Greater Bendigo National Park

Visitor Guide

Significant gold era and pioneering sites, combined with a wealth of Aboriginal cultural heritage values, provide visitors to the Greater Bendigo National Park with a unique experience. The 17,020ha Box-Ironbark park almost surrounds the city of Bendigo.

City in the forest

The Greater Bendigo National Park, together with the Bendigo Regional Park, almost surrounds the entire city of Bendigo making it a unique setting and establishing Bendigo as the ‘city in the forest.’

Enjoying the park

**Picnicking** – In the Whipstick section of the park Notley picnic area has picnic tables, fireplaces and toilets. Shadbolt has picnic tables and toilets. Further north in the Kamarooka section, Loeser and Mulga Dam have basic facilities. One Tree Hill to the south also has basic facilities. Bring your own firewood and drinking water.

**Camping** – there are campgrounds with basic facilities at Notley, Loeser, Rush Dam and Mulga Dam. Notley has pull through sites suitable for caravans. Campfires are only permitted at these sites. No campfires are permitted at Notley during summer.

**Walking, riding and driving** – most roads in the park are unsealed, but are suitable for car touring, cycling and walking.

**Dog walking** – dogs may be walked on roads and tracks in the One Tree Hill section of the park, but must be kept on a leash.

**Horse riding** – horse riding is allowed on tracks through the Whipstick and Mandurang sections of the park.

Other recreational activities include nature study, photography, orienteering and prospecting.

Walking Tracks

**Flagstaff Hill, Shadbolt** – start at the picnic area. The 1km loop walk will take around 40 minutes.

**Old Tom Mine, Shadbolt** – start at the rear of the carpark and wander through the historical remains of a once thriving goldmining area. It will take approximately 1hr 30 minutes to complete the 5.3km return trip.

**Mulga Dam** – start at the picnic area and follow the 1.6km walk which takes approx 45 minutes. Walk through Kamarooka Mallee vegetation and past historical charcoal pits that were used to produce charcoal early this century and during the Second World War.

**Be fire ready and stay safe**

Many parks and forests are located in high fire risk areas. **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 the latest conditions by calling 13 1963 or visit [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au).

For up to date information on fires in Victoria or general fire safety advice call the [Victorian Bushfire Information Line](tel:1800 240 667) on 1800 240 667.

For more information call the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit our website at [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)
**Bendigo Bushland Trail**

This trail consists of 65 kilometres of bicycle and walking tracks as well as some road tracks that link the city of Bendigo to its surrounding bushland.

Follow the blue and gold sign posts of 'Rex' the Echidna and experience the Box-Ironbark forests of Bendigo.

**Parks of yesterday become one**

This park includes the former Whipstick and Kamarooka State Parks, One Tree Hill Regional Park, Mandurang State Forest and Sandhurst State Forest.

The Kamarooka and Whipstick sections protect a unique tract of mallee vegetation known as the 'Whipstick scrub' and some of the best stands of distinctive Box-Ironbark forests of north central Victoria.

The Mandurang and Sandhurst sections are renowned for coppice regrowth forests and grassy woodland understorey.

One Tree Hill, with its relatively steep terrain, provides panoramic views of Bendigo and the surrounding bushland. The area is known for its colourful wildflower displays featuring wattles, wax-flowers and orchids, which are of great interest to wildflower enthusiasts.

**Plants and animals**

The forest is a result of 150 years of coppice regrowth forests of Red Stringybark, Red Ironbark, Yellow Gum, Red Box and Long-leaf Box.

The brilliantly flowering Whirrakee Wattle is unique to the Bendigo area. The parks are famous for their spectacular spring wildflower displays, which includes the nationally endangered Whipstick Westringia.

Over 170 species of birds have been recorded in Greater Bendigo National Park. The beautiful calls of the Grey Shrike-thrush, Crested Bellbird and Gilbert's Whistler can be heard.

The park is home to a diverse range of animals and has the only Victorian population of Pink Tailed Worm Lizard. Animals most likely to be seen are the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Black Wallaby, Echidna and Common Dunnart. The rare Brush-tailed Phascogale or Tuan can also be found.

**A vibrant history**

Aboriginal association with the Box-Ironbark forests dates back many thousands of years. The forests provided food, material for tools and shelter. The close association with the forests continues today and significant Aboriginal sites can be found throughout the area.

The park also has a colourful European history, particularly in relation to gold mining and eucalyptus oil production.

The gold rushes in the area began in 1857 and continued through the 1860s. Many signs of the rushes, including alluvial diggings, old mining dams and water races, shafts and mullock heaps are scattered throughout the park.

Mining of the Bendigo goldfields generated a huge demand for timber and the surrounding forest was extensively cut over or cleared.

Since European settlement, the Box-Ironbark forests and woodlands have been extensively cleared for agriculture, gold mining, urban development and timber. Today only 17 percent of the original Box-Ironbark vegetation of north central Victoria remains.

The eucalyptus oil industry dates back to the 1860s and old eucalyptus can still be seen in the area. Most of the picnic areas have been built on old eucalyptus distillery and homestead sites.

**Rebuilding the links**

The Victorian Government created Greater Bendigo National Park, along with other new and expanded parks across central Victoria, in October 2002 to conserve and enhance what remains of the Box-Ironbark forests and woodlands.

Many of the most intact stands of Box-Ironbark remain on private land. With private and public landholders working together, we can rebuild the links between the fragmented remnants of these forests to encourage the return of endangered plants and animals. Contact Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 to find out how you can be involved.

**How to get there**

The Greater Bendigo National Park is approximately 188km north of Melbourne. There are several different access routes to the park leading from the Loddon Valley Highway, Midland Highway and the Calder Freeway.

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