

BOMBALA

AND Beyond

Canberra

Williamsdale

Michelago

Bredbo

Cooma

Berridale

Dolgely

Nimmitabel

Bombala

Delegate

Bendoc

Gagle

Mila

Wyncham

Eden

Wanboyn

Cape Green

Cape Howe

Gabo Island

Mallacoota

Wrighton Inlet

Point Hicks

Tambora

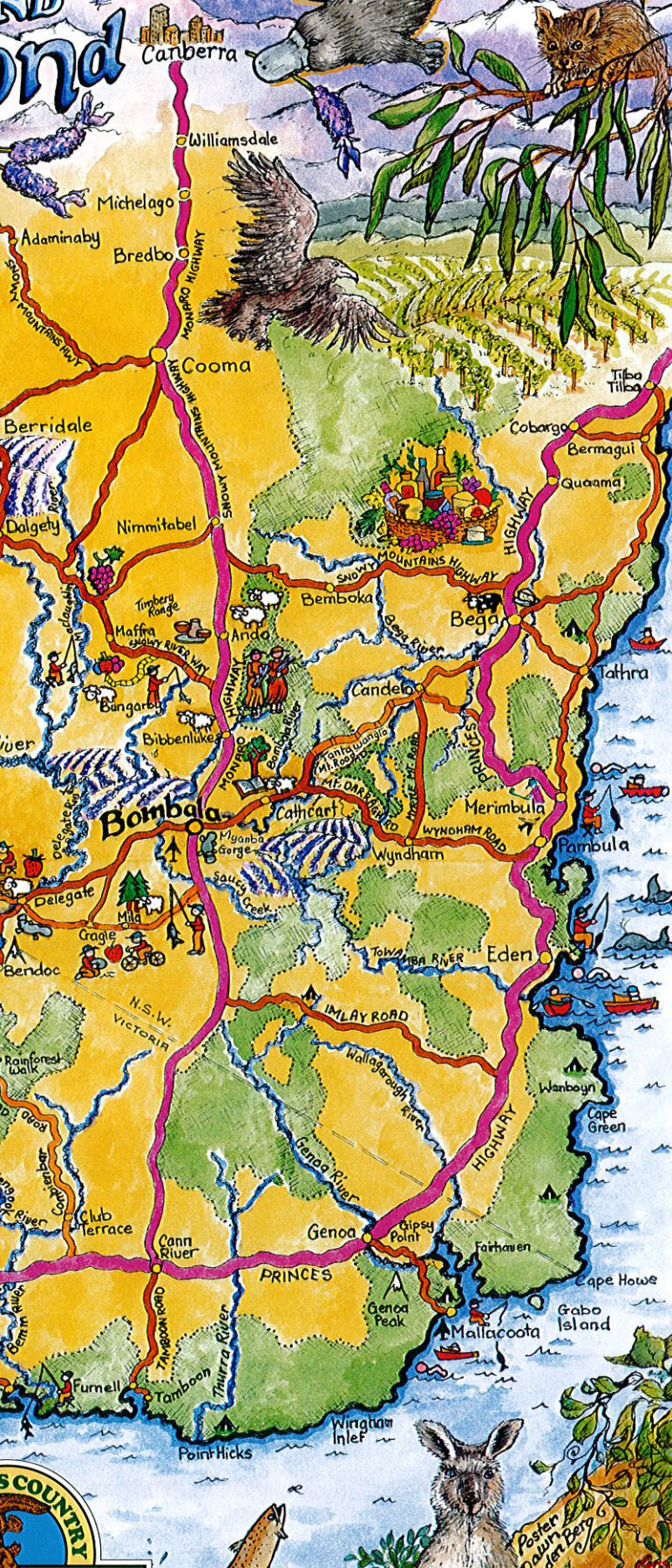
Furnell

Marlo

Copran

Orbost

Young Falls



Recharge your senses

Poster Down Perro
Canden 20

Escape for a day, unwind for a week in the peace and quiet that is...

Platypus Country

Welcome to the unspoilt beauty and solitude of the southern Monaro.

This guide is an introduction to the best kept secrets of Platypus Country – a region sure to recharge even the most jaded of senses. Platypus Country takes you back in history and back to nature in every sense. Nestling between the Snowy Mountains and the Sapphire Coast, Platypus Country extends a warm high country welcome.

The Southern Monaro township of Bombala and the villages of Bibbenluke, Cathcart and Delegate offer you a chance to enjoy and explore the history and beauty of Platypus Country at your own pace.

