

Brisbane Ranges National Park

Visitor Guide

Brisbane Ranges National Park (7,718ha) offers excellent opportunities for pleasant bushwalks, picnics, scenic drives, wildflower and bird studies and historical investigations. The many varieties of wildflowers show a magnificent array of colour in spring.



Look out for the Austral Grass Trees 'fountain' of long, pointed, wire-like leaves and the tall flower-spike or 'kangaroo tail' that they send up after fire.

A rich human history

The Wathaurong Aboriginal tribe lived in the area around Geelong and small clans regularly occupied the Brisbane Ranges. Their spiritual and physical connections are still celebrated through their descendants.

Today the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative based in Geelong is responsible for Aboriginal heritage in the area.

Squatters took up pastoral runs around the Brisbane Ranges soon after the founding of Melbourne in 1835, in what was then known as the Port Phillip District. Grazing was concentrated on richer lands to the east of the ranges along the Moorabool River.

The gold years

Gold was found in the Anakie hills in 1851 and miners began arriving soon after. Then in 1855 many gold reefs were found near what became the town of Steiglitz. By 1862 there were over 600 miners in the area. The town's fortunes slumped between 1876 and 1890, revived briefly until the early 1900s and then declined to the present ghost town status.

A separate parknote on Steiglitz Historic Park highlights the variety of experiences available.

The gold years had a considerable impact on the ranges, as much of the forest was cut to provide mine props, building timber and firewood.

A wealth of wildflowers

An outstanding feature of the park is its rich native flora. Some 619 native plant species (about one fifth of Victoria's total) can be found in the ranges. Many are either rare or remote from their normal localities. Brisbane Ranges Grevillea, for instance, though plentiful in the ranges, is only found along the Rowsley Fault; Velvet Daisy-bush is rare and found only in scattered locations across the state and Golden Grevillea is found elsewhere only in Gippsland.

In spring there is a magnificent display of wattles, hakeas, bush peas and a variety of orchids. A plant list is available on the Friends of Brisbane Ranges National Park website <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fobr/> or from the Bacchus Marsh Parks Victoria office, along with an illustrated guide to the wildflowers of the park, recently produced by the Friends.

