

Yarra River

Visitors Guide

The Yarra River is more and more recognised as one of Melbourne's greatest recreation and landscape assets. Board one of the many river craft at Southgate or Princes Walk or travel along the river in your own boat to visit attractions including Melbourne Park, the Royal Botanical Gardens and Herring Island Sculpture Park.

The river is the focus for numerous spectacular events including the famous Moomba Festival, rowing regattas, the Melbourne Festival and Dragon Boat Festivals.

Things to see and do

Walk, cycle or cruise along the Yarra and view the historic sailing ship Polly Woodside, the Exhibition Centre, the Turning Basin, the Crown Entertainment Complex, Southgate, Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Park and the River Walk Cafe. Upstream from the city centre enjoy the following attractions;

Herring Island Environmental Sculpture Park

Accessible only by boat, Herring Island is the only substantial island in the Yarra River. Explore Sculpture Trail created by artists using materials harmonious with the bush setting. Enjoy the vegetation, birdlife and Herring Island Gallery.

Dights Falls and Mill

A weir was built at Dights Falls on a natural rock bar in the early 1840s to supply water to the recently restored historic Dights Flour Mill.

Yarra Bend Park

Yarra Bend Park has a unique combination of natural features and remainders of Aboriginal and European occupation. Steep rocky outcrops and 235 hectares of native vegetation wrap around the river.

Facilities

The banks of the river have a number of barbecue and picnic facilities, fishing platforms and jetties. In addition there are trails and paths which cater for cyclists, walkers and joggers. For barbecues and functions contact the City of Melbourne.

Heritage

The Yarra River was very important to Aboriginal people, and its name is thought to derive from Aboriginal words meaning "ever flowing".

In 1803, Charles Grimes, Acting Surveyor General of New South Wales, led the first party of Europeans up the Yarra River. With the establishment of Melbourne beside its banks in 1835, the river provided shelter for the first ships and drinking water for the first inhabitants; it drained the neighbouring land; it was a ready made sewer; and it gave early industries the water necessary in their processes. After a steady deterioration in water quality during the 19th century, measures were undertaken more recently to clean up the river.

Over the years, the mouth of the river has been completely transformed by realignment, widening and deepening in order to create a large modern port.

Vegetation

The Yarra River rises east of Warburton and flows through Melbourne's eastern suburbs to Port Phillip Bay. Manna gums with their tall white trunks can be found along its upper reaches, their leaves an important food source for Koalas. Riparian scrub occurs along much of the river. River red gums form a tree canopy with a dense understorey of silver wattles, river bottlebrush, prickly currant bush and tree violet. Rushes and sedges often line the banks.



Fauna

Over 200 species of native birds live in the Yarra Valley. Of these, a third use the river and its wetlands for feeding, nesting and breeding. Common species include the Pacific black duck, Eurasian coot and Australian pelican. Latham's snipe travels from the mountains of northern Japan to areas along the Yarra River over the summer months.

With its quick-drying fur, webbed feet, streamlined body and broad muscular tail, the platypus is at home in Victorian rivers including the Yarra, even on the doorstep of Melbourne. Other animals that live along the banks of the Yarra are echidnas, koalas, possums, sugar gliders, kangaroos and bats.

About ten different kinds of frogs are known to occur in the Yarra Valley, including the common eastern froglet and eastern banjo frog. They are an important food source for larger animals such as fish, tortoises, water rats, birds and snakes.

Fifteen species of native fish can also be found in the river, the most common being the river blackfish. A number of our native fish migrate from the sea to the Yarra River at some stage in their life. As part of their lifecycle, eels travel to the Yarra River from as far away as the Coral Sea off Northern Australia.

Caring for the river

Parks Victoria is committed to keeping Victoria's rivers and bays clean. Litter traps have been installed along the Yarra to prevent litter entering the river from stormwater drains and ending up in Port Phillip Bay.

- If you're on the water, don't exceed the 5 knot (9km/h) speed limit and keep a careful a careful watch out for other river users.
- Remember all native plants and animals are protected by law.
- Swimming is not permitted along the Yarra downstream from Dight's Falls.
- Please take all rubbish away with you, and if possible recycle it.
- Jumping or diving from bridges or trees is not permitted.

How to get there

Gain easy access to the Yarra River from either of the two main city railway stations - Spencer Street or Flinders Street - and stroll along its banks. Or try walking or

riding the Main Yarra Trail which follows the course of the river for 33 km.






But the most enjoyable way to appreciate the Yarra is to visit one of the many parks along its course such as Yarra Bend Park (Melway 2D) including Studley Park and its restored Boathouse (Melway 2D E8) or the Fairfield Boathouse, or further out, in the Yarra Valley, at Banksia Park through to Westerfolds Park (Melway 32 and 33) and Warrandyte State Park (Melway 23 and 24).

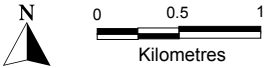
Further Information

For more information about the Yarra River call the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963.

