

Alpine National Park

- *our mountain heritage*

around Heyfield, Licola and Dargo in the
Wonnangatta - Moroka area

From the time people first set foot on the Australian continent, they have sought the alps for social, spiritual and survival reasons.

Their presence in these wild and wonderful mountains has left us a rich cultural heritage - from the rock scatters of the Ganai/Kurnai people on lofty vantage points to graziers huts nestling in protected folds of the high country; we are surrounded by our mountain heritage.

Getting there & getting around

This area of the Alpine National Park is situated approximately 250 km east of Melbourne along the Princes Highway to Traralgon then north east to Heyfield.

The main access is from Licola (north of Heyfield) via the Tamboritha Road, which leads to the Howitt and Moroka roads.

Please remember that mountain roads are often unsealed, narrow and winding. Take care as roads may be slippery at any time of the year.

Away from the main Howitt and Moroka roads many tracks are suitable only for experienced four wheel drivers, with many closed seasonally between early June and late October.

Plants & Animals

The area contains a diversity of habitats including the alpine herbfields and subalpine woodlands of the Snowy and Howitt plains, often associated with subalpine bogs and grasslands in cold air drainage basins.

These grasslands and woodlands are often home for mammals such as Brown and Swainsons antechinus, Mountain Brushtail and Ringtail possums.

Mountain gum - Snow gum forests often grow on more sheltered sites between 1000 and 1400 metres with a grassy or heathy understorey.

Below 1000 metres the mountain slopes are dominated by bands of tall straight Alpine ash (Woolly Butt) forests. These extensive forests include mature ash, 1939 regrowth, and regeneration from more recent timber harvesting operations.

Trees killed in the 1998 fire have been salvaged within the Carey State Forest, passed on the way through the Park.

In the past

Aboriginal groups travelled up to the high plains in summer, finding food such as Bogong Moths and conducting ceremonies. Little visible evidence of their occupation now remains, but Aboriginal communities are researching and recovering more of their peoples history.



Cattle have been grazed in the area since the 1840s and licensed areas are still grazed today. Grazing had its beginnings in the Howqua and Macalister river areas, and during the following 50 years extended to include most of the grassy forested slopes, river flats and snow plains. Cattle no longer graze the Wonnangatta valley but you can sense the history by visiting the ruins of the station, home of the pioneer Bryce family for many years and the site of an unsolved murder. Howitt hut is also closely related to both the Wonnangatta runs and murder!

There are relics of gold mining days of the 1860s and 1870s in the Grant Historic area, adjacent to the Alpine National Park. Please beware of mine shafts.

Loggers seeking Alpine Ash timber began cutting here in the late 1940s.



Parks Victoria Ranger
David Foster

"Victoria has all the outdoors you could wish for- mountains, forests, beaches and bushland, all preserved in our parks. Our natural landscapes have been here longer than anyone knows, and together we can make sure they're here forever."

For more information
call the Parks Victoria
Information Centre
on **13 1963**

or visit our website at
<http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au>

Enjoying the Park

Car Touring

It is possible to visit many of the areas mountain heritage sites in a 2WD conventional vehicle. Three popular heritage drives are:-

The Pinnacles - Moroka Road (91 km, 2 hours Licola to Pinnacles, one way)

The highlight is a high rocky crag called the Pinnacles. On a clear day the view takes in the Gippsland Lakes to the south and Mt Hotham to the north, and beneath the lookout the settled areas of the Wonnangatta valley. Other features along the way include Moroka Lookout, Moroka Hut and Horseyard Flat camping area

Howitt and Snowy Plains - Howitt Road (82 km, 2 hours from Licola one way)

Superb alpine and sub alpine scenery with expanses of colourful fragrant herbfields and snow grass plains are a highlight along the way. Other features include Snowy Plains Airstrip, Dimmick Lookout, Bryces Gorge and Guy's Hut, Howitt Hut and Mt Howitt walking track.

Grant Historic Area (17 km, 0.5 hours from Dargo)

A short drive north from Dargo along the Dargo High Plains Road will bring you to McMillan Road and the Grant Historic Area. This thickly forested area hides many features of the mining days including cemeteries, township sites and mining relics. McMillan road is steep, narrow and rough beyond Grant and is best accessed by 4wd vehicles, but the haunting Talbotville township site on the Crooked River is a great reward for those who explore further.

