

Murray Sunset National Park

Visitor Guide



Murray-Sunset National Park is in one of the few remaining semi-arid regions in the world where the environment is relatively untouched. Stretching from the Murray River at Lindsay Island in the north to Pink Lakes near Underbool in the south, with breathtaking sunsets and starry nights, its vast, wide open, and isolated landscapes will take more than a day to explore.



Parks Victoria acknowledges the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee as the Traditional Owners of Murray Sunset National Park and pays our respects to their Elders – past, present and emerging.

Getting there

Murray-Sunset National Park is in northwest Victoria, between Ouyen and Mildura and the South Australian border. It is approximately 530km from Melbourne and 340km from Adelaide.

Access to the park from Melbourne is via the Calder Highway, and from South Australia via the Sturt and Mallee Highways.

Things to see and do

Murray-Sunset National Park is the largest national park in Victoria. This remote outback park offers extensive 4WD, photography, birdwatching and remote camping opportunities for prepared travellers. The park is ideal for relaxation and solitude.

The northern section the park is dominated by Mallee woodland. Large tracts of pine, Savannah Mallee, and grasslands support a wide range of plants, birds and wildlife, with diverse wetlands and islands found along the Murray River.

The southern area offers a true sense of wilderness among the big horizons of the Mallee – from sand dunes and Pink Lakes to semi arid woodlands and open plains with abundant wildlife. Mt Jess and Mt Crozier offer superb vistas over the Mallee landscape.

In spring and summer the semi-arid landscape comes alive with a spectacular display of wildflowers.

Car touring and four-wheel driving

Unsealed roads from the Mallee or Sturt Highways are suitable for two-wheel drive vehicles (2WD). However, four-wheel drive vehicles (4WD) with good ground clearance are recommended for most tracks, particularly tracks in the park's remote interior. Many tracks have areas of deep sand with wide wheel ruts, and some become impassable in wet weather.

Pink Lakes – Access by 2WD vehicles via the gravel road from Linga. For those with limited time, a tour around Pioneer Drive is a must.

Lindsay, Mulcra and Wallpolla Islands – all tracks are dry weather only. See the separate visitor guide and maps for the islands.

Please check current road conditions on the park's web page at www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963 before visiting.

Pink Lakes

The picturesque Pink Lakes are so named because of their colour after winter and spring rains. The Pink Lakes change in colour throughout the year from a deep pink to a glistening white. A red

pigment, carotene, is secreted from the algae – best seen early or late in the day or when it is cloudy. The lakes evaporate over hot summer months leaving concentrated salt crusts over black mud.

Walking around the Pink Lakes

There are several short walking tracks in the Pink Lakes area suitable for people with no bushwalking experience. There are some sandy areas and gentle hills, so the tracks are not suitable for wheelchairs.



Kline Loop Nature Walk – 4.8km, 2 hours circuit – Grade 3

Take in the vast beauty of the Pink Lakes along the Kline Nature Walk. Learn about the long-standing salt mining industry in the area, the harsh conditions workers had to endure and life in a remote corner of the state at the outdoor Salt Museum.

Visiting the shores of Lake Crosby and Lake Kenyon, the trail starts at the northern end of the main campground, beside Lake Crosby, and is marked with orange arrows on posts. Look out for the many types of birds that live here, and for the footprints of kangaroos and emus as you pass through several different habitats along the walk.



Lake Becking – 1.4km, 40 minutes circuit – Grade 3

This pleasant short walk starts and ends at the top of Lake Becking and follows the old railway line, which used to carry salt into Linga. Follow the orange markers and look out for interpretive boards along the way telling the stories of the area.



Lake Hardy – 1.7km, 45 minutes circuit – Grade 3

This short circuit walk around the 'pinkest' of the pink lakes gives a nice overview of the terrain and vegetation of the area. Its proximity to the entrance road makes it a popular destination with photographers, especially at sunrise and sunset when soft light tends to accentuate the pink colouring of the lake.