Lower Yarra River

Visitors Guide

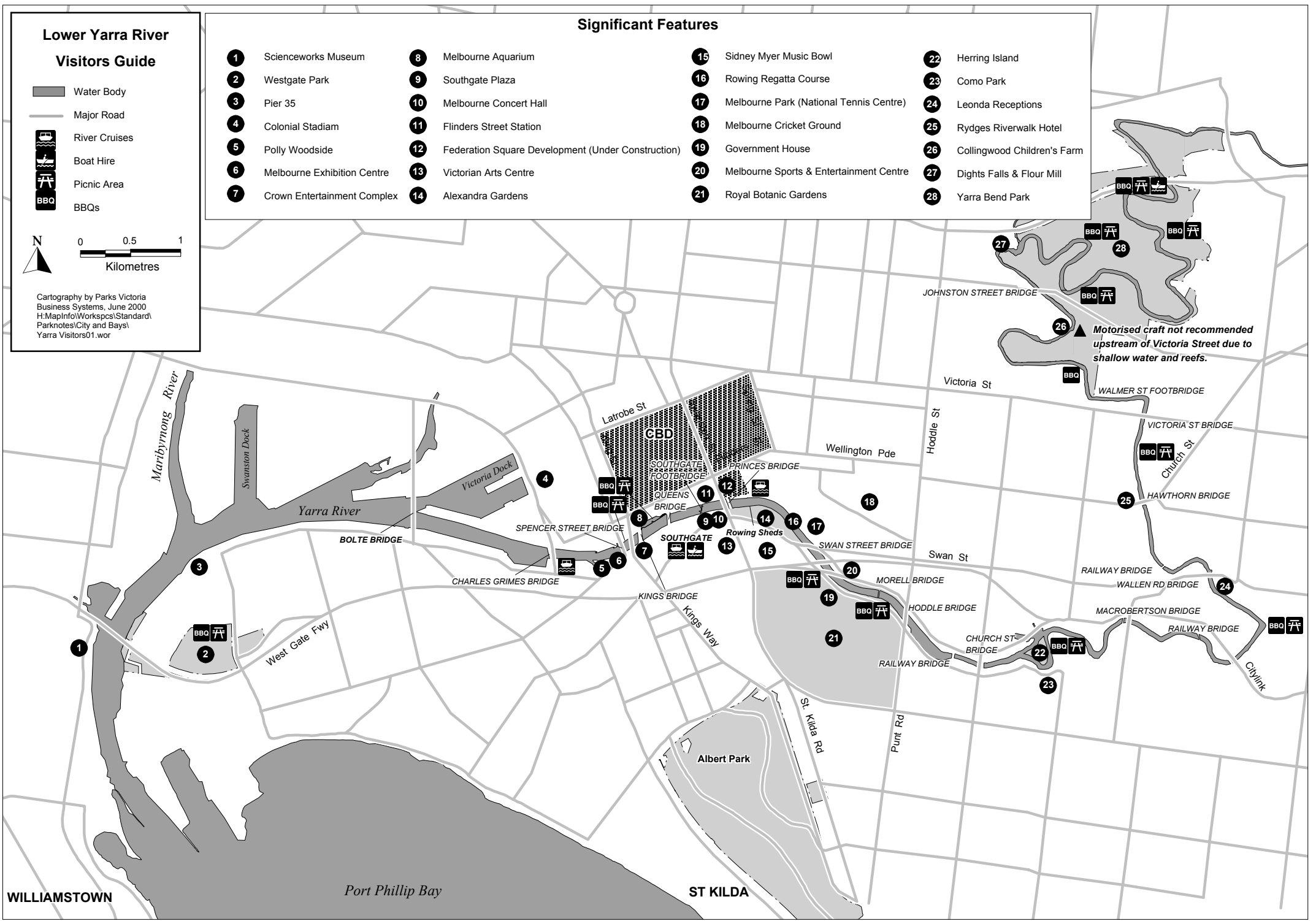
-  Water Body
-  Major Road
-  River Cruises
-  Boat Hire
-  Picnic Area
-  BBQs



Cartography by Parks Victoria
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Significant Features

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|--------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Scienceworks Museum | 8 Melbourne Aquarium | 15 Sidney Myer Music Bowl | 22 Herring Island |
| 2 Westgate Park | 9 Southgate Plaza | 16 Rowing Regatta Course | 23 Como Park |
| 3 Pier 35 | 10 Melbourne Concert Hall | 17 Melbourne Park (National Tennis Centre) | 24 Leonda Receptions |
| 4 Colonial Stadium | 11 Flinders Street Station | 18 Melbourne Cricket Ground | 25 Rydges Riverwalk Hotel |
| 5 Polly Woodside | 12 Federation Square Development (Under Construction) | 19 Government House | 26 Collingwood Children's Farm |
| 6 Melbourne Exhibition Centre | 13 Victorian Arts Centre | 20 Melbourne Sports & Entertainment Centre | 27 Dights Falls & Flour Mill |
| 7 Crown Entertainment Complex | 14 Alexandra Gardens | 21 Royal Botanic Gardens | 28 Yarra Bend Park |



WILLIAMSTOWN

Port Phillip Bay

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