

LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK (27,750 hectares)

Park overview

Lake Eildon National Park surrounds the shores of Lake Eildon and comprises the former Fraser National Park and Eildon State Park. The park is a major conservation area and popular destination for a range of recreational activities associated with Lake Eildon. The park contains flora and fauna not well reserved elsewhere, including Box Woodland and foothill forests. The park largely adjoins private land with some state forest located to the south and north of the park. Lake Eildon impounds the waters of the Howqua, Big and Goulburn Rivers.

Park location and access

The park is located 145km north east of Melbourne. Gateway towns include Alexandra and Eildon, both of which are less than 20km from Fraser camping area and the Jerusalem Creek camping area respectively. Mansfield and Jamieson. A network of four-wheel drive roads provides access throughout some sections of the park. There are camping sites within the park that are accessible via boat or by walking tracks.

Conservation attributes

The park falls entirely within the catchment of Lake Eildon, with the areas of forested land in the park delivering high quality water with very low sediment and nutrient loads to the Lake. The Big River is a Heritage River which abuts the park.

The forests on the eastern slopes of the Jameison block are relatively undisturbed and there are old growth areas scattered through much of the park, particularly in the Enterprise Plateau and Jamieson block. There are five plant species and seven animals of significance in the park. Old mine shafts in the area are known to support important colonies of various species of bat.

Some areas that have previously been cleared for agriculture or otherwise disturbed are heavily infested with weeds such as pastoral grasses, blackberries and thistles.

Recreation use

The park has a wide range of recreational uses including bushwalking, mountain bike riding and four-wheel driving. It is a popular destination for car, caravan, campervan and boat based camping on the shores of Lake Eildon. There are also numerous picnic areas, designed to cater for day visitors. For those who have an appropriate licence, deer stalking is permitted for part of the year in some sections of the park. Additionally, the lake provides opportunities for fishing, boating, canoeing, kayaking, water skiing and swimming.

History

The Taungurung people's traditional homeland extends across the Lake Eildon National Park. The park has an extensive European history, relating to gold-mining, pastoral development and the construction of Lake Eildon. The town of Darlingford was established in the 1860s at the junction of the Big and Goulburn Rivers, following on from the discovery

of gold in the area. Darlingford was submerged in the 1920s when the Sugarloaf Dam was built. Post world war two, the Eildon Dam was constructed, with workers living in the newly established town of Eildon.

Parts of the park were created through the purchase of former grazing properties along the Goulbourn and Delatite Rivers.

The park contains evidence of the previous pastoral uses and there are many former gold mining sites that are a heritage feature of the park.