

Dunolly and Inglewood State Forests

Take some time to enjoy the beautiful Box-Ironbark forests near Inglewood and Dunolly. These forests contain diverse native plants and animals. Picturesque Box-Ironbark forest is a great place to get away from it all, relax and appreciate natural beauty.

Forests around Dunolly and Inglewood have a rich cultural history. Evidence of the long-term occupation of the Jaara Jaara people is still found today. The arrival of Europeans and the gold rush changed the region forever. With nearby townships Moliagul and Tarnagulla, Dunolly forms the Golden Triangle. This region has produced more gold nuggets than any other Australian goldfield.

Our Box-Ironbark forests tell a fascinating story of change and survival. How you use the forest today will shape our forests of the future. How will you help shape the next chapter?



Photo: Flame Heath (DEPI/ Lebbink)

Getting here

Dunolly is located 190 km north west of Melbourne and 62 km west of Bendigo. From Melbourne, head north west along the Calder Highway. Turn left on to the Pyrenees Highway, which leads to Maryborough. From Maryborough, head north along the Bendigo – Maryborough Road and then veer left along the Maryborough Dunolly Road until you reach Dunolly.

Inglewood is located 185 km north west of Melbourne and 45 km north west of Bendigo. From Melbourne, head north west along the Calder Highway, passing Bendigo until you reach Inglewood.

History

INDIGENOUS HISTORY

The local Indigenous Jaara Jaara people have occupied the Box-Ironbark forest area for thousands of years. They have a special connection with the land, which they respected and cared for. The forest provided food and shelter critical to their survival.

The arrival of European settlers led to dramatic declines in the population of the Jaara Jaara people as they were overcome by introduced diseases. Their community and their way of living were drastically changed forever.

Today, the Jaara Jaara people continue their special connection with the land and the Box-Ironbark forest. They are strongly involved in forest management and continue to strengthen their culture.

OUR GOLDEN PAST

Before the gold rush

Grazing opportunities attracted the first European settlers to the areas now known as Dunolly and Inglewood. The Simson brothers were the first pastoralists to arrive in the 1840s.

The discovery of gold

Inglewood was established during the gold rush when large amounts of gold were found at Thompsons Gully in 1858. The town's population reportably reached almost 50,000 in the 1860s, earning it the nickname 'City in the Scrub'.

Gold was found in Dunolly in 1865 and its population is estimated to have once been 35,000 people.

The gold rush was full of hope and dreams for miners but the lifestyle was tough. Work was backbreaking and many miners and their families perished. Against the odds, some miners struck it lucky and their stories of success kept the hope alive in struggling miners.

The discovery of the Welcome Stranger is a story of hope to prospectors even today. The world's largest recorded alluvial gold nugget, it was unearthed at Bulldog Gully in February 1869 by miners John Deason and Richard Oates. It contained over 70 kg of solid gold and changed the lives of its finders, who were barely earning enough to live before the discovery. You can find the Welcome Stranger

monument within Moliagul Historic Reserve two kilometres south west of Moliagul.

The discovery of the Hand of Faith is a more recent success story. Kevin Hillier unearthed this nugget containing 27 kg of gold in 1980 behind the Kingower State School on Ironbark Road just out of the township. A small sign marks the location (GPS Easting 0746314 Northing 5944644).

After the gold rush

As the gold diggings petered out in the early 1900s, eucalyptus oil production became popular in Inglewood. Eucalyptus oil has been distilled in Victoria's Box-Ironbark forests since the 1870s and was one of Australia's first export products to England.

The majority of eucalyptus oil production in Victoria comes from blue and green mallee (*E. polybractea* and *E. viridis*) stands adjoining Box-Ironbark forest. The oil is good quality with high cineole content and keenly sought for medicinal as well as industrial applications. Eucalyptus oil is still produced in this area today. As you pass Kingower State Forest, keep your eyes open for areas of small mallee eucalypts harvested for eucalyptus oil.

