

Engaging Local Walking Groups



A Guide for Bushwalking Clubs



At a natural pace In a natural place

Engaging Local Walking Groups: A Guide for Bushwalking Clubs

This is a community contribution initiative of Bushwalking Victoria Inc.

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Walking Communities



Introduction

Bushwalking Victoria aims to increase bushwalking participation in the community by encouraging member bushwalking clubs to share their expertise with local community walking groups. Community walking groups are made up of people who live in the same area and join together for a walk once or twice a week. These groups can be formally organised with an employed coordinator (from a local health or community service, for example) or a volunteer walk leader. For many walking groups, their aim is to improve health and increase social interaction and the walking route is often the same local suburban path every week.

Bushwalking Victoria wants to support community walking groups to explore the natural world by introducing 'green' walking – walking in natural environments rather than built areas. To assist with the transition, this will mean offering diverse walking opportunities based on a continuum starting with local 'green' walks, in a nearby park for instance, to build people's confidence and gradually expand into longer and more venturesome activities.

This guide will assist bushwalking clubs to work collaboratively with local walking groups to encourage and empower them to go 'green walking'. The guide provides suggestions on how to do this, including how to assess the needs of the group and how to support them to start green walking. It offers a range of easy green walks to try out and includes several forms and handouts that will assist clubs to mentor community walking group leaders to plan and organise their walks.

How to Find and Contact Local Walking Groups

You can find out about walking groups in your area by contacting the following local organisations:

- Local Councils
- Community Health Centres
- Neighbourhood Houses
- Migrant Resource Centres
- Senior Citizens Groups.

Contact the Group Leader

Meet with the walking group leader first and then with the group before going green walking. Use this time to explain bushwalking, your bushwalking club and your personal experiences. Discuss the needs and aims of the group.



Important

The walking group decides when and where to walk. The mentor can provide support and guidance to assist the group to make a decision.

Talk about the abilities and any disabilities of the people in the walking group. In general, what is the group's fitness level? How long does the group usually walk for? Or perhaps this will be their first walk? With these issues in mind, talk about the duration and terrain of the walk you are considering. Will it be comfortable for the group?



Important

Discuss what kind of outcomes are important to the walking group and the speed at which they want to achieve them. Your role as a mentor is to provide advice and support to empower them to achieve their goals.

Walking with Diverse Communities

When working collaboratively with walking groups from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds it is important to liaise with Community Health Workers and key community leaders. These will be the people that have the cultural understanding and can bridge the language barrier. They will help you find out any religious or cultural expectations and needs that will impact on your green walk. For example, walking with children and babies, praying at particular times during the walk, days of religious observance, special dietary requirements, gender issues and different time-keeping standards are matters that may require particular planning.



Important

Work in partnership with a key representative from the community to assess the walking group's needs.

Where to Walk

'Green walking' is simply walking in the natural environment. It includes walking in the bush, walking along creeks and walks in urban and local parklands.

Selecting Accessible Walks

Start with short, easy walks such as in local parklands and increase the duration of walks as a group's confidence, fitness, and interest in walking increases.

Choose walks that can be accessed by public transport and, if private cars are available, have adequate parking facilities.



Tip

- Try one of the Green Walks Around Melbourne included in this booklet (see walk index on page 13). The walks have been suggested and reviewed by members of Bushwalking Victoria and have all the relevant information.
- Some councils have booklets outlining local walking routes. Go to the Department of Planning and Community Development website for the contact details of your local council:
<http://www.tinyurl.com/localcouncils>
- Check the street directory for maps of your walking route.
- Go to Metlink's Journey Planner website for a guide to public transport in Melbourne and Victoria:
<http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/>
- If some people decide to drive, car pooling is a good way to arrive comfortably and share petrol costs. Make sure you aim to meet in car parks without restrictions where possible.

Practise the Walk

It is a good idea for mentors to do a practice green walk to familiarise themselves with the route and the particular needs of the group which may be additional to your usual checklist. For example, is there access to public toilets (including hours of opening), shaded areas and seating? Is the width of the walking paths, all surfaces, slopes and any hills suitable for prams? Are pets allowed?



Tip

Use the attached *Green Walk Checklist* (page 56) to ensure you have gathered all this information when you do the practice walk.

When to Walk

Talk to the group to decide a day and time that best suits them. Avoid walking during the hottest time of the day and during days of severe weather conditions. Observe any days of cultural and religious importance. Find out about children and prams and plan the walk accordingly.



Tip

Check with the Bureau of Meteorology for weather forecasts and fire restrictions: www.bom.gov.au

What to Bring

Discuss with the leader of the walking group and/or the group the importance of comfortable clothing and flat, well fitting shoes, walking boots or sneakers while walking. Remind participants to bring a hat and sunscreen and a backpack for a bottle of water, any food, rain protection, mobile phone or medication needed. Remind the leader to carry a first aid kit during the walk.



Tip

Use the *Green Walking is Good for You* handout (page 58) to remind the group about appropriate clothing and supplies before the day of the walk.

Safety

Emphasise to the community group leader the importance of explaining to their group the basic bushwalking rules:

- Do not stray from the group.
- Keep the leader informed of any major discomfort in any individual.
- All walkers must wait for directions at track junctions.
- It is critical that the whip must always be last.
- The leader and the whip both need to carry a map of the walking route.
- Identify exit points in case the walk needs to be shortened.
- Ensure participants register at the beginning of the walk and provide emergency contact details; see the suggested Attendance Record form for this purpose on page 57.
- It is important that the mentor advises the walk leader to keep the Attendance Record form handy to check all walkers have returned from the walk and in case of an emergency.



Important note for bushwalking clubs

*The Attendance Record on page 57 must **NOT** be used for club events in which community group members participate. In these circumstances clubs need to use their own registration or attendance form and ensure that all visitors are granted temporary membership. Temporary members must sign the standard Bushwalking Victoria Acknowledgment of Risk form, downloadable from the Bushwalking Victoria website.*



Tip

- It is important that mentors and leaders have a charged mobile phone with them at all times and share that number with walkers.
- Use the *Green Walking is Good for You* handout (page 58); it includes safety tips.

Caring for the Environment

Discuss with the group the importance of minimising their impact on the environment by walking on designated tracks and not leaving any rubbish behind.

Insurance

1. **Walk/activity organised by a community group:**

A member of a bushwalking club affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria who is helping to lead or mentor a community group leader on a green walk is insured under Bushwalking Victoria's public liability insurance policy at the time of publication provided that the club is insured under the Bushwalking Australia/Bushwalking Victoria public liability policy and the club committee has authorised the activity as a club activity.

Bushwalking Victoria recommends that the community group should have its own public liability insurance. A group that is part of a Local Government sponsored program such as a Neighbourhood House or Senior Citizens Group may already be covered. The community leader can check with their Local Council to see if this is the case.

2. **Walk/activity organised by a BWV affiliated bushwalking club:**

If members of a community group are participating in a Bushwalking Victoria affiliated bushwalking club activity, then each such participant must be granted temporary membership of the club for the duration of the event and must sign the standard Bushwalking Victoria Acknowledgment of Risk form, downloadable from the Bushwalking Victoria website. They will then be covered by Bushwalking Victoria's public liability insurance for that activity on that occasion.

The following example shows how one bushwalking club overcame language and cultural issues to ensure a Burmese community group understood and acknowledged the risks associated with the particular club event which they attended as temporary members.

{Name of bushwalking club}

Reg No. {XXXnnnnXX}

Name of Activity:

Leader:

Grade of Activity:

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISKS AND OBLIGATIONS OF TEMPORARY MEMBERS

In voluntarily participating in the above event on **{date}**, an activity of this Club, I am aware that my participation in this activity may expose me to hazards and risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss of or damage to my property. In particular when participating in abseiling, caving or above-the-snowline activities I am aware that these activities expose me to additional hazards and risks.

To minimise these risks I have endeavoured to ensure that:

- this activity is within my capabilities,
- I am carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for the activity,
- I have advised the activity leader if I am taking any medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect my participation in the activity, and
- will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the activity, advise the leader of any concerns I am having and accept all reasonable instructions of the leader of this activity.

Declaration made by the signatories below:

These instructions have been read to the participants on the attached list and explained to them in their own language. To the best of our knowledge they understand the risks and, having considered them, they wish to join the activity, accepting responsibility for their own actions.

Signed:

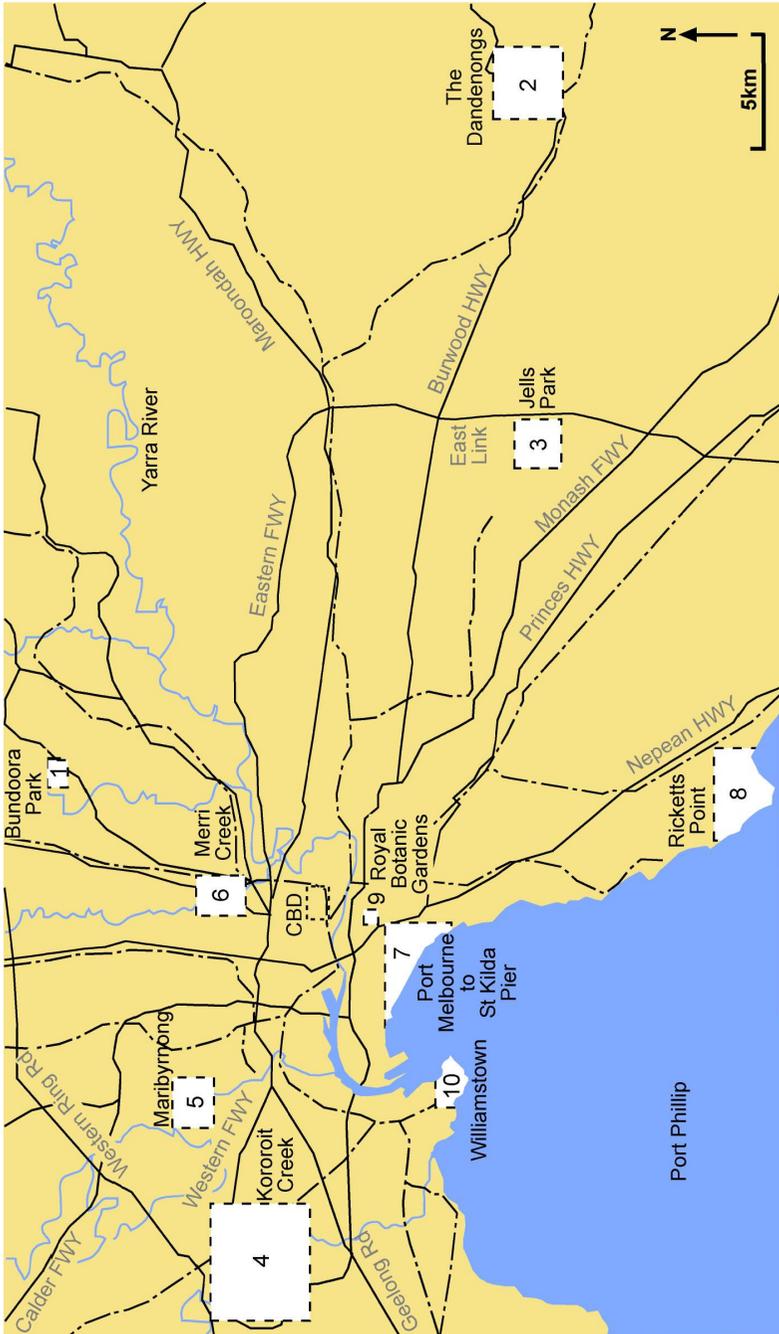
.....
Name
 Walk Leader (of bushwalking club)

