

WELCOME TO THE MOUNTAIN DUCK TRAIL

The Mountain Duck Trail is shaped by the Serpentine River as the river slithers its way from its headwaters about 7km north-east of North Bannister, falls down the Darling Scarp, snakes across flood plains, forms pools, backwaters and lakes, and then twists before it disappears into the Peel Inlet. If you want to experience 'paddling karma', then the top end of this trail is for you, with its expansive pools linked by short, scenic river sections which become racy in the wet seasons. The shallowness of the pools means there are rarely any power boats; there will be just you, the birds, the bush, the sky and the sound of your paddle.

Paperbarks, sheoaks and river gums are to be found here, and there are extensive reed beds throughout the pools. In fact, this area is held in such high esteem that sea kayakers undertake an annual pilgrimage to enjoy its abundant natural charms. A bonus for them is that there is little urban intrusion. However, even in this sublime area you have to be wary. The river level can rise considerably and has been seen to be at least one metre above the private bridge at the northern end of the trail. Navigation may be difficult when pools are flooded and the water spreads onto adjacent land.

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 this trail, please respect private and public property.

The beautiful Mountain Duck (Tadorna tadornoides) lives mainly on large waterways and not on mountains, as its name implies. This trail with its wide pools suits the Mountain Duck, and it honks to show it is happy – no quacking noises for it! And why wouldn't it be happy? There is plenty of food for it in this location, with weed, algae and numerous insects and their larvae. The Mountain Duck has a black bill, a glossy, greenish-black head and neck and a white collar around the base of its neck. The female is white around the eyes and bill, and both sexes have dark-brown eyes. The breast is cinnamon brown, the belly is dark brown and the wings are multi-coloured. The plumage also has showy patches of white, rich chestnut and olive green. The legs and feet are dark grey.

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.

3/09

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 only000
 Non-emergency13 1444

Hospitals:

Mandurah, Peel Health Campus9531 8000
 Pinjarra, Murray Hospital9531 7222

Local government

Mandurah City Council9550 3777
 Shire of Murray9531 7777

DEC 24 Hour Wildcare Helpline9474 9055
 (for sick & injured wild life, including birds)

SERPENTINE RIVER CANOE GUIDE NO. 4

The Mountain Duck Trail

Compiled by

Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc.



