

Barmah National Park

Visitor Guide



Barmah National Park, together with the adjoining Murray Valley Regional and National Parks in New South Wales, form the largest River Red Gum forest in the world. The complex ecology of the forest is closely linked to the Murray River and its flooding regime, creating a diverse and internationally significant natural habitat for an incredible variety of wildlife, particularly waterbirds.



Getting there

Barmah National Park lies along the Murray River between Barmah and Strathmerton, about 225km north of Melbourne. Major entry points are from Moira Lakes Road, Barmah-Picola Road and the Murray Valley Highway.

Welcome to Country

“Gulpa Gaka Anganya – Gaka Yawal Ngulla Yenbena Yorta Woka,” welcome friend – come walk with us the People on Yorta Country.

The Aboriginal Traditional Owners, the Yorta Yorta People welcome you to Barmah National Park. We ask that you treat it with respect and care for it as an extension of yourself.

Kinship to land is a vital part of Yorta Yorta life. Areas such as Barmah National Park provide an important opportunity for kinship to land to continue.

“The dreaming gave us our lore that binds us to the land through fundamental values passed on by our creation ancestors. They explained to us how the natural world was created and how the geographical features were formed and must be cared for.

To this day our spiritual connection to the woka (land) and walla (water) continues. As keepers of the land, we are bound to continue to preserve our cultural connection.”

– Yorta Yorta Elder

Knowledge and traditional management practices are now incorporated into Barmah National Park, which is jointly managed by the Yorta Yorta People and Parks Victoria under a Joint Management Plan overseen by the Yorta Yorta Traditional Owner Land Management Board.

Things to see and do

Walking

There are a couple of short walks starting near the Dharnya Centre. Most of the forest is accessible on foot so longer walks are also possible. We recommend following the river or existing tracks to avoid getting lost and reduce the risk of falls and injuries, and to avoid damaging the environment.



Yamyabuc Discovery Trail – Grade 2, 1.5km return, 30mins

This easy self-guided walk begins at the Dharnya car park and will introduce you to some of the natural and cultural features of the Barmah forest.



Lakes Loop – Grade 2, 4km return, 1.75hrs

Begin this circular walk at the Dharnya car park or join at Barmah Lakes campground, day visitor area or Rices Bridge.

The walk passes through mature and regrowth River Red Gums, passing a number of Aboriginal oven (cooking) mounds, skirting the edge of Barmah Lake, eventually reaching the Murray River and Broken Creek.

Cycling

Cycling is a great way to explore the park, and is permitted on all open vehicle tracks and roads including management-only tracks, but not on walking tracks. Please respect local signs and seasonal closures which apply to all vehicles. Cyclists must wear a helmet.

Picnicking

The Barmah Lakes Day Visitor Area is a great spot for a picnic, with toilets, fireplaces, picnic tables, a shelter and a nearby boat ramp. There are also toilets and picnic tables located at the Dharnya Centre. The Gulf Day Visitor Area has picnic tables and there are long drop toilets at Ulupna Beach. There are many delightful spots along the river without facilities.

Barmah Muster Yards

Visit the Barmah Muster Yards and learn about the interesting history of local mustering from the interpretative signs.

