Merbein Common
River Murray Reserve

Visitor Guide

Merbein Common encompasses diverse landscapes including riverine vegetation, billabongs and small patches of Native Pine. Hardy Black Box and tranquil River Red Gums are abundant along with many fish, birds and animals that utilise this vegetation for protection and shelter.

Purple Swamphens enjoy wading in river margins and find ideal habitats in Merbein Common

Enjoying the park

There are a variety of walking tracks in the area, catering for all fitness levels.

Merbein Link Trail- This trail showcases the old racecourse, tall River Red Gums and Chaffey Landing. A picnic area with toilets can be accessed at the river near the Merbein Sandbar.

Archaeological Trail- This walk passes by the old billabong that was part of the Murray River 15,000 years ago.

Catfish Billabong Trail- Horseshoe Billabong (formerly known as Catfish Billabong) provided European Settlers with plentiful resources and burst with opportunity of life.

Cultural and Nature Trail- Black Box and towering River Red Gums are abundant along this walk.

Other popular walks include the Merbein Lookout walk that highlights an old Canoe Tree where an information board is located. The Lake Hawthorn/Lake Ranfurly Track continues on past Lake Hawthorn and Lake Ranfurly, all the way into Mildura.

Fishing

Fish include Golden Perch, Murray Cod, Redfin, Yabbies and the introduced European Carp.

If you are over 18 years of age you must hold a current Victorian Recreation Fishing Licence (RFL). Fishing in the Murray River requires a NSW RFL.

Bird watching and photography

Merbein Common has an array of bird species perfect for photographers. A bird list for the Mallee area can be obtained from the Mildura Visitor Information Centre.

Plants and animals

Many fish, birds and animals use the billabong and the vegetation as nurseries, protection and for food. Tall River Red Gums remain close to waterways and Black Box are scattered throughout the area away from the water’s edge. Aquatic vegetation acts as a vital habitat for fish species including yabbies and shrimps.

Be fire ready, stay safe

On days of forecast Code Red Fire Danger this park will be closed for public safety.

If you are already in the park you should leave the night before or early in the morning for your own safety.

Closure signs will be erected and rangers will patrol where possible, however you may not receive a personal warning that the park is closed so check by calling 13 1963 or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au.

For up to date information on fires in Victoria or general fire safety advice call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 or visit www.emergency.vic.gov.au.

For more information call Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au
A rich human history

The region around the Murray River provided abundant resources including fish, crayfish, yabbies, tortoises and mussels. Nets were also used to catch waterbirds.

A site of historical significance boasts the oldest shell midden in South Eastern Australia, estimated to be between 15,500 and 16,000 years old.

Dr Wilhelm Blandowski, in his explorations of north west Victoria and his encampment at Chaffey Landing (Mondellimin), uncovered more than 17,000 terrestrial and aquatic specimens in the region with the help of the Nyeri Nyeri people. These documented findings provide us with significant insight into the rich biodiversity of the Murray-Darling landscape in the 1850s.

Chaffey Landing

Chaffey Landing, named after WB Chaffey who built the winery/distillery on the cliff above in 1913, is on the eastern boundary of the Merbein Common. This access point enabled paddle steamers, going downstream to Morgan, to be loaded with grape spirit that was then taken by train to Adelaide.

‘Bag Town’, on Chaffey Landing, is as an early river bank (makeshift) settlement. This area is clearly marked with two big palm trees and some peppercorn trees planted on the site by the residents who lived there during the ‘Great Depression’ – a part of Merbein’s social history. An information station at the site details the history of this era.

Healthy parks, healthy people

There is growing recognition of the vital contribution parks and reserves make to a healthy environment, to the health of individuals and to a healthy society.

With the invaluable assistance of the Friends of Merbein Common we are able to maintain the health and integrity of this park.

Join the Friends of Merbein Common in caring for the park’s important inhabitants. You can join the Friends of Merbein Common by becoming a friend today! Call Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au.