Boasting 26 parkland areas and reserves, the City of Perth is described by many as a parkland oasis. The beautifully crafted green open spaces that cover one tenth of the city area combine heritage, public art and water features to offer a break from the bustle of city life. Take some time out to experience the tranquillity of Perth's open spaces.

GETTING AROUND

Getting around Perth's parklands need not cost a cent. The modern CAT buses running on four routes are a great way to travel around the city. All CAT stops have distinctive stands and are easily recognizable with real-time passenger information that tells you when the next bus is due. You can also take advantage of the Free Transit Zone (FTZ) which operates on regular bus services within the city boundaries. The FTZ bus boundaries are detailed on a map available from Transperth and signposts are displayed at the route stops.

For further information on public transport, visit the Transperth InfoCentres at Perth Underground, Esplanade Busport, Roe Street Bus Station and Perth Station. Call 13 62 13 or check the website www.transperth.wa.gov.au.

1 Stirling Gardens
Corner Barrack Street & St Georges Terrace

Stirling Gardens is the oldest gardens in the city. First used by colonial botanist James Drummond as an acclimatisation garden in the 1830s, the reserve opened as a botanical garden in 1845. Botanical gardens were used to promote botanical learning, horticultural skill and civic pride and also provided a green space for those who could not afford to establish their own gardens. Stirling Gardens acted as Perth’s botanical gardens until 1960 when the Kings Park Botanic Gardens were officially established.

Stirling Gardens are named after Captain James Stirling, who founded Perth and established the Swan River Colony in 1829. Kangaroo sculptures, a water feature and the Grade II listed classical crescent, Stirling Street and Curduroy, are some of the interesting aspects of the parkland. At the corner of Stirling Gardens, near St George’s Terrace and Barrack Street, the statue of Alexander Forrest, who was both an explorer and an early Mayor of the city, stands guard over the gardens entrance.

2 Supreme Court Gardens
Corner Barrack Street & Riverside Drive

Harking with the Stirling Gardens are the Supreme Court Gardens, which contain both the Supreme Court (1903) and the oldest building in the City of Perth. Now known as the Francis Burt Law Education Centre, this was the only building suitable for public meetings when it was built in 1836. It performed various functions in those early days—as a church, a law court and as the Perth Boys’ School. School until 1850. The building now houses a small museum which is open from 10am to 2.30pm Wednesday to Friday.

The Supreme Court Gardens are semi-enclosed by mature trees and gardens. Events such as Opera in the Park and Carols by Candlelight, plus some high profile ticketed concerts, are held here in the summer months.

3 Langley Park
Corner Barrack Street & Riverside Drive

Langley Park was created by land reclamation between 1926 and 1955, and was used as an airstrip when Major Norman Broadly pioneered civil aviation in Western Australia in the 1920s. The airstrip was renamed Langley Park after the Acting Lord Mayor, TW Langley, in 1907.

Today, Langley Park is a popular vantage point for the annual Australia Day Skyworks, as well as the venue for many sporting events, exhibitions and markets.

4 Ozone Reserve
1 Adelaide Terrace

Ozone Reserve continues the sweep of green riverside land towards the western end of the city. Recent works on the reserve have introduced an environmentally friendly impoundment lake. Lake Vasta: named in recognition of Perth’s Italian sister city.

5 Point Peron
Corner Riverside Drive & The Causeway

This artificial wetland, accessed by a series of interconnecting boardwalks, serves a number of purposes. Stormwater is filtered through the wetland before flowing into the Swan River. Helping to preserve the delicate balance of the river, native reeds have been planted to attract birds and wildlife to the area. Interpretative works allow visitors to gain an insight into the significance of the site from an environmental, historical and indigenous perspective.

