

7. Visitor analysis

Aim

Students will gain an accurate understanding of the use of Kinglake National Park by representing visitor usage data graphically and analysing that data.

Materials

Resource sheet 7: Visitor statistics for Kinglake National Park.

Activities

1. Construct a column graph for each of the tables showing visitor numbers per month per year.

1a. Which months are the most popular?

1b. Why do you think these months are so popular?

1c. What are the differences in visitor numbers between the Mason Falls area and the Jehosaphat Valley area?

2. Construct a multiple line graph from the data on camper numbers.

2a. In which months were the greatest number of campers at Kinglake National Park?

2b. Were the peak camping periods similar each year?

2c. Suggest reasons to explain why the numbers of campers has remained similar.

2d. Suggest why might Kinglake National Park management have restricted the area available to campers?

3: What is the maximum number of cars that can legally be parked at Kinglake?

3a. Assume that the average number of people per car is 3. If all car bays were full, how many people would be in the park?

4. Referring to the table showing the origin of visitors to the park, where did most people come from?

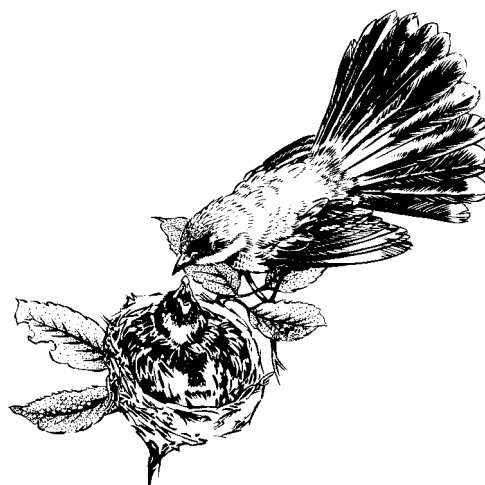
4a. Alternatively, create a labelled map or pie chart to show the origin of visitors to the park.

4b. If a similar map or pie chart was to be prepared for campers rather than day visitors, predict how the map or pie chart would differ from that drawn for 4a.

5. Referring to the table of activities undertaken during their visit to Kinglake National Park, what are the three most popular activities for day trippers at Kinglake National Park?

6. Suggest ways that these visitor statistics can help park managers.

7. The visitor survey described in the resource sheet was conducted in 1993. Do you think the visitor statistics for the park would be very different today? If so, suggest what statistics might be different and why.



7. Visitors to Kinglake National Park

Park Visitor Numbers

Kinglake National Park is a very popular park, mainly because it is so close to Melbourne. The estimated total park visitor numbers is approximately 200,000 per year.

The two main visitor sites are Mason Falls picnic area and Jehosaphat Gully picnic area. In 1993 it was calculated that 132,227 people visited these two sites, based on the total number of vehicles entering Mason Falls and Jehosaphat Gully and average car occupancy rates. Visitor numbers have fluctuated. The highest [check] annual number of visitors of 155,238 occurred in 1988. The decrease in visitor numbers from 1990 is probably linked to a park management strategy to reduce the number of car parking spaces available. It should be noted that since these visitor numbers were calculated from vehicle counts at the park's two most popular sites, the real number of

visitors is likely to be much higher as there are many other access points in Kinglake National Park which were not monitored. These include several other picnic areas, many walking tracks, roads and a camping area.

Visitor numbers are seasonal and weather dependent. The busiest months mostly coincide with school holidays. Generally, the busiest day of the week is Sunday, and public holidays. Of these, the busiest public holidays are Melbourne Cup Day, Easter Monday, Boxing Day and New Years Day, more or less in that order. Winter has the least number of visitors.

Day visitors

Most visitors to the park are day visitors, that is, they come to the park just for the day.

Table 1: Day visitor statistics.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
1982	14 312	7 164	9 877	13 797	10 402	8 805	
1984	17 273	8 792	12 454	16 443	10 408	10 596	
1986	11 660	8 120	14 178	9 538	9 197	10 684	
1988	19 893	11 386	14 862	17 779	10 696	11 204	
1990	20 102	9 008	13 037	14 622	8 329	10 078	
1991	13 173	12 274	17 722	12 559	8 721	6 895	
1992	15 640	14 316	16 582	13 059	10 174	2 891	
1993	14 180	9 922	12 880	18 112	9 136	7 331	
Average	16 468	9 888	14 238	14 491	9 588	8 660	
Year	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
1982	7 183	11 779	9 489	10 628	15 114	16 493	135 043
1984	6 282	6 052	8 864	9 489	11 412	15 529	133 594
1986	7 191	11 182	9 768	9 631	15 918	14 207	131 274
1988	9 781	8 593	11 201	11 504	13 198	16 141	156 238
1990	9 057	7 022	12 799	7 088	11 589	12 308	135 039
1991	8 503	11 528	9 666	8 656	10 870	12 139	130 706
1992	5 793	3 850	4 678	6 573	11 475	11 003	116 034
1993	10 630	9 982	10 840	9 133	10 984	7 800	130 930
Average	8 158	8 599	9 913	9 399	12 633	13 448	135 487

Source: Kinglake National Park

Note: Car park size was decreased in 1990.

