

Gabo Island Lighthouse Reserve

Visitor Guide



Gabo Island is rich in cultural history, significant flora and fauna and stunning landscapes with magnificent views of Croajingolong National Park, including the Cape Howe Wilderness Zone and Tullaberga Island. It covers an area of approximately 154 ha and features the only operating island lighthouse in Victoria. The lighthouse was constructed from 1858 to 1862 using the distinctive pink granite found on the island.



Getting there

Gabo Island is located approximately 14 km from Mallacoota at the eastern tip of Victoria, close to the border of New South Wales, and 500 metres off the wilderness coast of Croajingolong National Park. Access to and from Gabo Island is by boat or with a licensed commercial aircraft from Merimbula.

Things to see and do

Sightseeing

Explore the spectacular surrounds at Gabo Island. Enjoy the clear water of Santa Barbara Bay or just relax on the sandy beach whilst taking in the view of the Howe Range. This harbour area contains an amazing underwater world including marine fish, sea stars and sea anemones.

Keep a look out for passing whales, dolphins and seals. Watch the penguins make their way to the shore after dark.

Take a picnic lunch and walk around the island, taking in the ruins, the monument to the ship 'Monumental City' and the old cemetery.

Staying overnight

Gabo Island offers a unique accommodation experience. Stay in the Assistant Light Keeper's residence, featuring three bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, laundry and bathroom with all linen provided. There is no internet access in the guest accommodation.

Bookings are required for a minimum of two nights and it caters for up to eight people.

Peak rates apply for the following periods: 1 September to 30 April, Queens Birthday weekend and July school holidays.

Off Peak rates apply for the remainder of the year.

Advance bookings and payment are required year round. To book, go to www.parks.vic.gov.au/stay or call 13 1963.

Plants and animals

Gabo Island supports several plant species that are considered rare. The dominant vegetation communities on the island include a forest of Saw Banksia and Giant Honey Myrtle in the centre of the island, with a coastal herb land around the shoreline.

Gabo is also considered to be of state zoological significance because of possibly the largest breeding colony of Little Penguins in the world. Short-tailed Shearwaters also breed on Gabo Island.

These large numbers of sea birds provide an important source of food for raptors which hunt on Gabo Island, including White-bellied Sea Eagles, Whistling Kites, Marsh Harriers and Brown Falcons.

Sea mammals are regularly sighted off Gabo Island. Common species of whale sighted from the island include Southern Right

Whales, Humpback Whales and Killer Whales. Whales pass Gabo Island on their annual migration south to feed in Antarctic waters in October and November and then again during from May to July on their northern migration to calve in tropical areas. Pods of dolphins are also regularly sighted from Gabo Island. Species include Common Dolphins and Bottlenose Dolphins. Australian and New Zealand Fur Seals are also often seen basking on the rocks surrounding the island.

Geology and geomorphology

This rocky, windswept granite island presents a unique landscape, including the contrasting colours and textures of pink granite against the sea and its vegetation.

Extensive outcrops of pink granite, wide basalt intrusions, coastal slopes, boulder beaches, cliff top dunes and a sandy beach at Santa Barbara Bay signify the island's uniqueness.

Gabo granite was quarried from two locations on the island. Visit the Western Quarry and see where rock slabs were cut to build the light tower and buildings. Stone from the Northern Quarry was used in several prominent buildings in Melbourne.

Caring for the park

Please help care for this beautiful island:

- Stay on the tracks - penguin burrows are everywhere.
- Day visitors to visit during daylight hours only.
- Access to the airfield is restricted.
- Dogs, cats, fires and camping are not permitted.
- All native plants, animals, cultural and historic features are protected.
- Take rubbish away with you.
- If fishing, please ensure that you comply with all Fisheries regulations.

Be prepared and stay safe

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. Gabo Island Lighthouse Reserve is in the East Gippsland 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 Gabo Island.

Check the latest conditions at parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

Parks Victoria

Phone 13 1963

www.parks.vic.gov.au

Gabo Island Lighthouse Reserve



- Day visitor shelter
- Caretaker's residence
- Walking grade 2
- Gabo Island Lighthouse Reserve
- Accommodation
- Lighthouse
- Unsealed road
- Santa Barbara Bay - Lighthouse walk (2km / 45 min one way)
- Monument
- Parks Victoria office

