

# VNPA BUSHWALKING & ACTIVITIES INFOPACK



VICTORIAN  
NATIONAL PARKS  
ASSOCIATION



## BUSHWALKING AND ACTIVITIES PROGRAM INFOPACK

If you love Victoria's great outdoors, getting out and about in nature and making new friends, you'll love our activities.

The VNPA has the largest range of outdoor activities of any Victorian bushwalking group; there is plenty of choice no matter what your work or lifestyle commitments. This Infopack provides you with further information to help you choose experiences and to get the most out of your activity.

### VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION (VNPA)

The Victorian National Parks Association is Victoria's leading nature conservation organisation. It is an independent, non-profit, membership-based group that exists to protect Victoria's unique natural environment and biodiversity through the establishment and effective management of national parks, conservation reserves and other measures.

The Bushwalking and Activities Group (BWAG) is part of the VNPA and its committee of volunteers prepares and coordinates the activities in this program. The Committee and Activity Leaders are all volunteers. BWAG is keen to get suggestions for activities and encourages you to contact one of the committee members. If you are prepared to lead a trip or would like to discuss the possibility, please contact the Leaders liaison.

NatureWatch is a VNPA community engagement and citizen science program that brings together community groups, scientists and land managers to develop and manage projects that get volunteers out into the field monitoring native plants and animals.

#### BWAG COMMITTEE

<b>Convener</b>	Terese Dalman	vnpabwag.convener@gmail.com
<b>Leaders liaison</b>	Russell Bowey	0417 328 651
<b>Secretary</b>	Russell Bowey	vnpabwag.secretary@gmail.com
<b>Treasurer; Statistics; Training</b>	Robert Argent	vnpabwag.treasurer@gmail.com 0417 502 191
<b>Activities Program</b>	Gayle Davey	vnpabwag.program@gmail.com
<b>Social Activities</b>	Deb Henry	vnpabwag.social@gmail.com
<b>Emergency Contacts</b>	Sue Catterall	0417 526 519
<b>WT&amp;G Coordinator; Publicity</b>	Julia Pickwick	0433 977 396
<b>Bushwalking Victoria liaison</b>	David Moore	david@alexanderschool.edu.au
<b>Under 35 Activities</b>	Contact: VNPAU35@gmail.com	

The BWAG Committee is composed of volunteers elected at the VNPA/BWAG Annual General meeting each October. The committee meets 6 times a year (approximately every eight weeks). VNPA members may attend committee meetings; please contact the Convener if you are interested.

#### For more information please contact any of the BWAG Committee or the VNPA office:

Victorian National Parks Association  
Level 3, 60 Leicester St, Carlton VIC 3053  
Ph: (03) 9347 5188, Fax: (03) 9347 5199  
Email: vnpa@vnpa.org.au Web: www.vnpa.org.au  
ABN 34 217 717 593

## ACTIVITY CHOICES

### BUSHWALKING

Bushwalking is one of the finest ways to enjoy nature because it offers such a range of experiences, along with the opportunity to meet new people. As well as offering great walks we also run training sessions in navigation, leadership and pack-carry walking. There is range of one-day and multi-day walks.

### CYCLING

Whether you are a mountain biker or prefer road biking our cycling trips have you covered. Our trips can take up to an entire day or be combined with camping on overnight and longer journeys.

### CANOEING

Our canoeing trips take place over summer and include one-day outings on the Yarra as well as longer trips to the Murray and other rivers.

### SKI/SNOWSHOE

We offer cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowcamping during the winter months. Join experienced ski leaders on easy day trips suitable for beginners or more challenging multi-day snow trips for experienced backcountry skiers.

### EXCURSIONS

Visit interesting places by bus on one of our excursions, which usually include walks of varying length, an opportunity to explore the area and the chance to meet up with friends.

### SOCIAL/PRESENTATION

Regular social nights are an important part of the activities program and include slide nights, gear nights, dinners and guest speakers.

### FAMILY

The VNPA runs several family-friendly activities including walks, picnics, tree planting and bike rides. Some family activities will be suitable for children in prams. Getting outdoors with your family is worthwhile and rewarding.

### UNDER 35s GROUP

The Under 35s group offers a program of regular social and outdoor events to particularly encourage younger members' participation. Some events are suited to novice participants and you don't need to be under 35 to take part. A popular email network keeps Under 35s in touch and allows information sharing on upcoming activities. If you're a VNPA member and would like to join the Under 35s e-group, email VNPAU35@gmail.com

## WALK, TALK AND GAWK

A 'Walk, Talk and Gawk' is a leisurely park visit/guided nature walk, either full or half day, with frequent stops for observation. Expert leaders point out significant features, give ecological insights and explain how a park or area is managed.