A haven for wildlife

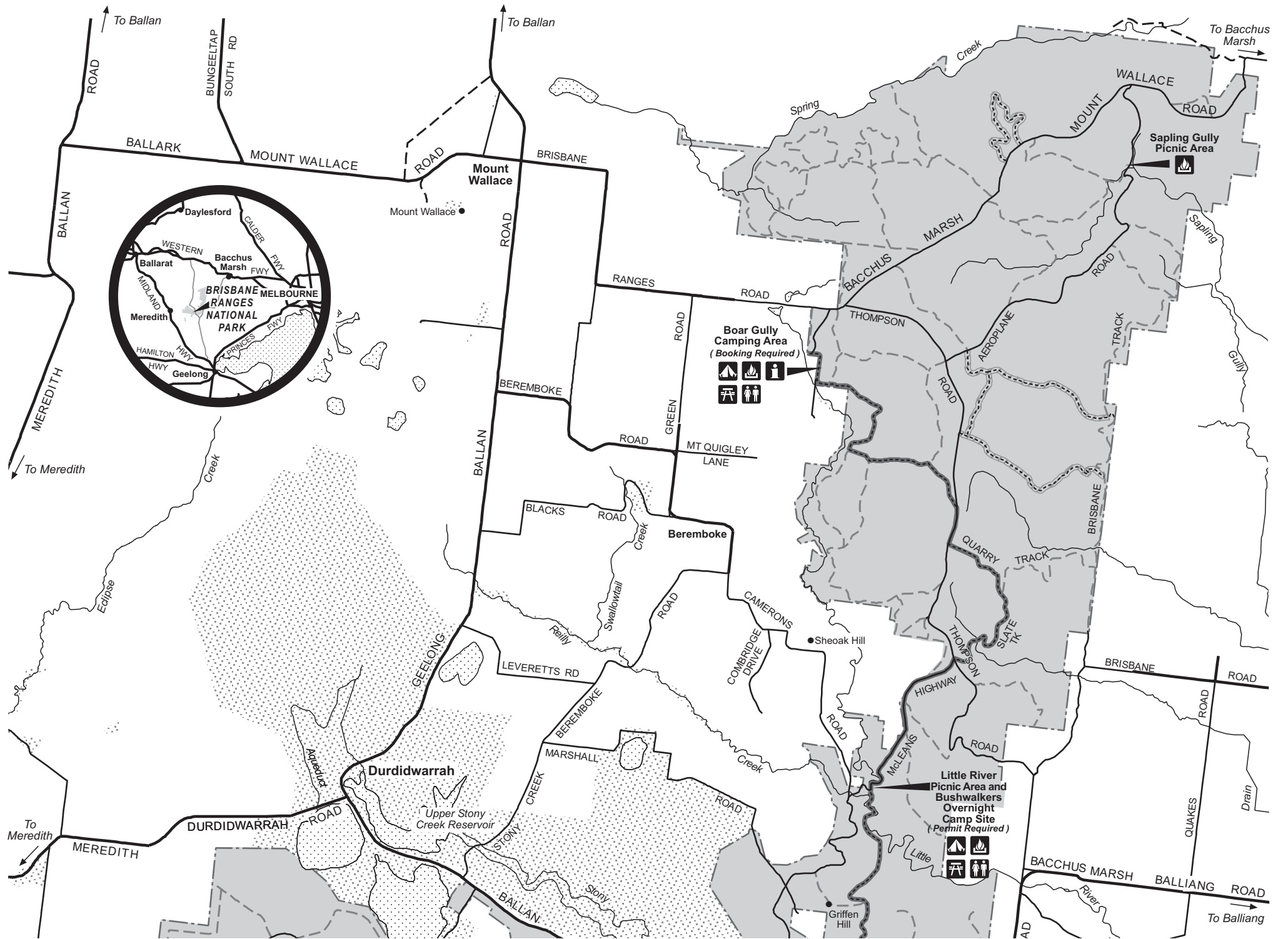
Keep an eye out for the mammals of the ranges, including Eastern Grey Kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas, possums and gliders. The formerly small number of Koalas has been increased over the years with stock from Phillip and French Islands in 1957 and 1977. They are common in the park and a research grid has been established by the Friends of the Brisbane Ranges to monitor their numbers.