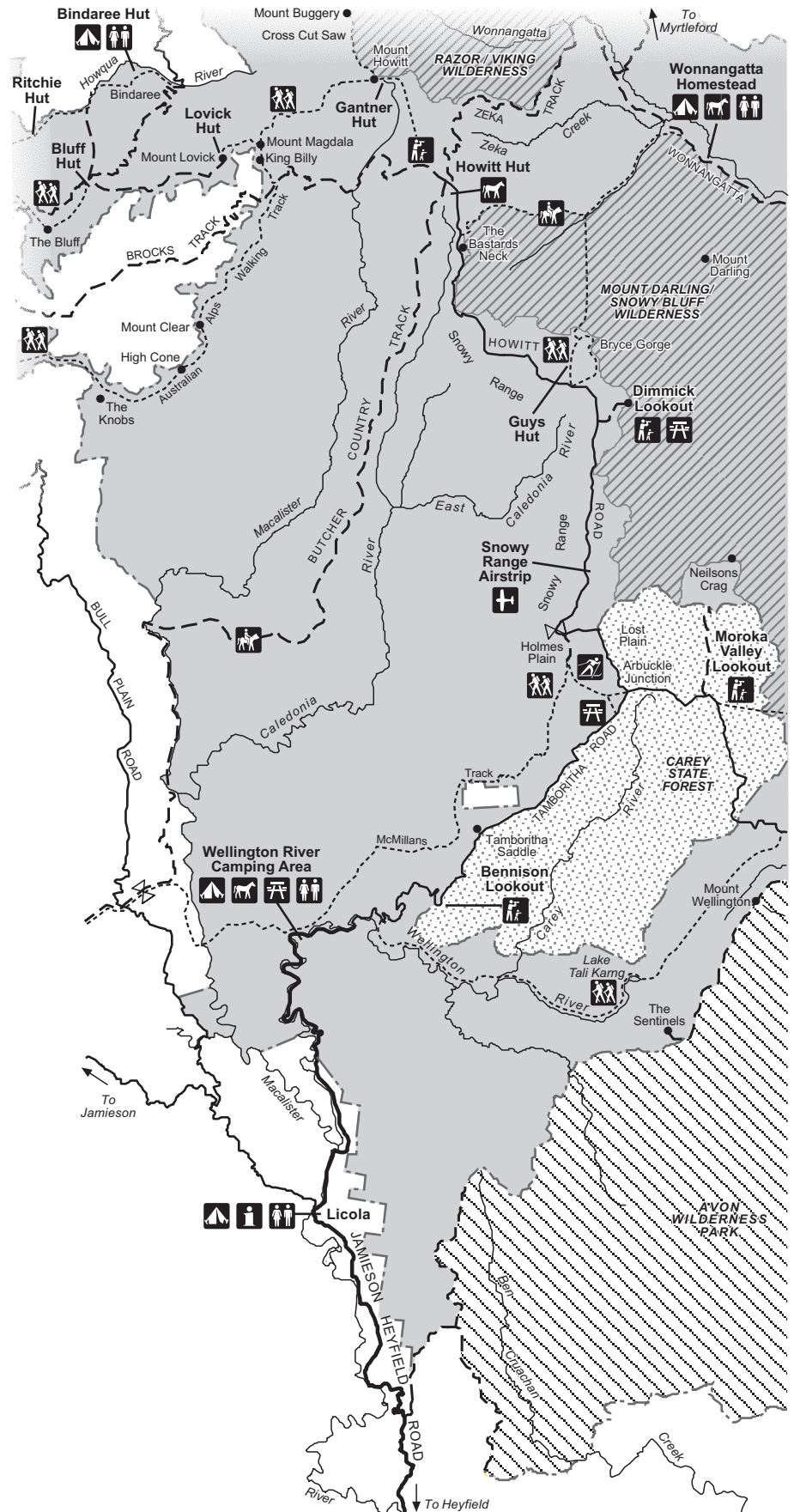


Four wheel drive tours

There are many 4WD trips in the area, some of the more popular ones being the Marathon Road to Castle Hill (off Moroka Road), the Zeka Spur to the Wonnangatta Valley and around the historic Eaglevale and Talbotville regions.

