

## WELCOME TO WARBURTON

Just 65 kilometres east of Melbourne, nestled in the foothills of the Yarra Ranges, lies Warburton: the gateway to the Acheron Gap and the Yarra Ranges National Park, and a perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of the city.

To get to Warburton from Melbourne, take the Maroondah Highway to Lilydale. Then follow the well-signposted route to Warburton.

Once you're on the Warburton Highway (B380), the city is left behind. This is a pleasant drive through rolling farms with the beautiful Yarra Ranges growing ever larger ahead of you. As you approach town, you'll see the iconic Yarra River to your left. Here, the Yarra's water is clean enough to drink.

In winter, Warburton is popular with people visiting Mt. Donna Buang – a wonderland for families who enjoy the snow play and tobogganing. In summer, the area is popular with hikers and cyclists who are drawn to its beautiful trails and cooler weather.

**However, this tour will take you beyond the tourist hotspots of the region.**

Discover spectacular forests, towering Mountain Ash, crystal clear mountain streams hugged by delicate tree ferns, and beautiful gullies of Myrtle Beech trees. You'll also witness some of the enormous damage caused by logging.

**There's a stunning forest playground right on Melbourne's doorstep. Head east and discover the beautiful natural treasures around Warburton.**



## FOREST ISSUES

The region surrounding Warburton is home to some of the most beautiful forests in Victoria. Unfortunately, these forests are still under immense pressure from logging – mostly to produce cheap copy paper.



Logging increases the likelihood and the severity of bushfires. By protecting our forests from logging, we are also protecting them from bushfire.

The Great Forest National Park will include the precious forests surrounding Warburton, completing the park system initiated by the creation of the Yarra Ranges National Park.

Stretching from Kinglake to Mt. Baw Baw, and north-east up to Elidon, the Great Forest National Park will host a range of activities such as bike riding, bushwalking, bird watching, four-wheel driving, camping, zip-line tours and much more.

The Great Forest National Park will protect and maintain important ecosystem functions critical for our way of life. It is an investment for the long-term, benefiting forest ecosystems, the economy and all Australians.

[greatforestnationalpark.com.au](http://greatforestnationalpark.com.au)



## DISCOVER WARBURTON'S NATURAL BEAUTY

Explore the wonders of the forest at your leisure, by following well signposted roads. Step into the heart of the rainforest on boardwalks that protect delicate mosses and streams. If you're feeling adventurous, you can wander along one of the many walking tracks. Remember to pack a picnic lunch, as there are many beautiful places with parking, picnic tables and toilet facilities. Allow a full day for this tour – longer if you'd like to visit the special Ada Tree.

## TRAVELLING SAFELY

- Drive slowly and be aware that logging trucks use these roads
- Roads may become boggy in heavy rain
- Not all areas have mobile phone coverage
- Natural hazards occur within forest environments
- Check for road closures and fire warnings in summer
- If you see injured wildlife, call Wildlife Victoria on 1300 094 535



We acknowledge the Taungurung and Wurundjeri peoples as Traditional Custodians of the region surrounding this route, and recognise their connection to ancestral lands and waters.



This is your forest and we hope you have enjoyed exploring it! These special places are under immense pressure. The forest you have just seen is being logged primarily for woodchips to make cheap office paper. The animals you glimpsed are losing their habitat.

Being part of the solution is easier than you think.



Scan QR code to read the surprising story of the Superb Lyrebird.



IMAGE: Wikicommons

**ETHICAL PAPER** – Sign the Ethical Paper Pledge and make a commitment to use office paper that does not destroy our native forests. Signing the pledge is a great way to show that your company or organisation is committed to a sustainable future.

Visit: [www.ethicalpaper.com.au](http://www.ethicalpaper.com.au)

**VOLUNTEER** – Volunteer and join a growing movement of passionate people taking action for our forests.

Visit: [www.wilderness.org.au/volunteer](http://www.wilderness.org.au/volunteer)

**DONATE** – Make a tax deductible donation and help protect nature for future generations.

Visit: [www.wilderness.org.au/donate](http://www.wilderness.org.au/donate)

Disclaimer: The Wilderness Society makes no guarantee as to the accuracy, completeness, currency or reliability of the information in this pamphlet and accepts no liability for any injury or damage resulting from your trip. Travel Safe.

