

9. Visitors to Grampians National Park

Links to Section 1

This resource sheet can be used for park specific application of activities in Section 1 of this Parks Victoria education resource kit, in particular:

Parks and SOSE

6. How many people visit Victoria's national parks?
9. Management issues in national parks.
11. Who is using the park?
12. Visitor impacts and management strategies.

Introduction

Because of its outstanding attributes the Grampians has long been a popular tourist destination. The park's easy access from State highways appeals to visitors and the tourism industry centered around the Grampians is now of regional and State significance.

Hall's Gap and the surrounding area is effectively the hub of the park and sites in the park near Hall's Gap are the most highly visited. The number of visitors per year is increasing (see table on next page).

With so many entry points it is difficult to be precise about visitor numbers in the Grampians. Recent estimates of visitor use indicate a relatively stable trend with an overall growth of about ten per cent since the area became a national park in 1984.

Who uses Grampians National Park?

Most visitors are from western Victoria, Melbourne and eastern South Australia. The majority of tourists are family groups with children between the ages of 5 -14 years. Ninety percent of the visitors spend less than seven nights in the park and 20% are day visitors. Ninety-two percent of visitors travel by car.

A survey conducted during Easter 1991 revealed that, at Zumstein, 80% of the visitors were from Victoria with 48% from Melbourne. Overseas visitors have increased from 1% of the total in 1987 to around 6% to 10% in the most recent survey. Overseas visitors are mainly from northern Europe, North America New Zealand and Japan. The traditional holiday periods (January, Easter) and wildflower season (spring) are the major periods of visitor use.

What do visitors do?

Recreation is one of the main uses of Grampians National Park. The most popular activities are pleasure driving (with associated sightseeing and picnicking), camping and bush walking.

The park contains a variety of camping and picnic grounds and many walking tracks. Some 1000 kilometres of roads and tracks provide an extensive network for recreation as well as for management purposes. The park is also a very popular rock climbing area.

Visitors are also involved in abseiling, painting and photography, nature study, fishing, boating, swimming, four-wheel driving, horse riding, cycling and wildlife viewing.

By far the most popular area of the park is the Wonderlands area, with its concentration of short and long walking trails to striking geological formations and views. Major visitor sites are: The Pinnacle, Grand Canyon, Lakeview Lookout, Sundial Peak and Silverband Falls. Several kilometres to the south of the Wonderland area is another popular visitor destination, Mount William, the highest peak in the park. Many other sites (e.g. MacKenzie Falls) are located throughout the park, offering visitors with cars scenic drives, walks and camp sites.

Education Resource Kit

Many visitors visit the National Park Centre near Halls Gap, and the adjacent Brambuk Centre. The Park's Centre is staffed by information officers and contains extensive displays about important aspects of the Grampians and a theatre for showing an audio-visual about the park's natural and human history.

The park's Education Officer, often utilising the Education Room adjoining the National Park Centre, assists many school groups. Each year approximately 6500 students attend the Visitor Centre and are involved in guided activities. An additional 1500 to 2000 students visit the Centre to view the audio-visual and displays.

Interpretation programs offered at the Park and Brambuk during the summer and Easter holiday periods provide a range of environmental and cultural activities for visitors.

Visitor numbers for Grampians National Park (in Visitor days).

1980/ 81	1984/ 85	1987/ 88	1995	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01
1 030 000	1 470 000	1 547 000	1 491 900	1 228 268	1 286 943	1 375 585	1 505 428



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