Today, Dunolly and Inglewood are beautiful little historic towns. Spectacular Box-Ironbark forest surrounding them contain relics of the gold mining era. If you are seeking to escape from the cities you can enjoy the scenic landscape and the wide-open spaces. If you are feeling lucky, the area is also still popular for gold prospecting.

Plants

The State forests surrounding Dunolly and Inglewood are part of the Box-Ironbark forest region. The Box-Ironbark ecosystem is a precious and unique environment that provides habitat to numerous native plants and animals, many of them rare or threatened. Predominant overstorey species include Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*), Red Box (*E. polyanthemos*), Yellow Gum (*E. leucoxylon*) and Red Ironbark (*E. tricarpa*).



Photo: Native cherry tree (Parks Victoria)

The understorey typically has numerous native grasses, although taller shrubs including Golden Wattle may also be present. Native cherry trees are common in some locations and have edible red fruits once eaten by Indigenous people. During Spring and early Summer, wild flowers blanket the forest floor. Look carefully and you may find delicate wild flowers including Early Nancy, Scented Sundew, Shiny Everlastings and the eye-catching Flame Heath.



Photo: Spreading Wattle (DEPI/ Lebbink)

Animals

While exploring the Box-Ironbark forest surrounding Dunolly and Inglewood you may encounter local inhabitants such as the Black Wallaby, Short-beaked Echidna, Sulfur Crested Cockatoo or a soaring Wedge Tailed Eagle. At night, you may see and hear nocturnal animals in the tree canopy, including the Common Ringtail Possum and Sugar Gliders.

White Winged Choughs are birds with interesting social lives commonly found in the Box-Ironbark forest. They hang out in social flocks consisting of the parents and offspring from previous years. The young birds take four years to reach breeding maturity and during this time they stay with their parents and help with household chores, including babysitting, feeding younger birds and nest building. Chough families have a better chance of survival with more individuals in the group. Families are even known to kidnap young birds from neighbouring groups to help with their chores.



Photo: White Winged Choughs (Parks Victoria)



Photo: Feathertail Glider (DEPI/McCann)

The Box-Ironbark forest is particularly important because it provides habitat for numerous threatened species, including the Brush-tailed Phascogale, Swift Parrot and Bush Stone-curlew.

Geology and geomorphology

The Box-Ironbark landscape is relatively flat, with sedimentary mudstone, slates and sandstone. Harder metamorphic rocks and sandstones often protrude as clusters of rocky hills that contrast with the relatively flat surrounding landscape. Granite intrusions also occur and often appear as distinguished clusters of huge boulders which are interesting to explore and climb. Gold-bearing quartz reefs lie within these ancient sediments and provided much of the gold found in this region.

Soils of the Box-Ironbark region are generally shallow and date back to the Ordovician era (430-500 million years ago) when this area was covered by ocean. These old shallow soils have lost their nutrients through weathering processes. In many places, especially rocky-outcrops, the base rock lies close to the ground surface and the roots of hardy plants grow directly into the disintegrating rock.

Activities to enjoy in the State forest

Box-Ironbark forest is great for a lazy picnic and stroll through historical sites. There are numerous opportunities for enjoyment. Help keep our Box-Ironbark beautiful by reducing your impacts and taking your rubbish home. Please respect all native plants, animals, historic sites and geographical features.

Prospecting

Prospecting can be exciting and sometimes rewarding. Many of the world's largest nuggets were found in areas not far from Inglewood and Dunolly. All prospectors require a Miner's Right. You can purchase a Miner's Right online from the Department of Primary Industries website at www.depi.vic.gov.au. Prospecting is permitted in most State forests and many reserves. Please remember to re-fill any holes you dig and leave the area the way you find it.

Bush walking

Bush walking is one of the best ways to explore and experience the Box-Ironbark forest. Wild flowers blanket the forest floor in Spring and Summer. If you are lucky and observant you may stumble across hidden relics of the gold mining era. This forest is a great place to walk your dog. Just ensure your dog is under control and does not disturb wildlife or other visitors.