.....
Name
 Office bearer of bushwalking club
 in attendance

.....
Name
 Planning Officer
 Liaising community organization
 in attendance

.....
Name
 Community Group Leader
 in attendance

Walk Locations Key Map

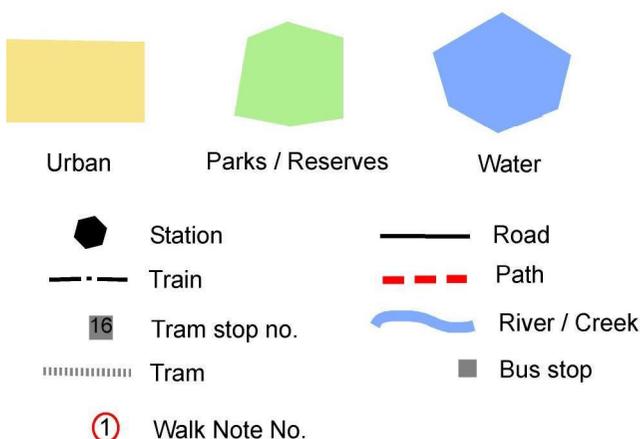


Green Walking Around Melbourne

Descriptions of 10 green walks in and around Melbourne follow. The descriptions include directions, public transport accessibility, approximate length, terrain, nearby facilities and any landmarks of interest.

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Key to maps



Walking Communities



1. Bundoora Park

Summary

The Darebin City Council describes this park as 'Melbourne's most diverse park'. The park features natural habitat, a golf course, many picnic areas and a tourist attraction known as Cooper's Settlement. The walk is a little more challenging in parts, involving some walking on uneven and uphill paths.

Distance: 6.2km (plus optional walks in Red Gum enclosure and visit to Cooper's Settlement).

Time: 2 hours.

Level of difficulty: Easy-medium.

Melway map: 19 F4 (start and finish)
(or download a local park map at www.bundoorapark.com.au).

Track surface: A mix of unsealed surfaces and park roads. Only suitable for prams with wide tyres and in dry conditions.

Facilities: Seats at intervals; toilets and picnic tables along Homestead Trail. The part of the walk along Darebin Creek does not have these facilities; you should carry drinking water. Café and toilets at the Visitor Information Centre (open 8:30 am to 5.00pm daily).

Coopers Settlement: Open 10am to 4.30 pm daily. Entry fees applicable. Attractions include Urban Farm, Heritage Village and Wildlife Reserve. Visit www.bundoorapark.com.au

Best season: Spring, Winter and Autumn. There is limited shade in Summer.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

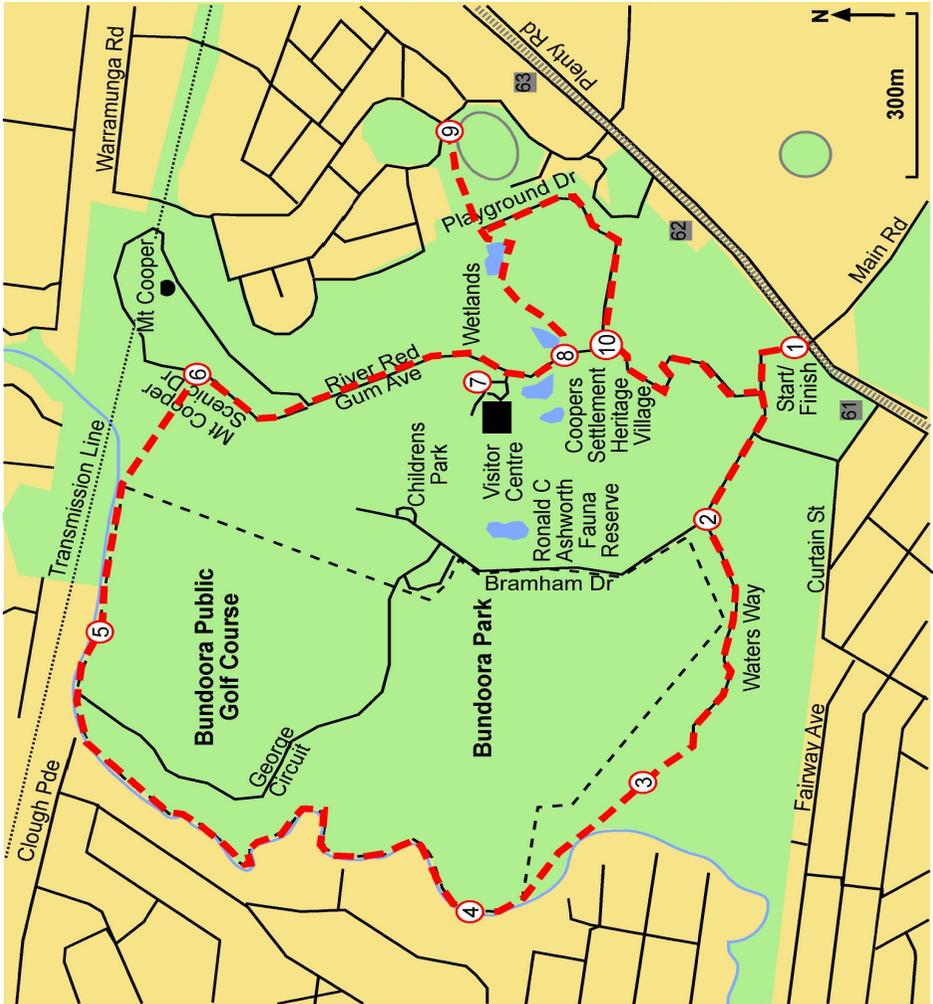
Dogs: Allowed on-leash, with selected off-leash areas.

Hazards: Watch for vehicles when walking on park roads. Look out for snakes from August to April.

Car parking: Good parking in designated areas within the park.

Public transport: Tram route 86 from Bourke Street, stop 61.

Bundoora Park



Walking Notes

1. Cross Plenty Road from tram stop 61 at pedestrian crossing lights. At the park entrance, commence walking along Bramham Drive (formerly Fairway Drive). Shortly, on your left you will see the gate leading into the River Red Gum preservation enclosure where you can take a detour to visit the red gums on a short circuit walk. There are benches and a water fountain along this walk.
2. Continue walking along Bramham Drive until you reach Waters Way (formerly Grasslands Road) on your left. As you approach this road junction you can see the 'Scar Tree', surrounded by a fence, on your right. This tree appears to have been used by indigenous people to make a canoe. Turn left into Waters Way and walk to the Cain Court car park that marks the end of the road.
3. At the car park, find two grass tracks veering off to the right and take the track that heads towards the creek. Continue walking on the track until you reach the golf course on your right.
4. Keep walking on the track which winds between the golf course on your right and the Darebin Creek on your left. You are now on the Darebin Creek Bushland Track. As you walk, you will observe a paved cement bicycle path on the opposite side of the creek, along with many grand houses.
5. After some time you will arrive at two large pylons carrying overhead electricity cables. At this point veer to your right and continue uphill, walking directly below the overhead power lines across open grasslands until you reach a road which is the lower section of the Mt Cooper Scenic Drive (a one-way loop road). At this point the energetic may wish to continue uphill to the next set of pylons for a panoramic view of Melbourne's skyline.
6. At the road turn right and follow the road to the start of the loop. Do not turn left. Instead continue along the road that is now called River Red Gum Avenue.



Walking Communities

7. When you reach the Visitors Centre on the right you may wish to visit the toilets, café or Coopers Settlement.
8. Leaving the centre, walk to the white sculpture near the car park entrance and turn right on to the gravel path. Following the path you will pass a small lake on the right and a road to your left. Cross the road at the pedestrian crossing and follow the Homestead Trail to the Bundoora Homestead. On your way you will cross another road known as Playground Drive. This area is ideal for a picnic; it has good facilities.
9. Bundoora Homestead (1899) is a magnificent Queen Anne Federation style home, surrounded by homes built much more recently. The homestead is now used as an arts centre and there is free admission to its occasional exhibitions. Its opening hours are: Wednesday-Friday 11am-4pm; Saturday-Sunday 12noon-5pm. On leaving the Homestead, return to the Homestead Trail and walk to the first road, which is Playground Drive. Turn left on Playground Drive until you reach River Red Gum Avenue.
10. Turn left at River Red Gum Avenue and follow this road to return to the park entrance.

Future Walk (or extension)

At the Grasslands Road car park, walkers may turn left and walk to meet the Darebin Creek. Follow the creek on a good quality path to Plenty Road for a return tram. This extension adds about 3km.



2. The Dandenongs

Summary

Grants Picnic Ground is located in Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenong Ranges National Park, 41km east of Melbourne. There are magnificent Mountain Ash trees, cool moist tree fern gullies, and lots of colourful rosellas, galahs, cockatoos and possibly a lyrebird.

These short walks all start from the Visitor Centre and are all beautiful.

Walks:

- Hardy Gully Nature Walk: 0.7km; 45 minutes; easy.
- Tree Fern Loop: 0.6km; 20 minutes; easy - some down and up but with a railing to assist and seating along the way.
- Tregellas Loop Walk: 2.5km; 45 minutes; easy - one uphill section.
- Margaret Lester Forest Walk: 0.5km; easy - suitable for prams and wheelchairs.

Time: 2 hours (total).

Melway map: 75 J3.

Track surfaces: Most tracks are firm. The Margaret Lester Track and the Coles Ridge Track are the only tracks suitable for prams. There are some steps in parts.

