

Ngari Tales

News from the Ngari Capes Marine Park

Spring 2013

Welcome to the first issue of the *Ngari Tales*, a newsletter for everyone who wants to know more about the Ngari Capes Marine Park: one of Western Australia's most recently created State marine parks, located in the south-west of WA.

Introducing the Ngari Capes Marine Park

The Ngari Capes Marine Park includes most of the southern half of Geographe Bay and continues around Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin to Flinders Bay near Augusta. The marine park starts at the intertidal zone and extends out to the limit of WA's coastal waters (three nautical miles from shore).

The marine park has been created to help look after one of the State's most highly used and valued temperate (cool water) areas. Visitors will find unique corals, granite and limestone reefs, and large seagrass meadows. A wide range of marine animals live in or visit the park. These include large demersal (bottom-dwelling) fish – such as West Australian dhufish, western blue groper and pink snapper, whales and dolphins, New Zealand fur seals, weedy sea dragons, blue swimmer crabs, rock lobster and abalone.

Some of the world's best surf breaks can be enjoyed along the marine park coast, while fishing, boating, swimming and diving are also popular. The creation of the marine park is part of the Government's commitment to progressively establish and manage the State's marine reserve system to help conserve our special marine habitats, wildlife and ecosystems. Marine parks are one of many tools being used to ensure these resources will be enjoyed by future generations.

The park's outer boundaries were created in June 2012 and the marine park management plan was approved in early 2013.

Legislative changes are needed to create management 'zones' in the marine park. The zoning scheme will influence how fishing and other activities are managed and is expected to come into effect during 2014. Once these zones are in place, recreational fishing will remain unchanged in 89 per cent of the marine park area (see map and zone information on page three).

Photo: Geoff Taylor/Lochman Transparencies



New Zealand fur seal

Funding boost for Ngari Capes

Benefits of the new marine park are already starting to flow. The Department of Fisheries has the new 12 metre patrol vessel *PV Geographe* in operation and has employed two new Fisheries and Marine Officers, a part time Community Education Officer and two research scientists. A marine park coordinator and three new marine park rangers have recently started work at the Department of Parks and Wildlife. These new resources were funded by Royalties for Regions as part of a specific package to improve compliance, education and scientific monitoring of the Ngari Capes Marine Park.

Photo: Megan Flowers



The new Department of Fisheries vessel for the marine park, *PV Geographe*

Why the name 'Ngari'

The word ngari (pronounced 'nyari') is the Noongar word for salmon (Western Australian Salmon). The Noongar are Indigenous Australian people who have lived in the south-west of Western Australia for many thousands of years. This name was chosen for inclusion in the marine park name following consultation with Noongar elders and the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council.

Two groups of Noongar people known as the Wardandi ('forest people who live by the sea') and the Piblemen, regularly used the coastal area that adjoins the Ngari Capes Marine Park. These people caught salmon using gidgees at Gnarabup and rocky outcrops between Dunsborough and Meelup. Gidgees were made by fastening five kangaroo rib bones to a long tea tree limb using a mixture of crushed grass tree resin, kangaroo dung and charcoal.

Western Australian salmon are not true 'salmon'. They belong to the *Arripidae* family and are more closely related to Australian herring than any true salmon. Adult Western Australian salmon live in schools for most of the year between Hopetoun and Esperance. They travel in large numbers to the Ngari Capes Marine Park each year around Easter to spawn.

This annual spawning event brings thousands of recreational fishers to the south-west each year. Commercial fishers also net this species along the Capes coast. The larvae are transported by the Leeuwin Current eastwards to settle along the south coast of Australia, as far as Tasmania, where they grow in sheltered embayments for three to four years. Once they reach adult size they travel back to the south coast of Western Australia.

The Wardandi and Piblemen people also knew of the timing of the salmon migration. They travelled to the

coast during the 'Djeran' season (April/May) when the marri and red flowering gums came into bloom. So it seems the park has been well named, as the arrival of salmon to this coast has caused an influx of people for many thousands of years, a pattern that continues to this day.

Going fishing in Ngari Capes in spring?

