

Park Features



Imagine a “Canadian Multi Use Forest Park”?

Visitor Guide

“Home to native wildlife and colorful spring wildflowers this forest park provides a fascinating glimpse of the past. Roam across ancient hills and gullies, discover relics from the mining era on a variety of easy walks, cycle or drive tours – or simply relax and enjoy a tranquil picnic at the Canadian Creek Gorge or the Canadian Forest lookout. “

Enjoying our Park

Picnics: There are several picnic areas in the park with wood barbecues soon to be provided.

Camping: Bush camping is possible in the park. There are no facilities at present.

Walking: Why not take time to explore the park by venturing out on some suggested easy walks. Step on and off the soon to be developed latest extension of the Great Dividing Trail, the proposed exercise trail or walk the Canadian Creek Gorge walk or circumnavigate the forest park on the Boundary Rd track.

Mountain Bike Riding: Mountain Bikes are a great way to experience the park. There are many mountain bike trails in the forest park. Start at Mt Clear or at the end of Wilson St, Canadian.

Fossicking: Panning for gold along some of the gullies in the park is a popular pastime in the park. All adults must hold a current Miners Right to engage in fossicking. Remember to fill any holes and leave the area as you found it. Relics must not be disturbed or removed

Gold Mining relics: There are many old gold mining shafts, sluicing areas, water races, dams and other remnants from the gold mining past.

Plants and animals

Trees: Eucalypts growing in the forest park include messmate, manna gum, scentbark, broad leaved peppermint and narrow leaved peppermint. Yarra gums grow in wetter areas along the Canadian Creek.

Birds: The forest park is home to 91 bird species according to Birdlife Ballarat.

Wildflowers: The forest park is treasure trove of wildflowers. Visit in October and November to see the flowers at their best.

Mammals: The forest park forms part of the City of Ballarat prime koala habitat and is protected under the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management C95. Ballarat is the first city in Australia to have a Koala plan. Kangaroos and many other native animals inhabit the forest.

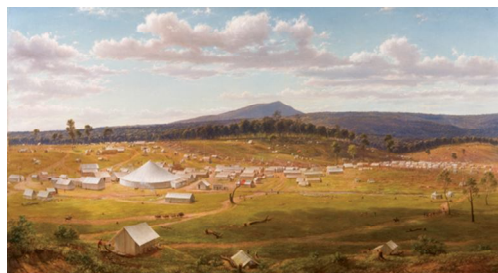
A long history

First people times



The Canadian Forest was home to the Wadawurrung people. Image: E Von Guerard, Warrenheip Hills near Ballarat 1854.

Goldfields times



The gold rush pushed the Wadawurrung off their land and stripped the forest. Whilst the mining activities created great wealth, mining denuded the landscape and created large degraded areas. Image: E Von Guerard, Old Ballarat as it was in the summer of 1853–4.

