



Big Busy Bushland Forest Circuit

Currawong Bush Park Walk



Suitable for

Active Families	✓
Strollers	
Pleasure Walkers	✓
Super Striders	✓
Circuit	✓
Seating	✓
Dogs	Currawong Bush Park is a protected habitat.
Trail Type	Natural Heritage with Historic Places

Manningham City Council

699 Doncaster Road
Doncaster Victoria 3108
t 03 9840 9333 f 03 9848 3110
e manningham@manningham.vic.gov.au
www.manningham.vic.gov.au

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Walk Overview

This trail explores the wildlife that makes up our big and busy bushland with a particular focus on the interrelationships between plants, people and animals. Different habitats provide opportunities to tell stories about animals such as insects which are often overlooked, and to tell tall tales about the giants—and there are ancient giants to meet.

Time

1.5 hrs

Distance

3.7 kms

Difficulty

Moderate—there are hills

Accessibility

Medium—unsuitable for wheelchairs



Location

Start and finish at Currawong Bush Park, Reynolds Road, Doncaster East.

Melway Reference

34 H6

Public Transport

Metlink: t 131 638
www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au

Ventura Buses: t 9488 2100
www.venturabus.com.au

Parking

At Currawong Bush Park, Reynolds Road.

This walk moves you through the Currawong Bush Park's Forest Circuit. Sculptural Markers dot the landscape and are places to stop for interpretation.

The paths are generally gravel and easy to navigate, but there can be mud after rains. There are hills to climb, ponds to investigate, trees to study, leaf litter to explore, plants to smell and evidence of wildlife to find.



Facilities

Drinking fountain, toilets, picnic tables, barbecue facilities, camping and function rooms for hire
Contact Council for camping permits and room hire.

Hazards

Muddy and slippery in places
Beware of snakes in warm weather



Be Prepared

Sun protection recommended
Carry a camera—wildlife are frequently seen
Good walking shoes are recommended
Good trail for Nordic Walking sticks.

Days of total fire ban

Currawong Bush Park is closed on days of Total Fire Ban.
Check the fire risk warning before embarking on this walk:
www.cfa.vic.gov.au













