

FREE
Please
take one

The Murray River Guardian

Your guide to visiting and camping on the Murray River

2012-2013



Inside this issue

- Lift-out guide to the Murray
- Things to do
- Managing your rubbish
- Recreational fishing guidelines
- Boating safety
- Fire information
- Junior Ranger information puzzles

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Western Rivers Region*
NSW National Parks and
Wildlife Service

Welcome to the Murray River Guardian

WELCOME to the Murray River Guardian, a joint publication by Parks Victoria and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. We hope you enjoy reading about the many ways to experience the magnificent Murray River and its tributaries, towering River Red Gum forests, wetlands and waterways in this popular region.

As you'll see, it's been another great year for the parks, with wetlands brimming and many native plants, birds and other animals flourishing.

There have been some wonderful joint activities with Traditional Owners throughout the year. As you will read, highlights include innovative youth camps and programs that pass on stories about Aboriginal culture to younger generations and help generate an understanding about the strong connections Traditional Owners have to these places.

We are also pleased to highlight the works being planned and undertaken on both sides of the River, including campsite upgrades, to help you enjoy these special places in the future.

We'd like to remind you to plan ahead before visiting this region as continued flooding has restricted access to some places. You can check our websites to see which areas are open for visitors.

Happy reading and take delight in exploring the beautiful parks along the Murray.

Acknowledgement of Country

THE Murray River has supported many people for tens of thousands of years. It has been the traditional home for many Aboriginal groups who have lived along its banks and in the surrounding forests, forming a deep understanding and connection with the land and waterways.

These people and their ancestors are recognised and acknowledged as the original inhabitants and owners of the land. Positive steps are being made in a number of parks and other public lands along the Murray River and its tributaries in Victoria and New South Wales to ensure Traditional Owners play a central role in the future management of these areas.



| Key contact numbers | |
|---|---|
| Emergency | 000 for fire, police and ambulance |
| Victorian Bushfire Information Line | 1800 240 667 or TTY 1800 122 969 |
| NSW Bushfire Information Line | 1800 679 737 |
| Wildlife Rescue | 0419 356 433 |
| Parks Victoria | 13 1963 |
| NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service | 1300 361 967 or TTY 02 9211 4723 |
| Department of Primary Industries | 136 186 for general Victorian fishing information |
| Fisheries Information line | 1300 550 474 for general NSW fishing information |
| Waste disposal and recycling | see page 35 for recycling and waste disposal locations along the Murray River |
| EPA litter hotline | 1800 LITTER (1800 548 837) |

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Spring Wildflowers

ENJOY the spectacular and colourful wildflower show in parks along the Murray River during spring. Look out for some of the many beautiful flowers including rare orchids, wattle, native daisies and acacias.

Good places to spot wildflowers include Murray-Sunset, Hattah-Kulkyne, Warby-Ovens and Gunbower national parks, Duggans Sandhill and Murray Valley National Park.

Photos: GEOFFREY BARROW



Wahlenbergia - Native Bluebells



Amyema miquelii - Box Mistletoe



Acacia triptera - Spur-wing Wattle

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Let us know...

...what you think about the Murray River Guardian – what’s useful or interesting and what other information you would like to see included.

Send an e-mail to:
MurrayRiverGuardian@parks.vic.gov.au

There’s so much to do in parks along the Murray River

BY **Natasha D’Arcy**

NOTHING restores your mind, body and soul like a good dose of nature. The beautiful parks along the Murray River provide a multitude of ways to experience their diverse environments and internationally recognised features. Get on your bike or launch a canoe, pitch a tent or even stay in your car and take a nature drive. The Murray River parks and reserves have something for the whole family – even the furry ones if you are visiting regional parks! Here is just a small taste of what you will discover:

Canoeing

Glide along its glassy waters and discover why the Murray River is known for some of the best canoeing experiences in the world. The Barmah-Millewa Lakes system is abundant with the sights and sounds of wildlife and the Ovens River offers fantastic still-water canoeing through a maze of channels and wetlands. There are numerous opportunities to hire a canoe and set your own pace or book a tour with an experienced operator and simply go with the flow.



Cycling

Hop on your bike and explore the numerous trails suitable for cycling along the banks of the Murray. Pedal along the Hattah-Lakes Discovery Trail for a wonderful wetlands ride. Pioneer Drive, in Murray-Sunset National Park, will take you past the spectacular Pink Lakes. Look out for the pump and skills mountain bike tracks coming to Moama Regional Park.



Bird watching

With over 200 recorded bird species, it’s no wonder birdwatchers flock to Barmah National Park and the adjoining Millewa Forest. The Barmah-Millewa Wetlands are Ramsar listed and one of Victoria’s largest water bird breeding areas. Look out for Brolgas, Night Herons, Azure Kingfishers and Sea Eagles. Gunbower Island and Murray Valley National Park are also popular spots for bird watching. Reed Beds Bird Hide in Murray Valley Regional Park is a great place to see migratory birds. Turn over the bird panels as you stroll along the boardwalk to check out which birds are vegetarians and find out who honks like a goose but soars like an eagle.



Black Cormorant *Photo: KEITH WARD*

Fishing

Cast out and forget your troubles as you fish for native species like the iconic Murray Cod. There is no shortage of good fishing spots in the parks along the Murray. The campgrounds in the Murray Valley National and Regional Parks offer fantastic fishing opportunities in the Murray and Edward Rivers. Hattah-Kulkyne National Park and Warby-Ovens National Park also boast good fishing spots.



Bushwalking

Step out among the towering River Red Gums and immerse yourself in the beauty of the parks and reserves lining the Murray River. An intricate network of walking trails will get you up close and personal with the living beauty of these stunning and diverse environments. The Gulpa Creek Track in Murray Valley National Park is a tranquil 5km walk with an abundance of birdlife and wonderful views of the Red Gums. The 4km Barmah Lakes Loop Track, in Barmah National Park, is busy with wildlife and passes a number of Aboriginal cultural sites.



Camping

Edward River Bridge Campground in Murray River Regional Park is an ideal location for the whole family – and it’s even dog-friendly. The site is free and packed with activities suitable for everyone including walking, cycling, and picturesque fishing spots. Or soak up the gorgeous sunshine and sunsets of the Mallee and camp at Lake Hattah in Hattah-Kulkyne National Park.



Picnic Areas

Take advantage of the large number of dedicated picnic spots dotted throughout the Murray River parks. They are a great way to spend a comfortable day by the Murray and a refreshing location for family gatherings. Barooga picnic area in Murray Valley National Park has barbecues and picnic tables. Ryan’s Lookout in the peaceful Warby-Ovens National Park is another great picnic spot.



In Victoria

The River Red Gum Parks along the Murray, Ovens and Goulburn Rivers in Victoria offer visitors wonderful opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors. There will be a continued focus on improving visitor facilities in a number of areas within River Red Gum Parks this year. Plans include upgrading or developing new camping areas, replacing some older ‘pit’ style toilets with new facilities, and providing improved access to key visitor sites. For further information about Victoria’s River Red Gum Parks visit www.parks.vic.gov.au or call Parks Victoria on 13 1963.



In New South Wales

With no park entry fees, you’ll find visiting the Murray Valley National Parks will be an affordable part of your holiday. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is continuing to provide new opportunities and improved facilities for local people and visitors to enjoy within these magnificent forests. Areas of the park will be made more accessible as we upgrade bridges and roads. When areas of the Murray Valley Reserves are inundated with flood water or affected by fire, there are still areas that can be accessed. Contact the local NPWS Office to find out where you can enjoy the Murray River (03) 5483 9100. Learn more about Murray Valley National Parks at www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au or www.riverredgums.nsw.gov.au. If you are travelling in NSW during the school holidays check out national parks and activities at www.wildwildworld.com.au.

What can I do within the park?

| <i>National Park</i> | <i>Regional Park</i> |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Camping | ✓ |
| Picnic | ✓ |
| Barbecue | ✓ |
| Fishing | ✓ |
| Boating/Canoeing | ✓ |
| Forest drives | ✓ |
| Orienteering | ✓ |
| Bushwalking | ✓ |
| Cycling | ✓ |
| Pets | ✗ |

Keeping a Watch on our Wetlands

BY **Natasha D’Arcy**

OUR wetlands are beautiful places to visit, rich with wildlife, a sanctuary for threatened species and critical to our nation’s biodiversity, culture and primary industries. It’s no wonder a vast array of organisations and groups are keeping a close watch on these precious places.

From swamps to billabongs, lakes to River Red Gum forests, Australia has thousands of wetlands with 64 recognised as internationally important under the Ramsar Convention.

Keith Ward, Environmental Water Reserve Officer for the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, is responsible for managing wetlands within the catchment, including the iconic and Ramsar listed Barmah Forest wetland. He says the challenges facing wetlands today are many and varied, listing modified flood regimes, pest plants and animals and changes in water chemistry and temperature as some of the major battles.

“In many cases the water has become saltier due to land clearing or we have acid sulphate in the soils because the site has been in drought after staying flooded too long. Nutrients from the run-off of fertilisers have other impacts. Also the water released from dams is really quite cold and a lot of native fish can’t cope with that,” Keith says.

Like most natural environments today, wetlands are also facing their own pest, plant and animal issues with carp

and feral pigs on the list of problematic species.

“You may have the best water quality, but if it’s full of exotic plants or fish, then you face an uphill battle to protect the natural biodiversity,” says Keith.

Environmental watering is one of the important techniques used to manage and protect wetlands. Keith’s role is largely responsible for identifying the environmental watering needs of wetlands and implementing watering allocations.

“It requires an understanding of what the plants and animals need, but it’s also about knowing wetland processes and how nutrients are recycled, so we are not drying them out at the wrong time,” says Keith.

Environmental watering is also used to manage the effects of natural events such as ‘Blackwater’, when the decay process of organic matter in the river can darken the colour and reduce the amount of oxygen in the water.

“In small amounts Blackwater is actually a driving force for ecosystems, providing the building blocks for what a whole range of water birds and fish are eating. However, with more potent Blackwater events, dissolved oxygen levels collapse leading to fish deaths and so environmental watering is used to flush the river and dilute the affected water,” Keith says.

Environmental watering, together with other management strategies such as ecological burns to tackle invasive plants and fencing streams to prevent cattle accessing the water, is making a real difference to the

precious wetlands of the Murray. There is a reason the Barmah-Millewa Forest is one of Victoria’s largest water bird breeding grounds and home to about 40 rare or threatened plants.

“Basically we identify where our greatest assets are and then pick our environmental challenges,” says Keith.

“A lot of the wins are very subtle but collectively the results are huge.”



Fledgling Ibis, Barmah National Park *Photo: KEITH WARD*

A Taste of the Wonderful Wetlands along the Murray

Barmah – Millewa Forest

With over 200 species of birds recorded, the Barmah wetlands provide fantastic bird watching opportunities, not to mention an abundance of other wildlife such as kangaroos and emus. Explore the many walking tracks, paddle out in a canoe or enjoy a day of fishing within this internationally recognised icon.

Warby-Ovens National Park

The lower reaches of the Ovens River offer fantastic still water canoeing as well as fishing opportunities. Have a picnic at Ryan’s Lookout and take in the spectacular views.

Hattah-Kulkyne National Park

Navigate the fantastic network of self guided trails in this park by car, foot or bike and soak in the natural wonders of the Mallee and its floodplains. Camp at Lake Hattah and indulge in bird watching or canoeing when water levels are suitable.



Great Egret at Steamer Plain *Photo: KEITH WARD*



Keith Ward surveying Moira Grass



Photo: GEOFFREY BARROW



Steamer Plain, Barmah National Park *Photo: KEITH WARD*

Action on Visitor Facilities

LOOK out for new facilities like these new picnic tables and barbecues at Barooga, popping up in more great locations throughout River Red Gum parks of Murray Valley, Murrumbidgee and Yanga as NSW implements its River Red Gum Nature Tourism Action Plan.

Supporting popular forest activities, including boating, fishing and camping, NSW is investing more than \$2.5 million to establish more visitor facilities, plus the creation of new experiences for River Red Gum visitors.

In the future you'll enjoy specialised mountain bike tracks, bird watching with easier wetland access, bird hides and interpretation, walking and canoeing trails.

Read all about it in the Nature Tourism Action Plan www.riverredgums.nsw.gov.au

In Victoria, you'll soon be able to enjoy new facilities in parks along the Murray River, with upgrades planned for sites including Kings Billabong and Merbein Common near Mildura, Gunbower National Park near Cohuna and Barmah National Park.

Upgrades will include new picnic tables, camping sites, toilets and fire places. There will also be better access to popular trails and riverside beaches with car park and entry road improvements at key sites.

At Hattah Lakes Campground in Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, works are underway to restore water flow to the lakes so they will have water in them for a greater percentage of the year — great news for birdwatchers, walkers and canoeists who enjoy this beautiful area (see page 11 for more details of this Living Murray project).



ABOVE: New barbecue and picnic table at Barooga Picnic Area (locally known as Ski Beach) Park

LEFT: New toilets recently installed on Ulupna Island, Barmah National Park

Riverina Red Gums - expressing cultural attachment though art

THE River Red Gum forests have supported Aboriginal people in the Riverina for over 30,000 years by providing them with staple resources for a healthy life. It was a virtual paradise to Aboriginal people.

During 2011, six Aboriginal artists participated in the Riverina Red Gums Arts project. The artists included:

Dennis Baksh
descendant of the Yorta Yorta people

Allan McKenzie
descendant of the Kamilaroi people

Cory McKenzie,
descendant of the Wiradjuri people

Jilalga Murray-Ranui
a descendant of the Wemba Wemba and Yorta Yorta peoples

Norman Stewart
descendant of the Yorta Yorta people

Kevin Williams
descendant of the Waradjuri people.

Two established Aboriginal artists were selected as mentors to the artists.

Each artist created individual and unique works that tell the story of their connection with the River Red Gum country. The exhibition of their works has featured in Griffith and Deniliquin.

If you'd like to know more, visit:
www.riverredgums.nsw.gov.au

> News and events

> Meetings, events and visits

Or use your smartphone to see the artists.



Nuppa Woka (My Grandfather's Country)

Norman Stewart - Acrylic on Canvas

This painting depicts the Red Gum Country where Norm's Grandfather used to fish for food. The old Grandfather (The Elders) knew where the best fishing spots were and his Grandfather is seen catching fish for the family. The bag in the water represents the "one bag limit" placed on Aboriginal people. The fact the bag is tied and in the water shows the limit did not mean much to these Traditional Owners.

The tin on the bank is the "can of worms" opened by the bag limit. Evidence of past occupation by the Yorta Yorta can be seen by the Canoe Tree at the left of centre.

Kidneys of Dhungala (The Kidneys of The Murray)

Norman Stewart - Acrylic on Canvas

The Kidneys of the Dhungala (Yorta Yorta word for the Murray River) shows the Millewa and Barmah wetlands as the "kidneys" that cleanse the water of the Murray River as it passes through them on its way to South Australia.

The lower section of the painting represents the sandhills around the Cummeragunja Mission - said to be the resting place of Baiame (Biamai), the creator. To the left of the painting is the Cadell Fault that created the wetlands and changed the course of the Murray River some 25,000 years ago.

Nuppa Woka (My Grandfather's Country)



Kidneys of Dhungala (The Kidneys of The Murray)



Murray Valley
National Park &
Yanga National Park

Ancient forests of River Red Gums, waterways teeming with birdlife, and outdoor activities like kayaking, fishing and bird watching, these newer national parks serve up all you would expect from a park experience.

But they are more than just natural beauty, with nods to our recent history of forestry and the more distant past when Australia was ‘riding on the sheep’s back’. The result is an outdoor history lesson you will not want to miss.



www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

River Red Gum Journey

by Paul Chai



DAY 1:

Life-size metal frogs, amphibian plush toys, posters, stickers and fridge magnets all covered in frogs. It’s not a huge leap to think the town of Balranald is obsessed with the southern bell frog that resides in nearby Yanga National Park. Balranald is the base for a trip I am making with my wife and two kids to Yanga, and the much newer Murray Valley National Park on the Murray River. But today we have another animal in mind – the sheep that used to reside on Yanga back in the days when it was one of the largest sheep stations in the district.

After settling into our accommodation in town we are heading out for an afternoon at the Yanga Woolshed, a huge wooden structure that was built on a lazy bend of the Murrumbidgee River in the 1850s, so that the wool could be taken to town on paddle steamers. The shed – and adjacent cottages, shearers’ accommodation and cook’s quarters – processed over 90,000 sheep during its heyday in the 1920s and was also the scene of some of the area’s most boisterous bachelor and spinster balls. Now, it is empty, save for some excellent signage informing you of its history and the skeletal remains of the miles of sheep pens that led the animals into the shed for the frenzied three weeks a year that it was at its operational peak.

FAST FACTS

Yanga National Park (also known as Murrumbidgee Valley National Park) is 8km south east of Balranald. Turn off the Sturt Highway into the Yanga rest area and travel a further 2 km to the Park office.



It’s a wonderfully moody place to wander in the afternoon, where the setting sun beams in through the cracks in the wood as the place starts to warm up and you can try to imagine the heat and the chaos of teams of shearers working there.

Outside, the other buildings add to the story and, while the accommodation is not structurally sound, peeping through the doors you can get tantalising glimpses of life as it was: simple bedding, bare tables carrying old browned newspapers and old beer bottles resting next to lounge chairs pushed onto a porch to overlook the racing river. The nearby Woolshed picnic area is more modern and well worth a visit but the sun is getting away on us, so we head home for the night.

DAY 2:

The next morning we visit Yanga Homestead as part of a tour run by National Parks. Going to the homestead is like receiving an intimate invite into a working pastoralist’s home, so well-preserved is the sprawling property, which was only sold to National Parks in 2005 under a deal that kept virtually all of the furnishings intact. So, you walk around amongst antique table settings, vintage barometers, hand-wound gramophones – and the first private phone ever installed in Australia (brought out from the US and assembled by the nephew of inventor Alexander Graham Bell). But there are modern touches too – electricity cables, whiteboards and modern desks – because it was a working station right up until the sale.

The River Red Gums crowd the bank and glow with the reflected retreating sun while small grey kangaroos forage at their favourite time of day.

The original homestead is made from rough hewn Red Gum slabs with later additions of cypress and it has an enviable position on the banks of the sparkling Yanga Lake, making it one of the few inland homesteads to be surrounded on three sides by water. Preliminary archaeology on the lake has shown it is important to the local Aboriginal people and is as old as nearby Mungo National Park. The local farming community made good use of the lake too – as the “recovery party” spot for the B&S balls held at the woolshed.

After a quick spot of lunch at a nearby picnic ground we are on the road again. This afternoon, we are travelling from the Murrumbidgee Valley to the Murray Valley and one of the newest additions to the National

Park family. Murray Valley National Park is just two years old, having been transferred from Forests NSW to protect the ancient stands of River Red Gums that line the banks of the river and the adjacent floodplain.

The one-time logging town of Mathoura is the step-off point and we are staying in a cabin that hangs right over Gulpa Creek, where birds wade and dive beneath our balcony. We have organised to go on a sunset fishing expedition at the section of the river where the Edward River flows from her bigger sister, the Murray.

We find a quiet elbow of the Murray, secure the boat to a fallen Red Gum and pass a peaceful couple of hours – but catch nothing of note except the dying rays of light.

Discover

THE BACKROADS TRAIL

www.backroadstrail.com.au

The Backroads Trail invites you to explore the region between Moama, Barham and Deniliquin, and from Dreamtime to the present day.

Weaving together heritage, culture, wine and food you will discover delicious produce, farm stays, bush walks, art and river cruises, and learn the area’s history via 19 interpretive panels.

Ask at a local visitor centre for a map, turn off the highway, and open your eyes to the charms of the Backroads trail.



Backroads Trail





WHERE CAN I BUSH CAMP?

Murray Valley National Park has many sections from Deniliquin to Mulwala. Here are a few:

Murray Valley National Park

- Boomanoomana - 20km from Barooga
- Quicks Beach - 3.5km from Barooga
- Woperana - 10km from Tocumwal

Yanga National Park

- Mamanga - 12 km from Balranald
- The Willows - 20 from Balranald
- Woolpress Bend - 65km from Balranald



WHERE CAN I BUSH CAMP WITH MY FAMILY DOG?

Murray Valley Regional Park

- Benarca – 15km from Moama
- Bama - 13km from Moama
- Hinchies Beach - 10km from Mulwala
- Edward River - 7km from Mathoura
- Willoughby’s Beach - 1km from Deniliquin

www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

BAROOGA DAY USE AREA

Barooga Day use area is an easy stroll from either Cobram or Barooga, located on the east side of the bridge spanning the Murray between the two towns. There’s also parking to suit larger vehicles such as motorhomes and caravans. A beautiful place to stroll along the Murray River, fish from the bank or swim from the sandy beach. Picnic in the shade of the River Red Gums on the grassy picnic area, with its free gas barbecues.



