



# Wheatbelt Way

Bright skies. Big horizons.



## NORTH EASTERN WHEATBELT DRIVE TRAIL

Western Australia

Dowerin • Koorda • Beacon • Westonia • Nungarin  
Wyalkatchem • Bencubbin • Mukinbudin • Trayning



## THE WHEATBELT WAY DRIVE TRAIL ATTRACTIONS



# Wheatbelt Way

Bright skies. Big horizons.

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# Wheatbelt Way Drive Trail

**Duration:** 3-5 days or more.

**Distance:** Approximately 800km-1000km depending on route taken.

**Road conditions:** Sealed roads with stretches of good unsealed road to rock and bushland features.

**Where to stay:** There are excellent caravan parks available in most towns, Country Hotels, Bed & Breakfast's or why not camp out under the stars at our free camping areas.

The Wheatbelt Way self-drive trail will lead visitors on an adventurous interpreted journey to the regions 9 communities of Dowerin, Wyalkatchem, Koorda, Bencubbin, Beacon, Westonia, Mukinbudin, Nungarin and Trayning. It highlights 24 interpreted sites of the many natural attractions and history/heritage sites while offering you opportunities to stay and experience the unique Wheatbelt communities and landscapes.

Travel to Dowerin 2hrs east of Perth or turn off the Great Eastern Highway at Carrabin and get started on your Wheatbelt Way adventure – it can be as long or as short as you like. During spring ask where to find the Koorda “rose”. Visit the Koorda hospital museum. Then travel to Bencubbin, take a peek at the sandalwood wood-cutters wagon and Pergande’s Sheepyards.

Travel north to Beacon, there is a good picnic and camping spot 30 kms north of Beacon at Billiburning Rock. Explore Beringbooding Rock which has the largest water catchment in the Southern Hemisphere. It has a free camping area with a toilet, barbeque and picnic table. Elachbutting offers magnificent views from the top, a large wave, a 40m tunnel, a cave, a prospectors well and wildflowers in season. Head down to the heritage listed Westonia Tavern for a relaxing evening meal.



Stop in to Mukinbudin and see yester-year on display at the 1950's Men's Shed, then travel on to Eaglestone Rock and its salt lake views. Visit the Nungarin Military Museum and historic Mangowine Homestead. Explore the walk trails and birdlife at Billyacatting Hill Nature Reserve. As you drive through Trayning note the stone wall which is an interpretation of “snake crawling in the grass” and then you can learn about the history of grain bulk handing at the Wyalkatchem CBH Museum, and even experience the farming lifestyle by asking for more information about farm tours at the Wyalkatchem Visitor Centre.

Breathe the fresh air as you explore the history and natural beauty of the Wheatbelt Way. Picture yourself surrounded by a vast timeless land of bright skies and big horizons, rich with the sights and sounds of nature, warm sunny days and cool evening breezes and green leafy trees contrasting with rugged rocky outcrops. Let us introduce you to the unique charm of the Wheatbelt Way where you can experience good old-fashioned hospitality while exploring at your own leisure. Whether you are planning a short visit or longer stay, **there is lots to see and do!**

# History



“....the pioneers in the early years of this century established the foundations of what was to become a flourishing wheat and sheep producing region”



In October 1836 the Surveyor General, John Septimus Roe, led an expedition to the east of the Avon Valley, in a search for pastoral land. One of his camps was located a few miles north of the present town of Koorda. Water was found only in the rock and gnamma holes and the soaks at granite hills. Roe contacted few natives, and gave few aboriginal names. Hardy settlers of the Avon Valley started sending flocks and herds out to make use of grasses and water found beside the lakes and the granite out-crops, and a nomadic pastoral industry developed. Seekers of sandalwood made more tracks, and by the 1860's a few pastoral homesteads were set up at favoured places.

Apart from the extension of pastoral holdings into the district in the 1880's, no further development occurred until the premiership of Sir John Forrest in the 1890's, when several Acts of Parliament were passed that were designed to facilitate the populating of vast regions of the inland plateau with “bold peasantry”. Generally a settler would be granted a free homestead block of 160 acres plus a conditional purchase block to make a total of 1,000 acres (445.5 hectares). The majority of early residents took up land on this basis, which required them to reside on their properties, install fences and make other improvements.

The regions pioneers were thus part of the sweeping development of wheat farming across agriculturally marginal areas of the State. The early isolation and lack of skills, capital and equipment encouraged people to turn to neighbours for assistance, a characteristic which has led to a strong sense of community across the Wheatbelt Way. Clearing and ploughing, often facing an uphill battle against climate and discomfort, the pioneers in the early years of this century established the foundations of what was to become a flourishing wheat and sheep producing region.

## About the North Eastern Wheatbelt



The Wheatbelt Way consists of the Shires of Dowerin, Wyalkatchem, Koorda, Mt Marshall, Mukinbudin, Westonia, Nungarin and Trayning. Altogether, it has an area of 2,602,524 hectares and a population of around 4,500 people. The Wheatbelt encompasses a range of environments and communities and as a result has a range industries operating in the region.

The area has a seasonal mediterranean climate with cool wet winters and hot dry summers. Average annual rainfall varies between 280mm and 360mm with approximately two-thirds falling between May to September. Average monthly maximum temperature ranges from 16°C in winter to 36°C in summer.

The region is highly suited to dryland agriculture, and is the source of nearly two thirds of Western Australian wheat production, half of its wool production, and a majority of the states lamb and mutton production. In contrast, the eastern fringe of the Wheatbelt Way is more arid, and the mining of minerals - mainly gold also takes place here.



...bright skies, big horizons

## Wheatbelt Way Drive Trail Audio CDs

The Wheatbelt Way Drive Trail has two audio CDs found at the back of this booklet which has stories, information and interesting facts about the sites you are travelling to or the landscapes that are passing you by. Alternatively you can download audio stories to suit your trip from the Wheatbelt Way website [www.wheatbeltway.com.au](http://www.wheatbeltway.com.au)

We hope you find the information in these CDs interesting and atmospheric. As you drive the Wheatbelt Way, spare a thought for the pioneering sandalwood collectors whose early tracks eventually grew into roads and became the identifying basis of early local government, in the form of Road Boards.

Hear about the histories of the nine towns, reminiscence in the old days of Minnivale as told by former postmistress, Doss Byrne, learn how the Gillespie Dog Boots were made, the sly grog shops at Beacon, the nostalgia of the old Bush Dances and life as an early Barmaid at the Edna May Hotel.





## Wheatbelt Way Drive Trail Wildflowers

Australia is one of seventeen countries described as being 'megadiverse'. This group of countries has less than 10% of the global surface, but support more than 70% of the biological diversity on earth. The Wheatbelt Way is located within one of Australia's 15 biodiversity hotspots and contains many of Western Australia's threatened and endangered flora and fauna.

