



Western Australia knows how to turn on a spectacular display of colour when wildflowers are in bloom and, year after year, images from the mid northwestern region of the state populate social media feeds and tourism brochures. For up to six months of the year nature turns the landscape into hues of bright pink, yellows, and whites, and taking the time to seek out some of the more unique varieties often rewards with awe-inspiring discoveries.



*Golden yellow Everlastings line the road for kilometres.*

## When is wildflower season in WA?

The wildflower season in WA kicks off in the northern areas around June and works its way south with the start of spring. Usually, it peaks around late September and October before dying back in November and the approaching summer. Each season is unique, and blooms are greatly influenced by the previous year's rainfall and weather conditions, as well as how quickly the hot days start to roll through with the oncoming warmer months.

To appreciate the immense span of Everlastings on the outskirts around Perth you have to wait for spring to kick in properly but, if you head further north, you'll be able to savour the sights earlier.

Interestingly, the floral landscape continually changes throughout the season. Travelling through the same area just a couple of weeks apart from a previous visit will often provide a different colourful vista. The array of white, pink, and yellow everlastings tend to adopt independent bloom cycles. However, if you're road-tripping, it's likely you'll be rewarded with a selection throughout your travels.



*Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation represents the Traditional Owners of the land around Coalseam Conservation Park where the Everlastings put on a colourful show each wildflower season.*

## What types of wildflowers are there?

There are so many different types and names of wildflowers in WA that you'd need a comprehensive directory to do them all justice. I have no idea of what I'm looking at half the time, but that doesn't stop me from appreciating nature's beauty. When we head out to see what we can find, it's more about the adventure and discovery, so whether or not we can name them becomes almost irrelevant.

Of course, some knowledge naturally comes about and gets retained the more familiar you become. Plus, you tend to bump into other enthusiasts who know the flowers back to front and are more than happy to share the specific names.



*The remarkably striking White Spider-orchid.*

Some wildflowers prefer the coastal sandy soils, while others thrive inland where conditions are more arid. There are more than 12,000 species, many of which are endemic to their area, with the most prolific being Everlastings. There can be hundreds and hundreds of metres of these blooms disappearing off the horizon, and it is quite a spectacle.

Tiny orchids native to the state's southwest are less abundant. You can spend hours searching for Cowslips, and the White Spider-orchid, which grow among a vast range of



native bushes and shrubs. These each boast flowers that are so random and stunning it is surprising.

There are some strange wildflowers about the place too, like Wreath Flowers, which are hugely popular and more challenging to find. Seeing these grow on the side of the road with nothing else around but bare earth is staggering.



*Earning its name due to the ring of flowers, the Wreath Flower prefers the sandy or gravelly soils around the mid-northwest of WA.*

## Where can you find wildflowers?

You'll find wildflowers all over WA, but there are a couple of significant regions that most people visit:

### Northwest

- **Best time** – June to September
- **Where** – the Pilbara area. Heading down towards the coastal town of Carnarvon boasts an impressive range of wildflowers that we've been fortunate to see a number of times when returning from trips further north. Some of these varieties are rare and unique to the area.

### Mid-northwest

- **Best time** – July to early September
- **Where** – easily accessible from Perth, this region is one of the more popular areas for wildflower appreciation and makes a great long weekend trip. From the coastal areas around Geraldton, and inland to Mullewa, then south to Morawa and Mingenew – near Coalseam Conservation Reserve. There are more of these beautiful little towns further south with Three Springs, Dalwallinu and Moora, just to name a few. All are worth a visit, and we thoroughly enjoyed our stay while exploring for flowers. This area also boasts the more formally recognised wildflower trails such as Wildflower Way, which makes up one section of the Midlands Route. You can then take the Granite Loop trail to lead you into Perth.



*Found in the Pilbara, the Mulla Mulla flower thrives in this dry region where the earth is rich with iron ore.*

### Around Perth

- **Best time** – late August to October
- **Where** – believe it or not, you don't actually have to go far to see wildflowers in Perth. They will be in your nearest bushland as well as established gardens like Kings Park, Araluen and Wireless Hill. A little further out, there's John Forrest National Park, Dwellingup, and the Bibbulmun Track.



