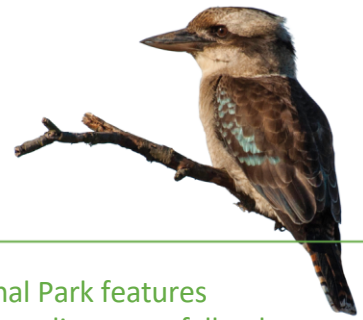


Alpine National Park around Mansfield and Whitfield

Visitor Guide



Welcome to Taungurung Country. This western section of the Alpine National Park features some of the most stunning alpine landscapes, including mountain peaks, cascading waterfalls, clear mountain streams and grassy high plains.



Getting there

This area of Alpine National Park is situated approximately 200-250km north-east of Melbourne or 40-60km south of Benalla.

Access Mansfield via the Maroondah Highway from Melbourne. From there continue on to Whitfield via Tolmie. Alternatively, if travelling to Whitfield from Melbourne, take the Hume Highway to Wangaratta, then turn onto Wangaratta-Whitfield Road.

Things to see and do

Walking

Some of the best mountain walking country in Australia is found in the Alpine National Park. Some tracks are suitable for day and weekend family walks. Others are long, rough and challenging, requiring a degree of bushwalking skill and stamina.

Due to the remote nature of this park, walkers must be self-sufficient with food, water, first aid and camping gear, and be skilled in the use of maps and compass.

The weather can deteriorate suddenly and without warning, and snow can fall at any time of year, including mid-summer. Don't hesitate to turn back if the trip becomes too difficult.

Check the advice on safety, park regulations and track conditions before walking or hiking in the park. Always stay on formed tracks.



Paradise falls – 0.5km, 30mins return Grade 4

Paradise Falls, near Whitfield, cascade an uninterrupted 31 metres and are most spectacular in spring, early summer or after rain. The walk to the viewing platform is a well-made stepped track perfect for all ability levels.

The falls can be accessed from Cheshunt. The last 11km is a gravel road but in good condition is accessible with 2WD. There are picnic facilities at the car park so pack a lunch or grab some fare from nearby Whitfield and enjoy the peaceful park.



Eagles Peaks - 11.5km, 4 hours one way Grade 4

This challenging but rewarding walk begins in Davon's Flat and finishes at Eight Mile Gap. Along the way you will encounter spectacular vistas of Mt Buller, The Bluff and Mt McDonald. For a shorter walk to Eagles peaks, start at 8 Mile Gap.



The Bluff – 2km, 1.5 hours one way Grade 4

One of the highest and most recognisable peaks in the area, The Bluff offers breathtaking views from the top. This challenging steep walk through the crags starts at The Bluff Carpark, near Refrigerator

Gap. Alternatively, visitors can reach The Bluff from The Bluff Hut. This option is longer, approximately 4.5km, but less steep. The Bluff Hut is only accessible with a 4WD.



Mt Howitt – 8km, 4 hours one way Grade 4

Mt Howitt is the highest peak in this area of the Alpine National Park. The track starts at the Upper Howqua Camping Area and follows the Howqua River before climbing up Howitt Spur to Mt Howitt.



Ritchie's Hut – 5.5km, 1.5 hours one way Grade 3

This gentle and pleasant walk follows the Howqua High Track along the Howqua River. The track begins at Eight Mile Flat, which is only accessible to four-wheel drive vehicles. Those with two-wheel drive cars can park at Seven Mile Camping Area and walk from there.



Mt Cobbler – 10km, 3.5hrs return Grade 4

Mt Cobbler is an exposed, rocky alpine summit, so be prepared for the onset of cold, wet and windy conditions at any time of the year. From the camping area at Lake Cobbler, the track enters the forest and dips into a creek gully, before starting the steady climb to an open snow plain. At the intersection turn right (north) to Mt Cobbler peak. The other walking track returns to a 4WD track across the Cobbler Plateau. The walk to the summit is well worthwhile for both the views and wildflowers you will encounter along the way.



Australian Alps Walking Track – 650km Grade 5

The long distance Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) passes through the area on its 650km journey between Walhalla (Gippsland) and Namadgi National Park (near Canberra).

