

MOUNT MEHARRY- Wiribiwiribi

Mount Meharry is the highest mountain in Western Australia. It is located in the Hamersley Range within the southeastern part of Karijini National Park in the Pilbara region.

HISTORY

Mount Meharry is named after William Thomas ("Tom") Meharry (1912-1967), Chief Geodetic Surveyor for Western Australia from 1959 to 1967. It was discovered (so far as non-indigenous records show) by Surveyor Trevor Markey and his party in 1967. Tom Meharry directed the survey party and performed the calculations that confirmed the mountain was the highest peak in Western Australia, being 15 m (49 ft) higher than Mount Bruce which lies 62 km northwest of Mount Meharry.

After Meharry's sudden death on 16 May 1967 the Nomenclature Advisory Committee (now the Geographic Names Committee) recommended to the Minister for Lands that the recently discovered peak be named after him. The Minister for Lands the Hon. W S Bovell MLA approved this on 28 July 1967 and a notice naming the peak was published in the Western Australian Government Gazette on 15 September 1967.

The summit of Mt Meharry can be reached from the Great Northern Highway via an unsealed road 16 km (9.9 mi) in length and a vehicular track 21 kilometers (13 mi) in length. Permission should be sought from the managers of the land over which the road and track pass. These are Juna Downs Station and the Department of Environment and Conservation, which manages Karijini National Park. *Juna Downs Station Phone Number: 08 9189 8278 or 08 9189 8156.*

In dry conditions, a two-wheel-drive vehicle can reach the national park boundary at about 800 meters altitude, requiring a walk of about 7 kilometers to the summit.

DIRECTIONS

SUMMARY OF DISTANCES:

The turnoff to Meharry is Packsaddle Road, on the Great Northern Highway.

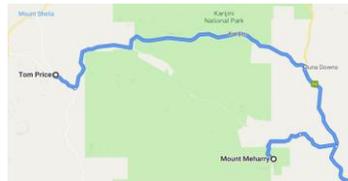
The distance from Tom Price to Packsaddle Road turnoff is approx. 154km

Turnoff to Mt Meharry Turnoff: 15.7km

Turnoff to Railway Crossing: 5km

Railway Crossing to Confusing Bend: 5.1km

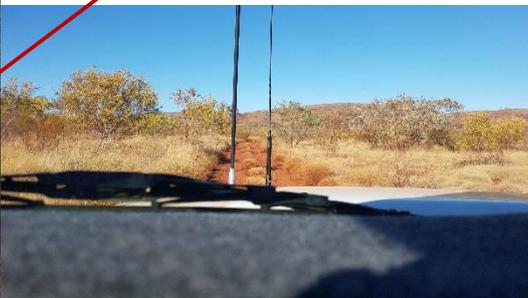
Confusing Bend to AWD Parking: 5.6km



While the turn-off is sign posted Packsaddle Road, there is no sign for Mount Meharry. Packsaddle Road is a dirt road. Follow Packsaddle Road for 15.7km. There is then a turn-off on the right, with a sign for Mount Meharry. The sign says 4WD, however you can continue for some way, even with a regular 2WD (September 2019 it was heavily corrugated and we had to let air out of the tyres.)



Juna Downs access road signage to Mount Meharry.



You may pass a few mining cars and trucks along Packsaddle Road, so be wary. (Packsaddle Road continues north and eventually becomes Juna Downs Road, and exits at the entrance to Karijini National Park, on Karijini Road).

About 5km from the 4WD turnoff, you will cross a mining Railway line. Continue along this road. The road becomes worse here and is quite sandy. It is not advisable for a 2WD along this road for risk of getting bogged in the soft sand.



At 5.1km the road looks like it should take a turn to the left. A less used road continues in a straight line. This road was covered in spinifex grass. This is the road you should take.



Continue straight, even though the road looks like you should go left.

Once past this turnoff, again take the obvious looking route. The road gets decidedly worse from here on out. Meharry is visible from here on in and is the big mountain/rounded hill off to the left.

Another 5.5km or thereabouts, some metal posts force you to go left. After a short drive, you drive into a river/creek gully a 4WD is required to continue any further. You will exit the creek a short time later.



There is a clear point at which the road starts to climb a steep hill. There is a great tree to park under and commence walking



CLIMBING MEHARRY

You're at 822metres at this point, and will only climb another 427 metres in elevation before reaching the summit at 1249 metres. However, you'll need to hike another 4.9km before completing the climb, there is very little shade the entire way up.

<p>After a short hike over the immediate hill in front of you, you drop back down to a flat area which leads to the base of Meharry</p>	<p>About 1.9km from the car, you will reach the base of Meharry</p>	<p>After the steep hill, there is a small step part which requires a high clearance 4WD if driving</p> <p>For the next 3km you will follow a ridge line which eventually leads to the top of Meharry. There are really very few shady resting places, so take them when you find them.</p>	<p>A further 2.1km there is a false summit, with Meharry a final 860metres further along</p>	
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The entire walk up takes approx. just under 1.5 hours, walking at a medium pace, and takes roughly an hour twenty to get back to the car. Other than the heat and lack of shade, the walk is pretty easy, It's not too steep, and being a road (albeit a bad road) makes the walking straight-forward.