## South

- **Best time** – early September to November
- **Where** – getting into the later part of the WA wildflower season you need to head further south where you will once again be spoilt with options. Home to some 1800 species of plants with many not found anywhere else in the world, Fitzgerald River National Park is one of the most unique and underrated parks in WA. It's an area that my family speak of very highly! The beaches and scenery are insane, and wildflower season coincides with the annual whale migration between June and November. Sighting these majestic creatures is another spectacular attraction to make the trip very worthwhile.



*The majority of Starflowers are found around Geraldton but we spotted this one on a trip to Fitzgerald River National Park.*

## How to enjoy wildflower hunting responsibly

### What to pack

- Plenty of water
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Camera
- Good walking shoes
- A decent map
- A sense of adventure
- Snacks or meal options for a more extended trip
  - There's something magical about having a picnic in the middle of the wildflowers midway through your walk!



*Cowslips are one of the more common native orchids and the flower grows on a single stem with up to three stems per plant.*

### Be respectful

- **Look but don't touch** – please don't pick the wildflowers! Especially if you are in a national park or conservation area. We are so lucky to have the array of amazing wildflowers that we do. Every year, there are literally thousands of people who head off to enjoy them, and that can have a pretty substantial impact on the environment and others. Not only should you do the right thing, but you can cop a pretty hefty fine if you don't!
- **Stay mindful of where you step** – flowers are delicate, and the whole plant is a fragile



yet essential part of the ecosystem. Be careful where you stand, stick to the marked and well-used trails, and avoid trudging through the bush as you will damage the vegetation and risk spreading disease and weeds.

- **Stay off private property** – wildflowers are not designated to public areas but grow all over the place, including private property and on their boundaries. These are people's homes and living spaces, and you should never enter into someone else's private property without permission. Farmers have had crops and fences damaged in the past because people wanted a particular photo for their Instagram.
- **Leave no trace** – there should be zero traces that you've visited the wildflowers in WA. That means no rubbish left behind, no damage done to anything, fires put out, and everything cleaned up! For more tips on how to leave no trace, see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).
- **Expect it to be busy** – if you head to the more popular wildflower locations, it will be busy. Coalseam will be packed by lunchtime every single day in peak wildflower season, and that means you'll be competing with lots of others. Have a backup plan, be respectful of others and enjoy it all together.



*The flowers of the Orange Immortelle only open on hot sunny days.*

## Your vehicle

- **2WD or 4WD** – the majority of the popular wildflower sites in WA do not require a 4WD. However, you will need a car with off-road capabilities to access some more remote places.
- **Park sensibly** – when pulling over to the side of the road, whether for that perfect photo or simply to soak up the view of wildflowers, do it sensibly and carefully. Don't roll over the flowers! We saw several Wreath Flowers clearly run over because people had parked poorly or deliberately caused damage. Remember that some of these stretches are used by huge road trains that cannot stop in time if you're travelling in front and suddenly break to admire the vista.



*Most spots are accessible with a 2WD.*

## Camping in wildflower season

There is no shortage of amazing places to camp in wildflower season. My advice is to get WikiCamps, pick an area that suits the distance you wish to travel, and the time you've got to enjoy the experience. Talk to the local visitor centres for great campsite recommendations. Miners Campground in Coalseam Conservation Park is one of the best campsites to see the Everlastings. The sites here can't be booked, so it's first-in-best-dressed, and during wildflower season it fills up fast! Breakaway Campground is another option and tends to get the overflow from Miners, but there are a number of free camps around the place too. Support the local communities as much as you can, especially those scattered around the mid-northwest who rely on the wildflower season for their yearly income. These local



communities are always welcoming and very accommodating.



*Western Australia's wildflower season is spectacular and has been one of our favourite trips.*

## **Our favourite flowers in WA**

Whilst we love looking for the little orchids, nothing compares to the big blooms of Everlastings and, in particular, the pink ones that seem harder to find. When we left on our first wildflower trip I was a bit tentative and unsure of whether I'd enjoy it.

To date, it's been one of our favourite camping trips and the scenery and special family time has remained with me since. We have some of the best wildflowers in the world, and if you haven't made time to see them yet, you should. It will blow your mind!

**We'll be making more wildflower trips in the near future, how about you?**