

**12 Day / 13 night Wildflowers of WA Photography Tour**

**Day 0 - arrival day into Perth- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2022 (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- Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August (B,L,D)**

We depart the hotel at 7am to begin our 12 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.

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 (2 night stay)

**Day 2- Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August (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!

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

We continue into historic Carnamah. The Carnamah Bell 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.

Our final stop today is Coorow, where we'll hunt for wreath flowers.

Overnight accommodation- Motel room with en-suite in Cervantes

### **Day 3 - Wednesday 31st August (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).

We reach Geraldton and you have the rest of the afternoon at your leisure.

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

### **Day 4 – Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September (B,L,D)**

We depart Geraldton and drive east to the town of Mullewa, one of the few places in the world that the wreath flower grows. Here we can take the Wildflower Walk ,a picturesque 2,820 metre circuit through bush land renowned for its stunning wildflower displays.

Continuing south, 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 world-wide for the unique and distinctive Wreath Flower.

Our destination today is Dalwallinu and en-route we stop in Perenjori and a couple of other spots if there's time.

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

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\*\**

### **Day 5 – Friday 2nd September (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.

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.

*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

### **Day 6 – Saturday 3rd September (B,L,D)**

This morning we drive down to the township of Narrogin.

We meet our wildflower expert guide at our motel, who will take us to the nearby Foxes Lair to explore. Foxes Lair is a 68 hectare bush reserve on the edge of Narrogin town. Situated between the Darling Range and the wheatbelt, Foxes Lair has landscapes, plants, and birds from both regions. There are over 240 species of flowering plants here and our guide is the caretaker of the reserve, so he knows all the best places to spot wildflowers.

This afternoon we'll visit Dryandra Woodland, north of Narrogin. This is a valuable conservation area, which is home to 24 mammal, 98 bird and 41 reptile species including the mound building malleefowl and Western Australia's state emblem- the numbat. This scenic area has magnificent woodlands and spectacular wildflowers.

We have some time to explore before our evening experience at Barna Mia, a predator-proof animal sanctuary, situated within the Dryandra Woodland. It's a place to discover threatened native marsupials in a natural setting and experience the wonders of the woodland. Once the sun has set, the action begins and our ranger tour guide takes us on a delightful journey through the sanctuary. With the guides special torches, you can see threatened native animals such as bilby, woylie, mala, quenda and boodie.

Overnight accommodation- motel room with en-suite at the Narrogin Motel

### **Day 7 –Sunday 4th September (B,L,D)**

Today we drive to the Stirling Ranges National Park. The mountain ranges of Stirling Range National Park rise to more than 1000m above sea level, featuring stark cliff faces, sheltered gullies, magnificent views and a rich diversity of unique and colourful wildflowers. The park is one of the worlds most important areas for flora with 1500 species, many of which grow nowhere else, packed within it's boundaries.

We arrive at our accommodation at the Stirling Range Retreat, have a quick lunch and then at 1.30pm we depart for our afternoon of exploring with the retreats resident flower expert, who will show us the best orchid and wildflower hotspots and to discover well camouflaged blooms hidden under bushes. The tour changes daily, so we'll rely on their expert knowledge and local information.

Overnight accommodation at the Stirling Range Retreat, nestled against the majestic Stirling Ranges National Park – we have a mixture of accommodation booked here and all have en-suites. It's rustic but clean and I think you'll agree it's a fantastic location !

### **Day 8 –Monday 5th September (B,L,D)**

This morning we take the spectacular 115 kilometre mountain drive, filled with enthralling views and stops along the way. You can use your new-found knowledge of flowers from yesterdays tour, to see what you can spot today too !

We have all morning to take the drive and then this afternoon we'll depart for the small coastal town of Bremer Bay.

Many rare species are found only in and around Bremer Bay. The Fitzgerald River National Park boasts an abundance of over 1800 unique species of flora and over 200 types of fauna. Orchids are also a big highlight of the area with many different species recorded and they can be seen walking around the townsite from the footpaths and walk trails.

Overnight accommodation- Bremer Bay Resort - motel room with en-suite

### **Day 9 –Tuesday 6th September (B,L,D)**

This morning we drive out to a nearby bushcamp for a special tour of the property with their resident botanist. This is an eco tour in a sensitive area, bordering Fitzgerald River National Park, so the group will be split into 2 for the day. One group will head off for a 3 hour tour with the botanist while the 2<sup>nd</sup> group has time to explore the wildflowers around the camp area. And then the groups swap over. These are small group private tours for just our tour group and there's plenty of time to learn about and photograph the wildflowers.