EDWARD RIVER BRIDGE PICNIC AREA

Only 45 minutes from Deniliquin or Moama, and 10 minutes from Mathoura, Edward River Bridge picnic area is a popular spot to spend the day at the river. We’ve made it easier for you to enjoy a day in the bush for all ages with our free gas barbecues, picnic tables and toilets.



Wander through the River Red Gums, kayak in the Edward River, catch a fish or go birding – Edward River Bridge picnic area is a place to connect with your family.



SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR BIRD WATCHING?

While Philip and Patricia Maher of Australian Ornithological Services specialise in locating the harder to find and rarer species for serious birders, they also lead more general natural history tours for nature enthusiasts.



Contact Patricia and Philip at www.philipmaher.com if you would like to enquire about their specialist services.



DAY 3:

The following morning I am on the water again but it is a much more leisurely pace as I kayak my way along Gulpa Creek on the way to the Reed Beds where the area’s plentiful birdlife goes to breed. I am on the wrong side of the breeding season but there are still plenty of birds to be seen, a result of the amazing rains the area has had – the best in decades.

FAST FACTS

Murray Valley National Park is in sections along the Murray River, from Mulwala to Moama.

The section near Mathoura is between Moama and Deniliquin, accessed from the Cobb Highway.



I love the pace and the peace of kayaking, it allows you to sneak up on birds wading through the reeds, to glide by as emus strut their way along the bank and to explore nooks and crannies of the creek where clumps of red duckweed gather.

When I finally make it to the Reed Beds there is an explosion of birdlife that takes flight from the water and settles in the branches of the dead trees that reach out of the river: night herons, spoonbills, black swans, dark and light-coloured ibis, egrets and (I discover later with the aid of a book) an Australasian darter. I’m no bird-spotter but the darter is a first for me. On the return journey it is almost unusually quiet for the first half with just the occasional gulping call of a rare Australasian bittern. Or is it the throaty sound of the charmingly named eastern pobblebonk frog?

On the way back to the cabin I’m reminded of the forest’s logging past as I pass one of the still-active sawmills in the area. This working history is part of the charm of this new national park, because the people and the town of Mathoura feel inextricably linked to the now protected forest through generations that depended on it for their livelihood.



I return to the cabin for a light lunch, and take my eldest son for a spin in the kayak. In the afternoon we all climb into the car and head down to the Reed Beds Bird Hide in the old Barmah-Millewa forest. The kids enjoy walking out on the boardwalk and sneaking around the two-level Bird Hide, while we adults just marvel at the beauty of the reeds from the height of the second level. With the light fading we head down to the Edward River picnic spot. The gas barbecues there made preparing our evening meal easy and we loved the spectacular evening light on the water.

FAST FACTS

The best viewing times at the Reed Beds Bird Hide are early morning or late afternoon.

DAY 4:

Wheels have replaced watercraft for our final morning in the Murray Valley as I take a mountain bike out onto the Gulpa Creek Forest Walk. The walk is part track and part boardwalk and it takes in a tranquil stretch of the creek with some interesting signs of its former life: ringbarked trees sit by the water; regeneration programs encourage new life and there is an Aboriginal clay oven mound to check out.

It is far more than the beauty of the dense forests of willowy Red Gums, the meandering creeks and the reeds stuffed to the brim with myriad birdlife.

The walk is situated on the Cadell Fault and while geographic uplifts are not generally my thing, what is interesting about the fault is that when it moved thousands of years ago the effect was so huge that it changed the course of the Murray and Goulburn rivers and created the Red Gum forests and wetlands that have now become so integral to the region. The first section of the walk also played host to a market garden in the 1930s and was part of a lease owned by the local police.

This is a stretch of land that has been worked, that has spawned an industry that created towns. You see the forest reflected in the River Red Gum buildings, in the black-and-white logging photographs that decorate the town. Murray Valley National Park may have spent a short time as a national park, but it has a long history that makes it a rewarding place to explore and unwind.

Backroads Trail



Discover

THE SPIRIT OF RESTDOWN
www.restdown.com.au

Take some time out to visit the 1.4km walking trail at Restdown’s environmentally sustainable vineyard.

The trail is an easy 1 hour walk over flat ground and takes you beside an old river system that existed around 40,000 years ago. Now a natural ephemeral wetland, Restdown is a wonderful spot for bird watchers, nature lovers and wine buffs.



Camping offers great experiences and lessons for life

Nick Moore tells Kate Milkins why he loves to camp on the Murray.

SOME people travel the world staying in five-star hotels, but for many, nothing beats camping beneath the stars and being right there surrounded by nature. Nick Moore, from Melbourne, is just one such camping enthusiast. He believes the benefits of getting out and enjoying nature go well beyond that first sigh of contentment as you finish pitching the tent.

Nick has enjoyed camping in different places along the Murray River and first experienced camping in Barmah National Park when attending a side-car motorcycle rally a few years ago.

“We stayed at Carters Beach on Ulupna Island and I thought, wow, this is such a great place. I couldn’t wait to come back with my family. One of the good things about coming from Melbourne to the Murray River is that the weather is usually warmer too,” he says.

Since that first trip, Nick has returned a number of times with friends and family members, including his wife, Rhonda and daughters, Charlotte, six and Amelia, two.

“Camping is a really great experience for the whole family – the kids have a wonderful time and it tires them out! I think it’s good for them just to be able to get out, get dirty and dig holes in the ground.

“As kids get older it can also provide valuable lessons for life. They can get out there and realise they don’t have to be totally dependant on technology and can actually help fend for themselves. It can also help them understand the size of our country and that the world is a big place. I believe this is really healthy and can help school kids put their own troubles or worries in perspective. As a father of two girls, I think this will be a really good experience in future.

“Camping also encourages a simpler way of life and I really like that. You can’t just throw food in the microwave and you need to slow the pace of the day down a lot. For example, it encourages you to chat while you sit around the campfire or stove, waiting for the water to boil,” says Nick.

“It takes you away from daily pressures like answering emails and gives you a licence to sit and watch the sun set (or rise, if the kids wake early!),” he says.



Idyllic camping spot: Nick Moore's tent pitched at Carters Beach

iSpyFrogs – App to help identify frogs

IF you visit one of the many tranquil wetlands along the Murray River, you will probably hear the sounds of frogs, especially at night. A new iphone application, ‘iSpyFrogs’, will make it easier to identify just which type of frog you are hearing.

The application was developed by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) in partnership with Museum Victoria to help encourage younger people to get involved in caring for the environment and our natural resources.

The App contains descriptions of 20 frogs found within the Goulburn Broken catchment and allows users to record frogs they have identified with the Goulburn Broken CMA. This information will be used to help learn more about the distribution and abundance of frogs, including threatened species, and to track the health of the catchment’s waterways and wetlands.

Goulburn Broken CMA Chief Executive Officer, Chris Norman said the ‘iSpyFrogs’ App is the first of a series of Apps being developed by the Goulburn Broken CMA under the theme of ‘iSpy Catchment Creatures’.

“Frogs are great indicators of catchment health, but can be hard to find,” Mr Norman said.

“The iPhone App allows easier identification of frog species as they all have distinctive calls.”

For those who don’t have an iPhone, the Whroo Goldfields and Broken Boosey Conservation Management Networks have recently produced an audio CD of the frog calls, plus an identification guide featuring frogs and reptiles found in the region.

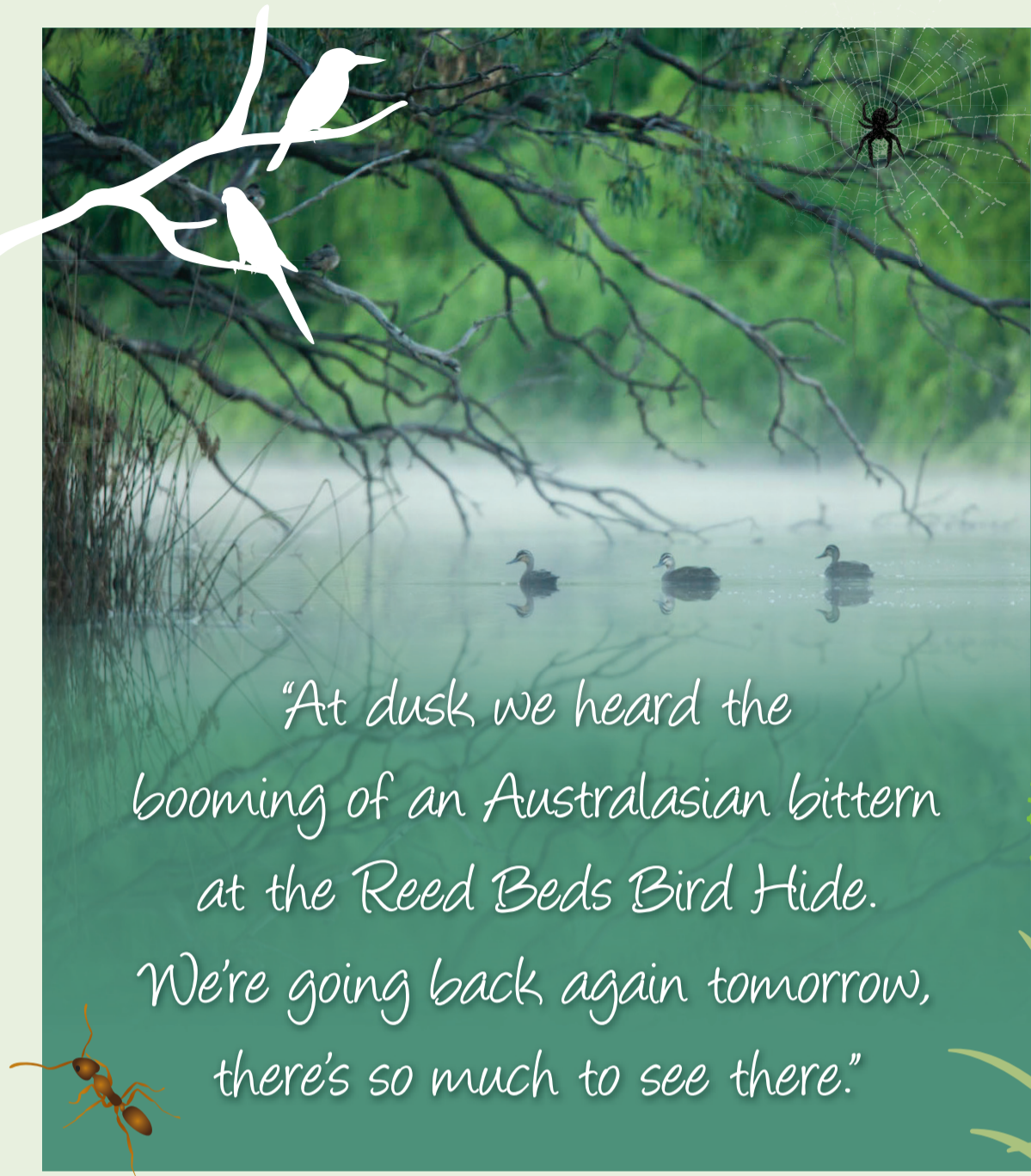
The Whroo Goldfields and Broken Boosey CMN Frogs and Reptiles Booklet and the iSpyFrogs Glovebox Guide are available from Goulburn Broken CMA, telephone 03 5820 1100 and the iSpyFrogs App is available for FREE on iTunes.

For more information contact Goulburn Broken CMA on 03 5820 1100 or visit www.gbcma.vic.gov.au.



Litoria Paraewingii Photo: KEITH WARD





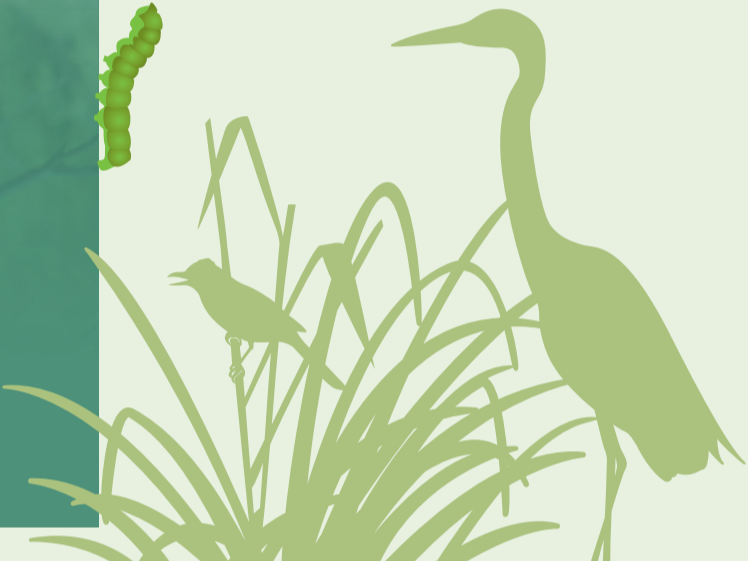
“At dusk we heard the booming of an Australasian bittern at the Reed Beds Bird Hide. We’re going back again tomorrow, there’s so much to see there.”

discover

Reed Beds Bird Hide at Mathoura is a birdwatcher’s paradise. With different birds to see every time you visit, you’ll never grow tired of this pretty place.

Take your camera for a stunning photo of an eastern great egret or a musk duck thrashing in the water to attract a mate. Walking along the boardwalk look for yellow rosellas and superb wrens or watch at the edge of the water for the purple swamphen.

Turn over the bird panels as you stroll along the boardwalk. Check out which birds are vegetarians and who prefers frogs or find out who honks like a goose but soars like an eagle.



Hide with us at the Reed Beds



MOIRA PRECINCT – MURRAY VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Discover the magnificent Reed Beds Bird Hide, located 5km from Mathoura along Picnic Point Road. Find out about the rich diversity of birds while you wander down the wheelchair accessible board walk – use your smart phone to learn more, or just relax with the bird symphony.



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.NATIONALPARKS.NSW.GOV.AU or call 1300 361 967

Keep an eye out for White-bellied Sea-eagles

HAVE you ever enjoyed watching the magical sight as a White-bellied Sea Eagle soars in the sky above? Now is a great time to look out for these beautiful birds and Parks Victoria is keen for you to register any sightings in the Barmah-Millewa forests to help protect their habitat and breeding sites.

Bruce Wehner from Parks Victoria has been running a monitoring project for the past seven years and says these birds are a good indicator of environmental health.

“The ability of these birds to breed successfully in a given season can help us determine how successful the environmental watering programs have been within the forests. The White-bellied Sea-eagles need the waterways in the forests to flood as they feed on smaller water birds and fish that are abundant during these times.

“The White-bellied Sea-eagle is listed as rare in Victoria so it is really important that we protect its habitat and breeding sites.

“They are very territorial birds so you usually only see one breeding pair in a relatively large area of land. For this reason, it is thought that the forest within Barmah National Park and Murray Valley Park can only support about seven White-bellied Sea-eagle breeding pairs. Any offspring will be expected to migrate elsewhere,” he said.

Existing territories are thought to include:

| Victoria | NSW |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barmah Lake• Ulupna Island• Big Woodcutter Lagoon• Keyes Point• Tongalong Island | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moira Lake• Nine Panel Bend• Lower Toupna Creek• Duck Lagoon• St Helena Swamp |

“We’d love people to contact us to report any sightings of White-bellied Sea-eagles in these forests and to include details such as the date, location, age class (adult or juvenile), unique landmarks and forest conditions. We’d also like to know what the birds are doing; for example nest building or raising young.

“Any information gathered from visitors will be used together with our prior data to conduct ground surveys of the birds from September to May. We will be trying to locate and monitor active nest sites and to assess the birds’ breeding success.

“We have been pleased that in each year of the project to date, we have recorded successful breeding and development of immature Sea-eagles in widespread locations within the forest. This is a positive sign and we hope that continued monitoring will help us to manage and protect their habitat in the future,” said Mr Wehner.

Please forward any sightings and information to Bruce Wehner at Parks Victoria, PO Box 1363, Shepparton 3632, phone 03 5832 0222 or email bruce.wehner@parks.vic.gov.au



Mature White-bellied Sea Eagle
Photo: Courtesy Paul O’Connor, Department of Sustainability and Environment

Rangers on the River

IF you are camping along the Murray River between Torrumbarry Weir, Echuca and Nathalia, don’t be surprised if you see a ranger on this boat, ‘The Darter’, cruising past your campsite. Say hello to the rangers on board and feel free to ask questions about the park you’re visiting.

Parks Victoria’s Mark Tscharke said the new boat has already been a tremendous help in patrolling the River during busy periods.

“We can get to places that would be difficult to get to by road and we’ve had a really positive response from campers who have seen us out and about. It’s been like a magnet to visitors, with many people coming over for a chat when we pull up to the bank,” said Mr Tscharke.

“We also run two or three joint patrols with NSW Maritime staff in summer. Travelling by boat makes it much easier for us to check on things such as unattended campfires and to collect rubbish from the river bank. Most people do the right thing, but some still don’t follow regulations related to activities including campfires and rope swings (these are not allowed due to safety hazards).”

“The boat will also be great for getting in touch with campers quickly if necessary. If there is a day of extreme fire risk, just like its namesake, the Darter can zip around the river to inform campers, instead of taking the long winding roads to contact people,” he said.



Tracking turtles with GPS ‘backpacks’

IF you’re camping in the Barmah or Murray Valley national parks and see a turtle wearing what looks like a backpack, don’t worry, you are not seeing things. Researchers from the Department of Sustainability and Environment’s (DSE) Arthur Rylah Institute have attached transmitters containing Global Positioning Systems to Murray River turtles to study their movements.

The turtle monitoring project is co-ordinated by the Yorta Yorta Nation and scientists from the Arthur Rylah Institute. It aims to find out how the turtles can be better protected from detrimental effects such as drought. The good news is that further funding is enabling the research to continue into its third year and the GPS units will help the scientists to monitor the turtles more effectively.

ARI Threatened Fauna Ecologist, Katie Howard, said GPS backpack units have been attached to nine Broad-shelled Turtles and four Common Long-necked Turtles to record their location when they are out of the water.

“The information will be used to identify and protect important habitat and nesting sites for these species. We have also gathered information during the drought to assess the response of turtles to flooding in the Barmah-Millewa Forest over the past three years.”

Ms Howard said the project was initiated by the Yorta Yorta people when large numbers of turtles were found dying throughout the forest during the drought.

“The turtle surveys are conducted in conjunction with the Yorta Yorta people who have a special connection with the freshwater turtles,” she said.

Yorta Yorta representative Lee Joachim said: “The Broad-shelled Turtle is of great cultural significance as a totem to the Yorta Yorta people.

“We want to increase our scientific knowledge of this important species because protecting it is a cultural responsibility for our community.”

The turtle surveys are funded by the Murray-Darling Basin’s The Living Murray Program.



Above: Greta Morgan from Parks Victoria holding a Broad-shelled Turtle fitted with a GPS ‘backpack’

Below: Broad-shelled Turtle

Photos: KATIE HOWARD





Aerial view of Hattah Lakes from the north-west. This flooding was in March 2011, with flows in the River Murray as high as 70,400 ML/day at Euston Weir. The engineering works aim to achieve the same level. The works are flexible enough to increase the extent and duration of a natural flood by closing the regulators when the floods recede and pumping additional water into the system (photo by Brendan Rodgers, Parks Victoria).

Happenings at Hattah *Helping to restore an international icon*

Article supplied by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority

NEXT time you visit Hattah Lakes, near Mildura, you may notice a few changes. Over the past year a major engineering works project has been under way. Flood flows from the Murray River are vital to the condition of the lakes and water management structures are being constructed to help restore natural flooding patterns.

Helping to restore environmental values

Hattah Lakes is one of The Living Murray’s six icon sites and is located within Hattah–Kulkyne National Park. It contains 12 wetlands of international significance, listed under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The vision for the icon site is to preserve and, where possible, restore healthy examples of the original wetland and floodplain communities.

“The Lakes need a more frequent flooding regime for longer and at the right time of year. Before the recent floods the last good natural flood was in 1996, and the park was suffering.”

— Brendan Rodgers, The Living Murray Project Manager, Parks Victoria

The engineering works have provided regulators and levee banks that will be used to deliver and hold water at the site.

“The works will water the central lakes using natural river and wetland connections for small and medium floods in the Murray. Pumps will be used to top up the lakes to a level they would have been if the river was not regulated. After watering, the water returns to the Murray River via Chalka Creek.”

— Nick Sheahan, The Living Murray Project Co-ordinator, Mallee Catchment Management Authority

The engineering works will enable nearly 6,000 hectares of wetland and floodplain communities to be watered, including all 12 Ramsar-listed wetlands at the site. This will help to restore the role of the lakes as a drought refuge for water birds and other species as well as providing an important breeding habitat. Environmental water will be used from a number of sources including The Living Murray, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder and the Victorian Environmental Water Holder.

