

WELCOME TO THE HERON & SPOONBILL TRAILS

The Serpentine River shapes these trails as it slithers its way down from high up in the Darling Ranges, falls down the Darling Scarp, snakes across flood plains, forms pools, back waters and lakes, twists and then disappears into the Peel Inlet.

The Heron Trail is a tidal all-year-round trail. On the river's lower section is a mixture of sheoaks, paperbarks, river gums, bushland, beaches, backwaters, reserves, jetties and residences. Power boating is popular during holidays, but this river is not as hectic as is the Murray River. There are two familiar herons on this trail. The two-toned White-faced Heron (*Ardea novaehollandiae*) is easily seen as it stalks along the river edges. The Rufous Night Heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*), with its chestnut-brown back and sides, cream belly and three white plumes growing from its blue-black head, is harder to see, as it roosts during daylight in river-bank trees. Other bird life abounds; for example, you may see whistling kites, mountain ducks, stilts, egrets, grey teal and black ducks. Dolphins regularly appear on fishing patrols. One of their spectacular methods is concussing fish by smashing them with wave-breaking force against the river banks.

The Spoonbill Trail is also tidal. Algae may be present; therefore, canoe only in winter and spring, after good rains. The shallow lakes appeal to canoeists who like a remote and easily accessible trail. Samphire flats, low bush, trees and narrow linkages between the lakes give the paddler a feeling of being an explorer. The only reliable comfort or rest sites are those shown on the guide map.

The Yellow-billed Spoonbill (Platalea flavipes) constantly moves its head from side to side when feeding, as though it is vacuuming the shallow fringes and reed beds, filtering water and consuming water insects, crustaceans, fish and molluscs. The bird life on this trail includes the birds listed in Trail No. 3, and more: musk ducks, avocets, ospreys, pelicans and the occasional White-breasted Sea Eagle.

This guide has an 'indicative map' only. For detailed maps, please contact Canoeing WA at: www.wa.canoe.org.au or: ph 9285 8501.

When you explore and enjoy these trails, please respect private and public property.

The Canoe and Kayak Guide to Western Australia by Martin Chambers covers trips from Esperance to Exmouth. Copies are available from canoe retailers, outdoor suppliers and direct from the author, ph: 9385 8371.

TRAIL HINTS

Before using this trail guide, canoeists and kayakers should:

1. have received instruction from a qualified instructor (contact Canoeing WA for details of instructors);
2. be familiar with the Boating Rules and Regulations contained in the official *Western Australian Boating Guide* produced by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, copies available from the department's Marine Office in Mandurah and from boating retailers;
3. know their capabilities, as paddling on calm waters does not qualify anyone to undertake more difficult paddling tasks;
4. be able to swim confidently wearing paddling attire;
5. keep to the right in boating channels and canals;
6. check weather reports, as wind can create hazardous waves, especially on inlets, estuaries, lakes and pools;
7. use open canoes only in the calmest of conditions;
8. be aware of submerged or semi-submerged hazards such as trees and logs;
9. in summer months check with the Shire of Murray or the Mandurah City Council for information about algal bloom;
10. be careful when rivers are flowing fast as more effort is then required to paddle, particularly upstream, and not paddle rivers when they are in flood;
11. watch out for and avoid any snakes swimming rivers or other waterways;
12. take care if using boat ramps as they can be very slippery;
13. recognise that paddling conditions are generally calmer in the morning than in the afternoon;
14. let a responsible person know of their trip plans;
15. when planning trips on calm waters allow for a speed of 4km/h for adults and less for young or inexperienced canoeists; and
16. use insect repellent and/or cover up to protect against mosquitoes.

Phone Contacts

Police:

Life-threatening emergency only 000
Non-emergency 13 1444

Hospitals:

Mandurah, Peel Health Campus 9531 8000
Pinjarra, Murray Hospital 9531 7222

Local government

Mandurah City Council 9550 3777
Shire of Murray 9531 7777

DEC 24 Hour Wildcare Helpline 9474 9055

(for sick & injured wild life, including birds)

SERPENTINE RIVER CANOE GUIDES NOS. 3 & 3A

The Heron Trail & The Spoonbill Trail

Compiled by

Canoe Trail Friends of
Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc.



Sponsored by



The Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc. is a non-profit organisation run by volunteers who wish to promote the establishment and maintenance of recreational canoe trails on the waterways of the Peel Regional Park and to advocate awareness of and care for the natural environment.

