

# Karri Forest Explorer



## Visitor guide



Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions



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## Warren National Park

Warren National Park protects magnificent virgin karri forest along the valley of the Warren River. The one-way Heartbreak Trail follows the river, sometimes level with the water and sometimes high above it. The steep track was built by hand to clear a path down to the river for firefighters, its name reflecting the hardship of the job. Heartbreak Trail can be slippery when wet and is not recommended for caravans or buses.

The rapids of Heartbreak Crossing and Warren Lookout, high above the river, are good stopping places along the trail and are excellent camping sites for those looking for a longer stay.

Warren National Park also contains the Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree, one of two fire lookout trees open to the public in the Pemberton area. It was pegged in 1988 as part of Australia's bicentennial celebrations. Visitors can also climb the Gloucester Tree in Gloucester National Park.

Another tree in the park is named after Marianne North, the English artist whose 1880 painting of the misshapen karri now hangs in a gallery at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.



**Above** Warren National Park.  
*Photo – Wendy Eiby.*  
**Right** Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree.



Clematis (*Clematis pubescens*).

## Visitor fees

Park entry fees apply in Warren, Gloucester and Greater Beedelup national parks. For current information on fees please see the *Park visitor fees* brochure at [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/know/fees](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/know/fees)

Annual Local, Holiday, Annual All Parks, and Goldstar passes are available at Parks and Wildlife Service offices, selected tourist outlets and visitor centres in Western Australia or online at [shop.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://shop.dbca.wa.gov.au).

These fees assist in conservation and park management including the improvement of visitor facilities and services.

## For more information

### Parks and Wildlife Service Pemberton Office

Kennedy Street, Pemberton  
Phone (08) 9776 1207  
[dbca.wa.gov.au](http://dbca.wa.gov.au)

### Pemberton Visitor Centre

Phone (08) 9776 1133  
[pembertonvisitor.com.au](http://pembertonvisitor.com.au)



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## Karri Forest Explorer Drive

The Karri Forest Explorer Drive was developed and funded by the department with support from the Pemberton tourism industry. It winds through some of the south-west's most magnificent karri forest.

Visitors can explore the forest at their own pace. Stop for a picnic at Big Brook Dam, climb to the Gloucester Tree lookout, see Beedelup Falls from the suspension bridge, go bushwalking, or fishing, or just sit and take in nature. You'll find trail-side information to guide you through the forest.

Visitors can stop for a wine tasting, coffee or a gourmet meal; visit a gallery or craft centre or cast your rod for trout. Choose from the wide range of places to stay and give yourself longer to explore the 86km drive.

The Karri Forest Explorer Drive starts just outside the historic timber town of Pemberton, but you can join it at several points along the way, depending on which way you're travelling, or where you're staying.

Karri (*Eucalyptus diversicolor*) grows up to 90m high, making it the tallest tree in Western Australia and one of the tallest in the world.

The main belt of karri forest grows south from Nannup to Manjimup to the Frankland River, then east to Denmark and Torbay, near Albany.

Karri has a long, straight trunk with smooth bark that is shed each year. The outer bark changes colour as it matures, so the trunks are multi-coloured in shades of pink, orange, grey and white. Karri produces white flowers in spring.



## Gloucester National Park

Best known for the Gloucester Tree lookout, this park is 3km south-east of Pemberton and a main attraction on the Karri Forest Explorer Drive. The 53m Gloucester Tree was chosen for a fire lookout in 1947, one of a network of lookouts built in the karri forest between 1937 and 1952.

The Gloucester Tree was named after the then Governor General of Australia, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who was visiting Pemberton when the lookout was being built. Today, visitors can climb 53m to see one of the most spectacular views of the karri forest.

At The Cascades, in the southern end of the park, the Lefroy Brook tumbles over a series of rocky shelves. Lookout platforms and a walk trail take visitors to the best viewing points.

## Greater Beedelup National Park

Greater Beedelup National Park surrounds Beedelup Brook, a name thought to have come from the Noongar Aboriginal word *beedja*, meaning sleep.

The park includes dense karri forest, mixed with marri and jarrah, with several beautiful stands of pure marri. Its main attraction is Beedelup Falls, which drop for 100m over a series of steep granite rocks. The falls are in full flow during winter and spring and can be viewed year-round along a walk trail and from two bridges.