Please remember:

- check road and track conditions before setting out
- vehicle access is limited to formed roads and tracks open to the public
- many roads and tracks are closed seasonally for environmental and safety reasons

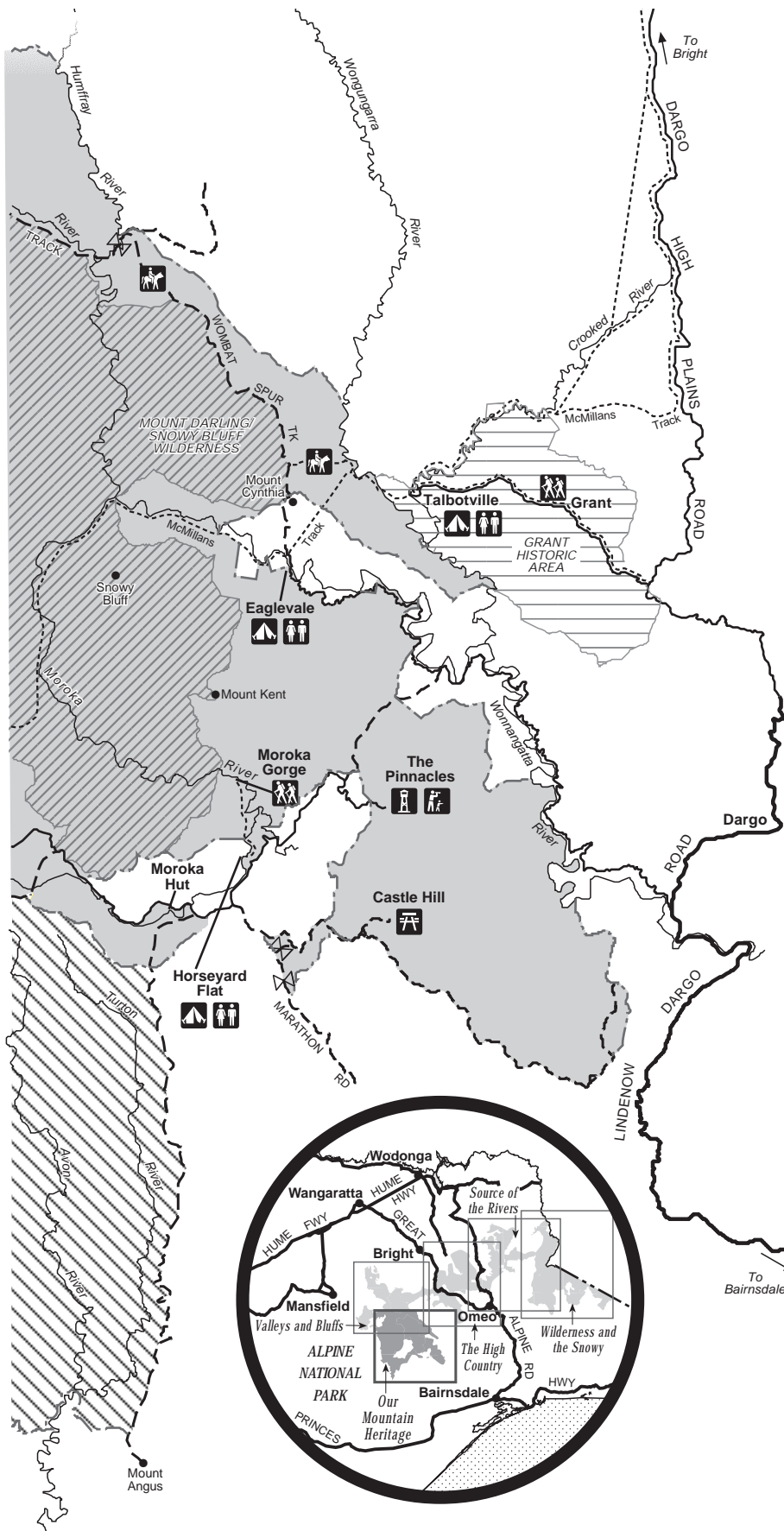


Alpine National Park - Our Mountain Heritage

	Sealed road		National Park
	Unsealed road		Other Park
	Vehicle track (4WD)		Wilderness Zone
	Walking track		Historic Area
	Gate (Closed in winter)		State Forest
			Water body

