



# Mt Disappointment State Forest

DELWP – Broadford

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## Mount Disappointment State Forest

Straddling the Great Dividing Range about an hours drive north of Melbourne, the Mount Disappointment State forest is one of Melbourne's most accessible forest areas for recreation. The area was burnt in both 1982 in the northern parts of the forest and again very severely across the whole forest in 2009. The forest is now regenerating and continues to provide a haven for wildlife, visitors and recreation activities.

Mt Disappointment State forest has a number of camping areas and walking tracks scattered throughout the forest.

## Location and Access

Mount Disappointment is approximately 1 hour north of Melbourne via the Hume Highway, through Heathcote Junction and then North Mountain Road.

## History

Mt Disappointment State forest is the traditional land of the Kulin nation. The Wurundjeri tribe looked after the land in the south and the Taungurung tribe looked after the land in the north. Few clues have been found to help understand how people interacted with the environment. Stone artefacts originating from silcrete, quartz and greenstone have been found in and around the forest. These stones were either tools or flakes created during the manufacture of tools. Stone tools were widely used for hunting, fishing and fighting as well as gathering and preparation of food and processing animal skins.

In 1824, Mount Disappointment was named by explorers Hume and Hovell because of their disappointment that the dense tree growth prevented them from viewing Port Phillip Bay from the summit. Historical information relating to the expedition is provided at Blairs Hut Picnic Area and at the top of the Summit Walk.

The European use of the forest followed the familiar pattern of goldmining, timber cutting and sawmilling. Once the gold mining began in the 1870's, so did the establishment of the Clonbinane, Reedy Creek and Strath Creek townships.

As a result of the mining, there was an increased need for timber to make poles, posts, pit props and firewood which saw the beginning of large scale timber harvesting in the area. Sawmilling began in 1880 and continued until 1939. At its peak, the timber industry employed 420 men to meet the high demands.

Logging continues to take place in the forest and is balanced with management of other important forest values such as conservation, recreation and catchment protection.

## What facilities are provided?

There are numerous camping opportunities within Mount Disappointment State forest. The main campsites are Regular Camp, Andersons Garden and No.1 Camp. There are facilities to cater for horse riders at No.1 Camp Horseyards. Day visitor areas include the sheltered forest alongside Sunday Creek, Andersons Gardens, Blairs Hut and Strath Creek Falls. All camping and visitor areas have picnic tables available and most sites have fireplaces and toilets.

A trail bike visitor area is also located on Main Mountain Rd to cater for the large numbers of trail bike riders who use Mt Disappointment State forest. The visitor area provides ample trailer parking and further information about trail bike riding in the forest.

## Things to see and do

The surrounding forest provides excellent opportunities for four-wheel-driving, camping, bushwalking, horse riding and trail bike riding.

### Summit Walk



Return 3.5km | 1 hour  
Short steep hills | Formed track, some obstacles  
Signposted | Many steps  
No experience required

The walk starts at Blairs Hut Picnic Area and follows the tree-lined fern valley to the summit of Mt Disappointment. Here you can learn about the explorations of Hume and Hovell and the history of this area and take in the views of nearby farmland.

### Strath Creek Falls Walk



Return 1km | 45 minutes  
Short steep hills | Formed track, some obstacles  
Signposted | Many steps  
No experience required

This waterfall has been popular with visitors for over 150 years. The walk leads to the amazing view of the falls cascading over the rock face and into the gully.

### Sunday Creek Reservoir Walk



Return 5km | 1.15 hours  
Short steep hills | Formed track, some obstacles  
Signposted | Many steps  
No experience required

Starting at Andersons Garden Picnic Area, the track follows alongside Sunday Creek. The walk crosses over a boardwalk and three footbridges before arriving at the base of Sunday Creek Reservoir. Walkers then loop

back onto the southern side of Sunday Creek, crossing at a 'leaf' designed bridge, and follow the track along the creek back to Andersons Garden.



