

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 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).



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.

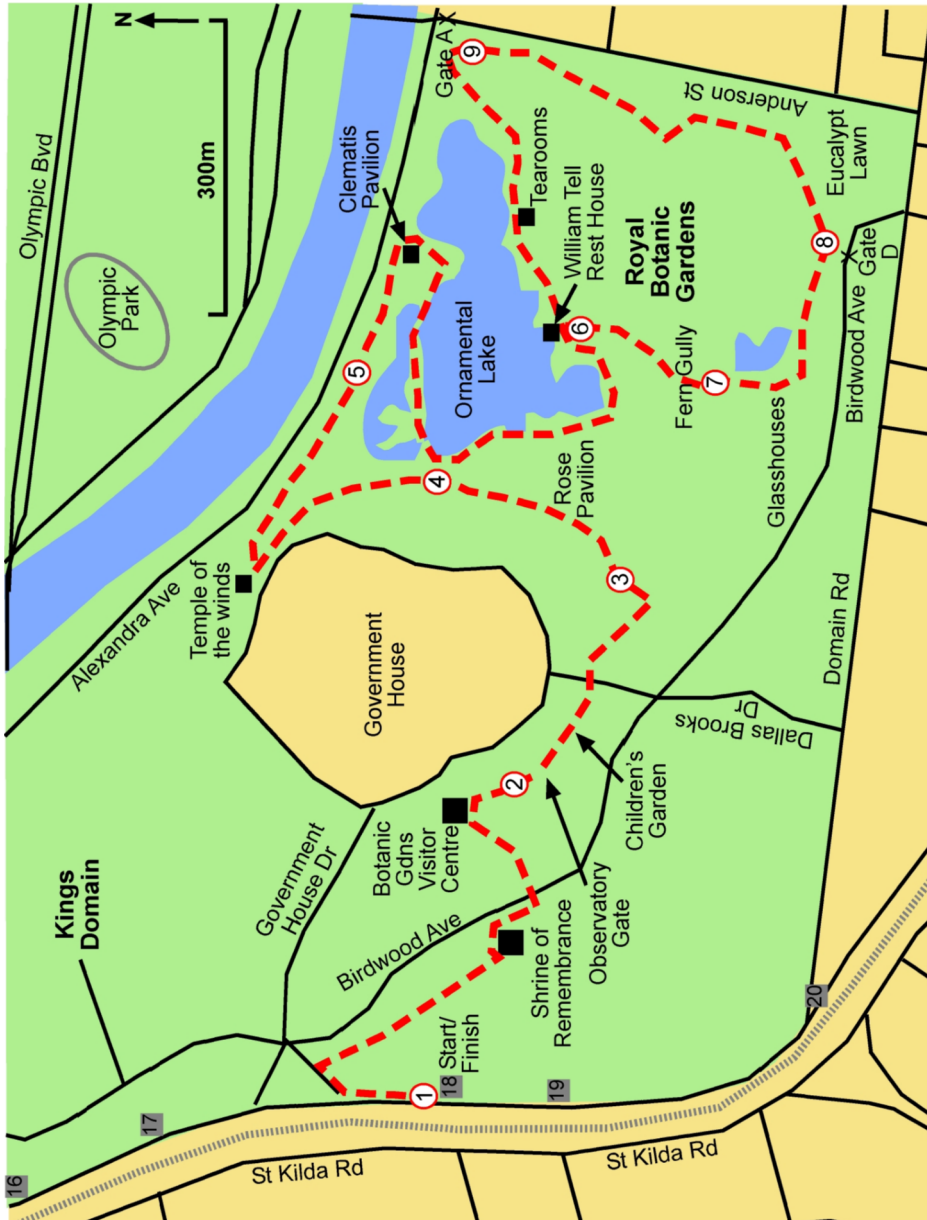
Hazards: There are no fences around the lake.

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.