

Tower Hill Reserve



Visitor Guide

"A stroll among the gigantic ferns of the valley ... a ramble among the cones and craters ... the winding path at the foot of the basaltic rises close to the lake ... almost tropical reeds rustle in the breeze ... leafy shrubs and trees form delightful bowers and alcoves ... tender emotion in suitable company". *Notes from George Bonwick's visit to Tower Hill in 1858*



Watch and listen for the Kookaburra along the wetland boardwalk.

The restoration

Tower Hill was not always as it appears today. In the late 1950s the first stages of a revegetation project began.

Long before this, European settlers had moved into the area and cleared much of the vegetation. It was not long before Tower Hill met with the same fate.

Little was known about the original vegetation until a dusty painting by Eugene von Guerard (commissioned in 1855) resurfaced. This painting is so detailed that some individual plant species can be identified.

With the invaluable assistance of many volunteer groups, more than 300,000 trees have now been planted. The aim of the restoration program today is to re-introduce Indigenous understorey plants, including ferns and grasses.

An extinct volcano

Tower Hill is a volcanic formation believed to have erupted about 30,000 years ago. Its formation is known as a *nested maar* and it is the largest example of its type in Victoria.

During formation, molten lava pushed its way up through the earth's crust and encountered a layer of water-bearing rock. Violent explosions followed creating a shallow crater which later filled with water to form the lake. Further eruptions occurred in the centre of this crater, creating the islands and cone shaped hills.

After the eruption

Artefacts found in the volcanic ash layers show that Indigenous communities were living in the area at the time of the eruption. The area was a rich source of foods for the Koroit Gundidj people, whose descendants retain special links with this country.

After many years, plants and animals returned to Tower Hill. The fertile soils produced a diverse range of vegetation including Manna Gum, Blackwood, Black Wattle, Swamp Gum and Drooping Sheoak.

The first confirmed sighting of Tower Hill by Europeans was by French explorer Captain Baudin in 1802, though there are theories suggesting Tower Hill may have been seen by the Portuguese as early as the 17th century.

Caring for Country

Parks Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities of Victoria and recognises the connection Indigenous Australians have to Country. Together, all Australians have a responsibility to 'care for country'.



A new home for wildlife

The revegetation of Tower Hill Reserve has provided a new habitat for many animals. You may see koalas, emus, kangaroos, echidnas and possums, as well as many types of birds.

Worn Gundidj Visitor Centre

This outstanding visitor centre is hidden inside a volcanic crater and is managed by Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Cooperative. Founded in 1992, the cooperative is a not for profit organisation which harmonises contemporary artistic creation and nature based tourism with traditional knowledge.

Visit and enjoy the cultural displays and Authentic Aboriginal Products. The centre is open Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm, and weekends and public holidays 10.00am - 4.00pm.



Take a walk

Take the wetland boardwalk, visit a birdhide or enjoy one of the short walks on offer. Barbecues, picnic tables and toilets are provided. *All coach tours and school groups must be pre-booked.*

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 when 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.



For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call **13 1963**
or visit our Website
www.parks.vic.gov.au

Tower Hill Reserve
PO Box 60 Koroit 3282
Tel: (03) 5565 9202

Warrnambool Visitor
Information Centre
Flagstaff Hill
Merri Street
Warrnambool 3280
Tel: (03) 5564 7837

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park by following these guidelines:

Please take all rubbish home with you or place in bins provided

Do not feed the wildlife

Electric barbecues are provided.

No fires, including gas or fuel stoves may be lit on days of

Total Fire Ban.

Tower Hill Reserve is in the **South West Total Fire Ban District.**

Dogs and other pets are not permitted in the reserve

Firearms are prohibited

All native plants & animals are protected by law. Please do not disturb them in any way