Facilities: Toilets next to the café/shop; picnic tables, barbecues and drinking fountains to the right of the main entrance. There are seats at Margaret Lester Track and Fern Tree Loop Walk.

Best season: All seasons but it can be very cold and wet in June and July. The wattles are spectacular in August. Good shelter.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: No, as this is a National Park.

Hazards: Tracks likely to be slippery after rain. Roots make many surfaces uneven.

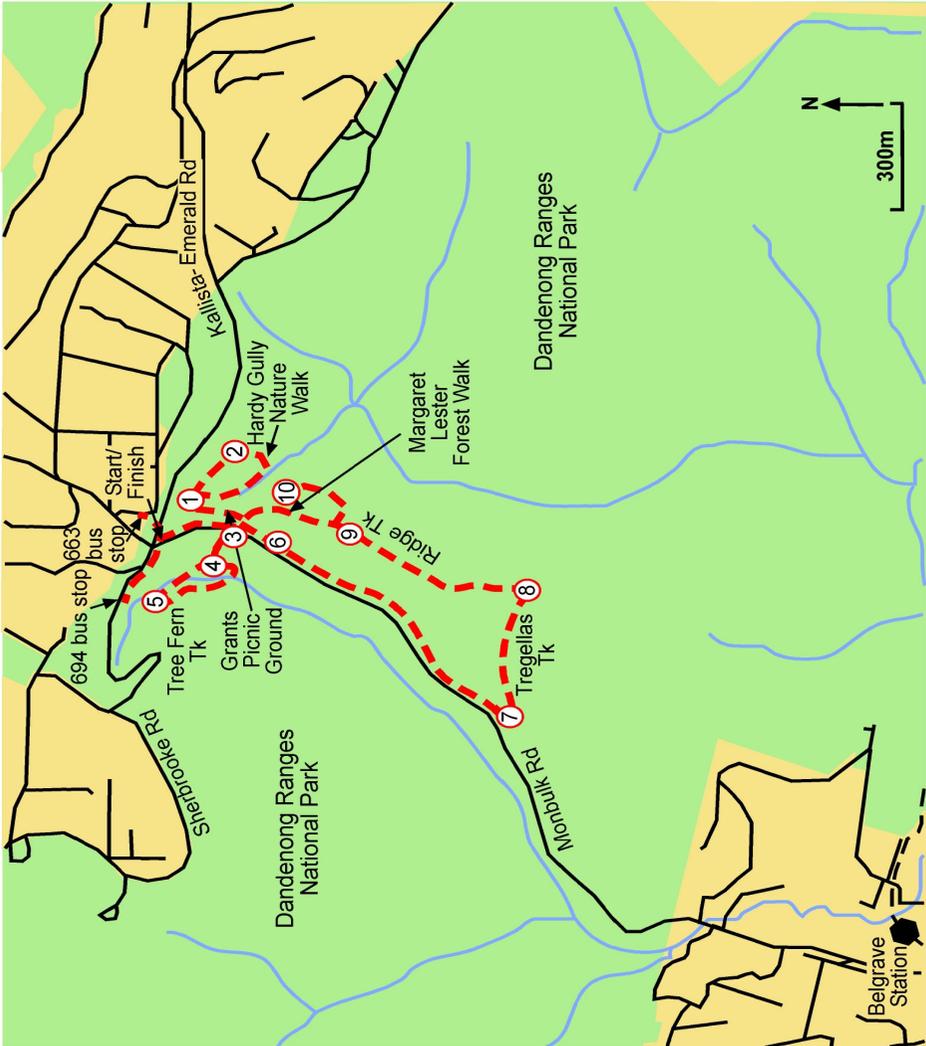
Car parking: Turn into Grants Picnic Ground; free.

Public transport:

Belgrave line train to Belgrave Station. Then bus 663, direction Lilydale Station (stop outside Community Centre, Kallista) **or** bus 694, direction Olinda (stop in Sherbrooke Road just past Kallista roundabout). Return buses: direction Belgrave Station. **Note:** No bus service on Sundays.

The Dandenongs

Walks starting at Grants Picnic Ground in the Dandenong Ranges National Park



Walking Notes

Hardy Gully Nature Walk

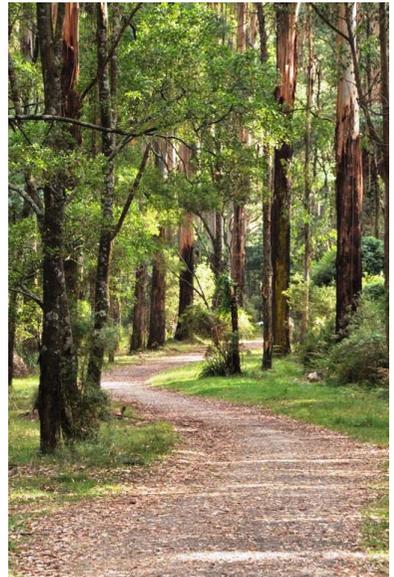
1. Facing the main road (Monbulk Road) from the café, turn right past the bird-feeding area to a gate on the right with a sign Hardy Gully Nature Walk. Pass through the gate and immediately turn right again, following the signs. The track goes downhill through a beautiful mossy fern gully with tall tree ferns and towering mountain ash trees before levelling out. Read about the flora and fauna as you pass the information boards.
2. At the T-junction with the Lyrebird Track turn left and walk up the gentle slope back to the entrance gate.

Tree Fern Loop

3. Opposite the main entrance to Grants Picnic Ground cross the very busy Monbulk Road. Enter the gate at the start of the well sign-posted Tree Fern Loop.
4. Turn left immediately and go downhill past a large sign and then down a flight of shallow steps (which has a solid railing for assistance) to a beautiful fern gully. Cross the wooden bridge over a small stream and then start uphill. This track is a bit steep and can be slippery but there is a railing all the way and you will pass three areas with bench seats where you can pause a moment to sit quietly amongst the ferns.
5. At the track junction with the Clematis Track turn right, cross a bridge and it is then a gentle uphill walk back to the gate. The café is across the road.

Tregellas Loop

6. From the café walk towards the main Picnic Ground entrance, past the parked cars and turn left along the small foot track on your left before the main road. You will notice two signposts for Sherbrooke Trail and Bleakley Track.
7. Follow this foot track down a long gentle slope, parallel to Monbulk Road for about 1km. Turn left at the junction with the Tregellas Track (the sign on your right is for Bleakley Track) and walk slowly uphill through the Messmate and Grey Gums. **Note:** This track may be slippery after rain.



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8. At the T-junction signed Coles Ridge Track, turn left through the tall Mountain Ash trees along a wide dirt track and follow this back to the Visitor Centre passing through magnificent tall mountain ash forest.
9. **Option:** Include the Margaret Lester Walk as you return. After the roundabout take the gravel track on your right, then the right fork and follow the mostly sealed track back to the café.

Margaret Lester Forest Walk

10. From the café walk uphill on the left of the parked cars and the picnic tables and take the left fork to this well-signposted walk. (**Note:** While the track surface is firm there are a few bumps, but it is suitable for wheelchairs and prams.) The walk goes through beautiful bush with information boards that describe different aspects of the world you are passing through. At the T-junction turn right and then right again almost immediately along a firm gravel track parallel to the car park to return to the café.

Future Walk

There are many walks in the Sherbrooke area of the Dandenong Ranges National Park, all with good signage. Parks Victoria has good maps which can be downloaded from the Parks Victoria website. Up-to-date *Melway* maps have the walking tracks clearly marked, but do not give any indication of the level of difficulty.



3. Jells Park

Summary

A large park in the Dandenong Creek Valley, this circuit walk goes around the peaceful lake which is edged on one side by large grassy slopes that welcome play and picnics, while on the far side is a quiet conservation area that is natural bush. You may visit a bird hide to watch the many waterbirds including purple swamphens, pelicans and an abundance of coots, moorhens and ducks. Away from the lake are other bush areas where woodland birds can be seen and heard and there are several delightful children's playgrounds.

Distance: Circuit walk of about 4km.

Time: About 1.5 hours .

Level of difficulty: Easy. The gradients are gentle and there are no stairs.

Melway map: 71 J7 (start and finish) and 72; and Parks Victoria website, search for Jells Park.

Track surfaces: Sealed track surfaces (shared with cyclists) or firm gravel; pram friendly.

Facilities: There are seats at intervals along track; toilets near Yabby Hill Playscape and Visitor Centre; picnic shelters; barbecues; café and kiosk.

Visitor Centre, café and kiosk: For information phone 03 9561 4522.

Best season: All seasons. There is plenty of shade as well as open grassed areas.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

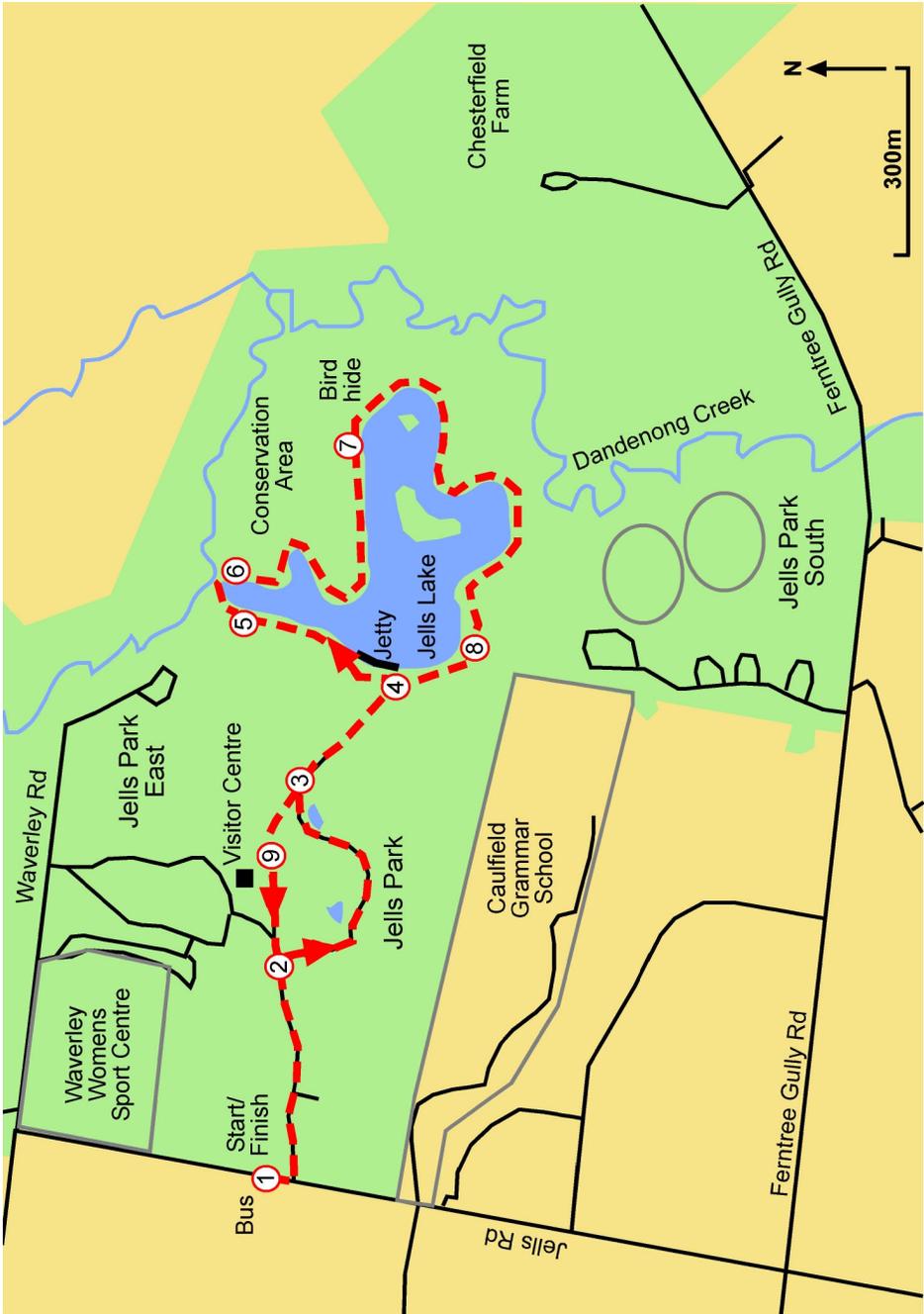
Dogs: Permitted on leads, but are not permitted in the fenced Conservation Area.