Working together

“This project is a great example of agencies working together to benefit the environment. The Mallee Catchment Management Authority is co-ordinating the delivery of The Living Murray program, in partnership with Parks Victoria who manages the National Park. Goulburn–Murray Water is responsible for the construction and ongoing operation of the structures.”

— Heather Peachey, The Living Murray, Murray–Darling Basin Authority

Some access tracks will be temporarily closed until works are completed (scheduled for December). For the most up- to-date information visit www.parks.vic.gov.au.

For more information about the project visit www.mdba.gov.au/programs/tlm and the Mallee Catchment Management Authority website at www.malleecma.vic.gov.au/about-us/programs/rivers-and-wetlands/hattah-lakes.html

What is a Ramsar-listed wetland?

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention) was signed in Ramsar, Iran on 2 February 1971. The Convention aims to halt the worldwide loss of wetlands and to conserve those that remain. For a wetland to be designated a Ramsar site it must satisfy one or more criteria, such as being rare or

unique or regularly supporting 20,000 or more water birds.

Australia has 64 Ramsar sites along the Murray River. The project is funded through The Living Murray program, a joint initiative by the New South Wales, Victorian, South Australian, Australian Capital Territory and Commonwealth governments and co-ordinated by the Murray–Darling Basin Authority. www.mdba.gov.au/programs/tlm




The Cantala regulator under construction in July 2012. The regulators are designed not to impede natural water movement along the creek lines, but can be closed for managed water events. This regulator is 100 metres wide and stands 5 metres tall (photo by Heather Peachey, MDBA).


The whole Murray River in your hand


Enjoy the Discover Murray River Trail with our App – murrayriver.com.au/murray-river-app




 Visitor centres, information, distances, water updates, weather & more all here

 All the major towns are listed with info., history, maps and more

 Looking for a river cruise? You've found it

 Clubs and Pubs are listed with a near by function making them easy to find


 Love your golf? No problems looking for one of the many great river courses

 10 major National Parks, World Heritage and UNESCO landscapes

 Full range of accommodation options right in your hand

 The largest range of houseboats listed right here for NSW, VIC & SA

 Events listed on the Murray River website end up on the App

 RVs are lovin' the Murray...now you can find GPS dump points and much more RV info!



Discover Murray
MurrayRiver.com.au

The whole Murray River in your hand

As a first of its kind, Discover Murray River's official free Murray River App gives you the whole Murray River in your hand. It includes 25 towns, ten major national parks and a 1400 kilometre driving experience through Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia promoting 'One River, many lands'.

The Murray River App is like a handheld visitor centre taking you along our great River from the Man from Snowy River country near Corryong and Mt Kosciuszko National Park to Storm Boy territory near Goolwa, Coorong National Park and the mouth of the Murray in South Australia.

Experience the Discover Murray River Trail's five different landscapes from the Mountains, Steep Banks and River Red Gums, Mallee and Outback, Golden Limestone Cliffs and Plains, Lakes and Mouth as part of the very popular great Australian River drive.

Once you arrive in any of the Murray River featured towns on the App, you can check accommodation, houseboats, river cruises, restaurants, attractions, clubs, golf, wineries, events and more, including GPS recorded town facilities.

The comprehensive town facilities feature includes picnic spots, playgrounds, ATMs, boat ramps and much more, showing the best of the each town's environment.

It's perfect for visitors who are new to the beautiful river region.

You can also get information on the national parks along and near the Murray River including a Google map reference, information and links to the closest visitor centres and towns.

This App is updated dynamically from Australia's largest Murray River website. Some of the main features include:

- Businesses on the river including houseboats, accommodation, attractions, restaurants, cafes and more
- Map directions using Google Maps (internet access required)
- Events along the river
- Main towns, history, weather and maps
- Handy travel tips for international visitors
- Locations of visitor information centres, RV dump points and public toilets
- Tri-State Fruit Fly information
- Lock and weir information and their contact phone numbers
- Live River Data links from the Murray Darling Basin Authority website

- "Near Me" recognises your location and shows nearby clubs and pubs

Since 1998 the world's largest Murray River website (www.murrayriver.com.au) has actively promoted houseboating, tourism and travel experiences. The website now receives over one million visitors annually. The new App is integrated with the website's resource tools.

It is also the perfect companion to the Murray River book, "The Murray River: One river, many lands" found at ABC stores nationwide.

To access the App you can scan a QR (Quick Response) code on Discover Murray River website, visitor centres and businesses along the length of the Murray River. This code links to the Murray River website mobile page and the App Store. It allows visitors to download the App before they come to the Murray or easily when they arrive.

Discover Murray is aiming to have an Android version available in late October, with an enhanced version for iPad considered for summer. With many new features to come in future upgrades the new Murray River App will guarantee to enhance any river journey and experience.

Visit m.murrayriver.com.au anywhere you have internet access or go to murrayriver.com.au/murray-river-app.

The bridges of Lindsay Island

BY Kym Schramm, Parks Victoria

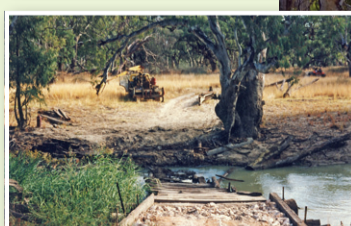
LINDSAY Island, within Murray Sunset National Park, features many kilometres of pristine Murray River frontage and is a popular place for fishing, camping and bush walking. Bordered by the Murray and Lindsay rivers, it is also traversed by a number of smaller waterways.

The Island has re-opened to visitors as new bridges have been built to replace those damaged by heavy floods in 2010-2011.

Although the old bridges have been replaced, they are a reminder of some of the fascinating history of Lindsay Island and provide insight into a very different time and way of life.

Before the nearby dam in NSW, Lock Number 7, was built in 1934, the only access to the Island was via rocky fords when water levels were low. As lock workers arrived to live on the Island, hand drawn barges were used to gain access to this area. The lock workers lived in primitive huts and tents on site for several years with limited access to the outside world. From the 1960s, basic wooden bridges were built on the Island by wood cutters who came to remove timber from the Island.

The new bridges will enable visitors to once again enjoy the beautiful surrounds and activities that have become so popular on Lindsay Island today.



RIGHT: New Broken Back Bridge, constructed in 2012





Barmah Forest Heritage and Education Centre

THE Barmah Forest Heritage and Education Centre in Nathalia provides a wonderful hands on depiction of the Barmah Forest's history. Visitors are taken on a journey that begins with a timeline from post European settlement to the present day. There are fascinating stories about timber cutters, graziers and some more curious industries including feather collectors and leach collectors.

The Centre boasts some impressive graphic design work that brings the story to life. Children can enjoy a giant jigsaw table illustrating the forest in flood and you can also hear local bush poet Tammy Muir telling a great story on DVD. The Centre is also an accredited Visitor Information Centre.

Where: 73 Blake Street Nathalia (the main street)
Open: 9am to 5pm seven days a week.
Cost: A gold coin donation is appreciated.



The Long Paddock – new sculpture pays tribute to the timber industry

THE Long Paddock touring route is well known to travellers on the Cobb Highway. In June 2012, four new sculptures were installed that pay tribute to the River Red Gum communities' timber industry.

The Moama sculpture, "The Barge", depicts the often "happy" barge masters who moved the sawn logs to the wharves at Echuca. In Mathoura, a timber town, timber cutters are depicted using various tools in "The Woodcutters". It also depicts the skill of timber cutters in managing the forests. In Denilquin, "Cut" depicts a giant cross-bench saw slicing through a piece of Red Gum. At Pretty Pine, "Smoko" depicts a timber cutter relaxing on a Red Gum log. The pieces reflect the timber industry's fascinating traditions and stories as told by the local communities.

Find out more at www.thelongpaddock.com.au





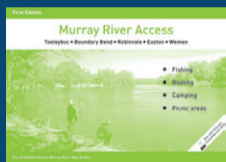
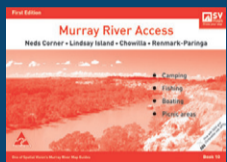
only
\$7.95ea
(RRP)

Murray River Access

These low cost A4 size booklets feature strip maps that show access tracks and facilities along both sides of the Murray River.

The current series of 13 booklets is designed for visitors touring the area. Each booklet has information covering camping, boating, fishing, picnicking, public toilets and major walks.

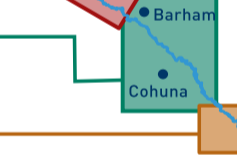
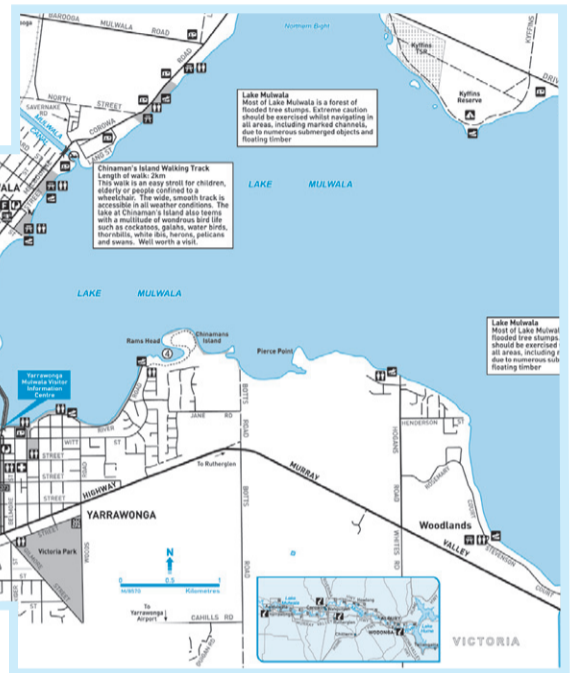
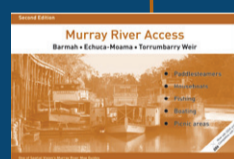
The booklets also include emergency contacts and tourist information.



Book 14

Book 15
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Book 16

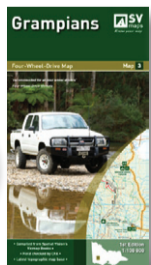
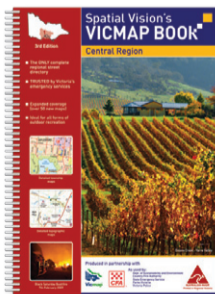


Upcoming products in South Australia

- Book 14 – Waikerie, Morgan and Blanchetown
Book 15 – Blanchetown, Swan Reach and Mannum
Book 16 – Mannum, Murray Bridge, Tailem Bend, Lake Alexandrina, Lake Albert, Goolwa to the Murray Mouth



Other Spatial Vision Map Products



www.svmaps.com.au
Phone 03 9691 3000



There’s so much to see and do in the Murray River parks

WITH parks across three states from west of Mildura all the way to Corryong past Albury-Wodonga in the east, there is plenty of space to explore. There are so many great parks to choose from and a range of activities to enjoy. Whether it’s fishing, camping, bushwalking, swimming, canoeing, four-wheel driving, bird watching, having a picnic or simply lazing by the river – you will find plenty for the whole family to do.

Major Mitchell Trail – Major Thomas Mitchell passed through central and western Victoria in 1836 on a landmark journey in Australian history. Shortly after his trip, the whole region was settled. Modern day motorists can retrace his 2,100km journey on the Major Mitchell Trail. The trail passes through towns including Mildura, Horsham, Ballarat, Bendigo and Wangaratta.

Call into your nearest Visitor Information Centre for more information and ideas.

Corryong – Towong

Corryong is a popular destination for rock climbing, rafting, horse riding, bushwalks, four-wheel drive touring, cycling and fishing. It is also the final resting place of Jack Riley, the man from Snowy River, who is buried in the Corryong cemetery.

Mount Lawson – approximately 70km east of Albury-Wodonga has panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and valleys from the summit of Mount Lawson and spectacular wildflower displays in spring.

Mount Granya State Park – the summit of Mount Granya rises dramatically above Lake Hume and the surrounding valleys. See impressive views from the tower, seasonal waterfalls and Lyrebirds.

Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park is a good spot for picnics, camping and bushwalks. Pine Mountain is a gigantic rock monolith reputedly one and a half times as large as Uluru. Mt Burrowa (1,300m), the highest peak in the park, is often snow covered in winter.



Jarvis Creek and Mount Mittamatite Regional Parks – Enjoy a picnic, walk or a pleasant forest drive.

Murray River Reserves - A number of reserves along the Murray River above Lake Hume provide opportunities for camping swimming, fishing, canoeing, bird watching and other activities.

Woomargama National Park – 30km north-east of Albury, contains the largest remnant community of box woodlands on the South-West Slopes. It’s an important haven for a large number of threatened and endangered species such as the Regent Honeyeater, Superb Parrot, Powerful Owl, Booroolong Frog and Carpet Python. It’s also home to the very rare wattle, Acacia phasmodoides. Parts of the reserve are close to 1000m above sea level, providing stunning views over the Murray River, Riverina and South West Slopes.

Enjoy bush walking, bird watching, four wheel driving and motorcycling. Norths Lookout on Tin Mine Trail provides extensive views over the Riverina and the western slopes of the Great Dividing Range. The Tin Mines and Samuel Bollard picnic and camping areas (suitable for backpack and vehicle based camping) is a stopping point on the Hume and Hovell Walking Track.

Corryong Visitor Information Centre
50 Hanson Street, Corryong VIC 3707
Phone: (02) 6076 2277

Albury-Wodonga

Lake Hume is more than four times the size of Sydney Harbour and is the main operating storage of the Murray River. Just 16km upstream of Albury, it is popular for catamarans, dinghies, windsurfers and powered crafts.

Wonga Wetlands are proof that a city’s treated waste water can be a valuable resource. Albury City’s Waterview Treatment Works transforms sewage into reclaimed water that is used all year round. For the first half of the year it’s used to irrigate 350ha of tree lots and pasture and in the second half it’s used to fill up the 80ha of Wonga Wetlands. The wetlands are ideal for bird watching and photography with five bird hides and walking trails.

Gateway Visitor Information Centre
Lincoln Causeway, Wodonga, VIC 3690
Phone: 1300 796 222
www.alburywodongaaustralia.com.au

Narrandera

Murrumbidgee Valley National Park – located along the Murrumbidgee River, includes great walking, fishing and camping spots. Koalas have thrived at Narrandera since they were released there in 1972. You will probably be able to spot them at the Narrandera Nature Reserve.



Narrandera Visitor Information Centre
Newell Highway, Narrandera 2700
Freecall: 1800 672 392
www.narrandera.com.au

Wangaratta

Warby-Ovens National Park – north of Wangaratta, provides a tranquil setting for a camping holiday. Soak in the sights and sounds of the River Red Gum forests, Ovens River and peaceful wetlands.

Wangaratta Visitor Information Centre
100 Murphy St, Wangaratta VIC 3677
Freecall: 1800 801 065
www.visitwangaratta.com.au

Lake Moodemere – near Wangaratta, is a natural lake with a wide range of bird life. Explore the 4km interpretive walking trail. It’s also the venue for the Moodemere Masters Ski Tournament held near the end of January.

Corowa–Wahgunyah Visitor Information Centre
88 Sanger Street, Corowa NSW 2646
Freecall: 1800 814 054

Rutherglen Wine Experience and Visitor Information Centre
57 Main Street, Rutherglen VIC 3685
Freecall: 1800 622 871
www.rutherglenc.com

Yarrawonga - Mulwala

Lake Mulwala – near Yarrawonga, is a haven for birds and native fish. The lake is over 15km in length and used all year round for water sports like fishing, boating, sail boarding, water-skiing, swimming, canoeing, sailing and paddle boat cruises.

Byramine Homestead, 15km west of Yarrawonga, has an unusual octagonal design with a central fortress room that was used for protection against bushrangers.

Chinaman’s Island Walking track at Yarrawonga-Mulwala is an easy 2km stroll for children, elderly or people confined to a wheelchair. The wide, smooth track is accessible in all weather conditions. The lake at Chinaman’s Island teems with a multitude of wondrous bird life such as cockatoos, galahs, water birds, thornbills, white ibis, herons, pelicans and swans. **Murray Valley National and Regional Park (Cottadidda, Boomanoomana and Mulwala Precincts)** have some great spots for walking and cycling. You’ll find the locals at Hinchey’s Beach on summer days.

Kyffins Reserve – about 1km from Corowa on the banks of Lake Mulwala, has over 1km of shoreline and camping areas well away from the main road. The Reserve is subject to flooding but at other times it is a very pleasant, gum treed forest, with low grassy undergrowth.



Yarrawonga Mulwala Visitor Information Centre
Irvine Parade, Yarrawonga VIC 3730
Freecall: 1800 062 260
www.yarrawongamulwala.com.au

Cobram – Barooga

Explore this area by bike, boat and canoe or simply stroll through the bush and drop in a fishing line. Expert guides can help with trail rides and river cruises.

Murray Valley National Park (Barooga and Cottadidda Precincts) Enjoy sandy beaches, towering 500 year old River Red Gums, native bushland, abundant birdlife and Australia’s unique wildlife all in their natural habitats at Barooga Day use area and Quicks Beaches at Barooga.

Cobram Barooga Visitor Information Centre
Corner Punt Road and Station Street, Cobram VIC 3643
Freecall: 1800 607 607
www.cobrambarooga.org.au

Tocumwal

There are 24 magnificent sandy beaches within five minutes east and west of Tocumwal, all surrounded by some of the most impressive River Red Gum Forests on the Murray.

The “**Blowhole**” is situated on a granite outcrop approximately 11km north of Tocumwal. The Blowhole is said to be sacred to the Ulupna and Bangarang Aboriginal people. When the Murray River is low, the “Blowhole” flows and bubbles.

The **Farm Gate Trail** will take you exploring a wide variety of farm based businesses that are open to the public. From paddock to plate, paddock to vase, paddock to clothing or paddock to glass the choices will tempt all your senses.

Tocumwal Visitor Information Centre
41-43 Deniliquin Street, Tocumwal NSW 2714
Freecall: 1800 677 271
www.toconthemurray.com.au

Shepparton

The Goulburn River forms the backbone and lifeblood of the Shepparton region, winding its way through native forests and fertile farmlands, bringing life to the rich agricultural landscape that has made the area renowned as Australia’s food bowl. Enjoy the tranquil waterways with popular pastimes like fishing, boating, walking and relaxing all here to be enjoyed.

Lower Goulburn National Park – The forests along the lower reaches of the Goulburn River between Echuca and Shepparton form an important ‘bio-link’ to the Murray River. The park is ideal for camping, fishing and canoeing



and you are likely to spot plenty of wildlife. **Shepparton Regional Park** is popular with locals and visitors alike. The park provides access to the Goulburn River – a good spot for fishing and water sports. It’s also a great park to take the dog for a walk or on a camping holiday.

Shepparton Visitor Information Centre
534 Wyndham Street, Shepparton VIC 3630
Freecall: 1800 808 839
www.discovershepparton.com.au

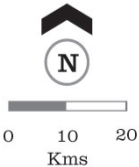
Deniliquin

Home to one of Australia’s finest inland beaches, Mclean Beach or as the locals call it the “Bondi of the Outback” is located on the Edwards River in Deniliquin.

McLean Beach is only a short stroll from the heart of Deniliquin and is frequented by residents and tourists alike. Many residents in the old days learnt to swim here at McLean and today you will find a sea of umbrellas, children building sand castles and various forms of ski boats plying the river.

Murray Valley Regional Parks (Deniliquin Precinct) – Come and visit the spectacular River Red Gum regional parks at Deniliquin. With so many peaceful places you can bush camp on the river and throw in a line. Paddle your canoe, or cycle with your family. You’ll enjoy what our River Red Gums have to offer, all with no entry fees. Deniliquin Regional Parks are dog friendly.

Your guide to the Murray River Parks



- Park
- Waterbody



This map provides an overview of the area. Refer to www.parks.vic.gov.au or www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au for more detailed maps of specific parks.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is accurate. Parks Victoria and NSW Parks and Wildlife Service do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence that may arise from you relying on any information.

Source: ©Land and Property Management Authority
Panorama Avenue Bathurst NSW 2795
www.lpma.nsw.gov.au

Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre and Peppin Heritage Centre
George Street, Deniliquin NSW 2710
Freecall: 1800 650 712
www.denitourism.com.au

Echuca – Moama

Echuca-Moama represents a bygone era of horse-drawn carriages, paddlesteamers and blacksmiths, as well as providing all the conveniences of the modern era. Nestled at the point where the Murray, Campaspe and Goulburn rivers meet, Echuca-Moama is the closest point on the Murray to Melbourne, making it a natural choice for city-dwellers to holiday or country folks to get away.

The Port of Echuca was once the biggest inland port in Australia. Enjoy sightseeing, strolling around the historic precinct, visiting local crafts or try travelling down the Murray on a paddle steamer.

