

10. Dabyminga Creek Bushland Reserve



Dabyminga Creek Bushland Reserve is one of the least known of the Natural Treasures. It includes a 60ha linear creekline reserve running north and south from Davis Road with dry forest ridges with wildflowers and sheltered grassy floodplains. Downstream, a wide 120ha area includes the forested lower slopes Brown Range and Spring Gully cutting through to Dabyminga Creek. An old vehicle track runs through grassy woodlands with many lovely older trees on the floodplain of Dabyminga Creek. Access is from Broadford via Marchbanks and Davis Road.

This reserve is on the land of the Taungurung People, and Dabyminga Creek and its tributary Spring Gully are areas of [Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity](#). We acknowledge their Elders past and present and emerging, and their care of Country over many millennia. We ask that all people respect this ancient heritage and care for the land we now share.

Directions

The Reserve is on Davis Road east of Broadford. From the northern freeway entrance to Broadford, cross into Marchbanks Road then Davis Road through to the gate at 7.9 km. Parking is available on the right past the gate. The road continues down to a rough crossing on Dabyminga Creek. Vehicle access along the Reserve is restricted and the track is not routinely maintained.

Walking Tracks

Dabyminga Track (6.1 km from start gate to north end, one way): From the carpark, follow the road down and turn left onto a smaller track and the start gate after 120 m. The track winds through ridges of dry forest. It crosses three gullies with steep gravelly slopes before reaching a larger gully with a small Weeping Grass floodplain. The track winds over a hill then down to the first creek crossing on bedrock at 1.33 km from the gate.



At this point, the valley starts to open out with small floodplains getting wider downstream and some rocky cliffs on the outside of meanders. After crossing a ridge, the track enters and follows down the creek for 25m following the floodplain around a bend with some large round granite boulders from up the slope. Blue Gums in the shaded spots give way to Red Gums and Manna Gums on a long straight stretch of floodplain. Burgan on the east slopes suggests that this small patch of volcanic rock (see Geology) was once cleared for agriculture.

From here, the track is deeply eroded by recent floods (2023/24) and has been diverted across to the east bank again. Large banks of stones have been dumped on the creek flats as the flood waters emerged from between the hills and slowed down to spread across the flats. The centre of the creekline has many large old Red Gums with River Bottlebrush and some Mat-rush typical of the vegetation of fast-flowing rocky streams.

The track goes over the end of another ridge to another river crossing (2.62 km from the gate). A bend in the creek runs up against a scree slope of possibly basalt boulders and a sheer rock face. From here, the floodplain becomes very wide with Dabyminga Creek and several smaller creeks from the west meandering across the plain with many large Yellow Box. The track is not always clear across the grasslands. It crosses two gravelly incised side creeks to the western boundary fence and a gate into private property (3.41 km from the start gate). The track continues up a slope and around a sharp corner of the fence.

The rest of the track has not yet surveyed for this Reserve Note. The vehicle track continues along Dabyminga Creek to the north end of the Reserve where it reaches private property. With permission from the owners, walkers may be able to continue through to Ennis Road.

South Loop (1.73km): From the carpark, a little-used track winds along the upper slope of dry but rich forest. It crosses a gully with a small dam and an area of mine diggings, then meets a more used vehicle track running down the ridge from the private road. Down the hill, the track meets a well-used track heading from Davis Road south through a gate into a fenced and leased area of the Reserve (track beyond the gate is yet to be surveyed). The return to the carpark passes the deeply eroded end of the creek past the diggings and a short track down onto Dabyminga Creek.



Tracks are not suitable for all abilities



No picnic facilities are available in the Reserve



No toilets. Nearest toilets are in Broadford



Track is not maintained and may be unsuitable for vehicles. The gate into the Reserve may be closed.

Landform and Geology



Sandstones and siltstones (*Broadford Formation* and *Humevale Siltstone*) were laid down on the edge of an ancient submarine continental shelf and adjoining deeper seas around 440 to 400 million years ago. These rocks were lifted above sea level about 380 million years ago (early Devonian Period). Hot granite - the Strathbogie Granite – intruded into the sedimentary layers and baked the surrounding rocks into a metamorphic aureole of very hard hornfels. Over 380 million years,

the sedimentary layers were eroded along the creek leaving the steep metamorphic aureole rising steeply to the granites of the Tallarook Plateau.

