

21. Monument Hill Reserve



Monument Hill Reserve is a 76ha area of forested hills and gullies overlooking the eastern side of Kilmore. The upper slopes have dry forests with smaller trees and the lower slopes have patches of tall old growth grassy forest. The Reserve is rich with wildflowers in Spring, and fungi in Autumn. Monument Hill is accessible from Andersons Road and Monument Road in the south and Hunts Road in the north. Walking tracks follow ridges up to the historical Hume and Hovell Monument viewing tower.

This reserve is on the land of the Taungurung People. 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



Via Andersons Road: Turn off Powlett Street/Northern Highway into Rutledge Street at the traffic lights. Rutledge Street crosses Kilmore Creek and becomes Andersons Road. After 1.0 km from the lights, Monument Road veers left off Andersons Road. This gravel road passes the lower and middle carparks and winds up to the carpark at the Hume and Hovell Monument.

Warning: This road is rough past the Monument. It is considered a fire access track and is maintained for emergency vehicle access only (dashed lines on map).

Via Hunts Road: Follow Foote Street and East Street and turn east into Hunts Road. The Bottom Track in the Reserve is 500m along Hunts Road. Parking is limited.

Walking Tracks



1. Circuit Track (3.60 km):

Dam Track starts from Monument Road between the lower and middle car parks and runs through Messmate forest on the lower slopes above the swale and the dam (Alternatively, follow the track from Andersons Road along the dam wall). At the top of the dam, the track swings around through bollards to Andersons Road. South Track starts through a second set of bollards to the left and follows the southern boundary of the Reserve. The Track is rutted and grassy. It gradually climbs to the southeast corner where the Track swings north and climbs more steeply to the Ridgeline Road. Turn left to join Monument Road up to the Hume and Hovell Monument (1590m from the start of Dam Track and 1940m to the end of the Bottom Track) (see photo left).

The Road continues along the main ridgeline with good views of the Dry Creek Valley and hills from the Tallarook Ranges (on the left side of the view) past the peak of Mount Piper to the hills around Tooborac, Glenaroua and High Camp (see photo below).



The road then descends with views of the Tantaraboo Hills and behind them the Mount William Range. The road follows the boundary down to Hunts Road. Turn left into Hunts Road for 100 metres to the start of the Bottom Track along the western boundary to Monument Road and the carparks. This track is rough with large stones and wet patches.

2. Link Tracks

Many tracks follow valleys and ridgelines east from the Bottom Track to Monument Road on the ridgeline. All are steep and rough, and actively eroding in some sections. Well-worn kangaroo and mountain bike tracks may lead walkers off the main tracks.

North Track (380m): a slashed line through regenerating scrubland follows a low ridge between two gullies. The upper slopes were cool burnt around 2012.

Middle Track: follows the higher ground south of a gully across the Low Road. It branches at 200m. *Valley Track* to the left runs up the side of the ridge then crosses the gully to follow a side gully steeply up the gully head to the road (another 340m). *Ridge Track* to the right runs up a longer dry ridge with exposed rock and a diversity of wildflowers to Monument Road (another 400m).



South Valley Track (470m): runs from the middle carpark up the south side of a wide valley with large Messmates and some Yellow Box, then up a short sharp ridge to the Monument. This track has some yellow tear-drop markers.



South Ridgeline Track (620m): the longest and most interesting route up to the Monument, with exposed bedrock and dry but rich wildflower woodlands. This track has orange and white markers.

Southern Link (300m): branches north off Dam Track over a through Messmate forest, over a drier ridgeline and back into the forest. The track passes through the more severe 2008 fire area to join South Track as it starts to climb.

