

Little Desert National Park

Visitor Guide



Dalkaiana Wartaty – Welcome. The Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jadawadjali, Jaadwa and Jupagalk peoples (collectively Wotjobaluk), the Traditional Owners of this land welcome you to country. Little Desert National Park is more than a desert and comes alive with spring wildflowers waiting to be discovered on its many tracks and trails. Camp beside the Wimmera River fringed with River Red Gums, or hike the rolling dunes of the desert. Open spaces and peaceful campgrounds make this park a natural treasure.



Co-operative management of the park

In 2005, the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation entered into the first Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) in Victoria with the Victorian and Australian Governments.

A co-operative agreement that includes this park ensures that the traditional owners will be able to continue to care for country by being involved in the management of the areas where their native title rights have been recognised.

Getting there

The park is 375km west of Melbourne, between the Wimmera River and the South Australian border. A number of sealed roads lead to the park from the Western Hwy and a gravel road leads from Dimboola to the eastern part of the park.

Once you leave the bitumen, most tracks are very sandy and are suitable for experienced drivers of four wheel drive vehicles only (not suitable for all-wheel drive vehicles).

Things to see and do

Bushwalking



Stringybark Walk 1km, 30 minutes circuit

Commencing from the Nhill - Harrow Rd, this peaceful loop walk showcases the diversity of the Little Desert. Explore the variety of plants in spring, don't forget to look underfoot, so you don't miss the wildflowers, such as Mallee Honey-Myrtle and a variety of native orchids.

The loop walk also offers plenty of opportunities for birdwatching, especially after rain. A factsheet at the start of the walk will guide you along the walk.



Sanctuary-Keith Hateley Nature Walk 1km, 30 minutes return

Keith Hateley was a local resident and major campaigner for the conservation of the Little Desert for the protection of the Malleefowl.

Start this nature walk in the sanctuary picnic area, 10km south of Kiata. Guided by a factsheet that can be collected at the start of this walk, you will be able to explore the plant and bird life of this area.

If you are lucky you may catch a glimpse of the rare Malleefowl.



Pomponderoo Hill Nature Walk 1km, 30 minutes return

This walk is on the park's northern boundary, 4km south of Dimboola. It loops around typical desert vegetation. A lookout gives great views of the park, Wimmera River and the surrounding area.

Campground trailhead walks

Kiata Campground is a trailhead for several walking tracks. Walking track Factsheets are available at the start of these walks.

Horseshoe Bend and Ackle Bend campgrounds have a short walk leading to the river. The walk provides great views of the desert, particularly at sunset. Continue past Ackle Bend and follow the track a further 1km to the river before returning to the campgrounds.



Long distance walking Little Desert Discovery Walk, 74km

The Little Desert Discovery Walk offers bushwalkers a unique long-distance walk tackling the 74 km Little Desert Discovery Walk.

Walk-day options

Options of one to four days' duration are possible.

This walk is a great opportunity to explore some of the park's diversity on foot and is especially colourful in spring. The park has 670 species of native plants and over 220 bird species recorded.

On this walk, you are likely to discover the Little Desert National Park is a place to unwind and to find beauty in the small things. From the myriad of insects such as the Jewel Beetle, one of the deserts pollinators, to the nocturnal inhabitants like the bats and pygmy possums that call the desert home.

You may not be the only one out and about on these tracks though. Keep an eye out for shingle-back lizards, skinks and brown snakes basking in the warmth.

Perhaps you can see evidence of their tracks left behind in the sand as they cross over the path. And don't forget to look up in the sky for Wedge-tailed eagles soaring high overhead.