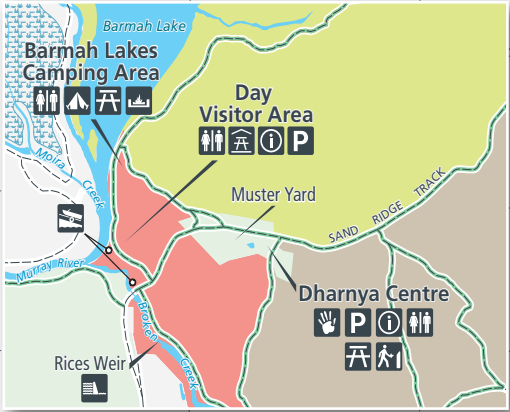
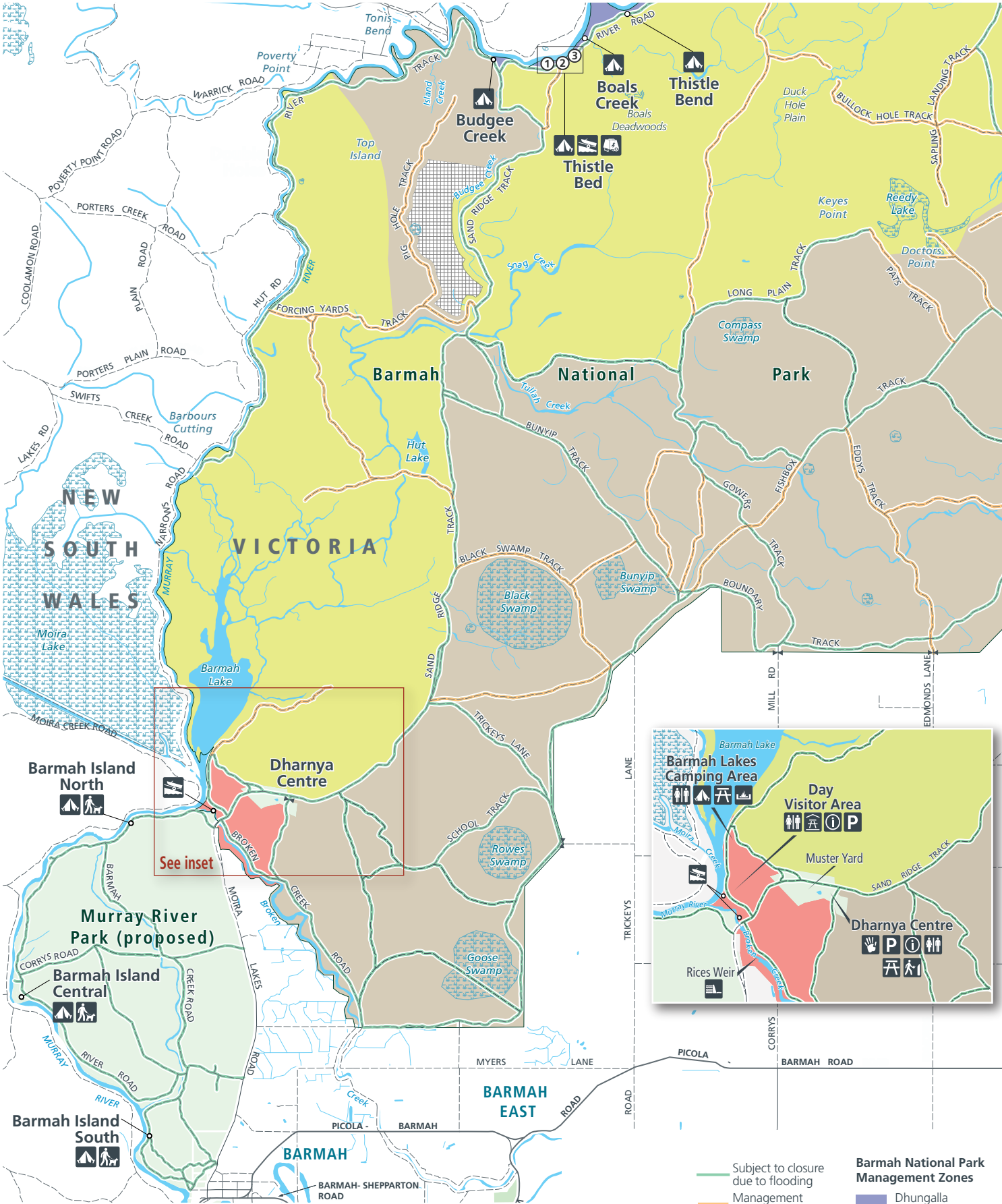
Fishing

Fishing for Murray Cod, Golden Perch and Yabbies is popular, with many visitors returning time and again to fish their favourite spot.

Fishing in the Murray River requires a NSW fishing licence, and fishing in the other creeks and lakes in the park requires a Victorian fishing licence. Licences can be purchased from many local outlets and online from onegov.nsw.gov.au and vfa.vic.gov.au.