Post gold times

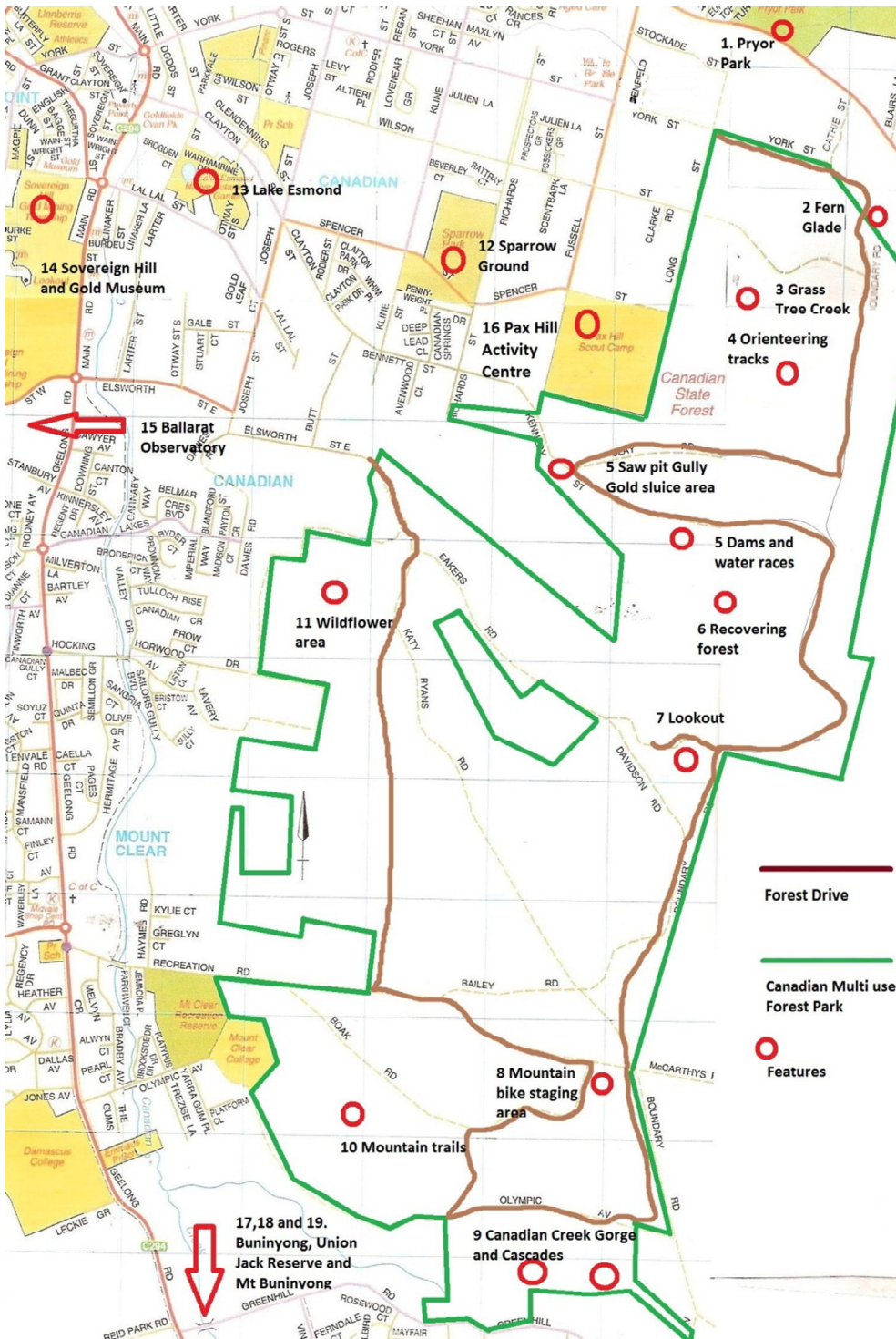


The Canadian Forest returned to its present form after the gold rush. Parts were cleared again in the 1950's to establish pine plantations. Recently the pine plantations have been cleared and indigenous species are now re-emerging.

Sovereign Hill and Ballarat from the Lookout (Map Ref 7)



The Canadian Multi Use Forest Park



1 Pryor Park

Pryor Park is a nearby local park established in the early 1990's on degraded land. It is home to many species of flora and fauna

2 Fern Glen

The Fern Glen is located off Boundary Rd. The Glen contains two fern types.

3 Grass Tree Creek.

This creek begins at Boundary Rd near Wilson St in the north east corner of the park. The creek passes significant stands of grass trees (Xanthorrea) on its westward journey to the junction with Pennyweight Gully.



4 Orienteering Terrain

This part of the Canadian Forest is spur gully terrain often used by orienteers in practice and competition.

5 Historical saw pits, dams and gold sluicing area.

Exposed quartz remnants from hydraulic water sluicing for gold lie here. Water races connect the dams to the sluice area.

6 Recovering Forests

This plantation land was cleared in 2011. Windborne and remnant seeds have grown to form a recovering forest similar to what happened after the Gold Rush.