Opening Hours

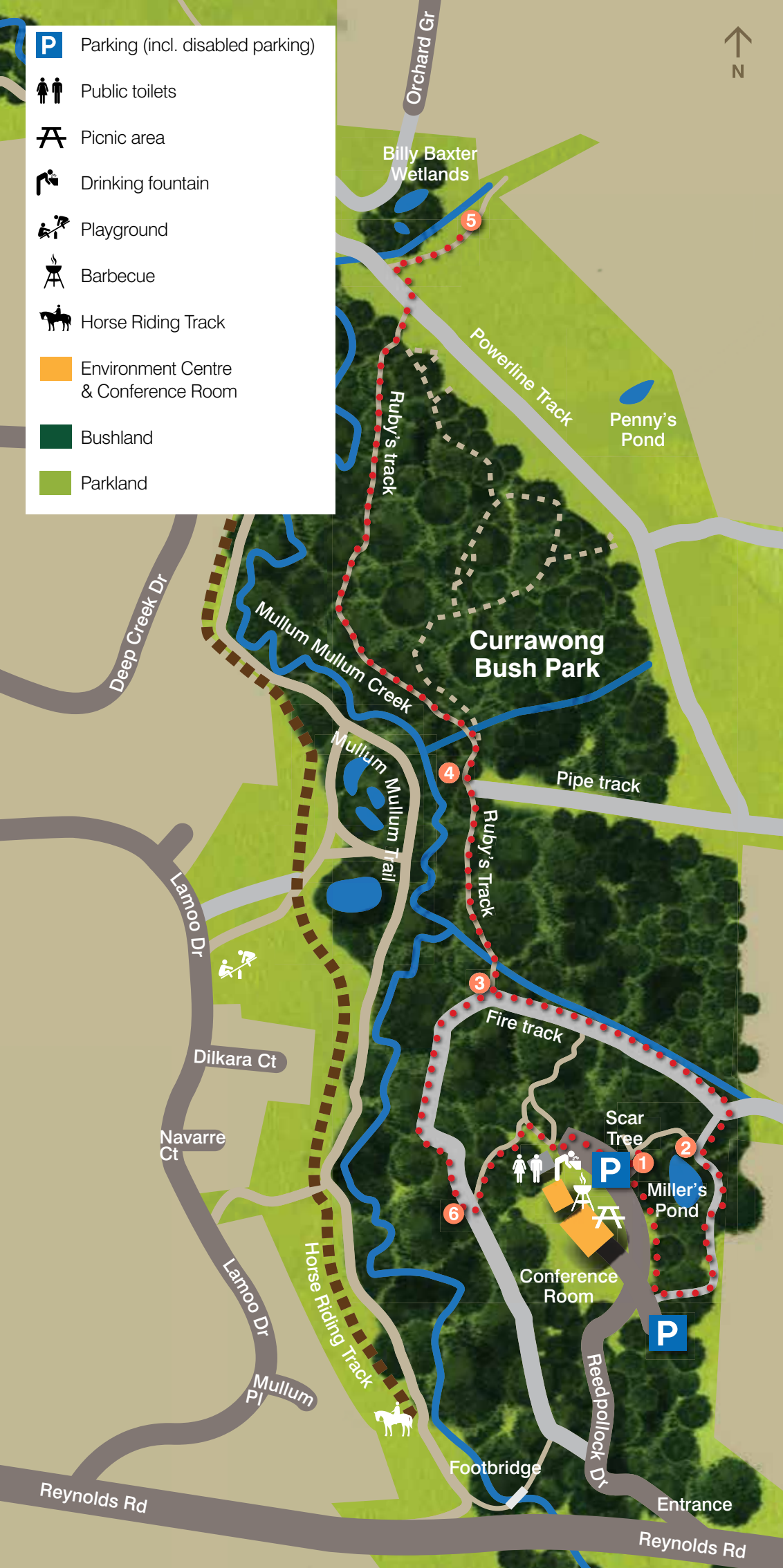
Currawong Bush Park is open during daylight hours
The automated boom gate has a 24-hour timer programmed to open and close at 8.00 am–5.00 pm, and 8.00 am–8.00 pm during daylight savings
If you find yourself in the car park after hours, simply driving up to the boom gate will trigger the opening mechanism.



Additional Walks

There are 20 other walks throughout Manningham to choose from, showcasing the city's rich cultural and natural environments and unique heritage.
Copies are available from the Civic Centre or see:
www.manningham.vic.gov.au/walks

-  Parking (incl. disabled parking)
-  Public toilets
-  Picnic area
-  Drinking fountain
-  Playground
-  Barbecue
-  Horse Riding Track
-  Environment Centre & Conference Room
-  Bushland
-  Parkland



Welcome to Currawong Bush Park—the best little wilderness in Melbourne. We acknowledge the *Wurundjeri-wilam* as the traditional owners of this land. The name *Wurundjeri* means ‘Wurun’ the Manna Gum, and ‘djeri’ is the grub that lives under its bark; ‘wilam’ means camp. The language spoken by Wurundjeri people is ‘Woi wurrung’.

If you don’t see any wildlife, you will most definitely hear them and see evidence of their existence. Remember, all flora and fauna are protected here. Please take only pictures and leave only footprints.

There are toilets and a drinking fountain to prepare for your walk ahead. Begin your walk from the picnic area carpark and head downhill.

1 Wurundjeri Wisdom

All hail the Stringybark

As you stand here, look around and try to get a ‘feel’ for the bush. Think about how you might survive in the bush and what here could be of use to you.

In the days when the *Wurundjeri-wilam* had to rely on the bush for survival, they wouldn’t have far to go. Look for the Red Stringybark, *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*. They have a very thick, reddish-brown bark that was used by Indigenous people to line their shelters. The fibrous bark can be twisted to make string and used to create baskets, bags and fishing nets.

Possums (Walert) looking for blossom might end up as tucker and their pelts made into cloaks. The grubs of several moth species, found in the bark, were a tasty treat and eucalyptus leaves were (and still are) used for a range of medicinal purposes. Green Manna Gum leaves are used in Smoking Ceremonies to welcome visitors onto Wurundjeri Country.