A well-formed walking track marked with blue triangles starts at the information board and leads left along the edge of the lake.

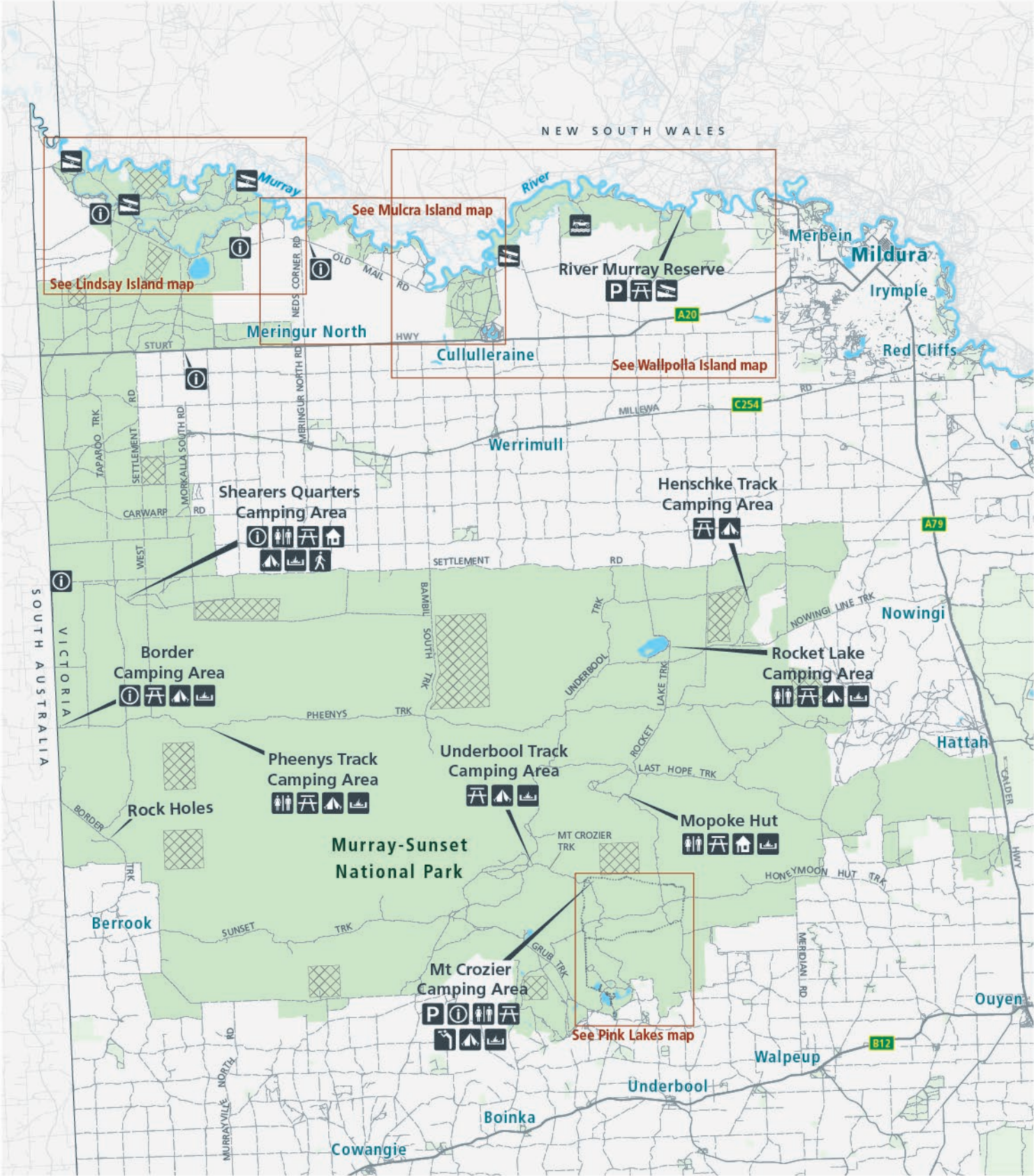
Shearers' Quarters

















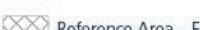










This historic building was once the home of the lessee of Sunset Pastoral Co. The four-bedroomed cottage offers hostel-style accommodation for up to 12 people.