Many great sections are suitable for day walks or short overnight hikes. Find out more at

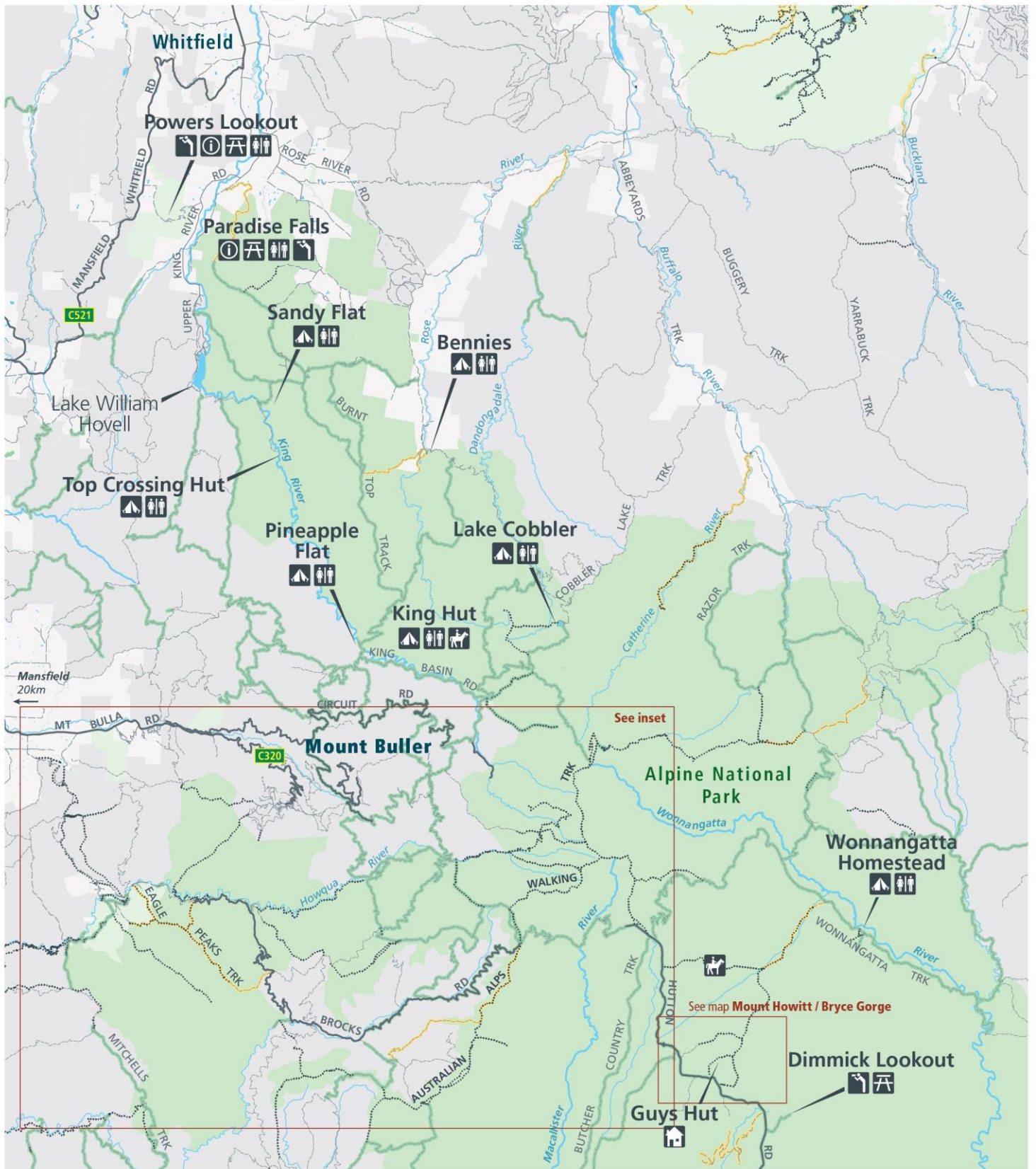
<https://theaustralianalps.wordpress.com/experience/aawt/>

Overnight hiking in the Razor-Viking Wilderness

The Razor - Viking Wilderness is a large area of remote rugged undisturbed land. There is no vehicle access into or within the Razor - Viking Wilderness. Likewise, there are no signposts or walking track markers. Here visitors need to be well equipped, self-reliant and experienced in navigation.