## EASY GOING AMBLES

These are slow-as-you-go strolls with rests along the way. If the spirit is willing to exercise and enjoy the great outdoors but your body slows you down, these ambles are for you. Generally they are offered on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

## URBAN WALK/ACTIVITY

Explore interesting natural and cultural heritage by walking or cycling in an urban setting.

## 4WD

Join a convoy or get a lift in another participant's 4WD and have an adventure in nature found in more remote or less accessible areas of Victoria.

## CONSERVATION ACTIVITY OR EVENT

There are many environmental restoration projects, citizen science monitoring and special events for you to have a hands-on experience helping nature. Tree-planting, weed pulling and rabbit control, working with our NatureWatch program or attending the Easter camp in East Gippsland are some of the activities you can choose from in our program. We also work closely with volunteer Friends groups and host the Victorian Environmental Friends Network, so we can put you in contact with such groups in your area. For more information go to [www.friendsnetwork.vnpa.org.au](http://www.friendsnetwork.vnpa.org.au)

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN VNPA ACTIVITIES

### BOOKING A WALK OR ACTIVITY

All intending participants should check the BWAG e-bulletin for any changes to the program. Contact the leader about 2-3 weeks, *but not more than one month*, before the trip, unless early booking is indicated in the program. Except where otherwise indicated, phone numbers given are home numbers and calls should generally be made in the evening on weeknights or at weekends. *Please ring before 9:00 pm*. Please remember that all leaders are volunteers.

Leaders will not accept early bookings – it increases the chances of cancellations and it is unfair to those who follow the guidelines. Leaders will limit numbers on a trip to comply with our Minimal Impact Bushwalking Policy and safety considerations.

Non-members are welcome on trips. They must be booked in with the leader and may attend three trips before it is necessary to join the VNPA, which you can do at any time.

When booking, indicate your name, telephone number, personal emergency contact number, and whether you are interested in car sharing. If contacting a leader by email, put the email subject as "BWAG < walk name >"

If you are unknown to the leader, s/he will discuss with you your fitness, equipment and experience to undertake the activity you have chosen. The leader may recommend another activity that is more suited to your ability. Persons under 18 cannot be accepted unless accompanied by an adult.

Please read the Activity Descriptions section before booking a trip.

## TRANSPORT

Trips are by private transport unless otherwise stated. Where possible, please try to share transport, as it cuts costs and fuel usage. After all, we are primarily a conservation organisation. The leader may arrange car pooling.

The objective of our cost-sharing policy is for costs to be shared between all the occupants of the vehicle according to the following guidelines:

- The total petrol cost for the vehicle is to be doubled and divided by the number of occupants. The number of occupants includes the driver/owner.
- If only one passenger, the passenger should pay 2/3 of the petrol cost and the driver 1/3 of the petrol cost.
- The driver and passengers should agree in advance.

## FEES

The leader will collect activity fees on behalf of the Bushwalking and Activities Group. This money is used to pay for general BWAG expenses, printing the activities program, and insurances.

Attendance fees per day are:

	ADULT	CHILD (U16)	FAMILY
MEMBER	\$5	\$2	\$10
VISITOR	\$9	\$3	\$20
ANNUAL PASS	\$50	\$20	\$100
NatureWatch	Free	Free	Free

The maximum fee for a trip is the equivalent of the fee for a three-day trip. Leaders do not pay fees on events they lead.

The "Annual Pass" is available to members as an alternative to paying trip fees. The card is valid for 12 months from the beginning of the next month from which it is purchased and is available from the VNPA Office. The Annual Pass must be produced at each activity or the appropriate fee will apply.

## BEFORE THE TRIP

- Be sure to read the Activity Descriptions section before booking on an activity.
- Read the information sheet provided by the leader.
- Leave details of the trip and the name and phone number of the contact with someone at home.

