

Hyden 53.2km (Site 2) Norseman 248.1km

Section 1 (Site 1 – Site 2)

HYDEN/WAVE ROCK – STATE BARRIER FENCE

Section length: 53.2 km
Driving time: 40 to 50 minutes
Site time: Wave Rock 2 - 4 hours; Fence 15 minutes
Road surface: Sealed for western 32 km, then gravel
Site location: Wave Rock – large tourist facility
Barrier Fence – parking bay north side of road

Section Description

This section is unique along the Trail in that it passes through farmland for its entire length. Wave Rock, some 4 km east of Hyden, is a major attraction, and it is well worth allowing time to walk the new Wave Rock Walk Circuit (3.6 km) – in addition to visiting the rock itself. The land east of Hyden is primarily used for wheat farming. Landcare is a rapidly growing activity, with signs of salinity already quite evident.

Rolling north-south ridges dominate the topography of this section, giving a series of long views across broad 'valleys'. Most of the road reserve is comparatively wide, providing an important natural 'corridor' for plants, birds and wildlife.

Hyden 58.0km (Site 3) Norseman 242.3

Section 2 (Site 2 – Site 3)

STATE BARRIER FENCE – HOLLAND TRACK

Section length: 4.8 km
Driving time: 5 to 10 minutes
Site time: Fence 15 minutes; Holland Track 15 minutes
Road surface: Gravel, generally good condition
Site location: Barrier Fence – parking bay north side of road
Holland Track – parking bay north side of road; Holland Track crosses from south-west to north-east

Section Description

Wide horizons and expansive views are the hallmark of this very short section through low sandy heathland. If you are travelling westward, Bushfire Rock and the agricultural areas are clearly visible ahead and to the south-west. Though this landscape may look barren it is in fact extraordinarily rich in species diversity.

In spring (August – October) this country is a kaleidoscope of colours, with a staggering array of wildflowers competing for attention. The soft sand that supports this floral extravaganza is obvious along the road verges.

Hyden 65.1km (Site 4) Norseman 236.2km

Section 3 (Site 3 – Site 4)

HOLLAND TRACK – FORRESTANIA PLOTS

Section length: 7.1 km
Driving time: 5 to 10 minutes
Site time: Holland Track 15 minutes; Forrestania 30 minutes
Road surface: Gravel, generally good condition
Site location: Holland Track - parking bay north side of road; Holland Track crosses from south-west to north-east
Forrestania - entrance track on south side of road, parking 50 m, under trees near shed

Section Description

This is a short section passing through low sandy heathland, with expansive views. The flame grevillea which makes an avenue along parts of the road is the tallest plant growing in this section, and one has to search far and wide for anything remotely resembling a tree.

If you are travelling westward you may catch your first glimpse of the agricultural areas to the south-west and then due west. After hundreds of kilometres driving through relatively untouched natural landscapes this crisp boundary is a visually arresting image.

Hyden 111.6km (Site 5) Norseman 189.7km

Section 4 (Site 4 – Site 5)

FORRESTANIA PLOTS – SHIRE BOUNDARY

Section length: 46.5 km
Driving time: 30 to 45 minutes
Site time: Forrestania 30 minutes; Boundary 15 minutes
Road surface: Gravel, condition can be variable
Site location: Forrestania - entrance track on south side of road, parking 50 m, under trees near shed
Boundary – parking bay north side of road, just east of Shire boundary

Section Description

The western part of this section passes across a 'greenstone belt' – an area of mineralisation that supports both nickel and gold mines. A variety of mine-related infrastructure is visible from the road. Lake Cronin, some 3 km north of the Forrestania cross-roads, is an ephemeral fresh water lake, but is difficult to access. East of the cross-roads, topography alternates between eucalypt woodland, mallee scrub and sandy heath, indicating changing soil types.

Fire! Fire!

In a vast expanse of natural country like this wildfires are inevitable. Many – perhaps most – are started by lightning. Others have been started along roads or tracks, and around mining and other mechanised operations. Given the relative remoteness of this country fires are often left to burn themselves out. The result is some huge 'scars', with substantial areas being burnt out. One fire in 2003 spread over some 400,000 hectares inland from Ravensthorpe, while another a year earlier burnt 100,000 hectares east of the Lake Johnston Nickel Operations.