The best times to view wildflowers along the Wheatbelt Way are from mid July through to late October with different species putting on their displays over the season (depending on rainfall received). Some orchid and wattle species flower as early as April and May. In normal seasons opening rains set the district up for a brilliant display of wildflowers including masses of white, pink and yellow everlastings, up to 20 varieties of orchids and many bigger trees and shrubs such as wattles, melaleuca, hakea, grevillea, and climbing clematis vines. Acacias are a feature around the granite rocks. Calothamnus quadrifidus provides a great display of red one-sided flowers and as does Leptospermum erubescens with its show of pink and white. If you keep your eyes open you may see the upside down pea bush with red flowers.



Stop in and ask at the local Tourist Information Centres along the Wheatbelt Way where to find the best wildflowers in each shire.





## Site 1 Tin Dog Creek

In the late 1800's as miners were heading to the Yilgarn Goldfields, this creek was used as a resting place for the men and their horses. They called their tinned beef 'tinned dog', presumably because of the taste, and many years later these cans can still be seen scattered in the bush as you walk along the trails. There are two circular walking trails, one 3.3kms and the other 1.8kms in length which can be accessed from the information bay parking area opposite Rusty, the tin dog. Look for western grey kangaroos, goannas, red-tailed cockatoos and echidnas as you walk.

In 2003 the students of Dowerin District High School were looking for a project for the town and came up with the idea of Rusty, the tin dog. They received a grant to enable them to use the services of a sculptor to help them. Rusty now stands on Goomalling Road with his paw lifted showing the way to the information area and Dowerin's main street.



## Site 2 Minnivale

This tiny town occupies an area formerly known as 36 Mile Post on the Rabbit Proof Fence where a railway siding was built in 1911 on the railway line heading east to Bencubbin supporting the early settlers of the district with supplies and transport.

Driving through the town of Minnivale today you will see the brick store built in 1921 still displaying advertisements of long ago, the remains of the farmer's co-op and post office minus a section of veranda built in 1919. This building was the hub of the town in its early days with most people getting their supplies through mail order catalogues and the co-op supplying fresh groceries.

The Methodist Church was built by brick in 1925 and is now a tribute to the pioneers of the district. A concrete floor is all that remains of the garage business. A bakery oven and few remaining houses are still there today.

A modern wheat silo and facilities were constructed in 1963 to replace the original facility that had been built in time for the 1933-34 harvest. It is no longer used to store wheat and soon Minnivale will become home to the Wheatbelt Rail Heritage Project where firstly the S Class "Greenmount" locomotive will be relocated, complete with passenger carriages, a dining carriage, guard vans and other items of rolling stock. These will form part of a permanent fully interpretative static display "The Wheatbelt Rail Heritage Museum" – annexe to the Bassendean Rail Heritage Museum.

Visitors to Minnivale will find a camping/rest area with toilets, showers, water and a dump point.





## Site 3 Naaning Well

Located east of Dowerin, just off the Goomalling-Merredin Road, Naaning Well site is significant for supplying water to gold seekers on the goldfields track to the Yilgarn Goldfield in the late 1800's.

Neenin Well, Naaning Well and Yarragin Homestead were commissioned by the Toodyay Road Board in 1869. The first payable discovery of gold in the Yilgarn was by prospectors Greaves, Payne and Anstey in 1887 at Eenuin and subsequently at Golden Valley north of present Bullfinch. It was these finds that began the rush.

Early in 1888 R Risley and Mick Toomey discovered gold at Southern Cross and on the 1st October 1988 the Yilgarn Goldfield was declared. The quickest way to reach the Yilgarn from Perth at this time was by rail to Northam and then by road to Goomalling and then east along the Yarragin Road.

Gold seekers trekked along the Yarragin Road, camping at the wells and homesteads as designated by a map provided that was published to provide prospectors with details of water and provisions. By 1889 inns had been established at Goomalling, Mangowine and Yarragin. In 1892, with the Coolgardie goldrush the focus turned to rail transport and the Yarragin route was all but abandoned.

The purpose of the Reserve was changed to protection of flora in 2000, at which time it was vested in the Shire of Dowerin. Naaning Well, well worth a visit, is significant for the associations with early explorers, surveyors and gold seekers on the goldfields track to the Yilgarn Goldfield. It has picnic facilities, toilet and a walk trail.

## Site 4 Korrelocking Reserve

Korrelocking Reserve is an area of 259ha of pristine bushland 7km east of Wyalkatchem and can be accessed via two roads; Goldfields Road and Tyler Road, which cuts the reserve diagonally from northwest to southeast.

The reserve lies in gently undulating cleared farmland, the only exception being a small area of jam woodland used by stock for shelter and grazing on the north-eastern corner. Some of the best Salmon Gums and Gimlets to be seen in the Wyalkatchem Shire can be seen in the reserve. As well as being a sanctuary for kangaroos and other forms of animal life indigenous to this part of the Wheatbelt, forty-four bird species have been recorded on Korrelocking, the highest number of species recorded on a nature reserve within this Shire. Six of these include: the Pacific Heron, Black-shouldered Kite, Whistling Kite, Little Eagle, Black-tailed native-hen and Long-billed Corella have not been recorded on any other nature reserve in the Shire.

The reserve is a popular spot for picnicking, especially during spring when the wildflowers are in full bloom. There is also a pioneer well a short walk from the car park. It has tables, interpretative signage and a clearly marked walk trail as well as a toilet.





## Site 5 Wyalkatchem Well

Wyalkatchem Well otherwise known as Wyalkatchem tank due to it being uniquely rectangular in form with sloped granite sides to create a stone tank, which was constructed by John Haywood for the Toodyay Roads Board in 1881. Haywood was an expirree who farmed at Toodyay.

Wyalkatchem Well is located 10 metres from the south side of the Wyalkatchem-Koorda Road with in the Wyalkatchem Golf Course. It was originally gazetted in 1884 as a Stopping Place for Teams. The tank is of stone construction that is regular in form and size. On the north side of the tank extensive sheets of granite adjoin a creek. The tank is approximately 5 metres wide and 7-8 metres long.

In 1915 the reserve was vested in the minister for Railways as a railway water supply. In 1917 the Chief Engineer of Railways wanted the Wyalkatchem Well closed to prevent teamsters and stock from polluting water running into the railway dam. Steam locomotives required high quality water for their boilers.



## Site 6 Cowcowing Cemetery and Lakes

Cowcowing townsite originated as a railway siding and was gazetted in 1919. However the town is long gone and all that remains is the CBH Wheatbin and Cowcowing Cemetery which is 4km further north.

Cowcowing Lakes is primarily a large track of land that is primarily a dry saltpan surrounded by dense low salt tolerant plants. The lake goes through a cycle of being wet for part of the year and then to either a salt crust or dusty playa as the lake dries out in the summer months. A natural function of all wetlands/lakes is to act as conduits returning salts deposited by rainfall, back to the ocean. At times the movement of salts by human standards is slow, and the wetlands often serve as temporary storage or reservoirs of salt. When full, it covers an area of around 15,000 hectares and is located north of Wyalkatchem on the way to Koorda.

