

Tarra-Bulga National Park

Brataualung Country

Visitor Guide



Hidden in the Strzelecki Ranges, Tarra-Bulga National Park features lush fern-filled gullies, giant Mountain Ash and ancient Myrtle Beech. Visitors have long enjoyed strolling along one of the nature walks or picnicking beside a shady fern-lined creek.



Welcome to Country

The Gunaikurnai people are the Traditional Owners of the Country featured in this visitor guide.

Through a new way of managing public land called Joint Management, the State has created an equal partnership with the Gunaikurnai people. The benefits of this partnership are many and include: the knowledge and culture of traditional owners incorporated into natural resources (land) management, cultural awareness and knowledge of local history, improved park management through knowledge-sharing and increased opportunities for new initiatives.

By conserving and protecting the natural environment and cultural values, the education and enjoyment experience is enhanced for all community members and visitors.

Tarra-Bulga National Park is one of the jointly managed parks within Gippsland. This agreement recognises the fact that the Gunaikurnai people have always been connected to their land and are the rightful people who speak for that Country. These parks and reserves are cultural landscapes which are part of our living culture.

Getting there


Tarra-Bulga National Park is situated approximately 190 kilometres east of Melbourne. Take the Princes Highway to Traralgon, then follow the Traralgon Creek Road to Balook. Alternatively, the park can be reached from Yarram via the Tarra Valley Road or Bulga Park Road. Roads throughout the area are narrow and winding but offer marvellous scenery with panoramic views from several points, including Mount Tassie.

Things to see and do

Tarra-Bulga Visitor Centre


The Tarra-Bulga Visitor Centre is located at Balook and is open on weekends and public holidays. The visitor centre has great information about the park and stories about its people - including the Traditional Owners of Country the Gunaikurnai, and the little-known but locally famous first woman Ranger of Victoria, Kara Moana Healy. You can pick up a map or have a friendly chat to the Friends of Tarra-Bulga National Park volunteers.

Walking from the visitor centre

-  **1. Corrigan Suspension Bridge – 1.2km, 25 minutes one way**
Grade 2

Walk to the impressive Corrigan's Suspension Bridge, which stretches through the rainforest canopy, affording spectacular views


of the lush fern gully on the forest floor below. Follow the signs from the Visitor Centre Carpark via Lyrebird Ridge, Ash and Wills Tracks.

-  **2. Lyrebird Ridge Track – 2.4km, 45 minutes return**
Grade 1


This track leads through regenerating and mature Mountain Ash forests. Rest on the seats provided and listen to the sounds of the forest.

-  **3. Forest Track – 4.4km, 1.5 hours return**
Grade 3


Starting at the end of the Lyrebird Ridge Track, this longer walk completes a circuit back to the Visitor Centre via part of the Old Yarram-Balook Road. It winds its way through Mountain Ash Forest, a rainforest gully and an unusual thicket of Hazel Pomaderris. This track is unsurfaced and has some steep sections. It is recommended for the more serious walker.

-  **4. Ash Track – 680m, 15 minutes one way**
Grade 2

Branching off the Lyrebird Ridge Track, this track leads through regenerating Mountain Ash forest to the beginning of the Fern Gully Nature Walk. Look for remnants of logging that occurred here in the early 1900s. Eucalypts are now growing to replace them.


-  **5. Fern Gully Nature Walk – 720m, 15 minutes return**
Grade 3

This walk begins where the Ash Track meets the Wills Track and gives an excellent introduction to the plants and wildlife of the Mountain Ash Forests and Cool Temperate Rainforests of the Strzelecki Ranges. Signs along this track explain the features seen.