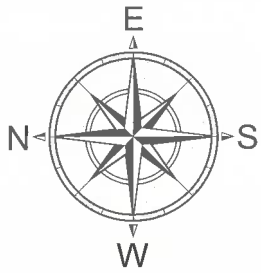
The Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc. does not accept any responsibility or liability for any loss, injury, death, damage, liability, cost or expense that may be suffered, sustained or incurred by any person relying on any aspect of this guide or making use of any trail named or described herein.

Inquiries: send a **stamped** self-addressed envelope to:
PO Box 3188, Mandurah East, WA 6210 or visit:

<http://canoetrailfriendsmandurahandpinjarra.blogspot.com>



(Indicative Map Only)



Joins Guide No. 4



6. Beach canoe launch site with car park 100m downstream from Riverside Gardens Boat Ramp, Wanda Rd, Greenfields. Picnic shelters, bbq, reserve, boardwalk to lake upstream (600m), river walk downstream (1.5kms).
7. All lakes and waterways upstream from Riverside Gardens are very shallow and suitable for canoeing only in winter and spring after good rains. May contain algae during warmer months.
8. Rest/comfort site.
9. Rest/comfort site.

Overhead Power Lines

Suggested Excursions

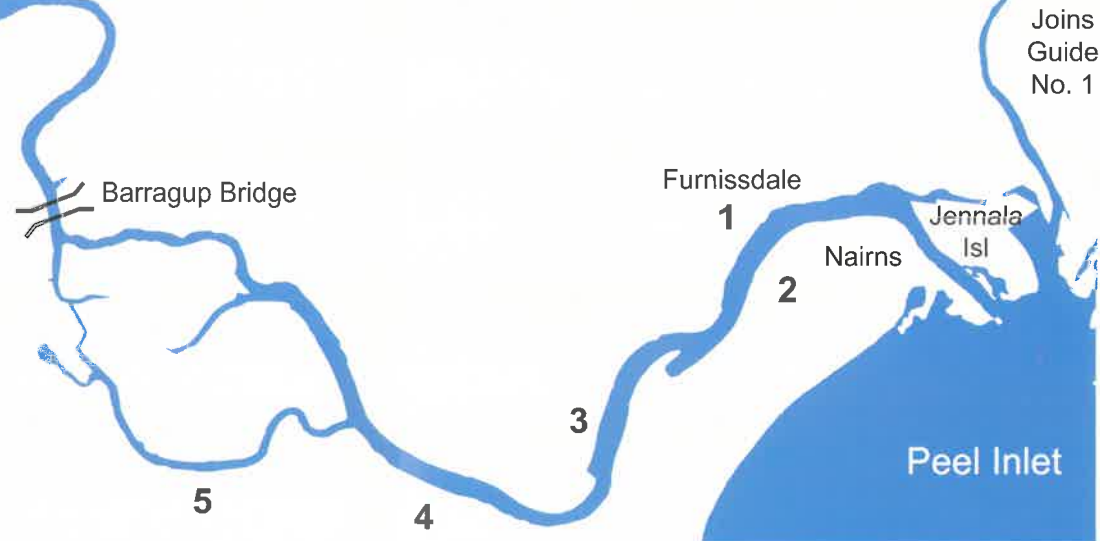
Heron Trail

- From either 1 or 2 to 4 and return (3.5kms).
- From 6 one way to either 1 or 2 (6.5kms) or 3 (5.5kms) with vehicle pick-up at destination.
- From 4 to 6 and return via river (10kms).
- From 6 via 1 or 2 to 3 (The Mill) on Canoe Trail Guide 1 (Darter Trail). Return to 1 or 2 (11kms) for vehicle pick-up.

Spoonbill Trail

- From 6 to 8 and return (12kms).
- From 6 via 8 to 9 and return (17kms). Note: Canoe only after good rains.
- Refer to Trail Hint 6 over page for advice on wind.

1. Beach canoe-launching site 30m downstream of boat ramp, cnr Riverside Dr & Furnissdale Rd, Furnissdale.
2. Small beach canoe-launching site 400m upstream of boat ramp, cnr Nairn Rd and Bertram St, Coodanup.
3. Small beach-launching site 60m downstream from small carpark off Riverside Dr. Just over 1km upstream from Furnissdale (1). Reserve, picnic tables, toilets.
4. Riverview boat ramp, Birchley Rd, Coodanup. Picnic tables/shelters, reserve.
5. Anabranh of Serpentine River. (Not recommended for canoeing due to obstructions.)



Joins Guide No. 1