Visit www.murray.nsw.gov.au for information on great trails and walks around Moama including Dhungala Cultural Plant Trail at Horeshoe Lagoon, Moama’s wetland and floodplain reserve.

The quaint village of Womboota, north-west of Moama was originally an outstation of Perricoota Station. The Old School Winery and Meadery offers visitors the chance to taste grape wines and meads.

Barmah National Park – together with the neighbouring Murray Valley National Park in New South Wales, forms the world’s largest River Red Gum forest. The park is popular for camping, fishing, horse riding, swimming and canoeing.

Murray Valley Regional Park (including Moama, Benarca and Bama Precincts) – close to Moama and Echuca, is dog friendly – perfect to visit if you are looking for somewhere to camp with your family dog, or enjoy a long walk.

Echuca-Moama Visitor Information Centre
2 Heygarth Street, Echuca VIC 3564
Freecall: 1800 804 446
www.echucamoama.com

Mathoura

Mathoura, north of Moama, began as a market garden and a pub on a drovers’ track in the mid-1800s, and built itself as a timber source for the developing young nation of Australia. Today, it is a mecca for lovers of a gentle country lifestyle and those seeking peaceful holidays amid forests, waterways and a beautiful natural environment. Mathoura’s wetlands are recognised as internationally significant.

Murray Valley National and Regional Parks (including Millewa, Gulpa Island, Moira, Bama and Barooga) – A good season has awakened the wetlands to a symphony of life. You’ll probably hear the Banjo Frog, spot a flash of a Kingfisher or even see the threatened Superb Parrot.



Reed Beds Bird Hide – Discover the magnificent River Red Gum Reed Beds Bird Hide, just 6km from Mathoura along Picnic Point road. Hidden at the end of a wheelchair accessible boardwalk, the bird hide offers vast wetland scenery teeming with a rich diversity of species. Turn over the bird panels along the boardwalk to check out which birds are vegetarians and which prefer frogs and who honks like a goose but soars like an eagle.

Discover wildlife of the creekside during easy walks of up to 5km along the tranquil Gulpa Creek. Canoe trees and Aboriginal oven moulds testify to the ancient occupation of these forests. Gulpa Creek Walk Trail maps are available from the Visitor Centre. Ride a bike or drive along any of the forest tracks to experience the beauty of the area. Walking and driving trail maps are available from the Visitor Centre.

Mathoura Visitor Information Centre
23 Moama Street (Cobb Hwy), Mathoura NSW 2710
Phone: 03 5884 3730
www.mathoura.com.au

Kerang – Cohuna – Barham – Koondrook

Gunbower National Park – The wetlands and billabongs of the Gunbower forest are internationally recognised. The area is known for its spectacular birdlife. This is a great park for camping, fishing and relaxing on the bends of the Murray River.

Terrick Terrick National Park is home to many threatened species. The granite peaks of this park contrast with areas of remnant native grasslands. It is an ideal park for a scenic drive, bushwalk or picnic.

Kerang Regional Park – The park’s wetlands provide important habitat for water birds, making bird watching a rewarding activity. The park is also popular for bushwalking and dog walking.

Golden Rivers (Barham, Koondrook, Cohuna, Kerang)
25 Murray Street, Barham, NSW 2732
Phone: (03) 5453 3100

Swan Hill

Swan Hill, at the heart of the Murray, is an excellent holiday destination. Immerse yourself in a bygone era of Australian history with a visit to Swan Hill’s historic Pioneer Settlement on the banks of the Marraboor River.

Nyah-Vinifera Park, near Swan Hill, protects forests along the Murray River and smaller areas of woodland. It is popular for camping, fishing, four wheel driving and walking.

Tyntynder Homestead, 16km north of Swan Hill on the Murray Valley Highway, was built in 1846 and was the first brick veneer building in Australia. It contains a wonderful collection of Aboriginal artefacts and historical memorabilia.

Swan Hill Information Centre
Corner McCrae and Curlewis Streets, PO Box 488
Swan Hill 3585
Freecall: 1800 625 373
www.swanhillonline.com

Robinvale – Euston – Balranald

Yanga National Park and Yanga State Conservation Area – A short drive from Balranald. Here you’ll discover chapters of history stretching back thousands of years – Aboriginal families, explorers and pioneers, shearers and rabbit trappers, fishermen and campers have visited here. Want to know more? Take part in the FREE daily guided Yanga Historic Homestead tour at 10.30am each day. Visit the Cooks Cottage interpretive visitor centre and learn more about the pastoral industry at the Yanga Woolshed.

This important part of the Lowbidgee floodplain includes 22,000 hectares of River Red Gum forest, wetlands, lakes and breeding sites for water birds. Catch a glimpse from the Yanga Lake Bird Hide or Lake Viewing Deck.

The Lachlan, Murrumbidgee, Murray, Edward and Wakool Rivers form the southern boundaries of the Balranald Shire, making popular waters for fishermen.

Mungo National Park is part of the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, a chain of dried-out lakes that were once strung between Willandra Creek and the main channel of the Lachlan River in Outback NSW.

Lake Mungo dried up around 14,000 years ago, and today a great crescent-shaped dune, called the Walls of China, stretches along the eastern shore of the lakebed.

Stone flake tools are scattered across the landscape, and peeking out of the mud are ancient wombat holes, fossilised chunks of Eucalyptus trees, and the bones of long-dead marsupials, including extinct buffalo-sized wombats and giant kangaroos.

Robinvale Euston Information Centre
Bromley Road, Robinvale Victoria 3549
Phone: (03) 5026 1388
www.robinvaleeuston.com.au

Balranald Visitor Information Centre
Market Street, Balranald NSW 2715
Freecall: 1800 444 043
www.balranald.nsw.gov.au

Mildura – Wentworth

Murray-Sunset National Park – Explore Victoria’s very own outback by four-wheel drive, on foot or go camping. This is Victoria’s largest park and is home to abundant wildlife and beautiful spring wildflowers.

Kings Billabong Park – Once you have set up camp, the days can be spent canoeing, kayaking, fishing or bushwalking. **Hattah-Kulkyne National Park** is home to the popular Hattah Lakes, diverse wildlife, majestic River Red Gums, Black Box woodlands and the distinctive mallee eucalypts. There’s a range of walks available in the park, from easy family walks to longer hikes.

Murray-Kulkyne Regional Park adjoins Hattah Kulkyne National Park and has a major recreation focus with direct access to the Murray River. Popular activities in the park include camping, caravanning, fishing, boating, swimming and walking. Generators and dogs (under control) are allowed in this park.

Gadsens Bend Park is located on one of the picturesque bends of the Murray River near Robinvale. The large sandbars are perfect for relaxing by the river and doing a spot of fishing.

Psyche Bend Pumphouse at Mildura is the oldest intact irrigation station in Australia. It was designed by Canadian engineer George Chaffey in 1889. Huge pumps at Psyche Bend

drew water from the Murray to Kings Billabong and from there it was distributed through a series of pumps and open channels. Today, visitors can experience the original pump house, reconstructed pumps, steam engine and boiler house.

Red Cliffs Scenic Reserve, located 5km east of the town of Red Cliffs, provides excellent photo opportunities of the majestic cliffs from the Red Gum Gully boardwalk and the viewing platform at Snake Gully carpark.

Wallpolla Island is 9,800ha of floodplain vegetation with River Red Gum, saltbush plains, seasonal lakes and grasslands. Middens and hearths remain from Aboriginal occupation and the land has been used for grazing and forestry since European settlement. Enjoy fishing, boating and camping on the island. Access is 25km from Merbein.



Lindsay Island forms part of Murray Sunset National Park and is located 90km west of Mildura towards the South Australian border. The island has a number of small creeks carrying floodwaters from the Murray River into swamps, billabongs and flood plains. It is home to a rich variety of plants and animals including Wedge-tailed Eagles, Emus, Red and Western Grey Kangaroos. It’s a great spot to go camping, fishing, canoeing or for a scenic drive.

Lake Cullulleraine is a natural lake filled from Lock 9 on the Murray River and supplies water to nearby properties. Black Box and reed beds fringe the lake. A range of activities can be enjoyed including boating, swimming, picnicking, camping and caravanning (powered sites available).

Mildura Visitor Information Centre
The Alfred Deakin Centre, cnr Deakin Avenue and Twelfth Street), Mildura VIC 3500
Freecall: 1800 039 043
www.visitmildura.com.au

Wentworth Visitor Information Centre
66 Darling Street, Wentworth NSW 2648
Phone: (03) 5027 3624

And... if you are heading further down the Murray through South Australia, then call into the Visitor Information Centre at Renmark to find more fantastic things to see and do.

Renmark Paringa Visitor Information Centre
84 Murray Avenue, Renmark SA 5341
Phone: (08) 8586 6704

South Australian Wooden Boat Festival

The next South Australian Wooden Boat Festival will be held at the historic wharf at Goolwa, near the mouth of the Murray River in South Australia, on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 February 2013.

This is a unique opportunity to see some of Australia’s paddlesteamers in all their grandeur, plus the biggest collection of wooden boats of all shapes and sizes, old and new. There are activities for the whole family including paddlesteamer rides, boatbuilding competitions, music, art and craft, fireworks along with some of South Australia’s regional food and wine.

The theme for the 2013 Festival is to tell the story of the river trade by gathering the classic paddlesteamers and riverboats from all of the historic ports of the Murray River.

Visit www.woodenboatfestival.com.au for more information.



Barrie Beehag Water Ski Race

17 November 2012

THE Moama Water Sports Club (MWSC) will be holding the Barrie Beehag Water Ski Race on 17 November 2012. This event is a fabulous fun day for the whole family. Racing starts at 10.00am from Deep Creek Marina, Perricoota Road, Moama to Torrumbarry Weir and return. This is the best spot to view the race, with Murray Rivers Edge providing a beautiful grassed area to watch the boats start and finish.

Bring your own rugs and chairs and enjoy the venue. Catering is supplied along with entertainment for children. Presentations will be held after racing on the lawn area at Deep Creek Marina Hotel. MWSC presents this event in conjunction with Morley Auto Group and Deep Creek Marina Hotel. For more information go to www.southern80.com.au.



2013 Club Marine Southern 80

8, 9 and 10 February

THERE is so much to see during this event, with 'Breakfast with the Stars' starting off the weekend on the Friday morning at the Kerribee Soundshell in Moama between 7.00am and 9.30am. Get up close to all the amazing paintwork, gleaming chrome and massive horsepower, while enjoying breakfast. The boats will then be scrutineered for safety and teams will attend briefings. On Friday night, the event will be officially launched on the banks of the majestic Murray River.

On Saturday morning from 8.30am, the teams will prepare to hit the water for the first race of the weekend. Racing will take place along the full 80km course from Torrumbarry Weir to Victoria Park boat ramp until midday. Racing will move to the five-mile boat ramp on the NSW side of the River for the shorter 20km course in the afternoon. While some teams are pitting their speed, skill and bodies against each other and the clock and at times the unforgiving Murray River 80km course, other teams will have polished their chrome, wiped every speck of dust from their immaculate paint work and put their boats on display at the Static Display, allowing spectators a chance to get up close to these amazing pieces of machinery.

Not all the excitement is limited to the race boats on the water. The finish line at Victoria Park has a festival atmosphere and offers 500 meters of river bank to enjoy all aspects of the event. As spectators watch the teams finish, they can also find something to eat with a huge range of food available and heaps of entertainment for the kids including face painting, a jumping castle and air brush tattoos. Adults will also find entertainment with trade sites covering everything from clothing, ski gear, power tools, boats, trailers and much more.

On Sunday there will be a full day of racing from 8.30am along the full 80km course finishing at the Victoria Park boat ramp.

MWSC would like to remind spectators that the river is closed to all vessels from when the Sweep boat passes with a red flag flying until they pass again with a green flag flying. MWSC also remind all campers to be aware of fire restrictions as advised by the CFA each day. We also ask that campers are responsible for keeping campsites clean and tidy. A Carry In Carry Out policy applies for all items brought into park areas.

We hope everyone has a great time, enjoys our fantastic events and all the region has to offer. For more information visit: www.southern80.com.au or follow us on Face Book or twitter.



It's a sign

Parks Victoria's Andrew McDougall explains why signs need to remain in place in our parks.

"We'll be camping near the big Red Gum upstream of Barmah just off the track". Does this sound familiar? Finding that gum tree in a forest can be a challenging task during the day, let alone at night.

How would you describe where you are? Ambulance and other emergency services also rely on signs to find their way in forests or parks.

Signs are more than pieces of metal or wood with arrows or directions on them. Without signs, getting to your favourite camping spot would be difficult.

In most forests and parks, phone reception is patchy or non-existent making the importance of signage even greater.

Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment manage most of Victoria's public land and the signage placed on it.

Signage is costly to install and replace, so the next time you think about damaging or removing a sign, please consider the potential effects of your actions. Leaving that sign in place may just mean you have helped save a life.

Safety around flood water

DRIVING through floodwater may look like fun, but have you ever considered the impact? Parks Victoria Rangers encourage all visitors to avoid driving through flood waters or river crossings unless absolutely necessary.

The effects of driving through these areas range from stalling your vehicle to more serious results, including drowning. So it is important to take care!

The power of our rivers and the variable Victorian climate means the conditions within our flood-plains are constantly changing and these changes can occur rapidly.

While a crossing may have been fine last week or last night, it may not be fine next time.

Most crossings have a gravel base and some contain culverts or pipes. The changing climate from drought to wet has also resulted in many of our crossings eroding quickly.

And while you might say, "It won't happen to me", hundreds of campers do take these risks every year, putting themselves and their families at risk and causing costly damage to their vehicles.





Pine Log Tank, Millewa Pioneer Park

Sunset History

BY Sally Nowlan, Parks Victoria

SOUTH of the Murray River, close to the South Australian border, is a hidden and fascinating world of local history and unique landscapes. The Millewa is a small area lying between the River and Murray Sunset National Park. It's a place of legends - from the Aboriginal people who first lived and hunted there, to the early settlers who struggled to make a living in this remote region.

The best place to start exploring this intriguing area is the **Millewa Pioneer Park** at Meringur, about an hour's drive west of Mildura on the Sturt Highway. The turnoff to Meringur is about seventy kilometres from Mildura.

Millewa Pioneer Park is an historical treasure trove of authentic local buildings, vintage agricultural equipment like old ploughs and tractors and much more. Everything at the park is tribute to how resourceful and tough these pioneers were. The interior walls of the tiny settler's cottage are made of hessian bags sewn together and pasted over with sheets of newspaper. The park is a non-profit venture and open every day from nine to five. Entry is by donation.

There are a number of places to see more examples of early European history in the area. One of the best is the **Pine Log Tank** on Long Plain at nearby Morkalla. Water was the critical ingredient for survival for both people and animals, so local pine and rammed earth was used to construct this amazing water tank.

Heading further west into Murray Sunset National Park is the **Taparoo Homestead** site with the remains of its many old bough sheds, yards and huts.

Heading south will bring you to the corrugated iron **Shearers Quarters**. The Shearers Quarters, on the edge of Murray Sunset National Park, was once a much grander place as the homestead for the manager of a large pastoral holding.

The Shearers Quarters is the remaining link to what was one of the largest lease holdings in Victoria. It's said the lease belonged to Les Hart who in 1936 applied to convert his holding of 190,000 acres (about 77,000 hectares) to a 21 year lease. In his application he declared his intention to construct a house for £200 within 12 months.

The lease holding was transferred to the Sunset Pastoral Company in 1958 for \$50,000. By this time a new homestead had been built closer to the South Australian border, and the old homestead converted to shearers' quarters.

These days it offers hostel-style accommodation with cooking facilities, bunks and hot showers. The Shearers Quarters is a very popular spot for researchers, photographers, bird observers and family groups who enjoy the fact that it's isolated and historic, and pretty much as it was when it was built.

Heading back north, the **Woodbine Shepherds Hut** site has evidence of the tough times of early settlement. Among the remains of the buildings, furniture and equipment are said to be two children's grave sites. From here continue north to return to Morkalla.

An alternative trip is to head north from Meringur, cross the Sturt Highway and drive a short distance to **Ned's**



Horse and buggy crossing the Murray River

Corner Homestead on the banks of the Murray. This former Soldier Settlement property, owned by Sir Sidney Kidman in the 1940s, now belongs to conservation group, Trust For Nature.

Driving through the Millewa region you will see many other historical places and structures including deserted town sites and homesteads, old timber fences, including a dog fence, early irrigation structures, stock yards and old tracks. They remain as evidence of the tenacity and determination of those who struggled to make a living from the land when it was first opened up to European agricultural practices in the 1920s.



Loading wool bales at the woolshed



Shearers Quarters - Murray Sunset National Park



Homestead gardeners and domestic staff



The Woolclasser arriving at Neds Corner



Willow control along Gulpa Creek, Murray Valley National Park

Leading the charge on willows and other pests

IT'S not often the sight of someone with axe in hand is welcome in our national parks, but the Aboriginal crew undertaking pest control in some of the NSW River Red Gum parks have put their axes to good use.

The crew took to the willows along Gulpa Creek Cutting to restrict the spread of the invasive tree species into the Gulpa Creek Wetlands and along Gulpa Creek.

The pest control crew undertook training at NSW TAFE to obtain chemical handling accreditation. Subsequently the work involved the crew injecting a herbicide into the stems of trees through a cut in the trunk. Care was taken to select a chemical safe for use around wetlands.

Willows choke other native species out of waterways causing blockages, erosion and providing harbour for pest animals. Willows are a noxious weed declared under the NSW Noxious Weeds Act.

Willows have no place in sensitive wetland environments on Gulpa Creek, that feed into wetlands of international importance and important breeding sites for water birds.

Willow control is just one of the ways local Aboriginal groups have been making environmental improvements in River Red Gum parks.

The team was also involved in chemically treating non-native tree species including Peppercorns, Date Palms and

Olives that were spreading across cypress pine sandhill ridges in Gulpa Island.

NSW and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Murray Catchment Management Authority (CMA) have also commenced a direct seeding program to revegetate these sandhill sites as pest species are removed.

NPWS Murray Area Manager Daniel Basham said the seeding program would complement natural revegetation.

"There has been significant natural regeneration of cypress pine seedlings and native shrubs across the sandhills due to high rainfall over the past two years and reduction of grazing pressure.

The direct seeding program and constant monitoring will help to rehabilitate these cypress pine sandhills, that are identified as an endangered ecological community in NSW", he said.

NPWS Murray Area Indigenous Ranger Minda Murray said the weeding program was a win-win for Aboriginal people and the environment.

"This has been a great initiative allowing local Aboriginal groups to undertake training and be involved in managing and protecting the forests, wetlands, waterways and sandhill sites."

Buy a lure to help threatened fish

FISHERS are being encouraged to purchase a specially designed lure to help protect threatened species, with the profits flowing back into fisheries conservation.

NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) Fisheries Conservation Manager, Luke Pearce, said all fishers across the State are encouraged to purchase an Oar-Gee threatened species lure.

"This is a great initiative between Oar-Gee Lures and NSW DPI and these lures are an easy way for individuals and families to help these threatened fish," Mr Pearce said.

"The lures help in two ways, firstly by educating people about what the species looks like and how much trouble they are actually in, and secondly because the profits from the sale of the lures come back to NSW DPI to be used for threatened species projects and management."

The ongoing project will help reverse the decline in native fish in the Murray-Darling Basin with numbers

estimated to be just 10% of their levels at European settlement.

"More than half of the native fish species in the Murray-Darling Basin are now recognised as either rare or threatened – this is 26 of the 46 native species," Mr Pearce said.

"We now have a situation where the introduced fish species make up more than 80% of the total fish at many sites in the basin.

"Without measures by science and research and initiatives such as this, we will see fish numbers continue to decline and face extinction".

Threatened fish include:

Trout Cod

A large aggressive species that almost became extinct. A breeding program that began in the late 1970s is helping to re-establish the population.

Macquarie Perch

A dark coloured fish. NSW DPI is working on perfecting captive breeding techniques which is essential for their future survival.

Purple Spotted Gudgeon

Colourful and aggressive little fish were once widespread and are now in serious decline.

Southern Pygmy Perch

Attractive little fish that are important for controlling mosquitoes and have now almost disappeared from the Murray-Darling Basin.

