



Lakes and Craters Precinct: Mount Elephant



Mount Elephant is often referred to as the 'swagman's lighthouse' of Victoria's western district and can be seen from at least 60 kilometres away. The well-known icon located approximately 30 kilometres north of Camperdown is of geological, historical, cultural, and scientific importance.

Formed about 20,000 years ago, it features a classical conical form with steep sides and a crater which drops 90 metres into the mountain.

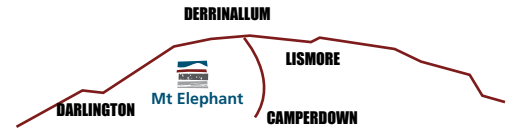
Mount Elephant is a good example of a breached scoria cone, which features a single eruption point. Its irregular rim has been caused by directed fire fountaining, and clear examples of volcanic ejecta including scoria, blocks and bombs and partially-melted granitic bedrock can be found in nearby quarries.

There are two quarry scars on the mountain. The one on the northern flank was used for railway ballast in about 1911, but proved to be too light for the job, and has long since been abandoned. The large scar on the western flank consist of two quarries – one of which is still licensed but not operating.

In 1944, a fire destroyed much of the woodland in and around the crater. A second fire in 1977 destroyed anything that remained. During this era, a lot of topsoil blew away, and the east and north-west side were left bare.

Up until 2000, Mount Elephant was located on privately-owned land, early last century, a netting fence was said to have divided the mountain into three sections which belonged to three different landowners.

In 2000, the communities of Lismore and Derrinallum in partnership with the Trust for Nature purchased the mountain.



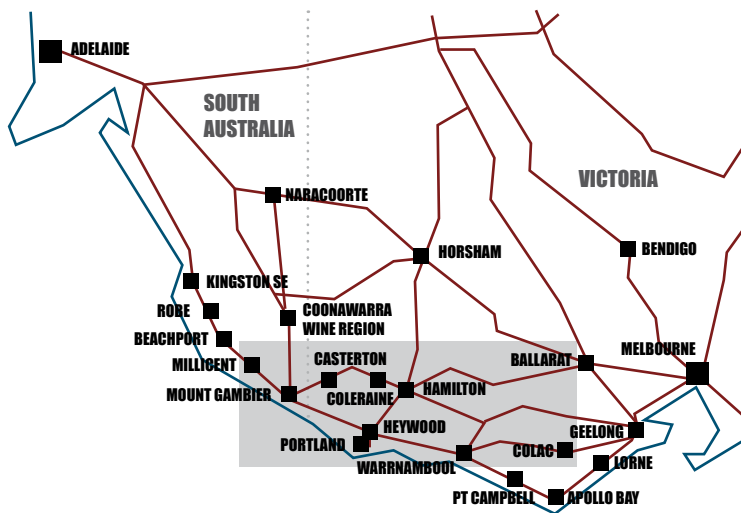
How to get there?

The entrance to Mount Elephant is 1 kilometre west of the township of Derrinallum on the Hamilton Highway.

Things to do:

- Public access is available on the First Sunday of each month (1pm to 4pm) and other times by appointment. Phone 03 5597 0243 or 03 5597 6779. Website www.mountelephant.com.au
- The summit provides a spectacular panoramic view of the basalt plains and other eruption points, as well as a rare view of a crater not associated with a phreatomagmatic eruption.
- It takes approximately half an hour to walk around the crater.
- It takes approximately one and a half hours to walk to the summit and return.





Australia may be referred to as a relatively young nation, but the well-preserved ancient landscape provides many precious windows into the past. The Kanawinka Global Geopark can take you on an amazing journey through this landscape, enabling visitors to travel back in time over thousands and thousands of years.

The surface geology of South Western Victoria and South Eastern South Australia is a striking contrast of sweeping plains and spectacular mountains which are largely the product of volcanic activity. In fact, with six sites of international significance and 14 of national significance, this area is Australia's most extensive volcanic province.

The history of these geological masterpieces stretches back to the Tertiary and Quaternary eras, when great outpourings of volcanic material through vents took place. Lava flows spread evenly across the existing plains, followed valleys, flowed under water, and in some cases forced upwards into rough, stony hills called tumuli, or steeper scoria cones.

In total, the flows cover an area of some 23,000 square km, extending north to the hills beyond Ballarat, and reappearing in a small section of south-eastern South Australia. This area is known as the Newer Volcanics Province, and features nearly 400 individual eruption points, most of which occurred between 4.5 and 2 million years ago.

Many of the eruptions were witnessed by the indigenous peoples of the area who have inhabited this region for up to 45,000 years, and feature prominently in stories of the Dreamtime.

Aboriginal people also made use of the stones from the lava flow to construct channels linking the wetlands, weirs, fish-traps, wind breaks and stone huts, and excellent examples created by the Gunditjmarra people can be found around Western Victoria's Lake Condah region in particular.

Later, during the 1870s and 80s, European settlers utilised the volcanic stone cleared from the land to construct dry stone walls in order to grow crops and introduce stock. Many examples can be found surrounding Corangamite on the Dry Stone Walls Heritage Trail.

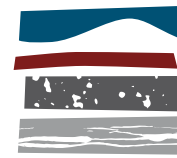
The region's spectacular and intriguing volcanic landscape also offers a range of other visitor experiences, from a 45-minute tour to the surface of Mount Gambier's Blue Lake, to the gruelling trek up Mount Schank and down to the crater floor.

In western Victoria, you can go on a chartered boat tour to Lady Julia Percy Island, which has the largest colony of Australian fur seals in the southern hemisphere. Or, take The Alan Marshall Walking Tour of Mount Noorat and the nearby township, or swim in the turquoise-coloured waters of Lake Surprise.

There are also plenty of picturesque picnic and camping spots just waiting to be discovered. Alternatively, you can take your time and spend the night in one of the numerous towns in the Kanawinka Global Geopark.

The Geopark is known as KANAWINKA GEOPARK, meaning Land of Tomorrow from the Buandik people. It is also the name of a geological fault line from Naracoorte Caves to Bass Strait at Portland and a Parish name west of Casterton about 1911 so all levels of the history, Geological, Indigenous and European are brought together in one name.

The Kanawinka Geopark was declared the 57th Member of the Global Network of National Geoparks assisted by UNESCO on June 22, 2008.



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Colac

Cnr Queen & Murray
Streets
03 5231 3730

Dunkeld

Parker Street
03 5577 2558

Hamilton

Lonsdale Street
1800 807 056

Nelson

Leake Street
08 8738 4051

Port Campbell

26 Morris Street
03 5598 6089

Port Fairy

Railway Place,
Bank Street
03 5568 2682

Portland

Lee Breakwater Rd.
1800 035 567

Warrnambool

Flagstaff Hill
Merri Street
1800 637 725

South Australia

Beachport

Millicent Road
08 8735 8029

Millicent

Mt Gambier Road
08 8733 0904

Mount Gambier

The Lady Nelson
Jubilee Hwy East
1800 087 187

Penola/Coonawarra

27 Arthur Street
08 8737 2855



Camperdown

Old Court House
179 Manifold Street
03 5593 3144

Lake Bolac

2110 Glenelg Hwy
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