7 Lookout

The lookout offers views to Sovereign Hill, Ballarat and in the distance Mt Cole. This is the highest point of the forest.

8 Mountain bike staging area

This cleared area is where championship mountain bike competitions are staged.

10 Mountain Bike trails

Competition quality mountain bike trails criss-cross these slopes.

11 Wild flower area

The wildflower flats have vibrant displays of spring wildflowers.

12 Sparrow Ground

Sparrow Ground is a nearby neighbourhood park with recreational grounds and significant stands of remnant native vegetation. Grass tree Creek and the Pennyweight trail pass through the park.

9 Canadian Creek Gorge and Cascades

The Canadian Creek gorge is the result of water flow off the ancient escarpment eroding the softer soil and creating a deep gorge. At the head of the gorge is a series of cascades which flow in winter.



The Forest Park features

Goldfields Track

The Goldfields Track is Victoria's premier walking trail linking Bendigo to Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh via Daylesford. The track should traverse part of the Canadian Forest in the future.

Walks

Popular walks in the park may include:

1. Pax Hill Loop
2. Canadian Creek Gorge Loop
3. Lookout loop
4. Grass tree Creek walking trail
5. Pennyweight Gully trail
6. Canadian Creek trail
7. A wheelchair accessible nature trail

Exercise trail

An forest exercise trail may be designed to allow participants to utilise the contours of the forest, gullies, steps, and obstacles for fitness and exercise training.

Bike Rides

The forest roads are well maintained trails. Hybrid or mountain bikes are recommended.

Current trails include:

1. Boundary Rd trail.
2. Olympic Avenue / Recreation Rd Trail
3. Canadian Creek trail
4. Mt Clear mountain bike tracks

The Canadian Forest Drive

The Canadian Forest drive begins at York St at the north end of the park and follows Boundary Rd, Olympic Avenue, Recreation Rd and Katie Ryans Lane passing most of the parks features before exiting at Elsworth St.

Picnic area

There are a number of popular picnic areas within the park. Local service clubs may be involved in the installation of BBQs in the future

The Great Eastern Ranges Conservation Corridor

<http://www.greasternranges.org.au/>

This corridor connects what remains of eastern Australia's rich natural and cultural heritage into a managed continent sized nature bio link and wildlife corridor that connects the far north Queensland Tablelands to the Grampians in Victoria.



The Great Eastern Corridor is the bio link connection from the Creswick Forest to the Canadian Forest which crosses the Western Highway at Woodmans Hill. To the north the Creswick Forest is connected to the Wombat Forest at Mollonghip. The Canadian Forest is connected to the Enfield forest to the south.



The Bio Link corridor 1988 version

The Wadawurrung People

The Wadawurrung have lived in the area for thousands of generations, there are many areas of cultural and archaeological significance to Wadawurrung People within the region, indicating a significant level of activity of the Wadawurrung People.

At the time of colonisation, 3 of the 25 Wadawurrung clans lived in the vicinity of the Eureka diggings and the Canadian Forest: the Burrumbeet balug at Lakes Burrumbeet and Learmonth, Keyeet balug, a sub-group of the Burrumbeet balug, at Mt Buninyong, and the Tooloora balug, at Mt Warrenheip and Lal Lal Creek.

At present, the descendants of the last known Apical Ancestor of Wadawurrung People are represented by the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation (Wadawurrung), who were formally recognised by the State Government as the Traditional Owners of Wadawurrung Country in May 2009, under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

Aboriginal walking tracks leading from Warrenheip, Buninyong, Black Hill (at Gordon) and lakes at Learmonth and Burrumbeet would have crossed the Canadian Forest.

The Wadawurrung continue to practice their culture, care for their heritage and continuing connection to Country. The forests, lakes, rivers, creeks and mountains are important features and resources for Wadawurrung People.

