

Scarlet Robin



Chocolate Lily



Brush-tail Possum



VOLUNTEERS & PARTNERSHIPS

Almost everything you see on the reserves today, apart from the summit road and carpark, has been achieved through the efforts of the Management Committee working with volunteers since 1995.

Community support from local, regional and international volunteers has been the backbone of the project, with over 2000 volunteer hours contributed annually. Works undertaken since 1995 include information shelters, a Volcanic Education Centre, walk trails, a volcanology trail, a local indigenous wildflower area, picnic areas and seating, an outdoor learning space and nature play area for children, and a dry stone wall gateway.

The Management Committee organises guided walks, educational activities and conducts a range of monitoring including flora and fauna. The Friends of Mt Leura Inc. offers free membership and an annual calendar of community events. Invaluable assistance has been provided through partnerships with a range of community groups and government agencies, including Friends of Mt Leura Inc., local service clubs, field naturalists, Camperdown College and other schools.

KEY PARTNERS



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

- There are NO toilets, BBQs or drinking water on the reserves.
- Fires, camping, and sleeping in vehicles are NOT permitted.
- Local Laws require you to: Keep dogs on leads at all times; pick up after your dog; and carry bags to pick up after your dog. Fines apply.
- Mount Leura Road has a 40kph speed limit. Please be aware of vehicles, walkers and cyclists at all times.
- Treat any wildlife you see with respect and give them space. Please do not feed wild animals or birds, or allow animals to be chased or disturbed.
- If you see injured wildlife call Wildlife Victoria 1300 094 535

Further Information:

Website: www.mtleura.org.au



@friendsofmltura



friendsmtleuramtsugarloaf



Swamp Wallaby

Brochures:

- Indigenous Flora Guide
- Wildlife of Mt Leura and Mt Sugarloaf Reserves
- Volcanic Banksia

Booklet:

- The Volcanic Edge – Mt Leura and Mt Sugarloaf Reserves

Printed material available at:

- Camperdown Newsagency
- The Courthouse Camperdown Visitor Information Centre

Thank you for visiting
— we hope you enjoy
your experience.

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Sweet Bursaria



Tawny Frogmouth



Common Brown Butterfly

WALKING TRAILS

of
MT LEURA & MT SUGARLOAF RESERVES
Camperdown - Victoria





Welcome

Mount Leura & Mount Sugarloaf Reserves (50 ha) are managed for recreation and conservation, and for cultural and geological values. They are owned by Corangamite Shire and the National Trust (Victoria) respectively, and have been managed on behalf of the Shire by a volunteer management committee since 1995.

INDIGENOUS HISTORY

The traditional owners were the Leehura people, part of the Djargurd Wurrung tribe. They called Mt Sugarloaf “Tuunumbee Heear”, which translates to “moving moving woman”. The mounts were important landmarks, used for navigation on the plains beyond, and as lookouts for monitoring the movements of neighbours and game.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

The town of Camperdown was surveyed in 1851 and within 50 years the vegetation across both reserves had been cleared. In the 1920s, cypress and pines were planted on Mount Leura as part of a Returned Soldiers Employment Scheme. The Mount Leura summit road was completed in 1935 and sealed in 1963. The conservation battle to protect Mount Sugarloaf from further scoria quarrying in the late 60s and early 70s is a very early example of a local community taking direct action to save a natural feature in Australia.



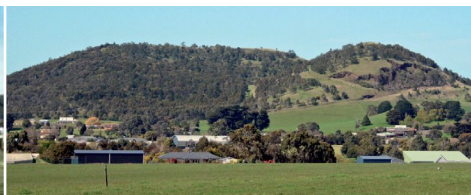
The Mounts - c. 1875 (with remnant vegetation)



The Mounts - c. 1938 (cleared)



The Mounts - 1995 (pines & cypress)



The Mounts - 2019 (revegetated)

GEOLOGICAL HISTORY

The Leura Volcanic Complex is listed on the National Trust Register of Significant Sites because “it is one of the largest maar and tuff rings in Victoria and one of a very small number of nested or complex maars formed by eruptions of the newer volcanics”. This dormant volcanic complex is estimated to have been active approximately 30 thousand years ago.

The two reserves, including the scoria cones of Mount Leura (311m) and Mount Sugarloaf (312m) ‘nest’ within the larger, older Leura Volcanic Complex. The reserves are on the southern edge of the Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP), one of the larger volcanic plains in the world, covering 10% of Victoria from Melbourne to the South Australian border. The VVP was once dominated by native grasslands, wildflowers and woodlands, but now less than 1% of this vegetation remains.

HABITAT RESTORATION

Before European settlement (1840s), these reserves were dominated by Scoria Cone Woodland species. The Management Committee is working towards the long term goal (60+ years) of re-creating a functional woodland using ‘succession’ – a change in the species structure and density of an ecological community over time. **The way it looks today is not how it will look in the future.**



Year 1
Average density:
700 stems/ha.