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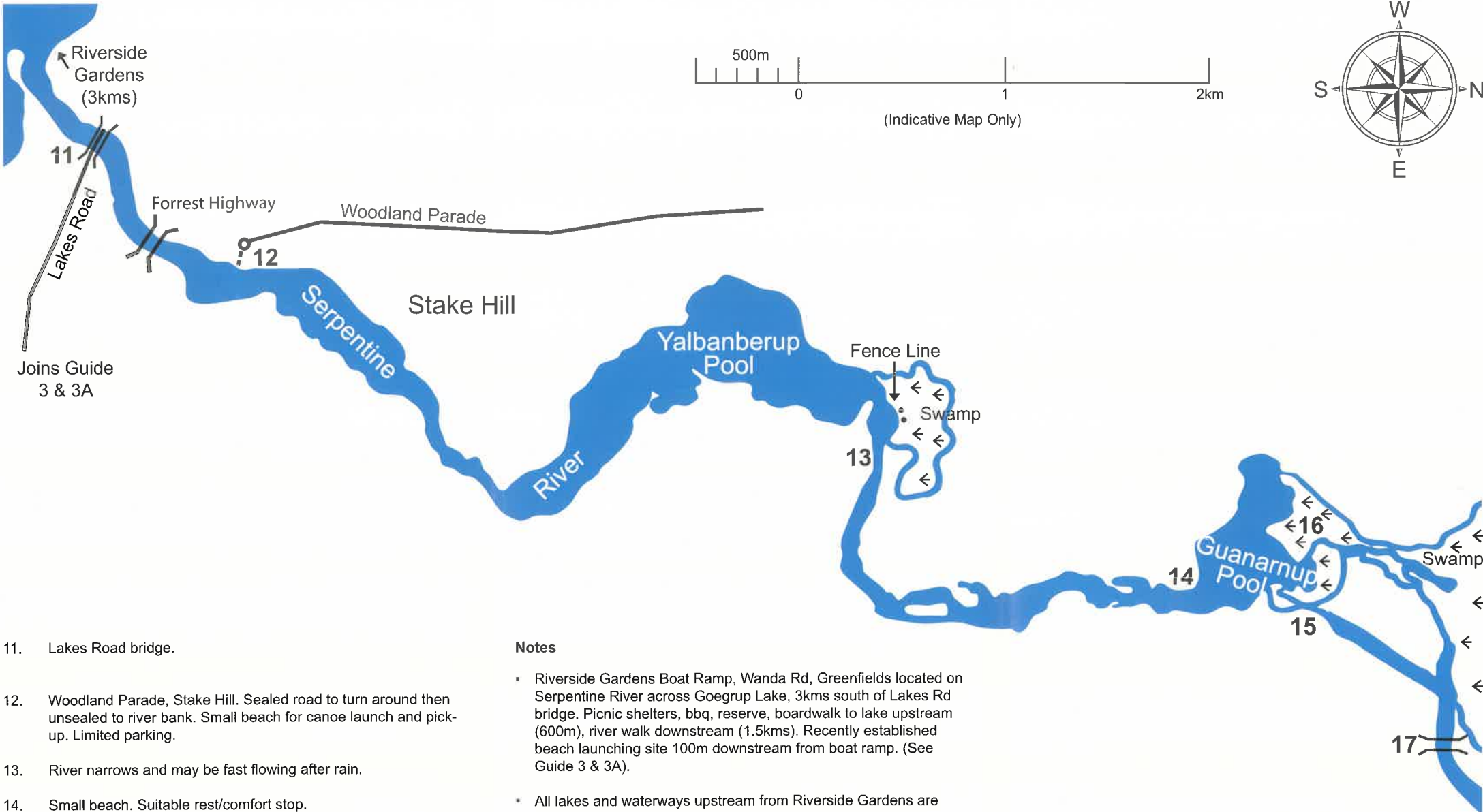


The Canoe Trail Friends of Mandurah & Pinjarra Inc. is a non-profit organisation run by volunteers who wish to promote the establishment and maintenance of recreational canoe trails on the waterways of the Peel Regional Park and to advocate awareness of and care for the natural environment.

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>



- 11. Lakes Road bridge.
- 12. Woodland Parade, Stake Hill. Sealed road to turn around then unsealed to river bank. Small beach for canoe launch and pick-up. Limited parking.
- 13. River narrows and may be fast flowing after rain.
- 14. Small beach. Suitable rest/comfort stop.
- 15. Lower end of canal narrow and may be fast flowing. Snags and overheads may make this route dangerous, particularly after rain.
- 16. Preferred route to upper Serpentine.
- 17. Private bridge. Rest/comfort stop.

Notes

- Riverside Gardens Boat Ramp, Wanda Rd, Greenfields located on Serpentine River across Goegrup Lake, 3kms south of Lakes Rd bridge. Picnic shelters, bbq, reserve, boardwalk to lake upstream (600m), river walk downstream (1.5kms). Recently established beach launching site 100m downstream from boat ramp. (See Guide 3 & 3A).
- All lakes and waterways upstream from Riverside Gardens are shallow to very shallow and suitable for canoeing only late in Autumn, Winter and Spring after good rains. May contain algae during warmer months.
- Allow extra paddling time for navigation, which can prove difficult in some areas.
- Rest/comfort stops are limited and may be difficult to access, depending on river levels.
- Obstructions may occur in some sections of the river.
- Refer to Trail Hint 6 over page for advice on wind.

Suggested Excursions

- From 6 (Riverside Gardens) to 12 and return (8.5kms).
- From 6 (Riverside Gardens) to either 14 or 17 and return (21kms and 26kms).
- From 12 to either 14 or 17 and return (12.5kms and 17.5kms).
- From 12 to Heron and Spoonbill Trail excursions (See Guides 3 and 3A).