

# York & Surrounding Districts

## SCENIC SELF-DRIVE ROUTES

**THE LAKES TO YORK via HELENA ROAD**

**Tour No. 5a**

See if you can spot this and other photo opportunities along your journey.



**Research by Walter & Adelphe King  
Collation, Editing, by Kookaburra  
Accommodation**

**The Adelphe Tours  
In conjunction with  
Kookaburra Accommodation  
On behalf of the York Visitor Centre**

**BE PART OF “HISTORY STILL IN THE MAKING”**

# Protect, Conserve and Enhance

DEC Nature Conservation in the York Shire

Perth Hills District

Swan Region

In the Shire of York there are more than 30,000 hectares of bushland, including five Nature Reserves and two National Parks that are managed by the Department of the Environment and Conservation (DEC). DEC nature conservation officers are responsible for managing and protecting more than four Declared Rare Flora and 19 priority species of rare flora in the York Shire, protecting areas of high conservation value such as Wandoo National Park, working with farmers to enhance conservation areas effected by salinity issues and helping to protect our native fauna from feral animals such as wild pigs and foxes.



*More than 30,000 hectares  
of bushland which are  
managed for nature*



Nature Reserves and National Parks in the  
York Shire:

Wambyn Nature Reserve  
Balkalling Nature Reserve  
St Ronan's Nature Reserve  
Cullen Nature Reserve  
Warrinine Nature Reserve  
Wandoo National Park



**Department of  
Environment & Conservation  
Perth Hills District  
Ph: 9295 9100**

**Distance: APPROX 53 KM**

**APPROX 33 KM SEALED**

**APPROX 20 KM FORMED ROAD BUT UNSEALED**

Note: Unsealed roads may not be in good condition following heavy rain.

**This route explores tree-lined roads and Water Catchment Area & National Park.**

Set odometer to **0** at The Lakes 24 Hour Road House – petrol, food and toilets available here.

**At 1.7 km** pass Horton Road on left and **at 3.8 km** pass the entry to BGC Quarries where extensive quantities of blue metal for road making are obtained. **At 7 km** pass Warriin Road on the left. **At 10.3 km** pass West Talbot Road (old road entrance) on your right. **At 10.8 km** pass stone gateway to Serena Park Farm on the left. The bush on your right consists mostly of the dark rough-barked Jarrah trees ( *Eucalyptus marginata*) some white-trunked Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) and *Dryandra* species.

**At 13.2 km** Turn right into Yarra Road (sealed) at crossroads. Straight ahead would take you to York by the usual direct route. Left in to Inkpen Road would take you to the Great Eastern Highway.

Some *Banksia grandis* is also present in the bush now.

**At 14.4 km** at Nanguring Road, you are entering a National Park. Scattered *Zamia* can be seen in the bush. *This family of palm-like cycads has been around since the dinosaur age. There are male and female plants. The female plant produces a pineapple-like bunch of bright red seeds around autumn. These are very poisonous except when treated carefully according to age-old traditional methods used by the Nyungar people, when they could then be eaten.*

**At 14.9 km** turning left here at crossroads of Talbot West Road (sealed). Straight ahead would lead south to the Brookton Highway. Right is the old rough West Talbot Road to the Great Southern Highway. The bush now consists mostly of Jarrah and Marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*). *The Marri have somewhat similar trunks to the Jarrah but are usually of a more spreading habit and they have the large traditional 'honky nuts'. The name Marri comes from the Nyungar language and they are also sometimes known as Red Gums from the dark red sap that exudes from any wounds on the trunk. Possums feed on this and have been observed nightly scraping at a scar on a trunk to keep it open and producing the gum.* Occasional wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) trees can also be seen in the bush.

**At 16.9 km** on the left scattered Grass Trees (*Xanthorrhoea preisii*) appear in the bush.

**At 17.5 km** Pass Turkey Farm Road (unsealed track) on the left. Your road becomes unsealed around here.

**At 17.8 km** Pass Owen Road (unsealed track) on left. You will see some farmland with scattered Marri trees in the paddocks. Take care as you may see wild emus around here.

**At 21.3 km** You enter the Water Catchment bush land where the headwaters of the Helena River rise. The road crosses the river as it flows right down to the Mundaring Weir and on to the Swan River. In the flat low lying bush you will see the grey-trunked Flooded Gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*) that are associated with damp creek lines. Occasional tee-tree shrubs (*Melaleuca* species) can now be seen on the right.

**At 22.7 km** pass Ridley Road on right and Pony Road on left (unsealed/unsigned tracks). The bush on the right is a Declared Quarantine area for the dreaded Jarrah dieback disease. *To help contain this disease please do not enter there unless you observe strict hygiene rules with disinfectant etc.*

Scattered Grass Trees can be seen in the bush. *These were very important resources for indigenous people and "ownership" was passed down through families. They used the green fronds for roofing their mia-mias (shelters). They chewed the juicy base of the fronds for medicinal purposes. The gum was heated and mixed with kangaroo dung, which then made a very durable glue for sticking barbs to spears, handles to stone axes etc. When the Grass Trees died or fell over, succulent bardi grubs lived in them and were "harvested" each time the family group passed through the area.*

**At 24.3 km** Note sign saying National Park. Pass Kent Road on right. Marri and Wandoo trees in the bush and some scattered Grass Trees.