The name of the town is Aboriginal in origin and was first recorded by explorers in 1854. The name of the nearby lake recorded as Gow gow eeh lake, has now been renamed Cowcowing Lake, the meaning of the name remains unknown.

The cemetery is the final resting place for the many of the early pioneering families and will be fascinating to anyone with an interest in the early history of the area. The site is well worth a stop and a leisurely stroll around the cemetery to pay homage to the earlier settlers and see an insight into the hardships of early life in the Wheatbelt.





## Site 7 Koorda Native Flora Reserve

The Koorda Native Flora Reserve is located 16km north of the town on the Mulji Road. Numerous species of flora native to the area are on display and offer the ideal setting for a leisurely stroll along the guided walk trail.

Colourful flowering shrubs and wildflowers are a blaze of glory for many months of the year. Probably the most luxurious displays are the Everlastings, for their brief flowering period, and the various types of yellow and pink *Verticordia* species, with especially brilliant *Dampiera* species being found in the area. Wattles, Bottlebrush and various types of *Cassia* line many roads in the spring time.

The small red *Darwinia Rosea*, which is plentiful in the area, and is commonly called the "Koorda Rose". Probably another fifty to sixty species can readily be found during their flowering periods, most particularly between July and October.

Great picnicking facilities are at this 28ha site with BBQ's, tables, interpreted signage and a toilet.



## Site 8 Gabbin Townsite

Gabbin is located in the eastern agricultural area of the Wheatbelt about 17km west of Bencubbin. When the railway line from Wyalkatchem to Mount Marshall was proposed to be constructed through this area in 1913 the need for a station at this place was identified. Gabbin was approved as the name of the station by the Minister for Lands in 1914, and it was derived from "Gabbabin" a place located about 10 km south east of the townsite which was first shown on maps in 1909. The town site, gazetted in 1918, was named after the railway station.

Agriculturally the land around Gabbin was opened for selection in 1910. Living conditions for these pioneers involved living in a tent until a 'humpy' was built. Most humpy's were a simple timber frame with earth floors that were covered with hessian bags. Hessian was also sewn together and starched with a form of plaster to make the walls and corrugated sheets of tin covered the roof. The humpy's were very hot in summer and cold in winter and all the cooking was done outside. Kerosene was used to soak the wicks used for burning in lights to provide light and water was heated using a copper or by filling empty 20 litre kerosene tins with water and placing on the fire.

Come have a look at the small pioneering town of Gabbin and enjoy the heritage walk trail. There are no services remaining in Gabbin such as fuel. Gabbin is one of many smaller towns in Wheatbelt that has slowly disappeared as a result of improved farming methods, population decline and more efficient methods of transport.





## Site 9 Pergande Sheep Yards

For a trip back in time, a visit to Pergande Sheep Yards is a must. Located at the site are the remains of an original and prominent homestead and sheep yards that was constructed almost entirely from local granite. The sheep yards are made from large granite slabs that were drawn into position by horse sled from the nearby Wiacubbing Hill. These slabs were then placed upright out of the ground to make the fences of the sheep yards. The homestead was constructed using smaller round rocks held together by mortar.

Given the historical and cultural importance of the site, it has been made available for visitors and the general public to be able to access. The site is located on the property of Murray and Donna Cooper, approximately 10 kilometres from Bencubbin. Readings at the site of the original farm owner, Edward (Ted) Pergande will prove fascinating. Ted and his wife Annie were prominent local figures who contributed greatly to the development of the area.



## Site 10 Marshall Rock

A favourite leisure spot for locals, Marshall Rock has been the location for many community barbeques and picnics dating back as far as 1913. The reserve remains a great place for bushwalking, bird watching and viewing the wildflowers. One of the best reasons to visit the site has to be the spectacular views from the top of Marshall Rock where one can see Lake McDermott, vast agricultural lands and even the Bencubbin Wheatbins. The Reserve covers 1.4 square kilometres and is bounded by private farming land on every side.

The Rock was found in 1836 by Surveyor General John Septimus Roe. Marshall Rock was named after Captain Marshall McDermott who was an early settler on the Swan River colony. It is a great spot for camping or a picnic with tables, shelter, fire pits and waterless toilet all available.





## Site 11 Billiburning Rock

Billiburning Rock was surveyed by Harry Sanford King around 1889. The rock itself is part of quite a large reserve. It has attractive flora and fauna, fantastic views from the top and is a pleasant place for a picnic or to camp. Billiburning also offers many memorable photograph opportunities. Located on the reserve are a gnamma hole and a soak which are easily accessible.

Billiburning Reserve is located towards the northern end of the Mt Marshall Shire. The northern end of the reserve backs onto the vermin proof fence which separates Billiburning Reserve from the Karroun Hill Nature Reserve. The vermin proof fence was built in the 1950's to keep the emu's, goats and wild dogs out of the farming area. Although it doesn't have a 100% success rate, the fence proved to be an success.

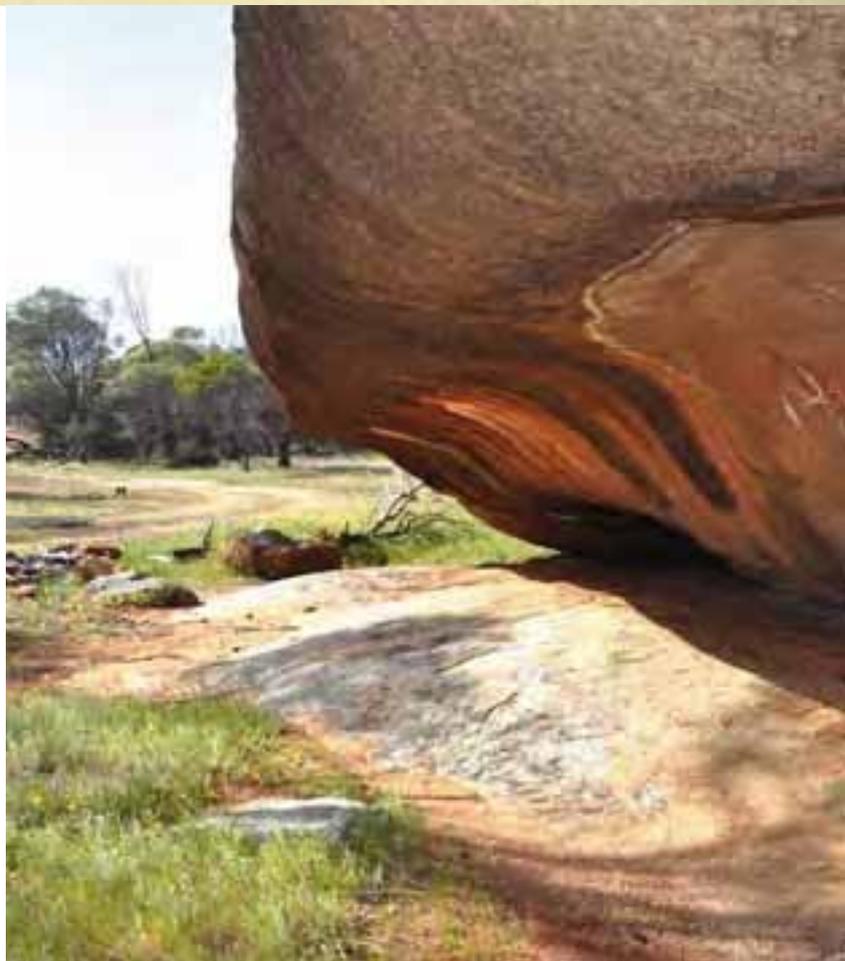


## Site 12 Datjoin Rock and Well

Datjoin Rock and Well reserve located east of Beacon, has several unique rock formations. The area was opened to pastoral leases as far north as Datjoin in 1872 and the well was dug in early 1900's by sandalwood cutters.