Car parking: Free parking; enter from Waverley/Jells Road corner, next entrance after the Women's Softball Centre. These gates open at 8am daily. Check closing times with Visitor Centre.

Public transport:

Glen Waverley line train to Glen Waverley Station (terminus). Then the bus, route 754, direction Rowville, bus stop is in Bay 5 on left side of the station. Request the driver to stop at Heysham Drive. 7-day service.

Jells Park



Walking Notes

1. From the bus stop it is a short walk uphill to the entrance to Jells Park, where you will notice a Welcome sign. Turn left into the park and immediately start enjoying the tall trees of the dry woodland as you follow the road, crossing a small crossroad.
2. Take the gravel track leading off to the right between a toilet building and the Yabby Hill Playscape – a wonderful children’s playground. The track then forks and you take the path to the left of the picnic shelter. This track goes through undisturbed bush where there is a good chance of sighting and hearing woodland birds, maybe even spotting a hare. Near the ponds you can listen for frogs calling after rain.
3. Emerging from the woodland and looking right you can see the lake across a large grassy slope. Turn right onto the sealed track and follow this path gently down hill towards the lake. At the lake’s edge is a sandy paddling beach where many waterbirds can be seen.
4. Turn left for good bird viewing from the wooden jetty, gaining assistance in identification from the wildlife information boards, or perhaps just relaxing on the shady seats behind you. Keeping the lake on your right, stay on the sealed path, and proceed up a gentle slope past more information in the small shelter on your right.



Walking Communities

5. At the T-junction turn right and, soon after, turn right again going past the *Dandenong Creek Trail* sign and proceeding straight ahead onto a firm gravel track through the gate to the Jells Lake Conservation Area. This is a lovely area of natural bush.
6. The path forks several times in the Conservation Area but a simple rule is to always choose the path closest to the lake which continues to be on your right. There are several shady seats close to the water for enjoying the lakeside environment and there is a bird hide where you can watch the water birds from your hiding spot. Again there are information boards to help you.
7. Turn right from the bird hide and pass on the left a large reedy pond, maybe seeing a white-faced heron in this different watery habitat. Staying on the path closest to the lake will bring you to the gate that exits the Conservation Area. At the T-junction ahead take the path to the right of the sheltered picnic tables, noting a water fountain by the left track.
8. Continue around the lake to meet the sealed track again at a Y-junction where you bear right. This track takes you back to the sandy beach by the lake so now you turn left up the hill towards the Visitor Centre, restaurant and kiosk which you can see ahead. There are sheltered tables here where you can enjoy a picnic if the weather is inclement.
9. To return to the bus, take the left fork just before the café, keeping the café on your right, and follow the straight road back to the entrance at Jells Road. **Note:** There is a barbecue area to the right of this road. Turn right and cross the road to the bus stop to take the route 754 bus (direction Glen Waverley Station), and then the train.



Future Walk

- The walk can be extended by turning left instead of right at Step 8 and doing a circuit around the southern part of Jells Park through more bushland and back past more children's playgrounds, toilets and barbecues. This would add about 2km to your walk.
- Another Dandenong Creek Park is Shepherds Bush, which is a northern continuation of Jells Park. At Step 5, you could follow the Dandenong Creek Trail through Shepherds Bush to High Street Road. Take a route 736 or 737 bus back to Glen Waverley Station.

4. Kororoit Creek

Summary

A well-defined, sealed trail along the valley of Kororoit Creek which contains mini-rapids, large waterholes and basalt cliffs. Spring is the best season for this walk, which goes through many areas replanted by community volunteers and Melbourne Water. The walk starts and finishes with short bus trips to and from Sunshine Station.

Distance: 7km.

Note: The track crosses the creek a number of times but the route is very clear.

Time: Approximately 2.5 hours.

Level of difficulty: Easy.

Melway map: 26 A9 (start) 40 E5 (finish). Walk route includes 25 K8 to K10.

Track surface: Sealed surface for full length of the walk.

Facilities: No toilet facilities along the track. There are toilets at Sunshine Station and bus terminal area. There are seats and picnic tables towards the end of the walk and playgrounds in the early stages of the walk. Carry drinking water as there is none available along the track.

Best season: Spring.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: Permitted on leash.

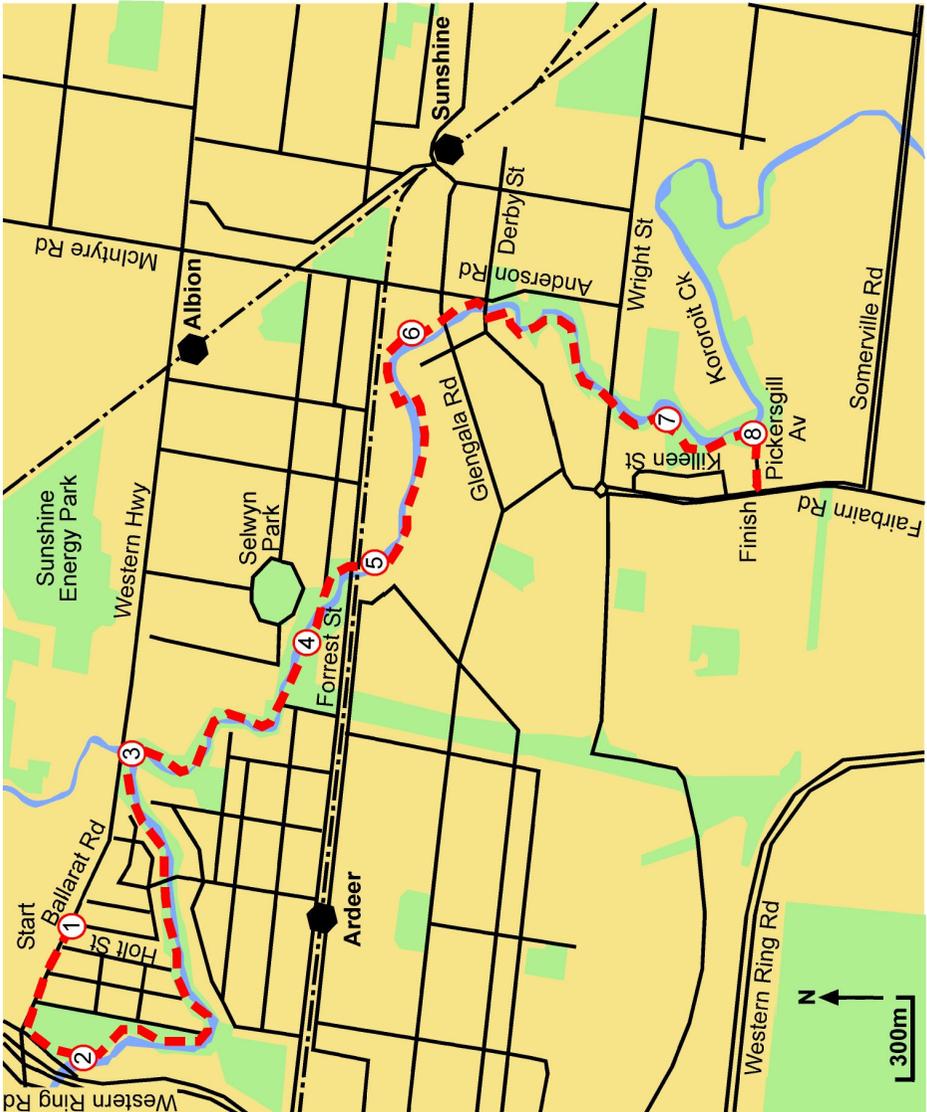
Hazards: Watch children on the path near the creek.

Car parking: 4-hour free parking is available at Durham Road Sunshine.

Public transport:

Take the Sydenham (Watergardens) line train to Sunshine station. Then take a bus from the bus terminal near the station: bus route 216 (Bay 10), direction Burnside **or** route 456 (Bay 6), direction Melton, to the start of the walk at Holt Street, Ardeer. Return to Sunshine Station on bus route 471, direction Sunshine Station. 7-day service.

Kororoit Creek



Walking Notes

1. Take public transport to Holt Street, Ardeer. Walk along the Ballarat Road service lane in the same direction as the bus for two blocks to the concrete Western Ring Path. The path is next to the softball field on Ballarat Road, just before the Western Ring Road.
2. Turn left and follow the path along the creek, staying on the left side of the creek as it bends back towards Ballarat Road. You will pass a playground and fitness course. You will then pass three footbridges off to the right. Do not cross these bridges, but instead keep walking along the Kororoit Creek until you meet Ballarat Road.
3. At Ballarat Road turn right and walk on the footpath next to the road, crossing over the tributary, Jones Creek. You can see this small creek covered in concrete on the other side of Ballarat Road. It now runs under Ballarat Road through drain pipes. Shortly you will turn right to return to the trail and continue along the left bank of Kororoit Creek, passing under some electricity pylons as you walk.