While fire impacts can be extensive out here they can also be quite patchy. Fire doesn't always burn on a single hot front – winds vary, as do day and night time temperatures, resulting in a mosaic effect which aids regeneration. Specific plants 'colonise' burnt areas first, paving the way for others that are slower off the mark. Some (particularly certain eucalypts) regenerate in astonishing densities, ranging into the hundreds of thousands per hectare. These gradually thin down to 30 – 40,000 per hectare in 'whip stick' stands and finally to mature open woodlands – providing they are not burnt again!

Hyden 124.5km (Site 6) Norseman 176.8km

Section 5 (Site 5 – Site 6)

SHIRE BOUNDARY – GREVILLEA HILL

Section length: 12.9 km
Driving time: 10 to 15 minutes
Site time: Boundary 15 minutes; Grevillea Hill 30 minutes
Road surface: Gravel, generally good condition
Site location: *Boundary* – parking bay north side of road, just east of Shire boundary
Grevillea Hill – parking bay on south side of road, on ridge crest

Section Description

The Trail east of the Shire Boundary is characterised by a series of low rolling ridges running generally north – south, producing wide almost-flat valleys and long views from crest to crest. Indeed, wide horizons abound throughout this section, which is dominated by sandy heathland with few plants more than knee-high – other than the now-familiar flame grevillea along the road verges. Both honey possums and pigmy possums are likely to be found in this country. Bush turkeys have been seen along this section of the Trail, as have dingos, belying the impression that such 'stunted' vegetation must be 'barren'.



Hyden 136.6km (Site 7) Norseman 164.7km

Section 6 (Site 6 – Site 7)

GREVILLEA HILL – THE BREAKAWAYS

Section length: 12.1 km
Driving time: 10 to 15 minutes
Site time: Grevillea Hill 30 minutes; Breakaways 2 hours
Road surface: Gravel, generally good condition
Site location: *Grevillea Hill* – parking bay on south side of road, on ridge crest
Breakaways – access track on south side leads 400 m to foot of breakaways; great picnic spot or overnight camping area

Section Description

This section marks the commencement of a significant transition, from the vast sandy heathland further west, through mallee woodland to a more eucalypt-dominated landscape further east. Patches of heath still occur further east, but they now become the subordinate landscape type. Fire scarring is quite evident, especially in mallee country, and The Breakaways themselves are well worth exploring – but please use care and caution as this is both a fragile and potentially dangerous environment. *Take care near cliff edges!*



Hyden 159.9km (Site 8) Norseman 141.4km

Section 7 (Site 7 – Site 8)

THE BREAKAWAYS – EMILY ANN

Section length: 23.3 km
Driving time: 15 to 20 minutes
Site time: Breakaways 2 hours; Emily Ann 20 minutes.
Road surface: Gravel, generally good condition
Site location: *Breakaways* – access track on south side leads 400 m to foot of breakaways; great picnic spot or overnight camping area
Emily Ann – parking bay on north side of road, just east of mine access road

Section Description

The transition begun in the section immediately to the west continues to take place between the Breakaways and Emily Ann. The growing dominance of eucalypt woodland is particularly evident east of the Banker – Mt Day Rd. This is in part due to the presence of another significant 'greenstone belt', an area of mineralisation that hosts both nickel (and gold) deposits and a range of particular eucalypt species.

Of interest to those travelling east to west is the growing incidence of sandy heathlands, the appearance of various hakea species (absent further east) and the increasing presence of the tall spindly flame grevillea along the verges.

Hyden 191.9km (Site 9) Norseman 84.4km

Section 8 (Site 8 – Site 9)

EMILY ANN – MCDERMID ROCK

Section length: 32.0 km
Driving time: 20 to 25 minutes
Site time: Emily Ann 20 minutes; McDermid Rock 2 hours
Road surface: Gravel, condition can be variable
Site location: *Emily Ann* – parking bay on north side of road, just west of mine camp road
McDermid Rock – access track on north side, leads 1.5 km to parking with picnic & toilet facilities; walk trail on rock

Section Description

While vegetation still varies through this section, the landscape is now clearly dominated by eucalypt woodland. Even the nature of the interspersing patches of scrub has changed, from the 'kwongan' heath further west to a taller, denser 'tammar' scrub. Scarring from a major fire in late 2002 is clearly visible in the western half of the section.