During the winter and spring months of July to October Datjoin Reserve is a popular picnic and tourist camp spot for travellers as well as those looking to find some of the best orchids and wildflowers the region has to offer. Beacon locals also frequent the area, having enjoyed many years of picnicking and socialising in years past at Datjoin. Datjoin had a brief brush with the law back in 1971 when Lionel Brockman, an aboriginal West Australian, escaped from Woorooloo Prison and used the reserve as a hideout for him, his wife and 12 of their children.

Travel 18kms east of Beacon on Burakin/Wialki Road to the narrow track entrance to the Datjoin Well and camping areas, accessible to cars/4WDs/camper trailers only, no caravans. Camp fires allowed April - September. Access to Datjoin Rock is another 2kms eastwards on Clark Road on the left at the top of the rise. No access to vans. Track is 4WD only and no camping.



## Site 13 Bonnie Rock Townsite

Bonnie Rock is a townsite on the edge of the Eastern Wheatbelt, and was the terminus of the railway line through Beacon. The townsite was gazetted in 1932, its lateness due to the land around Bonnie Rock not being surveyed until 1928/29. The name was suggested by the district Surveyor, S Smith, in 1930 and was taken from a nearby rock.

The Bonnie Rock district was at its peak in 1934/35 with 119 ratepayers, two shops, a butcher, garage, a boarding house, the railway and a large area cleared for a sports ground . By 1944 after a series of droughts and the Depression there was no Bonnie Rock townsite ratepayers left and the only remaining building was the Town Hall, and in 1949 there was only 29 ratepayers left in the district. The Town Hall still stands today and is used by the community as well as the sports area by the Bonnie Rock Horse and Pony Club.

Bonnie Rock is in the vicinity of Beringbooding Rock and Elachbutting Rock. It offers travellers a place to stop and rest on the way to these attractions. Ample sign posting indicates where the original streets were, with the main street being lined with the lot numbers and original owners.



## Site 14 Beringbooding Rock

Beringbooding Rock has the largest rock water catchment tank in Australia, built in 1937 and holding two and a quarter million gallons. "Sustenance Labour" was used to build the tank at a cost of 10,000 pounds. Beringbooding also has an amazing balance boulder, a huge gnamma hole, and some of the Kalamaia tribes' paintings of hands in a cave at the rear of the rock. Two early pioneer wells are also nearby.

Spring finds the pink ti-tree, heart-shaped leaf eucalyptus melaleuca, acacia, grevillea, hakea, calothamnus, eromophilla, cassia, quandongs, sandalwood and the native orchids flowering. Later into October and November the Kunzia Pulchella and one-sided bottlebrush flower profusely and many birds inhabit the area. Well worth a visit by anybody in the area.

Beringbooding Rock has great picnic and free camping facilities with easy caravan access, picnic tables, BBQ's, a toilet, interpretative signage and a marked walk trail. Alternatively just down the road at a local farming property is Watson's Way B & B with 4 self contained cottages.





## Site 15 Elachbutting Rock

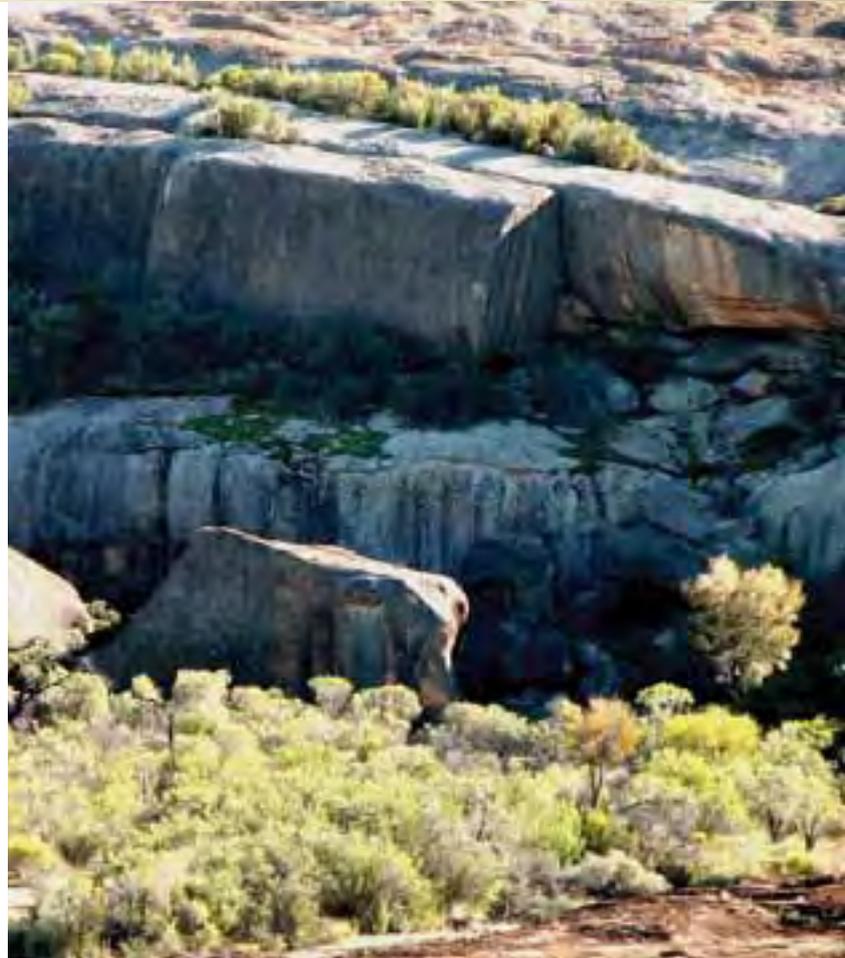
Elachbutting Rock is a massive granite outcrop, a very popular camping spot for 4x4 wheel clubs and for locals, also a popular site for weddings. The name Elachbutting is thought to mean 'big things standing' which is quite feasible as Elachbutting is a large granite rock, a prominent landmark standing out from the surrounding countryside with excellent views from the top. It has a spectacular colourful rainbow wave similar to Hyden's Wave Rock with the added beauty of 'Monty's Pass', a 30m tunnel caused by a rock slide. An echoing cave "Kings Cave" similar to an amphitheatre is close by. The 6km track around the rock with its dense trees and shrubs hide many interesting species of flora. The east side is renowned for its masses of Donkey Orchids at the base of the rock in a wet year.

