

# Alpine National Park



## *The High Country* - around Bright, Mount Beauty, Omeo and Dargo

The Bogong and Dargo High Plains and associated alpine peaks are part of a unique Australian alpine environment. Victoria's highest mountain, Mt Bogong (1986 m) and second highest, Mt Feathertop (1922 m) dominate the subtle, broad undulating high plains. Combined with extremes in weather, these features provide some of the most spectacular landscapes and recreational opportunities in Victoria.

### Getting there and getting around

The area is situated approximately 365 km north east of Melbourne or 100 km south east of Albury - Wodonga.

From the south access is via the Great Alpine Road, from Bairnsdale to Omeo and Mt Hotham or the Dargo High Plains Road from Dargo to Mt Hotham. From the north access is via the Bogong High Plains Road from Mount Beauty or the Great Alpine Road from Bright to Mt Hotham.

Please remember that mountain roads are often narrow and winding, and due to cold conditions at any time of the year, potentially slippery and icy. Snow chains must be carried during the snow season and fitted where directed.

### Car touring

The main attractions of the high country are easily accessible in a 2WD car. The Dargo and Bogong High Plains Roads and the alpine resorts of Mt Hotham and Falls Creek provide walking and skiing access. The alpine scenery from the Great Alpine Road over Mt Hotham is particularly spectacular.

If you have a full day (overnight is even better) it is possible to drive the Great Alpine Circuit (250 km) which follows the Great Alpine Road between Bright and Omeo, linking with Falls Creek and Mount Beauty via the Omeo Highway and Bogong High Plains Road.

The Dargo High Plains Road, although suitable for 2WD cars, can be rough and dusty in sections and slippery after rain.

The Bogong High Plains and Dargo High Plains Roads are closed by snow in winter and many of the four wheel drive tracks accessing the Barry.

Mountains are seasonally closed between early June and late October.

Please remember:

- check road conditions before setting out
- vehicle access is limited to formed roads and tracks open to the public
- wheel chains must be carried and fitted where directed during the snow season, June to early October inclusive

### Walking

Some of the best mountain walking country in Australia is found in the Alps. Some tracks are suitable for day and weekend family walks. Others are long, rough and challenging.

Shorter family walks can be undertaken to Mt Loch, along the Hotham to Dinner Plain Trail, Ropers Lookout, Wallace - Cope Hut circuit, Heathy Spur and Mountain Creek.

Longer more challenging day and overnight hikes are the Razorback or Bungalow Spur to Mt Feathertop, Tawonga Huts and the Fainters, and Staircase Spur or the High Plains to Mt Bogong.

The long distance Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) passes through the area on its 650 km journey between Walhalla (Gippsland) and Namadgi National Park (near Canberra). This AAWT track varies from a four wheel drive track along the Barry Mountains to a foot pad across the snow grass plains of the high country, from Mt Hotham to Mt Bogong.

Bushwalking along the AAWT and other longer routes is only for fit, experienced self reliant walkers.



## For further information

Parks Victoria  
Information Centre  
**Call 13 1963**  
or visit our website at  
[www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au)

Parks Victoria Offices at:  
Bright, Mt Beauty, Dargo and  
Omeo **Phone 13 1963**

## Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park  
by  
following these guidelines:

All native plants, animals,  
archaeological and historic  
sites are protected by law

Take rubbish home with you  
Dogs and other pets are not  
permitted

Always check fire danger  
forecasts. No fires (including  
stoves) on days of Total Fire  
Ban (East Gippsland & North-  
East Fire Ban Districts)

Use a portable stove instead  
of lighting a fire, especially  
above or near the tree line

Fuel Stove Only Area. Due to  
vegetation damage and visual  
scarring no campfires are to  
be lit in the Mt Bogong and Mt  
Feathertop areas, including  
access tracks

Firearms are only permitted in  
accordance with Hunting  
Regs

Choose a firm, dry, well  
drained campsite at least 20  
metres from any water course

Use of vehicles, including trail  
bikes, is restricted to existing  
roads and tracks. Vehicles  
must be fully registered and  
drivers licensed

Do not pollute waterways with  
refuse, detergent or human  
waste. Use existing toilets or  
bury your waste at least 100  
metres from any waterway or  
campsite

*Please don't throw this park  
note away. Keep it, return it  
for others to use, or recycle it*

### Healthy Parks Healthy People

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



## Tour guides

A number of licensed tour operators run tours (4WDing, bushwalking, horseriding and rafting) in this area.

Visit [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au) to see a list of tour operators and the type of tours you can participate in.

## Fire in the Alps

During the summer of 2006 a number of fires swept through the Australian Alps. Tracks within this section of Alpine National Park are now open.

To assist with regeneration please keep to tracks and trails, especially in fire affected areas.