3. Community Bank Walking Track

The [Community Bank Walking Trail](#) follows around Kilmore Racecourse and links to the Low Tracks in Monument Hill Reserve. The Trail starts at the corner of Union Street/Kilmore East Road and East Street and runs east along a recently cleared and replanted corridor beside an excavated wetland with Cumbungi. Towards Hunts Road, the Trail passes some older dead trees with good tree hollows, then meanders through a corridor of bushland adjacent to Hunts Lane. This wide corridor has Long-leaved Box and Messmate and a good diversity of wildflowers. The entry to the Bottom Track into Monument Hill Reserve is across the road where Hunts Road swings to the west. The Trail continues west adjacent to Hunts Road to a turn around 220m from East Road. There is no footpath beyond this point. Distance is 1600m, 3200m return. Beware of the Troll.

Note: Track names are used to help identify routes and places in this publication and are not official names.



No tracks in the Monument Hill Reserve are suitable for all abilities. The Community Bank Walking Trail around the Racecourse is relatively flat with a smooth fine gravel surface for all abilities.



No vehicles are allowed on the walking trails apart from management and emergency vehicles.



Picnic tables are available at the lower carpark



No toilets are available in the Reserve. Public toilets are at Hudson Park, Skehan Place off Sydney Street.

Landform and Geology

Monument Hill is the highest point along a north-south ridge of *Humevale Siltstone* that formed as fine sediments in deep seas around 440 to 400 million years ago. The rock is exposed on some of the ridge tracks. The Reserve is on the sloping west side of the ridgeline. Dry Creek has cut a deep valley east of the Reserve.

Several gullies through the Reserve have created a series of valleys and ridges generally facing west, but more southerly at the southern end of the Reserve. Ridges range from steep and narrow with exposed rock and small trees to broad slopes with deeper soils and large trees. In the south, the larger gully from urban areas crosses into the head of the Dam.

Vegetation

Over 270 plant species have been recorded in the Reserve. These plants are found in a range of habitats, from *Grassy Dry Forest* on the higher ridges with shallow rocky soils, merging into *Herb-*

rich Foothill Forest on the lower slopes, gullies and southerly aspects. Above the dam in the south, the wet swale has some more typical riparian species.



[Grassy Dry Forest](#) areas have predominantly Long-leaved Box on the driest sites. The trees are generally small and some have multiple bent and irregular stems. Many also have hollows suggesting age is not closely correlated with size in these drier sites. The understorey has tussock grasses notably Silver-topped Wallaby-grass, and many more flowers including Black-anthered Flax-lilies, Clustered and Sticky Everlastings, Little St John's Wort and many other species that thrive without the competition of introduced grasses.

Deeper soils, particularly on mid-slope swales and broader ridges, have more open grassy woodlands, with Broad-leaved Peppermints and Long-leaved Box, merging into the Herb-rich Foothill Forest. The slopes are dominated by Sweet Vernal Grass.



[Herb-rich Foothill Forests](#) have many very large Messmates with Yellow Box and Narrow-leaved Peppermints mostly in the gullies. Several of the larger trees have died in recent years, and there are many large logs on the ground adding to the habitat values for flora, fauna and funga. Areas of old forest are best seen on the broad lower slopes north of the South Valley Track. The understorey is open with only a few young trees, Blackwoods and Black or Silver Wattles. Smaller shrubs are also uncommon, including Hop Bitter-pea, Sifton Bush and patches of Dogwood and Burgan.

The ground cover is dominated by introduced Yorkshire Fog and Sweet Vernal Grass on the slopes, so that native species are hard to see. The lower slopes and valleys have some well-grazed Weeping Grass meadows. The ground herbs include typically wetter forest species such as violets and Kidney-weed. Rosy Hyacinth-orchid is a feature in summer. The forest also provides the right conditions for fungi. Over 114 species have been recorded in the Reserve.

The swale above the dam has a diversity of Messmates, Yellow Box, Manna Gums and Swamp Gums, with some very large Silver Wattles and a sward of Weeping Grass. The shallow end of the dam has little fringing vegetation.