An excellent place to camp with barbeques, picnic tables and a toilet. Elachbutting has a reputation for being bigger, better and more pristine than any Wheatbelt granite rock formation that you may have seen before. The rock is around 100km north of Westonia and is easily accessed via well maintained gravel roads. Visitors are encouraged to take all they need for a day trip and then take all they took home with them again.



## Site 16 Sandford Rocks

Sandford Rocks Nature Reserve is another great place to get close to nature in the Wheatbelt. This idyllic reserve contains a complex mosaic of exposed granite rock, with surrounding shrublands and woodlands. The reserve protects an area of 805.9 hectares, consisting of granite rock, thickets and woodlands. It is best accessed from the nearby town of Westonia. The reserve also has an excellent range of picnic facilities and amenities although no camping is allowed.



## Site 17 Boodalin Soak

Boodalin Soak is located approximately 6 kilometres west of Westonia, just off Stoneman Road. The Soak is within the Westonia Common which consists of 5600ha of Salmon Gum, Morrell and Gimlet Woodland. Also known as Bodalin Well, it was one of a series of dams and wells sunk by early Explorer and Government Surveyor CC (Charles) Hunt in 1865.

The soak has great historical value as a watering and stopping place for travellers from York to Kalgoorlie on their way out to the gold fields and is the site at which one of Western Australia's most infamous Bush Rangers, Moondyne Joe, was captured after an escape from Fremantle Prison. There is a granite outcrop nearby surrounded by native grassland which is well known for swathes of wildflowers in spring. Boodalin Soak is also a great place to camp if you enjoy being completely surrounded by picturesque woodland.



## Site 18 Weira Reserve

Located 13 kilometres east of Mukinbudin is the Weira Reserve. It boasts a picturesque limestone breakaway with a gnamma hole. There are barbecue, picnic and camping facilities including a toilet. Native flora and fauna abounds. Native orchids may be found on the bush trail and keep an eye out for the Red Capped Robin.

The large gnamma hole like many gnamma holes in the region was an important water source for the Aboriginals, pastoralists who shepherded their sheep throughout the region, miners on route to the goldfields and sandalwood cutters.





## Site 19 Wattoning Historical Site

The Wattoning gnamma hole was an important water site for Aborigines. In the late 1800's two rock lined wells and a soak were constructed by early pastoralists and precious water was carted from these by pastoralists, sandalwood cutters and prospectors. The water was lifted by bucket tied to a rope.

A homestead was constructed in 1873 by James Ward who lived here until about 1890 when it was then inhabited by the Ives family and then later still by the Hall family. Both families lost children who are buried in the small graveyard alongside an earlier pioneer. The homestead was then vacant after the tragic death of Mr Hall's child. Their stories are told on the excellent interpretive signage at the gravesite.

The vacant homestead was then used as a camp by Sandalwooders, who would pull wood in the bush and bring it back to Wattoning for cutting and cleaning. Wattoning homestead was burnt down sometime after 1911. Local Legend has it that some of these men, having too much to drink, became careless and a fire started which quickly gutted the thatched house. At the homestead site there is a picnic table and signage describing life at Wattoning in the early days. There is also the remains of a soak and the two wells.



## Site 20 Mangowine Homestead

Long a place of hospitality, the Mangowine Homestead is a beautiful historic building built in 1876 and is a 'must do' stop for people travelling through the region. Many years ago the homestead provided hospitality for prospectors and other visitors on their way to and from the Eastern Goldfields. It also serviced members of the local community as a place of rest and refreshment on their journeys to other areas. There are sweeping views of the Wheatbelt from the homestead as well as the opportunity to enjoy some renowned country hospitality.

The homestead can be accessed from the Nungarin North Road which runs between Nungarin and Mukinbudin. Enjoy wandering the grounds comprising of 10 hectares of natural bushland and meander through the homestead which has been immaculately restored as a monument to the pioneering Adams family who built it and lived there. The property consists of the first homestead constructed of stone and mud brick, a wayside inn, cellar, wells and a family store. It also contains interesting items of memorabilia relating to the Adams family. Each room has been restored to its original conditions and is filled with antiques and memorabilia from this era. Mangowine is a historical treasure and will be a highlight of your trip.





## Site 21 Billyacatting Hill Nature Reserve

Located on the Trayning Shire's eastern boundary is the 2500ha Billyacatting Hill Nature Reserve, a nature lover's paradise, especially during wildflower season. Importantly, the reserve is in pristine condition and exhibits very few signs of human disturbance. The Shire of Trayning, in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Conservation has developed two walk trails and visitor facilities at this excellent nature reserve. There is a 2.4km walk trail that takes explorers on a trail up to the highest point with a trig beacon located at 410m above sea level. The trail has "meet the plants" trail side signs along the way. A reasonable level of fitness is needed as a rock climb is involved. Allow about two hours for the whole walk. Alternatively for those who may prefer a more leisurely stroll there is a 1.1km Woodland Walk Trail through the vegetation at the base of the rock which also has trailside signs about the plants and birdlife. The reserve has picnic facilities, toilet and an interpretive shelter outlining the natural, cultural and historical significance of the reserve, take a packed lunch and enjoy a great day out with nature, no camping is allowed.



## Site 22 Trayning Gnamma Hole

The Trayning Gnammas are located 18km north of Trayning, they are some of the largest Gnamma's in the district. Gnamma's are the name for watering holes given by the Aboriginal people. The Wheatbelt Way region has been home to many Aboriginal groups for millennia, giving it a rich cultural diversity and history. The three main tribal family groups are the Ballardong people (Northam to Wyalkatchem) Kelamaia (out near Mukinbudin to Southern Cross) and the Njaki Njaki (Trayning to Merredin) that tended to congregate around local water holes usually associated with granite outcrops, depending on the seasons and conditions.

This site marks the boundary of the Ballardong and Njaki Njaki people and were a source of water for Aboriginal people of the area as they moved from place to place and a vital water supply for the early explorers and settlers of the district. Birds and other wildlife frequent the area and the perimeters of the granite near the gnammas are good places to search for orchids and wildflowers during the springtime.





## Site 23 Trayning Well

In 1869, John Forrest named the local water source at Trayning, which was his spelling of the local Aboriginal name Duri-iring, a combination of two words meaning 'to crawl' and 'a camping place'. 'Duranning' was eventually corrupted to 'Trayning'. The Aboriginal knowledge of waterholes was essential for early explorers and settlers survival and many soaks and wells retained the Aboriginal name after European settlement.