Year 60
Average density:
110 stems/ha.

At considerable cost, hundreds of cypress, pine and other exotic trees have been removed. More than 100,000 indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses have been hand-planted by the community since 1995. Re-establishing a woodland understorey with native grasses, herbs, ferns and wildflowers is challenging due to the dominance of introduced pasture grasses. The reserves are currently an island of vegetation in a sea of agricultural and peri-urban land, meaning they are subject to the surrounding pressures of weeds and feral animals.

WILDLIFE

Quolls, wombats and many small mammals are now locally extinct. As a result of revegetation works, and the installation of nest boxes and human-induced hollows, native wildlife is returning to the reserves. Wallabies, kangaroos, koalas, echidnas, lizards, swamp rats, birds and micro-bats are now more common.





Lower Shelter Trail

Distance/time (one way)	650 metres	15 mins	Difficulty: MODERATE to STEEP
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A great place for a picnic, and to learn about the volcanic history and the revegetation of these reserves. The facilities at the start of this trail are major features of the Mt Leura and Mt Sugarloaf Reserves.

Starting as a grassy paddock, this area has changed significantly. The indigenous trees were planted as part of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Tree Planting Program, in honour of one of our local Olympians, the late Mr Bill Roycroft, a renowned equestrian champion. In 2002, the shelter was constructed from cypress milled on site. The stone wall and interpretive signage were added in 2003. In 2007 work started on the local indigenous wildflower display area. The Volcanic Education Centre was established in 2014 and the creation of an outdoor learning space and nature play area commenced in 2018.

NB: This trail offers access to all trails on the reserves.

- P** Parking
- *** Direction Sign
- i** Information Shelter
- ⌘** Picnic Area
- Seat
- -** Boundary Fence
- ||||** Steps
- 🌿** Indigenous Flora Garden
- 🏠** Volcanic Education Centre
- 🌳** Nature Play
- S** Shelter

Mt Sugarloaf Trail

Distance/time (one way)	1 km	15 mins	Difficulty: EASY to MODERATE
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Before it was quarried, Mt Sugarloaf was considered the best example of a scoria cone in western Victoria. Winding your way to the top offers 360 degree views. This track, as well as many others across the Mt Sugarloaf Reserve, was constructed by the previous landowner as part of his farm management program. Today, these tracks provide ready-made walking trails, as well as access for emergency vehicles.

Crater Trail

Distance/time (one way)	375 metres	7 mins	Difficulty: EASY to MODERATE
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Experience what it is like at the bottom of this 100m deep crater, and enjoy the solitude. Can you guess how the line of stones you walk alongside came about? The answer has nothing to do with volcanic activity, but lots to do with an earlier landowner who was a very tidy farmer. Keep your eyes open for wallabies and kangaroos enjoying the seclusion and shelter.

