

Camping Rights

Dja Dja Wurrung On Country Rights

Dja Dja Wurrung People have lived on our traditional lands and cared for our Country over many thousands of years. For us, Country is more than just the landscape, it is more than what is visible to the eye - it is a living entity, which holds the stories of creation and histories that cannot be erased. We feel an affinity with the land when we're on Dja Dja Wurrung Country; the ancestor's spirit is in the rock, the tree, within the earth, the wind, the clouds and the fire. There is an inner peace that runs through us, a feeling of recognition and belonging to our Country spiritually. We maintain this strong physical relationship with Dja Dja Wurrung Country by continuing to access it, looking after it and by using its natural resources respectfully.

Rebecca Phillips – Dja Dja Wurrung member

This page gives more detailed information about Dja Dja Wurrung camping rights under the *Recognition and Settlement Agreement* with the state of Victoria. Please see the Introduction infosheet for important general information about your rights under that agreement before you read this page.

You need to have your Verification Card with you whenever you are camping under these Traditional Owner rights, or be with another Dja Dja Wurrung person who has their Verification Card.

Camping Rights - overview

Dja Dja Wurrung people can generally camp in parts of Dja Dja Wurrung country for traditional purposes without needing a permit or paying a camping fee. However, if camping is prohibited, you cannot camp in the area under your Traditional Owner rights. You may also need to pay any fee payable to a licensee or lessee if the camping is on leased or licensed land. Please refer to the discussion of particular land types below.

If a permit is required to use or occupy a vehicle or moveable accommodation (like a caravan or campervan), you'll still need to get that permit.

If you're camping with family members or friends who aren't Dja Dja Wurrung members, they will need to obtain the usual permit.

If a booking system is established for a particular camping area, you'll need to use the online or phone booking allocation system to reserve a spot. (There are none in Dja Dja Wurrung country at the time of writing.) And if someone has a permit to camp in a particular place, you cannot camp there.

You can stay for up to 59 nights in a row in a particular area, unless there's a shorter limit for camp sites on that type of public land specified in relevant Acts or regulations (for example, 28 nights in State Forests). If a Code Red Fire Day is declared, then of course you need to leave the area. For more information on Code Red Fire Days refer to Closure of Parks and Forests on DEPI website.

National Parks and State Parks

In parks under the National Parks Act 1975, Traditional Owners can generally camp anywhere and for any period of time, so long as you are camping in order to follow an Aboriginal tradition. You're still encouraged to follow the usual rule of camping at least 20 metres from waterways. While you're there, you need to follow the usual rules about fires, disposal of human waste, and use of soaps & detergents.

Other camping areas

In all other places within Dja Dja Wurrung country, you need to camp within areas set aside for public camping. That includes marked camp sites, and also "dispersed camping" (bush camping) where the rules of that area of land allow it.

Some reserves are managed by a committee of management or a private operator, rather than by

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Parks Victoria or a local council. In those reserves, the fee exemption doesn't apply.

Here is a brief summary of the camping areas within Dja Dja Wurrung country.

State Forests

You can camp anywhere that's more than 20 metres from any dam, bore or waterway, although it's best to camp on existing camp sites to protect the environment. You can stay for up to 28 consecutive nights.

For more information, including the minimal impact camping code, see DELWP's web page on '*Looking after forests*' .

Kooyoora State Park

Melville Caves Camping Area (1 km past the main Melville Caves picnic area - facilities include toilets and wood barbecues) and the Glenalbyn Campground.

Paddys Ranges State Park

Karri Track camping area has toilets and fireplaces. It is advisable to contact the ranger to ensure site availability. The camping area has space for up to 16 campsites.

Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park

Camp sites at Vaughan Springs, Warburtons Bridge and Chokem Flat Campgrounds. Walk-in dispersed camping is allowed throughout the park and vehicle-based dispersed camping is provided for in the park to the south of the Loddon River, subject to measures to minimise any impacts on the park.

Mt Alexander Regional Park

Dispersed foot based camping is permitted throughout the park.

Hepburn Regional Park

Camp at Mt Franklin (which is also suitable for caravans and motor homes) on a first come first served basis. Toilets, fireplaces and washing water are provided.

Creswick Regional Park

Camp at Slaty Creek Picnic Areas 1, 2 & 3.

Nature Conservation Reserves

Dispersed camping is generally not permitted, but you can camp in:

Dalyenong, Inglewood, Stuart Mill, Waanyarra and Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserves; and

Box-Ironbark Nature Conservation Reserves (designated site or dispersed camping in appropriate locations in larger reserves where this will not adversely affect the biodiversity values of the reserve).

Historical and Cultural Features Reserves

Dispersed camping is generally permitted.

Natural Features Reserves

Dispersed camping is permitted in individual reserves where specified.

Web links and more information

Further details on each camping area are available from the Parks Victoria and DELWP websites.

Find a park

<http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/find-a-park>

Camping areas

<http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/forestry-and-land-use/visiting-parks-and-forests/visiting-state-forests/places-to-visit/bendigo-places-to-visit>

Looking after forests

<http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/forestry-and-land-use/visiting-parks-and-forests/visiting-state-forests/looking-after-forests>

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Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement (2013)

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/your+rights/native+title/dja+dja+wurrung+settlement+commences>

Authorisation Orders

<http://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2014/GG2014S354.pdf>

Map of Settlement Area

<http://www.djadjawurrung.com.au/maps>

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Contact Details

<http://www.djadjawurrung.com.au/contact-us>

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