



Serendip Sanctuary



Visitor Guide

A wildlife oasis in the Western Volcanic Plain, this 250 hectare sanctuary is home to a rich and diverse array of birds and mammals. Come and learn about the grassland and wetland habitats that these animals call home. Serendip is an experience you will never forget.



Brolga

Serendip obtained its name from the word "Serendipity" meaning "the unexpected discovery of something wonderful".

Things to Do

- Start your Serendip experience at the Information Centre with a peek down the giant microscope or step into the Underwater World.
- Then begin your journey along the nature trails, viewing wildlife in natural habitats. There are four interconnecting nature trails throughout the Sanctuary, all within walking distance from the Information Centre. Each trail is no longer than two kilometres return.
- The Wildlife Walk is our most popular, as it provides an opportunity for visitors to experience a close encounter with native wildlife. The walk meanders past Emus and Eastern Grey Kangaroos grazing before providing you with outstanding opportunities for birdwatching from viewing areas, bird hides and flight aviaries. You may be treated to Brolgas trumpeting, Whistling Kites soaring high overhead, magnificent Yellow-billed Spoonbills wading through the shallow water, or even a glimpse of the well hidden Tawny Frogmouth as it watches you pass by.
- Specially designed bird hides enable you to see some of the 150 species of birds that breed at, or visit, Serendip Sanctuary.

Facilities

- Picnic area with free undercover electric barbecues are available for your enjoyment.
- A group barbecue area with a wood fire may be reserved for a small fee.
- Toilet facilities cater for people with restricted mobility.
- Drinking fountain.
- An Information Centre provides engaging, hands on displays.
- Entry is free. Guided tours are available for groups (minimum of 15 people) by appointment. Moderate fees apply.

Environmental Education

- Serendip Sanctuary offers curriculum based programs for school groups, from early childhood through to tertiary level. Environmental educational activities cover all VELs levels and equipment, including a specially designed ponding site for fresh water invertebrate study, are available. Fees apply. For bookings, please contact the Sanctuary.
- Serendip also runs school holiday activities on most school holidays. Bookings are essential.

Be fire ready and stay safe

Many parks and forests are located in high fire risk areas. **On days of forecast Code Red Fire Danger this park will be closed for public safety.**

Closure signs will be erected and rangers will patrol where possible, however you may not receive a personal warning that the park is closed so check the latest conditions by calling 13 1963 or visit www.parkweb.vic.gov.au.

For up to date information on fires in Victoria or general fire safety advice call the **Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.**

Serendip Sanctuary





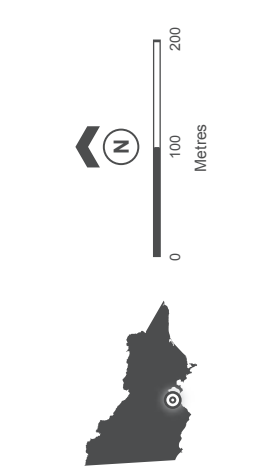
www.parks.vic.gov.au

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Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA 94) Zone 55.
 Map produced by Parks Victoria. This map supersedes all previous editions. Data source acknowledgements: State Digital Mapbase. The State of Victoria and Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Cartography by Parks Victoria 2011

- Park Information
- Toilets
- Disabled Access
- Picnic Shelter
- Picnic Table
- Barbeque - Wood
- Barbeque - Electric
- Bird Hide
- Lookout
- Parking
- Gate
- Bridge
- Sealed Road
- Unsealed Road
- Walking Track
- Management Vehicle Only (No Public Access)
- Fence
- Serendip Sanctuary
- Waterbody
- Native Grassland



For further information

Call Parks Victoria on **13 1963**
or visit **www.parks.vic.gov.au**

Geelong Visitor
Information Centre
26 Moorabool St
Geelong Vic 3220
Freecall: 1800 620 888

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park by remembering these guidelines:

Please take rubbish with you for recycling or disposal

All plants, animals, archaeological sites and geological features are protected by law and are not to be disturbed. This includes feathers and egg shell

Dogs are not permitted in the park

Firearms are prohibited

Light fires only in the group barbecue fireplace. Electric barbecues are provided in the Public Picnic Area. No fires, including barbecues, may be lit on a day of Total Fire Ban.

