



Kings Park Activates Dark Sky Tourism

Stargazing in the heart of Perth to highlight WA's world-class night sky. The first successful event attracts keen astro enthusiasts.

When you think of stargazing, it's not often you think of it in the heart of a capital city. At 400 hectares in size, Kings Park is one of the world's largest inner-city parks with low levels of light pollution within its borders. This makes it an ideal location to see the brighter constellations, stars and planets with the naked eye.

Ms Carol Redford, CEO at Astrotourism WA says, "The people of Perth are very lucky to still be able to see constellations like the Southern Cross, Scorpius and Orion. There are some cities in the world where you can't see even one bright star and, although Perth's light pollution doesn't allow us to see the band of the Milky Way in a place like Kings Park, our light pollution doesn't block out the stars entirely. It's an asset worthy of protection."

Kings Park is renowned for its biodiversity and displays over 3,000 species of Western Australia's unique flora. The Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) - which manages Kings Park and Bold Park - is now looking up to the night skies to activate dark sky tourism for locals and visitors alike. Ms Jo Metcalf is the Director Experience: Engagement, Communication and Events at BGPA and is beginning to explore a new eco-activity for Kings Park.

"We hosted a very successful first event during the incredibly popular Everlasting Kings Park Festival in September. The Sunset and Stargazing event was received with accolades and attracted over 75 people," she said.

Over five large telescopes, provided by Star Tracks Astro Events, transported visitors to other worlds including Saturn, the Moon, star clusters and nebulae. The event also featured live music, picnics and a spectacular green laser tour to point out the constellations in the night sky. Donna Vanzetti, CEO Star Tracks Astro Events, said the event surprised attendees as they weren't aware just how many stars can still be seen from Perth. "We've got to remember to look up at night. Light pollution has a way of making us forget that there's an incredible galaxy up there and it's one of the most spectacular sights you'll ever see," she said.

Metcalf said BGPA was delighted to welcome dark sky tourism activities to give visitors a unique new experience within Kings Park. "As the green heart of Perth, we are proud to deliver and support a multitude of nature-based tourism experiences amidst our magnificent State's flora. Now the same inspiration that our wildflowers provide can do the same for the stars."

The interactive stargazing activities in Kings Park are emerging just as dark sky tourism is surging in popularity. The recent Tourism WA Visitor Experiences and Expectations research indicates that

Carol Redford
Founder | CEO
0427 554 035

stars@astrotourismwa.com.au
www.astrotourismwa.com.au

almost all (95%) of visitors say they are interested in dark sky tourism experiences in WA. Stargazing was the most common activity undertaken and wildlife tours and dining under the stars are highly appealing.

Visitors to Kings Park will be able to witness the spectacle of full moon rises from locations like Kaarta Gar-up and the grassed terraces along Fraser Avenue at upcoming events. These locations allow for a clear view to the eastern horizon where the moon rises.

The next stargazing events to be held in Kings Park will be a “Marvellous Moon Night” on Wednesday, 6th November and the “Music and Stars Night” on Saturday, 23rd November. Tickets are available from [Star Tracks Astro Events](#).

Astrotourism Towns

There are 18 [Astrotourism Towns](#) across four regions in WA. Establishing since 2018, they are working with Astrotourism WA to share Western Australia's world-class dark night sky with visitors and at the same time protect the dark sky asset from light pollution. [Stargazing trails](#) mark out excellent dark sky locations for astro-tourists and astronomy enthusiasts alike.

Carol Redford, CEO Astrotourism WA is on a mission to make Western Australia the stargazing capital of the world and keep the night sky dark! She is one of 2,000 Dark Sky Advocates around the world who strive to protect the night sky with education, advocacy and community science.

– ENDS –

Images and Media Resources

[Click here to access images.](#)

Images include:

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Key Information

- [Tourism WA Visitor Experiences and Expectations in WA Research](#)
- [Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority and Kings Park](#)
- [Star Tracks Astro Events](#)
- [Astrotourism WA](#)

Interviews

Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, Kings Park

Jo Metcalf, Director Experience: Engagement, Communication & Events

jo.metcalf@dbca.wa.gov.au

0498 000 125

Star Tracks Astro Events

Donna Vanzetti, CEO

donna@startracksevents.com.au

0409 014 644

Astrotourism WA

Carol Redford, CEO

carol@astrotourismwa.com.au

0427 554 035