Dabyminga Creek cuts through the edge of the metamorphic aureole. To the east, the steep slopes of the plateau are mostly metamorphic rock with some patches of granite exposed on the slopes below Ennis Road. The aureole here is known as Brown Range with Mount Hickey at the highest point. The steep but lower range of hills west of Dabyminga Creek is also partly due to this harder rock.

Rocks along the creekline are dark and blocky typical of the hornfels (hard rock) tumbling down from Brown Range and Mount Hickey. In one place there are also some large round granite boulders from higher in the range. A small area of newer volcanic rock on the east side of the creek has sent basalt rock screes down to the creek.

These rocks and sandy loams form the deeper layers of the creek flats. They probably carry water in an underground creek topping up deeper pools when there are no surface flows to be seen. Spring Gully cuts across the wide section of the Reserve and its name also suggest an underground flow of water emerging as spring at some point (to be explored).

Vegetation



The vegetation varies with the topography. East of Dabyminga Creek, slopes of the Tallarook Ranges down to Dabyminga Creek are covered in [Herb-rich Foothill Forest](#) merging into [Grassy Dry Forest](#) as the slopes swing to the west and north where they are more exposed to the sun and wind. Red Box, Red Stringybark, Long-leaved Box and a shrubby to grassy understorey are typical of these dry forests.

The lower hills and outwash areas west of the Creek also have a diversity of drier grassy forests, with pockets of [Valley Grassy Forest](#) in sheltered swales.



The creekline and environs are mapped as [Riparian Forest](#) but it varies widely. Where the creek is in a narrow valley in the southern parts of the Reserve, it is more typical Riparian Forest/Herb-rich Foot-hill Forest with Blue Gums and Manna Gums, Blackwoods and Silver Wattles. Further downstream where the creek has formed wider floodplains, the Riparian Forest is restricted to a few sheltered locations.

Most of the floodplains are more like a [Floodplain Riparian Woodland](#) but with open grassy woodland containing a mix of old Manna Gums, Red Gums and Yellow Box, Silver Wattles and open grasslands dominated by Weeping Grass. As a result of the vigorous flooding, the river channel is rocky with River Bottlebrush and piles of debris around the trees, more like a [Riparian Shrubland](#).

Because of the diversity of ecosystems, there is a good diversity of plant species. Plant lists are in preparation.

Wildlife

As with plants, the Reserve has a diversity of habitat for wildlife. In particular, the forests and woodlands have many grand old trees with hollows. A species list is in preparation, but more surveying is needed.

Dabyminga Creek is a narrow but significant wildlife corridor between the Mount Disappointment Forests downstream past the Tallarook forests to the Goulburn River.

Aboriginal history

The Reserve is on the land of the Taungurung People and is an area of [Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity](#) along Dabyminga Creek and Spring Gully. As with many waterway reserves, this secluded valley would have been place of plenty for the First Nation inhabitants of the land.

History after colonisation

Dabyminga Creek was part of some large holdings from the late 1930s, but the creekline corridor appears to have been excluded from selection from the 1860s. Small scale alluvial and reef mining occurred at the end of Davis Road, although more mining was around Reedy Creek and back into Mount Disappointment. It is likely that this area was the site of a separate small settlement and township remote from Broadford and other towns. More information is being sought.

Management

The Reserve is Crown land managed by Parks Victoria and the waterway by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

It is included in the [Land Use Activity Agreement](#), a part of the [Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement](#)

Further information

Parks Victoria: Parks Victoria can be contacted on 13 1963 or go to <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/contact-us>. Website for the Dabyminga Creek Bushland Reserve is at <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/dabyminga-creek-bushland-reserve>. The website contains only general information on visiting reserves (at 30/6/2023). Dogs are not allowed in this Reserve.

Taungurung Land and Water Council at <https://taungurung.com.au/>. Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement at <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/your-rights/native-title/taungurung-recognition-and-settlement-agreement>.

Goulburn Broken CMA Revegetation Guide: information on different ecological vegetation communities, plant communities and plants in the Sugarloaf zone at <https://www.gbcma.vic.gov.au/revegetation/zones/sugarloaf>.

Acknowledgements

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These notes are a work in progress. If you have any comments or additional information on the nature and ecological history of Dabyminga Creek Bushland Reserve, please contact us at <https://www.beam.org.au/contact>,



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