**Drive carefully because KANGAROOS live along this route.**

**At 26.1 km** Turn left into the attractive Helena Road (unsealed) with trees meeting overhead. Ahead would take you in to the Talbot district. This is a low-lying area with a thick grove of young Flooded Gum trees (*Euc. rudis*) on the left. Scattered Zamias can again be seen in the bush, and some rough-leafed Dryandra species, mostly on the disturbed ground along the road verges. Grass Trees are also evident here and there.

**At 28.9 km** On the ridge to the left and right are the white trunked Powder Bark Gums (*Euc. accedens*) that grow on stoney ridges. *Their trunks turn orangey coloured at certain times of the year*

**At 29.6 km** on the left see a shield shaped Survey blaze on a tree near the edge of the road. The figures AR 91 2 are carved into the tree, and represent co-ordinates on maps to pinpoint positions for Dept. of Environment staff, Shire workers, fire fighters etc.



**At 30.5 km** Helena Glade Farm is tucked into the bush on the left.

**At 30.7 km** Pass Halls Haven farm on left.

**At 31.5 km** Pass Manna Flat road on left and then Deefor Rd on right (These are not signed as of March 2007) **be cautious of KANGAROOS through the bush.**

**At 32.9 km** There is a layby on the left. *You could safely park here while you walk in the bush.*

**At 35.3 km** the road passes through long groves of She-oaks (*Casuarina obesa*) on right and left. *The early settlers used these trees for roofing shingles.*

**At 36.3 km** Arrive at Catchment Road crossroads (unsealed). You are now leaving the National Park, with private property bush land on the left with some white trunked Powder Bark gums. Trees meet overhead. Some of the birds you might see in the bush on this journey are Magpies, "28" parrots, Cuckoo Shrikes, black Crows and various honey eaters.

**At 38.4 km** Farm boundary fence on left. **At 38.7 km** more Casuarinas then Powder Bark trees on the ridge **At 39.8 km**. **At 40 km** see a farm gate onto the road on left. This is a good spot to pull off the road for extensive views over farmland. From the gate look right and see Mt. Bakewell with its radio mast on the horizon. This is one of the two mountains that overlook the town of York.

**At 41.3 km** as the road goes down hill, note the revegetation plantings on the right.

**At 41.9 km** See Faristurn Farm gate ahead, follow the road as it takes a right angle turn to the left.

**At 42.2 km** The road goes through a salt scalded area with plantings of native shrubs aiming to combat the water logging and salt problems.

**At 42.7 km** there is a farm gate across the road as it now passes through private property even though it is a public road. The gate may be open or closed. You can have access through this, but **YOU MUST LEAVE THE GATE AS YOU FIND IT** please. If the gate is closed beware of wandering stock.

Trees on the road verge on the left are mostly Wandoos with occasional Marris.

**At 44.6 km** there is a derelict windmill on the right.

**At 45.5 km** arrive at another farm gate which may be open or closed. Continue on through it, but **PLEASE LEAVE IT AS YOU FIND IT**.

You now arrive at the Great Southern Highway (sealed) Turn right for York.

After turning, note extensive natural-looking revegetation planting on the right by Men of the Trees and local volunteers.

**At 45.8 km** pass road to the golf links on left. Wildflowers abound along that road and are usually visible during wildflower season – August to October.

**At 47 km** pass Cut Hill Road on right. **At 47.5 km** see ruins of an old stone house on the left.

**At 48.7 km** turn left into Morris Edwards Drive. This was the old entrance into York from the days of horse drawn traffic. *It is named after Morris Edwards who was a prominent figure in York in the early 1900s. He was noted for his generous hospitality, affectionately known as the "Duke of York", and host to many visiting dignitaries at his home "Hillside".*

**Around 50.2 km** there used to be several small farms on the left. Straggly York gums (*Euc. loxophleba*) and Jam trees (*Acacia acuminata*) line the road.

**At 51.4 km** Arrive at stop sign at crossroads with Ulster Road. York Cottages are on the right. *These are superbly built modern self-contained stone accommodation units. They cater especially for families with children as they have farm animals, climbing frames, tennis court and an indoor games room.*

On the outskirts of town on the right you can see some of the very old cottages, now hidden under modern additions, but still distinguishable by high rooflines and old style chimneys. Ahead you will see Mt. Brown (310m). *The lookout at the top is worth a visit, because panoramic views over the town can be seen, especially at dusk when long shadows dapple the landscape.*

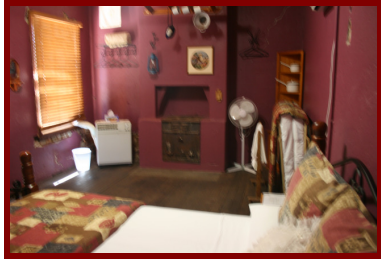
Cross over the railway line and **at 52.2 km** and arrive at the crossroads York's main street Avon Terrace.

*Look left at this intersection and note the two storey stone building with the Australian flags on the front. This is the Avon Valley's only Backpacker Accommodation. Kookaburras Accommodation were Silver award winners in their category in the 2006 Tourism awards offering a truly unique experience. They offer both share accommodation and Private Rooms catering to singles, couples and families and can be hired for special group functions.*

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