

## SHARK BAY WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

### FOUR NATURAL CRITERIA FOR OUV

#### CRITERIA (vii)

**To contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance**

- ◆ Stromatolites
- ◆ Hypersaline environment of Hamelin Pool
- ◆ Faure sill
- ◆ Wooramel seagrass bank
- ◆ Coastal scenery - Zuytdorp cliffs, Dirk Hartog Is, Peron Peninsula, Heirisson and Bellefin Prongs
- ◆ Fragum beaches of L'haridon Bight
- ◆ Inundated birridas and lagoons such as Big Lagoon.
- ◆ Strongly contrasting colours of the dunes/cliffs, beaches and adjacent ocean of Peron Peninsula
- ◆ Abundance of marine fauna (dugongs, dolphins, sharks, rays, turtles and fish)
- ◆ Annual wildflower season display.

#### CRITERIA (viii)

**To be outstanding examples representing the major stages of the earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features.**

- ◆ Stromatolites and microbial mats of Hamelin pool
- ◆ Hamelin Pool and L'haridon Bight and Holocene deposits

#### CRITERIA (ix)

**To be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.**

##### *Marine Environment*

- ◆ Unique hydrological structure, banks and sills, steep salinity gradients, three biotic zones
- ◆ Faure sill
- ◆ Hypersaline environment of Hamelin Pool
- ◆ Microbial communities
- ◆ Fragum eragatum shell deposits
- ◆ High genetic biodiversity (e.g. snapper, venerid clams, bivalves)
- ◆ Seagrass meadows, and their role in the evolution of the marine environment
- ◆ Wooramel seagrass bank, expanse of meadows and diversity of seagrass species
- ◆ Carbonate deposits and sediments
- ◆ Northern limit of transition region between temperate and tropical marine environments, resulting in high species diversity (e.g. 323 fish species, 218 bivalve species, and 80 coral species)

***Terrestrial Environment***

- ◆ Botanical province transition zone, most pronounced in the southern parts of Nanga and Tamala
- ◆ Range limits (145 plant species at northern limit, 39 species at southern limit, and 28 vascular plant species endemic).
- ◆ Isolation of fauna habitats on islands and peninsulas resulting in survival of threatened species
- ◆ Range limits and fauna species richness (100 species of herpetofauna – 9 endemics, 230 species of birds representing 35% of Australia's total species)
- ◆ Species evolution illustrated in Rufous Hare Wallaby and Banded Hare Wallaby.

**CRITERIA (x)**

**To contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.**

- ◆ Five out of Australia's 26 endangered mammals (Shark Bay mouse, Banded Hare-Wallaby, Rufous Hare-Wallaby, Western Barred Bandicoot, and Burrowing Bettong) survive in Shark Bay
- ◆ Bernier Island subspecies of Ash-grey mouse
- ◆ 12 threatened reptiles (e.g. Baudin Island Skink and Woma)
- ◆ Endemic Sandhill Frog
- ◆ 35 migratory bird species
- ◆ Threatened Thick Billed Grasswren
- ◆ Endemic Dirk Hartog subspecies of the southern emu-wren
- ◆ Dugong (approx. one eighth of the world's population)
- ◆ Humpback Whale and Southern Right Whale migratory staging post
- ◆ Loggerhead and Green Turtles (loggerhead rookery)
- ◆ Some threatened flora species