildflowers during late winter and spring (August- November). You have the option here to take the Iain Wilson Nature Trail (formerly named the Badgingarra Nature Trail), which is a 2km/ 2 hour trail (with an optional 1.5km lookout detour), featuring many species of wildflowers.

The Park is also home to numerous reptiles, emus, kangaroos and a variety of bird life including bustards and wedge-tailed eagles. The trail has numerous opportunities to view the surrounding landscape and wildflowers as it rises to its high point. It is rugged country with a steep hill climb and two lookout vantage points.

Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Our destination this afternoon is the town of Cervantes, the gateway to the Pinnacles Desert and Nambung NP.

After checking in and dropping our bags off, we continue 17kms south to Nambung NP, made up of 17,000 hectares of coastal heathland and home to a variety of native plants and animals. The Pinnacles are amazing natural limestone structures, some standing as high as five metres, which were formed approximately 25,000 to 30,000 years ago, after the sea receded and left deposits of sea shells. Over time, coastal winds removed the surrounding sand, leaving the pillars exposed to the elements.

Whilst driving around this park, we may also see wildlife including Kangaroo and Emu.

We'll take the 1.2 walk through the park and we'll stay in the park for sunset photo opportunities.



Overnight accommodation- Motel room with en-suite in Cervantes (3 night stay)

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include - Saltmarsh Honey Myrtle, Scarlet Feather Flower, many Myrtles, Dryandras and Banksias, a dense prickly heath the Aboriginals called 'Kwongan', masses of Wattle and blue Dampiera, Lambswool, Samphires, numerous orchids, Compact Poverty Bush, smokebush, the rare Badgingarra mallee, the mottlecah (with the largest flower of all the eucalypts), verticordia, yellow kangaroo paw and Badgingarra's emblem, the rare black kangaroo paw, quandong, yellowtail flower, thick-leaved fan flower, white clematis, cockies

Day 2 - Friday 18th Sept (B,L,D)

Our first stop today is Lesueur National Park, which is home to over 900 plant species – 10 per cent of Western Australia's known flora. Lesueur National Park is a biodiversity hotspot and ranks as one of the most important reserves for flora conservation in WA.



We take the one-way 18.5-km scenic drive loop, which has many opportunities to stop and take a closer look or follow marked trails deeper into the bush, up Mount Lesueur or down into Cockleshell Gully.

The park is also home to a wide variety of fauna including 122 species of birds, 15 species of native mammals, 52 species of reptile and a variety of insects including 29 species of the colourful jewel beetle, all of which are protected. These insects can be distinguished by their bright metallic colouring, usually yellow, blue, red or orange. One insect we need to be prepared for is the bush tick, so we'll all need to wear insect repellent today!

Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Our next stop is Alexander Morrison National Park. In 'breakaway' country, this park is renowned for its incredible diversity of endemic wildflowers.

Overnight accommodation- Motel room with en-suite in Cervantes

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include - acacias, hibbertias, leschenaultias, melaleucas, gastrolobiums. There are many different orchids, such as pink enamel, purple enamel, cowslip, blue lady, white spider and donkey orchids, several varieties of kangaroo paw, numerous species of banksia, 20 species of dryandra, grevillea, smokebush and hakea, colourful verticordia (morrison, featherflower), honeymyrtle, eremaea, calitrix and calothamnus. Leschenaultia, pea and conostylis species are prolific.

Day 3 - Saturday 19th Sept (B,L,D)

Today we'll take the Carnamah-Eneabba Wildflower Drive, which provides one of the largest and most spectacular wildflower displays in Western Australia.

Along the drive we turn off into Tathra National Park, which in the local Nyangar peoples' language means "beautiful place." This open sandy country is called the 'kwongan'. The kwongan contains over 2600 species of plants, over 70% of the species in southern Western Australia. Many kwongan species have specialised adaptations to grow in the low nutrient soils of this region and have deep root systems to obtain sub-surface moisture and specialised feeder roots in the humus layer.

We continue into historic Carnamah. The Carnamah Bell (*pictured*) is an endangered wildflower found only within a 100km radius of Carnamah. Also known as the Harlequin Bell, this wildflower is a dwarf shrub with green, red or yellow coloured bell-shaped flowers.