Disturbances: In the north, the forest on the lower slopes have been cleared and is regenerating with Messmates, Narrow-leaved Peppermints, Blackwoods, Black Wattles and Sifton Bush but still has an understorey of tussock grasses and some open grassland areas favoured by kangaroos. Around 2012, a cool burn killed a few trees and removed some logs, but stimulated regeneration. Some additional species have been planted into the open areas.



In the south, the slopes face south range from Grassy Dry to Herb-rich Foothill Forest. The gentle outwash slopes above Dam Track are mostly cleared with native grassland and wattles but almost no trees. In 2008, a hot management fire in the south between Dam Track and Monument Road killed many large trees; others developed epicormic growths and have recovered. The fire initiated a massive regeneration of Messmate and Silver Wattles in some patches but a poor response in others. Sweet Bursaria is abundant in patches.

Threatened species: Fringed Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra luteocilium*), Matted Flax-lily (*Dianella amoena*), Small Milkwort (*Comesperma polygaloides*) and Yarra Gum (*Eucalyptus yarraensis*) are threatened species recorded in the Reserve.

Plant and fungi lists are in preparation.

Wildlife

Monument Hill is a large patch of native forest mostly surrounded by farmland. However, there are corridors for wildlife moving to and from the Reserve. Some are being enhanced such as Landcare's Habitat Highway along Dry Creek from Broadford and Mount Piper and some are still remnants needing protection, such as the largely unused Quinns Road reserve running south from the Reserve and under threat from urban growth.

Eastern Grey Kangaroos use the many shaded grassy areas during the day and have well-used tracks leading to the golf course where they feed. The old trees with hollows and fallen logs also provide habitat for animals including nocturnal Brush-tailed and Ring-tailed Possums and Sugar Gliders and threatened species such as Brush-tailed Phascogales, Brown Tree-creepers and Powerful and Barking Owls. Nest boxes have been set up to enhance the Reserve for hollow-dependent species and monitor their presence.

Over 60 different species of birds have been recorded using the habitats provided in the Reserve.

Aboriginal history

Monument Hill is on the land of the Taungurung people. The Reserve has one recorded site of [Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity](#) on its southern slopes but the whole Reserve and the surrounding country would have held strong cultural and material values. This includes the use of the native flora widespread in the Monument Hill Reserve for food such as Myrnong (Yam Daisy) and Chocolate lily, and for weaving and rope such as Mat-rush and Flax-lily. Kangaroos, koalas and some of the now locally extinct small mammals would have provided meat and bones for food, clothing and tools.

History after colonisation

Explorers Hume and Hovell passed east of Kilmore in 1824. Charles Bonney arrived with livestock and settled in the Kilmore area in 1837, the start of an invasion that took over the land. The hill was used as a lookout and the forest was probably grazed and harvested for timber. Monument Hill was set aside as a public reserve “Kilmore Park” in 1911. The bluestone monument to Hume and Hovell was erected on the summit in 1924; it is now on the Victorian Heritage Register. Pines were planted in some areas but are now mostly removed and native species planted and allowed to regenerate.

Management

The Reserve is Crown land managed by Mitchell Shire Council.

The Reserve is on the land of the Taungurung People and is Crown land included in the [Land Use Activity Agreement](#), a part of the [Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement](#).

Further information

Mitchell Shire Council:

Information page with fact sheets to download at : <https://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/our-region/discovermitchell/tracks-and-walking-trails/monument-hill-reserve-kilmore>. Very useful information.

Monument Hill Management Plan. Plan from 2014 is available at https://cdn.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/general-downloads/MonHillmgt_plan_finalV2.pdf. A new plan is in preparation.

Kilmore Racecourse Walking Trail: <https://www.melbourneplaygrounds.com.au/kilmore-community-bank-walking-trail>.

