

# Tarra Bulga National Park

## Visitor Guide

Hidden within the Strzelecki Ranges, Tarra Bulga National Park features lush fern-filled gullies, giant Mountain Ash and ancient Myrtle Beech. Visitors have long enjoyed strolling along one of the nature walks or picnicking beside a shady fern-lined creek.

### Location and access

Tarra Bulga National Park is situated approximately 200 kilometres east of Melbourne. The park is reached from the Princes Highway at Traralgon by following Traralgon Creek Road to Balook.

Alternatively the park can be reached from Yarram via the Tarra Valley Road. Roads throughout the area are narrow and winding but offer marvellous scenery with panoramic views from several points, including Mount Tassie.

### Remnants of history

In 1840 the Polish explorer, 'Count' Strzelecki and his party, explored the ranges that now bear his name. Guided by Aboriginal guide, Charlie Tarra they cut through the thick scrub and tall timber of the Strzelecki Ranges and eventually reached Western Port, wet, hungry and exhausted.

The eastern Strzelecki Ranges were opened for selection from the 1890s and settlers cottages soon dotted the ridges. Farmers had to contend with short milking seasons, cold winters, noxious weeds, thick scrub and extreme transport difficulties.

In 1903 the Alberton Shire Council asked the State Government to reserve an area of forest with fern gullies near Balook as a public park.

In 1986 the two separate National Parks were joined and enlarged through a land exchange with private industry. Tarra Bulga National Park now protects 1,625 hectares of Mountain Ash Forest and Cool Temperate Rainforest.

### A haven for plants and wildlife

Tarra Bulga National Park protects a remnant of the forests that once covered the Strzelecki Ranges. Tall open forest of Mountain Ash, Messmate and Blackwood grow on the hills and slopes. Cool Temperate Rainforest of Myrtle Beech, Southern Sassafras, Austral Mulberry and Banyailas flourish within the sheltered gullies. The cool moist conditions here support a diverse understorey of ferns with over 41 species occurring within the park.

The canopy of forest provides food and nesting areas for a variety of birds including the Pilotbird, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Eastern Whipbird, Laughing Kookaburra, Crimson Rosella and Currawongs. The understorey composed of tall shrubs and small trees is home to the Eastern Yellow Robin, often seen perching sideways on low branches, eyes intently searching the ground for food. At night the forest comes to life as possums, owls and bats emerge from tree hollows to feed amongst the spreading branches of the rainforest canopy.

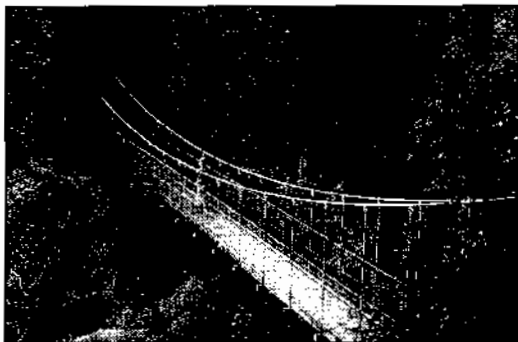
If you are lucky you may catch a glimpse of a Lyrebird scratching about amongst the leaf litter looking for insects and grubs. Their clear loud imitations echo through the forest. The park is also home to the Common Wombat, Swamp Wallaby, Greater Glider, Sugar Glider, Brush-tailed Possum and Platypus.



Parks Victoria Ranger

*"Victoria has a great parks system that protects many of our State's natural environments and their plants, animals and landscapes. Enjoy the parks, and please help us care for them...now and forever."*

For more information call the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit our website at [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)



Corrigan's Suspension Bridge

Twenty hectares were reserved in 1904 and given the Aboriginal name Bulga, meaning 'mountain'. Five years later, 303 hectares of forest within the Tarra Valley were temporarily reserved. This park was named after Charlie Tarra, Count Strzelecki's Aboriginal guide.