To book the Shearers' Quarters go to www.parks.vic.gov.au/stay or call Parks Victoria on 13 1963.

Murray-Sunset National Park

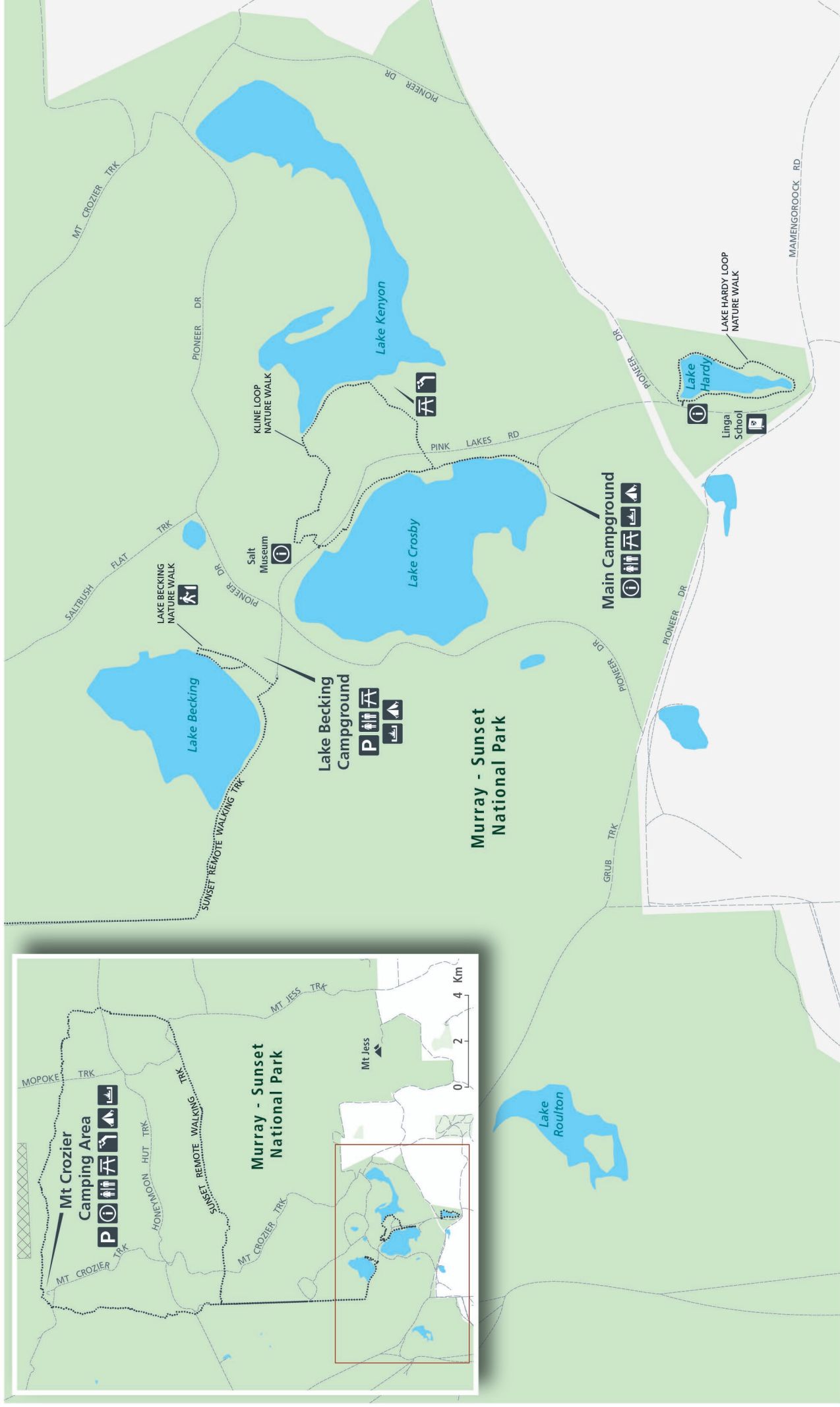
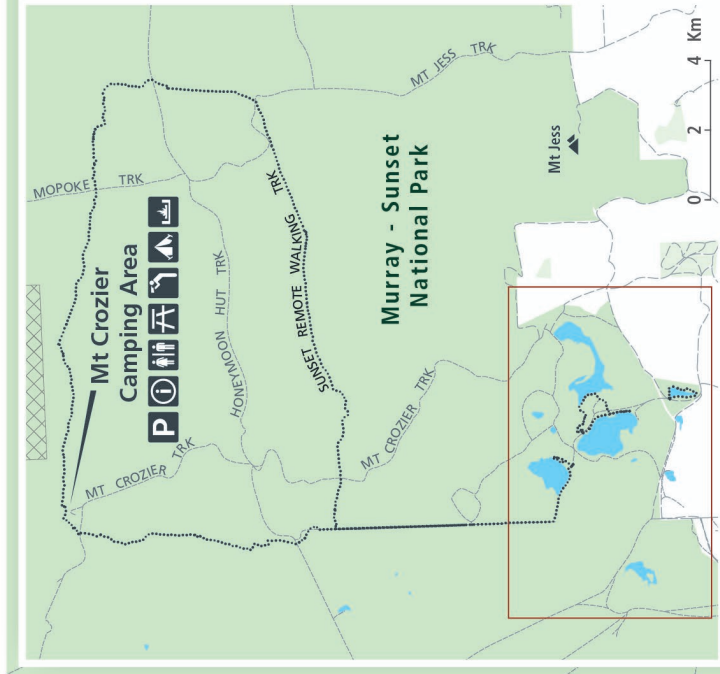
Overview



