

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.



## 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.

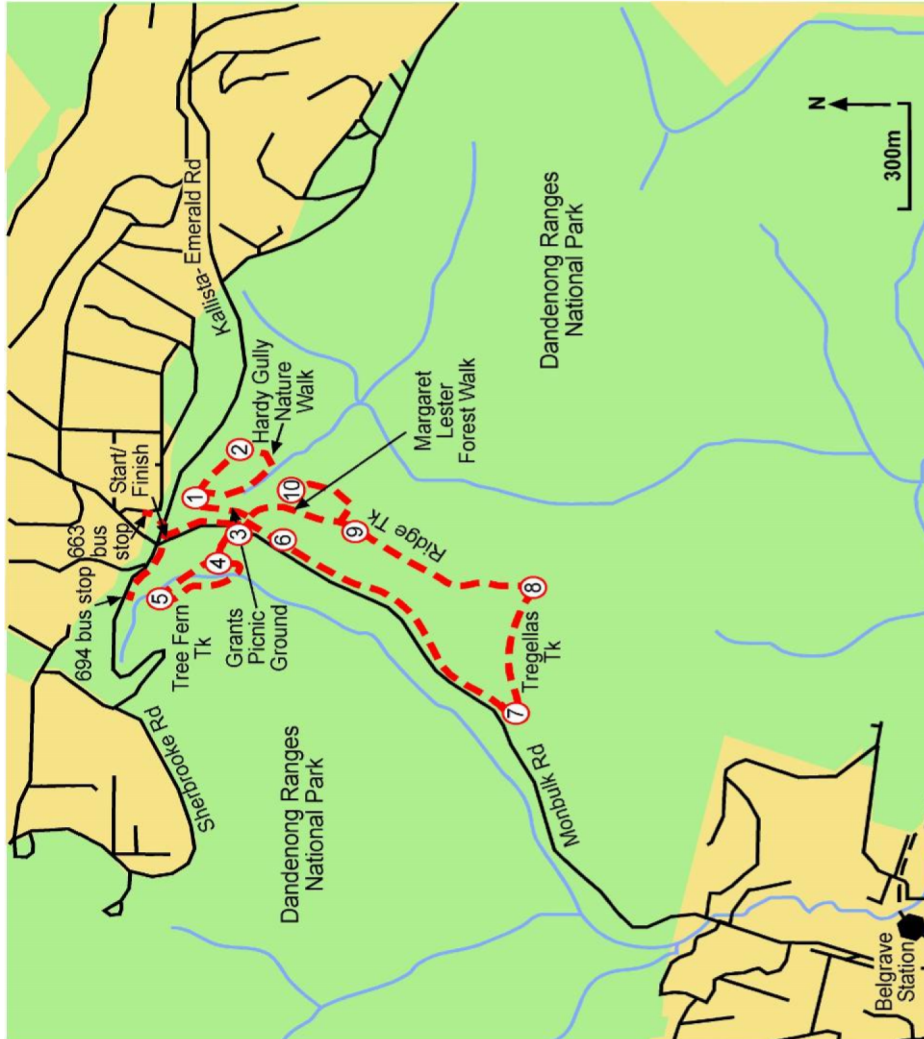
**Car parking:** Turn into Grants Picnic Ground; free.

### 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.

