

Introduction to Port Campbell National Park

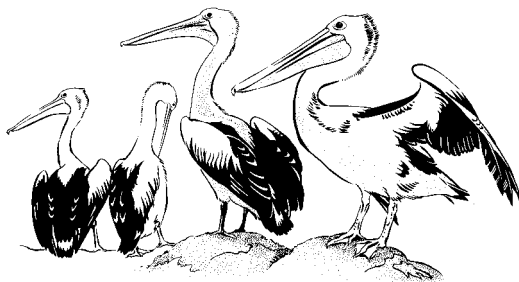
Many people visit Port Campbell National Park to see its spectacular coastal landscape and one of Australia's most recognised landmarks, the magnificent Twelve Apostles. The park's sheer cliffs, gorges, arches and off-shore rock stacks form a dramatic and scenic coastline. The changing weather, sea and light often create memorable visual effects. For many people, the location creates a sense of isolation that further adds to the appeal of the park for them.

The park is internationally recognised. The IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) has listed Port Campbell National Park as Category II (National Parks) on the United Nations' List of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for ecosystem conservation and appropriate recreation.

Sections of Port Campbell National Park are also listed on the Register of the National Estate, in recognition of the area's outstanding natural and cultural values, and its importance as part of our heritage. Port Campbell National Park and Glenample Homestead are classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

Port Campbell National Park is a medium sized park. It has a long narrow shape with 95 kilometres of boundary.

Geographically, Port Campbell National Park in south west Victoria is a narrow coastal strip extending inland from the low water mark of Curdies Inlet at Peterborough in the west to the outlet of the Gellibrand River at Princetown in the east.



Australian Pelican ©MT

Significant features of the park include:

Natural values

- A stretch of coastline where the wild Southern Ocean meets rugged limestone cliffs, which are being rapidly and spectacularly eroded.
- Extraordinary geomorphological features, including cliffs, rock stacks, caves, headlands and bays.
- A wide range of remnant coastal vegetation types, including important coastal heathlands, which provide a valuable link between other patches of remnant vegetation in the area.
- High biodiversity, including a remarkable diversity of plants. Significant flora species include the Metallic Sun-orchid and Clover Glycine. Significant fauna species include the Hooded Plover, Rufous Bristlebird, White-bellied Sea-eagle, Orange-bellied Parrot, Ground Parrot and Swamp Antechinus. The park is an important habitat for birds which migrate between the southern and northern hemispheres.

Cultural values

- Evidence of Aboriginal activities, including shell middens, stone artefacts, and staircases cut into the coastal cliffs.
- Shipwrecks off the park's coastline relating to important national historic themes, including shipping, navigation, immigration, trade and communication.
- Glenample Homestead, with its pastoral history and its relationship to the *Loch Ard* shipwreck.
- Spectacular coastal scenery which has been attracting tourists for over 100 years.