Alpine National Park

Mansfield/Whitfield

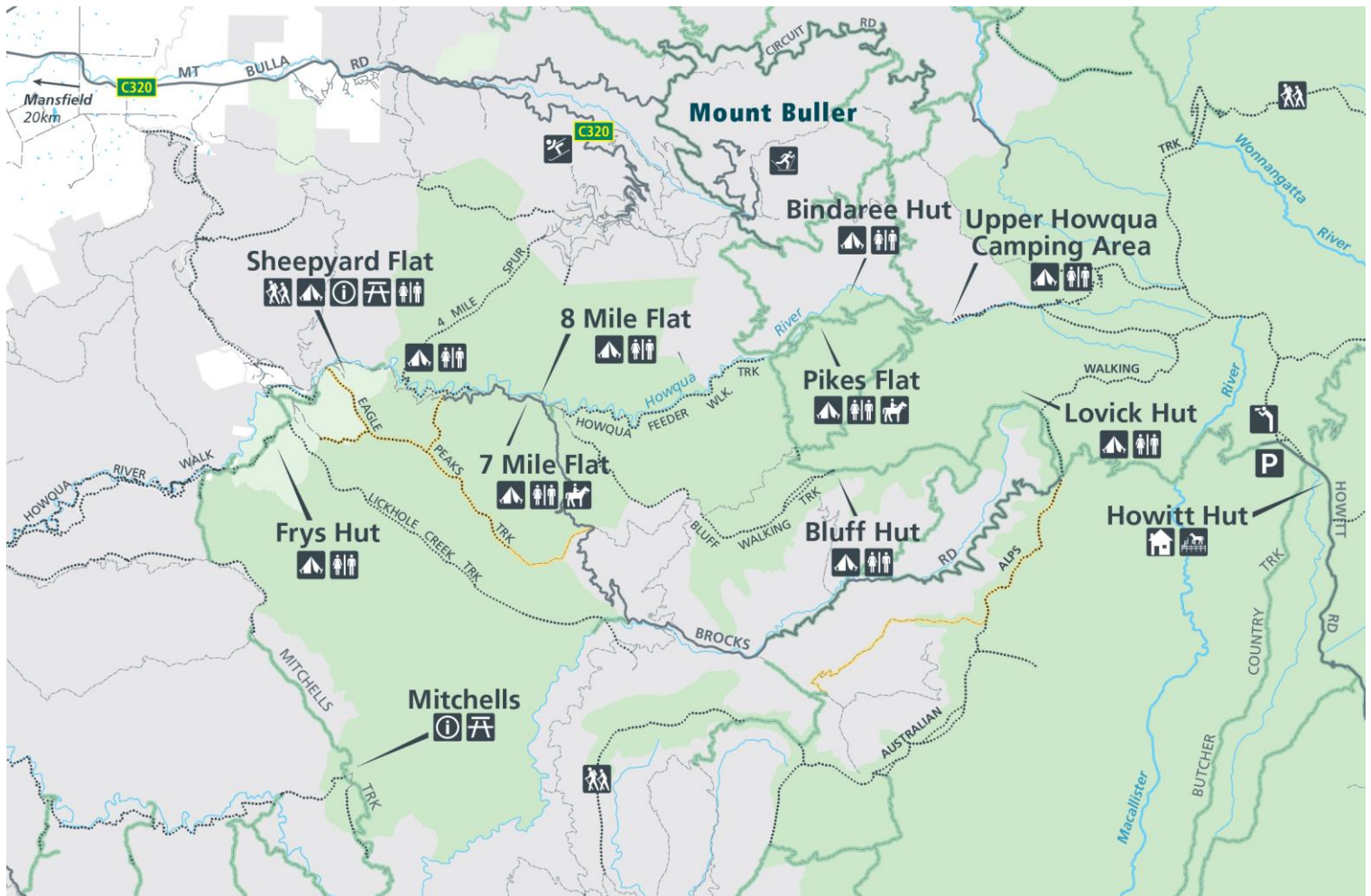


- | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Camping area | Picnic table | Great Alpine Road | Vehicle management only | Alpine National Park |
| Information | Horse riding | Main road | Seasonal road closure | Other Park |
| Toilets | Fishing | Sealed road | Walking track | Public land |
| Lookout | Boat ramp | Unsealed road | Major river | |
| Hiking | Cross country skiing | 4wd track | Minor river | |
| Downhill skiing | | | | |



www.parks.vic.gov.au
 Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not guarantee that this data is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability which may arise from you relying on this information. Cartography by Parks Victoria March 2017.
 For mobile App search for Avenza PDF Maps