Next we visit Coorow and will either take the Coorow farm wildflower trail, or hunt for wreath flowers, depending on what is best at the time.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Our final stop today is Three Springs, renowned for its picturesque townscape and old style wheat silos, visible from all roads leading into town.

Overnight accommodation- Motel room with en-suite in Cervantes

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today are numerous, including the Carnamah Bell!



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Day 4 - Sunday 20th Sept (B,L,D)

Today we travel to the town of Mingenew, where we can take the Mingenew Wildflower Walk, located south west of the Mingenew Recreation Centre. This is an ideal place to experience many varieties of wildflowers.

Next is the rugged reserve of Depot Hill, a short 12km drive northwest of Mingenew via the Allanooka Springs Rd. As well as the range of wildflowers, you may like to walk the bush track up to the historic WW2 Army Rifle Range (30 mins).

Nearby Coalseam Conservation Park is a renowned site for its carpets of native pink and white everlasting and yellow pom pom wildflowers.

The area was named the Coalseam after the Gregory brothers discovered coal in 1846. This marked the first discovery of coal in Western Australia, but only narrow seams of poor quality coal were found and the site was abandoned. The park still has remnants of its mining history as well as the many marine fossils embedded in the riverbank and the magnificent limestone cliffs from the Permian Ice Age, 250 million years ago.

But Coalseam Conservation Park is best known for its annual display of wildflowers, which come in a wide range of annuals and perennials due to the park's diverse habitat range and location between sandplain and arid country.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

At the Riverbend site, a section of the Irwin River has carved a striking cliff face into the Victoria Plateau. A cross-section of the underlying rock layers is exposed, offering an insight into the interesting geology of the park. The layers of rock span five evolutionary periods and provide valuable visual evidence of how the local landscape was formed.

From the Miners picnic area, you may like to take the 700m / 30 mins return walk to a viewing platform over a disused mine shaft with signs explaining it's history.

Overnight accommodation- Motel room with en-suite in Dongara

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today are numerous including local orchids, pink and yellow everlasting, bacon and egg, fringed lily, thriptomene, orchids, everlasting, cats paw, dampiera and the Bird Beak Hakea.

Day 5 - Monday 21st Sept (B)

It's a short drive to Geraldton today and en-route we take a look around the Central Greenough Historic Settlement, which are now conserved by the National Trust of Australia (WA). They provide a rare insight into the early settlement of agricultural lands.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

We also stop to photograph the leaning trees of Greenough. Buffeted by prevailing southerly winds, the trees (*Eucalyptus Camaldulensis* or Red River) are found throughout southern Australia growing along watercourses and on flood plains. It is only on the windswept Greenough Flats that the tree develops its distinctive leaning shape.

We reach Geraldton before lunch and you have the rest of the day at your leisure to look around the town- perhaps visit one of the museums, St Francis Xavier Cathedral, the HMAS Sydney II memorial, Old Gaol Museum and Craft Centre or visit the Chapman River Regional Park with its vast array of flowering plants, bird and animal life.

Overnight accommodation- Ocean Centre Hotel, Geraldton- hotel room with en-suite. Located right next to the beach.

Day 6 - Tuesday 22nd Sept (B,L,D)

Our first stop today is the charming 1860s heritage-listed Oakabella Homestead, which has been beautifully restored. Sitting on 1,000 acres of lush farmland, the site also includes its original unique barn and restored shearing shed. We'll have a stroll through the shearing shed and stables, followed by morning tea.

A little further north is Port Gregory and the nearby Lynton townsite, a historic settlement built by convicts in the mid-19th century. This convict hiring station employed convicts to work at the local Geraldine Mine and local pastoral stations.

Port Gregory provides a beautiful scenic drive through hills and valleys and wildflowers in Spring. The sheltered waters and exposed reef at low tide are a feature of the endless white beach and are adjacent to the stunning Pink Lake.

