

Code Off-road

Drive Lightly

Coastal ecosystems are some of our most fragile, and need special care when enjoying them. Beach driving especially has the potential to impact negatively on animals such as shorebirds, whose nests and young are difficult to see and who may be resting after long migration flights.

Drive Lightly with **The Code Off-road** and respect our coastal environment:

Stay on Track – There's no need to deviate when heading to the beach; damage to vegetation and soils can be irreversible, and once a new track is made, other vehicles will follow which leads to coastal erosion and loss of vegetation. On beaches, driving in others wheel ruts minimises impact on the beach, and is easier going for both you and your vehicle.

Dogs Are Only Man's Best Friend – Dogs can disturb nesting shorebirds causing parents to abandon the nest. Dogs and other pets are not permitted in National Parks and 1080 poison is regularly laid, which is fatal to dogs. When driving in areas where domestic animals are allowed, please keep your pet under control at all times.

Watch for Wildlife – Be aware and keep your eyes peeled for wildlife. You may see shorebirds on sandy beaches, estuaries and wetlands, reptiles basking at the side of the track, birds and kangaroos. Bring binoculars, there's heaps to see!

Picnic In, Pack It Out – It's pretty simple with rubbish, what goes in must go out again! It's not acceptable to bury or burn rubbish, or to throw food scraps into the bush. Carry rubbish bags in your vehicle and be prepared to carry out the rubbish of other, less thoughtful people.

Toilet Etiquette - Practice good personal hygiene in the bush and prevent the spread of nasties such as Giardia and Gastroenteritis as well as unpleasant surprises for other travellers. Use toilet facilities if they are available. Carry a trowel to bury solid waste and toilet paper at least 100m from any watercourse and at least 30cm deep.

Deliver Us From More Dieback – Many of our unique plant species including coastal heaths are susceptible to Phytophthora dieback (Phytophthora cinnamomi) – plant death caused by a

Don't spread the red



Be clean in the green

microscopic soil-borne water mould. The pathogen kills many coastal species and vegetation types. It is spread by the transportation of infested soil and plant material. There are many areas that are free of Dieback and you can help stop its spread if you:

- ▶ clean any mud and soil off your vehicle before and after your trip
- ▶ avoid travelling in wet and mud conditions
- ▶ keep to established tracks and roads
- ▶ respect track closures
- ▶ pay attention to signage highlighting Dieback issues in local areas



bremer bay

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Be a Champion Camper –



- ▶ Always camp in designated camping areas and do not create new camp sites, this impacts native vegetation and creates a fire risk
- ▶ Coastal vegetation takes a long time to grow and is easily damaged - bring firewood with you rather than collecting it nearby
- ▶ Remember fires are never permitted during total fire bans, during certain periods of the year and at any time within certain National Parks. Always check local regulations first.
- ▶ Where allowed, light fires in designated fireplaces, keep it small and make sure it's properly extinguished before you leave.

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Damaging, Delinquent & Downright Dangerous.

Did you know that although road licensed vehicles (4WD and motorbikes) are permitted in most areas, unlicensed off-road vehicles (e.g. quad bikes and trail bikes) are only permitted to be ridden in designated areas and private land with the owner's permission. Most of us are responsible drivers but there is a small minority who let the side down. All normal road rules apply when driving in off-road areas, and examples of behaviour which will get you into trouble include:

- ▶ Damage to vegetation, the landscape and heritage and cultural sites
- ▶ Disturbance to local wildlife
- ▶ Disrespecting other beach users
- ▶ Damage to signs, fences, bollards

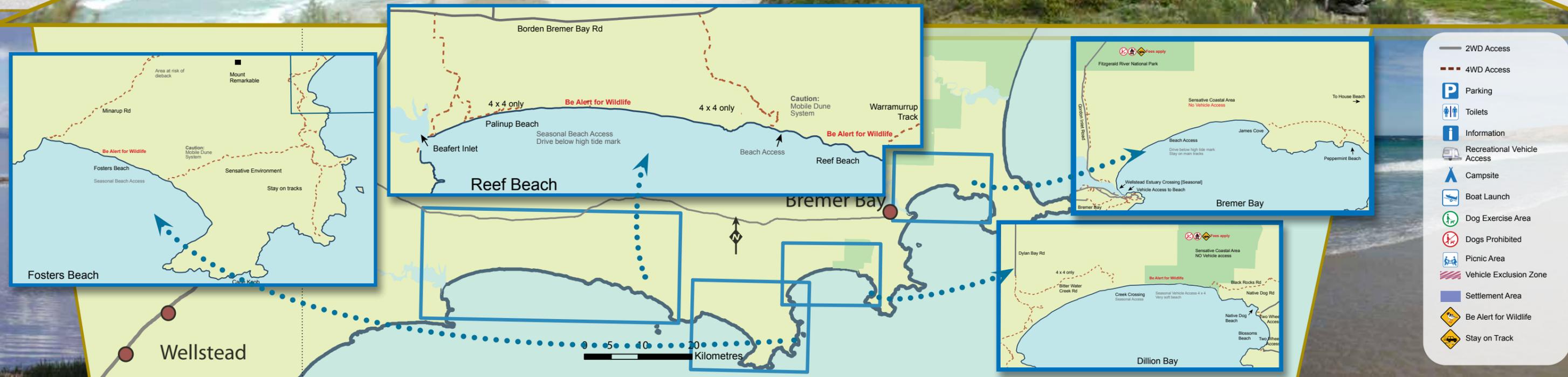
Contact details:

In national parks, call the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) Ranger, and on other public land call either the Shire Ranger or the WA Police.

