



William Ricketts Sanctuary

Visitor Guide with Map

Situated in a ferny glade in the Dandenong Ranges, William Ricketts Sanctuary is a place of beauty and tranquillity, featuring extraordinary sculptural forms half-hidden in the natural environment, just waiting to be discovered.

This unique sanctuary allows visitors to meander around the winding, looping paths of this cool temperate mountain forest, consisting of lush fern gullies and tall Mountain Ash gum trees. Enjoy a stroll through this beautiful environment, perfect for quiet reflection and contemplation of William Ricketts ceramic art. This site entry is free.



Welcome

Parks Victoria acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People, the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land where William Ricketts Sanctuary is located. We honour their deep and continuing connection to these lands, waters and community.

We pay our respects to Wurundjeri Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

Cultural advice

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this site may contain records and depictions of deceased persons. Some artwork may contain terms that reflects authors views, or those of the period in which the item was written or created but may not be considered appropriate today and cause offence. These views are not the views of Parks Victoria or any other representative body. The information provided reflects a historical context.

Opening hours

Daily: 10am–4pm, last entry 3:30pm.

Getting here

1402 Mount Dandenong Tourist Road, Mount Dandenong VIC 3767

Driving: William Ricketts Sanctuary is located approximately 45km east of Melbourne, around 1-hour drive.

The public car park is located opposite the sanctuary entrance, off Mount Dandenong Tourist Road. To access the site, you will have to walk across this road. Please take care while crossing. There is also a steep path from the car park to Mount Dandenong Tourist Road that may not be accessible for all.

Public transport: From Melbourne, take the Belgrave Line train to Upper Ferntree Gully Station, or the Lilydale Line train to Croydon Station. From either station, transfer to Bus Route 688 (Mount Dandenong). The bus stops directly outside William Ricketts Sanctuary.

Things to see and do

Walking



Loop walk

Grade 3, 900m, 20-30 mins

To make the most of William Ricketts Sanctuary, it is best to walk in a clockwise loop. You will pass all the major sculptures in the park. Be mindful of the steps that can be steep and slippery.

What makes this park special?

This site is a unique sanctuary set amongst cool temperate forest, with lush fern gullies and looping paths. Showcasing dozens of ceramic sculptural forms by William Ricketts, this property was his major life's work. William lived here from 1934 until his death in 1993, at age 94.

An eccentric life

Born in Melbourne in 1898, William Ricketts grew up developing various artistic skills including silver smithing, violin and clay modelling. In 1934 he moved permanently to the site to replant and recreate the forest after logging, with a vision to live amongst the trees. He used his considerable skills to express his beliefs.

Between 1949 and 1960 William made frequent trips to Central Australia to live with the Pitjantjatjara and Arrernte Aboriginal people. These communities gave him artistic inspiration and became the models for his intricate clay figures.

In 1970 William took his largest works to India where he stayed for two years. During his trip he discovered a spiritual empathy with the people of India, spending some time at an Ashram in Pondicherry.

William dedicated his life to creating these unique sculptural forms. He fired the clay to 1200 degrees centigrade in the on-site kiln, then placed them in the forest scene. Water flowing over sculptures represents the flowing essence of life.

Caring for the park



To help protect this park please follow these guidelines:

- Do not touch the sculptures. Help preserve them for the future.
- Rubbish bins are not provided at this site. Please take your rubbish home for recycling, composting or disposal.
- No dogs, cats or other pets are permitted in the sanctuary.
- Bicycles, scooters, skateboards and rollerblades are not permitted.
- All plants, animals, natural features and cultural sites are protected by law. Please do not disturb them.
- Feeding wildlife is bad for their health. It is an offence to feed or leave food where it is accessible for wildlife. Penalties apply.
- Drones are not permitted. Professional filming and photography require a pre-approved permit.

Be prepared and stay safe



To have a safe visit please remember this is a forest environment:

- Trees can drop branches without warning.
- Native animals including snakes and spiders live here.
- Paths and steps may become slippery, especially during rain.
- Some areas are steep and not suitable for visitors with limited mobility.

Emergencies

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000).

If there is a green emergency marker sign near you, read the information on the marker to the operator.

This site is in the Central 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 Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days, or high wind days, this site will be closed for public safety.