Camping

Camping is permitted within State forests and a great way to relax and enjoy the Box-Ironbark surroundings. Most camping spots are informal bush camps suitable for the self-sufficient camper who enjoys 'roughing it'. Be sure to leave your bush camp the way you find it.

- Camp in designated areas.
- Don't disturb wildlife or vegetation.
- Take your rubbish home with you.
- When no toilet facilities are provided, bury your toilet waste 15 cm deep and at least 100 m from any watercourse.
- Take care with fire. Observe all fire regulations and Total Fire Ban days.
- Use existing fireplaces or dig 30 cm deep trenches.
- Collect only dead wood from the ground.
- Fires should be less than one metre square and at least three meters clear of flammable material.
- Never leave fires unattended and ensure they are completely extinguished before you leave.
- Drive only on vehicle tracks (no off-road driving).
- Shooting without a licence is not permitted.

Bird watching

Bring your binoculars because the Box-Ironbark forest is home to numerous birds and ideal for bird enthusiasts. This area provides habitat for endangered bird species including the Swift Parrot and the Bush Stone-curlew.



Photo: Zebra Finch (DEPI/McCann)







Bike riding

Grab a bike map, gear up and explore this amazing Box-Ironbark forest on bike. It has a maze of interesting tracks suitable for all levels of experience. The *Dunolly Cycle Tracks* brochure produced by the Dunolly Community Action Group provides more information.