Car touring

Many attractions are accessible in a conventional two-wheel drive (2WD) or all-wheel-drive (AWD) vehicle. Before you go, check road and track conditions on www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

Howqua Hills Historic Area – 35km from Mansfield

This tranquil area beside the Howqua River can be accessed by 2WD vehicles. There are numerous camping flats, historic huts and mining relics. Once there, take the Howqua Hills Heritage Trail that follows the Howqua River from Sheepland Flat to Fry's Flat to explore the area at a gentle pace. It is approximately 3km return and takes about 1.5 hours.

Powers Lookout – 20km from Whitfield or 45km from Mansfield

Along the Mansfield-Whitfield Road, this rocky escarpment high above the King Valley provides sweeping views of the surrounding mountain and valley landscape. The first lookout is accessible with a wheelchair. A short walk with a series of ladders takes the visitor to a viewing platforms at the northern-most point of the rocky outcrop. There is also a 20 minute return walk to a waterhole amongst rocky ledges.

Four-wheel driving

There are many 4WD trips in the area, some of the more popular ones are listed below. Many roads and tracks are closed seasonally during the colder, wetter months (from the Thursday after Queens Birthday until the Thursday before Melbourne Cup each year) for environmental and safety reasons. Keep to formed roads and respect road closures. Please check before leaving.

Wonnangatta Drive – 222km loop from Mansfield

This iconic 4WD adventure covers a generous section of the Alpine National Park, starting in Mansfield and passing through Talbotville, Dargo and many historic huts and remote camping areas. Allow two to three days for this epic drive. Refer to <http://www.iconic4wd.com.au/> for more information.

Sandy Flat and Top Crossing Hut – 28km from Whitfield

From Lake William Hovell the track crosses the King River in several places, so take care, especially after rain when the river can become impassable. There are campsites on grassy flats beside the river with toilet facilities at both Sandy Flat and Top Crossing Hut.

Bluff-Upper Howqua area – 90km loop from Howqua Hills Historic Area

This area offers a challenging experience for skilled four-wheel drivers to explore remote parts of the park and see many of the best historic huts in the area.

From Howqua Hills Historic Area take Brocks Road to Eight Mile Gap, then follow Bluff Link Road and Bluff Track to Bluff Hut. Continue on to Lovicks Hut, past King Billys, then re-join Brocks Road to return through the state forest. Alternatively, follow the Bluff Link Rd into the Upper Howqua, Bindaree and on to Craigs Hut or Mt Buller.

Razorback and King River Valley

For extended 4WD day trips from Sandy Flat continue north along Sandy Flat Track, east on Long Spur Track, and then south on Stockyard Track and Burnt Top Tracks. Superb views can be seen from the Razorback (along the Burnt Top Track) looking toward Mt Cobbler and the Buckland Spur.

From Burnt Top Track continue driving to the Pineapple Flat Camping Area on the quiet upper reaches of the King River. Follow the King Basin Road south-east to King Hut. From here it is possible to return to Whitfield via the Cobbler Plateau or travel on to Mansfield via the Speculation Road and Circuit Road below Mt Stirling. Craigs Hut is accessed from the Circuit Road.

Lake Cobbler – 48km from Whitfield

This scenic drive passes through the picturesque farming valley of the Rose River, riverine forest and foothill bushland before ascending to the subalpine woodlands of Lake Cobbler. You will pass by the impressive pink sandstone and conglomerate slopes of Mt

Typo and Bennies, a quiet bush camping area beside the Rose River. The last section of road provides dramatic glimpses of the Dandongdale Falls, tumbling 255m off the Cobbler Plateau. This is also a popular site for Peregrine Falcon to nest.

Return the same way or take the 4WD Little Cobbler Track to the remote King River area.

Mitchells Track

This is another challenging remote drive, suitable for experienced four-wheel drivers. From Tobacco Flat, near Howqua Hills Historic Area, take Steiners Road to Mitchells Track. Mitchells Camping Area is a great spot to stop overnight. From there, continue south to the Jamieson-Licola Road via Mt Sunday Road.