On 1 March 1879, the Toodyay Road Board accepted the tender of Charles Adams for the sinking of a well at Trayning. In the 1887 survey, the place was described as:

Good supply of water at present, but not permanent. It is a tank excavated in the ground 10 feet in diameter by 14 feet deep stoned up with stone and covered over with saplings. A small gully is turned into it, which it fills whenever a thunderstorm occurs. This could be improved by enlarging; very good place for a tank.

The Trayning Well was an important source of water on the Yarragin Road to the Yilgarn Goldfields and for early settlers. Take the time to stop at Trayning Well to admire the workmanship of Charles Adam in the art of sinking and lining a well by hand in the late 1800's.



## Site 24 Yelbeni Town Site Museum

The Yelbeni Town Site Museum is relatively new, having been developed in 2002. It houses a very interesting collection of local history ranging from photos, plaques and pieces of vintage farm machinery that provide an accurate and informative glimpse of the past. Internal access to the museum is available during the Yelbeni Store (located in the original town hall) opening hours where a key can be obtained.

Yelbeni is one of many country towns built around a railway line and had it's hey days in the 1920's. The townsite derives its name from Yelbene Well, a watering point on the Yarragin Road to the Goldfields. In 1934 Yelbeni had one of the first bulk handling wheat bins built at the site behind the Yelbeni Centenary Museum, it was closed down in the late 1970's and wheat is now carted to Nembudding or Trayning.





# Dowerin

In 1906 the government extended the railway from Goomalling to the developing Dowerin Agricultural Area and decided to develop a town site at the terminus. The Aboriginal name of the site chosen was "Wuguni", but "Dowerin", also an Aboriginal name, was already in local use for the place and was gazetted in 1907.

The Shire of Dowerin is located 160 kilometres, or 2 hours, northeast of Perth. The Shire's 709 residents enjoy the appealing country environment which is complemented by a vibrant community lifestyle as well as the development of state of the art new facilities, such as the proposed Dowerin Community Club recreation facility.

## Accommodation

Dowerin offers a variety of accommodation options to suit any budget and taste. Visitors can opt to stay in the centrally located Dowerin Commercial Hotel or the homely Dowerin Bed & Breakfast, a short 2km drive west. For those looking to be closer to nature, Dowerin Caravan Park and Dowerin Camping Ground ensures those preferences are well catered for or head out to nearby Minnivale townsite where there is free camping facilities.

## Attractions and Events

Dowerin offers a range of attractions to suit every member of the family. Whilst in town pay a visit to the Rose Cottage and experience the collection of unique arts, crafts and collectables. This can be followed up with a visit to the Dowerin Bakery for a hearty lunch and

to sample their delicious treats. And whether you're an experienced bushwalker or simply out for a stroll, the trails surrounding Dowerin give an insight into the rich history of the region.

Dowerin is home to the Dowerin Field Days, an annual event showcasing the very latest in agriculture, machinery, associated equipment, precision technology and rural services. The town's population can increase up to 15,000 people during this event.



### Tourist Information:

Dowerin Community  
Resource Centre,  
Stewart Street, Dowerin  
Tel: 08 9631 1662

Shire of Dowerin,  
13 Cottrell Street, Dowerin  
Tel: 08 9631 1202





# Wyalkatchem

Wyalkatchem has a population of 620 residents. The district was explored in 1864 and the first settlers took up land in 1904. However, it wasn't until 4 years later that the town site was officially declared. The town's economy focuses heavily on sheep and wheat, producing around 895,500kg of wool and 56,000 tonnes of wheat annually. The town boasts many fine historical buildings from the early 1900's, including the Railway Station, Wyalkatchem Town Hall and the School Master's House.

Today the town is well serviced with a district high school, medical centre, golf course, and many active community and sporting clubs. It is well known for its state of the art all weather airfield which is home to local recreational aviation and microlight enthusiasts.

## Accommodation

For travellers to Wyalkatchem accommodation options are the Wyalkatchem Hotel or Henry's Hideaway B & B for those after a more personalised experience. Wyalkatchem Travellers Park is also an option for those preferring to camp or bring the caravan. All accommodation options offer old fashioned country service and a good night's rest.

## Attractions

Anyone interested in history will love Wyalkatchem. The CBH Museum which is one of the first bulk handling wheat bins built in the 1930's and Old School House Museum display a large and

varied collection of agricultural, transport and railway equipment, including a rare Waterloo Boy Tractor which was fully restored by museum members. Nature lovers are also well catered for, with the Walk-A-Wyal track sprouting a number of enjoyable walking tracks or head out to Korrelocking Nature Reserve to explore, bird watch or enjoy the wildflowers. Come and spend some time in Wylie "Strange Name, Beaut Place".



### Tourist Information:

Wyalkatchem Visitor Centre,  
Railway Terrace,  
Wyalkatchem  
Tel: 08 9681 1027





# Koorda

Due to its central location, Koorda came into being as a siding when the railway north and east from Wyalkatchem was gazetted in 1917. The township sprang up around the railway worker's camp and saw the establishment of a general store, post office, blacksmith, greengrocer and hostel to accommodate seasonal workers, mainly baggers of wheat. Koorda continues its tradition of productive wheat cultivation today, although coarse grains and sheep also feature prominently. The town is now a prosperous and vibrant Wheatbelt locale of 596 local residents who enjoy some of the best facilities in the region.

## Accommodation

Accommodation options for visitors range from the ideally situated Koorda Hotel in the centre of town, caravan park and self-contained units. All accommodation in the town is surrounded by the stunning natural beauty of the area, or head out to Mollerin Rock, Newcarlbeon or Native Flora Reserves to camp under the stars.

## Attractions

Koorda is home to a number of attractions to keep any visitor well occupied during their stay. Koorda Museum is well worth a visit and, as it was formerly the town's hospital, houses an interesting collection of antique medical and surgical equipment. Additionally, a visit to the town would not be complete without a visit to the granite outcrops of Mollerin or Newcarlbeon in the surrounding area. Anybody who enjoys the outdoors will be impressed by

the picturesque formations, each with their own peculiar mini-environment of wildflowers and small animals. They have picnic and barbecue facilities and make the ideal rest stop. After enjoying the surrounding natural beauty of the area, head into town to the drive-in movie theatre. An increasingly rare occurrence these days, the drive-in theatre shows films from October to March.



### Tourist Information:

Koorda Community Resource Centre,  
Cnr Allenby/Haig Streets, Koorda  
Tel: 08 9684 1081

Shire of Koorda  
Cnr Allenby/Haig Streets, Koorda  
Tel: 08 9684 1219





# Bencubbin

Along with Beacon, Bencubbin is one of the two main centres servicing the Shire of Mt Marshall, an area of 10,134 square kilometres and which is approximately 273 kilometres northeast of Perth. The area is primarily a wheat, coarse grain, and sheep farming district with a proud agricultural history. The town's name is derived from "Gnylbencubbing" the Aboriginal name for nearby Mt Marshall and it was suggested by the Chief Draftsman J.Hope in 1913 for the station at the terminus of the Wyalkatchem-Mt Marshall railway. Bencubbin is located at the southern end of the Mt Marshall Shire and is home to approximately 300 people.