-  **6. Scenic Track – 1km, 20 minutes one way**
Grade 2

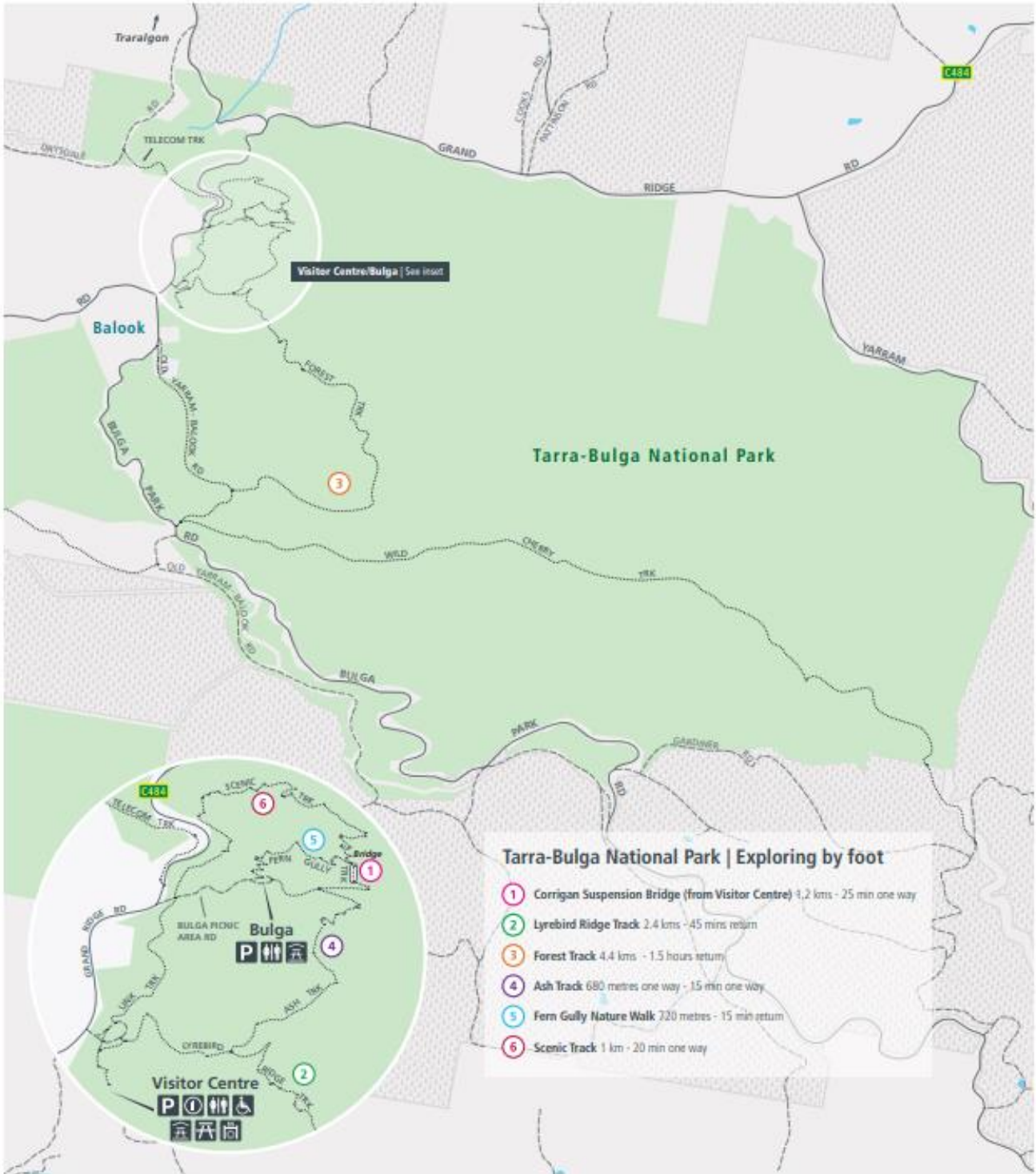
This walk from Corrigan's Suspension Bridge to the Bulga entrance takes you through tall Mountain Ash Forest and Cool Temperate Rainforest. At the end you can continue back to the Visitor Centre via the Link Track or take the road to the Bulga Carpark.

Walking from Tarra Valley

-  **7. Tarra Valley Rainforest Walk – 1.4km, 35 minutes one way**
Grade 2

Tarra Bulga National Park

East



Parking	Picnic table	Main road	Minor river
Information	Electric barbecue	Sealed road	Tarra Bulga National Park
Toilets	Waterfall	Unsealed road	Softwood plantation
Disabled access	Walk number	4WD	
Sheltered area		Walking track	