Departing the Gregory area, we continue north to Kalbarri National Park and explore the parks coastal Gorges including Island Rock and the Natural Arch, which provide spectacular views of this rugged piece of coastline. The ocean here has carved out massive chunks of soft limestone coast and created towering cliff formations approximately 100 metres high, strange rocky shapes, secluded beaches and colourful layered sands and silts compacted and layered in stone.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Beginning in late June, the dry sand plains and coastal gorges of Kalbarri National Park transform into a vivid display of colour. In the 5 months that follow, over 1,100 species of Western Australian wildflowers will burst into bloom across the Kalbarri region. Many of these are endemic to the region.



Look out for wildflowers on the coastal cliff tops and in the gorge country. Most common places to find wildflowers on the Kalbarri Coastal Cliffs are between Rainbow Valley and Mushroom Rock with orchids at Natural Bridge and Red Bluff sites.

Credit - Australia's Coral Coast

Overnight accommodation- Kalbarri Edge Resort in Studio rooms with en-suites (2 night stay)

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include- Kalbarri Spider Orchid (endemic to the Kalbarri area), Banksias, Hakea, Pink Pokers and Flannel Bush and orchids such as Pink Fairies and Snail orchids as well as native flowers like Grevillea, Wattle, Murchison Rose and Thryptomene.

Day 7 - Wednesday 23rd Sept (B,L,D)

We spend this morning exploring the inland gorges of Kalbarri National Park.

Driving through the park, the Murchison River Gorges slash abruptly through the Sand Plain. It is estimated that these tumblagooda sandstone walls were created 400 million years ago on the tidal flats of an ancient sea. Fossil tracks and sea fossils can be found in many places along the river. Rippled surfaces can be seen around Nature's Window, formed during ancient times by waves moving over tidal flats in a shallow sea.



A 400m walk from The Loop car park brings you to one of WA's most iconic natural attractions, Nature's Window (pictured). This natural rock arch frames the river view perfectly and is a must-snap photograph opportunity in Kalbarri National Park.

please note that the Kalbarri Skywalk is currently under construction at West Loop Lookout. This should be completed by our visit but as fees have not yet been advised, if you wish to take the skywalk, this will be at your own expense

There will be some free time this afternoon for you to take a look around Kalbarri and then late this afternoon, we'll take a 2.5 hour private sunset cruise on the Murchison River. The lower reaches of the river are home to a number of species of birdlife including Ospreys, Kites, Pelicans, Egrets, Australian Shell Ducks, Black Swans and our local White White Breasted Sea Eagles. As well as Emus, Kangaroos and Goats are often seen on the riverbanks. The river at times can be 40mm deep with mullet jumping, small fish and crabs.

The Murchison is a very vital ecosystem and what is seen on each cruise is always different

At the turn around point sometimes there is time to pull up to the shore and take a stroll along the riverbank, then on the return journey plenty of time to relax, take photos and enjoy.

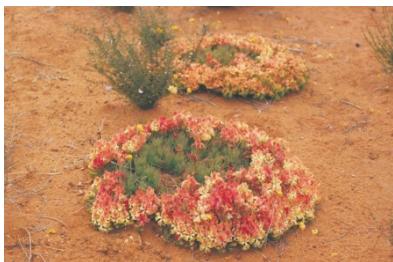
The cruise comes to and end at the Murchison River Mouth, one of WA's most treacherous. It's impressive to watch the water move through channel and boats come and go.

please note the cruise is subject to tides, which are not available yet for 2020

Overnight accommodation- Kalbarri Edge Resort in Studio rooms with en-suites

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include- vivid gold and orange banksias, grevilleas in white, yellow and red, green and red kangaroo paws, featherflowers in many coloured shades, smokebushes, starflowers and the famous Kalbarri catspaw, the Kalbarri spider orchid and the Murchison hammer orchid.

Day 8 - Thursday 24th Sept (B,L,D)



We depart Kalbarri today and drive south to the town of Mullewa, one of the few places in the world that the wreath flower grows (pictured).

We arrive at lunchtime and take the Wildflower Walk is a picturesque 2,820 metre circuit through bush land renowned for its stunning wildflower displays. This easy to follow trail starts and finishes on Lovers Lane opposite the caravan park and takes between 40 and 70 minutes to complete.