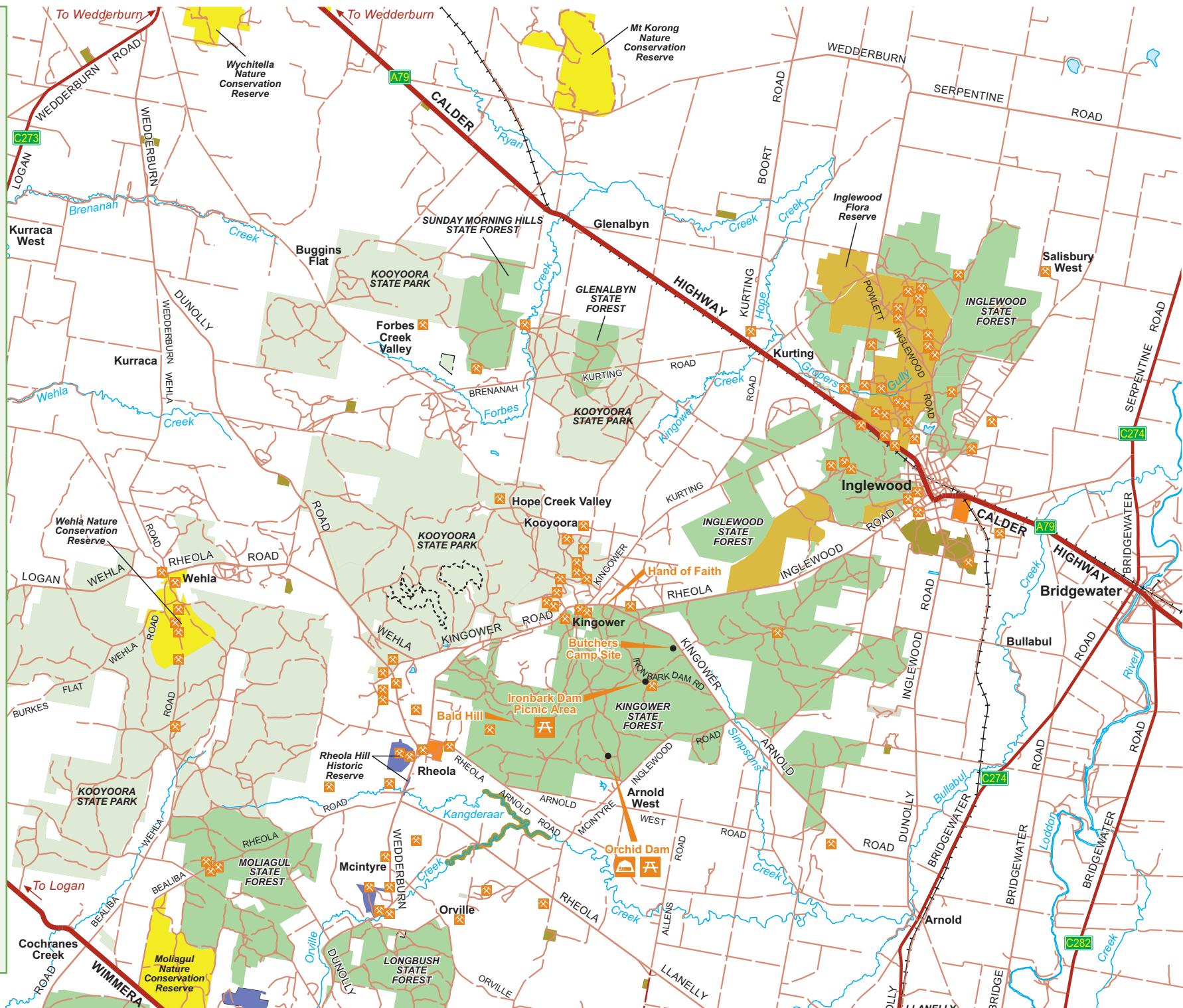
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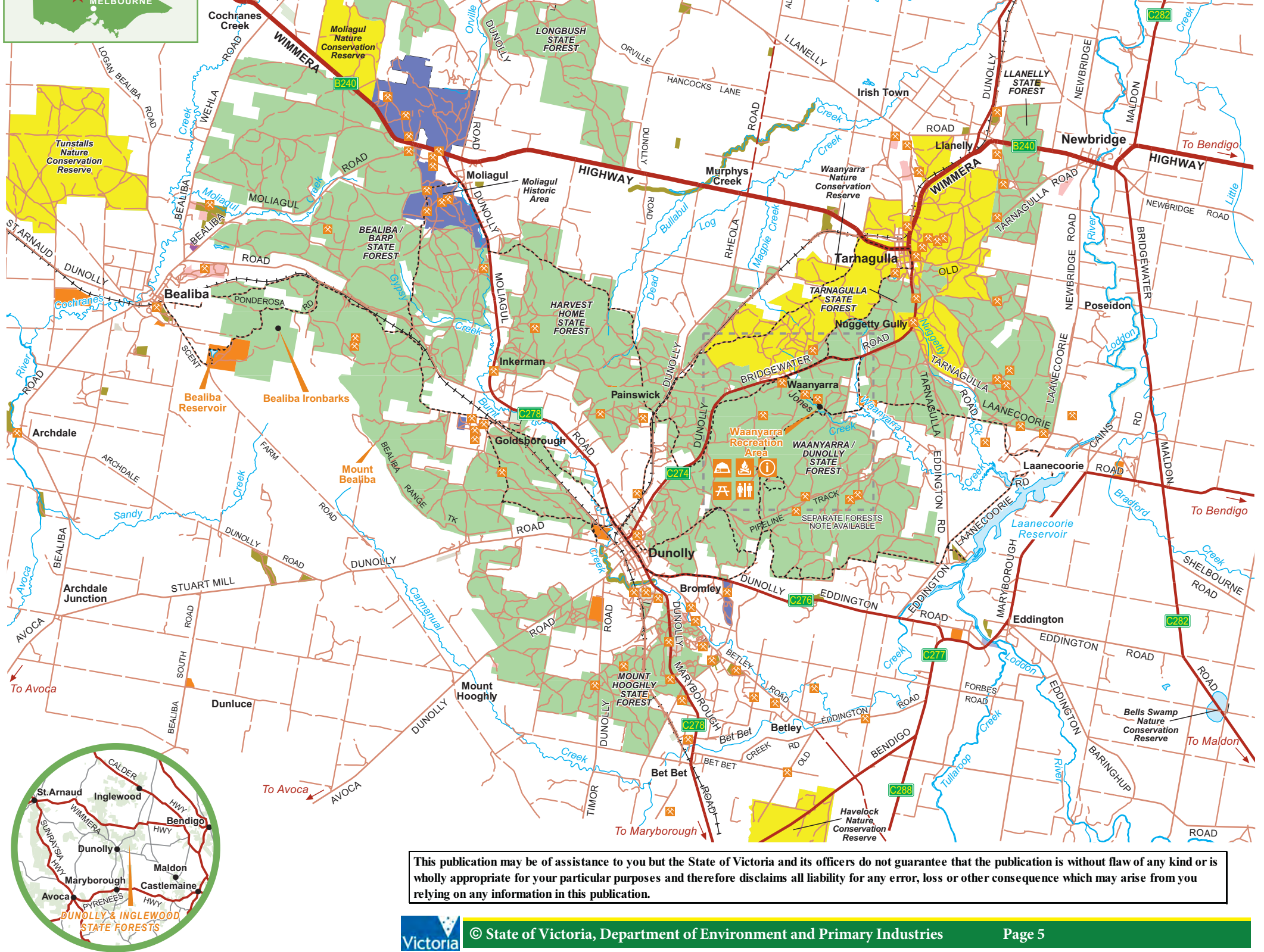
- Highway
- Major sealed road
- Minor sealed road
- Major unsealed road
- Minor unsealed road
- - - Vehicle track (4WD)
- - - Walking track
- +— Railway
- State Forest
- National Park
- Flora Reserve
- Nature Conservation Reserve
- Community Use Area
- Natural Features Reserve
- Earth Resources
- Services & Utilities
- Historic Reserve
- Uncommitted Public Land
- Water Production area
- Water body