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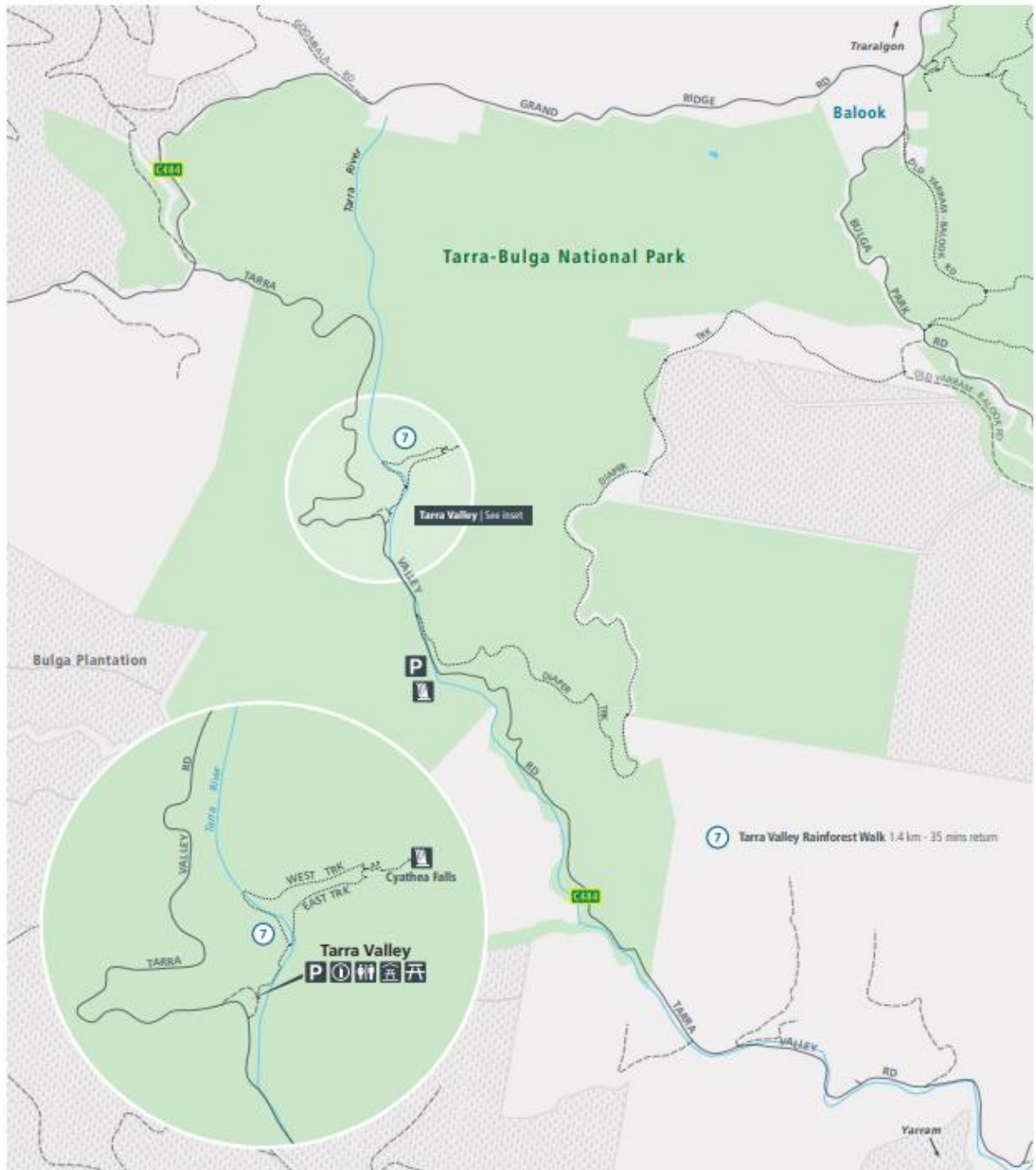


Tarra Bulga National Park

West



Healthy Parks Healthy People



- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Parking | Picnic table | Main road | Minor river |
| Information | Electric barbecue | Sealed road | Tarra Bulga National Park |
| Toilets | Lookout | Unsealed road | Softwood plantation |
| Disabled access | Waterfall | 4WD | |
| Sheltered area | Walk number | Walking track | |

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Meander through a rainforest gully and across trickling mountain streams to Cyathea Falls. The ancient Myrtle Beech along the trail creates a protective canopy above a delicate understorey of tree ferns, lichens and moss.