The lures are available from all good tackle stores. If they are not in stock, customers can order them in. They are also available online from www.bobsfishingtackle.com.au and can be viewed on the Oargee website www.oargeelures.com.au

Help save our threatened species Buy a threatened species Lure

OAR-GEE® LURES



Trout Cod



Purple-spotted Gudgeon



Macquarie Perch



Southern Pygmy Perch



Primary Industries

Stay fire safe this summer

Know your fire weather district and daily Fire Danger Rating

Prevent a fire starting: Total Fire Bans

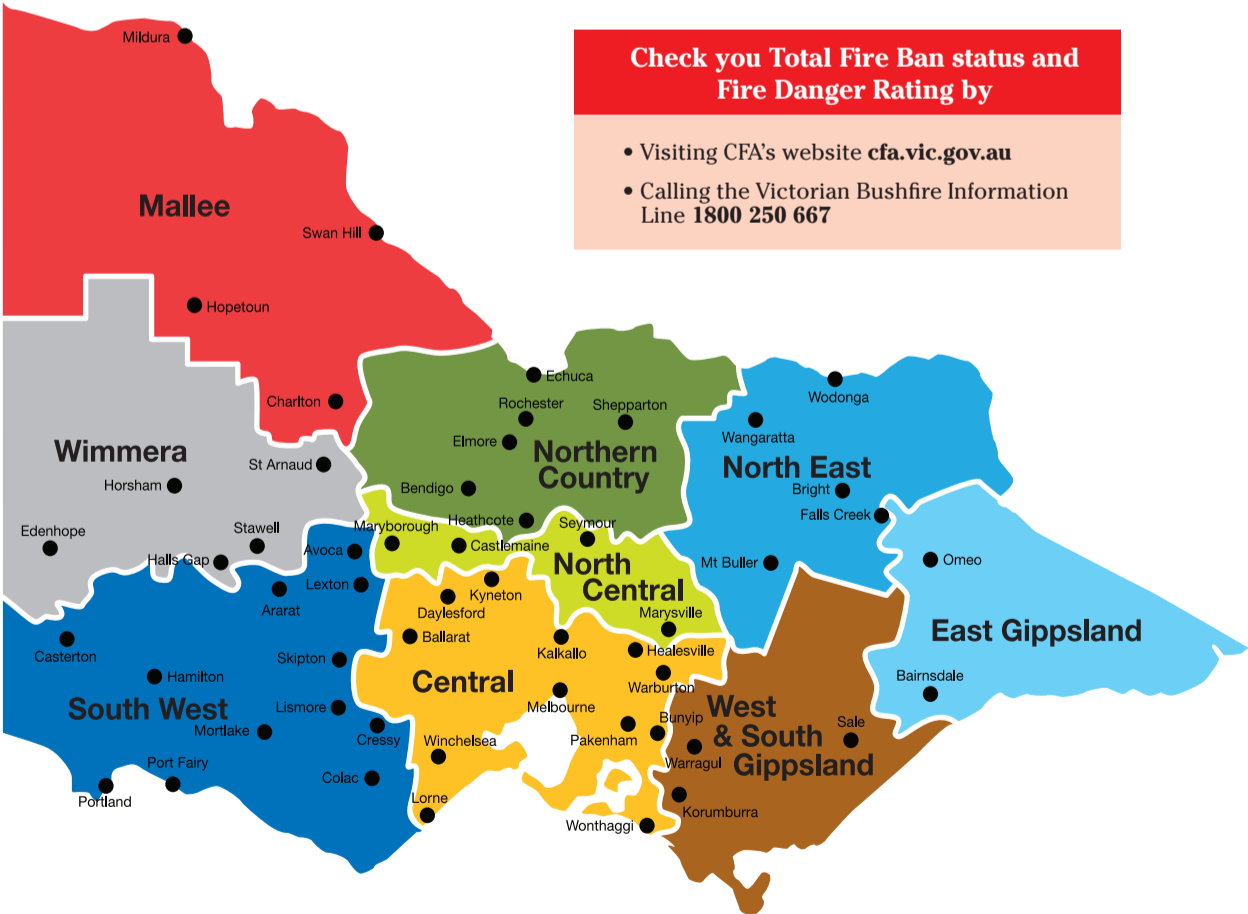
TOTAL Fire Bans are legal restrictions about what you can and cannot do to prevent a fire from starting. They are declared by CFA the day before or the morning of, based on the weather forecast. They are generally declared by fire weather district but can also be state-wide.

Actions and decisions to take to stay safe: Fire Danger Ratings

FIRE Danger Ratings tell you how a fire would behave if one started, and how hard it would be to put out. They are forecast using Bureau of Meteorology data for up to four days in advance, based on weather and other environmental conditions such as fuel load. They are declared by fire weather district – the higher the rating, the more dangerous the conditions.



| | WHAT DOES IT MEAN? | WHAT SHOULD I DO? |
|--------------|--|--|
| CODE RED | These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions. The safest place to be is away from high risk bushfire areas. | Leaving high risk bushfire areas the night before or early in the day is your safest option – do not wait and see. Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass. Know your trigger – make a decision about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– when you will leave– where you will go– how you will get there– when you will return– what you will do if you cannot leave |
| EXTREME | Expect extremely hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Spot fires will start, move quickly and come from many directions. Homes that are situated and constructed or modified to withstand a bushfire, that are well prepared and actively defended, may provide safety. You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider staying with your property only if you are prepared to the highest level. This means your home needs to be situated and constructed or modified to withstand a bushfire, you are well prepared and you can actively defend your home if a fire starts.• If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving high risk bushfire areas early in the day is your safest option.• Be aware of local conditions and seek information by listening to ABC Local Radio, commercial radio stations or Sky News TV, go to cfa.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 |
| SEVERE | Expect hot, dry and possibly windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable. Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety – check your bushfire survival plan.• If you are not prepared, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.• Be aware of local conditions and seek information by listening to ABC Local Radio, commercial radio stations or Sky News TV, go to cfa.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 |
| VERY HIGH | If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled in these conditions and homes can provide safety. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check your bushfire survival plan• Monitor conditions• Action may be needed• Leave if necessary |
| HIGH | Be aware of how fires can start and minimise the risk. | |
| LOW-MODERATE | Controlled burning off may occur in these conditions if it is safe – check to see if permits apply. | |



Check you Total Fire Ban status and Fire Danger Rating by

- Visiting CFA's website **cfa.vic.gov.au**
- Calling the Victorian Bushfire Information Line **1800 250 667**

Victoria's fire weather districts

Victoria is divided into nine fire weather districts. Fire Danger Ratings and Total Fire Bans are declared by fire weather district so it's important to know which district you're in.

The Murray River flows through the Mallee, Northern Country, North East and East Gippsland Districts, which include these shires:

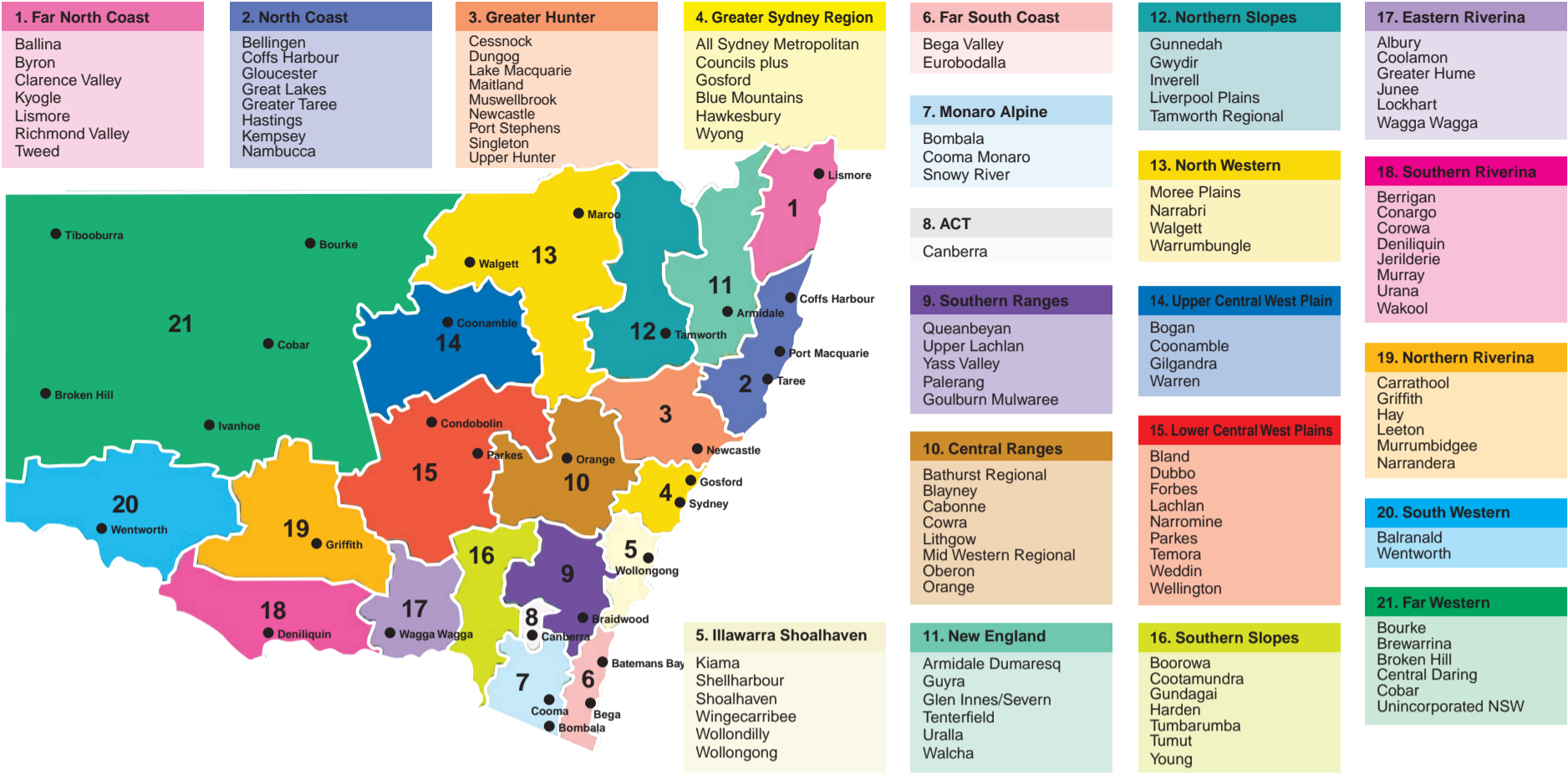
| Mallee District | North East District |
|---|---|
| Buloke Shire Gannawarra Shire Mildura Rural City Swan Hill Rural City Yarriambiack Shire (north of the netting fence) | Alpine Shire Benalla Rural City Falls Creek Alpine Resort (Unincorporated) Indigo Shire Mansfield Shire Mount Buller Alpine Resort (Unincorporated) Mount Hotham Alpine Resort (Unincorporated) Mount Stirling Alpine Resort (Unincorporated) Towong Shire Wangaratta Rural City Wodonga City |
| Northern Country District | East Gippsland District |
| Campaspe Shire Greater Bendigo City Greater Shepparton City Loddon Shire Moirra Shire Strathbogie Shire | East Gippsland Shire |

For more information please visit the CFA website at **cfa.vic.gov.au** or phone the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on **1800 240 667**.



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.
FireReady

Know your total fire ban district



The RFS may declare a Total Fire Ban for days of increased fire danger, based on advice from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM). For more information go to www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or www.bom.gov.au. During a Total Fire Ban no fire may be lit in the open and all Fire Permits are immediately suspended. This includes the use of incinerators and solid fuel barbecues.

You can or you can't

Can I light a camp fire or have a gas barbecue in a National Park, Regional Park or NSW State Forest?

| Bush Fire Danger Period | |
|-------------------------|---|
| NO | There is a "Solid Fuel Fire Ban" imposed in all National and Regional Parks and NSW State Forests in the Mid Murray Zone during the Bush Fire Danger Period, so no wood, heat beads or any other solid fuel can be lit |
| YES | A gas BBQ is allowed providing you have cleared an area of at least "3 metres" around the BBQ, you have an adequate water supply and preferably a fire extinguisher (Dry Powder). A responsible person must be in attendance while the BBQ is alight. |

| Total Fire Ban | |
|----------------|---|
| NO | Campfires, Fires for warmth or personal comfort, solid and gas or liquid fuel barbecues and ovens are banned on days of <u>Total Fire Ban</u> . |



Listen to your Local Radio Stations for regular Fire Weather Warnings, Bushfire Updates and Community Advice and Warnings

Report all Fires to "000"

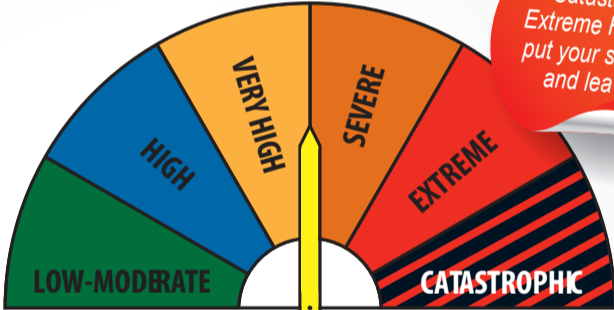
Prepare. Act. Survive

You will find further information on the NSW RFS website: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Fire Danger Ratings

WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR YOU?

- Knowing what they mean could save your life
- ☐ If you live or travel through an area where a bush fire can start you need to know what the Fire Danger Rating is and what it means so you can make the safest decision.
 - ☐ The Fire Danger Rating is the indication of the consequences of a bush fire if a bush fire was to start.
 - ☐ The higher the Fire Danger Rating the more dangerous the conditions and the more likely that people will be injured or die if a bush fire occurs.
 - ☐ When the Fire Danger Rating is Extreme or Catastrophic for your area, any fires that start will be extremely hard for fire authorities to control. Even a well prepared, well constructed and actively defended home may not survive.
 - ☐ If Catastrophic conditions are expected the best option is to leave early the day or hours before a fire threatens.
 - ☐ Keep informed - check the Fire Danger Rating for your area at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
 - ☐ PREPARE your Bush Fire Survival Plan today. Know your trigger points and download a plan from www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



On days of Catastrophic or Extreme Fire Danger put your survival first and leave early.

| FIRE DANGER RATING | WHAT YOU SHOULD DO |
|--------------------|---|
| CATASTROPHIC | For your survival, leaving early is the only option. Leave bush fire prone areas the night before or early in the day – do not just wait and see what happens. Make a decision about when you will leave, where you will go, how you will get there and when you will return. Homes are not designed to withstand fires in catastrophic conditions so you should leave early. |
| EXTREME | Leaving early is the safest option for your survival. If you are not prepared to the highest level, leave early in the day. Only consider staying if you are prepared to the highest level – such as your home is specially designed, constructed or modified, and situated to withstand a fire, you are well prepared and can actively defend it if a fire starts. |
| SEVERE | Leaving early is the safest option for your survival. Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety – but only stay if you are physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions. If you're not prepared, leave early in the day. |
| VERY HIGH | Review your Bush Fire Survival Plan with your family. Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions. Be ready to act if necessary. |
| HIGH | |
| LOW MODERATE | |



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE. | BUSH FIRE INFORMATION LINE | 1800 679 737

Volunteers count!

THE Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*) indeed matches up to its name. This slender, long-tailed bright green parrot has three main populations, with the principal population found in Barmah-Millewa.

One of Australia's most unique wetland areas, Barmah-Millewa, is frequently occupied by 20,000 or more water birds and is an important habitat for fish. This rich environment provides the perfect place for the endangered Superb Parrot to nest in the hollows of the iconic River Red Gums.

During nesting, the Superb Parrot will travel up to 10km to feed in box woodlands. The female sits on the nest – not leaving until the young are at least a week old, with the male travelling to provide food.

After fledging, Superb Parrots will partially migrate, with the Barmah Superb Parrots travelling to the Corowa-Berrigan district, while the Superb Parrots from Millewa are known to fly north of Deniliquin. When it's nesting time, the birds return to the same nesting sites to begin the cycle again.

But, these are short treks compared to the population near Canberra that has been recorded as travelling as far as Trangie and Gilgandra in central NSW, and even into Queensland.

What does all of this have to do with volunteers?

One of the main threats to Superb Parrots is losing the connection from the nesting place to the feeding habitat. Hollows suitable for nesting form in old trees but landscape changes have depleted vegetation corridors to box woodlands, their foraging habitat.

In Victoria, volunteers with the Superb Parrot Project of Victoria have been revegetating that corridor to the box woodlands by planting as many as 7,500 trees including the majestic River Red Gums to create future foraging sites for the Superb Parrot and contribute to the overall health of the Murray River.

Each year the Threatened Bird Network, from Birds Australia, asks for Volunteers to join the annual Superb Parrot count in the Barmah-Millewa area. The count takes place towards the end of the breeding season, tracking numbers of adult birds as they travel from River Red Gum to box habitats to collect food for their fledglings. Each nesting site is recorded, including numbers of young.

Superb Parrot Project Volunteers of Victoria conduct the count in Barmah, led by Philippa Schapper. The NSW count is a joint effort between the Southern Riverina Field Naturalists and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service led by Rick Webster, Senior Project Manager Water.

Rick reports that the results from 14 years of data are positive. The count has shown that although the drought affected the amount of Superb Parrots successfully fledged, the numbers of breeding pairs remained at a sufficient level to place the Superb Parrot in a strong position to breed well when the drought ended. Volunteers are looking forward to observing the anticipated increase in young Superb Parrots.

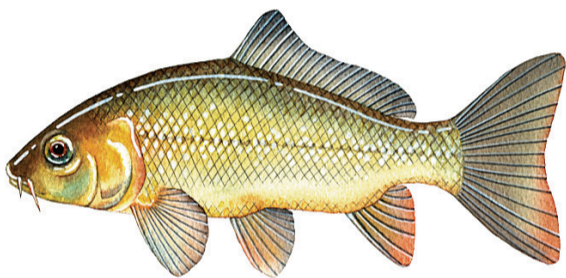
Volunteers are essential to maintain the program. If you would like to become a volunteer to count Superb Parrots please contact either Rick Webster on 03 5483 9111 or Philippa Schapper on 03 5867 3285.

Tips on how to spot a Superb Parrot

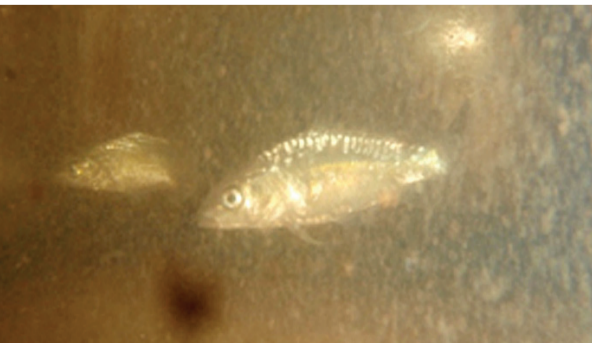
Superb Parrots utilise the same areas of the park each year, so the best way to spot a bird is to visit the flight paths they travel along to reach food sources outside the forest.

Superb Parrots are bright green birds with pointed wings and long thin tails. They fly swiftly through the canopy. Early in the breeding season males congregate in small feeding flocks.

Often this species is confused with immature Yellow Rosellas that are olive-green in colour. Yellow Rosellas differ in flight, having rounded wings and broad tails. Yellow Rosellas are also found throughout the area.



European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)



European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)

Daughterless Carp Project

A research project that aims to develop a long-term method of controlling introduced carp has been revived by the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority (LMD CMA).

Carp are native to many temperate regions of Asia. They were introduced to Australia around 1850 and have since become major pests. Carp compete with native fish for habitat and food and contribute to waterway degradation by sifting through sediment as they feed, causing muddy water and loss of in-stream vegetation.

For the last ten years, CSIRO has been developing genetic options for controlling and possibly eradicating carp in Australia. "Daughterless technology" aims to alter carp so they produce mainly male offspring over the long term, driving the pest to extinction as females become increasingly rare in the population.

Laboratory studies on Zebrafish (a small, short-lived relative of carp) show that daughterless technology is achievable, but a key question is whether the approach will work in carp.

With the support of the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA), in 2009 a collaborative project with the Invasive Animals Co-operative Research Centre (IACRC), CSIRO and Auburn University (USA) was initiated to answer this question. The LMD CMA has since stepped in and

provided just under \$60,000 in funding to the IACRC to continue this critical research into daughterless carp.

The first sets of carp produced as part of the research are just now maturing and preliminary data strongly suggests that the daughterless constructs are working as planned. However, until the constructs are incorporated into the fish's genes and passed onto their offspring (which should be predominantly males) the success of the project will not be known. It will take several more years to complete this analysis as carp take at least two years to reach sexual maturity.