## ON THE TRIP

- Although the leader is a volunteer, he/she is responsible for the whole group. Everyone's cooperation makes the leader's job easier and the trip more enjoyable for all.
- Get to the meeting place on time.
- Follow the leader's instructions during the activity.
- Try to stay with the group. Don't race ahead, and don't fall behind the whip. Try to maintain a comfortable distance between you and the person in front. Inform the leader or the whip if you are unable to keep the person ahead in sight.
- Remember the whip is to be the last in the group. Do not lag behind and divide the group. If you need to go off the track, make sure you tell the whip and leave your pack on the track where you go into the bush.
- If you see other party members who need help, offer assistance. Do not leave it entirely to the leader.
- Adhere to our Minimal Impact Bushwalking policy.

## TRAVELLING IN CONVOY

- A convoy may be necessary on a trip, particularly when completing a car shuffle.
- It is easier in smaller groups than in larger groups.
- Try to car pool to reduce numbers.
- Drivers should be aware of how many cars there are, the make and colour of other cars in the convoy, and who is last.
- Where available, exchange mobile phone numbers.
- Try to maintain visual contact with the car in front and behind (not always possible due to safety requirements, dust, winding roads, etc.)
- At intersections where direction changes, the leading car should wait to regroup before entering the intersection. Do not continue until all cars have caught up – this may take time.
- If separated, return to the last-known point on the route and wait. Do not attempt to second-guess the leader and find an alternative route to the destination.
- Obey road rules and follow safe driving practices at all times.

## EQUIPMENT

Due to the expense of bushwalking equipment 'try before you buy' and seek the opinion of others before buying. All bushwalkers have their own preferences but you will be able to reduce the risk of buying unsuitable gear. Many shops that sell bushwalking and camping gear will hire equipment at reasonable rates.

Use the list (in box on right) as a guide only. Extra items of a personal preference may also be carried as well as any items specifically requested by the leader.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

There are many useful books available in most bushwalking stores. The Bushwalking and Activities Group have an extensive library of books and track notes that can be borrowed by contacting the VNPA Office. The Bushwalking and Ski Touring Leadership handbook provides valuable information, particularly for leaders, and is available for loan from our library.

## EQUIPMENT GUIDE

### Day Walking

Day pack  
Waterproof jacket  
Waterproof overpants  
Sturdy footwear (well worn-in)  
Water bottle (minimum 1 Litre)  
Woollen beanie/balaclava  
Woollen jumper/thermal jacket  
Gloves  
Sunhat  
Sunscreen  
Toilet paper & trowel  
Personal first-aid kit  
Whistle  
A plastic bag for rubbish found en-route

### Overnight Walking

Pack (with liner, e.g. garbage bag)  
Sleeping bag  
Sleeping mat  
Tent  
Stove and fuel  
Matches  
Torch  
Beanie/balaclava  
Gloves  
Trousers  
Thermal underwear  
Woollen jumper/thermal jacket  
Boots (well worn-in)  
Gaiters  
Water bottle (minimum 1 Litre)  
Plate/bowl/mug/cutlery  
Toilet paper & trowel  
Waterproof jacket and overpants  
Personal clothing items  
Sunhat  
Sunscreen  
Toilet paper & trowel  
Personal first-aid kit

### Personal first-aid kit

1 triangular bandage and fasteners  
1 10-cm elastic bandage  
1 medium wound dressing  
Assorted adhesive dressing strips (e.g. bandaids, elastoplast)  
Emergency blanket  
Personal medications  
Moleskin or similar for blisters  
Insect repellent  
Paracetamol  
Antiseptic

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

GRADE	EASY	MEDIUM – May involve:	HARD – May involve:
<b>Walk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>on formed tracks</li> <li>terrain level or undulating</li> <li>pace relaxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some rough terrain, forest or road walking</li> <li>longer ascents or descents</li> <li>up to 6 hours walking in a day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rough terrain</li> <li>rock scrambling</li> <li>thick scrub</li> <li>8 hrs or more each day</li> <li>steep sustained ascents or descents</li> </ul>
<b>Excursion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus trips to places of interest to members, including the option of an easy or medium grade walk (see 'easy walk' above)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus trips to places of interest to members, including the option of an easy or medium grade walk (see 'medium walk' above)</li> </ul>	N/A
<b>Walk, Talk &amp; Gawk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Park visits/guided walks, with frequent stops for observation of significant features or ecology.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
<b>Canoe Kayaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>slow-flowing rivers</li> <li>small rapids</li> <li>a good command of basic strokes required</li> <li>'beginner' trips assume no experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>moderately flowing rivers</li> <li>small rapids requiring some manoeuvring</li> <li>route generally easy to recognise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level 1 rapids</li> <li>longer days, sustained paddling required</li> <li>manoeuvring in faster flowing water</li> </ul>
<b>Cycle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>up to 40km/day</li> <li>bitumen roads</li> <li>few hills</li> <li>no steep grades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>up to 50km/day in hilly country or 70km/day in flat country</li> <li>short stretches of dirt road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sustained stretches on dirt roads</li> <li>up to 60km/day in hilly country or 80km/day on the flat</li> <li>hilly terrain</li> </ul>
<b>Ski (day)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>up to 5hr/day</li> <li>mainly groomed trails</li> <li>limited experience is assumed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>up to 7hr/day</li> <li>ability to snow plough and stop</li> <li>moderate slopes and off-trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7hr/day or more</li> <li>good skating skills</li> <li>off trail, steep slopes, all snow conditions</li> <li>competent in poor weather</li> </ul>
<b>Ski (overnight)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>able to snow plough and stop with a daypack</li> <li>overnight backpack camping experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ability to ski gentle slopes with a full pack</li> <li>snowcamping experience desirable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>moderate slopes in all snow conditions with a full pack</li> <li>snowcamping experience in all conditions</li> </ul>

