

# Lake Albacutya Park



## Visitor Guide

Adjoining Wyperfeld National Park, this park is an important habitat for woodland species, and when flooded is a vital wetland for migratory birds. The parks and reserves of the Murray-Mallee are large and diverse. They are an important part of Victoria's parks system which plays a unique role in protecting Australia's biodiversity

*"The mallee is renowned for its diversity. This is where it all happens – it's a mecca of wildlife and open spaces".*  
Friends of Lake Albacutya



Major Mitchell Cockatoo

### A rich human history

Wotjobaluk and Wergaia people roamed the area they called 'wimmera – mallee', including the Lake Albacutya/Wyperfeld area. Using watercourses, woodlands and surrounding Mallee to their advantage their approach to the land was one of sustainability and coexistence. Their spiritual and physical connections are still celebrated through their descendants.

*Parks Victoria recognises this connection and acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Communities of these areas.*

Victoria's Indigenous communities and other cultural heritage such as shell middens, oven mounds, scar trees, artefacts and stories are all indicators of this earlier, and current, presence dating back more than 5,000 years.

### Water levels

At high water mark, the lake covers 5850 hectares of the 8300 hectare park. This lake last filled with water in 1975 and is part of a complex lake system, flooded only when (and if) the Wimmera River overflows from Lake Hindmarsh.



### Plants and wildlife

Although the lake is often dry, its Red Gum and Black Box woodlands attract a variety of colourful parrots such as Red-rumped and Regent parrots, as well as Sulphur-crested and Major Mitchell cockatoos.

The beautiful Major Mitchell Cockatoo is listed as vulnerable in Victoria. This is due to habitat clearing, resulting in the loss of suitable food (native Pine and Buloke) and hollows for breeding, and invasion of hollows from feral bees. Another major threat is from bird poachers stealing eggs and young. Please report any suspicious activity.

A variety of vegetation communities include Pine-Buloke woodland, mallee eucalypts and heathlands containing Guinea flowers, Desert Banksia, Tea-tree and She-oaks.

When in flood the lake is one of Australia's significant wetlands, recognised under the Ramsar Convention for protection of wetlands. It has been known to attract waterbirds such as Banded Stilts, the rare Freckled Duck and the majestic White-bellied Sea Eagle.

Emus and Western Grey Kangaroos are frequently seen in the open grassy areas.

### Weedy woodlands - worldly travellers

Early settlers have inadvertently introduced many of the common plants in this Black Box woodland, such as wild turnip, thistles and horehound. Soil disturbance from sheep, cattle, rabbits, fire and fluctuating high populations of kangaroos have damaged the native vegetation and encouraged the spread of weeds. Weed control and grazing management programs are ongoing with the support of friends and volunteers.

### Location and access

The park is 14km north of the small township of Rainbow. A sealed road from Rainbow ends at the main camping area at western beach. The eastern shore can be reached from Rainbow or Yaapeet, depending on weather conditions. Some tracks are accessible only to 4WD vehicles. Wyperfeld National Park abuts the northern and western boundaries.

### Be fire ready and stay safe

Many parks and forests are located in high fire risk areas. On days of forecast Code Red Fire Danger this park will be closed for public safety. If you are already in the park you should leave the night before or early in the morning for your own safety.

Closure signs will be erected and rangers will patrol when possible, however you may not receive a personal warning that the park is closed so check the latest conditions by calling 13 1963 or visit [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

For up to date information on fires in Victoria or general fire safety advice call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.

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For further information

Parks Victoria  
 Information Centre  
 Call **13 1963**  
 or visit the website  
**www.parks.vic.gov.au**

**Wyperfeld National Park**  
 1476 Wyperfeld Park Road  
 Yaapeet Vic 3424

**Alfred Deakin Centre**  
 180-190 Deakin Avenue  
 Mildura Vic 3500  
 Freecall: 1800 039 043

**Horsham**  
 Visitor Information Centre  
 20 O'Callaghan Parade  
 Horsham Vic 3400

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your parks and reserves by remembering these guidelines:

Please take rubbish home with you for recycling or disposal

All plants, animals, archaeological sites and geological features are protected by law

Dogs are permitted but must be restrained at all times

Fires must be lit in properly constructed fireplaces, be less than 1m in size, clear for 3m of flammable material, never left unattended and extinguished before you leave

No fires, (including gas or fuel stoves in tents) may be lit on days of **Total Fire Ban**. Lake Albacutya Park is in the **Wimmera Total Fire Ban District**

Firewood may be collected only for campfires within the park and only be dead wood from the ground

Please keep to designated tracks

Vehicles, including motor cycles, must not be driven off open formed roads. All vehicles must be registered and drivers licensed

Do not camp within 20m of the water's edge

Pit toilets must be at least 100m from the water's edge

**Mobile phones:**

You may not be in network range in some areas of the park. To be connected to Police, Ambulance or CFA, **key in 112 then press the YES key**

**Park closures**

Be prepared to leave early as **extreme weather may cause the closure of some park areas** for public safety

**Facilities**

There are toilets and tables at Western Beach, Yaapeet Beach and O.T.I.T camping areas. The Friends of Albacutya also maintain a toilet/shower block at Western Beach. Rain water is provided at Western and Yaapeet beaches, but may not always be available, so it is advisable to bring your own.

There is a concrete boat launch ramp at Western Beach. At Yaapeet Beach boats may be launched from the shore when the lake is full.

**Exploring the park**



You can explore Outlet Creek and the sand dunes north of the lake on short day walks or longer overnight expeditions. If you intend to walk in the more remote areas of the park please inform a ranger before setting out. It is too hot in summer for safe enjoyable walking.



Enjoy a drive through the park, but remember it is important to check current road conditions with park staff before visiting. Some tracks become impassable in wet weather and others are recommended only for four wheel driving.

The park is popular for four wheel driving, trail bikes, bush walking and family camping. When the lake is full skiing, fishing yabbing and boating are great activities to enjoy.

Camping is permitted in most areas around the lake in the designated areas.

**Be Safe Be Prepared**

- Carry a good quality map.
- Always wear sturdy footwear with a good tread.
- Drinking water and food should always be carried.
- On longer walks, carry protective clothing.
- A hat and sunscreen are essential in summer.

Your "firewood" is an important habitat for many small reptiles and insects. Use gas or fuel stoves to conserve fallen timber.