Check for park, facility and road closures and the latest conditions at parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

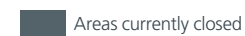
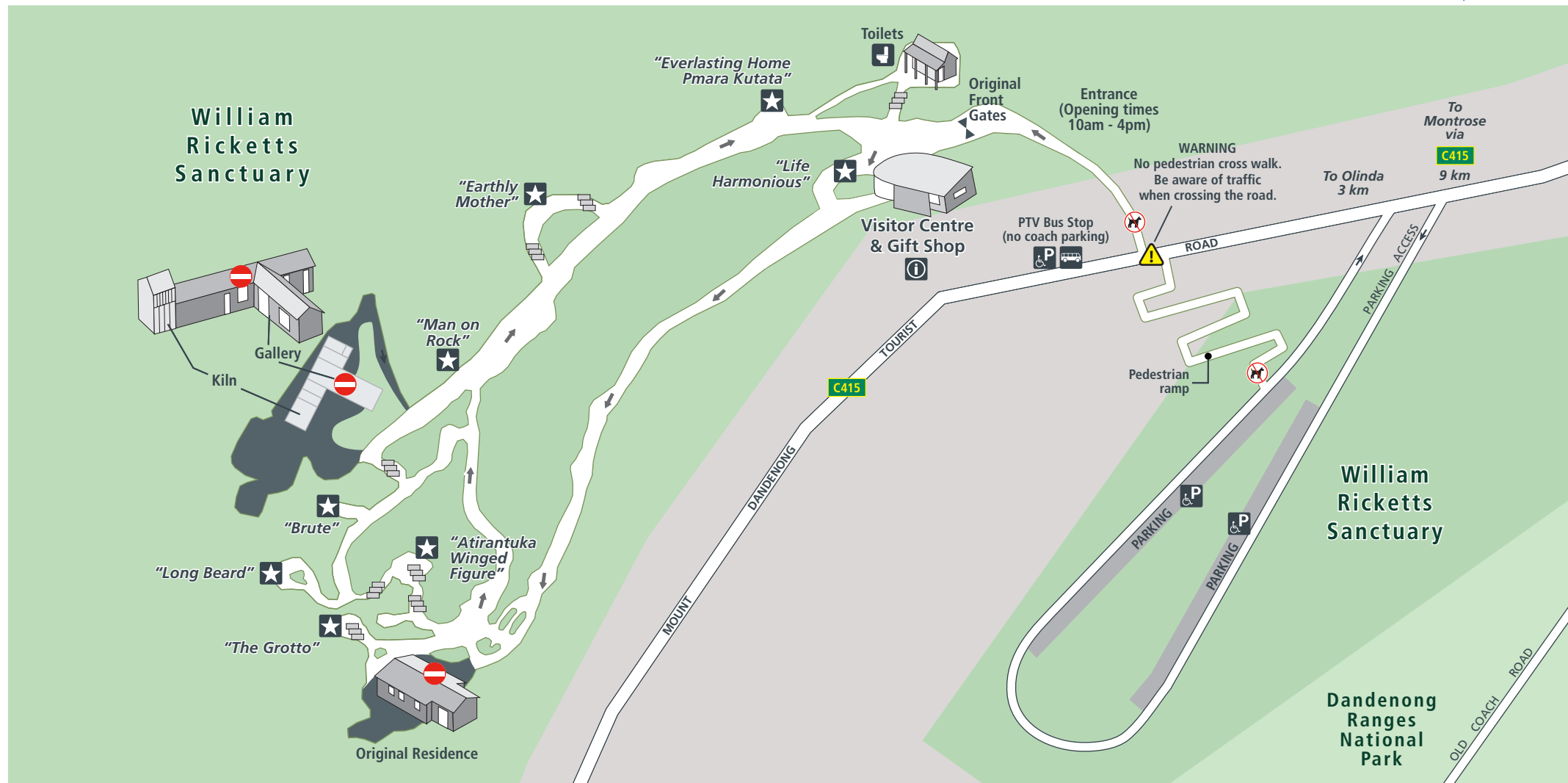


Want to learn more? Visit the William Ricketts Sanctuary webpage for more information, including accessibility and current park conditions:
www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/william-ricketts-sanctuary

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www.parks.vic.gov.au

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