Credit- Tourism Western Australia

This afternoon you have free to wander around the town. You may like to take the 2.3km / 1 hour Mullewa Bushland Trail which offers an insight into the landscape via a number of interpretative panels. It looks at bush tucker, the geology of the region, the mulga and saltbush and provides possibilities to see kangaroos, euros, lizards and bungarras (goannas) and plants used for bush medicine.

Another option is the Railway Heritage Loop, covering a distance of 1.4 km (about 30-40 minutes). Interpretative panels tell the story of the opening of the railway from Geraldton to Mullewa in 1894; the inland line to Northam in 1915; and the railway houses which developed in Mullewa in the 1940s. The loop has thirteen information boards and includes the Station Master's House, the Railway Institute and the Railway Station.

The Mullewa Town Heritage Walk is a 1.1 km loop (it takes 30-40 minutes) around the town centre which passes 22 places of interest.

There are also a range of historic buildings in the town, built by WA architect-priest Monsignor John Hawes.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Overnight accommodation- Motel room with en-suite – Mullewa Railway Hotel

please note that single rooms here have king single beds only and the price reflects this

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today are numerous including the Wreath Flower

Day 9 – Friday 25th Sept (B,L,D)

Continuing south today, we arrive in Morawa, known as the Heart of the Wildflowers and one of the most prolific areas for native flowering plants.



Carpets of everlastings are a feature and attraction however the area is known worldwide for the unique and distinctive Wreath Flower (*Leschenaultia macrantha*).

Our destination today is Dalwallinu and en-route we stop in Perenjori, at Wubin Rocks and Buntine Rock.

Some of the many wildflowers we may be lucky enough to spot in the Perenjori district include carpets of Everlastings, unique and distinctive Wreath Flower as well as the bright orange Wild Pomegranate.

Credit- Tourism Western Australia

The photogenic Buntine Rock provides panoramic views of the surrounding countryside and around the rock are displays of Everlastings, several types of Orchids, Wattles and Melaleucas.

Overnight accommodation- room with en-suite – The Old Convent Dalwallinu

please note that single rooms here have king single beds only and the price reflects this

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include- Wreath Flower, bright orange wild pomegranate, bright pink native foxgloves, many species of orchids, grevillea, acacia, purple darwinia and dampiera, thriptomene, smokebush, woody pear, cassias, eremophila, blue cornflower, yellow bells, white, pink and yellow Everlastings, Orchids, Pimelea, Wattles, Pink Native Foxgloves, many species of Orchids, Grevillea, Acacia, Purple Darwinia and Dampiera, Thriptomene, Woody Pear, Cassias, Eremophila, Blue Cornflower and Yellow Bells.

Day 10 - Saturday 26th Sept (B,L,D)

We spend today in the Wongan Hills region, in the Wheatbelt district. The name Wongan Hills comes from the Aboriginal words 'Wongan Katta', which translates to 'Talking Hills', referring to the wind whispering through the hills which rise North-West of the townsite.

Gathercole Nature Reserve is located just outside of Wongan Hills and offers a short five minute scenic walk to view some fascinating sculptured rocks and further along the trail you may see native animals and superb displays of wildflowers including rare flora. Views across the farmland and into the distance are available along the walk.



Credit - Australia's Coral Coast

The 2.5km Christmas Rock Walk is on the outskirts of Town. Wander along the rock wall used to divert water to the town dam, listen to the many birds and see the variety of colourful wildflowers.

The 1km Wongan Wildflower/ Christmas Rock Walk is located in the town area. Enjoy a leisurely stroll around the track, read the interpretive signs and enjoy the wildflowers. You may even see an Echidna or two on your travels.

A little further afield, Mount Matilda is the highest point of the Wongan Hills Nature Reserve, at 434m. These hills are the largest single area of natural vegetation remaining in the northern wheatbelt. The area is extremely diverse with more than 1400 species of flowering plants and 24 species are unique to the Wongan Hills. We won't have to do all the trail walk but will be able to do some of it which includes lookouts, hugely attractive gimlet trees and the possibility of seeing Mallee fowl and their nests. These birds are relatively rare and are remarkable in that they build nest mounds filled with vegetation.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

Our accommodation this evening is in historic York, the first inland European settlement in WA and situated in the Avon Valley.