The impact of various wildfires is clearly evident at a number of points along the Trail. In the case of more recent fires the visual impact is still strong. Where fires have occurred some years ago the processes of regeneration are readily seen. Similarly, the absence of fire for an extended period manifests itself in identifiable patterns in the landscape.



Hyden 197.2km (Site 10) Norseman 104.1km

Section 9 (Site 9 – Site 10)

MCDERMID ROCK – LAKE JOHNSTON

- Section length:* 5.3 km
- Driving time:* 5 to 10 minutes
- Site time:* McDermid Rock 2 hours; Lake Johnston 45 minutes
- Road surface:* Gravel, winding – beware sharp corners
- Site location:* *McDermid Rock* – access track on north side, leads 1.5 km to parking with picnic & toilet facilities; walk trail on rock
Lake Johnston – access track south side of road, picnic area on edge of lake, camping area off track to the right

Section Description

This very short section features some of the oldest and loveliest woodland along the Trail, especially between the Victoria Rocks Road and McDermid Rock. The eastern half of the section is dominated by the various pans that make up Lake Johnston, with a number of lovely views opening up along the way.

The track south to Knapp Rock and Scamp Rock (near the western shore of Lake Johnston) can be found just west of the Victoria Rocks Road. The remains of the rudimentary house built by would-be pastoralist J.O. Magee can be found near Knapp Rock, approximately 7 km down this track.

Hyden 200.1km (Site 11) Norseman 101.2km

Section 10 (Site 10 – Site 11)

LAKE JOHNSTON – LAKE VIEWPOINT

- Section length:* 2.9 km
- Driving time:* 5 to 10 minutes
- Site time:* Lake Johnston 45 minutes; Lake Viewpoint 15 minutes
- Road surface:* Gravel, winding, generally good condition
- Site location:* *Lake Johnston* – access track south side of road, picnic area on edge of lake, camping area off track to the right
Lake Viewpoint – parking bay on south side of road, at sweeping bend

Section Description

Lake Johnston is the key feature on this short section, with the major pan stretching far into the distance on the south side of the road. To the east of the lake a large 'dune' or 'lunette' has developed, built of countless grains of salt and sand blown off the lake surface by prevailing westerly winds.

North of the road, particularly close to the Viewpoint, there is a spectacular open woodland of mature salmon gum and gimlet, with a soft grey saltbush understorey. Saltbush is a common understorey plant in woodlands in the Goldfields area, but is not so widespread along this Trail.



Hyden 216.9km (Site 12) Norseman 84.4km

Section 11 (Site 11 – Site 12)

LAKE VIEWPOINT – DISAPPOINTMENT ROCK

- Section length:* 16.8 km
- Driving time:* 15 to 20 minutes
- Site time:* Viewpoint 15 minutes; Disappointment Rock 2 hours
- Road surface:* Gravel, generally good condition
- Site location:* *Lake Viewpoint* – parking bay on south side of road, at sweeping bend
Disappointment Rock – access track south side of road leads 400 metres to parking area with picnic and toilet facilities, walk trail on rock

Section Description

Perhaps the most remarkable landscape in this section is the open 'savannah' around and immediately east of the Lake Viewpoint. This grades to open mature woodland and then to progressively denser and

Hyden 256.3km (Site 13) Norseman 45.0km

Section 12 (Site 12 – Site 13)

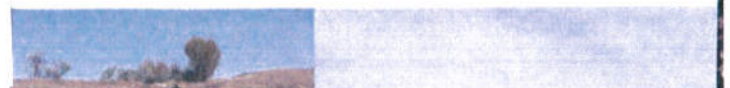
DISAPPOINTMENT ROCK – WOODLANDS

- Section length:* 39.4 km
- Driving time:* 25 to 30 minutes
- Site time:* Disappointment Rock 2 hours; Woodlands 1 hour
- Road surface:* Gravel, generally good condition
- Site location:* *Disappointment Rock* – access track south side of road leads 400 metres to parking area with picnic and toilet facilities; walk trail on rock
Woodlands – access track south side of road leads 100 metres to parking & picnic area

Section Description

'Transition' is the key word in this section – nowhere else on the Trail is the ever-changing mosaic of this landscape more evident than in this 40 km stretch. Not only are there a number of 'gross' changes from woodland to mallee scrub and sandy shrublands, but there are also more subtle variations in the eucalypt woodlands as the dominant species changes. These soil-driven transitions are fascinating to explore.