A map of the extent of Wadawurrung Country can be viewed at:

http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/images/documents/Aboriginal_Affairs/Wathaurung-Rap-area.pdf

For further information contact:

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The Canadian Forest Park may be managed in the future by a committee of management including the City of Ballarat on behalf of the Department of Primary Industries and Environment (DEPI).

Hopefully the forest park will come into being on the strength of public discussion and support.

Presently the forest park is visited by thousands of walkers, bird watchers, wildflower observers, cyclists, mountain bikers, orienteers, primary, secondary and TAFE and university students, youth groups including scouts and guides as well as pony riders, dog walkers and campers.

Imagine what the future holds?

Exploring the surrounding area

Lake Esmond Map ref 13

is situated on the corner of Larter Street and Lal Lal Street, Canadian and was originally a quarry for Eureka Tile Works until 1982. The park was named after the discovery of gold and Eureka Stockade leader, James Esmond (1822-1890). It was officially opened on 6 June 1988, and has developed into an invaluable source of passive recreation for nature lovers and bird observers, as well as a great location to enjoy a picnic.

Sovereign Hill and the The Gold Museum. Map ref 14

Sovereign Hill is an open air museum and depicts Ballarat's first ten years after the discovery of gold there in 1851. The Gold Museum extends Sovereign Hill's story of Ballarat - a majestic provincial city built on the wealth derived from the great Australian gold rushes of the 1850s. The Gold Museum offers an award-winning gift shop specialising in the sale of gold nuggets and Australian-made gold jewellery and fine giftware.

Ballarat Observatory Map ref 15

For over 100 years, the Observatory has served the Ballarat community. Apart from its astronomical use, the Observatory buildings and telescopes are of great historical interest, and were classified by the National Trust in 1989. The observatory was added to the Historic Buildings Register in 1992.

Pax Hill Activity Centre Map ref 16

Pax Hill Scout Camp is located on the corner of Fussell & Spencer Street, Ballarat just 5km from city centre. Set on 18ha of bushland. Facilities include camp sites, chapel, confidence course, giant slide, mine (underground maze), heritage centre. Popular activities are, hiking and bush walking, abseiling, archery, billy carts, bush golf, orienteering.

Buninyong Map ref 17

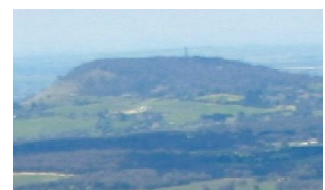
The town of Buninyong is the site of the first inland town proclaimed in Victoria. Here gold was first discovered in the Ballarat area, leading to the greater gold rush of the 1850s. Visit De Soza Park in the centre of town and follow the town walk or stroll through the Botanical Gardens.

Union Jack Reserve Map ref 18

The Union Jack Forest Reserve is adjacent to the historical township of Buninyong. The area was named by English, Scottish and Irish miners who discovered gold here in 1857. Covering 72 hectares, walking tracks pass through regrowth forest and adjacent to old mine shafts and sluice channels. Interpretative signs describe the fauna, flora, and features of the gold rush era

Mount Buninyong Map ref 19

is an extinct volcano and rises to 719 metres above sea level. Located in the Mt Buninyong Scenic Reserve 4 km north of the town of Buninyong and 14 km south of Ballarat and it is home to koalas, wallabies and bird life



The following organisations support the establishment of a Canadian Forest Multi-use Park.

- Friends of Sparrow Ground
- Friends of the Canadian Corridor
- Leigh Catchment Landcare Group
- Ballarat Bicycle User Group
- U3A walking group
- Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat
- Ballarat Sebastopol Cycling Club
- Ballarat Observatory
- Ballarat and District Outdoor Club
- Buninyong & District Community Association
- Birdlife Ballarat
- UB School of Outdoor Sciences Outdoor Ed
- BREAZE
- Ballarat East Network
- Eureka Orienteers Inc

The Canadian Forest Skyline and Mt Buninyong: Image viewed from Sovereign Hill

