Plants flower year round following rain, but most spectacularly in mid-winter when blankets of mulla mulla and Sturt desert pea cover the landscape.

Wildlife is abundant in areas of the park close to water. Rock holes, riparian zones and river pools support a thriving ecosystem. On the floodplains, many species of animal adapted to aridity can be frequently seen, and the transition zone between moist and dry environments is particularly diverse. Plants flower year round following rain, but most spectacularly in mid-winter when blankets of mulla mulla and Sturt desert pea cover the landscape.

Climate
The Pilbara is located within the arid tropics. During the summer, temperatures rise above 40°C and cyclones can strike. The cool season, between May and August, experiences little rain, with daytime temperatures around 26°C. Nights at this time of year can be cool, so be prepared.

5. Minimise campfire impacts
Ground fires and solid fuel fires are not permitted. Dead wood is part of an arid ecosystem, providing food and homes for wildlife. Leave the natural environment as you find it. Several weeds threaten the park; please brush seeds from clothing and equipment before moving on.

4. Leave what you find
Do not disturb animals, plants or rocks. Pets and Firearms are not permitted. Please do not feed kangaroos or other wildlife, or approach them. Please do not use soap in streams and pools as it kills wildlife.

3. Dispose of waste properly
Please take your litter with you. The toilets at Millstream have composting or isolation systems, which can be destroyed by chemicals in blackwater from portable toilets. As such, do not empty portable toilets into park toilets. Use sullage points provided in the towns and Main Roads roadside stops.

2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
Follow the signs in the park. Stay on the roads and trails marked on the park maps. Camp only in designated campgrounds. Spinifex is fragile; it is easily damaged by indiscriminate driving, parking and walking, and can take many years to re-grow.

1. Plan ahead and prepare
There is no fuel at Millstream and the public telephone only accepts pre-paid phone cards. Roads may be closed after heavy rain. Check travel conditions with the department’s Karratha office on (08) 9182 2000 or the Shire of Ashburton on (08) 9189 1029. The ranger’s office can be contacted on (08) 9184 5144.

For more information, contact the Millstream Homestead Visitor Centre on (08) 9184 5144 or visit the website at www.dpaw.wa.gov.au. 

Care for the park and follow the Leave No Trace principles.

Information and walk trail guide
Department of Parks and Wildlife
PO Box 835, Karratha WA 6714
Phone: (08) 9184 5144
Fax: (08) 9184 5146
Pilbara Regional Office
Department of Parks and Wildlife
Cnr Anderson and Lambert Road, Karratha Industrial Estate
PO Box 835, Karratha WA 6714
Phone: (08) 9182 2000
Fax: (08) 9144 1118
State Operational Headquarters
Department of Parks and Wildlife
17 Dick Penny Avenue, Kensington WA 6151
Phone: (08) 9334 6333
www.dpaw.wa.gov.au

Front cover: Crossing Pool. Photo – DPW and Tourism WA
More information
National park rangers are always glad to help make your visit more enjoyable and informative. They regularly visit camping and day-use areas so please have a chat with them.

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Information current at May 2014. This document is available in alternative formats on request.
Deep Reach Pool

George River Gorge

traditional Aboriginal custodians.

Deep Reach is very sacred to the Yindjibarndi people — please respect

Swimming is provided at Deep Reach Day Use Area. A 200m walk

Dogs and fires are not permitted in the camping area at any time.

Warrunghunha Trail

This trail begins at Miliyanha Campground and ends at Deep Reach Pool. The surface is slightly undulating, flat to stony ground. Cyclists must dismount at Cliff Lookout and walk 300m, as this section is pedestrian use only. The track is wide but care should be taken

Safe walking tips

When walking in the park wear a hat, broad spectrum sun

Avoid dehydration each person needs to drink plenty of water.

When walking in the park wear a hat, broad spectrum sun

Walking in the park wear a hat, broad spectrum sun

Millstream trails

Homestead Walk

750m – 30 minutes return – Class 2

This trail follows a compacted gravel path through the Millstream Wetlands, and is suitable for all fitness levels. A series of interpretive panels tell the story of the Millstream Wetlands. Swimming is not permitted in the pool or channels.

Red Roo dual-use walk/cycle Trail

9km one way – 3 hour walk/45 minute cycle – Class 3

This trail begins at Miliyanha Campground and ends at Deep Reach Pool. The surface is slightly undulating, flat to stony ground. Cyclists must dismount at Cliff Lookout and walk 300m, as this section is pedestrian use only. The track is wide but care should be taken when riding. Pedestrians have right of way.

Stargazers Link Trail to Deep Reach

5km return – Class 2

A 500m track links Stargazers Campground to the Red Roo Trail. A further 2km along the Red Roo Trail is Deep Reach.

Cliff top walk

600m return, allow 20 minutes – Class 2

A 300m cliff top walk links three vantage points, from which you can view the Fortescue River and the distant Hamersley Ranges. This trail can be accessed by vehicles from Millstream Road.

Chichester Range trails

Mount Herbert and Python Pool are two of the main attractions in the Chichester Range. The landscape is dominated by rolling hills, hummocks of spinifex, white-barked snappy gums on the uplands and pale coolabahs along creeksides. Animal and plant diversity is high near permanent pools.