Serendip is in the **Central Total Fire Ban District**

It is your responsibility to know if it is a day of Total Fire Ban. If in doubt call the **Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667**

Park closures - Be prepared to leave early as **extreme weather may cause the closure of some park areas** for public safety

Healthy Parks Healthy People

Visiting a park can improve your health, mind, body and soul. So, with over four million hectares of parkland available to Victorians, why not escape to a park today!



A rich human history

We respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners of this land, the Wadawurrung. The Wadawurrung were a powerful tribe that included 25 clans. The Western Volcanic Plains were bountiful in providing for all their needs.

In 1959 the State purchased the grazing property and developed the site into a prolific wildlife research station. The site was extensively revegetated and the sanctuary opened to the public in 1991.

Fauna

More than 150 species of bird common to the Western Plains of Victoria have been recorded at Serendip Sanctuary. The facilities provided here make it ideal for viewing them in their natural settings. Look for free-ranging Cape Barren Geese and Magpie Geese in the shallow, freshwater wetlands, and many ducks, White-faced Herons, Nankeen Night Herons, Black Swans, spoonbills and grebes in and around the marshland.

Honeyeaters and wattlebirds feed on nectar and insects in the trees around Lake Serendip and Whistling and Black Kites soar up above looking for small prey on the ground.

The Billabong provides habitat for various ducks, swamphens and moorhens and attracts other food for the birds such as frogs, water rats and snakes. The North Arm permanent wetland is more reliable for fish populations providing food for fishing birds like Pelicans and Cormorants. Also, keep watch for Chestnut Teal, Yellow-billed Spoonbills and flocks of White Ibis flying about preparing to roost in the trees around the permanent wetland each night.

Australian Bustards and Bush Stone-curlews are two rare Victorian birds that were once common on the Western Plains and now find a protected home at Serendip. Brolgas and Australian Bustards were chosen for the captive breeding program at Serendip, designed to rehabilitate species that have become rare or extinct on the Western Plains. The success of the captive breeding program has received international recognition.

Australia's rarest waterfowl, the Freckled Duck, and the most secretive of owls, the endangered Masked Owl, are now also on display at the Sanctuary. A collaborative breeding program with other Australian zoos is planned for the Freckled Duck in the future.

Serendip also provides habitat for a variety of mammal species including Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Black Wallabies. The Tasmanian Pademelon is one of the smallest members of the kangaroo family and now extinct on mainland Australia. This species is also kept and displayed at Serendip.

Flora

Since 1959 Serendip has re-created a range of habitats that has seen the number of animal species increase from 40 (with few breeding) to over 150 today (with over 60 breeding). The Sanctuary has also demonstrated effective ways that farming and wildlife can co-exist.

The birds you see at Serendip are there because the wetlands provide habitat for them. These wetlands are part of a larger number of wetlands in the region. As many wetlands have been modified or drained and no longer provide habitat, these remaining wetlands have significant conservation value.

Serendip has many different wetland types, each with its own characteristics. The shallow freshwater wetland is ephemeral and dries out every 2-3 years unless it receives a flow of water from the You Yangs water catchment. The Marshland at Serendip has channels of varying depths designed to cater for a range of waterbird species. Trees such as River Red Gums and wattles around Lake Serendip attract different species of birds. Finally, the North Arm of Lake Serendip is an example of a permanent open water wetland.

Prior to European settlement, grasslands were widespread across western Victoria. Today, due to farming, changed burning regimes and weed invasion, grasslands now cover less than 1% of their original pre-European area. Serendip Sanctuary has preserved and enhanced areas of grasslands to provide valuable habitat for the animals that live in these areas.

Looking after the park

- Walk quietly so as not to frighten the free range animals away.
- Walk on the designated paths.
- Leave everything where you find it.

Keep Wildlife Wild

The animals at Serendip are native to Victoria and most of them are free to come and go as they please. They find their food in the wild. Feeding them is harmful and dangerous to them and you. It can result in diseases, aggressive behaviour and an unnatural reliance on humans for food. Please let them stay wild.

Opening Hours

Serendip Sanctuary is open from 10.00am – 4.00pm every day except for Christmas Day and Good Friday.

How to get there

Serendip Sanctuary is located at 100 Windermere Road, Lara at the base of the You Yangs, 60km from Melbourne and 22km north of Geelong. It is signposted from the Princes Highway.

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Printed on Australian-made, 100% recycled paper.