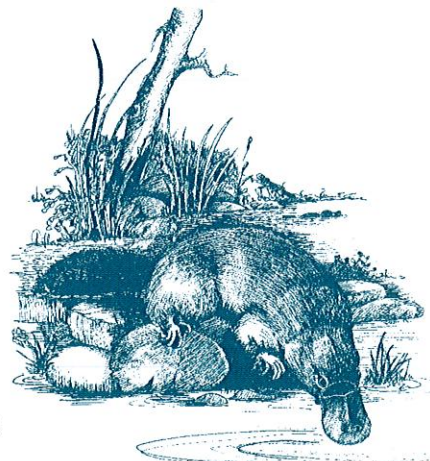
Platypus Country boasts some of the finest trout fishing streams in Australia, scenic mountain drives, primeval native forests and abounds in a spectacular array of native flora and fauna.

Our diverse natural environment can only be described as inspiring with treeless plains, rolling pastures and dense native forests intersected by a network of pristine, sparkling rivers and streams.

Settle back, relax and explore the natural beauty of this timeless landscape. From the grandeur of the South East Forest National Parks to the excitement of the Bondi Forest mountain bike trails and the stunning scenery of the southern Monaro, this unique and ancient landscape is there for your enjoyment.

Bombala, Bibbenluke, Cathcart and Delegate – alive and humming, just waiting for you.

Relax... indulge... enjoy...
Platypus Country offers it all!



Bombala Forest and Country

DRIVE 1: BOMBALA COUNTRY DRIVE

A relaxing half-day tour will show you what this vibrant region is all about.

Leaving Bombala, head for Bibbenluke turning off the highway at the Bibbenluke Bridge. The community of Bibbenluke is justifiably proud of its wonderfully restored Public Hall and marvellously equipped Public School. The farms around Bibbenluke produce prime lambs, quality fleece and beef cattle other producers dream about.

Turning left at the T intersection with Creewah Road you are now travelling through an area made up of hobby farms producing lavender, organic vegetables, free-range eggs, goats, jams and other specialty products.

Turning right at the T intersection with New Line road you cross over the beautiful Bombala River and head up New Line Road and into the more forested parts of the drive. Follow the signs to Nunnock Swamp and experience the tranquil beauty of this inspiring area, soak up a bit of history at Alexander's Hut and then head back and follow the signs to Cathcart.

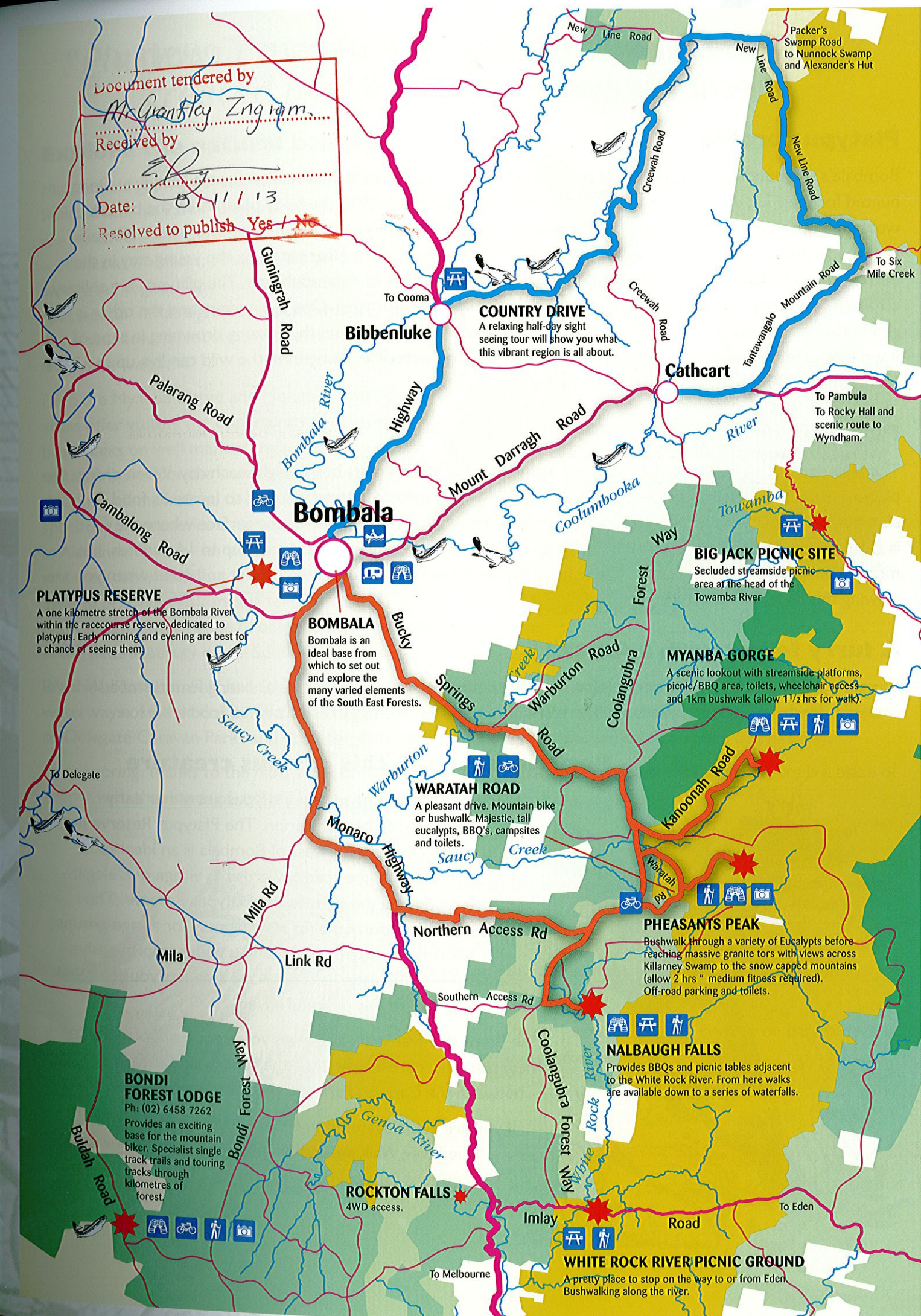
Once at Cathcart, history awaits you. The village has a town walk, a wonderful old General Store and the amazing Cathcart Collectables.