For more information contact Troy Muster (Catchment Officer Projects) on 03 5021 9460 or the Invasive Animals CRC on (02) 6201 2890 or contact@invasiveanimals.com or Dean.Gilligan@dpi.nsw.gov.au

More information can be found at www.lmd.cma.nsw.gov.au or phone (03) 5021 9460



Houseboat holidays on the Murray River



Photo courtesy of Willandra Houseboats



Helping to care for the River from your houseboat

Parks Victoria Ranger in Charge, Kym Schramm, encourages visitors to help care for the Murray River when on a houseboat and remember the following tips:

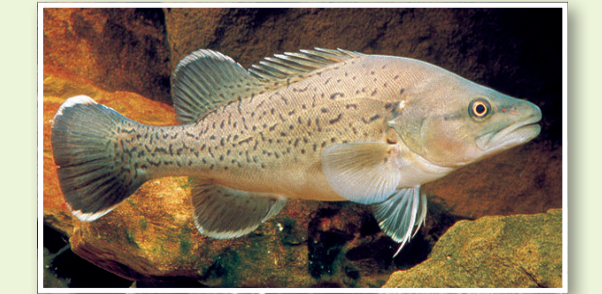
- Check where you are pulling up as you may be entering a national park in which firearms and dogs are prohibited and other specific regulations apply
- Remember to take your rubbish with you and help keep the Murray River clean. The smallest item of litter such as a cigarette butt can cause significant damage to wildlife
- Be aware that in some places, the river frontage is narrow and close to private property, which may not be fenced
- Take care when pulling up to prevent bank erosion
- Take care with camp fires and know the regulations to ensure everyone's safety and avoid a fine. Use gas wherever possible, as firewood is in short supply and not sustainable. If having a fire, use wood sparingly and only take fallen wood from the ground. Follow fire size regulations
- Use the toilet facilities on the boat

If you're up for a truly relaxing holiday, hiring a houseboat is a great way to experience the Murray River. There are plenty of options for hiring on both sides of the River to suit a range of budgets. Chris Durban and his wife Marina have been running Willandra Houseboats for 12 years and recently purchased Mildura Houseboats. They began with two houseboats and now have two fleets with a total of 15 boats. The Durbans say they thoroughly enjoy the lifestyle on the Murray River. "We love the peace and tranquillity and the changing moods of the seasons. The houseboats are a great office to work from and we love showing our visitors how to

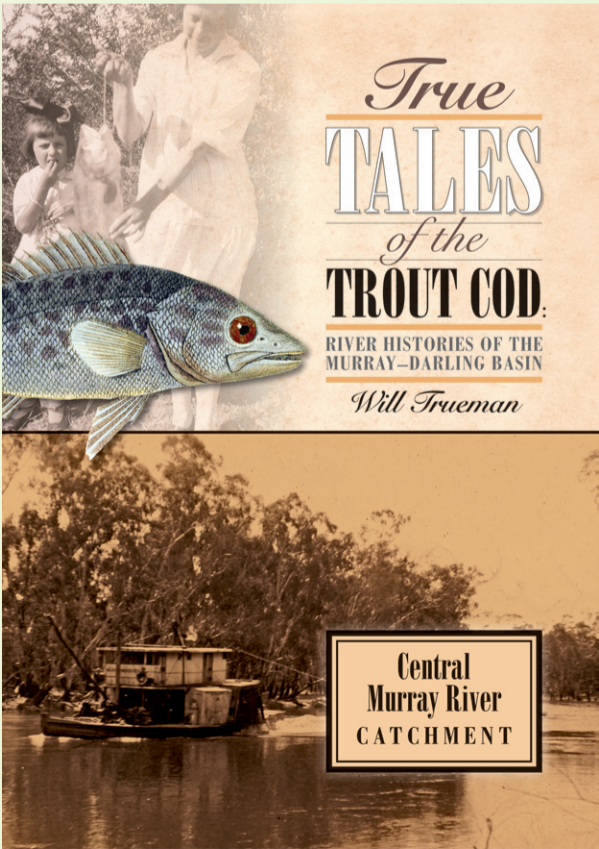
operate them," says Mr Durban. "In addition to local visitors, we get a lot of international tourists who have been to Australia before and are looking for a new kind of adventure. "There are so many things people can do from the houseboats including exploring the billabongs by canoe, bird watching or going for a bushwalk once you've tied up your boat." Most people enjoy their holiday so much that they don't want to get off the houseboat when they return!" he said. To find out more about Chris and Marina Durban's houseboats visit www.willandrahouseboats.com.au or call 1800 800 842.

True tales of the trout cod

THE Murray-Darling Basin Authority and The Australian River Restoration Centre have worked together with Will Trueman to produce a website and publications that tell the stories of fish and fishing from different regions of the Basin. The stories are told from the perspective of early explorers, settlers and Aboriginal people. Individual histories have been developed into booklets for some of the rivers of the Basin. Visit www.australianriverrestorationcentre.com.au/mdb/troutcod



Maccullochella macquariensis (Trout Cod)





Hey kids, want to learn more about the exciting animals in our bush?

Check out Wilderness Quest at www.wildernessquest.nsw.gov.au

Okay mums and dads, want to know what Wilderness Quest is?

Wilderness Quest is an initiative of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Wilderness Quest is an exciting new fun way for kids to find out more about the natural world and motivate them to explore the great outdoors safely. Aimed at five to eight year olds, Wilderness Quest is accessible on the web, and also an ipad App. It's a place for children to explore, play and have fun. Guided by Ranger Sam and his gang of friendly and cheeky Australian animals, children can explore a range of environments — from rainforests to coastal regions — through a variety of online experiences and games. They can take on challenges, collect points and learn about the natural wonders of our NSW national parks. Online visitors can access many of Wilderness Quest's features as a guest, but by signing up they can enjoy the full range of experiences on offer. The award winning Wilderness Quest - Nature Discovery app lets you explore a virtual ecosystem and immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of our natural landscapes. As you're travelling around our national parks you'll also find Wilderness Quest branded Discovery Tours and resource materials. It's all designed to help kids get the most out of their national park experience.



Happy exploring!





CAMPING FUN

WWW.JUNIORRANGERS.COM.AU

JUNIOR RANGERS ARE BORN TO EXPLORE. IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN NATURE, ANIMALS AND THE OUTDOORS THEN JUNIOR RANGERS IS FOR YOU.

Join a park ranger to hunt for treasure in the forest, climb mountains and explore crystal clear rockpools. Get close to nature, have fun and discover Victoria's wonderful parks.

For more information and activities visit juniorrangers.com.au or call Parks Victoria on 13 1963.

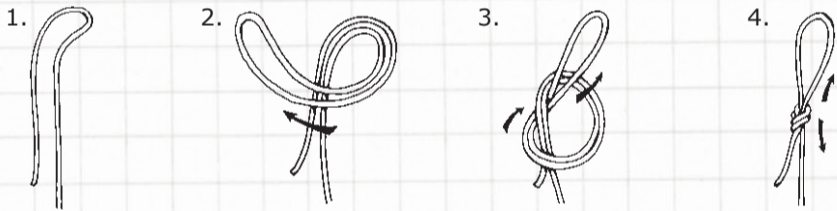
KNOTS FOR CAMPING AND FISHING

Knot tying is a skill that comes in handy for camping, fishing or even doing general tasks around the house! Unfortunately most people don't know how to tie a proper knot and when they do have to tie something, they make random loops and passes until they have something that resembles a knot, but isn't as secure as it should be.

In addition to the knots shown here, there are other knots that will do the tasks required; however we've found these knots to be simple and effective.

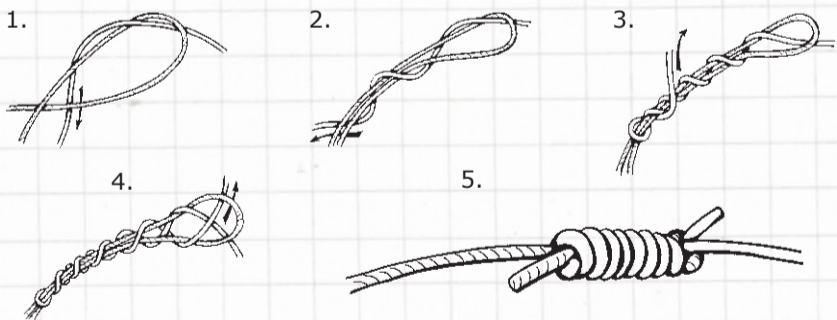
Double overhand loop

This knot is useful to easily attach a hook to a fishing line.



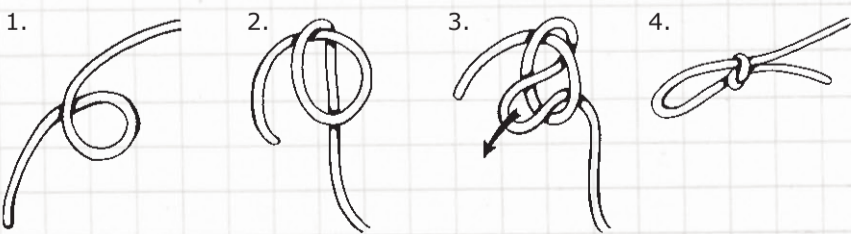
Albright knot

This is a good knot for attaching two sections of fishing line. Commonly used when attaching thicker line (leader material) to the main fishing line.



Slip knot

This handy knot is most commonly used to attach rope loosely to an object.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!



BORN TO EXPLORE



DID YOU KNOW?

The Murray River is Australia's longest river spanning three states, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. Compared to large rivers in other countries, it only has a small amount of water flowing down it. More water flows down the Amazon River in a day than down the Murray in a year! Due to the high demand for domestic, commercial and agricultural water supply, it's important to have protected areas along this precious resource to provide a safe habitat for our native plants and animals.

CAMPING FIND A WORD

Find the following words in puzzle below:

Backpack, Camera, Chairs, Firewood, First Aid Kit, Ice box, Lamp, Picnic, Shovel, Sleeping bag, Stove, Table, Tarpaulin, Tent, Torch

How many of these items can you find around your campsite?

JUNIOR RANGER SAFETY TIP!

Light fires in designated fireplaces or properly constructed fire pits or trenches. Don't light a fire if you are in doubt of safety or if a fire ban is in place. Use a fuel stove where possible, it's much better for the bush!

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | D | G | S | R | U | T | G | G | C | U | W | T | T | P |
| X | N | J | W | S | A | M | G | I | Y | L | C | A | O | M |
| F | S | L | E | E | P | I | N | G | B | A | G | R | R | A |
| W | I | W | S | N | L | C | F | F | V | X | Z | P | C | L |
| B | K | R | H | R | I | D | I | A | Z | E | L | A | H | R |
| Q | U | J | S | P | I | R | E | L | B | A | T | U | Y | Z |
| C | L | J | G | T | E | A | S | H | O | V | E | L | I | S |
| T | A | L | U | W | A | S | H | O | W | L | X | I | B | D |
| G | J | M | O | K | T | I | Z | C | I | S | O | N | W | J |
| F | Z | O | E | O | O | C | D | U | H | Q | B | D | C | M |
| B | D | Y | V | R | S | T | M | K | T | X | E | U | Q | I |
| S | D | E | M | L | A | O | N | I | I | Z | C | Z | C | N |
| K | C | A | P | K | C | A | B | E | N | T | I | G | U | D |
| Q | H | U | A | Q | S | P | S | Q | T | P | F | B | Z | S |
| T | A | N | Y | V | V | N | B | N | D | R | N | P | U | I |

Camping on Country

As you're visiting parks along the Murray River, it's fascinating to think that Aboriginal people have lived in these areas for thousands of years. Their strong connection to and understanding of the land and waterways has built up over many generations.

A number of inspirational camps and activities in River Red Gum parks have been helping to ensure that the Aboriginal culture and stories connected to these places are shared with younger generations.

One such camp was held at the Dharnya Centre in Barmah National Park in 2012.

Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation Senior Project Manager Jackie Walker said: "We hope the camp will help the girls in building a strong sense of sisterhood, identity and self-esteem though connection to their culture, traditions and strong female role models."

Seventeen girls from Echuca, Moama, Shepparton and Mooroopna attended the two day camp, organised by Parks Victoria in partnership with Yorta Yorta Nation, for females aged 12-20 years.

The girls explored Aboriginal cultural heritage sites as they walked and talked on country with Parks Victoria Cultural Heritage Officers Auntie Greta Morgan and Auntie Hilda Stewart.

They shared stories about spirituality and connection to the land around the campfire and learnt more about their culture and traditions through a series of workshops.

Auntie Denise Morgan showed the girls how to make jewellery and basket weaving, and they painted a mural of a scar tree also resembling family in a workshop led by artist Auntie Rochelle Patten.

Parks Victoria Cultural Officer, Hilda Stewart explained the importance of these experiences.

"We want to teach the young Aboriginal kids to be proud of their culture and who they are and to never forget where they come from. This is important because it will help connect them to country and their culture."

Through our ancestors and Elders, who have passed down our cultural heritage, it is up to us and future generations to continue and to follow in their footsteps.

"I've really enjoyed watching the kids participate in these different activities, having fun and asking questions. Getting kids out and about on country, so they can physically see what you are talking about, has been fantastic. Getting Elders involved, especially their own mob has also been really valuable," she said.

Local kids in many towns along the Murray River have also enjoyed learning about Aboriginal culture from Hilda in Junior Ranger Discovery Programs held during the school holidays. Activities included learning about and seeing traditional Aboriginal tools, weapons and bush foods.

For up-to-date information on holiday activities along the Murray River visit www.juniorrangers.com.au



RiverConnect – Connecting Shepparton and Mooroopna communities to their rivers

RIVERS can be so important and even the 'heart and soul' of local communities. RiverConnect began in 2005 in response to interest in the local rivers and forests and the decision to form a community group to help guide the future management of the rivers.

Riverconnect has brought together many community members, organisations and the local council with the aim to develop a strong sense of belonging and connection to the rivers. Those involved in the initiative include the Greater Shepparton City Council, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Parks Victoria, other natural resource management groups and Aboriginal and educational organisations.

The Goulburn and Broken rivers are vital for the local communities that they support including providing water for drinking, food processing and agriculture. The Aboriginal community also has strong links with the rivers and lands that stretch back through the ages.

The Goulburn is the longest river in Victoria, and the section from Lake Eildon to the River Murray has been declared a heritage river under the Heritage Rivers Act. This declaration aims to protect the important nature conservation, recreation, scenic and cultural heritage attributes of the River.



In partnership with: Parks Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Central Sub Region, Yorta Yorta Joint Body, Yorta Yorta Nations, Rumbalara Co-operative, Word and Mouth and Goulburn Murray Landcare Network.

Action programs and objectives

Connecting Community

To provide access and facilities, together with activities and information to enable the community to value the river and its environment and visit and enjoy this area as an integral part of their lifestyle.

Connecting Environment

To protect repair, enhance and sustain important river, wetland and forest environments, so that current and future generations can understand and enjoy natural river and redgum forest environments.

Connecting Aboriginal People

To provide programs, activities and facilities so that the community can understand and better appreciate the important historical and cultural significance this area holds for its traditional owners.

Connecting Education

To provide opportunities for the education sector and the broader community to understand the environment, culture and importance of the area as a valuable asset to appreciate, enjoy and protect.

Communications & Consultation

To provide information to the community to support the achievement of the overall RiverConnect objectives, and allow the community to influence the development RiverConnect strategic plan.

Vision

Shepparton and Mooroopna will be widely recognised as river towns where features of living here include:

- A thriving natural environment
- A connection with that environment
- A culture that is enriched by the traditional owners connection with the area

People value and respect our rivers and floodplains, whilst using them as part of their daily lives for recreation, relaxation and education.

The community, government and land managers, together with the traditional owners, work in partnership to protect and enhance the value of our rivers.



Regular activities that residents and visitors to the area can be involved in along the river include:

- Spotlight walks at Jordan's Bend (weeknight) –Squirrel glider sightings
- Walking or cycling along the extensive shared path network along the rivers in Shepparton
- Canoe trips on the Goulburn through River Country Adventours (www.adventours.com.au)
- Visiting Lower Goulburn National Park at Reedy Swamp – great for bird watching
- Visiting Gemmills Swamp in Mooroopna – two bird hides and a two-hour self guided walk developed by the Goulburn Valley Environment Group
- Looking out for Aboriginal scar trees in the River Red gums
- Fishing in the Goulburn River – shallow with plenty of snags (a current Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence is required)
- Walking to Kidstown on the shared path between Shepparton and Mooroopna
- Visiting Victoria Park Lake (and the Visitor Information Centre)
- Art Classes along the River

For more information about RiverConnect and upcoming events visit www.riverconnect.com.au

Copies of the RiverConnect strategic plan can be obtained from the Greater Shepparton City Council website: www.greatershepparton.com.au or by contacting the

Council office on (03) 5832 9700.

For more information regarding events and attractions in Shepparton, please contact the Visitor Information Centre toll free phone number 1800 808 839 or visit www.discovershepparton.com.au.

How to help injured or orphaned wildlife

WILDLIFE Rescue and Information Network Inc (WRIN) in Victoria and Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service (WIRES) in NSW are volunteer run organisations dedicated to rescuing and rehabilitating native fauna found injured, sick or orphaned. These organisations are endorsed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service respectively.

What to do with injured wildlife

When you find an injured animal or bird, it is important not to handle them any more than necessary. They are wild animals, not pets, so care must be taken. They will be very frightened at being approached and handled, and may try to defend themselves by biting or scratching.

Shock is the biggest killer, so warmth, darkness and quiet are very important. Place a blanket or jumper over the injured animal or bird to reduce stress and keep it warm. Remove injured wildlife from roads by picking them up firmly from behind. Be firm and keep away from teeth and claws. Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling as some animals can transmit diseases to humans.

What to do if you find orphaned wildlife

Many native animals are killed on the road, leaving orphaned pouched young still alive. If you find a dead adult marsupial, carefully remove it from the road and check its pouch for young. It is important to keep pouched young warm by wrapping them in a blanket or jumper, as they are unable to generate their own body heat. Do not try to feed any pouch young as they need a special diet and feeding the wrong milk could kill the baby. A warm - not hot - hot water bottle and a woollen jumper will keep the baby warm until it is taken to a shelter. Do not try to stand joeys up or let children play with them. They cannot show their stress the same way as domestic animals.

Take the orphaned animal to a wildlife shelter as soon as possible for urgent care.

To report injured wildlife in Victoria call Wildlife Victoria on 1300 094 535 or in News South Wales call WIRES on 1300 094 737.

For more information about these volunteer organisations visit www.wildlifevictoria.org.au or www.wires.org.au



Protecting River Banks

DO you live near, or undertake works on the banks of the Murray or other NSW waterways? New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) has released a new brochure to help you comply with the laws aimed at protecting our native fish and their habitat. The brochure outlines ways to manage important fish habitats including riverbank and in-stream vegetation and snags (large woody debris). It also identifies the types of works that require approval under the NSW Fisheries Management Act 1994. Rivers and other natural waterways provide vital

habitat for a range of species including fish, shellfish, frogs, platypus and water birds. They are also an important part of our way of life, providing water for livestock and domestic use and supporting industries such as tourism, recreational and commercial fishing and aquaculture. However, these habitats are under pressure from further development, increasing demand for water use and inappropriate land management practices. Combined, these pressures have caused loss of aquatic habitat, sedimentation, erosion and other water pollution problems.

Everyone has a role to play in ensuring our waterways continue to be healthy and productive for future generations. Check out the brochure to gain some useful tips on how you can help to look after the riverbank. You'll also find important information about how to comply with current laws aimed at protecting our fisheries and their habitat. Visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/habitat/rehabilitating/living-and-working-on-a-riverbank. If you would like a copy of the brochure, please call (02) 6626 1269.



Snags in the Murray River



Excavator doing unauthorised works on river bank

On the boardwalks - beautiful walks around Mildura

BY Sally Nowlan, Parks Victoria

IF you're keen to get out among the beautiful landscapes along the Murray River, there are some great boardwalks near Mildura that are well worth a visit.

Red Cliffs Scenic Reserve

Follow the tourist drive from Red Cliffs (about 16km south of Mildura) to Red Gum Gully at Red Cliffs Scenic Reserve. A short walk down approximately 30 steps leads to a boardwalk meandering through a gully of Red Gums and down to the river bank where you can see native water birds like Pelicans and Whistling Kites. Nearby, you'll also find the Scenic Reserve viewing platform that looks out over the river. It's a beautiful panorama of brilliant red cliffs along the Victorian side of the river. The lookout is wheelchair and pram friendly and there are picnic tables on site.

Kings Billabong

At Kings Billabong, about five kilometres east of Mildura, a boardwalk takes you through the stunning billabong and wetlands that are home to hundreds of water birds including Swans, Pelicans, Whistling Kites, Kookaburras, Ducks and many kinds of Parrots.

There are approximately 15km of walking trails to choose from starting at the Billabong Walks car park. These include a popular four kilometre return walk to the bird hide, through beautiful wetlands with huge River Red Gums and Black Box woodlands. Most of the walks here are wheelchair and pram friendly. There are seats and tables at the carpark but no toilet facilities. The nearest toilets are at Red Cliffs or Mildura. Don't forget to take your rubbish with you so these special places stay clean and beautiful.



Freshwater recreational fishing in New South Wales

Rules and Regulations

BEFORE you go fishing, you should be familiar with the bag and size limits and other rules that apply for the area you are fishing in.