## In the past

Many Aboriginal people have a remarkably rich history of Aboriginal use in the Victorian Alps and a vast knowledge of the cultural sites, oral history and ancestral stories that relate to the alpine region of Victoria. Throughout the many seasons each year, Aboriginal groups would come from as far away as the coast and south west slopes, to meet with the tribes of the mountains for intertribal ceremonies and feasting on Bogong Moths. During these festivities they would exchange cultural objects and materials for tools. Aboriginal sites such as shelters and campsites provide a deeper understanding of the Aboriginal connection with the high country. Throughout the Alps their custodianship still endures.

Following in the footsteps of explorers such as John Mitchell and Baron von Mueller, miners and graziers pioneered the mountains in the 1850s in search of gold and suitable summer pastures.

The value of the mountains for recreation and tourism was realised as early as the 1880s with the establishment of the Bright Alpine Club and numerous Government hospices.

In 1939 the SEC began work on a major scheme for electricity generation in the Kiewa Valley. The aqueducts, Rocky Valley and Pretty Valley dams on the Bogong High Plains are all part of the scheme which was completed in 1961.

## Plants

The Bogong and Dargo High Plains contain the most extensive and botanically rich area of alpine vegetation in the Victorian Alps. Smaller changes in aspect, wind, cold air drainage, water, soil and rock type create a mosaic of plant communities such as mossbeds, herbfields, heathlands and Snow Gum woodlands.

## Animals

These habitats support a variety of animals such as the rare Mountain Pygmy Possum, Broad-toothed Rat, Bush Rat, Brown and Dusky Antechinus and Lesser Long-eared Bat.

Common bird species are the Australian Kestrel, Flame Robin, Little Raven and Pied Currawong. Reptiles in the alpine environment include the White-lipped Snake and Alpine Copperhead.

The Bogong Moth inhabits the alpine peaks between November and April - away from the heat of the inland plains.



Bogong moths

*Bogong Moths shelter  
in rock crevices where  
they provide food for  
Mountain Pygmy  
Possums and Little  
Ravens.*

For more details of the Alpine National Park see the following maps and publications:

### Maps

Spatial Vision Touring the Victorian Alps  
1:140,000

VicMap 1:50,000 Bogong Alpine Area

VicMap 1:50,000 Dargo Plains - Cobungra

VicMap 1:50,000 Howitt - Selwyn

### Alpine National Park park notes

#### Source of the Rivers

- around Mitta Mitta, Omeo, Tallangatta and Corryong

#### Our Mountain Heritage

- around Heyfield, Licola and Dargo

#### Valleys and Bluffs

- around Mansfield and Whitfield

#### Wilderness and Snowy

- around Benambra, Buchan and Bonang

Horseriding in the Alpine National Park

### Books

The Australian Alps Walking Track and Alpine National Park by John Siseman (Pindari Publications)

Victoria's National Parks Explorer's Guide (See Australia Guides)

Explore the Australia Alps - Car touring guide to the Australian Alps national parks by Australia Alps Liaison Committee (New Holland Press)

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## Other Walking park notes to refer to include:

- 1 Walks around Bogong High Plains
- 2 Walks around Feathertop, Hotham & Dinner Plain

Walkers must be self sufficient with food, water, first aid and camping gear and be skilled in the use of maps and compass. Do not rely on arriving at a hut.

## Cross county skiing

The high country boasts some of Australia's finest ski touring areas, from well defined and groomed trails near the resorts to the winter wilderness of the Dargo High Plains.

Popular localities include areas adjacent to the Falls Creek and Mt Hotham Alpine Resorts such as the Bogong High Plains, JB Plain and the Mt Loch area.

Mt Bogong, The Razorback, Mt Feathertop and the Dargo High Plains are visited by more experienced skiers.

## Downhill skiing and alpine resorts

The alpine resorts of Falls Creek and Mt Hotham, adjacent to the Alpine National Park, are managed by separate resort management boards, and are not part of the Alpine National Park.

These areas have been set aside to provide accommodation and facilities for downhill skiing, snow boarding and other snow based recreation.

## On horseback

Horseriding is popular during summer and autumn, especially on the Bogong High Plains. Restrictions apply to group size and the location and timing of rides to minimise the impact on the environment and other park visitors.

Where riding is permitted, permits are required for horseriding parties larger than five. Riding in alpine and subalpine environments is permitted only between 1 December and 30 April inclusive.

## Mountain bike riding

The Dargo and Bogong High Plains offer some great opportunities for exploration by bicycle. Track surfaces vary from sealed roads to steep, rough four wheel drive tracks. Cycling is not permitted on walking tracks.

The following roads and aqueducts are available for bicycle riding:

- all public roads, except if seasonally closed
- Rocky Valley, Cope East, Cope West, Langford East and Langford West aqueducts
- all management vehicle only (MVO) roads, except for Spion Kopje Track



