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BOOK REVIEW

Portrait of a Peninsula: The wildlife of Torndirrup.

Vic Smith. 1991. Published by the author. 120 pp., 34 colour photographs, 37 line drawings, 210 × 140 mm, rrp. \$12.50.

Vic Smith retired to live and study the fauna on a peninsula, south of Albany in southern Western Australia, where lies the Torndirrup National Park. He describes in Part 1 of this small book the discovery of the region by Europeans, settlement and current attractions. In Part 2 is described the geology, climate, vegetation and flora, and fauna. The most extensive sections are those of vertebrates. There is also a short discussion on the Torndirrup ecosystem, and the ocean to the south with a history of whaling. Throughout the text are attractive line illustrations, mainly of fauna, all but two of which have been drawn by Michael Bamford.

Torndirrup National Park is an interesting place with magnificent coastal scenery. The floral canopy of its low vegetation is remarkable and beautiful, and the sequential

blossoms supply food not only to insects and birds but also to honey possums. Beneath the canopy live other small marsupials including dipplers.

It is to be expected in such a small book that discussions are selective and brief but for ornithologists there is a checklist with notes on time of presence, abundance and breeding. The section on marsupials contains much information on their biology.

The book is easy to read and quickly the reader gets a 'feel' for the region, and herein lies its value. Anyone planning to visit the region should read this book and take the copy with them so they can quickly reread it when there. For those who become 'hooked', the bibliography and checklists in Part 3 will guide them into the next stage of enthusiasm. The book may be obtained from the author at 1 Karrakatta Road, Goode Beach, Western Australia 6330.

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