The other major feature is the glorious mature salmon gum woodland around the Woodlands site. Allow plenty of time to take in the rich glowing colours and the variety and size of the burls (the wart-like swellings on many tree trunks).



Disappointment Rock Walk Trail (1892 m)

Metres	Track notes
0	From the carpark trail turn right along edge of rock face, walking west towards a large jumble of boulders
73	Trail passes left of large boulders and split rock (#1) and continues west across a flat platform of rock
58	At a split in the rock reach four ' water eyes ' (#2) which may have been significant water holes in the past
89	Follow the crack downslope and turn left, walking along lower platform close to vegetation, to uplifted fault (#3)
64	Continue west, skirting vegetation to pass to the right of hourglass rocks (#4)
69	Walk west across lower platform, skirting several 'islands' of vegetation – one is the rock breaker (#5)
107	Veer left (south-west) climbing slightly to skirt a jumble of rock slabs and cross natural bridge (#6)
46	Walk south to large pan gnamma (#7) which, when full, is teeming with minute aquatic life
49	Turn left and walk upslope to the gnomes picnic area (#8) , a collection of flat-topped hour-glass rocks
115	Veer right, past 'islands'; skirt left of more hourglass rocks and descend left to base of complex fault (#9)
186	At top end of fault turn left and climb left of large 'island'. Between a rock and a hard place (#10) is on shoulder
66	Angle right (east) and climb to rock sand (#11) , a classic display of weathering in action
107	Continue east along ridge to cairn at the summit (#12) of the rock outcrop
238	Descend east, skirting just south of line of vegetation, heading towards prominent inclined boulder (#13)
45	Continue to descend to reach junction with spur trail going right
100	Take spur trail south to huge A-tent (#14) , the largest 'pop-up' in WA (note <i>Callitrus varicosa</i> or rock pine)
205	Return to junction , turn right and descend, veering left through gaps in vegetation. Skirt large island and descend beside bright stains to water on the rock (#15)
78	Descend and turn left on platform at base of rock, walking north-west to waiting for a wave (#16)
77	Continue north-west along lower platform to reach life of lichens (#17) , where water spills off the upper faces
120	Proceed along lower platform to return to trail-head

McDermid Rock Walk Trail (1271 m)

Metres	Track notes
0	From the access trail walk straight up the slope
71	Pass to the left of the old rock dam (#1) and angle left and up the slope
38	Pass to the right of single ancient <i>Calothamnus tuberosus</i> (#2) and climb the slope towards the summit. Note parallel 'tram lines' on slope to right
82	Walk between two ' islands ' of vegetation (#3). Continue to climb the spur leading to summit
51	On crest ridge turn left and walk 30 metres to the trig point at the summit (#4)
66	Continue south down ridge, noting many 'pans' in platform below. Cross major fault line (#5)
80	Descend right of several 'islands' and a large pan; follow fault lines towards strip of vegetation (#6)
50	Pass through vegetation and angle right across rock platform to reach pan-in-a-pan (#7) . From here, also look up to large balancing rock (#8) on crest
41	Veer right, towards balancing rock, to reach split boulder (#9)
73	Continue to descend parallel to major rock face, crossing a large 'delta' of staining before reaching gathering of loose rounded boulders (#10)
71	Angle right and cross vegetated strip to walk along platform at base of 'wave' to bright pegmatite dyke (#11) running across trail and up face of rock
80	Continue north, passing around head of a 'bay' of vegetation to reach fault junction (#12)
125	Walk north along lower platform, parallel to strip of vegetation, to snap-shot in time" (#13)
59	Go thru vegetation, towards balancing rock; turn right before rock and climb to rumble in time (#14)
13	Climb a few metres to high point of dome and lone sandalwood tree (#15)
63	Turn sharp right and descend towards vegetated gully; turn left, pass through trees and cross rock to reach two large boulders with tafoni (#16)
76	Turn right, passing left of large pans and walking toward trail-head, beside parallel tram-lines (#17)
140	Some 30 metres before the rock dam reach pan gnammas (#18) , with lichens and mosses
92	Reach rock dam, turn left and descend to trail-head

