



Wilsons Promontory National Park



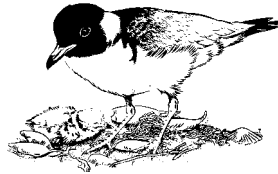
Education Program Guide

The Prom's diverse range of environments, including beaches, intertidal mudflats, mangroves, rainforest, heath land and a variety of woodlands make a wonderful classroom for students to explore and learn in.

The park

The southernmost point of the Australian mainland, Wilsons Promontory (affectionately known to Victorians as 'the Prom') is arguably the most loved national park in Victoria. Its 130 km coastline is framed by granite headlands, mountains, forests and fern gullies. Tidal River, 30 km inside the park boundary, is the focus for tourism and recreation. The park contains the largest coastal wilderness area in Victoria.

Hooded Plovers nest on the beach and are at risk from people playing in sand dunes. Status – endangered.



Education programs

The education program at Wilsons Promontory National Park is specifically designed to meet both Parks Victoria's organisational and park management objectives and the VELS and VCE curriculum. All of the activities provide hands on experience that enable students to explore the park in a fun and stimulating way.

VELS sessions

'Rockpool Ramble'

Early, middle and later years

Sessions are tide dependent.

Students explore the rocky coastline to discover a myriad of life forms such as sea stars, elephant snails and sea anemones. This 'hands-on' session enables students to study the unique methods of survival used by these plants and animals.

Thongs and sandals are not appropriate footwear.

'Tracks and Traces'

Early and middle years

Students will learn the subtle signs that tell us which animals are about, including tracks, scats and territorial markings. Upon their return to school students will be able to assess animal types and numbers living in their local area.

'Ponding on the Prom'

Early, middle and later years

How healthy is Tidal River? Students study the water habitats of Tidal River and have the opportunity to net a variety of small creatures living within them. Using stereo microscopes, they are able to identify and discuss how they eat, breathe and move about. The information gathered is then used to determine the health status of the river.

'Endangered species'

Middle and later years

Problem solving scenarios will be used as students work as a recovery team to save one of Victoria's most endangered animals. This session will cover animal monitoring, trapping, pest animals and habitat conservation.

'Kangaroos, Grass & Fire'

Middle and later years

The Yanakie Isthmus is home to one of Victoria's most threatened habitats – Coastal Grassy Woodlands. Students will use problem solving and thinking skills to determine some of the best ways to deal with the issues that the Isthmus faces.

'All fired up'

Middle and later years

Fire is essential to the park's flora and fauna diversity. Students will compare a burnt and unburnt site to study the unique relationships between plants and animals and the survival mechanisms of native plants after fire, including seed dispersal, regeneration and fire dependency.



education

VCE sessions

Below is a sample of some of the sessions available. Education staff can modify and adapt these for specific school requirements. Contact us for more information.

Outdoor & Environmental Studies

Unit 1 Understanding Outdoor Experiences

Examines the role of national parks for outdoor experiences. Students will examine the factors that influence visitors' needs and expectations. A particular focus will be the strategies the park has in place to maximise visitor experiences while also minimising their potential impact.



Stay on designated walking tracks to prevent damage to soil and vegetation, and to avoid getting lost.

Unit 2 Environmental Impacts

Examines either a freshwater, marine or terrestrial environment with an emphasis on the characteristics and interrelationships specific to the ecosystem. Students will then explore the many strategies in place at an individual and park level to maximise visitor experiences while minimising their potential impact upon the ecosystem.

Unit 3 Relationships with Outdoor Environments

Enables students to explore past users and pressures upon the park. Topics will include indigenous, sealing, whaling, farming, fire, conservation and recreation uses. Students will study strategies employed by the park to maximise ecological sustainability.

Early history of the Prom includes sealing, whaling and the construction of a lighthouse.



Unit 4 The Future of Natural Environments

Students will study the social, historical, economic, environmental and political issues facing the Prom and other natural environments. The session will look at contemporary needs and expectations of visitors, management of conflicts, the impact and strategies in place to manage exotic species as well as the challenges in managing threatened species and native fauna.

Biology

Unit 2 Intertidal Study

Is a field based session. It enables students to examine an intertidal habitat at Picnic Point. They will study the relationship between environmental factors, adaptations and distribution of flora and fauna on the rocky reef.

Rockpool rambles are a great way to learn about intertidal marine species.



Unit 2 Coastal Grassy Woodland Study

is a field based session that enables students to examine one of Victoria's threatened habitats – Coastal Grassy Woodlands. They will study the relationship between environmental factors, adaptations and distribution of flora and fauna on the Yanakie Isthmus. Students will be able to use the Prom's exclusion plots for data collection and analysis.

Unit 2 Mangrove Study

is a field based session that enables students to examine Australia's southernmost mainland mangrove habitat. They will study the relationship between environmental factors, adaptations and distribution of flora and fauna.

Environmental Science

Unit 3 Ecological Issues: Energy and Biodiversity

Enables students to examine one of Victoria's most threatened habitats – Coastal Grassy Woodlands. They will study processes threatening the biodiversity of the Yanakie Isthmus. Students will use the Prom's exclusion plots for data collection and analysis as a method of assessing the risk to the ecosystem.

Other factors studied include changes to the ecosystem over time including past/present uses as well as the challenging management strategies in place to ensure the future sustainability of the Isthmus.