The grading information in the above table should be used to decide if you can complete a proposed activity enjoyably and with little risk. If you are inexperienced, you would be expected to progress through the grades, and to do day walks before attempting overnight pack-carrying walks. Discuss any doubts about your abilities with the leader. In some cases gradings are combined, e.g. easy/medium or medium/hard. Exploratory walks are in areas unfamiliar to the leader. In keeping with VNPA policy and minimal impact guidelines there is no intentional off-track walking or routes selected through environmentally sensitive areas.

ACTIVITY ICONS			
	Bushwalk		Easy Going Ambles
	Walk, Talk & Gawk		Overnight/ Multi-day
	Urban Walk/Activity		Conservation Activity or Event
			Social/Presentation
			Excursion
			Public Transport
			U35
			Family
			Ski/Snowshoe
			Kayak/Canoe
			Cycling
			4WD

## CONDITIONS AND POLICIES FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES

Please take note of the following conditions and policies when taking part in a VNPA event.

### DISCLAIMER

By participating in a VNPA event you agree to do so at your own risk.

### LIABILITY

Every person participating in a VNPA activity does so at their own risk in all respects and, as such, accepts full responsibility for his/her suitability, fitness and preparedness for the activity and for any injury to him/herself. The Association, its office bearers, organisers, leaders and helpers are absolved from any liability in respect of any injury, loss or damage suffered by the participant while engaged in any VNPA activity to the extent permitted by law.

### PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

The VNPA has a public liability insurance policy.

### VNPA OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Occupational Health and Safety involves shared responsibilities and a team approach. Everyone associated with the VNPA has a duty of care, which requires each person to be capable and responsible for their own health and safety as well as for the health and safety of others. So far as is practicable VNPA is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment that is safe and effectively eliminates or minimises the risks to the health and safety of staff, members, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

### USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES FOR VNPA ACTIVITIES

Volunteers are advised that personal vehicles used for VNPA business and activities are not covered under the VNPA Public Liability or any other insurance. Volunteers should have as a minimum Third Party Motor Vehicle insurance or Full Comprehensive insurance when undertaking activities with the VNPA.

### VOLUNTEER PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The VNPA has volunteer personal accident insurance.

### PARTICIPATION BY CHILDREN

Children under 18 years old are welcome to attend VNPA activities if accompanied and supervised by their own parent or carer at all times, and if accepted prior to the day by the activity leader.

### INCIDENT REPORTING

All incidents should be reported to the activity leader at the time they occur.

Serious incidents should be reported to the leader and to the VNPA Office on 9347 5188 within 48 hours of the incident. Examples of serious incidents include:

- An injury requiring medical or dental treatment from a health professional (e.g. doctor, dentist, medical practice, hospital). This does not include treatment of minor injuries by a qualified first aid officer.
- An incident that results in the attendance of emergency services including police, ambulance, fire, SES, Bush Search & Rescue, or similar.
- An incident that results in property damage.
- A motor vehicle accident.
- Any serious misconduct including violence, abuse, neglect, discrimination or harassment.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT SYSTEM (EC)

The Bushwalking and Activities Group has organised an Emergency Contact System to enable communication to assist parties that are delayed or require external assistance. The system is to be used for all activities where the EC coordinator has deemed it necessary. The leader will advise participants of the name and phone number of the selected contact. All participants should leave details of their trip, the expected time of return and the phone number of the contact with a relative or friend. Enquiries about the late return of people are to be directed to the contact. Do not ring the police. The names and phone numbers of emergency contacts are listed for relevant dates in the program. Direct any queries to the emergency contact coordinator.

