

Mamang Walk Trail

Fitzgerald River National Park



Visitor guide for Point Ann to Point Charles



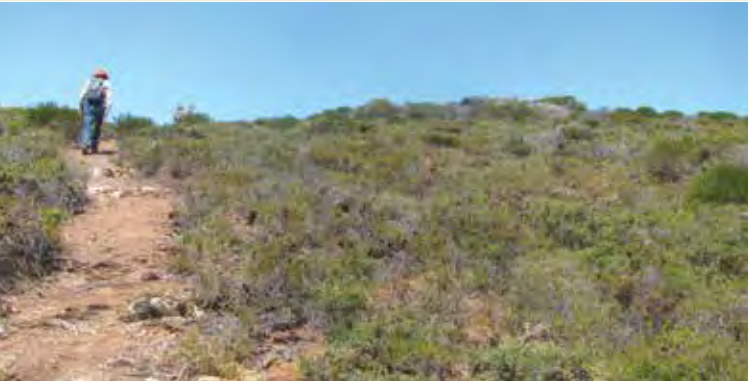
Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



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Above Approaching Point Charles Lookout. *Photo - John Watson*

The Mamang Trail is an outstanding 15.5km (31km return) walk along part of the spectacular Fitzgerald River National Park coastline from Point Ann to Point Charles, overlooking the Fitzgerald River mouth and mountain peaks of the central wilderness area beyond.

Mamang is a south coast Aboriginal name for whale and many traditional stories about mamang are evidence of the close relationship the Noongar Aboriginal people had with these annual visitors to this coast.

Along the trail you pass through an array of the region's unique vegetation and flora, which also provides habitat for a rich range of fauna species including birds, insects, marsupials and reptiles, although only the lucky few will spot the mainly nocturnal and marsupials.

From July to October the southern right whales come close to shore to give birth and nurse their newborn calves before returning to the southern waters around Antarctica. Migrating humpback, minke and orca whales, dolphins and seals are also frequently seen.

Specially designed viewpoints with expansive views of the coast, inland peaks, river valleys and inlets are provided along the trail, including some with almost the whole coastal sweep from the Doubtful Islands near Bremer Bay, to East Mt Barren in the far north east, with the Hopetoun coastline in the distance beyond.

The area is also steeped in settler history with the southern end of Western Australia's No 2 rabbit proof fence at Point Ann, parts of the Mamang Trail following charred remains of the east-west intercolonial telegraph line, dating from the 1870s and old commercial fishing history around Fitzgerald Inlet.



Above Central wilderness peaks from Point Charles (day walk terminus).
Photo - John Watson

Take care

Keep your personal safety in mind at all times. Caution is required in any natural environment with potentially hazardous terrain. Fitzgerald River National Park is no exception.

Stand back from rocky headlands and cliff edges. Many areas within the park have steep, rocky slopes that can be unstable underfoot.

Choose fishing or swimming sites with great care.

The Southern Ocean is unpredictable, making rock fishing and swimming especially dangerous. Huge waves and swells can suddenly occur even on calm days. Rocks become slippery when wet. Rip currents are common along the coastline.

Wear a lifejacket at all times when fishing from rocks.

No pets

Pets are not permitted in the park. Please leave your dogs, cats and other domestic animals at home as they can harm native wildlife and environment. Foxes and feral cats are predators to native animals, so the park is baited with 1080 poison to control the numbers of these introduced predators. Native animals are naturally resistant to 1080, but the baits will kill your pets.



Please heed visitor risk warnings shown on signs that display this symbol.



Top Humpback whale. *Photo - Doug Coughran* **Above left** Honey possum.
Above right Descending from Royal Hakea Lookout. *Photo - John Watson*



Getting started

The main trailhead is at Point Ann car park and is well signposted. A second trail entry point is from St Mary Campground a few hundred metres around the bay and also well signposted. As there are no toilet facilities on the trail, please use the facilities provided at Point Ann or St Mary campsite before you leave.

Walking the trail



The Mamang Walk Trail is a Class 4 walk that requires a good level of fitness, sturdy walking boots, suitable clothing, sun protection and plenty of water. It is a marked trail that follows the coast along sandy beaches, across vegetated dunes and rocky ridges. Surfaces may be unstable or slippery.

There are several stops on the trail, which have views of the coast, inland peaks, river valleys and inlets as well as the land-locked Lake Nameless. Along the way you will find occasional rest areas with seats or platforms. These are mostly located at the viewpoints. The trail offers options for an easier half day walk, a full day walk and overnight camping at Fitzgerald Inlet.