Geography

Unit 3 Regional Resources

Examines the social, historical, economic, environmental and political issues facing the Prom and in particular Tidal River. The session will look at contemporary needs and expectations of 400,000 visitors per year as well as the impact and strategies in place to sustainably manage the park into the future. The group will be able to access numerous 'behind the scenes' sites to give them a thorough understanding of the infrastructure required to successfully manage a remote site.

Making the most of your visit

Education services

- Utilise the skills of our education staff when planning and preparing your visit.
- Create opportunities for students to have quiet contemplative experiences in the park.
- Art, journal writing and time out activities enable students to disengage from the hectic pace of many camps.

Coastal Banksia are widespread at the Prom and rely on fire to help open their hard, woody seed cases so that seeds can germinate in the fertile ash-bed below.



- Access the Education Zone adjacent to the Tidal River campground – this area has been set aside for environmental education in a relatively undisturbed area.
- Participate in Operation Prom, a relaxed two day professional development program for teachers and outdoor leaders.
- Utilise free services such as the audio visual and Visitor Centre display.

Sea stars are often seen in the intertidal zone. Some are brightly coloured, others use clever camouflage to blend into their surroundings.



Park management

- Recycle your rubbish using the appropriate bins provided at Tidal River.
- Reward students who take more rubbish home with them than they originally brought.
- Ensure you have received your free education kit.
- Take along a rubbish bag when going on any walks.

Don't feed or offer food to wildlife. A tidy campsite encourages appropriate wildlife behaviour.



- Feeding wildlife:
 - Is bad for their health
 - Causes unnatural and menacing behaviours
 - Causes an imbalance in natural populations
 - Can spread disease.
- Leave the park in a better condition than you found it. The park runs regular free programs such as revegetation and weed eradication.
- Limit numbers on overnight hikes to no more than twelve people per group – large numbers of people impact on the environment and the quality of other people's visit.
- Ensure that your visit is a special one – people are more likely to nurture something they cherish.

Safety

- On wet days, encourage students not to wear cotton clothing as it cools the body very quickly and can lead to hypothermia.
- Purchase some extra waterproof jackets from recycle shops for students who forget to bring one.
- Reliable mobile phone access is limited to the Tidal River area only.
- For the safety of you and your students keep to existing walking tracks – many search and rescues are the result of people walking off tracks.

Victoria's marine national parks and sanctuaries are home to a wide range of animals and plants that are found nowhere else in the world.

Weedy Sea Dragon – Victoria's marine emblem.



Wilsons Promontory
National Park
Education Service

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education

Self guided activities

Introduction to the park

This free 50 minute session includes a welcome and talk from one of the education staff (if available), the audiovisual presentation and an opportunity to explore the Visitor Centre.

Bookings are essential.

Photo trails

Photo trail kits are available for schools to use when doing short walks around Tidal River. Each kit contains photos of habitats, wildlife, park history and points of interest. Students are each given a photo at the start of the walk and when they come across their photo, they share the information on the back of the photo with the group. Each trail takes a minimum of one hour to complete. These include:

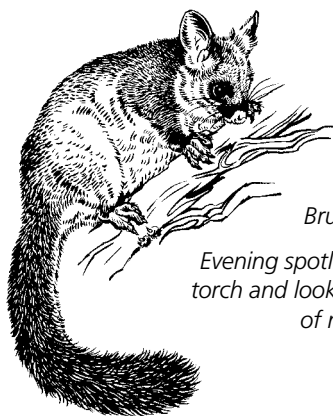
- Wetlands trail along the Loo-Errn Track.
- Coastal trail along Norman Bay.
- Aboriginal food and medicine trail.

Bookings are essential.

Beach combing box

This box of goodies contains everything you need to run a successful and exciting beach combing activity. It includes data sheets, group sets of field guides, hand lenses and clip boards, binoculars, tide chart and a rubbish bag.

Bookings are essential.



Brush-tailed Possum.

Evening spotlight walks – use a torch and look for the eye-shine of nocturnal animals.

Operation Prom

Teachers and outdoor leaders can expand their knowledge of the Prom and add to their repertoire of outdoor activities on this two day professional development course. Participants leave refreshed and equipped to plan and implement exciting and rewarding outdoor education programs. The course is generally held in the September school holidays, and accommodation and meals are included in the cost.

Bookings

Education activities are offered Monday to Friday and generally operate to a set timetable:

- 8.30 am – 10.00 am
- 10.30 am – 12 noon
- 1.00 pm – 2.30 pm
- 3.00 pm – 4.30 pm

During the winter months, however, session times may be more flexible. Please enquire.

To make a booking

- Phone: 03 5680 9536
- Email: shaintz@parks.vic.gov.au
- Fax: 03 5680 9516

All bookings will be confirmed by fax or email stating the date, time, year level, number of students and activity.

Cost

The cost per student, per activity is \$2.80. Payment prior to arrival is appreciated. If a tax invoice is required beforehand, one can be faxed or posted to the school.

Curriculum material

A range of free primary and secondary curriculum units are available on Parks Victoria's web site including:

- Native animals
- Endangered species
- Tourism
- Feral animals.

The area surrounding the Prom's airstrip, 12km south of the Yanakie Entrance Station, is a great place to view Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Emus and Wombats.

