Bold Park

1983 – The State government’s “System 6 Study” formally recognised the importance of the park’s conservation, scenic, educational and recreational value.

1987 – A proposal for a 19ha housing development along Stephenson Avenue sparked a strong community response and the Friends of Bold Park Bushland were formed. Lobbying for a fully protected Bold Park continued until 1998.

1994 – The City of Perth was divided into smaller councils including the Town of Cambridge, which adopted management of Bold Park as a conservation reserve.

1998 – The park was enlarged to 437ha and given “A Class” Reserve status. Management was transferred to the newly formed Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority.

Bold Park... Today
The Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) works with the Friends of Bold Park Bushland and the community to implement the Bold Park Management Plan: to conserve and enhance the park’s conservation, landscape, recreation and education values.

With a strong focus on conservation and ecological restoration this requires programs targeting: weed control, native seed collection, planting of local native species and raising awareness of conservation issues through education for the public.

Photos courtesy of the Battye Library, BGPA, N. Bougher, B. Knott, and J. Thomas.
Natural Environment

Soil types, topography and hydrology all influence the plant diversity within Bold Park.

A high, north-south dune ridge with young, shallow soils over limestone runs parallel to the coast. The dune ridges were formed when sand was blown from the sea onto the coast. Over time rain water leached the calcium from shell fragments binding sand particles to form limestone. These rocky outcrops support low heath which contains a great array of plant species.

The eastern side of the ridge features valleys with deeper soils, where tall eucalypts thrive. The Jarrah and Marri woodland in these valleys merges into the Flooded Gum wetland which surrounds Camel and Perry Lakes. These lakes are part of a network and are interconnected by subsurface water movement.

Groundwater levels in the region have dropped due to an increase in bores and a decrease in rainfall, limiting the movement of water between lakes. Today, Camel Lake only contains open water if sufficient winter rainfall occurs.
Jarrah & Marri Woodland

The woodland surrounding the Camel Lake Heritage Trail is dominated by Jarrah and Marri trees.

Marri has rough patchy bark, often oozing red gum, with large urn shaped fruit known as honkey nuts.

Jarrah has stringy bark in vertical strips, small nuts and long leaves.

Parrots, such as the Australian Ringneck, are fond of the seeds, nuts and insects in the woodland.

Limestone Heath

Limestone heath communities occur on ridges and over shallow limestone. They are typically low, dense and diverse. Comprised of Wattles, Cockies’ Tongues and other shrubby plants, these areas provide ideal food and protection for Fairy-wren, Button-quails and other wildlife seeking shelter.

Peaches and Cream

Keep an eye out for colourful fungi, especially in the wetter months.

Flooded Gum Wetland

The lower Camel Lake area is a seasonal wetland. It is dominated by Flooded Gums which have smooth white and grey bark and provide habitat for a wide diversity of insects and birds. Sedges and rushes grow densely around the wetland, creating the perfect habitat for frogs, ducks and insects.

Listen out for frog and bird calls.

Banksia & Tuart Woodland

Most of the park is Banksia & Tuart woodland. The Slender and Menzies Banksias are the two dominant species in the woodland. They flower at different times of the year, providing an alternating source of nectar for wildlife.

Tuart trees have pale grey bark and ice cream cone shaped flower buds. They offer habitat for a vast array of wildlife and fungi.

The woodland is important for birds which nest in tree hollows or build stick nests like the Tawny Frogmouth. Many species of insects and larvae also inhabit woodland plants.

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PEOPLE AND BOLD PARK

NYOONGAR PEOPLE

Nyoongar people have lived in the south west of Western Australia for over 45,000 years. They lived in harmony with their natural environment and led a sustainable life, moving from place to place as the seasons and resources dictated. Plants, mammals, reptiles and insects were used for food, shelter, clothing, medicine and crafting implements.

Djiridji, Sandplain Zamia, Macrozamia fraseri

This ancient plant bears stunning but toxic red fruit named bayu.

After careful preparation by being soaked in running water and then buried, the red flesh was crushed and cooked before being eaten.

Balga, Grasstree, Xanthorrhoea preissii

The flower stalks were used as spears and leaves were used for weaving and thatching. Insect larvae, a protein rich food, were collected from inside the trunk.

Marri, Corymbia calophylla

The resin of the tree was used to treat upset stomachs and skin conditions.

Wonnil, Peppermint Tree, Agonis flexuosa

Leaves were crushed between the hands to release oil, which was rubbed on the chest to treat colds.

Kardar, Gould’s Monitor Varanus gouldii

These lizards were hard to catch, but provided an important source of meat.

Yonga, Grey Kangaroo, Macropus fuliginosus

Kangaroos no longer live in Bold Park, but would have formed a staple of the Nyoongar diet, providing both food and skins which were used for cloaks and bags.

POST SETTLEMENT HISTORY

The arrival and endeavours of early settlers had a dramatic influence on the landscape, shaping the park we see today. Follow the timeline to see how settlement has changed Bold Park.

1830s – Limestone was quarried within Bold Park and kiln fired to produce lime for mortar. This included the north side of Reabold Hill, which is now the Quarry Amphitheatre.

1844 – Walter Padbury bought Reabold Hill and the surrounding lands, known as the Limekilns Estate, to conduct his butchering business.

1875 – Ernest Giles rested his camels after his historic trek from Port Augusta to Perth, giving Camel Lake its name.

1879 – Joseph Perry purchased the estate, adding a horse breaking and stock dealing business.

1890s – Camel Lake became a temporary quarantine station for camels imported for transportation to and from the Goldfields.

1917 – The City of Perth purchased the Limekilns Estate (1234 acres)

1936 – It is declared that Bold Park be set aside for the people of Perth forever.

1970s – Walking along trails within Bold Park became a popular activity in the 1970s and 80s.