The group is indebted to the contact people who give their time and effort to help protect our safety.

### MORE INFORMATION

Please contact the VNPA office at [vnpa@vnpa.org.au](mailto:vnpa@vnpa.org.au) or call 03 9347 5188.

## MINIMAL IMPACT BUSHWALKING POLICY

The VNPA's objectives emphasise principles of conservation and education. This policy provides for the conduct of walks held as part of the VNPA Bushwalking and Activities Program and as a guide to emphasise acceptable standards to minimise the impact of activities in the bush.

Bushwalking is defined as walks in native bushland not developed for high level visitor use.

### PARTY SIZE

Party size will be based on the following considerations:

- Location of activity including terrain, land type and conservation status of the land
- Type of activity – Walk Talk & Gawk, easy walk, overnight or extended
- Condition of, and likely impact of walking on, tracks
- Seasonal and weather considerations
- Local knowledge (personal, ranger).

Recommended maximum group sizes are as follows:

- Sensitive areas e.g. alpine areas above 1200m, rainforest, unstable areas in arid and coastal zones and some flora and fauna reserves **Maximum 12**
- Stable areas in land with a primary purpose for conservation e.g. national and state parks **Maximum 20**
- Stable areas in land with a primary purpose for recreation e.g. metropolitan parks and gardens **Maximum 30**



## ROUTE SELECTION

- Some routes are excluded from the public for reasons of legislation, regulation, by-laws etc. These include cultural sites of Indigenous people, Reference Areas, and some water catchments.
- Route selection should ensure avoidance of areas such as:
  - Sites of significance for nature conservation
  - Sphagnum bogs
  - Creek gullies susceptible to damage
  - Revegetation areas
  - Reference areas
  - Private property without permission.
- Route selection should also consider the appropriateness of walking in and around historical and cultural sites, and should respect the values of these sites. In some cases these sites must be avoided and information to determine their status should be obtained.
- Parties must stay on the track and not cut corners even where others have done so.
- In open untracked country it is advisable to spread out to disperse impact on the terrain and vegetation.

## VEGETATION AND SOILS

- Do not interfere with plants and minimise trampling of vegetation and soil.
- Avoid known areas of dieback (*Phytophthora*) particularly during wet periods or when soils are damp, and minimise the risk of spreading infestation by cleaning shoes, walking poles etc. immediately on completion of your bush activity.
- Think about where you put your feet, hands and equipment. Flat soled and lighter footwear lessen damage and are less likely to carry soil containing *Phytophthora*.
- Avoid sensitive and soft environments and stay on rocks and hard ground.

## HUMAN WASTE

- All participants must have access to a trowel. Faecal waste and toilet paper must be buried at least 150mm deep and 100m away from water sources and campsites. In snow be sure to dig into the soil, not just the snow.
- Consider the effect of ground seepage and potential water runoff into watercourses.
- Particular attention is required if the participant is ill.
- Use unbleached, undyed toilet paper that breaks down more quickly than those containing dyes. Tampons, sanitary pads and nappies should be carried out in press-seal plastic bags.

## DETERGENTS AND SOAP

- Detergents and soaps are often unnecessary – except for a small cake for hand washing after toilet and before cooking. Get someone to pour water over your hands to rinse, well away from water sources.
- Plates etc. can be washed with sand and gravel or a scourer. Avoid greasy food to minimise washing.
- Don't put food wastes, wash-up water or toothpaste spit into water sources, but dispose of them on soil at least 50m from water.

## FIRES

- Stoves are encouraged on all trips. A number of places are 'fuel stove only' areas, including:
  - Mt Bogong
  - Mt Feathertop and its approaches
  - within one kilometre of Lake Tali Karng
  - within one kilometre of Vallejo Gantner Hut
  - Wilsons Promontory
  - above 1700 m in Kosciuszko National Park
  - many areas in Tasmania.
- Before visiting an area, check with local departments whether campfires are allowed.
- If a fire is to be lit and is not required for emergency purposes, use only existing fireplaces in areas where appropriate wood can be obtained.
- Remember that fallen and decayed wood is significant to the ecosystem as it is an important habitat and provides nutrients back into the soil.
- When camping in recognised camping areas that have constructed fireplaces, keep the fire small and in the fireplace provided.
- Consider carefully the lighting of a fire on days of high temperatures and/or strong winds. Note fire ban days and be aware of which Fire District you are visiting.
- Ensure your fire is out before you leave or go to bed.
- Where possible restore soil on any inappropriate fireplace scars you come across.