Hyden 289.5km (Site 14) Norseman 11.8km

Section 13 (Site 13 – Site 14)

WOODLANDS – GEMFIELDS

- Section length:** 33.2 km
Driving time: 20 to 25 minutes
Site time: Woodlands 1 hour; Gemfields 30 minutes
Road surface: Gravel, generally good condition
Site location: *Woodlands* – access track south side of road leads 100 metres to parking & picnic area
Gemfields – access track north side of road leads directly into parking area

Section Description

For those with an eye to the subtle soil-driven variation in eucalypt species this is a fascinating section. The topography in the eastern portion is dominated by rolling rocky hills which support a particular set of eucalypts (see Section Description, Section 14), while further west species such as salmon gum and gimlet are more evident, growing on the deeper loamy soils.

Indeed, this variation can be seen in the hills and valleys in the 10 km to the west of Gemfields – look for the changing bark colour and texture. The effect of fire is also clearly evident, in a number of stands of same-age same-size eucalypts.



Hyden 293.8km (Site 15) Norseman 7.5km

Section 14 (Site 14 – Site 15)

GEMFIELDS – LAKE COWAN LOOKOUT

- Section length:** 4.3 km
Driving time: 5 to 10 minutes
Site time: Gemfields 30 minutes; Lake Cowan 45 minutes
Road surface: Gravel, many crests, some sharp corners
Site location: *Gemfields* – access track north side of road leads directly into parking area
Lake Cowan – access track north side of road leads 100 metres to parking and picnic area on stony ridge with great views over lake

Section Description

Perhaps the most obvious feature of this short section is the series of stony north-south ridges that create a rolling topography with constrained horizons and unique vegetation types. There is little doubt that this country would have been of great interest to early prospectors, and numerous old mine shafts bear witness to their investigations.

This mineralisation supports four major eucalypt species primarily found in the rocky hills around Norseman – *lesouefii*, *dundasii*, *brockwayi* and *torquata*. Another feature is the heavy dull green mid-storey of boree or Goldfields tea-tree (*Melaleuca pauperiflora*).



Information to this map.

Road conditions

Though the Trail is mostly gravel, it is generally suitable for all vehicles, including those towing caravans, providing a suitable safe speed is maintained. However rain can cause the road to be closed - for up to date information, check with local Shire Councils (see back page).

Drive safely

- Watch for wildlife, especially at dawn and dusk;
- Look well ahead for possible trouble spots, and for dust indicating an approaching vehicle;
- Take a break regularly;
- Take care approaching and overtaking road-trains;
- Slow down on corrugated sections and always drive at a speed suited to the prevailing conditions.

Be prepared

- Carry an emergency supply of food and water
- Set off with enough fuel to cover *at least 400 km*
- If you break down **STAY WITH YOUR VEHICLE**
- For more information about outback travel visit the Tread Lightly website: www.treadlightlyaustralia.com.au

Hyden 301.3km (Site 16) Norseman 0km

Section 15 (Site 15 – Site 16)

LAKE COWAN LOOKOUT – WOODLANDS WALK

- Section length:** 7.5 km
Driving time: 5 to 10 minutes
Site time: Lake Cowan 45 minutes; Woodlands Walk 1 hour
Road surface: Gravel, then bitumen through Norseman
Site location: *Lake Cowan* – access track north side of road leads 100 m to parking and picnic area on stony ridge with great views over lake
Woodlands Walk – parking area is just off 'Scenic Drive' (Battery Road) on eastern outskirts of Norseman