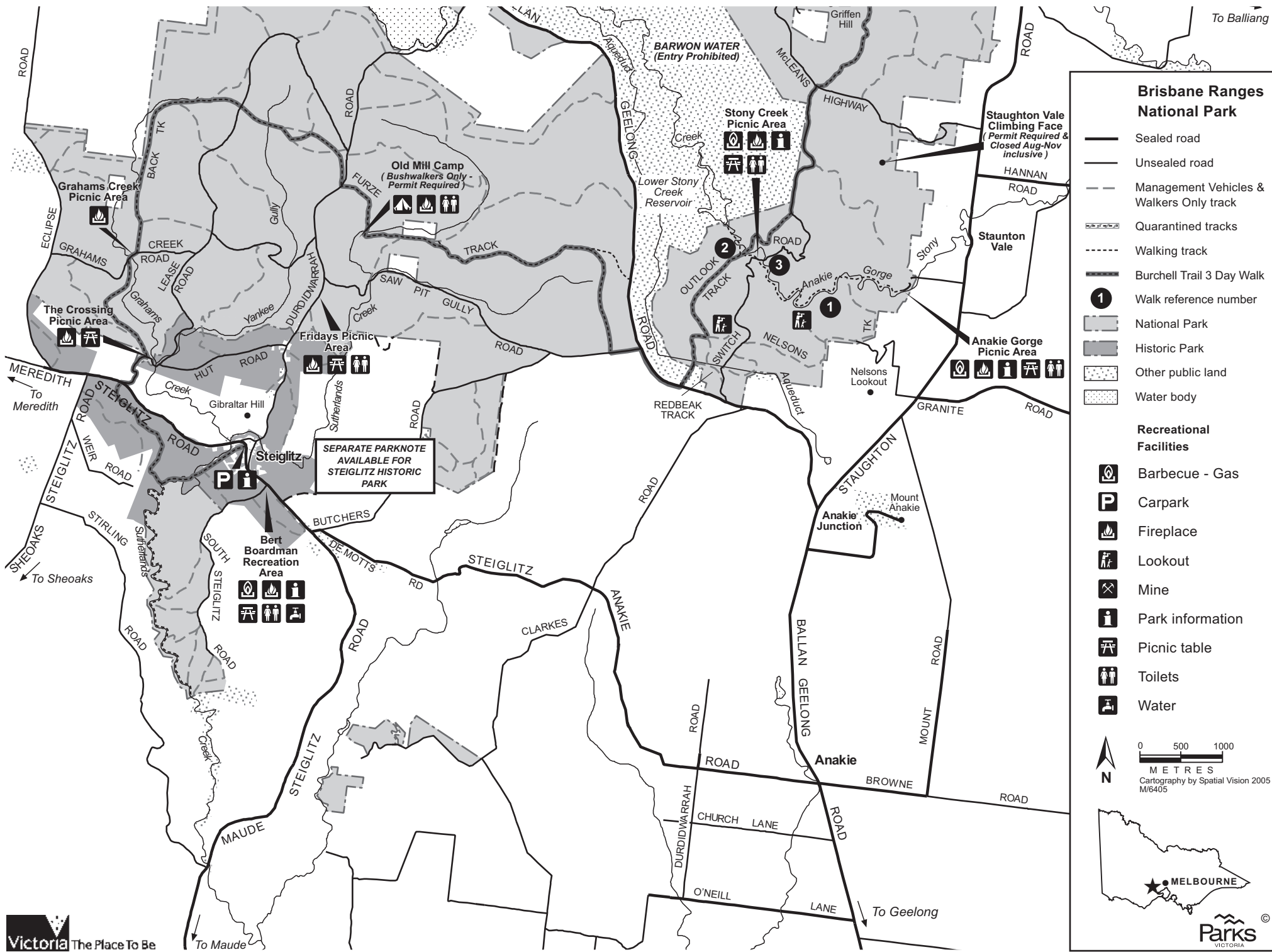
The Brisbane Ranges offers fantastic bird watching opportunities, with more than 170 species of native birds recorded in the park. Two species to look out for are the Yellow-tufted Honeyeater and White-throated Nightjar. Pick up your bird list at the Bacchus Marsh office.

How to get there

The park is 80km west of Melbourne via the Princes Highway (Melway Ref: 511 D3). Turn off at Werribee and follow the Ballan Road from Geelong. Alternatively, take the Western Freeway to Bacchus Marsh and follow the Geelong Road, turning off to Boar Gully, Balliang or Anakie.







Brisbane Ranges National Park

- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Management Vehicles & Walkers Only track
- Quarantined tracks
- Walking track
- Burchell Trail 3 Day Walk
- Walk reference number
- National Park
- Historic Park
- Other public land
- Water body

Recreational Facilities

- Barbecue - Gas
- Carpark
- Fireplace
- Lookout
- Mine
- Park information
- Picnic table
- Toilets
- Water

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METRES
Cartography by Spatial Vision 2005 M/6405

MELBOURNE

Parks
VICTORIA

For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call **13 1963**
or visit the
Parks Victoria website
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Parks Victoria
Bacchus Marsh Office
219a Main Street
Bacchus Marsh 3340
Tel: (03) 5367 2922

Bacchus Marsh
Visitor Information
Centre
156 Main Street
Bacchus Marsh 3340
Tel: (03) 5367 7488
Open: Fri Sat Sun Mon
10am to 4pm

Great Ocean Road
Visitor Information
Centre
Cnr Princes Hwy &
St George's Rd
Corio 3214
Tel: 1800 620 888

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your parks by remembering these guidelines:

Please take rubbish home with you for recycling or disposal

All plants, animals, archaeological sites and geological features are protected by law

Please keep to the tracks when walking. Care should be taken to avoid mine shafts

Dogs and other pets are not permitted

Firearms are prohibited

Light fires only in fire places provided. No fires, including barbecues, may be lit on a day of

Total Fire Ban.