Picture developments will include restaurants, cafes, beach and picnic areas, a children’s playground, short-term boat moorings and a jetty for ferries providing river cross-

6 Heirisson Island
Just off the Causeway

The island over which the Causeway runs is thought to have been named after a crew member sailing with the French navigator-explorer, Captain Hamelin in 1801. Francois-Antoine Heirisson explored and mapped parts of the Swan River Colony, including the island. After the Swan River Colony’s foundation, the island became a base for training and exercising horses stabled in the Francis Burt Law Education Centre, this was the only building suitable for public meetings when it was built in 1836. It performed various functions in those early days—as a church, a law court and as the Perth Boys’ School. School until 1850. The building now houses a small museum which is open from 10am to 2.30pm Wednesday to Friday.

The early settlers of the Swan River Colony decided to bridge the Swan River using Heirisson Island as a causeway. Although the first bridge was washed away soon after completion, a new causeway was built by convicts in 1863. Although work commenced in the 1930s to fill in swampy areas between the mudflats, Heirisson Island did not take on the shape we see today until the 1950s. At this stage the river banks were realigned, road beds built and it was brought up from the river bed to create a single island.

Today, Heirisson Island is home to a colony of Western Grey kangaroos, which can be seen in the enclosed southern part of the island. The statue of Heirisson’s leader, Lagig,was also located on the island, which was a significant hunting ground for indigenous people.

7 Queens Gardens
Corner Hay Street & Plain Street

The site of Queens Gardens has been closely associated with the physical and social development of Perth. Initially, it was used for recreation purposes including horse racing and later as a clay mine and brickworks. The bricks produced between 1850 and 1855 went into several of Perth’s most prominent buildings. The main features of the gardens include lakes filled with water lilies (the old clay pits), mass displays of flowers and a replica of the Peter Pan statue in Kensington Gardens, London. The classic English style of the enclosed Queens Gardens makes this a popular venue for weddings.

8 Wellington Square
Corner Wellington Street & Bennett Street

Wellington Square is originally a swamp, like much of the land north of Wellington Street. Just was drained and established as a public reserve in the 1830s to provide a space for training and exercising horseflesh stabled in the area. In 1899 the ground was cleared to make a cricket field and two pitches were installed. It was formally named in honour of the Duke of Wellington, the British Prime Minister at the time of the Swan River Colony’s foundation. Among locals though, it became popularly known as ‘The Rec’. Wellington Square continues its function as a recreation ground today, with cricket clubs and horse stables making use of the facility all year round. The park also has fitness equipment, which is accompanied by an exercise instruction board.

Boating, fishing, swimming, the city’s pristine beaches and the Opera House are all experiences that await a visit to this magical city.
Adjacent to Claisebrook Cove in East Perth, Mardup Park provides a wonderful backdrop for recreational activities. Cyclists, rollerbladers and pedestrians favour the wide paths that skirt the river’s edge while family groups that flock to the area make good use of the children’s play area and basketball courts.

The Northbridge Piazza is home to Perth’s very first free outdoor movie theatre. Located in the heart of Northbridge, the piazza grounds consist of the LEI Superscreen, a multi-purpose community building, a vertical stage and a grassed area. The Superscreen showcases a variety of features from the latest films to cult classics, creative presentations, sports and music. The grass and staked areas play host to a variety of events including festivals, performances, exhibitions, sporting events, live music, talks and other cultural activities. The Northbridge Piazza is a major attraction operating 24 hours a day.

The Plateau (public square) on Lake Street celebrates the contribution of the Greek community to the Northbridge area. An eye-catching artwork, Nexus, incorporates columns symbolizing classical Greek architecture. Public squares are a central feature of many Greek villages, offering an important meeting place for community members. The Lake Street Plateau will form the focal point for Greek businesses, including restaurants, in years to come.

Named after architect and former City of Perth Councillor Harold Boas, these gardens feature several lawns and a waterfall. Dense shrubbery, large grassed areas and ample shade trees; many over 100 years old; give this park its character. Harold Boas Gardens is popular for wedding ceremonies and is a great site for a relaxed breakfast or delicious dinners. The Black Swan Brewery site at the foot of Kings Park now contains luxury apartments and a number of restaurants and is a great site for a relaxed breakfast or delicious dinners. Further around the river, Matilda Bay has been a much loved picnic and paddling spot for generations of West Australians, with shady trees to take the bite out of the midsummer sun.