More information

More information for this walking trail can be downloaded from the website listed below. Please refer to *Fitzgerald River National Park* brochure for park map and details of access roads.

National park rangers are available to informative. Don't hesitate to contact them if you need assistance.

Rangers (West)

Jacup

Tel (08) 9835 5043

**Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
Parks and Wildlife Service**

Albany District Office

120 Albany Highway, Albany WA 6330

Tel (08) 9842 4500

Fax (08) 9841 7105

Email albany@dbca.wa.gov.au

Tides charts can be downloaded from the Bureau of Meteorology's website: bom.gov.au/australia/tides

Other Fitzgerald River National Park brochures include:

- *Fitzgerald River National Park information and recreation guide*
- *Eastern short walks*, which includes the short walks to Barrens lookout, East Mount Barren, Sepulchralis Hill and No Tree Hill)
- *Western short walks*, which includes the short walks to Mount Maxwell, West Mount Barren and the Point Ann Heritage Trail
- *Hakea Walk Trail*



Brochures are available from park entry stations, walktrail heads or download copies from the website: exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/fitzgerald-river

Fitzgerald River National Park podcasts

A series of podcasts about the Fitzgerald River National Park and the different walks can be downloaded prior to visiting the park from the same website.



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Front cover: Fitzgerald Inlet and central wilderness peaks from Fitzgerald Valley Lookout. *Photo - John Watson*

Half Day Walk

Point Ann to Lake Nameless Lookout

10.6km return – allow three to four hours

This is an easy walk and is mostly sandy underfoot. From the Point Ann trailhead take the path to the beach, turn left (north) and follow the beach. As you pass the St Mary Campground entry point on your left, be wary of four wheel drive vehicles entering or leaving the beach. Continue past the sandy mouth of the St Mary River and continue for about 1km (20 minutes) until you reach the exit steps from the beach about 200m beyond a small creek mouth cutting through the dunes.

Please brush-clean your boots at the cleaning station. Follow the upward sloping trail to the Nuytsia Lookout where you see the central wilderness peaks ahead and a distant view of Doubtful Islands in the south, Point Ann in the foreground and West Mt Barren and Mt Bland towards the west - a breathtaking reward for your efforts.

The trail continues eastwards past the nearby Nuytsia Grove and soon descends into an inland valley then swings right until you reach the Lake Nameless junction. Follow the left turn to reach the Lake Nameless Lookout, which is only 250m (5 minutes) along the trail.

At the lookout a middle distance view of Lake Nameless opens up. At a time of slightly higher sea level Lake Nameless would have been another coastal inlet and you can easily see the now vegetated valley, which would have been the exit channel between the lake and the ocean.

You can return to Point Ann either by retracing your steps along the way you came or via the beach link trail and the southern end of Point Charles Beach. The distance is about the same. If you choose the beach route, retrace your steps to the Lake Nameless junction and instead of turning right, turn left towards the ocean. In about 15 minutes you will emerge at the beach. Turn right towards the south-west, weave through some interesting sculptured beach rocks and continue all the way along the beach to Point Ann. At peak high tide times you may get wet feet.

Below Royal hakea (*Hakea victoria*).



Full Day Walk

Point Ann to Point Charles

26.8km return – allow nine to ten hours

Follow the trail from Point Ann to Lake Nameless Lookout as described overleaf, and then continue to Point Charles. This is a more strenuous section of the walk with undulations and some rough and rocky sections. From Lake Nameless Lookout the trail descends to the valley floor and then follows a series of zigzagging old dune ridges to the Inter-colonial resting point, which has the finest open view of the lake. The former east-west inter-colonial telegraph line between Albany and Eucla crossed the valley here and you can see remains of some of the old poles and wire. Please do not disturb, deface or remove any of these protected historical items.

From this point the trail steadily ascends out of the valley woodlands through some fine vegetation, which contains the iconic royal hakea. The next major stopping point is the aptly named Royal Hakea Lookout.

The trail continues along the ridge for about 2km with views of the ocean to the south and occasional inland views to the north and north-west. The central wilderness peaks gradually become a dominant part of the landscape directly ahead.

A small signposted spur track to the Fitzgerald Valley Lookout (90m) offers another spectacular 'surprise' view of the Fitzgerald Inlet and Fitzgerald River valley stretching almost to the far northern park boundary.