## RUBBISH

- If you can carry it in, carry it out. This includes orange peel, apple cores and eggshells; they all take a long time to degrade or may seed and produce fruit.
- Don't burn plastic, foil or plastic-coated paper products. Consider the most appropriate type of food packaging when preparing food for the trip.
- Carry out any rubbish you come across, if possible.
- Consider carrying a spare plastic bag for collecting rubbish dropped by previous walkers.



## CAMPSITES

- Camp on hard or sandy ground. It will cause less damage than camping on boggy or lushly vegetated ground.
- Where possible use an existing campsite.
- Party size must reflect campsite availability and suitability. Camp away from animal pathways.
- Trenches are unnecessary and should never be dug, nor should vegetation be cut for tent poles or for bedding—sleeping mats or spare clothing make a more comfortable mattress.
- Always leave your campsites in better condition than you found them, even if this involves removing **existing rubbish**.

## PETS

- Pets must not be brought on VNPA trips. As a general rule, regulations do not allow domestic animals in National and State Parks.

## NOISE

- As a courtesy to other walkers and to the natural inhabitants of the bush, keep noise to a minimum.

## FEEDING ANIMALS

- Do not offer or leave food for animals. It is bad for the health of the animals and may result in situations where aggressive animals attack visitors to the park.

## MOST OF ALL ...

### 'TAKE NOTHING BUT PHOTOS, LEAVE NOTHING BUT FOOTPRINTS'

- No object is to be removed from its environment unless you have a relevant licence. This includes flowers, seeds, shells, skeletal remains, feathers, rocks, leaves, driftwood and cultural and historical artefacts.

## NATURE CONSERVATION

Many of the activities listed in the Bushwalking and Activities Program will take you to areas that VNPA's vital nature conservation work is helping protect. The VNPA determines its conservation priorities using a science-based approach. Currently these focus on four key themes.

### 1. PROTECTING SEAS AND SHORES

- Protection of our marine and coastal areas, particularly in the face of climate change.
- Striving to get a government commitment to expand Victoria's current network of marine and national parks and sanctuaries.
- Ensuring that the proposed marine and coastal act provides the framework for significantly improving the planning, protection and management of our marine and coastal environments.

### 2. PROTECTING SPECIAL PLACES

- Completing our world class parks and reserve system – like Wellsford Forest, Wombat Forest, the Great Forest National Park and areas in East Gippsland.
- Protecting critically endangered native grasslands threatened by urban growth, particularly in the western and northern areas of Melbourne.
- Ensuring the Moolap wetlands near Geelong are protected from urban development, and the Anglesea heathlands are included in the Great Otway National Park.

### 3. PARKS PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

- Ensuring our special places and parks are secure, properly resourced and managed.
- Fighting threats to our parks such as development, grazing and fossicking.
- Research and better management of Victoria's alpine regions.
- Fire management that protects people and minimises impacts on the natural environment.

### 4. HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

- Ensuring the diversity of local plants and animals so that ecosystems are healthy and flourish.
- Protecting riverside habitats – riparian land is species-rich and critical to river and ecosystem health.
- Establishing biolinks.
- Strategic reform of conservation policies e.g. Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, biodiversity conservation strategy, native vegetation clearing regulations.

These are just some of our nature conservation activities. If you share our vision for Victoria as a place with a diverse, secure and healthy natural environment cared for and appreciated by all – get involved and get active for nature.

VNPA relies solely on philanthropic support from our members and supporters to carry out our important work. Your support is crucial.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP?

- Become a member or make a donation.
- Sign up for our ebulletin to keep up to date on our nature conservation news.
- Take action - write to the Premier or sign a postcard for one of our campaigns.
- Join our facebook page at [www.facebook.vnpa.org.au](http://www.facebook.vnpa.org.au)

To find out more or to support our work please phone **03 9347 5188**, email [vnpa@vnpa.org.au](mailto:vnpa@vnpa.org.au) or go to [www.vnpa.org.au](http://www.vnpa.org.au) – where you will find updates, media releases and fact sheets on our nature conservation work.