



## Macedon Ranges

*Renowned for its native forests, ferny gullies and exotic gardens, the Macedon Ranges offer excellent walking barely an hours drive from Melbourne.*

The Macedon Ranges are the highest summits west of Melbourne and are a major landmark on the surrounding basalt plains. The range is part of the Great Dividing Range and is composed of residual volcanics and granites that have resisted ongoing erosion. During the late 1860s and 70s, the area surrounding Mount Macedon village became something of a summer retreat, in much the same way as the British viewed their hill stations in Northern India. The wealthy built cottages (and later mansions) and planted exotic gardens. Today these private gardens are regarded as amongst the best in Australia and at times are open for public viewing.

The Macedon Regional Park protects much of the forested high ground surrounding the village of Mount Macedon. The main ridge connecting Mt Macedon, Camels Hump and Mt Towrong has a number of excellent walking trails. The range incorporates a wide variety of vegetation types, which provide shelter to over 200 species of birds including yellow-tailed black cockatoos and large numbers of rosellas. Walkers may also see koalas, swamp wallabies, grey kangaroos and echidnas.

### Getting There

From Melbourne follow the Calder Freeway for 56 km. Leave the freeway and continue about 10 km along the Mount Macedon Road to the village of Mount Macedon.

The Macedon Ranges Walking Trail starts in **Mount Macedon village** at the corner of Mount Macedon Road and Douglas Road. The Mt Macedon Circuit walk starts at **McGregors Picnic Ground** on Cameron Drive (see the map on p.86).

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### Macedon Ranges Walking Trail

<b>DISTANCE:</b>	15 km (4-5 hrs)
<b>GRADE:</b>	MODERATE
<b>START/END:</b>	MOUNT MACEDON VILLAGE
<b>BEST TIMES:</b>	SPRING, SUMMER AND AUTUMN
<b>MELBOURNE:</b>	67 km
<b>CONTACT:</b>	PARKS VICTORIA 13 1963
<b>MAPS:</b>	PAGE 86 FREE PARK NOTES FROM PARKS VICTORIA

*This horseshoe traverse of the Macedon Ranges takes in Mt Macedon, Camels Hump and Mt Towrong.*

- Walk down Douglas Road passing a number of grand houses, until a parking area is reached on the left. This is where the signposted Macedon Ranges Walking Trail crosses the road, having come up from Macedon in the valley below.

- Follow the trail up through dry messmate forest. After 700 m a junction is reached. The trail continues on through damper messmate forest with abundant wattle and stands of mountain ash. These trees are eventually replaced by snowgums. The trail then joins the tourist walk to the Mt Macedon Memorial Cross. Local resident William Cameron built the original structure (during the depression years) as a war memorial. Lightning strikes later damaged the cross and the area was devastated by the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires. Recently the cross was replaced and the surrounding gardens renovated. The lookout provides one of the finest panoramas near to Melbourne.

- At the Memorial Gates (next to the carpark), the signposted trail continues behind the tearooms and then north, passing Western Lookout along the way. Although this section of the trail is never more than a couple of hundred metres from Cameron Drive, there is a real sense of remoteness. The trail passes a turnoff to Cameron Picnic Ground and then crosses a few tracks that are seasonally used by horse riders. Beyond McGregors Picnic Ground is a turnoff to Camels Hump Carpark.

- It's a 20 minute side trip up to the rocky summit of Camels Hump (1008 m) and walkers will be rewarded with excellent views of the surrounding rural landscape, including Hanging Rock. This is the highest point of the Macedon Ranges. Back at the carpark, continue along the Macedon Ranges Walking Trail which sidles around the northern slopes of Camels Hump before crossing Mount Macedon Road.

- The trail continues to Days Picnic Ground, then crosses Lions Head Road and follows the Forest Eco-Tourism Walking Trail to Sanatorium Lake. This attractive spot was named after a tuberculosis sanatorium which operated in the valley below between 1899 and 1910. The lake supplied water to the sanatorium and now attracts a great number of birds.



## Macedon Ranges



• Continue along the trail to the Sanatorium Picnic Ground. Turn right and walk down the gravelled road to Barringo Road. Cross over and follow Zig Zag Track through the messmate forest to its junction with Hemphills Track. Turn left and follow Hemphills Track for a further 1.5 km to the next junction. Turn right and walk to the top of Mt Towrong. There are fine views as you descend the western slopes of Mt Towrong to Anzac Road. Turn left and walk along this road for about 850m to Mount Macedon Road. Turn left and walk into Mount Macedon village.

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## Mt Macedon Circuit

<b>DISTANCE:</b>	8.5 KM (3 HRS)
<b>GRADE:</b>	EASY
<b>START/END:</b>	MCGREGORS PICNIC GROUND
<b>BEST TIMES:</b>	SPRING, SUMMER AND AUTUMN
<b>MELBOURNE:</b>	72 KM
<b>CONTACT:</b>	PARKS VICTORIA 13 1963
<b>MAPS:</b>	PAGE 86 FREE PARK NOTES FROM PARKS VICTORIA

*A varied forest walk offering excellent views.*

• From the western end of McGregors Picnic Ground cross Cameron Drive to where a rough vehicle track enters a remnant stand of taller trees. Walk down this track (disregard the early turnoff on the right) for about 450 m to Turitable Reservoir (also know as Anderson Reservoir). This area is managed by Western Water and walkers are allowed to enter. Please note that water activities are restricted since this is part of the town water supply. Walk along the often muddy track below the dam wall then 150 m along the forest track to a fork. Turn right (uphill) and continue on through tall timber about 400 m to a gate. A pine plantation is now entered and at the next junction head right to exit onto the gravelled Clyde Track.

• Turn left and walk down Clyde Track for about 600 m. Just after Francis Road is the gated Hood Track (both are signposted and turn off to the right). Continue along Hood Track, which provides generally level walking through a variety of native and exotic trees. About 300 m beyond a small grove of pine trees is a clearing with excellent views of the distant city. The track now descends to another clearing. Disregard the turnoff to the right and continue along the main track until it intersects with the Macedon Ranges Walking Trail at a signposted junction.

• The winding trail climbs fairly steeply up the hill and soon passes a turnoff to Eastern Lookout. As you approach the top, the forest gives way to snow gums. Their presence confirms that snow is a regular occurrence at these heights. The trail joins the tourist walk to the Mt Macedon Memorial Cross. William Cameron built the original structure during the 1930s, as a memorial to those who died in World War 1. The original cross was replaced due to lightning and fire damage and the surrounding gardens have been extensively renovated. The view from the lookout is outstanding. Mt Macedon was named by Major Mitchell who ascended the peak in 1836.

• At the Memorial Gates (next to the carpark) the signposted trail continues behind the tearooms and into the forest. There is a sense of remoteness along this section of trail even though Cameron Drive is never more than a couple of hundred metres away. Pass the turnoff to Cameron Picnic Ground then cross a few wider tracks (seasonally used by horse riders). McGregors Picnic Ground is soon reached.