Southern Loop Trail

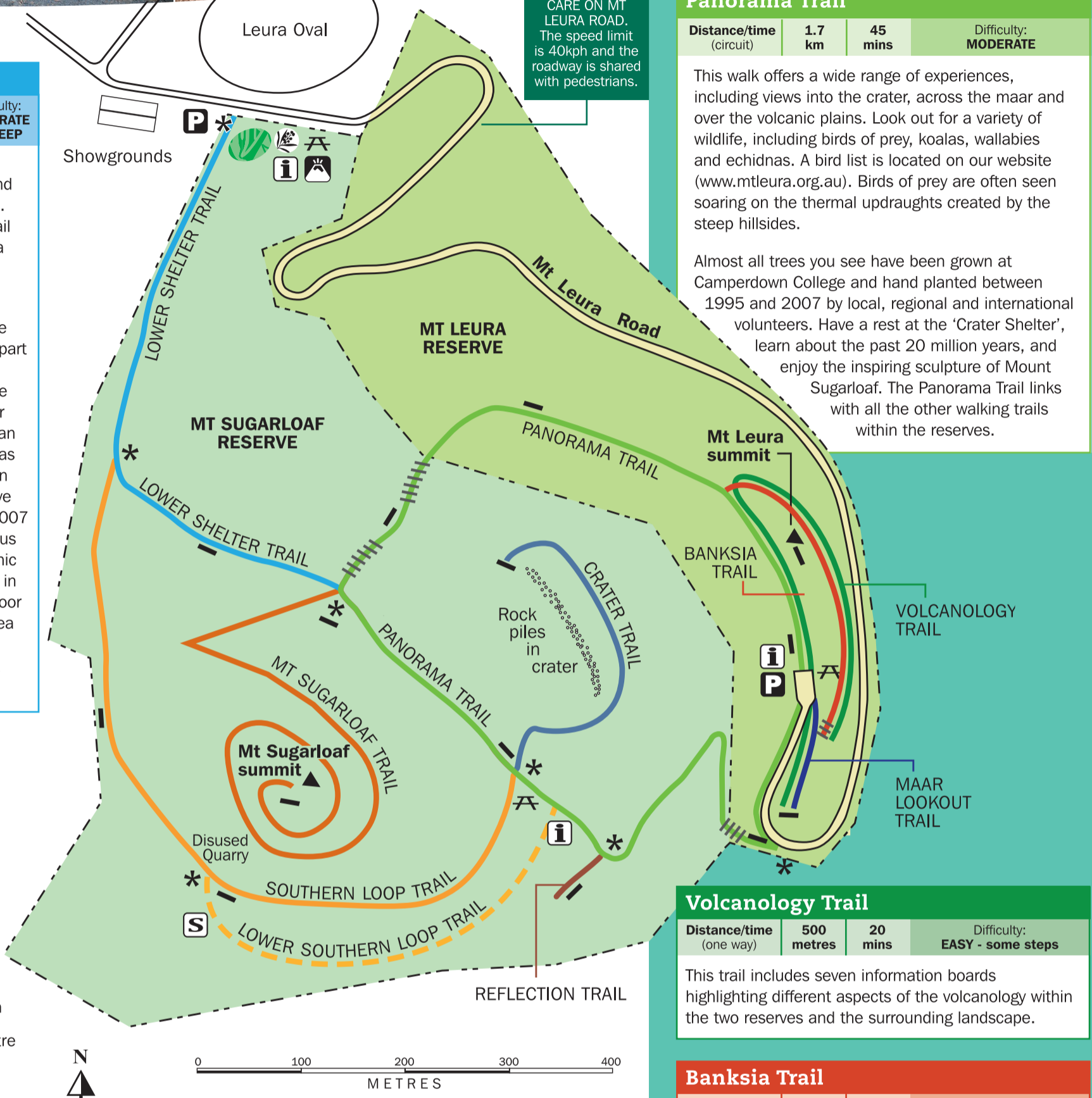
Distance/time (one way)	650 metres	15 mins	Difficulty: EASY to MODERATE
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This walk takes you past the disused Mt Sugarloaf scoria quarry. Mt Sugarloaf was saved from destruction in a conservation battle which set a precedent at the time. In 1969, local people took direct action to save this natural landmark by sitting in front of a bulldozer. With State Government and local financial support, the National Trust acquired the land in 1971 to guarantee the preservation of the rest of the mount. Areas at the top of the quarry are slowly eroding, and over time, it is almost certain that the quarry face will reach the summit of Mt Sugarloaf. In the 1970s the lower slopes of the quarry were planted with Australian trees and shrubs to hide the quarry face.

Further on, the trail offers a secluded experience of the southern area of the maar which includes many smaller scoria cones. The trees in this area were planted in 2005 during a very dry period, but have grown exceptionally well. The native bracken fern has regenerated naturally.

The Lower Southern Loop Trail offers an alternate route, with an easy to moderate walk of 730 metres (see map).

PLEASE TAKE CARE ON MT LEURA ROAD. The speed limit is 40kph and the roadway is shared with pedestrians.



Panorama Trail

Distance/time (circuit)	1.7 km	45 mins	Difficulty: MODERATE
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This walk offers a wide range of experiences, including views into the crater, across the maar and over the volcanic plains. Look out for a variety of wildlife, including birds of prey, koalas, wallabies and echidnas. A bird list is located on our website (www.mtleura.org.au). Birds of prey are often seen soaring on the thermal updraughts created by the steep hillsides.

Almost all trees you see have been grown at Camperdown College and hand planted between 1995 and 2007 by local, regional and international volunteers. Have a rest at the 'Crater Shelter', learn about the past 20 million years, and enjoy the inspiring sculpture of Mount Sugarloaf. The Panorama Trail links with all the other walking trails within the reserves.

Volcanology Trail

Distance/time (one way)	500 metres	20 mins	Difficulty: EASY - some steps
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This trail includes seven information boards highlighting different aspects of the volcanology within the two reserves and the surrounding landscape.

Banksia Trail

Distance/time (one way)	300 metres	10 mins	Difficulty: EASY some steps
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This is a significant section of the 'Volcanology Trail'. Note the *Banksia marginata* (Silver Banksia) trees grown from various Victorian Volcanic Plains provenances. These plantings will provide seed to reintroduce this severely depleted species.

NB: The pamphlet entitled 'Volcanic Banksia' is available from both Upper and Lower Shelters and will provide more information about this special project.

Maar Lookout Trail

Distance/time (one way)	80 metres	2 mins	Difficulty: EASY
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Take advantage of the seat to enjoy the magnificent views: Lake Purrumbete and Mt Porndon to the east; the smaller scoria cones nested within the volcanic maar to the south; Mt Sugarloaf and the 100m deep crater to the west.

Reflection Trail

Distance/time (one way)	50 metres	2 mins	Difficulty: EASY to MODERATE
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Located to the east of the Crater Shelter, this short trail takes you to the perfect location to reflect on the 20 million year history of this landscape and its recent transformations. Enjoy the sounds of the reserves.