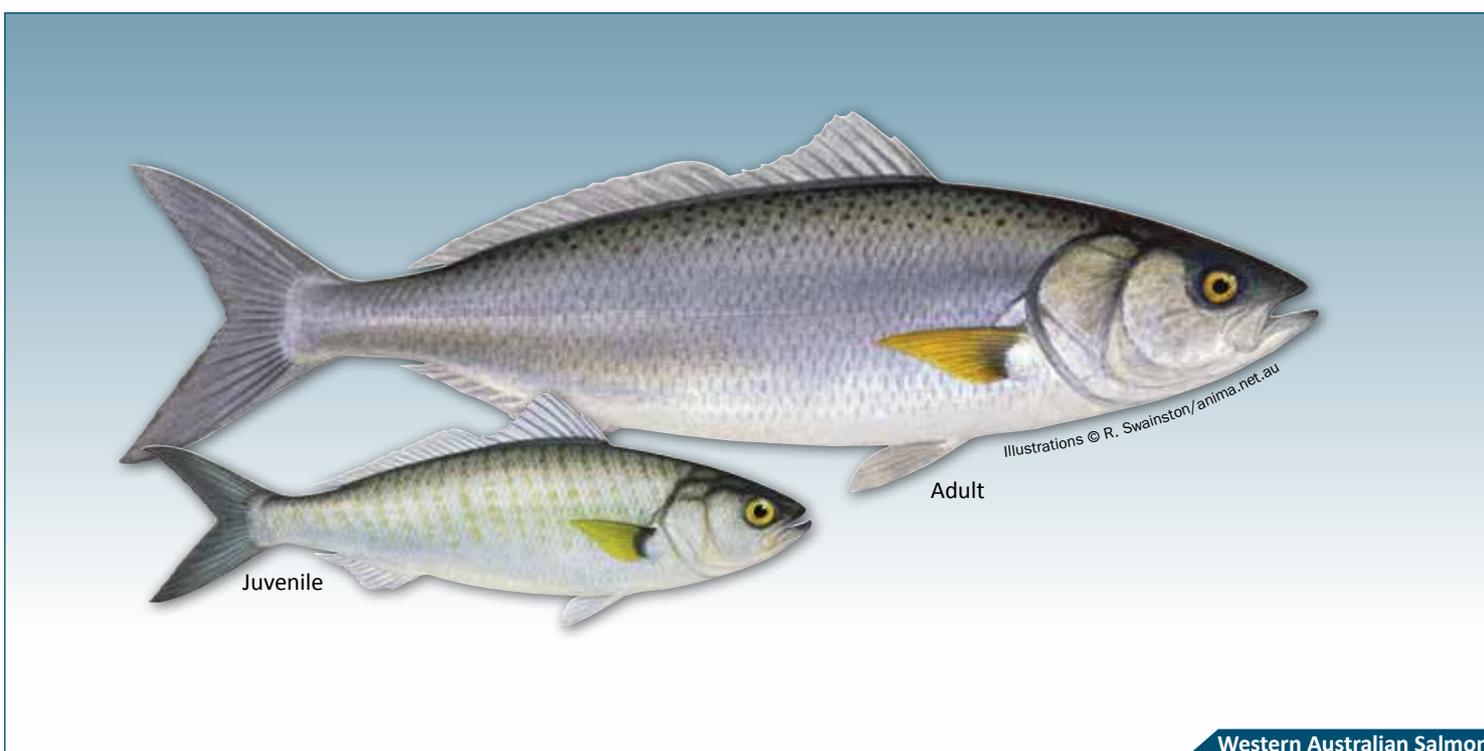
Take a note of these dates for the spring season:

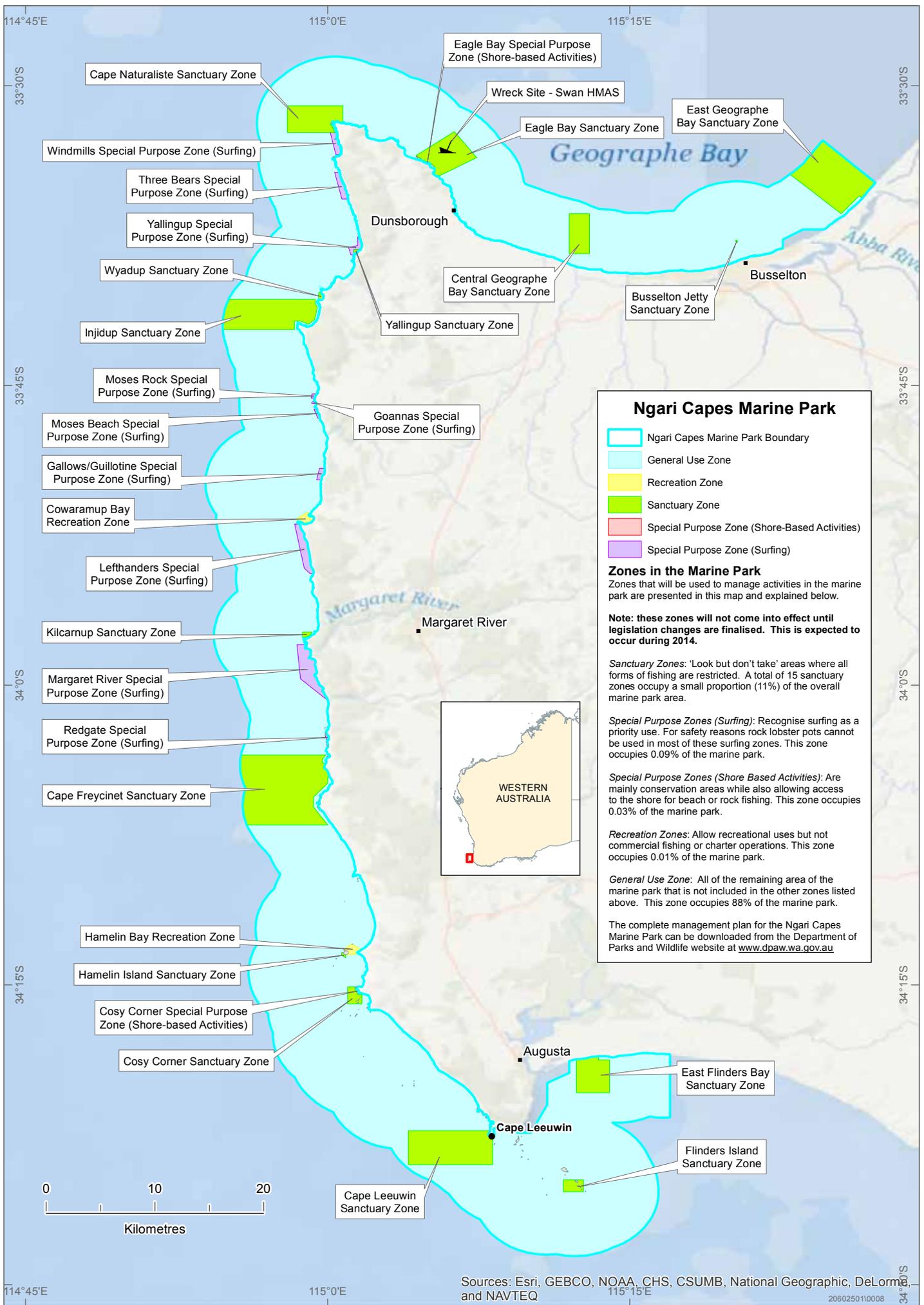
- Demersal finfish closed season 15 October to 15 December (inclusive).
- Abalone season opens 1 October (closes 15 May the following year).
- Western rock lobster season opens 15 October (closes 30 June the following year).