After the tours finish, we drive to Albany for our overnight accommodation.

Overnight accommodation- Dog Rock Motel in Albany- motel room with en-suite

### **Day 10 –Wednesday 7th September (B,L,D)**

We head further west today, driving to Denmark and onto the tree-cloaked Walpole-Nornalup National Park, home to tingle forests, which occur nowhere else in the world. Here we take The Valley of the Giants – Tree Top Walk, featuring a stunning walkway positioned 40 metres above the ground amid the dizzying heights of the tingle forest canopy. Experience walking in the Tree Top canopies of tall karri trees with views over core wilderness and then venture to the Ancient Empire of 400 year old red tingle trees along a boardwalk that meanders across the forest floor. The trail follows the story of the lost era of Gondwana.

Our next stop is inland, to Pemberton and the Gloucester National Park, home of the Gloucester Tree. The Gloucester Tree is one of only 3 remaining tall Karri trees that were made into lookouts during the 1930's and 1940's. This was a way of spotting fires in the tall Karri forest and this tree was named after the then Governor-General of Australia, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who was visiting Pemberton at the time. Today, visitors can climb up the 61m (optional !) to see one of the most spectacular views of the Karri forest and take a lovely walk through the forest.

The Southern Forests region is known for its biodiversity with more than 2500 species of plants including over 100 terrestrial orchid species.

At Gloucester National Park we may also see karri wildflowers (we're a little early but you never know !), Cutleaf Hibbertia, Tassel Bush, Native Wisteria, Coral Vine and White Clematis.

Overnight accommodation- Pemberton, motel room with en-suite (2 night stay)

### **Day 11 –Thursday 8th September (B,L,D)**

Orchid lovers should be happy today as we travel to D'Entrecasteaux National Park. Consolidated limestone cliffs overlaid with sand at Pt D'entrecasteaux provide a perfect habitat for coastal heath wildflowers and orchids - late winter/early spring look for displays South Coast Spider Orchids, Blue Fairy Orchids, Curled-tongue Shell Orchids, Snail Orchids, Parrot Bush, Bull Banksia, Basket Bush, Cockies tongues, Bearded Heaths, Cut-leaf Hibbertia and Melaleucas. Karri Cowslips, Pink Fairy Orchids, Zebra Orchids, Cherry Spiders, Broad-lipped Spider Orchids, Donkey Orchids, Flying Duck & Hammer Orchids, Pimeleas, Cutleaf Hibbertia,

At Point D'Entrecasteaux there's an easy cliff-top walk and there's plenty of other offshoot trails if you're more adventurous and haven't had enough of the stunning coastal blooms.

We have the whole morning to explore here and then this afternoon, we'll take a private cruise on the Donnelly River. Meandering along the 12 km section, we will transverse a diverse eco system that is only accessible by boat. From the lush Jarrah and Karri forests, through the Paperbark and wetlands, to the limestone cliffs and majestic Southern Ocean. On the way we will cruise past the unique holiday huts nestled amongst the towering Marri trees and coastal dunes. This cruise will be tailored to suit our group's photography interests and includes an on-shore stop en-route, for drinks and a gourmet BBQ.

Overnight accommodation- Pemberton, motel room with en-suite

### **Day 12 – Friday 9th September (B,L,D)**

We start making our way back to Perth today, with a stop for lunch en-route.

We arrive into Perth mid afternoon, so there's time to freshen up before our last group dinner together.

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

### **Departure day from Perth – Saturday 10th September (B)**

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 \$6790 per person twin share and \$8185 single room

Prices are based on travel in Aug/ Sept 2022 and include GST. Minimum 14, maximum 20 guests

*Extra nights at The Ingot Hotel at Perth Airport on a B & B basis can be booked through us at \$125 pp 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.

*\*\*Sorry- no drones allowed on this tour\*\**

*\*\*It's a condition for Photographers planning to sell any photos taken in Western Australian National Parks and Reserves, that photography permits are obtained. Permits are free or have a small fee and are not applicable if photos are for personal use- only when images are being sold \*\**

**Inclusions:**

- Sole use of 24 seat 6WD tour coach, with professional driver guide
- 1 night pre and 1 night post tour accommodation in Perth
- Most meals as stated
- 10 nights accommodation while touring
- Park entry fees
- Barna Mia nocturnal mammal experience at the Dryandra Woodland
- Private wildflower tours of Foxes Lair in Narrogin, Stirling Range NP and Bremer Bay

**Exclusions:**

- Arrival/departure flights into Perth
- Travel Insurance
- Alcohol and soft drinks (water is provided with dinner, water and cordial provided with lunch)