4. Walk to the right of the tennis courts and meet a playground at Selwyn Park. You may wish to take a break at this point.

Continue walking the path along the creek and pass under the Forest Street road bridge.

Note: For an early exit don't go under the bridge, but walk up to Forest Street for buses 400 and 451 back to Sunshine Station.



Walking Communities

5. On the trail and just past the Forest Street bridge is a footbridge across to the right hand side of Kororoit Creek. Cross the footbridge, looking out for ducks and other water birds. Continue walking the trail until you meet another footbridge, where you will cross back to the left hand side of the creek; keep walking on this side.
6. Walk under the Glengala Road bridge and continue to the Derby Street footbridge where you will cross the creek again. This time you will be walking on the right side of the creek. Next you will meet the Wright Street bridge where you will need to walk up to the street and cross the bridge, turning right off the bridge to continue on the trail. Continue walking on the left side of the creek until you meet a steel footbridge.
7. Cross the steel footbridge and observe the natural rock wall. Further along the trail on the right hand side of the creek, you will find park benches and a picnic table (at Killeen Street) for a break. Continue walking on the trail, past St Peters Primary School. Just past the school you will meet Pickersgill Avenue.

Note: For an early exit or to avoid a second bus ride, don't cross the first footbridge but exit to the left and walk along Derby Road then left along Hampshire Road to Sunshine Station.

8. Turn right and walk down Pickersgill Avenue to Fairbairn Road. Cross Fairbairn Road, turn right and walk to the bus stop on the next corner (Bennett Street). Take the route 471 bus to return to Sunshine Station.



Future Walk (or extension)

Continue along the trail beyond Pickersgill Avenue to Buckingham Reserve which has a children's playground and shelter, and return the same way. This extension would add about 30 minutes.



5. Maribyrnong River Trail

Summary

This is a very popular walking circuit along a flat, bitumen track. It has many points of interest including an avenue of honour, the beauty of the river and surrounding parks. Some native birds that may be seen include: Seagulls, Wood and Black Ducks, Small Pied Cormorants, White-faced Herons, Rainbow Lorikeets, Magpies and Mudlarks.

Distance: 4km.

Time: 1 hour.

Level of Difficulty: Easy.

Melway map: 28 D8.

Track surface: Sealed.

Facilities: There is a good level of shade and reasonable wind protection. There are bench seats, tables, drinking fountains and toilets along the trail. Barbecues and playgrounds are located at Riverside Park (Step 4) or Coulson Gardens (Step 8).

Best season: All seasons. This walk would be best planned for midweek, during work hours to avoid excess pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leash only, except for off-leash areas as described below.

Hazards: The trail runs beside the Maribyrnong River. There are no protective fences along the trail or around some of the children's playgrounds so supervision of children at all times is advised. This is a trail shared with bicycles so be alert and considerate to other users.

Car parking: Free, all-day parking is available in The Boulevard near the commencement of the walk (enter from Holmes Road).

Public transport: West Maribyrnong tram (No. 57) from Flinders Street to stop 41. Or take Craigieburn line train to Ascot Vale Station. Turn right out of the station, head 500 metres towards Maribyrnong Road and take Footscray tram (No. 82) to stop 41.

Options:

Shorter: see Step 4. Longer: see Step 5.

Maribyrnong River Trail



Walking Notes

1. Cross Raleigh Road at the pedestrian crossing next to the bridge and follow the sealed trail directly next to the river. Shortly you will pass an old bandstand, children's playground, a minor skate park and the Boathouse Restaurant.
2. Walk along the river by the bluestone terraces that are used by spectators to watch rowing events. Soon the rowing sheds can be seen on your right.
3. Walk past the roundabout at Holmes Road and continue along the river. An Avenue of Honour consisting of recently planted trees and plaques commemorates several ships lost in a fierce battle in the First World War. To your right across the Boulevard, parklands include Aberfeldie Park. Shortly after passing the parkland you will find Poynton's nursery, with an upstairs cafe on the corner of Vida Street.
4. Shortly after the nursery the trail veers away from the Boulevard, keeping next to the river. You will soon meet Riverside Park that includes two children's playgrounds, two free electric BBQs, two large, sheltered picnic rotundas and public facilities. This is a good place for something to eat and drink while you take a look at the tall wooden sculptures in the park. **Optional exit:** There is a bus (route 467) up the hill on Fawknor Street that goes to Moonee Ponds Station.



Walking Communities

5. Continue walking along the river until the Afton Street pedestrian bridge is encountered. This is the half way point and you will return on the other side of the river. **Optional extension:** Explore the Afton Street Conservation Park next to the bridge. This park is reclaimed Defence Force land. All the tracks are gravel. There are some small hills. Return to the pedestrian bridge.
6. Cross the pedestrian bridge then turn left. Continue to walk the trail next to the river. If you have a dog you may like to let your dog take a run in the off-leash park over the bridge. There are some interesting houses to view along this side as well as the magnificent river as you walk along. Rowers and fishermen are often seen along the river.
7. Continue walking along the river, until you find a historic flood marker opposite Plantation Street, where you can see how high the river can rise during floods.
8. Continue along the river until Coulson Gardens are encountered.
9. Walk along the river until you find a water fountain and the rear of the Anglers Tavern. Both are possible spots for a refreshing drink. Continue walking to the right of the Tavern and join the busy bridge across the river on Raleigh Road. Cross the bridge until you reach tram stop 41 where you will have completed the walk.

Future Walk (or extension)

From the Raleigh Street bridge continue in the same direction as in Step 9 (South) towards Pipemakers Park where there are toilets, shelters, a museum and BBQs. At the park, there is a pedestrian bridge across the river that you could cross to return to Raleigh Road on the other side of the river. However as at August 2009, the Maribyrnong Council had closed the bridge until further notice due to safety issues. The Council can be contacted on 03 9688 0200 for further advice. Whether you return on the same side of the river or cross the pedestrian bridge, this loop will take about one hour.



6. Merri Creek

Summary

In the heart of inner suburban Melbourne, this trail passes through areas of trees and wetlands giving an unexpected sense of bush only a few kilometres from the CBD. The walk passes relics of earlier times when bluestone was quarried in this area and leads to CERES, a fascinating place dedicated to community and environmental initiatives, well worth visiting.

Distance: About 5km (plus walk around CERES); or 3.2km one way (96 tram to City from CERES).

Time: About 2 hours.

Level of difficulty: Easy.

Melway map: 30 D11; and Darebin Council *Merri Creek Trail* map (phone 03 8470 8470).

Track surfaces: Mostly sealed surfaces. Area between Merri Creek Wetlands and Arthurton Road is unsealed. Suitable for prams in dry weather, however prams should not cross the creek (see Step 4) after rain.

Facilities: Seats at intervals; toilets at Sumner Park, Kirkdale Park, CERES; water fountain/tap at Sumner Park; barbecues at Sumner Park and Kirkdale Park; café at CERES.

CERES Environmental Park: Open: 9am-5pm during Winter and 9am-6pm during Summer. Market: 9am-1pm Wednesdays and Saturdays. Free entry. Information: ceres@ceres.org.au Phone: 03 9387 2609.

Best season: Spring, Summer and Autumn.

Mobile phone coverage: Good .

Dogs: Permitted on leash.

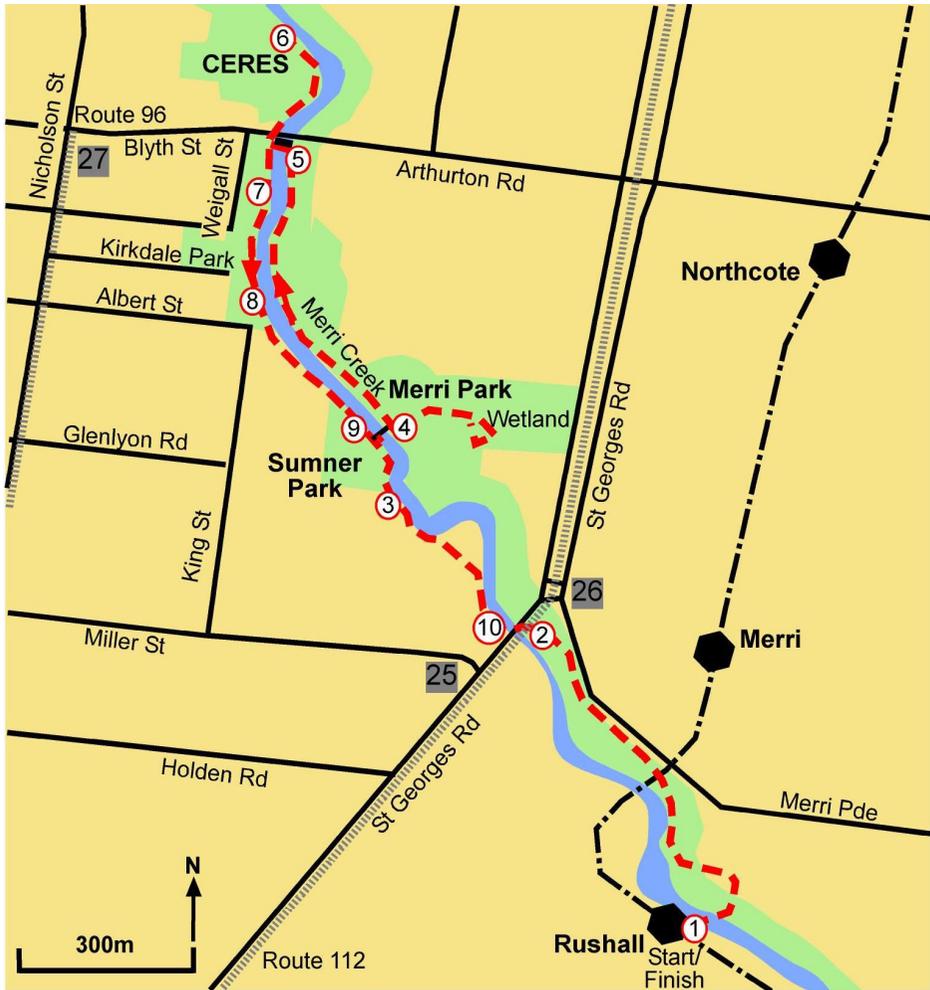
Hazards: The tracks are shared with bicycles so keep to the left on the path, be alert and considerate of other users. Watch children on the path near the creek.

Car parking: Very limited.

