

Maribyrnong Valley Parklands



Visitor Guide

Just a short drive from the heart of the city is the Maribyrnong Valley Parklands, featuring Brimbank Park. The parklands offer ideal settings for picnics, walks along the extensive network of trails, fishing, all set within peaceful parklands and surrounded by prolific birdlife.

Location & access

Brimbank Park is approximately 15 kilometres north-west of Melbourne in Keilor East. Vehicle access is off Keilor Park Drive, Melways reference 15 B10.

Brimbank Park is open seven days a week, from 7:00am on week days and 8.30am on weekends. The park closes at 5.00pm and at 7.00pm during Daylight Savings.

Things to see and do

There is a network of cycling and walking tracks, playgrounds, picnic areas and an orienteering course within the park. The 25 kilometre Maribyrnong River Trail follows the river from Keilor to Footscray.

You can also enjoy the natural values within parklands including riverlands, escarpments and the Grasslands.

While visiting the Maribyrnong Valley Parklands, take time to reflect on the past and enjoy the many examples of Indigenous and Early Settlement history.

Picnics

There are several picnic areas in the park (see map for more details). Gas barbecues, shelters and picnic tables are available free of charge with no bookings required. For large group functions please contact the Ranger office or 13 19 63.

The Leaping Lizard Café at the visitor centre is open during park hours, with both indoor and outdoor eating areas.

Walking Tracks

With over 10km of tracks in Brimbank Park and the Maribyrnong River Trail, you are sure to find a path right for you. Most of the tracks through Brimbank Park are sealed and allow for shared access and disabled visitors.

Dogs are welcome at Brimbank Park but must be on a leash at all times.

Plants and Animals

Native grasslands sweep across the open plains, down through the rocky outcrop escarpments with majestic River red gums lining the Maribyrnong River. These natural areas are home to a diverse variety of local wildlife.

Wildlife can include a large variety of birds including parrots, galahs, large wetland birds and birds of prey. Brushtail and ringtail possums dwell within the large river red gums. Wallabies and bats are known to frequent the area as well as different species of snakes and lizards.

Grasslands

Prior to European settlement, Basalt Plains Grasslands covered one third of Victoria. Today grasslands are an endangered ecosystem with less than 1% remaining.

They are federally, state and regionally protected and host a great variety of unique plants and animals, many of which are endangered themselves.

Grassland Biodiversity

Grasslands are composed of a wonderful diversity of tussock grasses, Kangaroo, Wallaby and Spear Grass, colourful herbs, forbs and some wonderful lilies and orchids, many being unique to our local grasslands.

These provide habitat to a variety of endangered animals including the Golden Sun Moth and Striped Legless Lizard and more common wildlife such as colourful skinks, snakes, birds of prey and small birds.

Threats to the Grasslands

One of the greatest threats to our grasslands is the transport of weeds such as Serrated Tussock and Artichoke Thistle.

Because of this, the Grasslands are reserved for conservation values. Access to the reserves is restricted and requires an appointment with a Ranger for access.



For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call 13 1963

or visit the

Parks Victoria website
www.parks.vic.gov.au

Brimbank Visitor Centre
Keilor Park Drive
Keilor Vic 3036
Tel: (03) 9334 0500

Caring for the
environment

**Help us look after your parks
by following these
guidelines:**

Please take rubbish home with
You (including cigarette butts)
for recycling or disposal

All plants, animals, historical
and archaeological sites and
geographic features are
protected by law

Dogs are permitted at Brimbank
Park but must be kept on a lead
at all times

Vehicles, including motor bikes,
may only be used on formed
open roads. Drivers must be
licensed and vehicles
registered and roadworthy

Firearms and generators are
prohibited

No fires, including barbecues,
may be lit on a day of

Total Fire Ban.

Maribyrnong Valley Parklands
and the Grasslands are in
the Central Fire Ban District

Access to the Grasslands is
restricted. Please call the
Ranger Office to book an
appointment

Healthy Parks Healthy People

*Visiting a park can improve
your health, mind, body and
soul. So, with over four million
hectares of parkland available
to Victorians, why not escape
to a park today!*



Aboriginal History

There are two clans of the *Woi wurrung* language group who formed a close association with the Maribyrnong River, sharing its bounty of resources from opposing banks of the river.

The *Marin-balluk* occupied the area between the Maribyrnong River and Kororoit Creek, while the territory of the *Wurundjeri-willam* stretched from the northern banks of the Maribyrnong River continuing around to just east of the Yarra River.

Archaeological studies undertaken in the late 1970s have documented an extensive range of Aboriginal cultural heritage locations within Brimbank Park and the Lower Riverlands. These include stone quarries, artefact scatters, cooking hearths and scarred trees.

In the eyes of the many Aboriginal peoples, these locations are interconnected and thought of as a whole landscape, rather than individual sites as recorded in a scientific context.

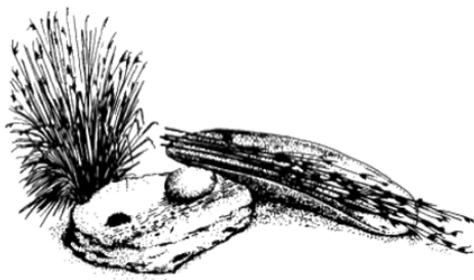
Aboriginal Land Use

The area around Brimbank Park which follows the Maribyrnong River through rich volcanic plains would have provided ample food resources for the local people.

The *Marin-balluk* and *Wurundjeri-willam* people's life, of complex social and spiritual observances, enabled them to adapt to the numerous environmental changes that have occurred to Victoria's volcanic, grassy plains over many thousands of years.

The ability to survive off the land relied on an intimate knowledge of the landscape.

Their movement through country was highly attuned to seasonal availability and the abundance of various plants and animals.



Grinding stones and coolamon

European History

European Settlement started in the Maribyrnong area from the 1830s. It was first settled by squatters who used the banks of the Maribyrnong River (then known as the Saltwater River) to graze their sheep.

The Dodd family took over the area now Brimbank Park in the 1900s. During this time fences were built from local stone around the farms. The remains of these fences can still be seen near Dodd's Homestead. You can see many other relics and artefacts from this era throughout the park.



Dodd Family on verandah of Dodd's Homestead

European Land Use

Primary use of the land was initially stock grazing, replaced in 1850s for fruit growing, on the rich riparian soils on the terraces.

The 1930s saw market gardens established. Some are still here today, but most of the surrounding area has made way for urban development.

In the 1970s the land was bought by the Board of Works, an agency of the State Government and Brimbank Park was developed. The park derived its name after the historical practice of the locals driving their stock around the 'brim of the bank'.

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