Brisbane Ranges National Park is in the **Central**

Total Fire Ban District

Collect only dead wood from the ground for campfires

Vehicles, including motor bikes, may only be used on formed open roads.

Drivers must be licensed and vehicles registered and roadworthy



Take a walk

The Brisbane Ranges offers a fantastic variety of walking opportunities through a range of habitats representative of those found throughout the park.

The tracks offer several alternative routes from Anakie Gorge and Stony Creek Picnic Areas.

1. Anakie Gorge walk

3 km, 1 hour (one way)

From either picnic area, this walk leads through Anakie Gorge along a relatively flat gradient. Interpretive signs explain interesting features along the way. A pipeline carrying water from Lower Stony Creek Reservoir, constructed in the 1870s to service Geelong, can be seen in places. Nelsons Track intersects the Anakie Gorge Walk 2km (40 minutes) from Stony Creek Picnic Area and 1km (20 minutes) from Anakie Gorge Picnic Area.

2. Ted Errey Nature Circuit

8 km, 3 hours (return)

The late Mr Edmund George "Ted" Errey was a past president and respected member of the Geelong Field Naturalist Club. A gifted teacher, Ted was passionate about the flora of the Brisbane Ranges.

Leaving the Stony Creek Picnic Area, the walk climbs steadily over a saddle, descends to cross a broad watercourse and climbs steadily once again to join a management vehicle track (Outlook Track). A short walk to the east reveals a lookout with panoramic views over much of the Stony Creek Water Catchment. Following Outlook Track to the West, the walk meanders through heathy woodland before crossing Switch Road and entering Aqueduct and Nelson Tracks. Again there are two excellent lookouts along this section of the walk. The walk drops quickly to join the Anakie Gorge Walk allowing walkers to access the Anakie Gorge or Stony Creek Picnic Areas.

3. Wadawurrung walk

2.5 km, 1 hour (return)

This walk offers excellent views of Anakie Gorge over the Stony Creek Water Catchment. Starting from the Stony Creek Picnic Area, the walk heads towards the Lower Stony Creek Reservoir before climbing sharply east towards Switch Road. Turn right and follow Switch Road back to the Stony Creek Picnic Area. Along the way there are great views of the You Yangs and Anakie Gorge.



The shy and solitary Short-beaked Echidna is a special inhabitant of the Brisbane Ranges.



Hiking Opportunities

The Burchell Trail (3 day walk)

For the more adventurous, the Burchell Trail is a great way to see both the Steiglitz Historic Park and Brisbane Ranges National Park. Starting from the Steiglitz Courthouse or the Boar Gully Camping Area, the walk follows orange track markers and uses existing walks, management tracks and public roads. Overnight camps are located at the Old Mill and Little River Bush Camping sites. A permit system applies for this walk. Permits can be obtained by phoning the Bacchus Marsh office. Call **13 1963**.



Look up and see if you can spot a koala sleeping in the forks of the trees along the Anakie Gorge Walk.

A sinister invader

The presence of Cinnamon Fungus in the park is a serious problem. This organism invades the fine roots of many native plant species, causing root rot. Infected plants have difficulty absorbing enough water through their remaining roots, particularly in summer and may die.

In many places in the ranges, you will notice patches of dead or dying plants such as grass trees, bush peas and banksias. This is a sign that Cinnamon Fungus may be present.

There is no known practical cure for the disease, but its spread can be limited by preventing the movement of infected soil. All management tracks have been closed to vehicle, bicycle and horse access to reduce the spread of this serious threat. Several tracks have been quarantined to restrict all access.

Please assist us by obeying all signs relating to the management of this silent killer.

Get Involved – Hands on!

Hanging out with Friends can be good for your mind, body and soul!

There is growing recognition of the vital contribution parks and reserves make to a healthy environment, to the health of individuals and to a healthy society.

With the invaluable assistance of the Friends of the Brisbane Ranges we are able to maintain the health and integrity of this very special Park.

You can join the Friends of Brisbane Ranges in caring for this special place and become a Friend today! Call Parks Victoria on **13 1963** or visit www.parkweb.vic.gov.au