Public transport:

Train: Epping Line to Rushall Station. Or **bus:** Route 250 Latrobe University to Garden City, get off at Rushall Station **or** route 253 Northland to Garden City, get off in Rushall Crescent and walk across to the railway station. Both buses may be taken from the corner of Lonsdale and Exhibition Street in the City. Buses run every day.

Merri Creek



Walking Notes

1. Turn left out of the station and left again to go through the rail underpass then turn right to cross the bridge over Merri Creek, following the *Merri Creek Trail Ceres 2.3km* sign. Keep following the signs. At the first street turn left (McLachlan Street) and left again at Cunningham Street, then right when you reach the creek. The path goes under the metal railway bridge and soon you will see wooden steps leading down to a pleasant picnic ground beside the creek with tables and shady trees. Prams can access this area by walking another 200m on the concrete path before turning hard left down a gravel path. Walk up this path to rejoin the main track.
2. The path leads you to a road bridge across the creek at St Georges Road. Turn left along the footpath beside the road, pass the steep track on your left (marked *Pedestrians Only*) and turn left onto the shared track which loops more gently down and back under the road bridge. The creek is now on your right.
3. This part of the trail is pleasantly green and opens to Sumner Park with its sports ground, pavilion (with toilets behind), a barbecue and a water tap. The only seats are benches beside the pavilion and on a Saturday morning you can stop to watch children learning soccer skills.
4. The Merri Creek Wetlands are on the other side of the creek so cross the bridge soon after Sumner Park, turn left and then take the right fork up the hill. Go through the gate on your right to find a very pretty bushland setting, a perfect place for a break (no seats) – but it is a wetland so it will be wet underfoot after rain. Return to the bridge exit (do not cross the bridge), turn away from the City so that the creek is on your left and follow the firm dirt track (suitable for prams except after heavy rain) through a lovely bush area. Prams should not visit the wetlands but, after crossing the bridge, turn left through the bush area.



Walking Communities

5. This attractive green track ends abruptly at busy Arthurlon Road where you again cross the creek. Turn left along the road bridge and immediately left again onto a shared track heading downhill to rejoin the main shared track, turning left to pass under the bridge.
6. Almost immediately you are at the creek-side entrance to CERES Environmental Park. Explore CERES and be amazed at the sustainable solutions they suggest. **Option:** You could return to the City from CERES: at the front gate in Roberts Street turn left, then right at Blyth Street. From here you can see the Tram 96 terminus at the Nicholson Street intersection.
7. To return to Rushall Station, retrace your steps from CERES creek side entrance and turn right onto the shared track, this time going under the bridge so you are now on the opposite side of the creek to your outward journey. A short track immediately on your left leads through a few trees to the creek and some bench seats, another pleasant place for a break.
8. Signs along this part of the creek record some of the early history of the area such as a very interesting story associated with the parts and usage of the amazing crane that is a functional litter trap. The remains of the retaining wall from the 1880s Wales Street bluestone quarry can be seen just before Kirkdale Park (which has seats, shelter, barbecue, toilets and swings) and before the next bridge you can see the remains of an old weir in the creek below where the water rushes between the narrow walls.
9. Pass the bridge (that leads to the wetlands) and now you are on the track you set out on.
10. Go under the St Georges Road bridge and walk gently uphill. Turn right over the bridge then right again along the track beside creek. Follow the Merri Creek Trail signs back to Rushall Station.

Future Walk from Rushall Station

Merri Creek Trail to Dights Falls (3km one way). Follow the signs through beautiful parkland to the junction of Merri Creek and the Yarra River.



7. Port Melbourne to St Kilda Pier

Summary

Take a walk beside the sea, play or laze on the beach, gaze at the yachts, revel in the sea air, stroll along the piers and then grab a coffee on the historic St Kilda Pier or in one of the many cosmopolitan cafes.

Distance: 4.5km.

Time: 1.5 hours.

Level of difficulty: Easy.

Melway map: 57 A3 start, 57 K10 finish.

Track surfaces: Sealed track surface, flat walk and no hills except for a ramp to reach the Esplanade at Step 10.

Facilities: Seats; toilets and water fountains are found along the way; picnic tables, shelters and barbecues are at Catani Gardens; cafes and kiosks are along the route and at the end of the walk in Acland Street.

Best Season: Spring and Autumn are best as the route is exposed to the elements and provides little shade. Sun protection and/or wet weather gear are necessary. While Summer is a good option for swimming it can be very hot so take hats and skin protection.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: Permitted on leash.

Hazards: Some parts of the track are shared with bicycles so be alert and considerate of other users. Watch children on beaches and on the piers.

Note: Volunteer life guards patrol some beaches at weekends and public holidays in the summer months. Remember to swim between the flags.

Car Parking: Free in side streets for limited times but necessary to check parking restriction signs as limits vary in different streets.

Public transport:

To start: Light rail route 109, direction Port Melbourne, from Collins Street or from Southern Cross Station (Spencer Street), 7 day service.

From end: From The Esplanade take either tram 16, direction Melbourne University, to Flinders Street Station or tram 96, direction East Brunswick, to Southern Cross Station. 7-day service.

Port Melbourne to St Kilda Pier



Walking Notes

1. From the light rail terminus walk towards Station Pier, cross the road, and turn left at the sign Bay Trail: St Kilda Pier 4.4km. This part of the trail is shared with bicycles so be alert. At the end of the fenced area on your right turn along the board walk to a small pier from which you enjoy your first views across Port Phillip Bay to your destination, the St Kilda Pier. You also have a close view of the Tasmanian ferry Spirit of Tasmania when it is in dock.
2. Return to the track and turn right past the Centenary Pillar, reading about the ambitious dreams of our forebears and noting that the beach area here is sheltered from the westerly wind. From this point the walking track is separated from the bicycle track and leads you to a rotunda which has seats inside and outside. Next you pass a statue of Wilbrahim Liardet, a pioneer of Port Melbourne, and then another relic of the past - an old stone drinking fountain (no longer in use).
3. Past the Port Melbourne Yacht Club is another short boardwalk leading to Lagoon Pier which is worth visiting for the views of the foreshore. Return to the track and turn right towards the Port Melbourne Life Saving Club where you will find public facilities.
4. You will pass another water fountain before reaching the South Melbourne Life Saving Club.
5. You may see a game of volleyball on one of the courts marked by white posts on the beach in front of the Plum Garland Memorial Playground. This is a well-equipped, safe, fenced and shady play area for children. Opposite the playground, in Victoria Avenue is the terminus of Tram 1, a 7-day service, which is an alternative start or finish for the walk.
6. Walk past the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club, the café (maybe stop for a coffee) and walk along the Kerferd Road Pier and look back to the foreshore as well as checking the catch of any fishermen. Return to the track.



Walking Communities

7. At the Albert Park Public Change Rooms you can change into beachwear for beach activities if you wish. Refreshments are available from the café while further along on the beach is a wooden shelter with bench seats on all four sides so it protects from winds from any direction.
8. Past a grassy area with a water fountain, the sandy beach beside the path is now covered with many banksias and other local plants as a result of an intensive local habitat planting programme. These bushes can provide beach shade and protection from the wind and on a windy day you may watch the kiteboarders. Please note that swimming is not permitted here.
9. Cross Pier Road at the traffic lights and enter Catani Gardens, a grassy park with shady trees, picnic area, barbecue, public toilets and a children's playground (under reconstruction, July 2009). The central path leads right through a rotunda before you take the right fork, keeping the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron on your left. This path joins Pier Road (shared with bicycles and vehicles) where you turn left to the start of St Kilda Pier.
10. Walking along the St Kilda Pier is a must to see the reconstructed historic kiosk and to view the breakwater where a colony of Little Penguins lives. When you leave the pier walk straight ahead across a grassed area with a central statue of Captain Cook and the St Kilda Sea Baths on your right. Cross Jacka Boulevard using the overpass (no steps) which leads to The Esplanade and Tram Stop number 13 for routes 16 and 96 back to the City.



Future Walk (or variation)

Turn right from St Kilda Pier and explore St Kilda. You will find *St Kilda Foreshore: A Guided Trail* at <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/walks>

8. Ricketts Point

Summary

Spectacular cliff top views of beaches stretching across Port Phillip Bay to Arthur's Seat in one direction and of the City skyline the other way. Early Heidelberg artists' views of the area are preserved on the information boards along the track by displaying their paintings next to the area they depicted. It is a Marine Reserve with splendid opportunities for beach and rock-pool exploration.

Distance: Linear walk 3.5km (or continue for 4.7km total).

Time: About 2 hours.

Melway map: Start: 86 H7; Finish: 86 A5.

Track surfaces: The walk is on a variety of track surfaces including sealed (shared with cyclists) and firm sand with occasional roots and some steps. Some sections are not suitable for prams or wheelchairs, but the roadside path is sealed and an attractive option.

Facilities: There are seats at intervals along the track. There are toilets at Cheltenham Station, beside the Beaumaris Life Saving Club and in the picnic ground past the Tea House. Water fountains are at the clifftop start, Moysey Gardens and in the picnic ground after the Tea House; barbecues in the area around the Tea House.

Best season: Sheltered on cliff top, exposed on beach. A lovely Spring, Autumn, Winter walk; a beautiful beach place in the Summer.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: On leash only.

Hazards: The roadside path is shared with bicycles so be alert and considerate of other users. Watch children near the water.

Car parking: Free in side roads (for example, Charman Road); fee payable along foreshore.

Public transport: Frankston line train to Cheltenham Station; exit station, turn right, cross railway line, cross road to bus stop (opposite cemetery). Bus route 923, direction St Kilda. Bus stop: Beach Road at Charman and Beach Road junction. 7-day service.