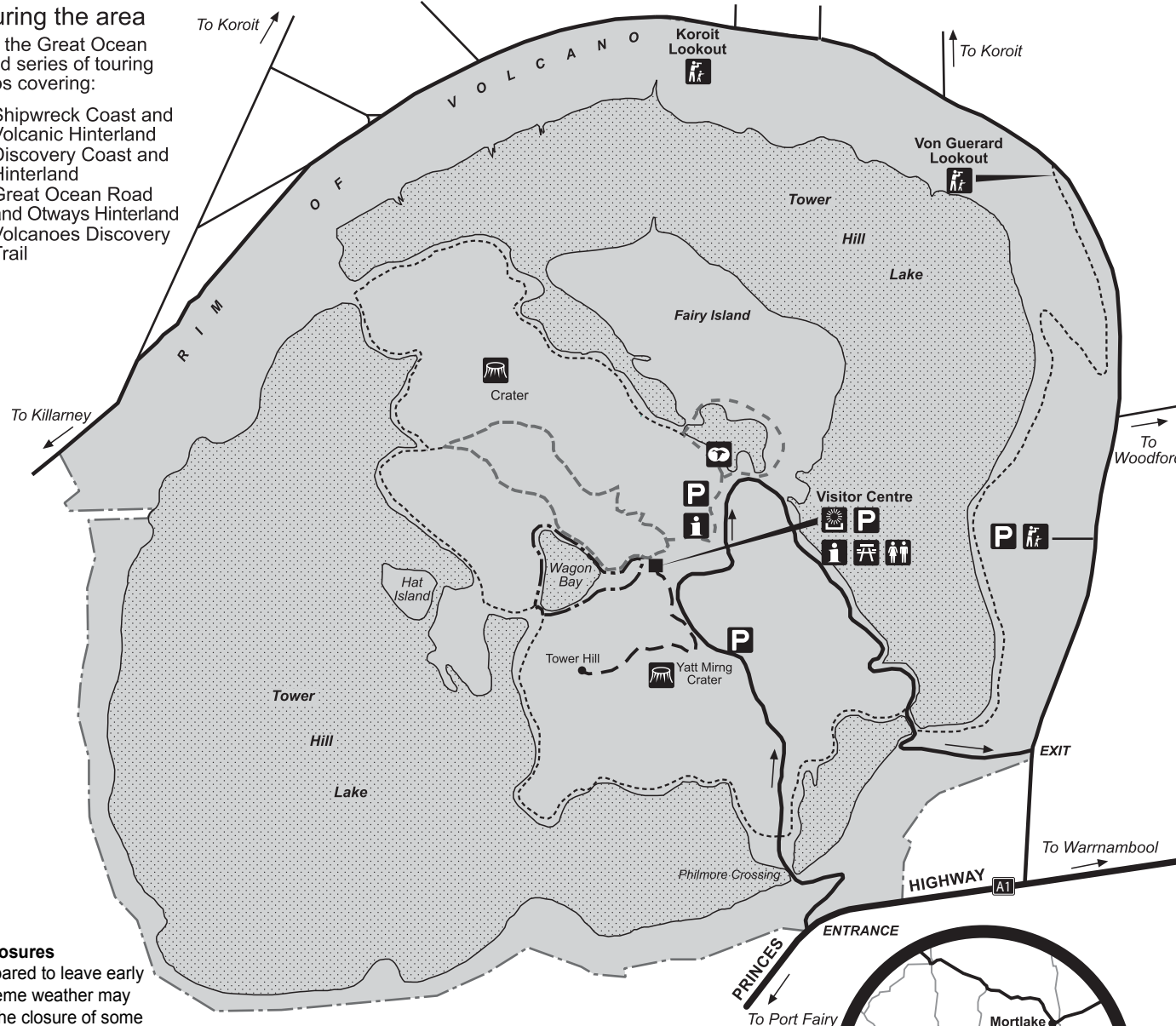
Mobile Phones:

You may not be in network range in some areas of the reserve. To be connected to Police, Ambulance or CFA, **key in 112 then press the YES key**

Touring the area

See the Great Ocean Road series of touring maps covering:

- Shipwreck Coast and Volcanic Hinterland
- Discovery Coast and Hinterland
- Great Ocean Road and Otways Hinterland
- Volcanoes Discovery Trail



Tower Hill Reserve

- Highway
- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- ▨ Reserve
- ▨ Water body
- Nature Walks**
- - - Peak Climb
- - - Lava Tongue Boardwalk
- - - Wagon Bay Loop
- - - Journey to the Last Volcano
- - - Other Walking Tracks

Recreational Facilities

- ☀ Barbecue - Electric
- 🕒 Bird hide
- P Car park
- i Park information
- 🍷 Picnic table
- 🚻 Toilets
- 👁 Viewing Area



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Walk information

There are four short walks which all start from the picnic area.

- **Peak Climb**
Geology – 30 mins (steep)
- **Journey to the Last Volcano**
Geology, wildlife – 1 hour (moderate)
- **Lava Tongue Boardwalk**
Wetlands, wildlife – 30 mins (easy)
- **Wagon Bay Loop**
30 mins (easy)

Caring for Country

Through their rich culture Indigenous Australians have been intrinsically connected to this Country for tens of thousand of years.

Parks Victoria recognises this connection and acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Communities of Victoria.