



Monkey Mia & the Central West

POP 55,000

Includes ➔

Batavia Coast	167
Geraldton	168
Kalbarri	171
Shark Bay	175
Monkey Mia	179
Gascoyne Coast	180

Best Places for Sunset

- ➔ Steep Point (p176)
- ➔ Fishermens Lookout (p167)
- ➔ Red Bluff (p175)
- ➔ Shark Bay Hotel (p178)
- ➔ HMAS Sydney II Memorial (p168)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Gnaraloo Station (p182)
- ➔ Dongara Breeze Inn (p167)
- ➔ Eco Abrolhos (p173)
- ➔ Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort (p179)
- ➔ Hamelin Outback Station Stay (p176)

Why Go?

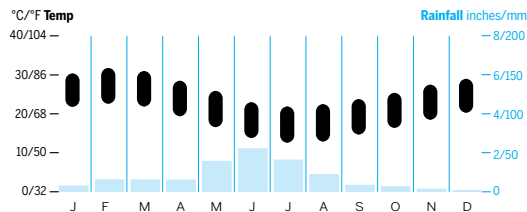
The pristine coastline and sheltered turquoise waters of World Heritage-listed Shark Bay draw tourists and marine life from around the world. Aside from the dolphins of Monkey Mia, the bay's submerged sea-grass meadows host dugongs, rays, sharks and turtles. On land, rare marsupials take refuge in remote national parks, and limestone cliffs, red sand and salt lakes litter a stark interior.

Further south, the gorges of Kalbarri invite adventurers to explore their depths, while wildflowers carpet the plains, and ospreys wheel away from battered Indian Ocean cliffs as humpback whales migrate south.

Veggies are ripening in Carnarvon as anglers and boardriders check the tides, and windsurfers are waiting for the 'Doctor' (strong afternoon sea breeze) to blow. In Geraldton, cool cafes, weekend markets and an excellent museum combine with Indian Ocean views along the city's wonderfully revamped foreshore.

When to Go

Monkey Mia



Jun–Aug The winter swells pump the breaks off Gnaraloo and Quobba.

Aug & Sep Kalbarri and surrounds erupt in wildflowers.

Nov–Feb Windsurfers clutch their sails from Geraldton to Carnarvon.



Monkey Mia & the Central West Highlights

- 1** Watching the wild dolphins feed at **Monkey Mia** (p179).
- 2** Taking in gorgeous viewpoints, or canoeing or abseiling the deep gorges, at **Kalbarri National Park** (p174).
- 3** Surfing the Tombstones break at **Gnaraloo** (p182).
- 4** Driving out to the mainland's most westerly tip, **Steep Point** (p176).
- 5** Scouting for dugongs on a boat trip out of Monkey Mia in **Shark Bay** (p175).
- 6** Diving on ancient shipwrecks, or taking in the reef from the air, at the **Houtman Abrolhos Islands** (p173).
- 7** Spotting marine life from a coastal walk in the **Francois Peron National Park** (p177).
- 8** Checking out the first-rate foreshore regeneration in **Geraldton** (p168) and getting a dose of 'city' treats.
- 9** Checking out the surrealist rosy hues of **Pink Lake** (p171).