Recreational Fishing Guides are available from many outlets throughout NSW and Victoria such as most fishing tackle shops, caravan parks, local shops, service stations, many Kmart stores, on the web or by phone.

The whole of the Murray River, from its source in the Snowy Mountains to the South Australian border, is NSW waters and is covered by NSW fishing laws, including the waters of Lake Mulwala. Lake Hume is managed under Victorian fishing rules (see below for further information).

Please note that a review of NSW recreational fishing regulations will commence in 2011 and extensive consultation will occur. This may result in changes to the laws during 2012. Check with your local NSW Fisheries Office before going fishing.

A NSW fishing licence is required to fish in the Murray River, even if you are standing on the Victorian bank. NSW fishing rules apply in the Murray River and Lake Mulwala.

Native fish bag and size limits

Why have bag and size limits?

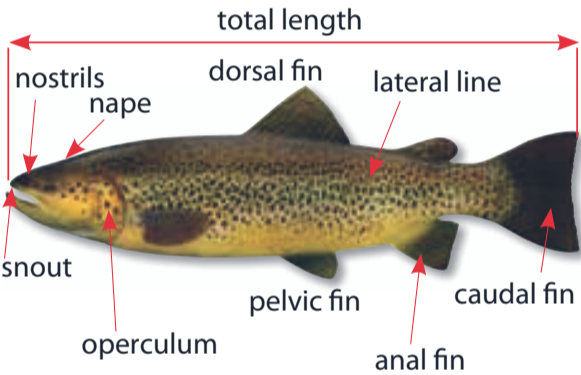
- Bag limits exist to ensure the sustainability of fish stocks and equitable share of catch among anglers
- Minimum size limits mean fish can breed before they are caught
- Maximum size limits exist for species where large fish produce a greater proportion of eggs

Note: The bag limit is the quantity specified per person next to the species listed in the table. If you have been fishing for more than one day you may have up to the possession limit, which is twice the daily bag limit, unless otherwise stated. The possession limit also applies to the transport and storage of fish. Legal length is minimum unless otherwise stated.

| Species | Fishing closure | Legal length (cm) | Bag limit per day |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Australian Bass and Estuary Perch (combined) | Closed season in rivers June-August inclusive | — | 2 (only 1 over 35cm in rivers single species or combined) |
| Blackfish – River | Fishing prohibited | 0 | 0 |
| Freshwater Catfish (Eel-tailed) | Closed to fishing in all western rivers and unlisted western dams | 0 | 0 (in western rivers and unlisted western dams) |
| | | 30 | 5 (in eastern dams and listed western dams) |
| | | 30 | 2 (in eastern rivers) |
| Crayfish – Murray | Closed season September-April inclusive. Fishing prohibited in notified trout waters and Blowering Dam | 9 | 5 (only 1 over 12cm) |
| Eel – Southern Shortfin | NA | 30 | 10 in total |
| Eel – Longfin | NA | 58 | 10 in total |
| Golden Perch | NA | 30 | 5 |
| Murray Cod | Closed season September-November inclusive | 60 | 2 (poss limit 4 with only 1 over 100cm) |
| Silver Perch | Fishing prohibited in rivers | 25 (in listed stocked dams) | 5 (in listed stocked dams) |
| Unlisted native species | NA | — | 10 in total |
| Yabbies – Freshwater | NA | — | 200 in total |

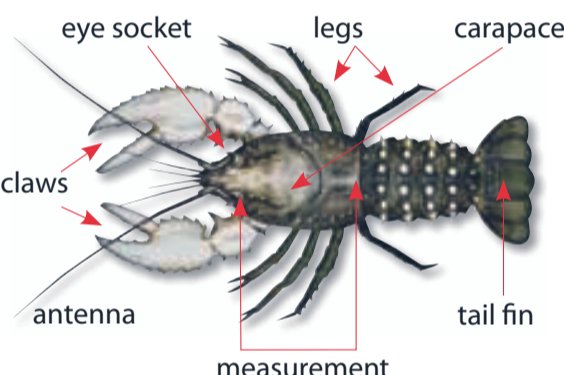
Measuring a fish

Fin fish



To determine the legal length of a fish, the fish is measured from the point of the snout to the tip of the tail. This is known as the total length.

Crayfish



Crayfish are measured from the rear of the eye socket to the centre rear of the carapace,

Illegal Fishing Methods

- It is illegal to use setlines, spear guns, spears, bow and arrows, poison or explosives or firearms to take fish, to us a gaff to take fish, to jag or foul hook fish, to use frogs, live finfish (including carp), live birds or live animals as bait, any traps or nets not permitted for recreational use, or to sell your catch.
- Carrying, possessing or using more than the legal number of attended rigged lines, in on or adjacent to waters.
- It is illegal to keep prohibited size fish – they should be returned to the water immediately with as little harm as possible.
- You must not alter the length of a fish by filleting, or removing the head or tail when you are in, on or adjacent to any waters, unless for immediate consumption, for immediate use as bait or unless at a fish cleaning facility.
- It is illegal to remove heads, tails and claws from crayfish in, on or adjacent to the water or to keep crayfish with eggs or to remove those eggs.

General freshwater fishing rules

Lines: Two attended lines are permitted in all non-tidal waters other than some notified trout waters. Attended lines must be within 50 metres, in your sight and have no more than 2 hooks per line or up to 3 treble hooks attached to any lure per line. Settings are not permitted. Any spare lines should not be rigged (should not be capable of taking fish).

Traps and Nets: In some waters you may use up to 5 yabby traps, 1 shrimp trap and 5 hoop (lift) nets all tagged with the user’s name and address and the letters YT, ST or HN (signifying YT – yabby trap, ST – shrimp trap, HN – hoop net). Persons must not set traps or nets for longer than 24 hours without lifting those traps or nets.

Dams: Areas below and above dams and weirs may be closed to fishing.

Lakes Hume and Mulwala: NSW fishing regulations apply to all of Lake Mulwala and Victorian regulations apply to all of Lake Hume.

For general fishing information, call the Fisheries Information Line 1300 550 474 or visit the website www.industry.nsw.gov.au
The buy a Fishing Licence 1300 369 365 www.licence.nsw.gov.au
To report illegal fishing activities call the Fishers’ Watch Phonenumber 1800 043 536

Threatened and protected species

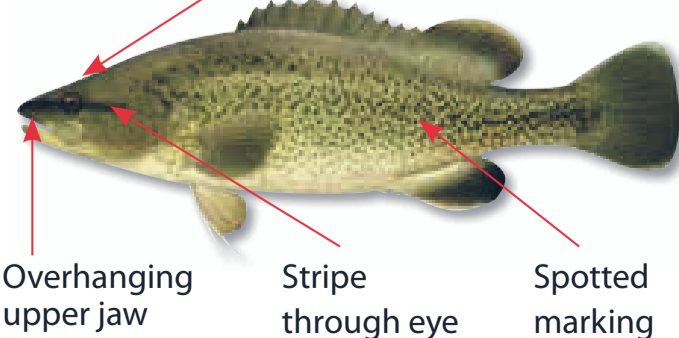
IT is an offence to take, harm or be in possession of threatened species. Threatened or protected fish must be immediately returned to the water with care if accidentally caught.

Trout Cod: to protect breeding Trout Cod, the Murray River is closed to fishing between Yarrawonga Weir and Tocumwal Road bridge from 1 September to 30 November inclusive.

Eastern Cod: To protect breeding Eastern Cod, fishing is prohibited from 1 August to 31 October in the Mann River and certain tributaries. Refer to the NSW Recreational Freshwater Fishing Guide, your local fisheries office, or website www.industry.nsw.gov.au for full details.

Trout Cod are protected. You can identify them from Murray Cod by:

Trout Cod



Trout and Salmon legal lengths and bag limits

| Waters | Legal Length (cm) | Bag Limit per day |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Trout spawning | 50 | 1 |
| Artificial fly and lure | 25 | 2 |
| General trout streams and dams | 25 | 5 |
| All other waters | 25 | 10 |

NSW Recreational Fishing Fee

TO fish in any water in NSW, you are required to pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee and have the receipt for payment of the current fee in your immediate possession. If not, you risk an on the spot fine.

You can pay the fishing fee:

- On the internet at www.licence.nsw.gov.au
- By calling 1300 369 365 (Visa and Mastercard only)
- From hundreds of standard and gold fishing fee agents, eg tackle outlets, service stations,
- From most Kmart stores in NSW

By law, all the licence fees are placed into special trusts overseen by angler committees and can only be spent on improving recreational fishing in NSW.

Recreational fishing in Victoria - where to find the information you need

A VICTORIAN Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) covers all forms of recreational fishing in all of Victoria's marine, estuarine and fresh waters. Victorian RFLs are not valid in other states or territories, so check if you need a licence when you intend to fish interstate.

Who Needs a Licence?

Unless you are exempt, an RFL is required when:

- Taking, or attempting to take from public waters, any species of fish by any method, including line fishing, bait collection, gathering shellfish, yabby fishing, prawning and spearfishing, and/or
- Using or possessing recreational fishing equipment in, on or next to Victorian waters.

Exemptions

You will not need an RFL to fish if you are:

- Under 18 years of age
- 70 years of age or over
- The holder of a Victorian Government Seniors Card or interstate equivalent
- The holder of a Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Card
- The holder of a Veterans' Affairs Repatriation Health Card, coded TPI, and/or
- The holder of a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card relating to age, disability or carer status, coded DSP, AGE, CAR.

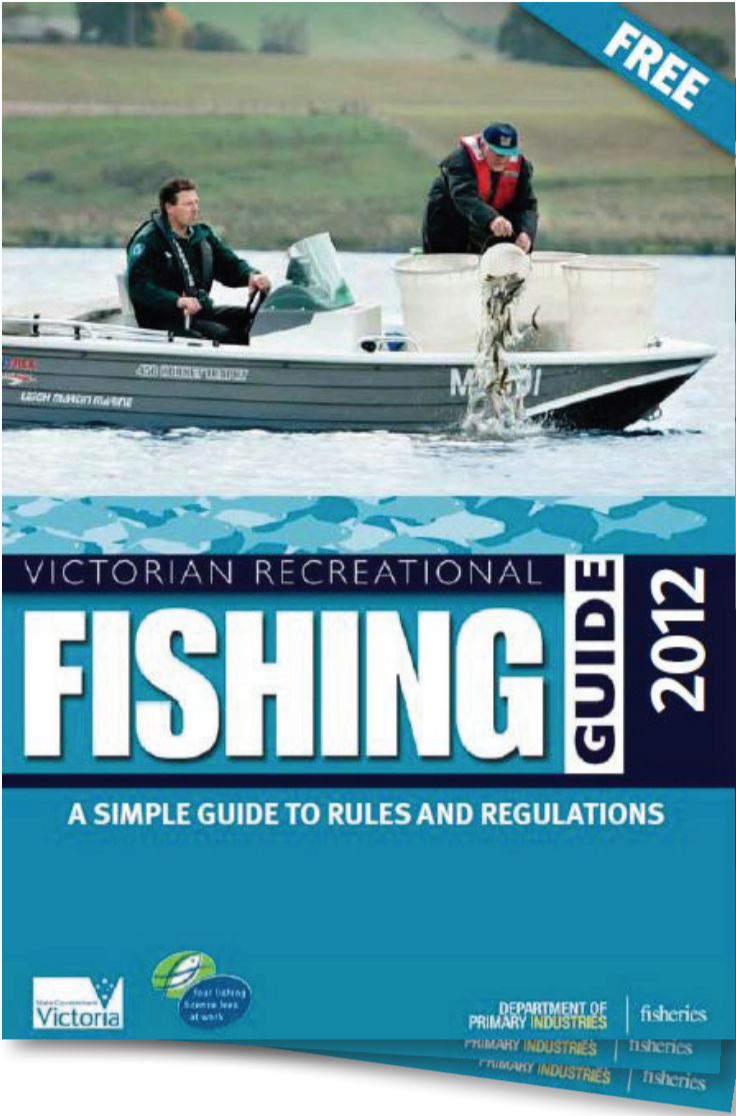
Victorian RFLs are available from many of the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) offices and more than 980 retail businesses throughout Victoria, including most retail fishing tackle stores.

Contact the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186, or purchase online at www.new.dpi.vic.gov.au/fisheries/recreational-fishing/fishing-licence.

It is important for fishers to know information about closed seasons, bag limits, minimum sizes and permitted equipment in Victoria in order to fish sustainably and to do the right thing.

The Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide contains all of this information and more.

View the Guide online at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fishing or hard copies can be obtained (free of charge) from reputable fishing tackle shops, DPI offices or by calling the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186.



Victoria

For general fishing and recreational licence information, call the DPI Customer Service Line

136 186

or visit the website

www.dpi.vic.gov.au

To report illegal fishing activities

**call 13 FISH
13 34 74**

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS 'AUSSIE RULES'

Your guide to boating safety interstate

Boating is regulated by State Governments so different laws apply in different States. When it comes to the Murray River, which borders Victoria and New South Wales (NSW), the laws of NSW apply.

This guide outlines some of the differences between the laws of Victoria and NSW. Make sure you check out all of the regulations before you head out on the water.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) or 'Lifejackets'

Both States recognise Australian and a range of international lifejacket standards. For information about lifejacket regulations in Victoria visit www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au, and in NSW visit www.maritime.nsw.gov.au

Towed water sports (waterskiing and wakeboarding)

NSW:

Observers must be at least 16 years of age (or hold a Young Adult Licence).

You must keep a distance of at least 60 metres from people and non-powered vessels and 30 metres from powered vessels and fixed objects.

Victoria:

Observers must be at least 12 years of age.

At speeds of greater than five knots you must keep at least 50 metres from a person in the water, another vessel or a fixed or floating structure.

Please note: Both States require any person being towed to wear an appropriate lifejacket.

Personal water craft (PWC) operation

In both States you require a PWC licence to operate a PWC.

NSW:

At speeds of 10 knots or more, you must keep a distance of at least 60 metres from people and non-powered vessels, and 30 metres from powered vessels and fixed objects.

Victoria:

At speeds greater than five knots you must keep at least 50 metres from a person in the water, another vessel or a fixed or floating structure.

Please note: Both States require any person on a PWC to wear an appropriate lifejacket.

Capacity stickers

NSW:

Known as a 'safety label' it shows the capacity of the vessel and the maximum number of people that can be carried must be clearly visible from each driving position on a powered craft (called a 'PWC behaviour label' for PWCs).

Victoria:

A range of recreational vessels must display an Australian Builder's Plate in an obvious location.

The plate details the maximum carrying capacity of the boat (passenger and load), the maximum engine capacity, and for vessels under six metres in length, the vessel's buoyancy characteristics.

Please contact Transport Safety Victoria for information about which recreational vessels must have a plate affixed.

Incident reporting

NSW:

Where an incident has resulted in death, injury or damage to property in excess of \$5,000, a written report must be forwarded to NSW Maritime within 24 hours, setting out the particulars, unless these have already been given to a NSW Maritime Officer.

Vessel incident report forms are available from any NSW Maritime Operations Centre, Police, Marine Rescue NSW or by visiting: www.maritime.nsw.gov.au

Victoria:

All incidents must be reported to Victoria Police where there is death, injury or damage to property and the property owner or their representative is not present on 1800 135 729. In an emergency call 000.

Marine incident reporting forms are available at: www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au

Direction of travel

Both States follow international practice - stay to the right in rivers and channels.

On lakes, the direction of travel is anti-clockwise unless otherwise stated. If in doubt, consult the relevant waterway manager and follow authorised signage.

Further information

Transport Safety Victoria: www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au or 1800 223 022

NSW Maritime: www.maritime.nsw.gov.au or 13 12 36

Watch your Wake! - Reducing the negative effects of wake generated by powered boats on the River Murray

DURING the summer months many of us will start to think about spending more time by the river to escape the heat, catch up with friends and family and unwind and enjoy the natural landscape. Some might cruise about in a tinny and find a nice place to cast a line. Others might strap on a pair of water skis, jump on a wakeboard or head out on a jet ski.

However, the relatively calm waters of the River Murray that make it so ideal for boating, also mean that the River is vulnerable to the potentially negative effects of certain activities, particularly those that produce waves or ‘wake’.

The Murray River is an ancient river that meanders its way across a vast flat continent. Compared to other rivers around the world, the Murray River has evolved as a naturally low energy river system, with relatively slow currents and low rates of erosion on a global scale.

Wake generated by powered boating activities can cause considerable damage, depending on a number of factors – the boat speed and type, direction of travel and distance from the bank. As wake waves are caused by water displacement, often the largest waves are produced when boats move from displacement speed (<8 knots) to planing speed (>20 knots) and when slow towing.

Continued exposure to wake may lead to river channel and water quality degradation, including increased bank erosion, increased turbidity and loss of instream and riparian vegetation that provide important habitat and stabilise the river banks.

Boat wake can also negatively affect other people who use the river including swimmers, kayakers or fishermen. It is important to be aware of these potential negative effects and try to minimise them.

Here are some simple steps to follow:

- Always be aware of your wake, especially when changing speeds or navigating in shallow waters that can make wake larger
- When you’re travelling close to banks, slow displacement speed causes the least damage.
- Before taking the boat onto the plane, get into deep water well away from the nearest bank and get the boat on the plane without delay
- In narrow sections of the river, it’s even better if you stay in displacement mode and take the time to enjoy the scenery or troll a line
- Avoid travelling at transition speed, with the stern dug in and the bow high – you’re making the most damaging wake in this phase
- If your boat is fitted with a wake enhancing device, consider operating it in designated areas such as lakes, and be aware of sections of the river that are no wash zones

Next time you are in a boat, have a look at the wake generated by your vessel and consider the effects on the river banks and fellow visitors to help ensure a safe, sustainable and enjoyable visit for everyone.

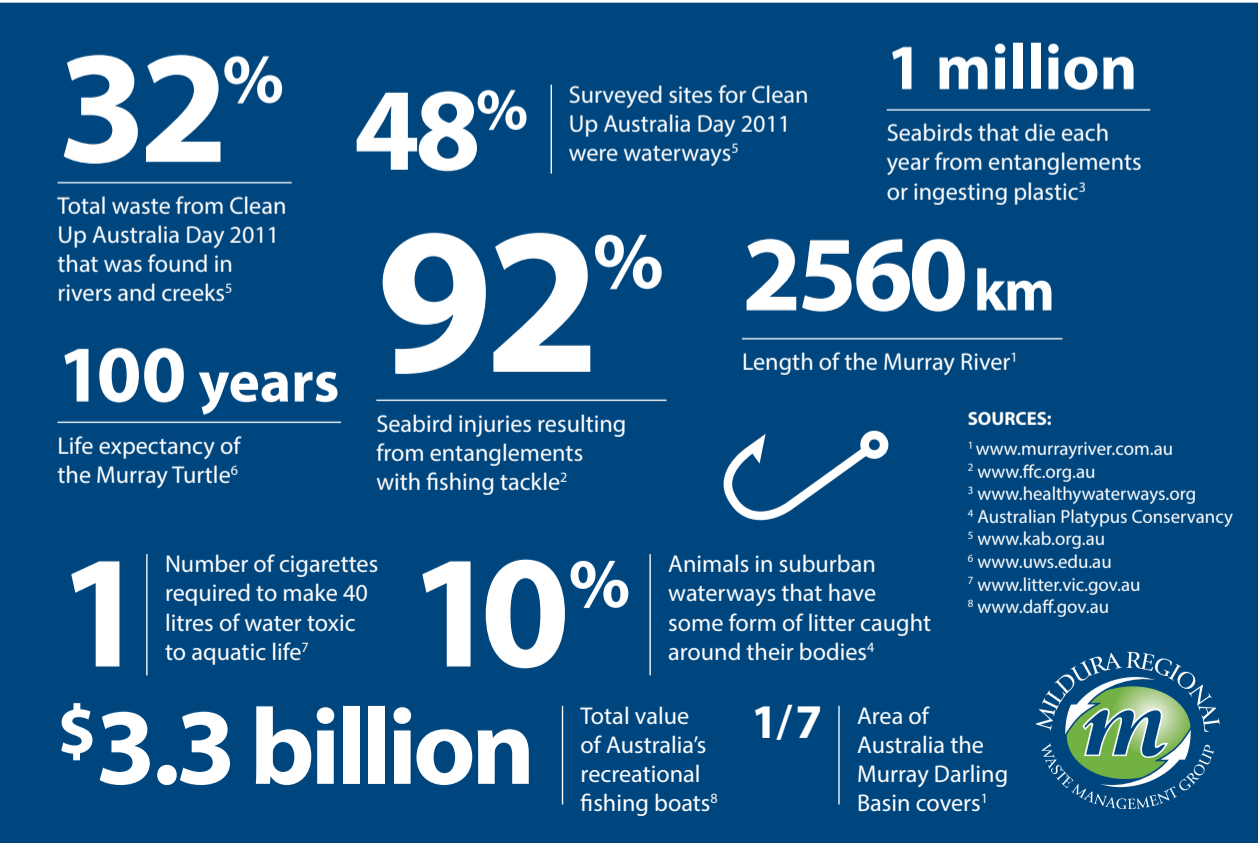


Sunraysia River Watch

SUNRAYSIA River Watch is a community self-help program designed to protect the river and its environment from pollution and degradation. The Sunraysia River Watch initiative was launched in 1992 to keep a friendly eye on the Murray River from Robinvale down to the South Australian border, and the Darling River in the Wentworth vicinity. The community is encouraged to “treat the river like a friend” and utilise the 24 hour 1300 RIVERWATCH phone line.