Ricketts Point



Walking Notes

1. From bus stop turn right and walk towards the sea, cross Beach Road and turn left to the start of a gravel track on right. Pause a moment to enjoy the spectacular views towards Mordialloc and Arthur's Seat in the distance. Take the right track down some shallow steps past a water fountain. At the fork take the right track (left goes to Mordialloc via the beach, a future walk) and visit the first of many viewing points on your left.
2. Keep taking the left forks (right forks lead back to road) past a sign titled Coastal Art Trail: Come and See what Tom saw, and down more shallow steps leading to a cairn marking the meeting place of the early artists. From the cairn take the left fork to enjoy the melaleuca bush and wonderful views along a sandy track which briefly returns to the road to cross the Beaumaris Yacht Squadron driveway. There is another short sandy track loop on your left (opposite 481 Beach Road) before rejoining the sealed footpath.
3. Moysey Gardens is a grassy area with a brick cairn dedicated to the Moyseys, who were early settlers of area. Here are the first two artists' information boards depicting works of John Perceval and Arthur Streeton. Continue along the footpath (shared) past picnic tables, cross a car park and return to the sandy cliff top foot track again, passing more picnic tables with a superb view of Table Rock and its colony of cormorants.
4. The sandy track darts back to the sealed path briefly and then heads back to the cliff top and the next artist board about Alfred Coleman. At the Sea Scouts boat shed take the ramp to explore the small rocky beach with its short pier and another artist board about Clarice Beckett. Return to foot track and continue walking (the beach is on your left).
5. At the next opportunity take the left fork and then almost immediately take the right fork and return to the footpath. There is the option of another short sandy track loop and then back to the footpath again.
6. Opposite Tramway Parade turn left down the ramp (with handrail) to the beach. Turn right along beach (firm sand) past an artist board about Charles Conder. Just beyond the Beaumaris Life Saving Club there is a sheltered grassed area with picnic tables. Look for the attractive hand-painted tile seat and the information boards for the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary and for artist Tom Roberts. Walk through the gravel car park past several grassy picnic areas and another toilet.
7. The sealed (shared) trail starts again on the left of the car park, next to the rubbish bins. The beach and an extensive rocky shelf are on your

Walking Communities

left. Three beautiful ceramic tiles detailing the life of the Marine Sanctuary are set into the track at about 50m intervals; don't miss them!

8. The path passes in front of a café and kiosk on the right followed by an artist board about Arthur Streeton, with a beautiful picnic ground just behind.
9. Two more artist information boards about the Coastal Art Trail and the artist Charles Condor are on the left. Turn right past the toilets, cross the car park driveway and follow the track uphill to the road. (**Optional exit:** Cross Beach Road and walk along the right side of Haydens Road past Florida Avenue and Pacific Boulevard to the bus stop. Take bus 923, direction Southland, back to Cheltenham Station.)
10. Walking along the beach from the Beaumaris Yacht Club is possible but difficult because the sand is soft and the area is for dogs off leash; instead the cliff top sealed footpath is recommended, with extensive views of the City, before returning to the beach via a ramp. A short walk on firm sand takes you past two artist boards – George Bell and Frank Latimer – before the formed Promenade Track starts and winds around the base of the cliff past a weather shelter.
11. At the time of review (July 2009) the Promenade Walk was closed opposite Fourth Street due to a landslide. Climb the stairs to Beach Road and cross into Fourth Street which veers to the right at the roundabout. The bus stop for the 923 bus, direction Southland, is on the left side of Fourth Street. Take the bus back to Cheltenham Station.

Future Walk

It is possible to continue walking beside Port Phillip Bay from the end of this walk until St Kilda Pier. There are many public transport access options which make numerous short walks possible. Check the *Melway* maps.



9. Royal Botanic Gardens

Summary

The Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG), close to the city centre, has huge shady trees, extensive lawns, an ornamental lake with water birds including black swans, amazing plants from many countries as well as indigenous ones and a delightful Children's Garden. There are two cafes and shops. Walking and picnicking on the lawns is welcome.

Distance: 4.5km (shorter or longer options possible).

Time: About 2 hours.

Level of difficulty: Easy. There are some gentle gradients in the RBG, and some stairs to reach the Shrine of Remembrance forecourt.

Melway map: 2F, 2G, 2L; an excellent map is available from the Visitor Centre.

Track surfaces: Sealed track surfaces or firm gravel; pram friendly. No bicycle riding in the RBG.

Facilities: Seats; toilets; picnic shelters; shady trees; cafes.

Access: Open at 7.30am daily; for closing times and information about guided tours check with the Visitor Centre: 03 9252 2429 or www.rbg.vic.gov.au; free entry.

Best season: Spring, Summer and Autumn, but a Winter walk has charm too.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: Dogs are permitted on leash.

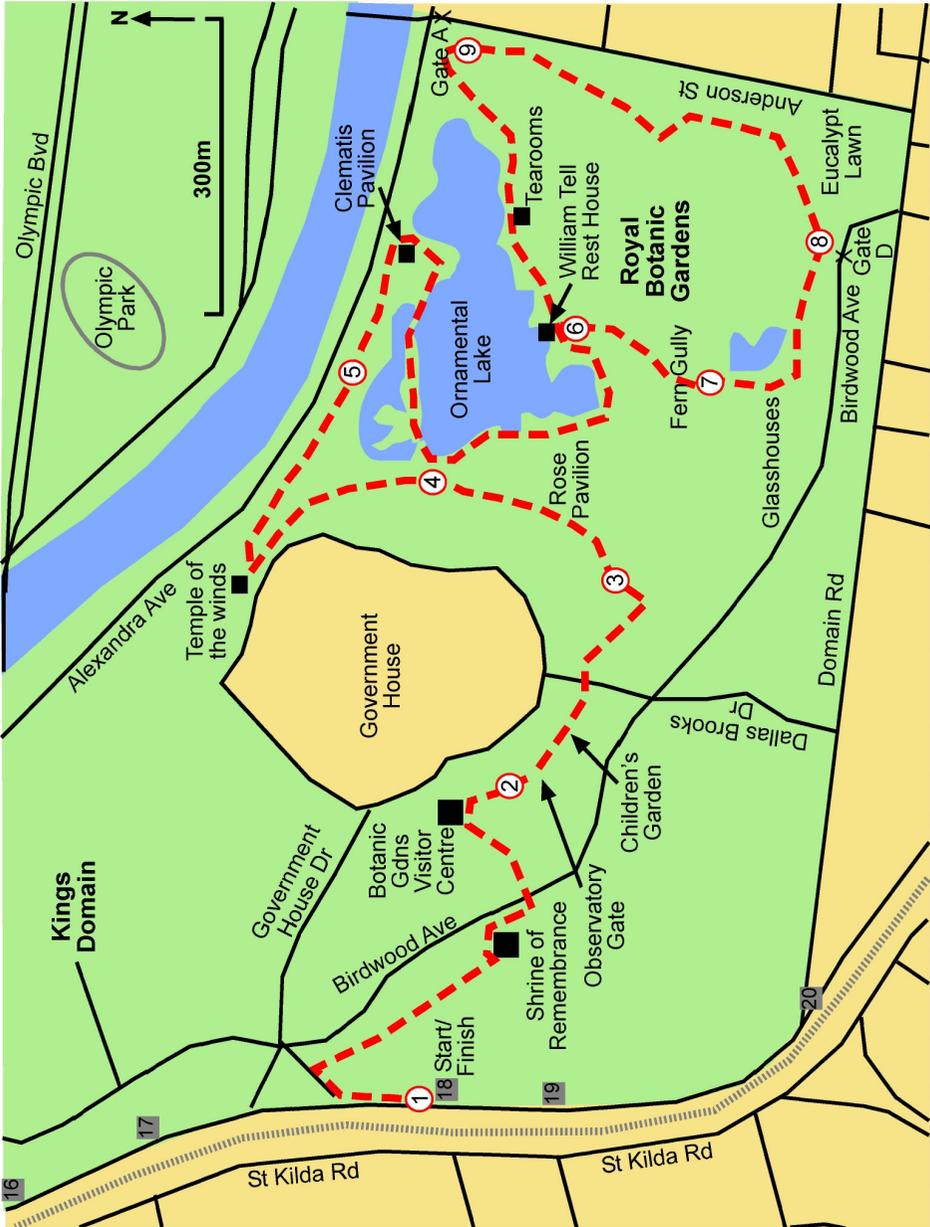
Hazards: There are no fences around the lake.

Car parking: Very limited street parking in Birdwood Avenue.

Public transport: Trams 3, 5, 6, 8, 64, 67 and 72 from Flinders Street Station in Swanston Street. Get off at Stop 18, Coventry Street

Options: At any time this walk can be shortened by following the signs *Tea Rooms* for a rest by the lake or *Observatory Gate* to exit the RBG.

Royal Botanic Gardens



Walking Notes

1. From tram stop 18 face the Shrine of Remembrance and walk to the left then turn right up Anzac Avenue to Birdwood Avenue (to avoid stairs at the Shrine) or hard right up the impressive promenade (some stairs) that leads to the Shrine forecourt. At the top turn around for a splendid view toward the City then follow the path clockwise around the façade, passing the historic statue of The Man with the Donkey. The Shrine's Visitor Centre is on your right (open 10am-5pm daily). Continue around the Shrine's façade and turn left at the Legacy Garden, crossing the road to the Royal Botanic Gardens.
2. Collect information from the Visitor Centre straight ahead. Enter the Gardens through the Observatory Gate and note the Weather Station immediately on your left followed by whimsical animal topiary which points to the Children's Garden on your right - a must-see for all young children (check opening hours). Cross the next track, watching for vehicles, and at the T-junction marked by a tall slender sculpture, turn left.
3. Follow the signs to the Rose Pavilion with its elegant cupola roof (shelter and seats). Pass to the left of the pavilion noting the Government House Tower on your left and, looking right, beautiful vistas down to the Ornamental Lake.
4. Go past some steps and then a track to the left which goes to the Plant Craft Cottage (check opening hours) before taking the next fork to the left past the impressive Memorial Wall. **Option:** Turn left up the stairs through the Grey Garden, a remarkable display of plants that require little watering, to visit the Temple of the Winds, overlooking the Yarra, and the soccer stadium. Return down the stairs.
5. Take the path on the left and follow the sign to the Clematis Pavilion (shelter and seats) past the Southern Chinese Collection. At the Pavilion turn hard right to cross the bridge to Long Island which features the fascinating local Lower Yarra river habitat. Cross the bridge and turn left around the lake and follow the signs to toilets and Tea Rooms.
6. At the William Tell Rest House (shelter and seats) turn right up a gradual hill and follow the signs to the Fern Gully. Turn left onto a smaller track which winds through the Fern Gully, a restful shady area of tall palms and tree ferns, crossing two paths before the small track finishes at a main sealed path. The tracks in the Fern Gully have slightly irregular surfaces so prams and wheelchairs may need assistance or could choose to stay on main paths and go around the Fern Gully.