Produced by campaigners and volunteers at the Wilderness Society, Victoria, with assistance from local Warburton residents and Warburton Environment. Printed October 2015 on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.



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## Warburton - SELF-DRIVE MAP -



IMAGE: Paul Colchester

EXPLORE AND DISCOVER THE  
MAGIC OF THE FOREST



**RETURN HOME!** At the end of Acheron Way, turn left onto the C512 toward Alexandra. Then take the left at Maroonah Highway B360. This will take you over the Black Spur, through the Yarra Ranges National Park, and down into Healesville towards Melbourne.



**WATER:** These are the forests that attract and catch water for the streams, rivers and reservoirs that supply Melbourne's drinking water. As you drive along, you will see signs that let you know you have entered a water catchment area.

These areas are off-limits to the public to protect Melbourne's water, yet state government logging agency, VicForests, allows logging contractors to enter them and clearfell whole areas. Logging causes large scale erosion, leading to silt build-up in waterways.

Young trees, like young humans, need more nourishment as they grow, so they soak up thousands more litres of water than mature trees do. Logging steals water from our rivers and reservoirs, and dirties the water that reaches our waterways and kitchen taps.

**ADA TREE:** The Ada Tree is about a 90 minute return drive south of Warburton. If you have time, it's well worth the trip. Pull on your walking shoes and take the scenic Ada Tree Walk. The walk itself should take about 40 minutes. As you're walking, take the time to look around you as the trail winds from rainforest into Mountain Ash Forest and then back again.

Be sure to pause and read the information boards about the forest and the history of the Ada Tree. If you're lucky, you may catch a glimpse of the lyrebirds - look out for their scratchings on the sides of the trail! Visit the information centre at Warburton for more information and a map for the walk.



# Warburton

## - SELF-DRIVE MAP -

**KEY**

- ROUTE TO FOLLOW
- NUMBERED STOP
- SEALED ROAD
- 2WD GRAVEL RD OR TOWN RD
- RIVER
- SOME SIGNIFICANT LOGGING COUPES
- SUGGESTED LUNCH STOP
- PRIME LEADBEATERS POSSUM HABITAT
- TOILET

INDICATIVE SCALE  
0 500 1000  
METRES

APPROXIMATE MAP SCALE = 1 : 50,000  
Please note this map is not exactly to scale.



**8. GRANTON ROAD (STOP):** About four kilometres from the end of Carter Gap Road, turn right into Granton Road. A few hundred metres down, you will see a campsite on the right. Look out; it is not always easy to spot. If you get to the bridge you've gone too far! Park the car at the campsite and listen for the sound of water. You will see narrow walking trails. Follow one of these trails to the riverbank. This is a calm place, so spend some time reflecting on everything you have seen today. Refill your water bottle or just skip a couple of stones.

At your own pace, head back to the Acheron Way and continue north (right turn this time).

**7. MT VINEGAR (4WD ONLY):** Continue up Carter Gap Road until you pass through a set of green gates. Then take a hard left and head towards the summit of Mt. Vinegar.

Eventually, you will see CFA water tanks on your right. It is highly advisable that two wheel drive vehicles stop here. For those with four-wheel drive, continue along the road for another 200-300 metres. Pull your car over and look out at the view over the Yarra Ranges. On the ridgeline, in the distance, you can see the recovering forests damaged on Black Saturday. When you are ready, turn the car around and return to the Acheron Way. Continue heading north (left turn).

**6. CARTER GAP ROAD (DRIVE/STOP):** Continue along the Acheron Way. About 20 kilometres from the Rainforest Gallery, turn left into Carter Gap Road. As you drive along, you will see many logging coupes.

Do you see any charred debris on the ground? Look at the way the ground is either compacted or torn up by the machinery used for logging. Weeds are establishing themselves. As you look around, you might pause for a moment to consider what this means for the forest, wildlife and our climate.

Drive about six kilometres along from Acheron Way; here is a quiet spot to stop your car and take in the view over the ranges.