Barmah National Park

Map 1



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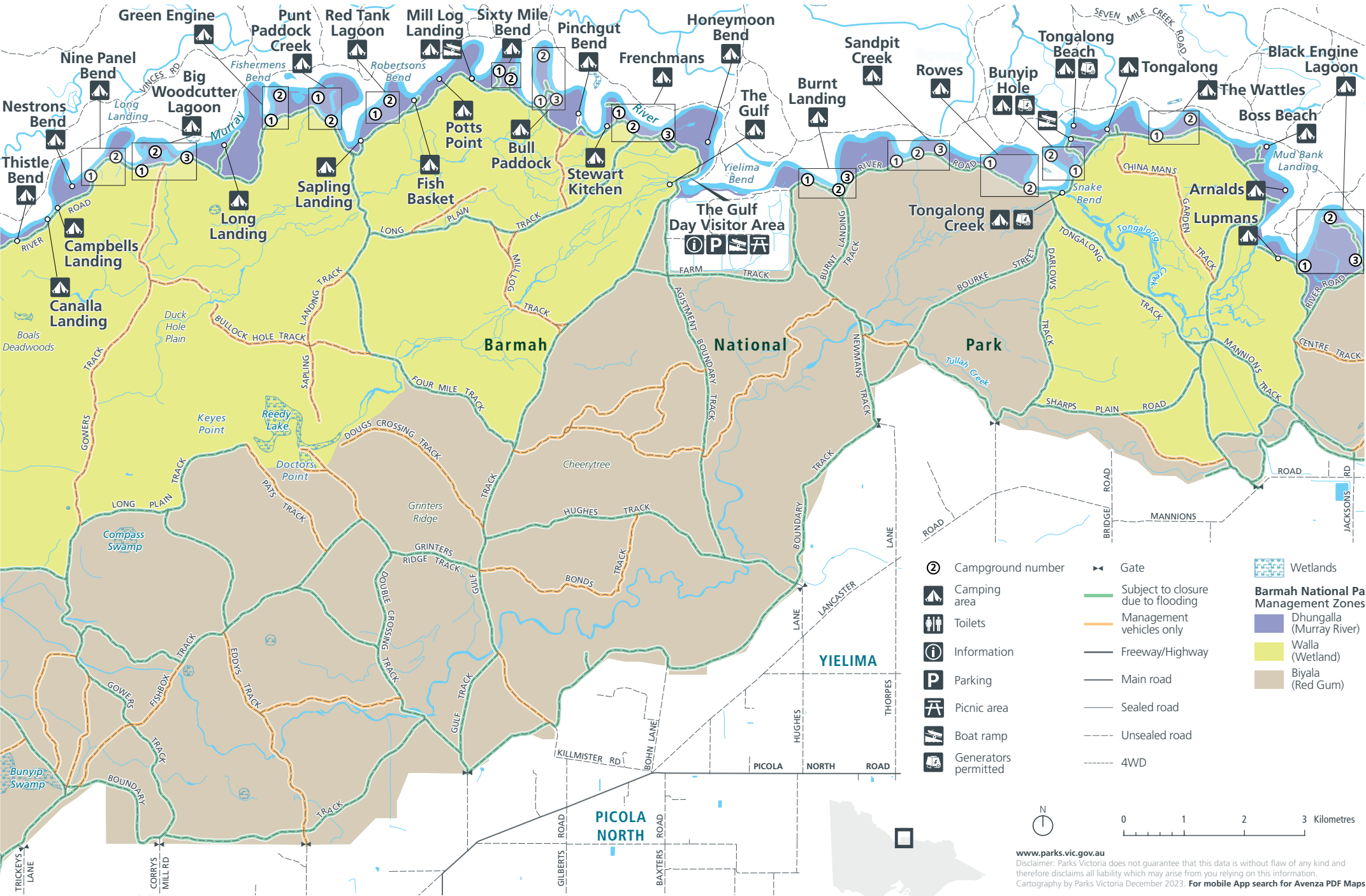


www.parks.vic.gov.au
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Barmah National Park

Map 2



Map 3



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- Reference area



0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometres

Please familiarise yourself with and abide by the regulations and restrictions in the *NSW Recreational Freshwater Fishing Guide* and *Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide* which can be downloaded from dpi.nsw.gov.au and vfa.vic.gov.au respectively.

Boating and canoeing

Boating and canoeing are popular on the Murray River, Barmah Lakes and adjoining creeks.