	 P Parking	 Fireplace	 Guided walk	 Freeway/Highway	 Walking track
	 i Information	 Boat ramp	 Historical site	 Main road	 Murray-Sunset National Park
	 T Toilets	 4WD crossing	 Hut	 Sealed road	 Other park/reserve
	 P Picnic table	 Hut	 Walking track	 Unsealed road	 Reference Area – Entry prohibited
	 L Lookout	 Walking track		 4WD	 State Forest

Murray-Sunset National Park

Pink Lakes





Sunset Nature Walk – 3.5km, 1.5 hours return – Grade 3

Take this gentle walk from the Shearers' Quarters to explore the unique natural and historic features of the area. The signs along the way tell the stories about the area's farming and logging history, as well as introducing many of the other inhabitants of the park today.

Hiking



Sunset Remote Walking Track – 66km, 3 day loop – Grade 4

This 3-day hike offers experienced and well-prepared walkers the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in this remote and arid region. The track is best walked in the cooler months. Hikers should be completely self-sufficient and always check conditions with local rangers before starting out. Carrying a topographic map, compass and/or GPS, and a personal locator beacon is recommended.

Camping

There are eleven campgrounds in the park, with a range of basic facilities (see the table below). Camping is free, and no bookings are required, however campers must be well-prepared and self-sufficient. No drinking water or bins are provided.

Table 1 – Campground Facilities	Picnic tables	Toilets	Fire pits
Campgrounds			
Border (4WD)	●		●
Henschke Track (4WD)	●		
Lake Becking (2WD)	●	●	●
Lake Crosby / Main Campground (2WD)	●	●	●
Mopoke Hut (4WD)	●	●	●
Mt Crozier (4WD)	●	●	●
Mt Crozier Remote (4WD)	●		●
Pheenys Track (4WD)	●	●	●
Rocket Lake (4WD)	●	●	●
Shearers' Quarters (4WD)	●	●	●
Sunset Tank (4WD)	●		●

There are no designated campgrounds or facilities along the Murray River or its islands, however bush camping is permitted along the river. Please practise minimal impact camping and observe relevant fire regulations. Campsites should be at least 20m from the river.