Superb Lyrebird

## For further information contact

Parks Victoria  
Information Centre  
13 1963  
or visit the website  
[www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

Parks Victoria  
Traralgon Office  
Hotham Street, Traralgon  
Ph (03) 5172 2111

South Gippsland Visitor  
Information Centre,  
Cnr South Gippsland Hwy &  
Silkstone Road,  
Korumburra  
Ph (03) 5655 2233

Latrobe Visitor Information  
Centre  
Princes Hwy, Traralgon  
Ph (03) 5174 3199

## Caring for the environment

Please help us care for our parks and reserves by remembering these guidelines:

All native plants and animals in the park are protected.

Please keep to designated walking tracks to avoid becoming lost.

Bins are not provided within the park. Please take your rubbish home.

Camping is not permitted in the park.

Cats and dogs are not permitted within the park.

Fires may only be lit in the fireplaces provided. No fires to be lit on days of total fire ban (Eastern District).

## Enjoying the park

### Picnicking

Tarra Bulga National Park is a delightful setting for a picnic. Three picnic areas are situated within the park; at the Visitor Information Centre, Tarra Valley and Bulga. The Visitor Centre picnic area provides picnic tables, fireplaces and toilets with disabled access.

Tarra Valley and Bulga picnic areas are set amongst the Giant Mountain Ash and shady fronds of tree ferns. Tables, fireplaces, toilets and picnic shelters are provided.

### Accommodation

Camping is not permitted within the park. Caravan Parks are situated within the Tarra Valley and in Yarram and Traralgon. Other accommodation including guesthouses and bed and breakfasts are scattered throughout the Strzelecki Ranges.

### Walking: from the Visitor Centre

1. *Corrigan Suspension Bridge* – 1.2 kilometres, 25 min one way.

Walk to the impressive Corrigan's suspension bridge, which stretches through the rainforest canopy, affording spectacular views of the lush fern gully on the forest floor below. Follow the signs from the visitor centre carpark via Lyrebird, Ash and Wills Tracks. Return via the same route.



*Slender Tree-ferns*

2. *Lyrebird Ridge Track* – 2.4 kilometres, 45 min. return.

Commencing at the Visitor Information Centre, this track leads through regenerating and mature Mountain Ash forests. Rest on the seats provided and listen to the sounds of the forest.

3. *Forest Track* – 4.3 kilometres, 1.5 hours return.

Starting at the end of the Lyrebird Ridge Track this longer walk completes a circuit back to the Visitor

Centre via part of the Old Yarram-Balook Road. This track winds its way through Mountain Ash forest, a rainforest gully and an unusual thicket of Hazel Pomaderris. This track contains some steeper sections, is unsurfaced and is recommended for the more serious walker.

4. *Ash Track* – 680 meters, 12 minutes, one way.

Branching off the Lyrebird Ridge Track, this track leads through regenerating Mountain Ash forest to the beginning of the Fern Gully Nature Walk. Look for the remnants of the logging that occurred here in the early 1900s and the Eucalypts now growing to replace them.

5. *Fern Gully Nature Walk* – 720 metres, 15 minutes return.

The Fern Gully Nature Walk begins where the Ash Track meets the Wills Track and provides an excellent introduction to the plants and wildlife of the Mountain Ash Forests and Cool Temperate Rainforests of the Strzelecki Ranges. A leaflet is available at the start of the track to explain the features seen on the way.

6. *Scenic Track* – 1 kilometre 20 min, one way.

This walk takes you through tall Mountain Ash forest and patches of Cool Temperate Rainforest. It commences at the Corrigan's suspension bridge and finishes at the Bulga picnic area.

### Walking: from Tarra Valley

7. *Tarra Valley Rainforest Walk* – 1.4 kilometres, 35 minutes return.

Meander through a rainforest gully and across trickling mountain streams to Cyathea Falls. The Ancient Myrtle Beech along the trail creates a protective canopy above a delicate understorey of tree ferns, lichens and moss.



*Cyathea Falls, Tarra Valley*