



# Wave Rock

Photo by Alan Horsfield

Wave Rock is one of the many amazing geological formations found in the Western Australian wheat belt. It is situated near the small town of Hyden, about 350 kilometres east of Perth. Wave Rock is 110 metres long and a staggering 15 metres high, and it stands in the form of a wave just about to crash onto some prehistoric beach—a 'wave' frozen in time.

There are other rock formations within the Wave Rock Reserve, including Breakers, Hippo's Yawn and the Humps. There are also some excellent Aboriginal rock paintings within the Mulka's Cave, and an interesting small museum inside the caravan park's small kiosk.

Believed to have formed over 2700 million years ago, Wave Rock is part of the northern face of Hyden Rock. The shape of the wave is formed by gradual erosion and weathering of the softer rock beneath the upper edge, leaving a rounded overhang. It has been evolving for many centuries.

The colours of the Wave are caused by the rain and active springs in the wetter months dissolving and re-depositing chemical deposits in the granite (carbonates and iron hydroxide) down the face, forming vertical stripes of greys, reds and yellows. At different times of the day, the changing sunlight alters the colours and appearance. There are actually several examples of such 'waves' in the Hyden area.

In addition to being an impressive geological and tourist attraction, the Rock was once put to practical use. It was converted into a catchment for the town's water supplies, with a 40-centimetre high concrete wall around the upper edge of the rock directing rainfall into a storage dam, like a huge roof on a stadium.

Sources include Wave Rock Hyden in Western Australia Tourist Information  
[http://www.discoverwest.com.au/western\\_australia/wave\\_rock.html](http://www.discoverwest.com.au/western_australia/wave_rock.html)