Return to the spur junction and turn left to resume the main trail. The trail descends into the broad valley below and you catch glimpses of the exposed sandy tops of the Point Charles Bay dunes on the horizon with the ocean beyond. The trail slowly ascends from the valley floor to the top of Point Charles. You can elect to return to Point Ann via the beach (about 2.5 hours) once you reach the sign posted Point Charles junction or continue to the final viewpoint at Point Charles Lookout and fully complete the day walk (about 30 minutes from the junction).

Return to Point Ann – allow 3–4 hours via the beaches. From Point Charles Lookout retrace your steps to the Point Charles junction. Here you have the choice of returning the same way you came along the main route or turning left onto an alternative trail that takes you via the inland edge of the dunes to the beach. It is better to head slightly left and then directly down to the beach rather than trying to shortcut diagonally right towards Point Ann as this will involve additional up and down through smaller dunes and the recommended route, though appearing longer, is much quicker and easier.

On reaching the beach turn right and simply follow the beach all the way to Point Ann. Please be aware of four-wheel drive vehicles and potential high tides.

Please be aware. Undertaking this walk along the beach in reverse (i.e. approaching Point Charles junction from Point Charles beach) is strongly discouraged due to difficulty in locating the critical entry point to the link trail from the steep inland dunes. There are no defining trail markers because of the constantly changing sand dune levels.

Two Day Walk

Point Ann to Fitzgerald Inlet

31km return – allow 12 to 13 hours actual walking

This Class 4 walk takes you the entire length of the Mamang Walk Trail.

Complete the walk to Point Charles as described above, then follow the trail as it swings round and down in a large zigzag to reach the corner of Fitzgerald Beach below. Cross the sandbar by heading NNW towards the highest vegetated dune. A prominent marker on the other side of the bar guides you to the end of an old four-wheel drive track, which runs parallel to the inlet on its east bank. Follow the track for about 1km until you reach the Fitzgerald Inlet campsite (about 50 minutes from Point Charles lookout).

Return to Point Ann via the beach route or trail route as described above in the full day walk.

Below Lake Nameless from Mamang Trail. Photo – John Watson



Above left Shoreline cliffs Fitzgerald Inlet. Above Central wilderness peaks from Fitzgerald Beach below Point Charles. Photos – John Watson

Facilities and campsite

Occasional resting areas with small seats or platforms are provided to rest your legs and take in the wonderful views. There are trail markers and directional signs. There are no toilet facilities along the trail.

The Fitzgerald Inlet campsite is about 1km inland from the mouth of the Fitzgerald Inlet. The campsite is situated in a relatively sheltered area surrounded by shady trees. There is a cleared area for pitching tents, a picnic table and a composting toilet. There is no potable water on this site. All water, food and camping equipment will need to be carried in. Bring your own toilet paper and please take all your rubbish with you.

Remember

Don't light fires. Gas barbecues are provided free of charge at Point Ann and St Mary campgrounds.

Be clean. Rubbish bins are not provided in the park; please take your rubbish with you.

Save animals and plants. No hunting or wildflower picking is permitted in Fitzgerald River National Park. Drive slowly to avoid killing wildlife on the roads.

Below Central wilderness peaks from St Mary Beach. Photo – John Watson



Stay on the road. Follow signs in the park and keep vehicles on the roads marked in this map. Observe track closures and speed limits. To drive a four-wheel drive vehicle on sand, engage four-wheel drive and reduce tyre pressure. Don't forget to re-inflate your tyres when you leave the area. It is recommended that two-wheel drive vehicles are not driven on sand or other soft surfaces.

Be prepared. Always carry plenty of fresh water (at least three or four litres per person per day) as there are no reliable drinking water supplies within the park.

Dieback

Dieback is caused by a pathogen, known as *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which is lethal to hundreds of plant species. This disease kills plants by destroying their root systems, and threatens many of the park's plant species. The climate of the south coast favours the spread of dieback, which thrives in warm, moist soil and can easily be spread in mud or soil that adheres to vehicle tyres or bushwalkers' footwear.

It is therefore sometimes necessary to close roads and tracks or temporarily restrict access to certain areas.

Fitzgerald River National Park is one of the parks least infected by dieback in south-western Australia. With your help it has a chance of remaining so. Bushwalkers can help by cleaning mud and soil from their boots before entering a park or reserve, or at the boot-cleaning stations provided at trailhead sites in the park.

When driving in the park, it is essential to keep to established roads and tracks and obey all 'ROAD CLOSED' signs. By washing the tyres and under-body of your car before and after a trip to a park or reserve, you can help preserve WA's natural areas.