WA Police: 131 444
DPaW Albany District: 9842 4500
Shire Office:
Shire Ranger: 0429 351 022



A GUIDE TO SAFE | SPECTACULAR | RESPONSIBLE OFF-ROAD DRIVING ON THE WA SOUTH COAST



Code Off-road - Trip Preparation!

KEEP SAFE WITH THE CODE OFF-ROAD AND THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

Maintenance – Make sure that your vehicle is maintained in good working order, and check it over before setting out.

Supplies – You might be loaded up with fishing gear, but remember to make room for basic supplies such as water, food, first aid kit, extra fuel as well as vehicle maintenance equipment.

Recovery - The suggested minimum kit essentials for a 4WD would include:

- ▶ air compressor with gauge
- ▶ tow rope, make sure there are strong attachment points on your chassis - not tiedown points
- ▶ jack and a jack plate or air exhaust jack
- ▶ bow or 'D' shackles
- ▶ vehicle tool kit
- ▶ rigger's gloves
- ▶ recovery tracks
- ▶ a shovel
- ▶ tarp



You don't need to be a specialist mechanic to operate a 4WD, but you will need a few basics to ensure that you and your vehicle get home safely.



Photo Credits: Gareth Stoakes, John Tucker, Albany 4WD Club, South Coast NRM, Geoff Taylor.



TAKE THE 'CODE OFF-ROAD' WITH YOU ON YOUR NEXT TRIP

Don't let this be you!



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Safe Driving...

Training – Consider undertaking 4WD training through a registered provider or joining a 4WD club – there are several in the region, Perth and other major Australian centres. Guaranteed fun will be had and you'll pick up great driving skills for life.

Awareness – Always carry a map of the area you are travelling in. Take notice of any signage at entry points and note emergency contact and location ID.

Tyre Pressures – A reduced tyre pressure maximises the tyre footprint for increased traction. It is essential that tyre pressure is reduced before entering off-road tracks and sandy beaches to 18psi (check manufacturer's specifications for your vehicle). Make sure that your driving speed is also reduced and avoid sharp turns with deflated tyres, and that they are reinflated prior to driving at normal speeds. Always carry an air compressor with a gauge for this purpose.

Engage 4WD – Keep things under control by engaging 4WD and locking hubs before entering off-road tracks or sandy beaches (refer to vehicle manual). Generally, in sandy conditions second or third gear in low range will see you through, but when engaged in 4WD avoid sharp turns or sudden braking to avoid losing momentum. Use difflock in soft sand if available on your vehicle.

Visibility – Sun glare may reduce visibility on beaches, so consider polarised sunglasses. Off-road tracks are full of blind corners and hill crests. Play it safe; drive slowly, be aware of your surroundings, respect others and avoid driving at night.

Passing Points – Are there to enable vehicles to pass without damaging vegetation. Please use them, and resist the temptation to create new ones.

Safe Travel – Always drive slowly on coastal off-road tracks and beaches; enjoy your drive and the surroundings! Your vehicle will thank you for it and you have time to make decisions. Driving with your seat belt on is not just a legal requirement; it helps you to control the vehicle on uneven bumpy ground.

Up the Creek Without a Paddle – River and creek crossings can look deceptively shallow. If in doubt, always stop and walk the crossing, if you can't walk across don't attempt to drive. Wheel axle height is a good guide as to how deep you should go.

Beach Etiquette – When driving on the beach, aim to travel at, but not above the high tide mark, and check tidal and weather conditions on the day. Avoid driving over piles of seaweed, be especially careful on high-energy beaches and remember all beaches are different and can change daily. Slow down when passing other beach users and pass behind fisherman.

GET ME OUT OF HERE

– Always tell someone

where you are going and your expected return time, and arrange to travel with another vehicle if possible.

Although it's essential to carry a mobile phone, remember that there may be no signal in coastal areas – do not rely on it.

Consider a satellite phone if you are going to be in remote areas for extended periods, or VHF or UHF radio. If you become stuck or break down you are generally safer staying with your vehicle until help arrives, but if you have to hike out avoid walking in the heat of the day and leave a note in your vehicle of your intentions.

Help! Help! Help!

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It is vital you know how to drive safely and lightly to protect yourself and this fragile environment, and ensure the South Coast remains just as magical in years to come.

Everybody loves the stunning scenery, magnificent beaches and great outdoor activities on offer along the WA coastline.

Responsible and skilled driving minimises degradation to coastal ecosystems, accidents, and the spread of Phytophthora dieback.