Grand Strzelecki Track

To go further afield and explore the beauty of the Strzelecki Ranges, embark on the Grand Strzelecki Track. Over 100kms connecting two National Parks, Morwell and Tarra-Bulga, you will traverse changing landscapes, including valleys, farmlands, old and regrowth forests, bushfire regeneration and managed forests. Home to abundant wildlife, including koalas, wallabies, echidnas and possums.

The trek can take 3-4 days or be broken into smaller sections. For further information visit www.grandstrzeleckitrack.org.au

Ranger-led Activities

The Junior Ranger program encourages kids to explore Victoria's amazing parks with a real Park Ranger. Activities are run mostly during school holidays and on some weekends. When school holidays roll around, make sure you sign up for one of the many Junior Ranger activities on offer at Tarra-Bulga National Park, or other National Parks across Victoria by visiting www.juniorrangers.com.au/events

Picnicking

Tarra-Bulga National Park is a delightful setting for a picnic. Three picnic areas are situated within the park; at the Visitor Information Centre, Tarra Valley and Bulga. The Visitor Centre picnic area provides picnic tables, electric barbeques, a picnic shelter and toilets with disabled access.

Tarra Valley and Bulga picnic areas are set amongst the Giant Mountain Ash and shady fronds of tree ferns. Tables, toilets and picnic shelters are provided.

Rubbish bins are not provided. Please take all your rubbish with you.

Accommodation

Caravan parks are situated within the Tarra Valley and in Yarram and Traralgon. Other accommodation including guesthouses and bed and breakfasts are scattered throughout the Strzelecki Ranges. Camping is not permitted within the park.

Flora and fauna

Tarra-Bulga National Park protects a remnant amount of the forests that once covered the eastern Strzelecki Ranges. Tall open forest of Mountain Ash, Messmate and Blackwood grow on the hills and slopes. Cool Temperate Rainforest of Myrtle Beech, Southern Sassafras, Austral Mulberry and Banyallas flourish within the sheltered gullies. The cool moist conditions here support a diverse understorey of ferns with over 41 species occurring within the park.

The canopy of forest provides food and nesting areas for a variety of birds including the Pilotbird, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Eastern Whipbird, Laughing Kookaburra, Crimson Rosella and Currawongs. The understorey composed of tall shrubs and small trees is home to the Eastern Yellow Robin, often seen perching sideways on low branches, eyes intently searching the ground for food. At night the forest comes to life as possums, owls and bats emerge from tree hollows to feed amongst the spreading branches of the rainforest canopy.

If you are lucky you may catch a glimpse of a Lyrebird scratching amongst the leaf litter looking for insects and grubs. Their clear, loud imitations echo through the forest. The park is also home to the Common Wombat, Swamp Wallaby, Greater Glider, Sugar Glider, Brushtailed Possum and Platypus.

Remnants of history

In 1840 the Polish explorer, 'Count' Strzelecki and his party, explored the ranges that now bear his name. Guided by Aboriginal guide, Charlie Tarra, they cut through the thick scrub and tall timber of the Strzelecki Ranges and eventually reached Western Port - wet, hungry and exhausted.

The eastern Strzelecki Ranges were opened for selection from the 1890s and settlers' cottages soon dotted the ridges. Farmers had to contend with short milking seasons, cold winters, noxious weeds, thick scrub and extreme transport difficulties.

In 1903 the Albion Shire Council asked the State Government to reserve an area of forest with fern gullies near Balook as a public park. Twenty hectares were reserved in 1904 and given the Aboriginal name Bulga, meaning 'mountain'. Five years later, 303 hectares of forest within the Tarra Valley were temporarily reserved. This Park was named after Charlie Tarra, Count Strzelecki's Aboriginal guide.

In 1986 the two national parks were joined and enlarged through a land exchange with private industry. Tarra-Bulga National Park now protects over 2,000 hectares of Mountain Ash Forest and Cool Temperate Rainforest.

Be prepared and stay safe

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000). Tarra Bulga National Park is in the West and South 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 Total Fire Ban days.**

On Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days this park will be closed for public safety. Warnings signs may be erected, but do not expect a personal warning. Do not enter the Park. If you are already in the Park, leave the night before or as early as possible in the morning.

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