## Accommodation

Accommodation options in the town are the Bencubbin Hotel or Bencubbin Caravan Park. Both are centrally located and well presented and maintained. The caravan park offers the choice of camping areas for tents or caravans, as well as small and large cabins to cater for any size of group. Otherwise head out to Marshall Rock and set up camp under the shady trees between the two granite outcrops.

## Attractions

In town you have the Sandalwood Interpretation Centre located at the Bencubbin Community Resource Centre. Also check out the Heritage trail and botanical gardens. Just a short drive out of town a climb up Marshall Rock offers 360 degree views of surrounding

farmland, Lake McDermott, Bencubbin Wheatbins, Welbungin and Wiacubbing Hill. From here, head onto Pergande Sheep Yards and be amazed at the craftsmanship and skill required to build the yards and imagine how families started out farming in the district. For those visiting the area between July and October will be in for a treat as the abundance wildflowers will be in full bloom following the winter rains.



### Tourist Information:

Bencubbin Community  
Resource Centre  
Monger Street,  
Bencubbin  
Telephone: 08 9685 1007





# Beacon

The town of Beacon is a vibrant and well established town boasting a good range of facilities and services. Formerly known as Beacon Rock, the name was changed to Beacon in 1931 to avoid confusion with another railway siding and like many of the towns in the area Beacon has a rich agricultural history. The town was established in the 1920's as blocks of land were divided and sold and the railway extended to service the area. With this established, soon a store and post office were constructed, followed by a bakery, butcher and other infrastructure. Sport also played a significant role in the community with many clubs formed in the 1930's.

Nowadays Beacon town is home to 100 residents and also supports up to another 100 on surrounding farm lands.

## Accommodation

Those visiting Beacon can opt either to stay in the Beacon Caravan Park or at the Beacon Barracks. The latter is budget style accommodation a short walk to the town's main facilities. The caravan park offers self-contained units as well as powered and unpowered sites, set in pleasant surroundings with laundry facilities and a barbeque area. For those who are self sufficient head out to Billiburning Reserve and set up camp at the designated camp sites within the pristine reserve.

## Attractions

Anyone who enjoys the outdoors will love Beacon. An abundance of flora and fauna can be found around the town, although there's no better place to see it all in one place than at the Beacon Botanical Park. Other attractions worth a visit include Billiburning Reserve and Datjoin Rock; these are great places to see collections of beautiful wildflowers. Returning to town, relax with a meal at Beacon Country Club or call into the Beacon Men's Shed to view restored vintage machinery or pay your respects at their World War II Memorial.



### Tourist Information:

Beacon Central Community  
Resource Centre,  
11 Rowlands Street,  
Beacon  
Tel: 08 986 1014





# Westonia

The town of Westonia owes its beginnings to the discovery of gold by a prospector known as David Weston. He spent several years on the eastern goldfields and was finally rewarded in 1910 when he discovered a reef carrying good values. The town now boasts a proud gold mining history that continues to this day with the Edna May gold mine still in operation. This small town of 237 also offers visitors a unique and charming experience, with colourful and interesting streetscapes and vast areas of natural bushland to enjoy.

## Accommodation

Westonia has a range of options that are appealing for the budget conscious but also have quality lodgings that will surprise any visitor. Choices are the classic Westonia Tavern or the convenient and well maintained Westonia Caravan Park. For those who enjoy experiencing the great outdoors and want to camp, Boodalin Soak is just 6km out of town, or head 100 km north to Elachbutting Rock, which has great facilities and is very accessible.

## Attractions

The most striking thing about Westonia is its unique charm and natural surroundings, nestled amongst 5,600ha of salmon gum, morrell and gimlet woodland interspersed with granite outcrops and remnants of the town's gold mining history. The town is also unique in that all new buildings in the town's centre have been constructed in a 1920's historic style, and all existing heritage buildings have been continuously restored and maintained over the years.

The facades on the town's original bank, café, hotel, fire station, boarding house and green grocer store have also been reproduced to front new buildings constructed in the town.

A walk through the town is a must to fully appreciate its historic charm. Having discovered the town, just outside the entrance to the caravan park you will find the start of the Woodlands and Wildflowers Heritage Trail. This 4km walk trail will take you through the Westonia Common Woodland and back to town past its historic points of interest. Elachbutting Rock is spectacular and has a granite wave formation that is said to be more spectacular than Hyden's Wave Rock so pack a picnic for a day trip or camp a night or two!



### Tourist Information:

Westonia Community  
Resource Centre,  
Wolfram Street, Westonia  
Tel: 08 9046 7077

Westonia Shire Office  
Tel: 08 9046 7063





# Mukinbudin

The Shire of Mukinbudin was settled by pastoralists who in the 1870's took up large leases in excess of 20,000 acres to run sheep, as well as by Sandalwood cutters and miners en-route to the goldfields. Since then Mukinbudin has grown into an enthusiastic, progressive and proud community of 568, although it still maintains its unique agricultural feel. The town is still growing, with 17 newly subdivided residential blocks developed in recent years and new businesses investing in the district.

## Accommodation

Mukinbudin offers a range of accommodation options to cater for any visitor. The award winning Mukinbudin Caravan Park offers shady sites, pleasant ablutions, campers kitchen and barbeque facilities. Also available are four renovated railway cabins (twin share) and three fully self contained air conditioned units. Hotel and motel accommodation on the other hand can be found at the Mukinbudin Hotel in the centre of town. For those looking for something different, Watson's Way Bed & Breakfast located 70kms north of Mukinbudin (out near Beringbooding Rock) offers a more intimate experience. For those keen campers there are great campsites also at Beringbooding Rock and Weira Reserve.

## Attractions

Mukinbudin is undoubtedly a place for those who have an interest in the outdoors. There are no better places to experience this than at Beringbooding Rock and Weira Reserve. Anything from four wheel

driving, barbequing, camping, bushwalking and spectacular views can be experienced amongst these attractions. Anyone with even a passing interest in the history of the area should visit the Wattoning Historical Site, Goodchild's Gateway and the unique Bulk Grain Storage Silo or the 1950's Men's Shed.



### Tourist Information:

Shire of Mukinbudin,  
15 Maddock Street,  
Mukinbudin  
Tel: 08 9047 1102





# Nungarin

One of the smallest shires in the country with just 240 people, but what we lack in size we make up for in just about everything else. Nungarin is located 300 kilometres east of Perth. The meaning of the name is uncertain in the language of the local Aborigines, though one plausible explanation is that it is derived from the word 'nungoo', meaning 'to see' and which could be referring to the Nungarin rock. Since then Nungarin has had a busy history, including serving as an important stopping place during the 1880's Eastern Goldfields rush. It also served as an important WWII strategic army depot and workshop with almost 12,000 troops stationed in the town at one stage. Nungarin is now a progressive and community focused shire boasting an appealing lifestyle for residents.