Please help us protect the riverbanks, which provide important habitat for many animals and prevent erosion:

- Boats must only be launched at public boat ramps (see maps).
- A speed limit of 5 Knots applies on Barmah Lake. Personal watercraft, including jetskis and wave runners, are prohibited.
- Boating on rivers and lakes demands special care. Obstacles like submerged trees and sandbars may not be visible, and currents and other conditions are constantly changing. Play it safe and keep your speed down.
- Please consider the impact of your wash on other vessels and the environment, ensuring it does not cause danger or damage.

The Murray River is a NSW waterway and the laws of NSW apply. Download the *Boating Handbook* from rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime or call 13 12 36 to ensure you comply with regulations.

When boating in Victoria, including on all rivers and creeks in Barmah National Park except the Murray River, please comply with the Victorian regulations which can be found at transport.safety.vic.gov.au/maritime-safety/recreational-vessel-operators

Car touring and four-wheel driving

Although 2WD vehicles can access some tracks in dry weather, 4WD vehicles with good ground clearance are recommended for tracks within Barmah National Park.

Some tracks are dry weather only, and gates may be closed during floods or environmental watering. Do not walk, ride or drive through floodwaters. Please respect local signage and check current road closures on the park's web page at parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

Swimming

Swimming can be enjoyed at the numerous sandy beaches. Take care, as rivers may have fast currents, underwater objects, and deep holes which can be hazardous. Always actively supervise children in or near water.

Do not swim in flood water, and never swim alone. Drinking alcohol significantly increases the risk of drowning. Wear a life jacket if swimming in deep water. Always enter the water slowly, feet first. For your own safety, do not dive or jump into the river.

Plants and animals

The Barmah-Millewa forest is an internationally significant wetland listed under the Ramsar Convention and represents all four of Victoria's freshwater wetland types. The forest supports over 200 species of birds and is one of Victoria's largest waterbird breeding areas. Brolgas, Night Herons, Spoonbills, White-bellied Sea-Eagles and Azure Kingfishers can all be seen.

Wildlife abounds throughout the forest. Grey Kangaroos, Emus and Koalas are common. Early morning and late afternoon are generally the best times to see birds and other wildlife. During the day, look for koalas in the towering River Red Gums and for reptiles sunning themselves on logs. The park also protects 38 rare or threatened plants including Fruit Saltbush and Winged Peppergrass.

River Red Gums line the Murray River for most of its length. These iconic trees can reach 45m and live for more than 500 years. The

trees need regular periods of flooding and can survive inundation for months. Their seeds are washed onto higher ground during a flood and germinate and grow before the next flood reaches them. Hollows and broken branches provide nesting for Galahs, Cockatoos, Superb Parrots and other parrots; while fallen branches provide habitat for many other animals.

Grey, Yellow and Black Box grow on the ridges, with mixed Box woodland common on the sandy ridges.

Seasonal flooding transforms dry billabongs into wetlands exploding with life. During floods, the narrow Barmah Choke forces the river's flow into the Edward River in New South Wales, the Barmah Lakes system, and out onto the broader floodplain. Birds, insects, frogs and other animals take advantage of the favourable conditions to breed. The Walla (Wetland) Zone contains most of the park's floodplain marsh, including sensitive vegetation communities and extensive breeding areas for birds and other animals.

Camping

Barmah National Park offers an iconic river country camping experience. You are truly spoilt for choice, with so many sites to choose from, including popular spots with boat ramps and more remote and secluded locations. No fees or bookings apply.

Camping is permitted only within the designated camping areas shown on the park maps. Outside these areas camping is prohibited.

Campers must be fully self-sufficient. No facilities are provided except where shown on the park maps.

Sustainable camping guidelines

Please practise minimal impact camping and observe relevant fire regulations:

- Please take all rubbish away with you for recycling or disposal.
- Campsites should be at least 20m from the riverbank.
- Chemical toilets are preferred. Pit toilets must be at least 100m from the water's edge. Bury toilet waste and paper at least 15cm deep.
- Do not empty chemical toilet waste or other rubbish in public toilets or waterways. There are free dump points for chemical waste and grey water in Cobram, Nathalia, Strathmerton and Tocatul.
- Download the Barmah National Park maps to your phone from Avenza Maps and use your phone's GPS location service to know where you are in the park and which management zone you are in. Use the table on the next page to see which regulations apply.



What can I do where?

Camping and fire regulations by management zone

Green symbols indicate that an activity is permitted within stated restrictions.

