

Muir, Gary (mainly from Internet)

Graduated from cadet school in 1985. Worked for CALM for several years then went in to tourism industry.

WOW Wilderness Eco Cruise on the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets with the amazing Gary Muir

Gary Muir operates a wilderness cruise at Walpole.

In 1910 a small parcel of land at Walpole was set aside for A Class reservation and the waterways protected from professional fishing and netting after Western Australian Minister James Mitchell and his party were impressed with the beauty of the area. This was the beginning of what was to become the Walpole Nornalup National Park, Walpole Wilderness Area and Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park.

The cruise takes you through the Walpole and the larger Nornalup Inlets to a landing near the sandbar and mouth.

Lady Walpole, wooden launch built here in 1932 by the Swarbrick family which operated for many years as a tourist boat was returned to Walpole in 2010 in time for the Walpole Nornalup National Park Centenary. It can be seen anchored in the water at Rest Point.

Gary Muir has an amazing knowledge of the history of the area in which his family were early settlers and knowledge of the biology of animals which he imparts in a unique way, with his flair for delivering his stories in an entertaining manner. Newdegate Island, known locally as Snake Island, which the Muir family once owned and farmed. Aboriginals used to cross the sandbar at low tide to collect orchid bulbs. The Murrum people knew the area and island as Norn Norn Nup – place of the black snake. The Island was then purchased by someone to grow vegetables. Aboriginals continued to visit the island, instead bring home potatoes. Confrontation resulted in one Aborigine being shot. Shortly after that the Muirs purchased the Island then tried to run cattle, but had significant losses due to the presence of a poisonous native plant of the *Gastrolobium* genus.

Gary delivers information with enthusiasm and humour, using the toy animals he uses when explaining animal biology. Here he was talking about the where Walpole fits as the bellybutton of the world (North Pole, South Pole who is in the middle!) and the breakup of Gondwana.