Recreational Facilities

-  Camping
-  Fireplace
-  Historic site
-  Information
-  Picnic table
-  Toilets

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KILOMETRES
Cartography by Spatial Vision 2007
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FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY!

Look out for old mine shafts when walking through the forest.

Attractions**Bealiba Reservoir**

Bealiba Reservoir near Bealiba is a great for a lazy picnic. (GPS 0729499 5923642)

Mt Bealiba

Mt Bealiba is well worth a visit, with spectacular views of the surrounding forest and farmland. If you have a 4WD you can take the steep track to the top. Otherwise, leave your car at the bottom and enjoy the walk to the top. (GPS 0731539 5923085)

Bealiba Ironbarks

As you drive through Bealiba/Barp Forest, keep your eyes open for the Bealiba Green Blue Ironbarks. There are two distinctive types of Ironbark in this area. One has bluish leaves and the other greenish leaves. The most popular place to see this is shown on the map. (GPS 0731775 5924502)

Eucalypt distillery

Kingower State Forest is scattered with areas of Blue and Green mallee popular for eucalyptus oil production. Keep your eyes open for areas of small mallee eucalypts harvested for this purpose.

Ironbark Dam

Ironbark Dam is great for a picnic. It has a basic wood BBQ and picnic tables and is surrounded by beautiful old Ironbark trees. The dam is located on the corner of Ironbark Dam Road and Ironbark Ext. (GPS 0748037 5942502)

Orchid Dam

Orchid Dam is another beautiful spot for a lazy picnic. There are picnic tables and a wood BBQ. Explore the surrounding forest and see if you can find a scar tree. Orchid Dam is located off Orchid Dam Road. (GPS 0746916 5940273).

Bald Hill

A drive along Kingower Range (along Bald Hills Road) up to Bald Hill offers amazing panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. You can see Mt Kooyoora and Mt Karong to the north. Mt Bealiba, Mt Alexander and Mt Moliagul are to the south. You might even spot a wedge tailed eagle nest towering in a tree. (GPS 0743952 5941171)

More information

The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) is responsible for managing Victoria's State forest.

Visit the DEPI website at www.depi.vic.gov.au

For more information contact:

- DEPI Inglewood office ☎ 5438 3066
- DEPI Customer Service Centre ☎ 136 186.

Acknowledgments

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