Concerned community members and visitors who value the river environment can phone 1300 RIVERWATCH to report illegal or anti-social behaviour along the river. Reports are referred to an appropriate authority for following up.

Community members are also encouraged to become involved in the committee, that meets at Enjoy Wine Café in Mildura on the first Tuesday of every month at 9 am. More information can be found on the Sunraysia River Watch website www.riverwatch.com.au.



Keep our River and wildlife tangle-free



BY Mildura Regional Waste Management Group

Fishing Guide:

Choose the right gear

- Avoid alloy or stainless steel hooks
- Choose the right line / braid for the scenario

Avoid interaction

- Never cast near birds or turtles
- Before casting check for birds flying overhead
- Don't feed wildlife when gutting fish

Manage your waste

- Take a bag for rubbish
- Coil excess line and cut coils so the line becomes short pieces
- Dispose of rubbish responsibly - including cigarette butts, bait boxes, carp, lure packaging and excess line

River Red Gums drop branches *Be safe, not sorry. Don't let this happen to you!*



TREES, especially the iconic River Red Gums, can drop branches, or entire trees can fall, without warning. There is no way to determine when a tree might fall or drop a branch. Trees may be particularly prone to dropping a branch or falling when they are under stress, including:

- High wind
- Extreme temperatures or sudden changes in temperature
- Drought
- Fire
- Compaction
- Flood

The recent floods, following an extended drought period, have potentially increased the likelihood of trees falling or dropping branches, especially those with roots that may have been loosened as a result of river bank erosion and destabilisation.

There is no way to predict which way a tree might fall so it is important to stay clear of trees. Branches falling from trees rarely fall straight down. They may bounce against other branches and swing out well beyond the edge of the canopy of the tree.

Follow the guide to minimise the risks to you and others. For more information or advice on safe camping go to www.parks.vic.gov.au, call Parks Victoria on 13 19 63 or speak to a ranger on patrol.

DO

- ✓ Set up camp, park your car and picnic well away from trees as branches can swing out beyond the edge of the canopy of a tree
- ✓ Take extra care in very hot or windy weather as these can be particularly dangerous
- ✓ Observe all warning signage
- ✓ Stay well away from trees that appear to be dead or have dead branches

DON'T

- ✗ Camp, park or picnic under or near trees, even if it is a hot day and you are seeking shade
- ✗ Damage trees in any way, including cutting or marking them
- ✗ Climb trees or attach rope swings to trees



Play it safe by the water this summer

VISITORS to the Murray region are urged to play it safe by the water this summer, with an increased number of drowning deaths in inland waterways continuing.

Inland waterways were the scene of 47 per cent of drowning deaths in 2010/11, with males four times more likely to drown than females.

Life Saving Victoria Manager of Research and Injury Prevention, Dr Bernadette Matthews, said many people drown in Victoria's rivers, lakes and dams or are paralysed after diving into shallow water.

"Rivers can often conceal submerged objects like trees, branches, rocks or discarded rubbish so it's vital to look before you leap," Dr Matthews said.

"If visiting inland waterways, never swim alone and always let others know your plans, like where you're going and when you plan to return."

Recent flooding has changed water conditions in many areas, so be sure to check signage and speak to a local

before entering the water.

Dr Matthews said alcohol continues to be a key risk factor for drowning.

"Deaths where alcohol was reportedly consumed by the individual prior to drowning represent over a quarter of all drowning deaths in Victoria," she said.

"Mixing alcohol and water activities is a dangerous combination; alcohol can severely impede your swimming ability and cause you to become disoriented in the water."

For more water safety information, visit www.watersafety.vic.gov.au or download the Victorian Water Safety Guide smartphone app by searching for 'water safety' in the App Store or Google Play.

Water safety tips:

- Look before you leap
- Never swim alone
- Alcohol and water don't mix
- Check conditions before you go



Protect yourself from mosquitoes



WE all love getting outdoors enjoying the sunshine and warm weather. Unfortunately, mosquitos do too and with all the rain we have experienced, they are likely to be out in full force again this summer. They're not just annoying – some mozzies can transmit serious diseases.

There are simple things you can do to protect yourself:

- Wear light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing when outdoors
- Use mosquito repellents containing DEET or picaridin on exposed skin
- Try to limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are about (usually dusk and dawn)
- Make sure there is no stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed around your home or camping area
- On holidays make sure your accommodation is properly fitted with mosquito netting or screens
- Don't forget the kids – it's safer to spray or rub insect repellents on their clothes rather than directly onto their skin

Further information can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas/diseases/gr_vector or contact your local Council Environmental Health Department.



Campfire safety

THE first question you should ask yourself about a campfire is “do I need one?” There may seem to be plenty of wood on the ground, but much of it is providing a home for wildlife.

Visitors to our Murray River parks and forests are urged to take extreme care with campfires. Unattended campfires can easily spread in hot windy conditions and start a bushfire.

Approximately 10 per cent of wildfires in Victoria’s parks and forests are started by campfire escapes, so it is important that people are aware of the current weather and fire conditions and also the forecast conditions in the days following their visit.

Campfires are not permitted in some areas of public land or may only be allowed in purpose-built fireplaces. Check what restrictions are in place when planning your camping trip and use a properly constructed fireplace where

provided, or use a fuel stove.

If there are no restrictions on campfires, and in the absence of a fireplace, campfires should be lit in a 30 centimetre deep trench, with a three metre radius above and around the fire clear of vegetation and other flammable materials. Wood for campfires should be no longer than one metre.

Remember:

- Campfires are prohibited on days of Total Fire Ban and are not permitted in most parks – if you are unsure of restrictions, do not light a campfire
- Take care on dry, windy days – if the wind is strong enough to carry sparks, don’t light a campfire
- Keep your campfire just big enough for cooking and keeping warm

- Collect only dead wood from the ground. Cutting down any tree, dead or alive, is not permitted
- Campfires must be attended by an adult at all times. You must be within 50m of the campfire while it is alight and within line of sight
- Put your fire out with water, not soil, even if you are going for a short walk or swim
- If your campfire is cool to touch it is safe to leave

For information on planned burns and fires in Victoria and general fire safety advice, please contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL) on freecall 1800 240 667. Callers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech/communication impairment may call textphone/telewriter (TTY) on 1800 122 969.

Making Victoria FireReady:

Don't let your campfire go bush!

- Clear the ground and air space of flammable material (eg. leaves, twigs, tree stumps) within 3m of your campfire
- Campfires must be lit in a 30cm deep hole, and cannot exceed 1m² in size
- An adult must be present at all times
- Never leave your fire unattended
- Extinguish your campfire with water, not soil
- When it's cool to touch, it's safe to leave

ON-THE-SPOT FINES APPLY FOR UNSAFE CAMPFIRES

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

FireReady

State Government Victoria

Victorian BushfireInformation Line: 1800 240 667

www.dse.vic.gov.au

Recycling and waste disposal locations along the Murray River

Moira Shire

Ph: 03 5871 9222

Barmah – Cnr Moira Lakes Rd & Racecourse Rd
Extended hours from Boxing Day 26 December 2011 to 26 January 2012
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8.00am - 12.00noon
Saturday and Sunday 9.00am - 3.00pm

Cobram Landfill – Pye Rd – north of Murray Valley Hwy
Monday to Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm
Saturday and Sunday 10.00am - 3.00pm

Nathalia – Cnr Shepparton/Barmah Rd & Balls Rd
Thursday 8.30am - 12.30pm
Saturday 12.30pm - 4.30pm

Numurkah – Naring Rd between Hendys Rd & Lorenzs Rd
Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday 10.00am - 5.00pm

Strathmerton – Murray Valley Hwy between Ruttles Rd & Stokes Rd
Wednesday and Sunday 9.00am - 12.00noon

St James – Kellys Rd, south of St James Rd
Saturday 9.00am - 12.00pm

Tungamah – Tungamah Rd between Chinaman’s Lane & Cemetery Rd
Saturday 1.00am - 4.00pm

Yabba – Yabba South Rd between Katandra Rd & Jeffreys Rd
Sunday 9.00am - 12noon

Yarrowonga – Channel Rd east of Benalla-Yarrowonga Rd
Everyday 10.00am - 5.00pm

Campaspe Shire

Ph: 03 5481 2200

Where recyclables and waste are separated waste disposal is free at Campaspe Shire transfer stations. Waste should be securely contained in a bag. Campers waste and recyclables can also be left at the Torrumbarry Road House for a small fee – currently \$3 – with recyclables free.

Gunbower – Murray Valley Highway (2km east of town)
Monday 1.00pm - 4.00pm
Sunday 9.00am - 12.00pm

Echuca Environment Centre – McKenzie Rd
Monday to Saturday 8.00am - 4.45pm
Sunday 10.00am - 3.45pm

Rochester – High Street
Tuesday 1.00pm - 4.00pm
Thursday and Sunday 9.00am - 12.00pm

Torrumbarry Roadhouse – 5487 7260
– Murray Valley Hwy, Torrumbarry
Open 7 days per week – Sorted recycling free.
\$3 per bag for general rubbish

City of Wodonga

Ph: 02 6022 9300

Wodonga – Kane Rd
Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Saturday and Sunday 10.00am - 4.00pm

Albury Shire Council

Ph: 02 6043 5860

Albury Waste Management Centre – Centaur Rd, Lavington
Monday to Friday 7.30am - 5.00pm
Saturday and Sunday 9.00am - 4.00pm

Gannawarra Shire

Ph: 03 5450 9333

Kerang – Kerang-Murrabit Rd
Tuesday and Friday 10.00am - 2.00pm
Sunday 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Cohuna – cnr Chuggs and Cohuna-Leitchville Rds
Tuesday and Friday 10.00am - 2.00pm
Sunday 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Swan Hill Rural City Council

Ph: 03 5036 2333

Swan Hill Sea Lake – Swan Hill Rd – 4km West of Swan Hill
Sunday to Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm
Saturday 9.00am - 2.00pm

Piangil – 3km South of the township on Hayward Rd adjacent to railway line
Wednesday 9.00am - 3.00pm
Sunday 1.00pm - 4.00pm

Boundary Bend – Kooloonong Rd 5km south of the township
Tuesday, Thursday & Sunday 9.00am - 12.00pm

Robinvale – Sea Lake-Swan Hill Rd, 10km south-east of Robinvale
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9.00am - 3.00pm

Ultima Sea Lake – Swan Hill Rd – 1km East of Ultima
Sunday and Wednesday 9.00am - 1.00pm

Wakool, NSW

Ph: 03 5887 5007

Barham – East Barham Rd
Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday 12.00pm - 5.00pm

Goodnight – Goodnight Rd
Wednesday 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Sunday 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Koraleigh – Koraleigh Rd
Wednesday 9.30am - 12.30pm
Saturday 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Indigo Shire

Ph: 03 5728 8000

Beechworth – Diffey Rd
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday 1.00 - 5.00pm
Rutherglen – Cornishtown Rd
Friday, Saturday, Sunday 1.00 - 5.00pm

Towong Shire

Ph: 02 6071 5100

Corryong Landfill – Sugarloaf Rd
Tuesday and Thursday 4.00pm - 6.00pm *Summer*
Saturday 8.00am - 12.00pm
Sunday 12.00pm - 4.00pm

Tallangatta Transfer Station – Murray Valley Highway
Tuesday and Thursday 10.00am - 12.00pm
Saturday 8.00am - 12.00pm
Sunday 12.00pm - 4.00pm

Corowa Shire

Ph: 02 6033 8999

Corowa – Albury Rd
Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8.00am - 1.00pm
Tuesday and Thursday 12.00pm- 5.00pm
Saturday and Sunday 8.00am - 5.00pm

Mulwala – Mulwala-Savenake Rd
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday 9.00am – 1.00pm

Howlong
Tuesday and Friday 2.00pm - 5.30pm
Wednesday 7.30am - 11.30am
Saturday and Sunday 10.00am - 5.30pm

Berrigan Shire

Ph: 03 5888 5100

Tocumwal – Newell Highway, Tocumwal
Sunday, Wednesday, Friday 1.30pm - 4.00pm

Finley Recycling Centre – Killeens Road, Finley
Sunday 8.30 - 12.00pm

Berrigan – Greenhills Road, Berrigan
Sunday 12.30 - 4.00 pm
Tuesday, Thursday 1.30pm - 4.00pm

Murray Shire

Ph: 03 5884 3302

Moama Waste Disposal Depot – Centre Road, Off Cobb Highway – Phone (03) 5480 0414
Monday to Friday 11.00am - 4.00pm
Saturday and Sunday 9.00am - 4.00pm

Mathoura Transfer Station – Clifton Street
– Phone (03) 5884 3694
Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday 8.00am - 4.00pm

Deniliquin Council

Ph: 03 5898 3155

Deniliquin Waste Disposal Depot – Hay Road (Cobb Highway) about 4km from the North Deniliquin roundabout
Open every day 8.30am - 4.00pm

Mildura Rural City Council

Ph: 03 5018 8100

Mildura Landfill – Scherger Dve, off Ontario Ave
Monday to Friday 7.00am - 4.45pm
Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays 8.00am - 3.45pm

Nangiloc Transfer Station – Castle Crossing Rd
Tuesday and Thursday 1.00 - 6.00pm
Sunday 3.00 - 6.00pm

Lake Cullulleraine Transfer Station – Sturt Hwy
Wednesday 1.30pm - 5.00pm
Sunday 9.00am - 12.30pm

Werrimull Waste Facility – King St
Wednesday 9.00am - 12.30pm
Sunday 1.30pm - 5.00pm

Sewage Dump Point
Cnr Benetook Ave and Adams St, Mildura

Wentworth Shire Council

Ph: 03 5027 5027

Wentworth Transfer Station – Pooncarie Road
Sunday and Wednesday 8.0am - 4.45pm
Friday 12.30pm - 4.45pm

Dareton Transfer Station – Dunya Road
Tuesday and Saturday 8.00am - 4.00pm
Friday 12.30pm - 4.45pm

Pomona Transfer Station – Neilpo Road
Friday 8.00am - 12.00pm

Buronga Landfill – Arumpo Road, 2.5km from the Silver City Highway turnoff
Monday – Friday 8.00am - 4.45pm
Saturday, Sunday 9.00am - 4.45pm

Balranald Shire Council

Ph: 03 5020 1300

Balranald – Sturt Highway
Tuesday, Thursday 5.00pm - 7.00pm
Saturday
Sunday 10.00am - 1.00pm
10.00am – 3.00pm

Euston – Sturt Highway
Tuesday, Thursday 5.00pm - 7.00pm
Saturday 10.00am - 1.00pm
Sunday 10.00am - 3.00pm

Tumbarumba Shire Council

Ph: 02 6948 9100

Tumbarumba Waste Transfer Station – Saleyards Rd, Tumbarumba, off Mason’s Hill Rd
Sunday 1.00pm - 6.00pm
Wednesday 8.00am - 2.00pm
Friday 1.00am - 5.00pm
Saturday 9.00am - 2.00pm
Khancoban Landfill – Alpine Way, Khancoban
Tuesday, Friday, Sunday 1.00pm - 6.00pm

Note: All landfills are closed on Christmas Day, Anzac Day and Good Friday.
Sewage Dump Points – Some shires and some caravan parks have Sewage Dump Points for emptying portable toilets and caravan sullage.

Safe and sustainable camping guidelines



Campfires

If in doubt – Leave it out!

Small campfires are permitted for cooking or warmth provided:

- It is not a day of Total Fire Ban. Gas appliances are also prohibited in open areas on days of total Fire Ban
- The fire is in a properly constructed fireplace or a 30cm deep trench. Trenches must be backfilled before leaving
- All flammable material within a distance of 3 metres is removed around a campfire or BBQ
- All flammable material within 1.5 metres is removed from around a campfire or BBQ that uses gas, liquid or chemical fuel
- The fire is not left unattended at any time and is completely extinguished with water before leaving. The person in charge of the fire must be in the line of sight and within 50 metres of the fire
- The fire is no larger than 1 square metre
- In NSW, solid fuel fires are not permitted during the 'solid fuel fire ban period' over summer months. Call the NSW National Parks office for more information 03 5483 9100



Danger

- Do not camp or park under or near trees as they can drop branches without warning, and may fall some distance from the tree
- Take care when swimming – fast currents, underwater objects and holes can be hazardous
- Do not venture into deep water without a life jacket
- Do not dive or jump into the river or use any kind of swing
- Beware of rising water. Access tracks can be flooded when the river level rises
- Be alert to other dangers – safety is your responsibility



Rubbish

Carry In Carry Out

In Victoria:

- No bins are provided on the Victorian side of the Murray River
- Take all rubbish home for recycling or to a local waste disposal location
- Avoid bringing glass bottles and containers into the park
- Do not spray paint or attach signs to trees or objects
- Keep campsites free of litter at all times
- Do not place litter in campfires

In NSW:

- Rubbish collection points are provided at the entrances to most NSW reserves



Firewood

Do the bush a favour – use a gas stove instead

- Cutting down any tree dead or alive is an offence – it can also be very dangerous
- Collect only a small amount of firewood from the ground – less than one cubic metre
- Do not burn hollow logs
- Do not drag or snig logs
- Do not place logs larger than 1 metre on the fire
- Firewood for domestic use can only be collected from designated areas. Call Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service on 1300 361 967



Campsites

The best campsites are found, not made

- All camps must be at least 20 metres from any waterway
- Permanent structures or camps are not permitted. Campsites must be vacated when directed by a parks employee
- Digging steps into river banks is illegal and can cause erosion and landslides
- Camping is not permitted in day visitor areas or on licensed water frontages adjacent to private property
- Unattended caravans and tents are deemed to be in permanent occupation and will be subject to legal proceedings if not moved when requested to do so by a parks employee



Toilets

- Chemical toilets are recommended, but earth pit toilets are acceptable
- Toilets must be at least 100 metres from any waterway
- Bury all toilet waste, including toilet paper



4WD and motorbikes

Don't take vehicles or motorbikes off road

- Off road use of any vehicle (4WD, motorbikes and cars) is strictly prohibited and fines apply
- Drivers and riders must be licensed and vehicles registered and roadworthy
- Remember that Victorian Recreational Registration for motorbikes is not recognised as legal in NSW
- Helmets must be worn
- Normal traffic laws apply
- Remember that drivers, walkers, bike riders and horse riders can all share the same tracks in the park
- Boats and jet skis must only be launched at boat ramps. Vehicles must not be driven onto sand beaches or below the normal water mark (normally defined by the grassy edge)



Dogs and other pets

Ensure that you and your pets enjoy your holiday

- Check whether dogs and other pets are permitted in the area before leaving home
- Where permitted, dogs must be on a lead or under effective control at all times



Generator use

Use a commonsense approach. Minimise generator use and consider other visitors and campers.

- In Victoria, generators are not permitted in national parks
- For both Victoria and NSW, use a commonsense approach. Minimise generator use and consider other visitors and campers. As a general rule, non-natural sound is more acceptable in highly developed camping areas rather than remote camping areas where there are few facilities and sound travels greater distances
- To reduce the risk of starting a bushfire from your generator, always ensure:
 - the generator is located in an area clear of fuels, dry grass or other combustible objects
 - extension cords do not cross access tracks and are rated for external use
 - the generator is only refuelled when the engine is cold
 - avoid using generators on days of Total Fire Ban



Fireworks

- It is illegal to obtain, possess or discharge fireworks unless you hold a Pyrotechnicians Licence or Fireworks (Single Use) Licence from WorkCover
- No fireworks are allowed in Murray River forests, parks and reserves
- Permits and/or licences will not under any circumstances be issued for bushfire prone areas including the Murray River parks and reserves
- People buying and using fireworks without a WorkCover permit risk a penalty notice with on the spot fines from police and WorkCover inspectors. The courts can impose substantial penalties for handling fireworks without a licence
- Fireworks are likely to cause bushfires. Anyone found guilty of causing a fire through the use of fireworks is liable to significant penalties. This also applies to inappropriate use of Marine Safety Flares
- To report the illegal use or sale of fireworks contact your local police

IN EMERGENCY CALL 000

FIRE • POLICE • AMBULANCE