Overnight accommodation- Terrace motel room with en-suite –The York Palace Hotel and Terraces

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include- orchids including Common Spider, Lemon-scented Sun Orchids, colourful Sundews (Drosera) and Ant Orchids.

Day 11 - Sunday 27th Sept (B,L,D)

This morning you may like to take a short walk to the York Bushland Garden, which is run by the local Branch of the Wildflower Society and contains a wide range of wheatbelt plants.

We now begin our drive back to Perth calling into John Forrest National Park en-route. Situated in the Darling Scarp this was the 1st national park in Western Australia and the second in Australia after Royal National Park. John Forrest National Park is set in jarrah forest still largely in its natural state. The uplands are dominated by jarrah and marri. The valley floor features flooded gum, swamp peppermint and paperbarks. The park has 10 species of native mammal (one declared rare), and 91 species of bird (two considered to be in need of special protection), 23 species of reptile and 10 species of frog.



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

A slow drive along the full length of Park Road will show you many of the 500 odd species of wildflowers recorded for this park.

We'll park in the main picnic area (due to our vehicle size) but the rest of the park is largely undeveloped for those who enjoy the wilderness. You can access Hovea Falls by strolling about 800 metres east of the main picnic area while National Park Falls is 700m along the John Forrest Heritage Trail, which is a 2.5km loop walk in total. There is also the option of taking the Wildflower Walk or Glen Brook trail. The Wildflower Walk is a 4.5km / 2 hour loop walk that highlights the diversity and colour of the many wildflowers in the park. The Glen Brook trail is 2.2kms / 1 hour follow the path up the valley to the Glen Brook Dam discovering wildflowers, birds and possibly a kangaroo heading in for a refreshing drink. *Expect some steps, short steep sections and slippery surfaces on both walks which are both classed as moderately difficult.*

Departing the park, it's now only a short drive into Perth and we head back to our accommodation with time to freshen up before our final group dinner together.

Overnight accommodation- The Ingot Hotel at Perth Airport- motel room with en-suite

Wildflowers in the region we're visiting today include- the rare Thomasia glabripetala, Alyogyne huegelii, Marianthus bicolor, Senna artemisioides, calothamnus, hakeas, grevilleas, dryandras, pimelias, myrtles, sundews, trigger plants, acacias, kangaroo paws, blue lechenaultia, undews, orchids and resurrection plants.

Departure day from Perth- Monday 28th Sept (B)



Credit- Tourism Western Australia

After check out, please make your way to Perth Airport for your onward flight. A free shuttle service is available at the hotel.

For anyone staying on an extra day or two, Kings Park in Perth CBD has an excellent wildflower display in its Botanical Gardens with free guided walks at 10am and 2pm (subject to change).

END OF TOUR

B= Breakfast L= Lunch D= Dinner

AUD \$6245 per person, twin / double share, based on a maximum of 16 adults travelling

AUD \$7645 single room

Extra nights at The Ingot Hotel at Perth Airport on a B & B basis can be booked through us at \$125pp twin share and \$220 single

For solo travellers who prefer to twin share, we'll try our best to match you up with someone else of the same sex but this cannot be guaranteed. If we're unable to find you someone of the same sex to share with, you'll need to have your own room and pay the single supplement.

Itinerary is exclusive to Sacred Earth Safaris and subject to availability, road, weather and cultural conditions as well as availability of wildflowers. Wildflowers vary from year to year depending on the weather. Each night's accommodation will remain the same but the itinerary may be changed slightly nearer the time, to give us better wildflowers viewing opportunities.



Credit - Australia's Coral Coast

Inclusions:

- Sole use of 24 seat 6WD tour coach, with professional driver guide and tour hostess
- Andrew Goodall as your host and photography guide
- 1 night pre and 1 night post tour accommodation in Perth including free airport transfers (subject to availability and they run every hour)
- Most meals as stated
- 10 nights accommodation while touring
- Park entry fees
- Private Kalbarra NP cruise

Exclusions:

- Arrival/departure flights into Perth
- Travel Insurance
- Alcohol and soft drinks (water is provided with dinner, water and cordial provided with lunch)
- Kalbarri Skywalk fees
- Optional activities such as helicopter flights, camel rides and museum entry fees unless listed above