Occasionally Carter Gap Road is closed due to logging operations. If you can't continue up toward Mt Vinegar, follow the road for another kilometre from the Acheron Way. As you head up the hill, take White Road (on your right) and then about 300 metres so your right will be another logging track. Follow this track to the logging coupe and check out the destruction. As you drive back along White Track look at the logged face of Mt. Vinegar and consider what effect decades of logging has on our forests.



IMAGE: Sette Devine



## 5. YARRA RANGES NATIONAL PARK

**(DRIVE/STOP):** Starting at the Acheron Gap, the next five kilometres of the road is surrounded by the Yarra Ranges National Park. Enjoy the beautiful winding drive alongside the Acheron River through this spectacular forest. Declared a National Park in 1995, much of the Ranges have been protected since the late 1800s as a water catchment. Sadly, logging continues in the catchment areas not included in the National Park. Along this stretch of road, there are many points you can stop to absorb the incredible forest and take photos as well.



IMAGE: Ian Moodie

## 4. ACHERON GAP (STOP):

About eight kilometres along the road, look out for the sign on your right! It marks the gully where the Great Dividing Range slopes down towards the sea. From this point, the mountain range follows the east coast all the way to Queensland, dividing the east from the dry interior of Australia.

There are a number of short walks you might explore from here. A walking trail to the left of Acheron Way will take you toward the Knobs, or you can follow the firebreak trail heading up the hill behind the sign.

Sometimes, logging access roads are closed to the public, ensuring the activities of VicForests' logging contractors are shielded from public scrutiny.



Scan QR Code to learn more about saving the Fairy Possum from extinction.

**3. MYRTLE BEECH GULLY (STOP):** About six kilometres along the Acheron Way, the Mountain Ash recedes and the sky becomes visible. Watch for the stopping bays on the side of the road. These appear at many points and it's worth pausing to soak up the beauty of your surrounds.

Once parked, you can carefully cross the road to look down at the magnificent Myrtle Beech. A living relic of the supercontinent Gondwana, Myrtle Beech is native to Victoria and Tasmania where they are found in damp gullies. Can you hear the sound of water as it winds through the forest toward the Yarra River?

Many decaying trees are now covered in fungi and lichen; these trees remain an important part of the ecosystem for hundreds of years after they die, providing shelter to wildlife and smaller plant life, and storing carbon. Can you spot the 'fluffy' green trunks?

## 2. ACHERON WAY AND THE SPECIAL PROTECTION ZONES

This drive will take you through some spectacular forests. To your left is the Yarra Ranges National Park; to your right is State Forest. It doesn't look any different, does it? Do you know what the difference is?

Some parts of the forests to your right are semi-protected in a Special Protection Zone (SPZ). SPZs are areas temporarily set aside from logging; they are known to be home to rare and endangered animals and plants. But SPZs do not provide lasting protection, because they can be removed and the forest logged at any time.

Can you see the view of the valleys in the distance? These beautiful expanses of forest are also available to the logging and paper industries.

**IN WARBURTON:** When you arrive in Warburton, take a break at one of the many cafes in town. The local information centre is also worth a visit. Pause to take a look at the steps before you climb them - you may be pleasantly surprised. The centre is open from 10:00am to 4:00pm each day.

Once you are ready to head into the forest, continue along the Warburton Highway, bear left onto Donna Buang Road (C507), and the signs will lead you to your first stop: the Rainforest Gallery.

**1. RAINFOREST GALLERY (STOP):** Take some time to enjoy this short 300-metre walk - no need to rush! First, take in the view from the observation platform. Look up into the towering Mountain Ash above. Some trees that surround you are home to epiphytes - plants that live on trees - and animals such as Crimson Rosellas, Black Cockatoos and small skinks.

Meander along and examine the delicate, ferny leaves of the Myrtle Beech trees - some many hundreds of years old. Can you hear the burbling of Cement Creek as it flows toward the Yarra River?

Please note, the extended Rainforest Gallery walk is not suitable for mobility limited persons as it has stairs, but the observation platform in the forest canopy is easily accessible from the road.

From the Rainforest Gallery, head north along the Acheron Way (C507). From this point onward, the road is unsealed. This is also a good point to take note of your odometer reading. Unless otherwise specified, distances on this map are approximated from this point.