Fireplaces are not available in the Biyala zone.

	Gulpa Gaka (Welcome) Zone	Walla (Wetland) Zone	Dhungalla (Murray River) Zone	Biyala (Red Gum) Zone
Camping permitted in designated areas please refer to the park maps				
Use of generators permitted only between sunrise and sunset in designated camping area areas as depicted on the park map				
Fires permitted in fireplaces provided prohibited on days of Total Fire Ban				N/A
Fires permitted in self-dug pits but not within 50m of provided fireplaces. All fires must comply with the regulations below				
Use of chainsaws permitted Walla zone: only within 10m of the Gulf Track Biyala zone: only within 10m of vehicle tracks open to the public. Prohibited on Ulupna Island				

Fire regulations

- Solid fuel fires are prohibited during the declared Fire Danger Period except within the constructed fireplaces provided.
- Check the dates of the Declared Fire Danger Period for **Moir Shire** which change yearly at cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/fire-danger-period-restrictions
- All solid fuel fires are prohibited on days of Total Fire Ban.
- Gas or electric camping stoves and barbecues may be used on days of Total Fire ban provided the conditions below are met, and at least 10 litres of water are available for immediate use.
- Conditions for all permissible fires:
 - must be entirely contained within the constructed fireplace, or (where permissible) contained within a self-dug pit at least 30cm deep.
 - must not be larger than 1 square metre in any direction. Logs must be less than 1m long. It is prohibited to drag logs or burn logs with hollows.
 - a 3m area in all directions is cleared of everything flammable
 - an adult is in attendance at all times (awake, within 50m and in line of sight of the fire) who has the capacity and means to extinguish the fire
 - the fire is completely extinguished before the adult leaves. Always extinguish your fire with water, not soil. When it is cool to touch, it is safe to leave.
 - it is prohibited to remove firewood from the park. Dead wood provides important habitat for animals and birds. Please only collect fallen wood with no hollows, the smallest amount needed for cooking and warmth, or bring your own firewood or a portable gas or electric camping stove.

Caring for the park



Help us look after your park by following these guidelines:

- Please take all rubbish away with you for recycling or disposal. Report illegal dumping in parks by calling 13 1963.
- All plants, animals, historical and archaeological sites and geographic features are protected by law.
- It is an offence to feed or to leave food where it is accessible to wildlife. Penalties apply. Store all food securely and properly dispose of all rubbish, including food scraps.
- Digging, firearms and hunting are prohibited.
- Vehicles, including trail bikes, may only be used on formed open roads. Off road driving is not permitted. Drivers must be licensed, and vehicles registered and roadworthy.
- During and after floods, many roads within the park become impassable. To prevent damage to your vehicle and to the roads, please observe local signage and respect road closures.
- Dogs and other pets are prohibited in Barmah National Park.

Be prepared and stay safe



- There is limited mobile phone reception in the park. Short wave radios are recommended for campers in isolated areas beyond the Barmah Lakes.
- No drinking water is available. Please bring enough water with you for the duration of your stay.
- Summer temperatures can be extreme. Avoid walking during the hottest part of the day, wear a hat, sunscreen, sturdy shoes and carry plenty of water.
- Avoid parking, camping or sitting under or near large trees, like River Red Gums, as branches may fall and swing away from the tree. Whole trees can also fall without warning. Rope swings are not recommended.
- Avoid heavily treed areas in or after windy and stormy weather, and after floods or fires when the risk of falling trees and branches is higher.
- Take care when swimming, boating or canoeing - deep holes, submerged objects, and strong currents may not be obvious.
- Mosquitoes in this area may carry Ross River Fever and other viruses. Use insect repellent and cover up, particularly at dawn and dusk, to reduce the risk of being bitten.

Emergencies

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000). If there is a green emergency marker near you, read the code on the sign to the operator.

Barmah National Park is in Moira Shire and the **Northern Country** 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.

No fires may be lit on a day of Total Fire Ban.

Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban at emergency.vic.gov.au, download the VicEmergency smartphone app, call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226 or listen to a local ABC / ACE radio station, such as ABC Shepparton 97.7FM for emergency broadcast messages.

On Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days this park will be closed for public safety. Closure signs may be erected but do not expect an official warning. Check the latest park conditions at parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.