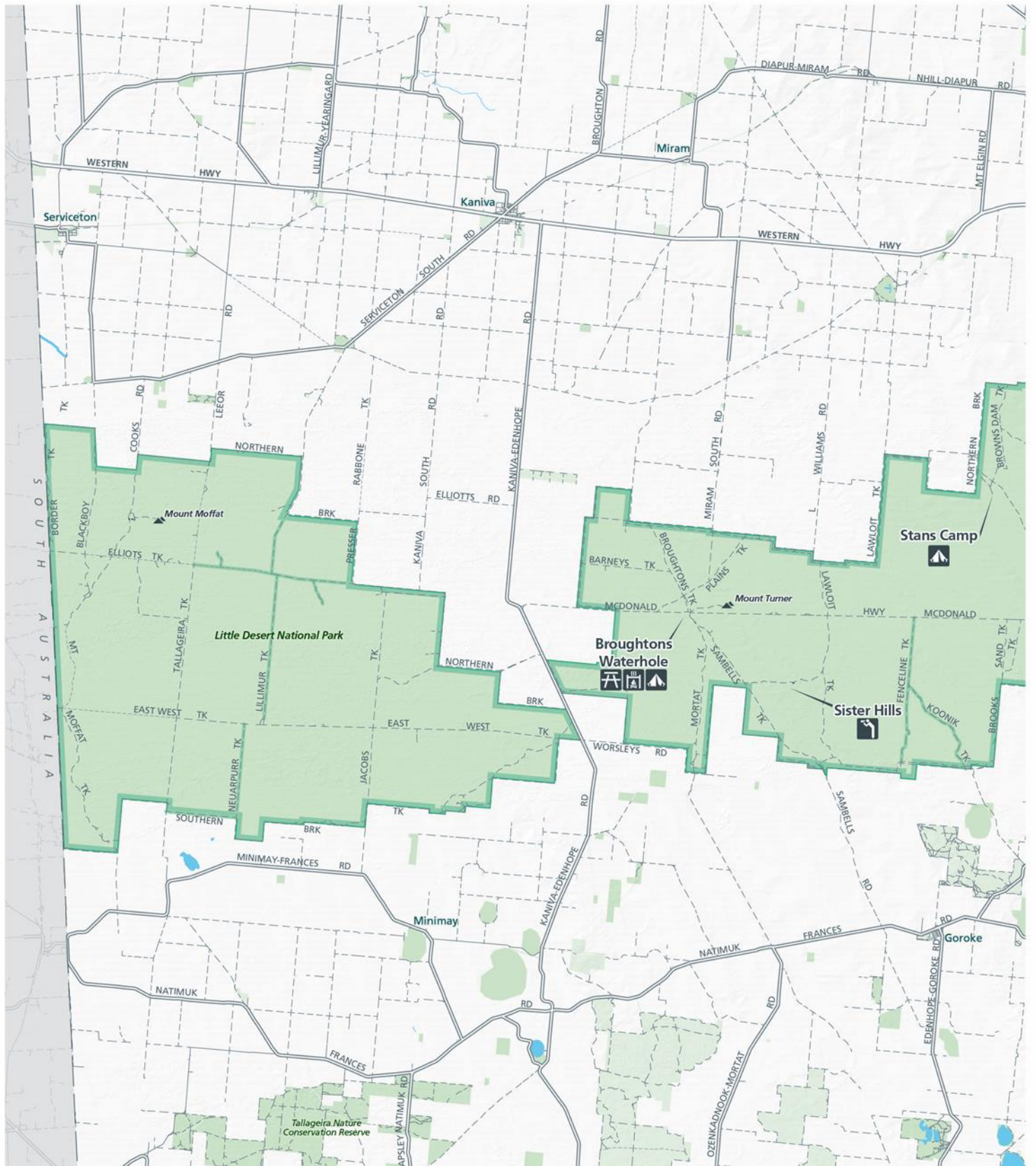
Overnight campsites

There are two overnight camps along the way, accessible only by walkers. Most of the walk is on sandy, slightly undulating tracks, however these tracks can become challenging in summer.

Register to walk and use the campsites

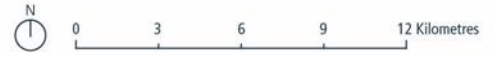
Overnight walkers are asked to register their details a week in advance by completing and emailing a *Trip Intention Form* – see additional resources.