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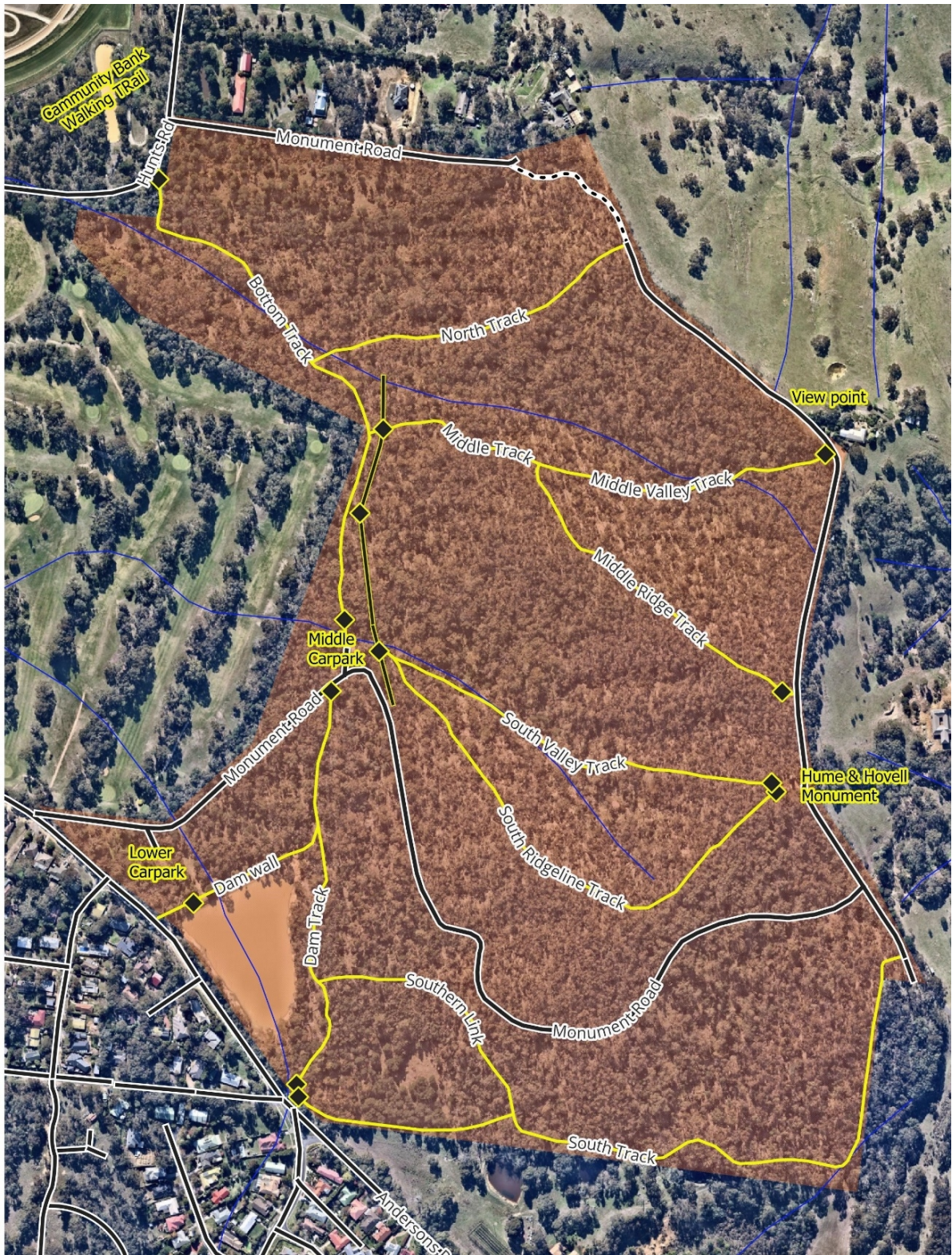
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These notes are a work in progress. If you have any comments or additional information on the nature and ecological history of Monument Hill in Kilmore, please contact us at <https://www.beam.org.au/contact>



Monument Hill Reserve, Kilmore



Monument Hill Reserve	Roads	Walking tracks	Barriers
Creeks and gullies	Rough road		Bollards