Recreational Facilities

	Airstrip
	Bushwalking
	Camping
	Cross country skiing
	Fire tower



Setting up Camp

Dispersed camping is permitted throughout the area, but make sure you are at least 20 m from any lake, river or stream. If you prefer the use of toilets, picnic tables and fireplaces the following camping areas are provided, no bookings are required:-

- **Wellington River**, 17 numbered camping areas beneath shady peppermints and manna gums, toilets located at 1, 5, 8, 13 & 16, horseyards at site 13, Tamboritha Road approximately 10 km from Licola;
- **Horseyard Flat** set amongst Black Sallee on the banks of the Moroka River, Moroka Road;
- **Eaglevale** on the Wonnangatta River below the towering ramparts of Mt Kent and Snowy Bluff;
- **Wonnangatta Valley** (4WD access only), near the historic site of the Wonnangatta Homestead;
- **Talbotville** (4WD access only) on the grassy flats of the Crooked River;
- **Grant** a grassy clearing in the forest, all that remains of a once thriving gold mining town.

When camping you should be fully self sufficient with food, water and camping equipment. Always carry a tent. Huts are for emergency use only.

Fires

Firewood supplies are limited especially in the alpine and subalpine areas, so the use of camping stoves is preferred. Tali Karng is a fuel stoves only area.

If you must use a fire, keep it small and within fireplaces provided. No fires, including camp stoves, may be lit on days of Total Fire Ban.

Huts

There are many old huts in the area, some of them historic. Moroka (1946), Guy (1940) and Howitt (early 1900s) huts are all easily accessible and reflect the grazing history of the area. Moroka hut is still used today by graziers.

Enjoy a visit to a hut but do not rely on them for accommodation as they may be difficult to find or already occupied. Please help look after them.

On Horseback

Horse riding is popular during summer and autumn, especially along the Bicentennial National Trail, which passes through the Wonnangatta Valley on its journey between Healesville (Victoria) and Cooktown (Queensland)

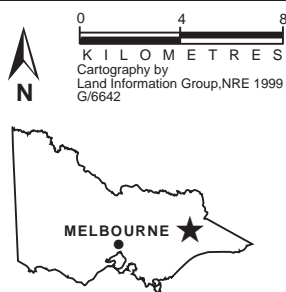
Horses must be held in the Wellington River yards when in that area of the Park, there is a horse route from there to the start of the Tali Karng track.

Various controls apply to group size, and the location and timing of rides, to minimise the impact on the environment and other park visitors.

Horses are not permitted on the shores of Tali Karng.

- Horsing
- Bicentennial National Trail
- Horse yard
- Lookout

- Park information
- Picnic table
- Toilets



For further information contact:

Parks Victoria
Information Line **13 1963**

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

Parks Victoria office at:
Heyfield (03) 5148 2355



Caring for the environment

Take your rubbish home with you, most rubbish will not burn or rot.

Dogs and other pets are not permitted.

Firearms are generally prohibited

Choose a firm, dry, well drained camp site at least 20 metres from any watercourses.

Use a portable stove instead of lighting a fire - especially above or near the treeline.

Always check fire danger forecasts. No fires (including stoves) on days of **Total Fire Ban**.

Fuel Stove Only Area. Due to vegetation damage and visual scarring no campfires are to be lit within one km of Tali Karng or Vallejo Gantner hut (Macalister Springs).

Where **toilets** are not provided, bury your toilet waste at least 100m from water or camp sites.

Wash up away from streams to protect the fragile stream environment.

Enjoy a visit to a hut but do not use them for accommodation, always carry a tent.

Vehicles, including trail bikes are restricted to existing roads and tracks. Vehicles must be fully registered and drivers licensed.