Jehosaphat Gully was closed from April to September 1992 for redevelopment works.

Campers

There is one small campground in the park.

The number of camper nights for Kinglake National Park fluctuates but is generally low compared to many other parks. Weather conditions no doubt influence the variations in the following figures below.

Table 2: Camper Nights at Kinglake National Park.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
1986	177	58	183	128	95	64
1988	135	71	73	251	146	28
1990	324	73	127	255	28	36
1991	399	86	251	207	36	33
1992	245	93	327	206	39	19
1993	139	267	49	312	36	89
Average						

Year	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
1986	12	26	60	100	296	165	1 364
1988	10	85	60	86	109	93	1 147
1990	20	2	175	109	233	173	1 555
1991	26	8	150	234	140	263	1 833
1992	19	28	79	18	72	180	1 325
1993	C	C	18	75	114	198	1 297
Average							

Source: Kinglake National Park
C = closed

Table 3: Number of visitors to Mason Falls and Jehosaphat Gully.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Mason Falls	9908	5314	6590	9786	4752	3594
Jehosaphat Gully	4272	4608	5865	7626	4359	3553
Average						

Site	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Mason Falls	5323	4988	6616	5000	5469	4605	71 945
Jehosaphat Gully	5089	4844	4174	3871	4899	2649	55 809
Average							

Source: Kinglake National Park 1993

Visitor Profiles

A survey of visitors to the park was conducted in 1993.

Most visitors to Kinglake National Park are from metropolitan Melbourne.

Table 4: Regional location of visitors to Kinglake National Park

Metropolitan Regions	%
Western	2.7
North West	14.3
North East	32.3
Inner Urban	3.9
East	14.3
Inner East	8.8
Southern	4.9
Other East	4.3
Westernport	0
Country Regions	
Other country	10.7
Interstate	0.3
No answer	3.7

Source: 1993 Visitor Survey

The survey found that 56% of visitors travel between 30 and 60 minutes to the park and 35% travel over an hour. Most visitors get to the park by car, only 3% get to the park by tourist bus, motorbike and by walking.

Almost equal proportions of males and females visit the park (males 50.7%, females 49.3%).

When compared with Melbourne's average for metropolitan population, the age groups of visitors to Kinglake National Park are over represented in the 20 - 29, 30 - 39 and 40 - 49 year old categories. The under representation of 60 + year old visitors may be attributable to declining health and or lack of access to transport.

Table 5: Age Group of Visitors to Kinglake National Park

Age group (years)	Kinglake National Park %	Metropolitan Statistical Division (MSD)
0 - 9	Not surveyed	Not surveyed
10 - 19	5	19.6
20 - 29	28	19.6
30 - 39	26	18.6
40 - 49	18	13.8
50 - 59	11	11
60 +	12	16.8
Total	100	99.7

Source: 1993 Visitor Survey

The survey found that 47% of the visitors to Kinglake National Park have a tertiary education, compared to the average of 10.1% for the population of Melbourne. This figure indicates that highly educated people are more likely to be visitors to Kinglake National Park.

A high proportion of park visitors (44%) were visiting Kinglake National Park for the first time. Of the repeat visitors, 55% attend annually and 40% less frequently.

Most day visitors to Kinglake National Park stay for three or more hours. One percent of visitors stay less than half an hour, 10% for 30 to 60 minutes, 57% for one to three hours and 32% stay for over three hours.

Most day visitors to Kinglake National Park (97%) come with other people. Of this 97%, 39% came with their family, 27% came with their partner, 17% came with friends, 15% came with family and friends and 2% with a work, school, cultural or tour group. Only three percent of visitors to Kinglake National Park visit the park alone. There were approximately 5,000 group visitors per year.

Kinglake National Park is a popular educational resource. Some 4500 students visit the park each year, made up of roughly similar numbers of primary and secondary school groups, and some tertiary groups.

Facilities and Activities

The survey asked which areas people visited and what activities they undertook.

Figure 6: Park Areas Visited at Kinglake National Park

Park Area	%
Masons Falls	47
Jehosaphat Gully	26
Mt Sugarloaf	20
Information Centre	10
The Gums Camping Area	5
Frank Thomson Reserve	3
Wombelano Falls	2
Island Creek Picnic area	1
No answer	37

Source: 1993 Visitor Survey

Most people (66%) visiting the park make use of the picnic areas and walking tracks.

