

Introduction to Grampians National Park

Rising abruptly above the surrounding plains, the Grampians presents some of the most picturesque scenery in Victoria. The spectacular mountain ranges and brilliant spring wildflower displays, combined with its Indigenous and European history, make it one of Victoria's most popular tourist destinations and the State's third largest national park.

The spring wildflower display in the Grampians is exceptionally rich and colourful and showcases some of the 970 native plants that occur in the park.

The steep sandstone ranges make a striking visual impression on visitors, as do the waterfalls. The Australian Heritage Commission lists the Grampians National Park as being of high geological significance at the national level.

Its natural and cultural features make the park a very popular place for bushwalking, car touring, picnicking, camping, rockclimbing, photography and nature observation.

Grampians National Park is one of the largest in Victoria. Students' investigation of this park and its management issues can be compared with other parks in terms of:

- Park boundary factors (its shape, size and adjoining land uses).
- Visitor facilities and activities.
- Plant and animal communities conserved in the park.
- Geology and geographical features.
- Cultural heritage features contained in the park.

The resource sheets provided in this document can be used as pre-visit materials and/or for park specific applications of the student activities described in the Statewide section of Parks Victoria Teachers Resource. Particularly relevant activities from the Statewide section are identified in a box at the start of each resource sheet for Grampians National Park.

Visitor facilities

Services for schools

The park's Education Officer is available to assist school groups with materials, lessons, guided activities and advice about suitable activities in the park. Classes are conducted in the Education Room adjoining the National Park Centre and activities may also be conducted at suitable outdoor sites in the park.

Schools wishing to visit the Grampians National Park should contact the Education Officer well in advance to make a booking.

Bookings can be made via Parks Victoria's education website
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/education

Facilities provided within Grampians National Park

Facilities for visitors include:

- Visitor Information Centre.
- Camp grounds.
- Picnic grounds.
- BBQs and picnic tables.
- Information shelters.
- Walking tracks and roads.
- Lookouts.
- Pit toilets.

A network of sealed and unsealed roads provides vehicle access to key features within the park.

Access for disabled visitors is provided at Grampians National Park's Visitor Information Centre, Reeds Lookout, Boroka Lookout, MacKenzie Falls and at a walking track in the Victoria Valley. A wheel chair access track to the Balconies is under construction.

Facilities in the Grampians National Park are designed to be in harmony with the natural environment. The following facilities are provided for visitors to the Park. Please note that to help protect the park, restrictions apply to many of these recreational activities. Contact the Grampians National Park Centre for further details.

Picnicking

Facilities are provided at designated picnic grounds and include picnic tables and fireplaces.

Bush walking

The park has some 200 kilometres of walking tracks, providing visitors with opportunities for easy strolls or challenging overnight expeditions. The tracks are signposted at their starting points. Several maps and track notes are available at the National Park Centre and other tourist outlets.

Tracks in high usage areas are well defined and constructed. In the remote and rugged Victoria Range, walking tracks are less formally defined.

Groups wishing to undertake extended or remote walks should seek advice from the National Park Centre and complete a Trip Intention Form, available at the Centre and at Halls Gap Police Station. Suitable maps, water, food and protective clothing should be carried at all times.

Camping within the park

There are thirteen designated campgrounds in the park in a variety of settings. Facilities provided are basic: all have pit toilets, picnic tables and barbecue facilities; some have water supplies. Camp grounds are usually established at sites that have previously been disturbed for another purpose, for example, a campsite might be located on a site that was previously used for a saw mill.

Swimming

Lake Bellfield provides opportunities for swimming, however it is a deep, cold lake and care should be taken. The shallow water near the picnic ground opposite Silverband Road is an appropriate area. In summer the public pool in Halls Gap is open.

Cycling

With the advent of the mountain bicycle, cycling has increased in the park. Bicycle riding occurs on public roads throughout the park but some areas are not ideally suited to cycling because of the terrain and traffic conditions. Bicycles must stay on vehicle tracks that are open to public use. Prospective cyclists should seek advice from the National Park Centre about suitable routes.

Horse riding

Some horse riding is permitted in the park. Horse-riders are restricted to specific numbers, tracks and conditions.

Rock climbing and abseiling

The Grampians is the second most popular rock climbing destination in Victoria. The area around Mount Wudjubguyan (Hollow Mountain), Summerday Valley and Mount Stapylton offers a profusion of climbs. Climbers should seek current climbing information from the National Park Centre.



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