Cross-country skiing

Cross country skiing on The Bluff or Cobbler Plateau is for the experienced only due to the remoteness of the area, and navigation and skiing skills are vital. A 4WD vehicle is necessary to access both areas and even then a relatively arduous walk may be encountered.

Mount Stirling, and Mount Buller to a lesser extent, offers a range of cross country trails more suitable for inexperienced or family groups. Both these areas are outside the Alpine National Park and managed by the Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management Board.

Mount Skene is also popular during winter. A permit from 4WD Victoria is required to access this area during the seasonal road closure period.

Horse riding

Explore the mountains and valleys of the Alpine National Park on horseback, especially in the Howqua Valley and the King River area. Restricted times and group sizes apply so please refer to Howqua Hills Historic Area guide as well as Horse riding guide for Alpine National Park. Camping with horses must be booked, call 13 1963.

Fishing

The Howqua, King, Jamieson and Rose Rivers, as well as Lake William Hovell, just outside the park, provide good fishing opportunities. Check your Fishing Guide for trout seasons and freshwater cray regulations and ensure that you hold a current Victorian fishing licence.

Deer hunting

Sections of the Alpine National Park are regarded as world class for Sambar Deer stalking. Within sections of the Alpine National Park Sambar Deer may be hunted by stalking only between 15 February and 15 December. The use of dogs to hunt Sambar Deer is not permitted.

Other conditions also apply. Please visit The Game Management Authority website www.gma.vic.gov.au for all information about hunting in Victoria, including licences, where and when to hunt and all regulations.

Cycling and mountain biking

Cycling is permitted in the Alpine National Park on all open roads, most management vehicle only tracks and some walking tracks. Call **13 1963** for more information.

Camping

There are numerous great sites in the area for dispersed bush camping without facilities. Please do not drive off road over vegetation to set up your camp.

For bushwalkers, dispersed camping is allowed; however please ensure you are at least 20 metres from any lake, river or stream.

For car based campers, sites with facilities are:

- In the Howqua Hills Historic Area (refer to Howqua Hills Historic Area Visitor Guide)
- Seven Mile Flat (2WD accessible) and Eight Mile Flat (4WD accessible) just beyond the Howqua Hills Historic Area
- Bennies beside the Rose River (2WD access)

- Lake Cobbler (4WD access recommended - very rough past Bennies)
- Pineapple Flat (4WD access)
- King Hut (4WD access)
- Pikes Flat (4WD access)
- Bindaree Flat (4WD access)
- Upper Howqua (2WD access)

All campers should be fully self-sufficient with food, water and camping equipment. Huts are for emergency use only. Some camping areas are not accessible by vehicles during seasonal road closures.

Where toilets are not provided, bury your waste at least 100m from water or campsites. Wash up 50m away from streams to protect the environment.

Portable stoves are recommended. If you are lighting a campfire, use fallen timber, keep it small and never leave it unattended.

Please carry out all your rubbish.

Be prepared and stay safe

Fire

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000). This part of the park is in the Northeast fire district. Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering parks and forests during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions.

Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban at emergency.vic.gov.au, on the [VicEmergency smartphone app](#) or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226.

No fires may be lit on Total Fire Ban days.

On Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days this park will be closed for public safety. Do not expect a personal warning. Do not enter the Park. If you are already in the park, leave the night before or as early as possible in the morning.

Check the latest conditions at parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

Driving

- Check road conditions and river crossing levels before leaving.
- Vehicle access is limited to formed roads and tracks open to the public. Vehicles are not permitted in Wilderness Areas.
- Many roads and tracks are closed seasonally for environmental and safety reasons, most between the Thursday after the Queen's Birthday until the Thursday before Melbourne Cup.

Walking

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

- warm clothing
- wind and waterproof jacket
- gloves, hat, sunglasses and strong footwear
- first aid kit and sunscreen
- energy food and water
- compass and relevant topographical map

Before you go, let someone know where you are going, and when you expect to return. Also, please keep your group small (4 - 8 people). Please keep to walking tracks.

Other resources

Visit www.parks.vic.gov.au for other visitor guides for Alpine National Park (ANP)

- ANP around Benambra, Buchan and Bonang
- ANP around Heyfield, Licola and Dargo
- ANP Tali Karng
- Grant Historic Area