## Accommodation

Nungarin offers a range of accommodation options to suit all travellers. The historic McCorry's Old Hotel was opened in 1912, and offers comfortable and affordable accommodation thanks to its restoration to original condition. There are also powered sites available for caravans. Another option in Nungarin town, the Nungarin Hotel was opened in 1929 and offers visitors a decent bed and the chance to relax by the fire with a cold beer. The Nungarin Caravan Park up at the Nungarin Recreation ground has drive through power sites and access to great amenities.

## Attractions

No trip to Nungarin should occur without a visit to the extensive Heritage Machinery and Army Museum. Items are housed in an enormous 2,500 square metre building and map Australia's rich pioneering and army history. Historic Mangowine homestead is unique in depicting a era of past life gone by in the region. For those wanting to get out and explore the area, visits to Danberrin Rock, Eaglestone Rock and Talgomine Reserve are highly recommended. They offer stunning views, and an opportunity to explore the vast Wheatbelt landscape. Before you leave the town, make sure to pick up a souvenir at the charming Nungarin Wheatbelt Markets, held on the first Sunday of the month.



### Tourist Information:

Nungarin Community  
Resource Centre,  
Railway Street,  
Nungarin  
Tel: 08 9046 5400





# Trayning

Located 235 kilometres from Perth, the Trayning Shire has the towns of Kununoppin, Trayning and Yelbeni, home to 430 people with a focus on agriculture. The area is named after Trayning Well, the Aboriginal name of a nearby water source located on the old road from Goomalling to the Eastern Goldfields. It was first recorded by a surveyor in 1892 and allegedly derives from the Aboriginal word "during", meaning "snake in the grass by the campfire".

## Accommodation

Trayning offers two reasonably priced accommodation options for visitors to the region. Trayning Hotel/Motel offers comfortable beds and good amenities. The Shire of Trayning similarly offers good amenities for those wanting to camp or enjoy the luxury of their own camper or caravan at the Trayning Caravan Park, with drive through powered sites, BBQ's, grassed area, playground, amenities and a RV dump point.

## Attractions

Visitors to Trayning will be treated to the beautiful natural surroundings of the region and are recommended to visit Billyacatting Hill, Yarragin Rock and the Gnammas to experience them. A variety of amazing flora and fauna can be found at these locations and highlight the natural diversity of the area. Visit the historic town of Kununoppin, nestled among the tall Salmon Gums or head out to the Yelbeni Centenary Museum to see machinery from yester-year.



### Tourist Information:

Shire of Trayning,  
Railway Street,  
Trayning  
Tel: 08 9683 1001



# Accommodation Listing

## Dowerin

Dowerin Caravan Park and Motel	Tel: 08 9631 1135
Dowerin Commercial Hotel	Tel: 08 9631 1206
Dowerin Bed and Breakfast	Tel: 08 9631 1008

## Wyalkatchem

Wyalkatchem Caravan Park	Tel: 0427 814 042 or 08 9681 4042
Wyalkatchem Hotel	Tel: 08 9681 1210
Wyalkatchem Barracks (backpackers or groups)	Tel: 08 9681 1166
Henry's Hideaway B & B	Tel: 0488 099 053

## Koorda

Koorda Caravan Park	Tel: 08 9684 1219
Koorda Hotel	Tel: 08 9684 1226
Yalabee Units (self contained)	Tel: 08 9684 1219

## Bencubbin

Bencubbin Hotel	Tel: 08 9685 1201
Bencubbin Caravan Park (cabins available)	Tel: 08 9685 1202

## Nungarin

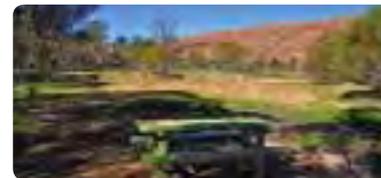
Nungarin Caravan Park	Tel: 08 9046 5006
McCorry's Old Hotel (B & B and powered camping sites)	Tel: 08 9046 5187
Nungarin Hotel	Tel: 08 9046 5084

## Beacon

Beacon Caravan Park & Railway Barracks (cabins available)	Tel: 08 9686 1140 or 0488 025 853
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## Trayning

Trayning Caravan Park	Tel: 08 9683 1001
Trayning Hotel/Motel	Tel: 08 9683 1005



# Free Campsites

## Mukinbudin

Mukinbudin Caravan Park  
& Self Contained Chalets

Mukinbudin Hotel

Watson's Way B & B

Tel: 08 9047 1103

Tel: 08 9047 1133

Tel: 08 9047 0014

## Westonia

Westonia Caravan Park

Westonia Tavern

Carrabin Roadhouse Motel  
& Caravan Park

Tel: 08 9046 7063

Tel: 08 9046 7012

Tel: 08 9046 7162

The Wheatbelt Way Campsites are in incomparable locations that have designated camping areas with BBQ's and Picnic Tables, some have toilets. Please take with you all that you need and then take it all away with you again. Enjoy life's simple pleasures in the Wheatbelt's most natural settings, camping under the twinkling stars in the serenity of the bush.

## Dowerin

Minnivale Townsite

## Koorda

Mollerin Rock

Newcarlbeon Rock

Koorda Native Flora Reserve

## Bencubbin

Marshall Rock

## Beacon

Billiburning Reserve

## Mukinbudin

Beringbooding Rock

Weira Reserve

## Westonia

Elachbutting Rock

Boodalin Soak

## Nungarin

Danberrin Hill

Eaglestone Rock

Talgomine Reserve





## Wheatbelt Way 2 CD Set

### CD No. 1

#### Track number and title

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Dowerin History
- 3 Naaning Well
- 4 Minnivale History
- 5 Wyalkatchem History
- 6 Cowcoving Lakes and Cemetery
- 7 Koorda History
- 8 Koorda Native Flora Reserve
- 9 Mt Marshall Shire
- 10 Gabbin History
- 11 Bencubbin History
- 12 Pergande Sheep Yards
- 13 Marshall Rock
- 14 Beacon History
- 15 Billiburning Reserve
- 16 Datjoin Rock
- 17 Bonnie Rock
- 18 Beringbooding Rock
- 19 Westonia Shire
- 20 Elachbutting Rock
- 21 Sandford Rocks
- 22 Westonia – History and Heritage

### CD No. 2

#### Track number and title

- 1 Early Life as a Barmaid at the Edna May
- 2 Boodalin Soak
- 3 Weira Reserve
- 4 Mukinbudin History
- 5 Kalamaia Aboriginal Women
- 6 Wattoning Historical Site
- 7 Open Air Pictures
- 8 Nungarin History
- 9 Mangowine
- 10 Billyacatting Hill
- 11 Yarragin Rock
- 12 Gnammas
- 13 Trayning Well
- 14 Trayning History
- 15 Yelbeni
- 16 Yelbeni Museum



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