Walking Communities

7. Follow directions to the two Glasshouses, keeping the Rain Garden on your left: the Cacti and Succulent Glasshouse (hot, dry and spiky) and the Tropical Glasshouse (lush, green and steamy), both worth a visit (Open: 10am-4pm). On exiting the glasshouses turn right and follow the signs to the Australian Rainforest Walk, which has information boards about Australian forests.
8. You have now almost reached the highest point of the Gardens so note Gate D on your right and then take the right-hand path past the Eucalypt Lawn before turning left down the hill, past Guilfoyle's Volcano Project (under construction, August 2009) on your right. Follow this path past the Tecoma Pavilion (shelter and seats) fairly close to the fence all the way to the lowest corner at Gate A because it is a gentle downhill route and alternative routes are steeper.
9. Turn hard left following the sign to the Ornamental Lake to head for the Tea Rooms and the lake. View the Separation Tree on the left at the next fork but then bear right to the Tea Rooms and lake. Pass the café on your left and walk to the William Tell Rest House again. Turn left up a gradual hill and follow the signs back to the Observatory Gate. Retrace your steps across the Shrine forecourt and down to the tram stop.



Future Walk

The City of Melbourne is blessed with many beautiful public parks and gardens.

Consider exploring the:

- Treasury and Fitzroy Gardens (*Melway* 2G A3)
- Carlton Gardens (*Melway* 2B J9-11)
- Flagstaff Gardens (*Melway* 2F A1)
- Royal Park (*Melway* 2A and 2B, start at 2A H4).



10. Williamstown

Summary

A beachside walk past contrasting sandy and rocky beaches as well as interesting geological features. Walk through this well-preserved historical area of early Melbourne with its fascinating naval artefacts and choose between picnicking in one of several parks or pausing for refreshment in one of its abundant cafes. Add on a self-guided walk past many early buildings.

Distance: 4km.

Time: About 1.5 hours.

Melway map: 56 B10 start; 56 E11 finish.

Level of difficulty: Easy.

Track surfaces: Sealed (except for short detour at Point Gellibrand) and suitable for prams and wheelchairs.

Facilities: There are seats in the parks; water and toilets at Williamstown Beach area, Fort Gellibrand Reserve, the Visitor Centre/Gem Pier and at Newport Station; barbecues; children's playgrounds; kiosks (Williamstown Beach area); and cafes around Nelson Place.

Visitor Centre: Open 9-5pm daily; ph 03 9932 4310, www.visithobsonsbay.com.au ; excellent self-guided walk maps available, including *Waterfront Williamstown*, *Community Williamstown* and *Seaside Williamstown*.

Best season: All seasons - shady trees for summer, many cafes for winter recovery. Point Gellibrand is exposed so bring sunscreen or rain gear.

Mobile phone coverage: Good.

Dogs: Some leash-free areas otherwise dogs permitted on leash.

Hazards: Note the warnings before swimming at Williamstown Beach. The tracks are shared with bicycles so be alert and considerate of other users.

Car parking: Street parking is ticketed but there is free parking at weekends on the corner of Nelson Place and Kanowna Street.

Public transport: Werribee train line to Williamstown Beach, changing trains at Newport. Alternatively, a ferry service operates from Southgate (City) to Gem Pier and the Visitor Centre.

Williamstown



Walking Notes

1. From Williamstown Beach Station turn right and walk through the underpass opposite Parker Street. Turn right then left to Langford Street – you can see the sea ahead. At the T-junction with Osborne Street turn right, then left into Garden Street past the bocce and bowling club. This leads you to the beachfront. Cross the Esplanade at the pedestrian crossing.
2. Williamstown Beach is a wide sandy area with a children’s playground, cafes, and toilets. Read the Hazard Warning board before entering the water. Dogs are not allowed on this beach.
3. Turn left along the path beside the Esplanade past picnic tables, a shelter, free barbecues and drinking fountains. Opposite the Williamstown Anglers’ Club and across the W. A. Parker Reserve is the entrance to the Williamstown Botanic Gardens – worth a detour. A number of old houses along the Esplanade, marked by plaques, are worth a look.
4. Continue along the path enjoying the sea air and sea views across the wide grassy expanse of the Hatt Reserve, taking note of the signs where dogs are allowed off leash. Opposite Thompson Street the path veers to the right, away from the road and beside some tennis courts. It passes through the Cyril Curtain Reserve behind a large cricket ground towards Point Gellibrand. As you round the Point you will have a startling and stunning view of Melbourne’s skyline ahead. Here, the wide area between the path and the sea is rocky in contrast to the early part of the walk.
5. Opposite the junction of the path with Battery Road there is another park with a barbecue and a playground on the edge of the Old Fort



Walking Communities

Gellibrand site. (The Fort is not open to the public.) Keep following the path beside the beach, passing a very rocky Shelley Beach until a small gravel track detours off to the right (not suitable for prams and wheelchairs). It is marked by a large rock with information about the fascinating environment of Shelley Beach featuring visible lava blisters and large numbers of pelicans, cormorants and oyster catchers.

6. The gravel track rejoins the main sealed path beside Battery Road just before it becomes the Steve Bracks Promenade. Enjoy sea and City views as you promenade to the historic Time Ball Tower, Flagpole and Hulk Anchor. These are surrounded by information boards which are well worth reading.
7. Now you are passing modern working Williamstown: the Port of Melbourne is on your right with more information boards about the early piers that still exist but are not open to the public. Opposite the corner of Kanowna Street and Nelson Place another information board tells a fascinating tale about how the American Civil War came to Williamstown.
8. Wander along Nelson Place admiring the historic façades, some restored others visibly crumbling, and head for the Visitor Centre in the Commonwealth Reserve at Gem Pier. Pick up a brochure to do a short historical walk around Old Williamstown before returning home or continuing on (see Future Walk below). The many cafes might tempt you to stop for refreshments.
9. From the Visitor Centre cross Nelson Place to Thompson Street, walk three blocks past an eclectic mix of tiny old weatherboard houses and stunning new architect-designed dwellings. At the corner with Hanmer Street there is a very large block of apartments; cross Hanmer Street and take the diagonal path to the left of this large building, passing a children's playground and leading to Williamstown Station. Catch the train back to the City.
10. An alternative way back to the City would be via ferry from Gem Pier to Southgate. The Visitor Centre has information about this service.

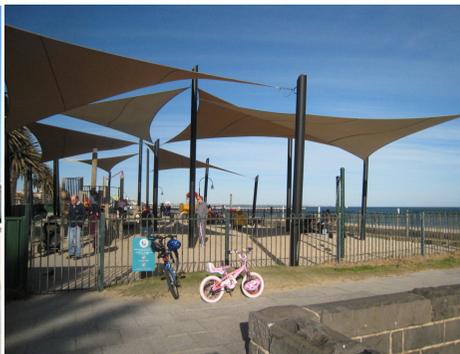
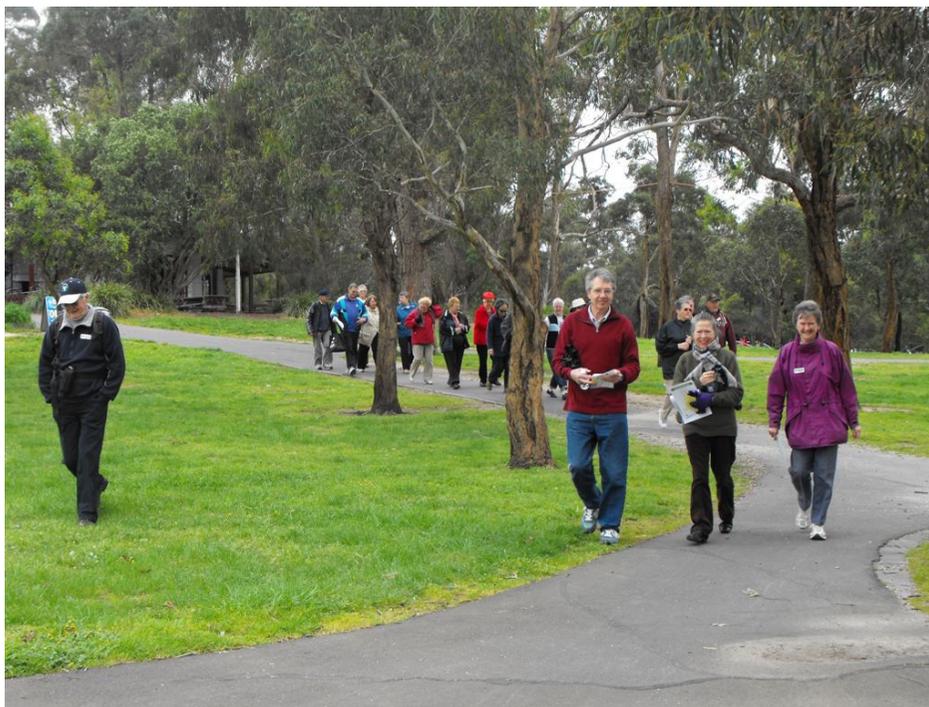


Future Walk (or extension)

A pleasant walk is to continue along Nelson Place from the Visitor Centre to The Strand where the path becomes the Williamstown Foreshore Trail and follows the sea up to Newport. Take the train at Newport (*Melway* 56 K4).

Planning Tools

Checklists and forms to help you mentor a community group leader to plan and organise a successful and safe walk



Walking Communities

GREEN WALK CHECKLIST
(for use by community walk leaders)

Walk Leader _____

Date _____

Walk Name/Route _____

Duration _____

Distance _____

Melway Reference _____

Check:

Public transport

Exit Points

Parking Facilities

Mobile Phone Reception

Public Toilets

Seating

Opening Times

Dog access

Drinking water

Comments:

Paths _____

Hills _____

Obstacles _____

Interesting features _____

GREEN WALKING IS GOOD FOR YOU

Walking is excellent for general fitness, suits people of all ages and abilities, and is cheap. Physical exercise has been demonstrated to improve health.

WHAT TO BRING

- ✓ Comfortable clothing
- ✓ Flat, well-fitting shoes or sneakers
- ✓ Food and water
- ✓ Medications you may need
- ✓ Weather protection – hat, sunscreen and rain protection
- ✓ A small personal first aid kit

SAFETY TIPS

- ✓ If possible carry a mobile phone with you
- ✓ Have the walk leader's mobile phone number handy
- ✓ Call for help or call an ambulance in an emergency — always dial 000
- ✓ Report any accident or injury to the walk leader
- ✓ Do not leave an injured person alone
- ✓ Never stray behind the whip
- ✓ Wait for the walk leader at corners or junctions
- ✓ The walk leader will have information about shortening the walk and exit points if necessary

ABOUT BUSHWALKING VICTORIA

Bushwalking Victoria promotes safe and environmentally responsible bushwalking and its benefits to the community. In addition, it is the peak body representing the interests of all recreational walkers in Victoria and helps to unite affiliated Victorian bushwalking clubs, associated members and individual supporters.

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**Bushwalking
Victoria** 

At a natural pace In a natural place