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The Kangaroo Trail hops



Press Release

The Kangaroo Trail Map Project hops

The Kangaroo Trail Map project team is proud to announce that the Kangaroo Trail web site (www.rootourism.com.au) is now live.

Melbourne, VIC, 10 January, 2008: The Kangaroo Trail will take domestic and international tourists on an unparalleled journey of discovery across the vast Australian continent and its offshore islands.

They will see supreme athletes such as one of the four species of plains dwelling kangaroos, rock climbers who seem to defy gravity such as one of the fifteen species of rock-wallaby, and one of the best noses for truffles in the world, the long-nosed potoroo.

The trail will take the tourist into the hinterland from each of the state and territory capitals to explore the fascinating world of the bounders of the bush. Their leaders will be one of the six species of large kangaroos who are the most recognisable of the multitude of macropods. In their wild habitat the tourist will follow the mob to their smaller kin and learn about the diversity and structure in the communities of Australia's unique marsupial grazers and browsers.

The more adventurous tourist can follow a Big Red into the spectacular landscapes and big skies of the Outback. The Wallaroos that span the continent will lead them into the most spectacular wilderness through the gorges and ranges of the Great Divide, the Flinders Ranges, the Red Centre, Cape York, Arnhem Land, the Kimberley and the Pilbara.

This project aims to be the flagship of an attitudinal change towards succour for our free-living fauna and their habitats based around wildlife tourism with this marvellous mob of marsupials. Through partnerships with conservation agencies, tourism organisations, operators and gateway communities across the continent and offshore islands this visionary project which will place Australia at the forefront of nature-based tourism destinations for both our international visitors and our citizens.

Through benign engagement with the kangaroo mob will come empathy, understanding and economic activity, and the phenomenal diversity of 50 or more species will be a treasured asset in our natural heritage. At the recent 2nd National Wildlife Tourism Conference (Fremantle 2006), the delegates resolved that 'A key obstacle to growth [of wildlife tourism] is that Australians have a relatively poor appreciation of their native wildlife.' Thus there is an urgent need for measures to facilitate 'greater appreciation of Australian wildlife by Australians' if we want to sustain, conserve and reintroduce the living entities that make up our fauna.

The Kangaroo Trail has two entities:

1. The Wildlife Trail Map: A draft of this large format (A0) map has been produced to direct tourists to the best place to see the 50 species. This map is being sent to potential advertisers and sponsors in order to garner support for a large print run of this innovative product. We expect tourists to clamour for a (free) copy of this map which will grace many a wall when our stunning portrayal of

more

The Kangaroo Trail hops the exquisite character and charm of the kangaroo fauna is recognised. Map in hand these tourists will take one or many hops along the trail rewarding the agencies, operators and communities who conserve our icons of the bush.

2. The Kangaroo Trail Web Site: Go to www.rootourism.com.au for the facts that will fill your experience of seeing wild kangaroos, tree-kangaroos, wallabies, rock-wallabies, hare-wallabies, nailtail wallabies, pademelons, quokkas, potoroos, bettongs and rat-kangaroos. The site will be populated with fact sheets that include the latest research on the behaviour and ecology of the species, the species of the month, and feedback from trail hoppers.

The Project is managed by Maryland Wilson, President of the **Australian Wildlife Protection Council**. Content and content management is provided by Dr David Croft, wildlife biologist and principal of **rootourism**TM wildlife tourism services. Design is by Neil Williams of **moocreative**. The project is generously supported by **Voiceless, the fund for animals**.