Fishing

The major streams and rivers such as The Wellington, Macalister, Wonnangatta and Caledonia rivers, provide good fishing opportunities. A closed season may apply to trout fishing so be sure to check when you purchase your inland fishing licence.

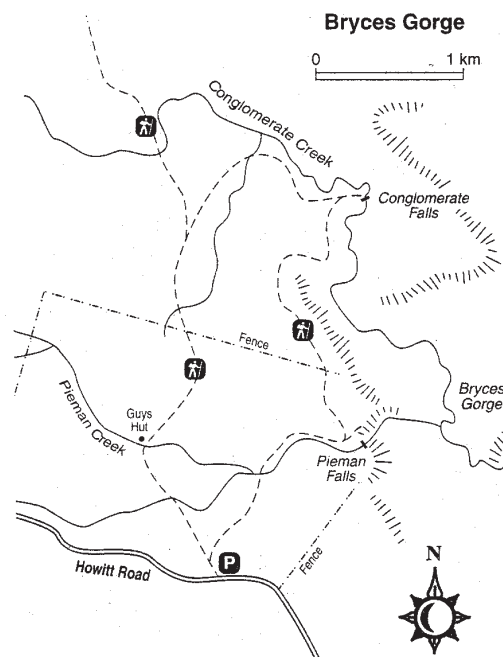
Walking

Some of the best mountain walking country in Australia is found in the Alps. Some tracks are suitable for day and weekend family walks; others are long, rough and challenging, requiring a high degree of bushwalking skill and stamina.

Shorter family walks can be undertaken to Dinner Creek Gorge, Mt Arbuckle, Neilson Crag, Guys Hut and Bryces Gorge (half day).

In the Grant and Talbotville area there are several walks exploring historic sites such as Jolly Sailor mine, New and Old Good Hope mines and Jungle Creek Falls

Longer more challenging day and overnight hikes can be undertaken to the Wonnangatta Valley, Mt Howitt, Tali Karng and the Moroka Gorge.



Cross Country Skiing

Cross country skiing is popular in the Lost Plain - Holmes Plain area. From Lost Plain a 4 km ski trail passes over Mt Arbuckle, with good views from the summit. More experienced skiers can explore the extensive, but remote open snow plains, particularly the Snowy and Howitt Plains.

A four wheel drive vehicle may be necessary to access the areas along the Tamboritha Road, even then a relatively arduous walk may be necessary to reach skiable snow past the seasonal road closure on the Howitt Road.

Wilderness

The Avon, Razor-Viking, Mt Darling/Snowy Bluff wilderness areas are large areas of remote, undisturbed land with little evidence of European occupation.

There is no vehicle access into or within these areas, signposts or walking track markers; here visitors need to be self reliant, meeting nature on its own terms.

Tour guides

A number of commercial tour operators run tours (4wding, walking, horseriding and rafting) in this area. Contact the Victorian Tour Operators Association (VTOA) for details.
(03) 9654 2618

Take care!

All visitors and especially walkers, should realise that weather conditions can change rapidly in mountain and alpine areas. Snowfalls can be experienced at any time of the year, so always be prepared with:-

- waterproof jacket
- warm clothing
- woollen hat, gloves
- strong footwear
- first aid kit, and
- map and compass

Before you go, let someone know where you are going, and when you expect to return.

Please keep to walking tracks, particularly in old gold mining areas such as Talbotville and Grant where there may be mine shafts.

Other Publications

For more details and extensive coverage of the Alpine National Park see the following maps and publications:

VicMap 1:50,000 series Howitt - Selwyn, Tamboritha - Moroka, Dargo Plains - Cobungra & Crooked River.

The Australian Alps Walking Track & Alpine National Park by John Siseman (Pindari Publications)

Explore the Australian Alps - car touring guide to the Australian Alps national parks by Australian Alps Liaison Committee (New Holland Press)

Alpine National Park Parknotes

- *Valleys and Bluffs* around Mansfield and Whitfield
- *Source of the Rivers* around Mitta Mitta, Tallangatta and Corryong.
- *The High Country* around Bright, Mt Beauty & Omeo
- *Wilderness & the Snowy* around Benambra, Buchan & Jindabyne