Take the little track, on the left, to the fallen Aboriginal Scar Tree.

Aboriginal Scar Tree

The Indigenous people were (and still are) masters in creating tools without destroying the landscape. The Aboriginal Scar Tree here is one example of this.

A large piece of woody bark was removed in one piece with a stone axe that was ground down to a sharp edge. The width of the cut was not large enough to kill (ringbark) the tree.

From the sculptural marker head up to the access road, turn left and walk to the second carpark. Here take the track heading downhill on the left.

2 Pond Ponder

Secret activity

Even if you can’t see it, this little pond is abuzz with life. And it all starts with the simplest of plants—algae.

There are more than 40 different varieties of algae in this pond. Many fish, amphibians and insects live on algae. With so much good food, there must be lots of animals—and there are.

It is estimated that there are more than 2,000 types of insects throughout Currawong Bush Park. So where are they all?

You’ll find the tiny Water Boatman just below the pond’s surface, where they cling to submerged objects to prevent themselves rising to the surface. To breathe, they trap air around their body.

This is a good idea because at the surface you will find the most efficient of pond predators—the dragonfly. While flying between 15 and 50 kilometres per hour, these ancient animals devour insects including flies, moth, butterflies and even bees.

Follow the path heading downhill.

3 Gregarious Grasslands

Fire and Silver Wattle

In winter this area is ablaze with a golden hue. These delightful puffballs of yellow flowers belong to the Silver Wattle. Wattle rely on heat to disperse their seed. On very hot summer days you will hear the pods pop open releasing their small black seeds.

Even more efficient than a hot day is fire. Fire assists plants like the Silver Wattle to release its seeds and germinate, although it kills the parent plant. It also requires good rain afterwards.

Continue downhill and over the footbridge.

4 Beaut Eucs

Layer upon layer

The trees in a eucalypt forest provide important protection for a range of understorey plants. The forest’s growth can be seen in layers. Take your time to notice these layers.

Canopy—this is the ‘umbrella’ created by the spreading foliage of the tallest trees. Here the canopy is ‘open’ meaning plenty of light penetrates the ‘umbrella’.

Midstorey—look for smaller trees such as Silver Wattle, Cherry Ballart (which look like small pines), Christmas Bush and Burgan (which is covered with white flowers in spring).

Herbaceous or ground layer—bracken, grasses and orchids.

Forest floor—leaf litter, rotting logs, insects and fungi are all at work providing a healthy nutrient rich forest foundation.

Continue ahead until you reach the powerline track, turn left walking downhill, turn right at the next track to the last sculptural marker.

5 Wild Wetland

Edged with sedge

Autumn to winter is the time to see fungi here. Some are brightly coloured mushrooms; others are dullish, flower-shaped and spreading.

This wetland is actually a natural filtration system. There are three settling ponds each layered with wetlands plants that assist in removing toxins from the water.

Pondweed, rushes and sedges grow round the edges while other plants appear to float but are actually attached to the pond’s base. This is fantastic habitat for small fish, amphibians and insects.

At times duckweed will dominate as a thin green layer. Fortunately this is a favourite of our native birds and fish, so it gets eaten.

Retrace your steps back to the Gregarious Grasslands marker and continue ahead on the access track.

6 Riverside Revelry

Tiny and mighty

A big busy bushland requires your sharp attention. Use all your senses—sight, hearing, smell, touch, but perhaps not taste.

Our wildlife is in the trees and bushes, in the streams and ponds, on the ground and even underground, but many of these creatures cannot be seen or heard.

Tiny to microscopic insects are prolific here. They are our eco stabilisers and assist in providing a healthy forest. They are decomposers, burrowing through logs, devouring rotting wood, dead animals and plants. Their work releases nutrients back into the soil so that plants can grow and die, get composted, which feeds the soil so that plants can grow again. This is our never ending cycle of life and is the foundation to a healthy ecosystem.

To complete this walk, make a sharp turn to your left and head up the hill to the picnic area carpark.