Table 7: Facilities Used During Visit to Kinglake National Park

Facilities Used	%
Both walking tracks and picnic area	66
Walking tracks only	22
Picnic areas only	11
No answer	2

Source: 1993 Visitor Survey

The most popular tracks used by visitors in the Mason's Falls area are the 15 minute walk along Lyrebird Circuit Track and the more strenuous three to four hour walk along Running Creek Track.

Table 8: Use of Walking Tracks in Mason's Falls Area

Track	%
Masons Falls walk	54
Lyrebird Circuit walk	37
Boundary track	15
No answer	37

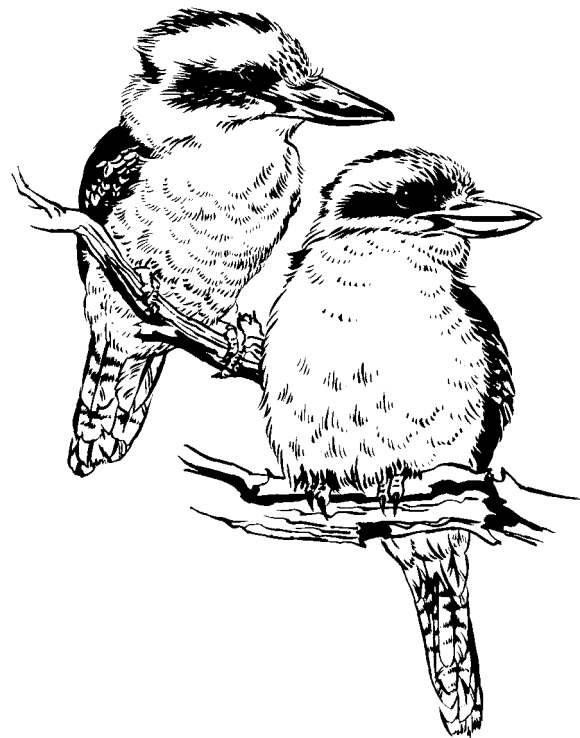
Source: 1993 Visitor Survey

In the Jehosaphat Gully area the most popular walking track is Shelley Harris Track.

Table 9: Use of Walking Tracks in Jehosaphat Gully Area

Track	%
Shelley Harris track	21
Lavers Circuit	17
No answer	37

Source: 1993 Visitor Survey



Laughing Kookaburras © MT

Kinglake National Park offers a range of recreation opportunities. Walking is the most popular activity, followed by picnicking. Socialising and sightseeing are also popular. Quite a few visitors take the opportunity to undertake photography or study the plants and wildlife in the park, reflecting the conservation and natural resource values of the park. No formal visitor interpretation or education activities were provided by park staff during the survey period except for two weeks over Easter.

Table 10. Activities undertaken on a visit to Kinglake National Park

Activities	%
Walking	89
Picnicking	74
Socialising with family / friends	55
Sightseeing	54
Photography	24
Studying birds, plants or animals	21
Showing visitors from overseas / interstate	15
Sitting around doing nothing	12
Relaxing / reading / sunbathing	11
Supervising children's play	11
Courting / romancing	10
Playing	8
Other	5
Cycling	1
Attending special event	1
Supervising children's cycling	1
Education activities / programs	1
Painting / drawing	1
Orienteering / Rogaining	1
Informal sports	0

Table 11. Car Parking Capacities in Kinglake National Park

Location	1990	2002
Masons Falls picnic area	200	100
Jehosaphat Gully picnic area	50	35
Mt Sugarloaf	12 + 3 buses	same
Visitor Centre		10
The Gums Camping Area	18	18
Frank Thomson Reserve	30 + 2 buses	121 bus
Island Creek Picnic area	12	5

Source: Kinglake National Park

Visitor attitudes and preferences

Visitors were asked "What are the most important features of the park for them?"

Table 12. Important leisure features of Kinglake National Park

Feature	%
Forest / bushland	90
Water features	78
Nature / conservation areas	77
Barbecue / picnic areas	74
Scenic vistas	73
Bicycle / Walking trails	70

Source: 1993 Visitor Survey

Visitors were asked to indicate whether they would like to see more facilities developed within Kinglake National Park with 39% indicating they would like to and 60% would not like to see the park with more facilities. Of the 39% who did want additional facilities the most popular preference was the opportunity to view wildlife (28%), more walking paths (21%), nature trails (18%), linkages to other parks (18%), picnic shelters (18%), an information centre (18%) and better river access (17%). It may be that some of these facilities are provided but the visitor was unaware of them.