Section Description

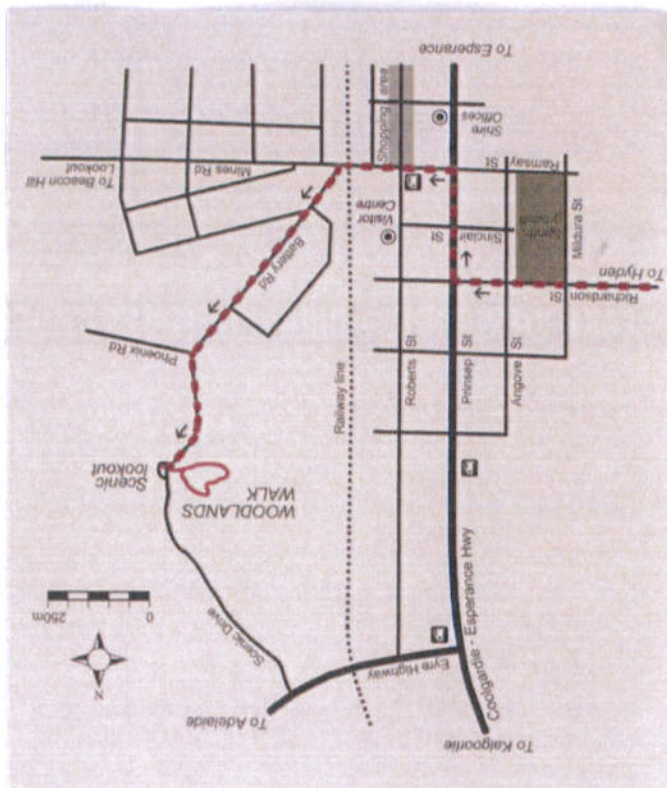
The spectacular drive across the Lake Cowan causeway is the highlight of this short section – regardless of whether the lake happens to contain water or not. The gold mines east of town and the gypsum mine at the south end of the lake are both visible. Be sure to go through Norseman to complete the Trail at the Woodlands Walk!

Pastoralism and people

One of the reasons this country is so intriguing is that there has been virtually no impact by domestic stock animals. Few areas of WA can be considered as 'original' as the land between Hyden and Norseman – hence this landscape offers a unique insight into a pre-European world. But why is this so – where are the pastoralists?

Beyond the 300 mm isohyet (in country that receives less than 12" of rain per year, in the 'old' scale) intensive agriculture is not possible. Here instead pastoralism takes over, with vast areas supporting relatively low stock numbers that graze natural grasses and shrubs. The critical factor in supporting a pastoral enterprise then becomes water, and most 'stations' (pastoral properties) are dependent on bores that access underground supplies year-round.

Through various quirks of geology and geography the area you are driving through does not have readily accessible underground water supplies. Consequently attempts at pastoralism have been almost non-existent. One lease was granted to J.O. Magee in 1954-55, for country immediately west of Lake Johnston. His struggle to provide water for stock is best seen in the remains of the small stone dam on McDermid Rock, presumed to have been built as a stock watering point. The lease was cancelled in 1958. An earlier concept to settle 3500 families between Hyden and Salmon Gums (along the proposed Stileman Railway) would most likely have been a human disaster, had not the Great Depression brought it to a rapid end.



While in Norseman "stop, stay and explore":

- ❖ Discover the Beacon Hill Walk Trail and Federation Lookout
- ❖ Drive the Dundas Coach Road Heritage Trail (50km)
- ❖ Walk the Woodlands Walk, and visit "Hardy Norseman"

In and around Hyden:

- ❖ Visit Mulka's Cave, The Humps, King Rocks and Graham Rock (in addition to Wave Rock, of course!)
- ❖ Enjoy the Lace Place, the Wildlife Park, the Wildflower Shop and other attractions at Wave Rock
- ❖ See the "PeopleScope" sculptures in the main street

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Shire of Dundas	08 9039 1205
Shire of Kondinin	08 9889 1006
Norseman Visitor Centre	08 9039 1071
Wave Rock Information Centre	08 9880 5182
Main Roads WA "Road Conditions"	1800 013 314



SHIRE OF DUNDAS



The Granite and Woodlands Discovery Trail



- Make a special outing of it: 2 days from Hyden to Norseman and return, or 3 to 4 days from Perth to Norseman and back again;
- Combine it with a trip to Kalgoorlie – and explore the Golden Quest Discovery Trail in the northern Goldfields and the Golden Pipeline Heritage Trail on your way back to Perth;
- Use the Trail as your route to or from the Eastern States;
- Or take a circular tour from Perth and include the south west and Esperance too!

