

Serendip Sanctuary



Visitor Guide

Take an exciting journey through the Western Plains of Victoria. This 250 hectare sanctuary is the perfect place to experience and learn about birdlife and the unique characteristics of the wetlands.



Brolga

Serendip obtained its name from the word "Serendipity" which means "the unexpected discovery of something wonderful".

Close to nature

The world class bird hides at Serendip are specially designed to enable you to view native wildlife at close range. Birds can often be seen preening, feeding, incubating eggs and rearing young.

Start your Serendip experience at the Information Centre with a peek down the giant microscope or step into the Underwater World, activities room or Frogs World exhibit to begin your wildlife journey.

Four different nature trails traverse the Sanctuary. Each trail interconnects and is no longer than 2km return.

Stroll past the Brolga, Bustard and Pademelon displays or take a walk through the wetland and dryland aviaries and onto the North Arm and the Wader Birdhide. There is an environmental wonder around every corner.

Large flocks of waterfowl and mobs of free range Kangaroos are dispersed throughout the Sanctuary. Captive Emu, Wallabies, Pademelons, Lizards and Yabbies are also on display.

Picnic facilities

A fantastic picnic area with free undercover electric barbecues is the perfect venue for a day out with family and friends. A group barbecue area with a wood fire is also available for groups (bookings are required and a small fee applies).

Things for the Children to do

Find the five hidden Bush Art Animals.

Go Ponding and catch your own water bugs and view them through the microscopes.

Get a bird's eye view of Serendip and beyond with the video camera on top of the tower.

View the Birds of Serendip CD Rom to see the animals going about their daily activities.

Match each bird's beak to their feet and then work out what food each bird eats.

Environmental Education

Serendip conducts Ranger led VELS based environmental education programs to suit all year levels. Quality facilities include the Ponding site with nets and microscopes, an Activities Room and the Alcoa sponsored Frogs World.

Guided Tours are available by appointment. Moderate fees apply

Opening Hours

Serendip Sanctuary is open from 10.00am – 4.00pm every day except for Christmas Day and Good Friday.

How to get there

Serendip Sanctuary is located at the base of the You Yangs, 60km from Melbourne and 22km north of Geelong. It is signposted from the Princes Highway.



To You Yangs
Regional Park



PLAINS ROAD

ROAD

FLINDERS AVENUE

FLINDERS AVENUE

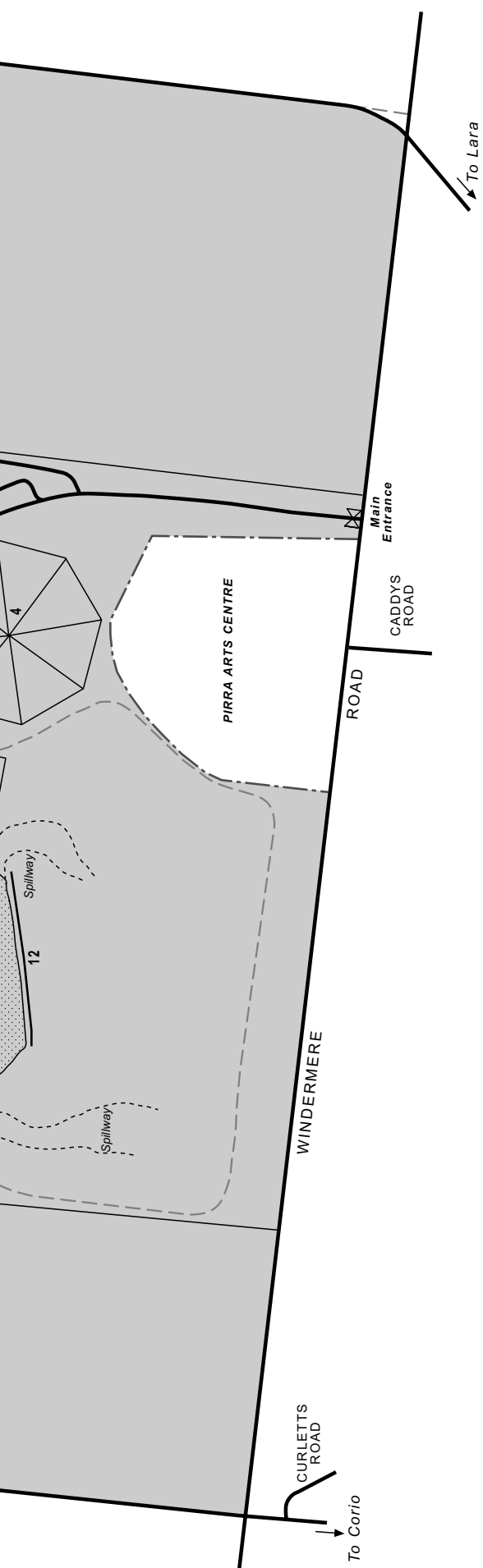
NORTH ARM

LAKE SERENDIP

Marshland

FOREST





- Wetland walk** – 900 metres - - - - -
22. Watertable Watch – groundwater observation bore
 23. Lake view
 24. Observation tower and video camera
 25. Banding shed
 26. Ponding site
 27. North Arm tea-tree observation hide
- Farm Dam for Wildlife Walk** – 1300 metres
28. North Arm
 29. Demonstration farm dam for wildlife
- Wader Walk** – 1400 metres
30. Magpie Geese breeding enclosure
 31. Wader bird observation