Python Pool

100m – 20 minutes return – Class 3

From the car park, follow the trail along a dry creek bed to Python Pool, a permanent freshwater plunge pool located at the base of a cliff in the Chichester Range escarpment. The water is often fine for swimming but algae growth can be common following periods of low rainfall. The trail is uneven and story.

McKenzie Spring

4.5km – 2.5 hour return – Class 3

From the Mount Herbert carpark, follow the Chichester Range Camel Trail from Mount Herbert to McKenzie Spring. This was once a watering hole for camel and bullock teams and is a pleasant surprise for walkers, contrasting markedly with the surrounding arid hills. The spring is not suitable for swimming. The trail includes short steep sections and the ground can be uneven with loose surfaces. Return along the same route. A moderate level of fitness is required.

Mount Herbert Summit

600m – 25 minutes return – Class 3

From the Mount Herbert car park follow the Chichester Range Camel Trail to the base of Mount Herbert, and then follow the track to the top of the mountain for a panoramic view. There are short steep sections and some steps. The ground is uneven with loose rocks.

Chichester Range Camel Trail

8km – 2 hours one way, 16km – 6 hours return – Class 4

This trail crosses the rugged basalt and sandstone terrain of the Chichester Range. It includes steep gradients, natural obstacles and consists of variable surfaces including loose rocks. A good level of fitness is required. If you are walking both ways, it is recommended to begin at Python Pool. If you are only walking one way, start at Mount Herbert and have a vehicle meet you at Python Pool.

Cameleers Trail

4km – 1.5 hours return – Class 4

Follow the trail towards Python Pool, turn left at the sign and head up the hill along this steep trail. This hill has caused camel and bullock teams some grief over the years. There are natural obstacles including washouts in some spots, and the surface is loose and rocky. Take time to appreciate the work that went into its early construction. Retaining walls and stone culverts hint at the effort involved in maintaining a route like this.

Fees

Park entrance fees and camping fees apply. Please pay entrance fees at the self-registration park entry stations. Alternatively you can purchase a park pass from the Department of Environment and Conservation. There are no fees for vehicles from Millstream Road.

Water

Fresh water is available at the visitor centre. The water is untreated and

Swimming

Swimming is provided at Deep Reach Day Use Area. A 200m walk

Camping fees

These are payable at the self-registration stations in the campgrounds or via the camp hosts. Holders of the following cards are entitled to the specific concessional rates: Senior’s Card, Disability Support Pension, Age Pension, Disability Support Pension (blind), Carer Allowance and Companion Card.

Camping

Camping is available at Millstream and Stargazers campgrounds. Millstream has a camp kitchen, toilets and is generator-friendly. It has some shade in the mornings and afternoons. Stargazers is a more open site and generators are not permitted. A gas BBQ and tobbles are provided. Both campgrounds are suitable for tent camping up to very large caravans and motorhomes, and can be accessed by 4WD vehicles in good weather.

Camping at George River Gorge has access for 4WDs only. Allow 3 hours to travel from Millstream Homestead to the gorge. Use caution when driving, as water levels are highly variable in the river pools and may pose a safety

Picnicking

Gas barbeques are available in the day-use areas at the Millstream Homestead and Deep Reach Pool.

Through the past

Yindjibarndi people

The Millstream Chichester area is a very significant Indigenous cultural site in northern Western Australia. Its cultural and mythological importance stems from thousands of years of occupation, with Millstream being the home of the mythological serpent or snake, whose presence is still strongly felt at Nhangangunha (Deep Reach Pool). All the points are significant in this regard and warrant a high level of respect because of their spiritual and mythological importance.

The broad area of land straddling the Fortescue River (Yandu Nyirrunga) from the Hornsby Range through to the Chichester escarpment is the homeland of the Yindjibarndi people. Yindjibarndi people’s lands run from the Chichester escarpment northward to the sea.

Aside from its highly important spiritual significance, Millstream was an important campsite for inter-tribal meetings. The Fortescue River (Yandu Nyirrunga) provided food and water, particularly during dry months. Along the river, Indigenous people had a varied diet of red meat, fish, reptiles, grubs, eggs, browsing ants and root vegetables. Extensive areas were burnt to create natural paddocks and attract kangaroos. The dry climate meant that knowledge of the locations of waterholes was important. The Indigenous people (Ngardangard) were skilled in land management and werenomadic within their traditional boundaries.

Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma people continue to come to the park to spend time on country and to carry out customary activities.

They are also represented on the Millstream Chichester Park Council, which, in association with the Department of Parks and Wildlife, manages the strategic direction of the park.

Millstream pastoral station

Millstream was named in 1861 by the explorer FT Gregory, who reported its favourable grazing prospects. The pastoral lease, first taken up in 1865, changed hands several times before it was taken over by Les Gordon in 1925. In its heyday the station covered more than 400,000 ha and ran 55,000 sheep. The present homestead, built in 1920, housed the Gordon family until 1964. It was a tavern between 1975 and 1986, when the land was purchased by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, now the Department of Parks and Wildlife. The homestead is now a visitor centre.