Little Desert National Park Map 1

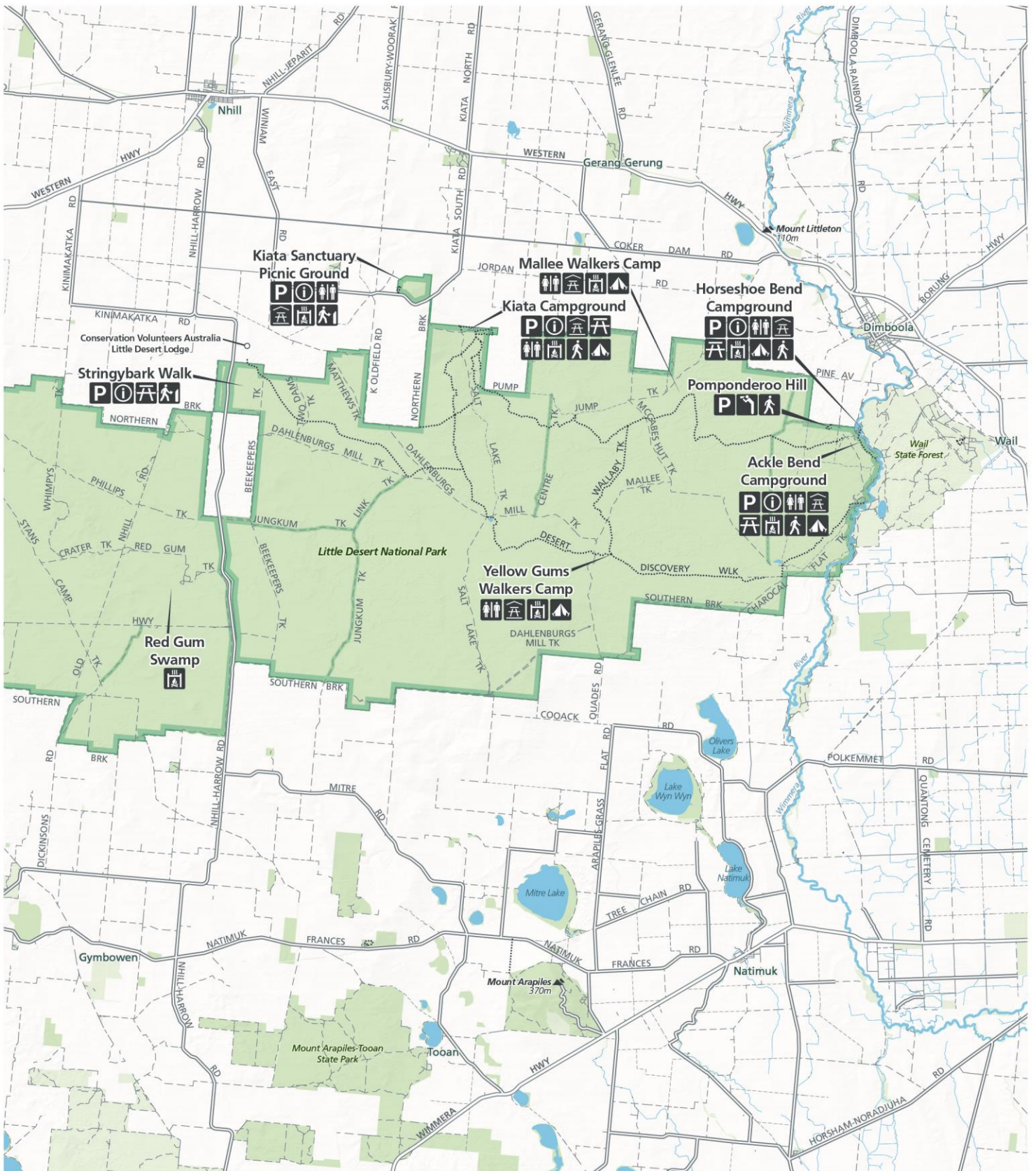


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|--------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Picnic table | Freeway/Highway | Walking track | Little Desert National Park |
| Wood BBQ | Main road | Management vehicles/walking track only | Other park/reserve |
| Camping area | Sealed road | Major river | Public land |
| Lookout | Unsealed road | Minor river | Waterbody |
| | 4wd track | Stream/creek | |