- Wildlife walk** – 1100 metres
6. Display pond
 7. Watertable Watch – groundwater observation bore
 8. Native grassland
 9. Kangaroo and Emu walk-through enclosure
 10. Brolga
 11. Marshland bird observation hide
 12. Dam wall
 13. Lake Serendip
 14. Billabong hide
 15. Freckled Duck Enclosure
 16. Heron Picnic Area and Pademelon walk-through
 17. Walk-through Wetland and Dryland Aviaries
 18. Walk-through wallaby enclosure
 19. Brolga breeding enclosures
 20. Bustard breeding enclosure

1. Public BBQ area
2. Group BBQ area
3. Toilets (disabled access)
4. Bustard breeding enclosure
5. Information Centre (office, theatre, activities room, toilets, feed room, incubation room)
21. Depot

Serendip Sanctuary

- Sealed road
- Ring road
- Sanctuary area
- Water body

Recreational Facilities

- Barbecue - Electric
- Barbecue - Wood
- Bird hide
- Disabled access
- Lookout

Serendip Sanctuary

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- Ring road
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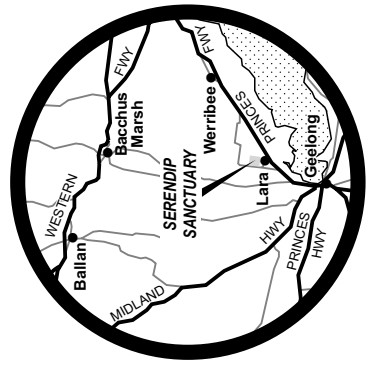
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MELBOURNE
GEELONG

0 50 100 150
METRES
Cartography by Spatial Vision 2009
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Parks
VICTORIA



For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call 13 1963

or visit the
Parks Victoria website
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Geelong - Great Ocean
Road Visitor Information
Centre
Cnr Princes Highway
and St George Road
Geelong VIC 3214
Freecall: 1800 620 888

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park
by remembering these
guidelines:

Please take rubbish away
with you for recycling or
disposal.

All plants, animals,
archaeological sites and
geological features are
protected by law and are
not to be disturbed. This
includes all feathers and
pieces of egg material

Dogs are not permitted
in the park

Firearms are prohibited

Light fires only in the Group
BBQ fireplace. Electric
barbecues are provided in
the Public Picnic Area
No fires, including
barbecues, may be lit on a
day of Total Fire Ban.

**Serendip is in the Central
Total Fire Ban District**

The wetlands

There are many different types of wetland at Serendip, each with its own features.

Shallow Freshwater Wetlands

These wetlands often only hold water for a few months each year, mostly after winter and spring rain. They are called ephemeral wetlands, meaning temporary.

Brolga, rare in Victoria, use shallow, freshwater wetland areas exclusively for nesting.

Spring rains produce explosions in invertebrate life, proving valuable food resources for birds at nesting time.

Brolga, ibis and egrets, with their specialised beaks, probe in the soft mud for insects or graze on the vegetation around the water edge.

The Marshland

The Marshland was created by building a levee bank to catch runoff from adjacent buildings and roads. Varying depths in the Marshland cater for a range of waterbird activities such as wading, feeding, swimming and diving. The islands and vegetation provide safe roosting and food sources.

Look for Mountain Ducks, Black Swans, Magpie Geese and Wood Ducks grazing around the edges. Coots, Hardhead Ducks, Cormorants and Grebes can be seen ducking and diving in the open water.

Lake Serendip

When full, Lake Serendip extends over 30ha. Historically the lake dries out about every four years. The trees around the lake attract birds which you might see in the garden or the bush.

River Red Gums, with their nesting hollows, attract parrots, cockatoos, galahs and rosellas.

Wattles and melaleucas attract wattlebirds, honey-eaters and thornbills to feed on both the flowers and insects that the nectar attracts.

Black and white Mudlarks, Willy Wagtails and Magpies peck and dart around in search of insects on the ground. Swallows and Martins fly low to pick up insects which skim across the water. Black Shouldered and Whistling kites soar high looking for small prey on the ground.

The Billabong

This wetland is filled artificially with bore water to provide habitat for various bird and other animal species. The 5900 parts per million salt content of the water affects emergent and surrounding vegetation, requiring salt-tolerant species such as Knobby Club Rush (*Isolepis nodosa*), Fragrant Saltbush (*Rhagodia parabolica*) and Tanged Lignum (*Muelenbeckia florulenta*) to be grown here. The Billabong provides shelter and deeper water.

Moorhens and Swampheens nest in the rushes, while Sacred and Straw-necked Ibis use them to build their nests in the nearby trees. Magpie Geese and Ducks swim and dive in the open water and roost on logs and the islands.

North Arm - a permanent wetland

The North Arm is an example of a permanent open water wetland. The Western Plains are one of the few areas in Victoria where permanent wetlands are common.

Permanent wetlands provide more reliable fish populations and attract fishing birds such as cormorants and pelicans.



Eastern Grey Kangaroos

A rich human history

In 1856 the property of Lara, which included the area now occupied by Serendip, was sold by the Crown to Robert De Little from Launceston. Since then the property has been resold a number of times and used for everything from farming, sheep studs and even a health resort for alcoholics (1907 to 1930).

In 1959 the State repurchased the property with a view to further developing the site as a Wildlife Research Station. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s gradual changes were made to the property to accommodate the needs of wildlife and its research.

Serendip Sanctuary opened to the public in 1991 and is now managed by Parks Victoria.

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