Remember: a recreational fishing licence is required if you are fishing from a boat or if fishing for abalone or western rock lobster. For more information about licences, size limits and bag limits, visit www.fish.wa.gov.au

WA Beach Clean Up 12 and 13 October 2013

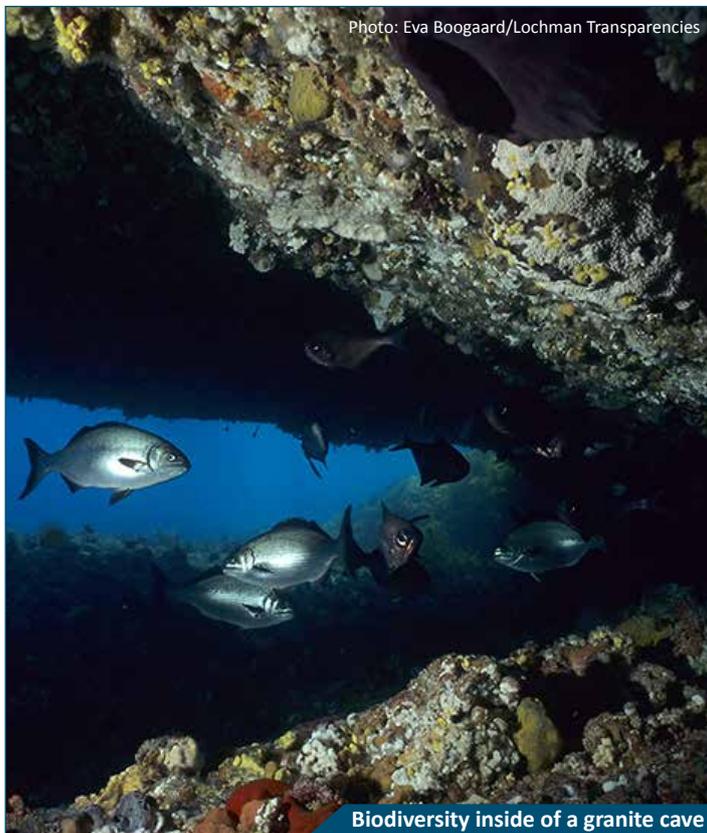
Get involved in the 2013 WA Beach Clean Up and help remove marine debris and litter from your favourite beach. This annual event, coordinated by the Tangaroa Blue Foundation, involves volunteers in removing rubbish and contributing to a comprehensive database of information about the materials found on our beaches. This information is being used to find ways to cut down marine debris in our oceans, which will help reduce impacts on marine life and seabirds. To register your involvement or for more information visit www.tangaroablue.org or email info@tangaroablue.org





Sources: Esri, GEBCO, NOAA, CHS, CSUMB, National Geographic, DeLorme and NAVTEQ
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Photo: Eva Boogaard/Lochman Transparencies



Biodiversity inside of a granite cave

Monitoring the Ngari Capes Marine Park.

Since 2012, the Marine Ecology and Monitoring Section (MEMS) of the Department of Fisheries research division has been monitoring the marine environment of the new Ngari Capes Marine Park. The monitoring team uses boat-based methods (such as Baited Remote Underwater Video camera surveys) and SCUBA diver surveys to assess the marine animals and plants at five sites spread across the marine park. The program builds on a study that was started in 2006 by the South West Catchments Council and collects data on the natural variability of the finfish community, mobile invertebrates (e.g. rock lobster) and benthic (sea floor) habitats within the marine park. The monitoring is essential for detecting impacts to the marine environment of the area and in understanding how well the zoning of the marine park works over time.

Want to get involved?

There are many ways you can get involved in the science and management of the Ngari Capes Marine Park. A wide range of citizen science projects coordinated by the Department of Fisheries allows people to contribute valuable data to scientific monitoring programs. Details can be found at [www.fish.wa.gov.au /About-us/Pages/Volunteers.aspx](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/About-us/Pages/Volunteers.aspx)

Two new projects need the help of fishers who target squid or blue swimmer crabs in Geographe Bay. The crab research project will help to assess crab stocks in the bay while the squid research will develop a better understanding of the biology of local populations.

Getting involved is as easy as signing up for a log book program for crab research, making measurements of squid or sending in dried or frozen parts of squid to the research team. For more details on how to participate go to the above website or contact the researchers directly:

Blue Swimmer Crabs

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Squid (southern calamari)

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Photo: Dave Abdo



Monitoring by SCUBA at Hamelin Bay

Further informaton

For more information about the Ngari Capes Marine Park or to register to receive this newsletter electronically contact:

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