Fishing and boating

Fishing is a popular activity along the Murray River. Fishing in the Murray requires a NSW fishing licence, and fishing in the other creeks and lakes in the park requires a Victorian fishing licence. Licences can be purchased from many local outlets and online from www.onegov.nsw.gov.au and www.vfa.vic.gov.au.

Please help us protect the riverbanks, which provide important habitat for many animals, and prevent erosion by using a boat ramp to launch your boat. Refer to the visitor guide for Lindsay, Mulcra and Walpola Islands for more information and maps of the Murray River section of the park, available from www.parks.vic.gov.au.

Plants and animals

There are approximately 600 known species of plants native to the park, including Victoria's largest flower, the Murray Lily, the restricted Silvery Emu-bush and the rare Blue-leafed Mallee.

Mallee vegetation dominates the sandy loam soils with pockets of Native Cypress-pine and Belah woodlands scattered throughout.

In addition to the more conspicuous mammals, such as Western Grey and Red Kangaroos, the park is home to a number of rare and threatened species. These include the Paucident Planigale (a small carnivorous mouse-sized marsupial), the Millewa Skink and the Regent Parrot. Keep an eye out for the park's many species of reptiles, included Bearded and Mallee Dragons.

Over 220 species of birds have been observed in the park. Notable birdlife includes the Malleefowl, Mallee Emu-wren, Major Mitchell's Cockatoo and the Black-eared Miner. More information can be found in the *Birds of the Mallee Parks* factsheet, available from www.parks.vic.gov.au.

Caring for the park



Help us look after your park by following these guidelines:

- Please take rubbish away with you for recycling or disposal.
- All plants, animals, historical and archaeological sites and geographic features are protected by law.
- Dogs and other pets are not permitted in the park.
- Firearms are prohibited.
- Light fires only in fire pits, if provided. Collect only dead wood from the ground at least one kilometre from the designated campground or bring your own firewood or gas or electric stove or barbecue. Extinguish fires with water before leaving.
- No fires are permitted on a day of Total Fire Ban. Built in and portable gas or electric barbecues may be used provided:
 - a three-metre area is cleared of anything flammable
 - at least 10 litres of water is available for immediate use
 - an adult is in attendance at all times.
- Chemical toilets are preferred. Pit toilets must be at least 100m from the water's edge. Bury toilet paper and waste appropriately.
- Vehicles, including motor bikes, may only be used on formed open roads. Drivers must be licensed and vehicles registered and roadworthy.

Be prepared and stay safe



In an emergency call 000 for fire brigade, police and ambulance.

- There is no mobile phone reception in the park. Radios are recommended when travelling in the remote interior.
- Visitors should carry plenty of water and avoid walking during the hottest part of the day in summer. Conditions can be extreme.
- Feral bees may be present and persistent around any source of moisture during dry, hot weather.
- Snakes are also more active in spring, summer and autumn. If you see a snake, stand still and don't panic. Snakes nearly always move away when they feel footstep vibrations. Snakes are protected, so please don't try to kill them.
- Avoid camping under or close to large trees like River Red Gums, as branches may fall at any time and swing away from the tree at any time.

Murray-Sunset National Park is in the Mallee fire district. Bushfire safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering parks during the bushfire season needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions.

No fires may be lit on Total Fire Ban days. Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban in the 'Prepare and Get Ready' tab at www.emergency.vic.gov.au, on the VicEmergency smartphone app, or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226.

On Code Red Fire Danger Rating days this park will be closed for public safety. Do not expect an official warning. Check the latest conditions at www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.