### **MOUNT DISAPPOINTMENT FOREST DRIVE** 40km, 3 hours return (circuit drive)

This leisurely forest drive takes in the sights of the summit, Strath Creek Falls, and majestic Mountain Ash forests, largely affected by the 2009 fires. Turn off the Hume Highway at Heathcote Junction and enter Mt Disappointment State forest via Main Mountain Rd. Continue on Main Mountain Rd at the five ways intersection before turning onto Mt Disappointment Rd then Board Rd. Follow Disappointment Rd and stop at Blairs Hut Picnic Area for a picnic and short walk to the summit of Mt Disappointment for magnificent views of the area. Continue along Disappointment Rd and turn right, back onto Main Mountain Rd at the five ways. Just past Regular Camp, turn right down Flowerdale Rd. At No.1 Camp detour down Murchison Spur Rd to view the Strath Creek Falls. Returning back to No.1 Camp, continue down Flowerdale Rd. At the end of Flowerdale Rd, turn right down Whittlesea Yea Rd and continue on to Whittlesea, returning to Melbourne via the northern suburbs.

### **Campfire Guidelines**

- On Code Red Fire Danger Rating days, State forest and parks are closed to the public. Do not enter forests or parks on Code Red Days. If you are already there when a Code Red day is announced, you should leave the night before or early in the morning. For more information contact DELWP (see below).
- Campfire safety** – All solid fuel fires must be in a properly constructed fireplace or in a trench at least 30 cm deep, with the ground and airspace within 3m of the outer perimeter of the fire clear of flammable material. All liquid, gas or chemical solid fuel fires must keep the ground and airspace within 1.5m of the outer perimeter of the fire clear of flammable material. Fires must be attended at all times by a person with the capacity and means to extinguish it. Ensure the fire is extinguished with water before leaving. **If it's cool to touch it is safe to leave.**
- Campfires are prohibited on days of Total Fire Ban.** This ban does not apply to a person preparing meals on a gas or electric appliance that has been designed and commercially manufactured exclusively for cooking provided:
  - the ground and airspace within 3m of the appliance is clear of flammable material
  - when in use and alight, the appliance at all times is in a stable position and attended by an adult who has the capacity and means (minimum of 10 litres of water on hand) to extinguish the fire.

### **Forest Use Guidelines**

Forest Rangers patrol the area regularly to assist visitors and to enforce regulations.

### **RUBBISH**

There are no rubbish collection facilities available.

Please take your rubbish with you and ensure the area is clean for future visitors.

Do not bury or burn rubbish in fires. It is an offence to burn rubbish and those doing so will be fined.

### **TRAIL BIKES and VEHICLES**

Trail bikes and vehicles must be registered. Unlicensed persons are not permitted to ride trail bikes or drive vehicles. Trail bikes and vehicles must not be ridden off formed roads, on walking tracks or around campgrounds. The surrounding road network is available to licenced and registered riders.

### **FIREARMS**

Normal firearm laws apply in State Forests.

- A licence is required
- It is prohibited to shoot on, from or across roads
- Use of firearms in camping areas is prohibited.

All native birds and animals are protected by law. Mt Disappointment State forest is a popular recreation area. Take special care with firearms.

### **CAMPING – Minimal impact**

To protect the delicate environments of the forest, we need to 'tread lightly' in the bush to minimise our impact on the natural environment.

- Camping is not permitted outside of designated areas or within 20 metres of any river, stream or lake.
- Be careful of camping under trees. Trees can drop their limbs at any time (particularly during high winds).
- Do not dig trenches around tents. With modern tents, this is unnecessary, particularly if you choose a well-drained or raised site.
- Use toilets where provided. At some sites hand washing facilities and toilet paper may not be supplied. Come prepared.
- All native plants and animals are protected.
- Dogs are allowed in State Forest but must be under direct control at all times and are expected to be on a leash in picnic and camping areas or when near other visitors.
- Protect water quality – wash up at least 50 metres away from the river and avoid using soap (use gritty sand and a scourer instead).
- Leave campsites tidy.

### **For more information**

The Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) is responsible for managing Victoria's State Forest. For further information contact DELWP's Customer Service Centre ☎ 136 186 (TTY: 1800 555 667) or visit DELWP's website at <http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au>

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## SAFETY - Please Read !

On Code Red Fire Danger Rating days, Parks and State Forest are closed to the public. Do not enter parks or forests on Code Red Days. If you are already there when a Code Red day is announced, you should leave the night before or early in the morning. For more information contact the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI).

Be responsible for your own safety. Be aware of extreme weather events, carry your own first aid kit and let someone know before you go.

Pit toilets are common at State Forests but hand washing facilities and toilet paper may not be supplied. Come prepared.

When on forest roads, be prepared for the unexpected. Timber trucks, 4WD's, hikers, horse riders, trail bike riders, cyclists and native animals may also be using your chosen track.