**Above** Gloucester National Park.  
*Photo – Wendy Eiby* **Right** Big Brook Aboretum.



## Big Brook Forest

Big Brook is a young forest, regenerated after logging in the 1920s. In 1930, by which time about 2,000ha of karri had been clear-felled to produce logs for Pemberton Mill, a spark from a steam locomotive started a bushfire. The remaining karri dropped their seed on the ash bed from the fire and the seed germinated the following winter.

Big Brook was one of the first tourist destinations developed in the karri forest after the Second World War, and has grown in popularity ever since.

The forest surrounds the scenic Big Brook Dam, built in 1986 to increase the water supply to Pemberton and the local trout hatchery. Visitors can swim and fish in the dam (there's great trout and marron fishing in season) or picnic by the water's edge.

A sealed walk trail suitable for strollers and wheelchairs follows the edge of the dam. Nearby attractions include a boardwalk to a 300-year-old giant karri, Big Brook Arboretum which showcases trees from around the world, and a boardwalk through a stand of Warren River cedar.



## Camping along the Karri Forest Explorer

Why not spend a few days seeing the sights of the Karri Forest Explorer and camp in the forest surrounding Pemberton?

There are excellent camp sites in Warren National Park. Draftys Camp has two camping loops with shady camp sites spread along the Warren River. There are 22 camp sites, toilets and a camp kitchen with picnic tables and free gas barbecues.

Warren Camp offers six camp sites that are well shaded in the magnificent karri forest and close enough to the river to hear the water flowing past. Picnic tables and toilet facilities are provided.

Big Brook Arboretum also offers camping in a large open grassed area. Toilet facilities are provided and you can camp here with your dog.

Nestled among marri and jarrah forest, the Carey Brook camp sites, Snottygobble Loop and Grasstree Hollow, present a secluded camping experience close to the pristine Carey Brook. There are tent sites, a site suitable for groups, a camp kitchen and toilets.

Camping fees apply to all of these campgrounds.

Campfires are permitted in Parks and Wildlife Service supplied fire rings only except during the bushfire season when no fires are allowed. Please bring your own firewood and do not collect it from surrounding national parks. Portable gas stoves are recommended.

There are many other accommodation options around Pemberton and the Karri Forest Explorer. Please contact the Pemberton Visitor Centre for details.



Camping at Big Brook Arboretum.



**Above** The Cascades. *Photo – Wendy Eiby.* **Right** Riding through the karri forest. *Photo – Leon Ewing.*

## Exploring the karri forest on foot

There are lots of great opportunities to get out of your car and discover the forest on foot along the Karri Forest Explorer.

### Warren National Park

The Warren River Loop Walk is a 10.5km, moderately hard walk trail that passes through some of the region's most magnificent old-growth karri forest. Rated as one of WA's Top Trails, this loop trail can be started from any point and can also be walked in short sections varying in length from 300m to 2.8km.



### Gloucester National Park

There are several walking options leaving from the Gloucester Tree ranging from the easy 400m Dukes Walk to the more challenging 10km Gloucester Route.

In the southern section of the park at The Cascades, the Lefroy Brook Loop Walk is a 1.2km trail that follows the Lefroy Brook before climbing out of the valley through karri and marri forest.

You can also walk the 6km between the Gloucester Tree and Cascades along the Bibbulmun Track.

### Big Brook Dam

An easy 3.4km sealed walk trail circles this picturesque dam and is suitable for prams and wheelchairs. You can also walk the 1km to Big Brook Arboretum along a walk trail that leads off from the upper reaches of the dam.

## A bit more adventurous?

If you are into mountain biking, drop into the Pemberton Visitor Centre and ask about the mountain bike trails located at the Pemberton Mountain Bike Park. There are a range of circuits that cater for beginners to the more experienced riders.

You can also take a ride on the Munda Biddi Trail, Western Australia's long distance off-road cycling trail.

The Pemberton Visitor Centre can help you out with more information on canoeing, four-wheel driving, cycling, mountain biking and local tours.



## Care for the trail

Follow the seven Leave No Trace principles:



- Plan ahead and prepare**  
Your safety in natural areas is our concern, but your responsibility.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces**  
Stay on paths and help prevent erosion. Follow signs and stay on roads marked in this brochure. Normal road rules apply.
- Dispose of waste properly**  
Put your litter in bins or, better still, take it with you.
- Leave what you find**  
Leave the natural environment as you find it.
- Minimise campfire impacts**  
Campfires are permitted in Parks and Wildlife Service supplied fire rings only except during the bushfire season when no campfires are allowed.
- Respect wildlife**  
Do not disturb animals, plants or rocks.
- Be considerate of yourself, your hosts and other visitors**