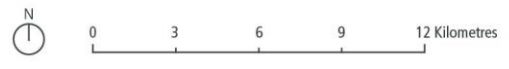
www.parks.vic.gov.au
 Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not guarantee that this data is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability which may arise from you relying on this information. Cartography by Parks Victoria July 2016.
 For mobile App search for Avenza PDF Maps



Little Desert National Park Map 2



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|----------------|------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Parking | Wood BBQ | Freeway/Highway | Walking track | Little Desert National Park |
| Information | Lookout | Main road | Management vehicles/walking track only | Other park/reserve |
| Toilets | Walking track | Sealed road | Major river | Public land |
| Sheltered area | Camping area | Unsealed road | Minor river | Waterbody |
| Picnic table | Self guided walk | 4wd track | Stream/creek | |



Camping

Camping is available at Ackle Bend, Horseshoe Bend and Kiata campgrounds and at Broughtons Waterhole, Mallee Walkers Camp and Yellow Gum Walkers Camp.



Image: Wimmera River near Horseshoe Bend

The campgrounds all have toilets, fireplaces and tables, apart from Broughtons Waterhole, which does not have toilets.

Caravan access is available at Ackle Bend, Horseshoe Bend, and Kiata Campgrounds via tracks suitable for two-wheel drive vehicles.

No drinking water is supplied – bring your own. Limited non-potable water may be available from rainwater tanks at campgrounds and walker's camps.

For more information, visit the Parks Victoria website at www.parks.vic.gov.au/safety/be-safe-plan-ahead/drinking-water

Camping fees apply at Ackle Bend and Horseshoe Bend. To book go to www.parks.vic.gov.au/stay

Bush camping away from the park campgrounds is permitted in the central and western blocks of the desert.

Please take all rubbish away for disposal or recycling.

Dogs, cats and generators are not permitted in the park.

Ackle Bend Campground

Ackle Bend camping area is located on the Wimmera River, south of Dimboola via an unsealed road that is suitable for two wheel drive vehicles.

There are 10 unpowered sites available with a maximum of six people per site. Generators are not permitted.

Horseshoe Bend Campground

This campground is located south of Dimboola and is surrounded by an impressive bend of the Wimmera River.

Access is via a gravel road that is suitable for two wheel-drive vehicles.

There are 10 unpowered sites with a maximum of six people per site.

Kiata Campground

Kiata Campground is located 10km south of the Western Highway from Kiata township. The gravel road is unsealed and suitable for two wheel drive vehicles. Basic bush camping sites are available.

Broughtons Waterhole

This campground is set in among Yellow Gum woodland and is accessible off the McDonald Highway on a road suitable for four wheel drive vehicles only. Camping here is very basic.

Mallee Walkers Camp

Mallee Walker's Camp is located on the northern loop of the Little Desert Discovery Walk, halfway between Kiata and Horseshoe Bend camping areas.

Basic bush camping sites are available for walkers only.

Yellow Gums Walkers Camp

Yellow Gums Walkers Camp is located on the southern loop of the Little Desert Discovery Walk, between Kiata and Horseshoe Bend camping areas.

Basic bush camping sites are available for walkers only.

Four-wheel driving

A range of four-wheel drive tracks that traverse the park. Many are tracks are sandy and can become boggy when wet. Salt Lake Track starts at the Kiata Campground and is good for viewing spring wildflowers.

More experienced drivers may wish to explore the western section of the desert near the South Australian border.

A separate brochure is available on 4x4 driving from

www.wimmeramalleetourism.com.au/online-brochures

Seasonal track closures may apply to prevent damage during wet conditions. For changed conditions prior to your visit refer to

www.parks.vic.gov.au

Additional Fact Sheets

Visit www.parks.vic.gov.au for other publications such as,

Little Desert Discovery Walk – Track notes

Little Desert National Park – Overnight walking trip intention form.



Be prepared and stay safe

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000). If there is a green emergency marker sign near you, read the information on the marker to the operator. Little Desert National Park is in the Wimmera fire district. Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering parks and forests during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions. Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban at www.emergency.vic.gov.au, on the VicEmergency smartphone app or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226. No fires may be lit on Total Fire Ban days. On Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days this park will be closed for public safety. Warning signs may be erected, but do not expect a personal warning.

Check the latest conditions at www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.