DRIVE 2: BOMBALA FOREST DRIVE

This scenic route winds its way through softwood and hardwood forests and on to the South East Forests National Park.

Walking trails are well marked. Facilities like the camping area at Waratah Road let you experience the relaxation that only a night camping out under the magnificent, starry, southern skies can give you.

Stroll the elevated walkway to the imposing granite rock shelf of Myanba Gorge. For the energetic, walk to the top of Pheasants Peak, passing through a landscape as ancient as time itself.



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COUNTRY DRIVE
A relaxing half-day sight seeing tour will show you what this vibrant region is all about.

PLATYPUS RESERVE
A one kilometre stretch of the Bombala River within the racecourse reserve, dedicated to platypus. Early morning and evening are best for a chance of seeing them.

BOMBALA
Bombala is an ideal base from which to set out and explore the many varied elements of the South East Forests.

BIG JACK PICNIC SITE
Secluded streamside picnic area at the head of the Towamba River.

MYANBA GORGE
A scenic lookout with streamside platforms, picnic/BBQ area, toilets, wheelchair access and 1km bushwalk (allow 1 1/2 hrs for walk).

WARATAH ROAD
A pleasant drive. Mountain bike or bushwalk. Majestic, tall eucalypts, BBQ's, campsites and toilets.

PHEASANTS PEAK
Bushwalk through a variety of Eucalypts before reaching massive granite tors with views across Killarney Swamp to the snow capped mountains (allow 2 hrs - medium fitness required). Off-road parking and toilets.

NALBAUGH FALLS
Provides BBQs and picnic tables adjacent to the White Rock River. From here walks are available down to a series of waterfalls.

BONDI FOREST LODGE
Ph: (02) 6458 7262
Provides an exciting base for the mountain biker. Specialist single track trails and touring tracks through kilometres of forest.

ROCKTON FALLS
4WD access.

WHITE ROCK RIVER PICNIC GROUND
A pretty place to stop on the way to or from Eden. Bushwalking along the river.

“Let the tranquil beauty of Platypus Country recharge your senses...”

Platypus profile

Bombala’s surrounding environment of pristine waterways provides the ideal habitat for the platypus. Once hunted for their fur, the platypus is now a protected native species. With the body of an otter, the bill of a duck, webbed feet and a tail unlike any other, this fascinating monotreme is a natural marvel. The female platypus lays one to three eggs which she incubates for approximately ten days. After hatching, the young stay in their burrow for 3-4 months, eventually emerging half to three quarters of their adult size. The platypus is a solitary creature that rarely shares its burrow, of which the female has two types. One is a nursery and the other is for general living. The nursery burrow is dug well above the waterline to avoid their young drowning in time of flood, the other living or ‘camping’ burrow is dug below the waterline. Platypus in the wild can live up to 12-14 years, although the average lifespan is much less.

Platypus feeding

The platypus feeds on aquatic invertebrates and must eat 15-30% of its bodyweight each day. When diving, the platypus shuts its eyes and ears and uses an electro receptor system located in its bill to locate its food. The platypus temporarily stores the gathered food in cheek pouches until it reaches the surface where the food is ground up between hard pads inside the bill. The platypus can stay underwater for up to 14 minutes, but more commonly it will only remain under for between 60 to 90 seconds. So be patient and quiet when you are viewing this national treasure.

A furry fellow with a fat tail

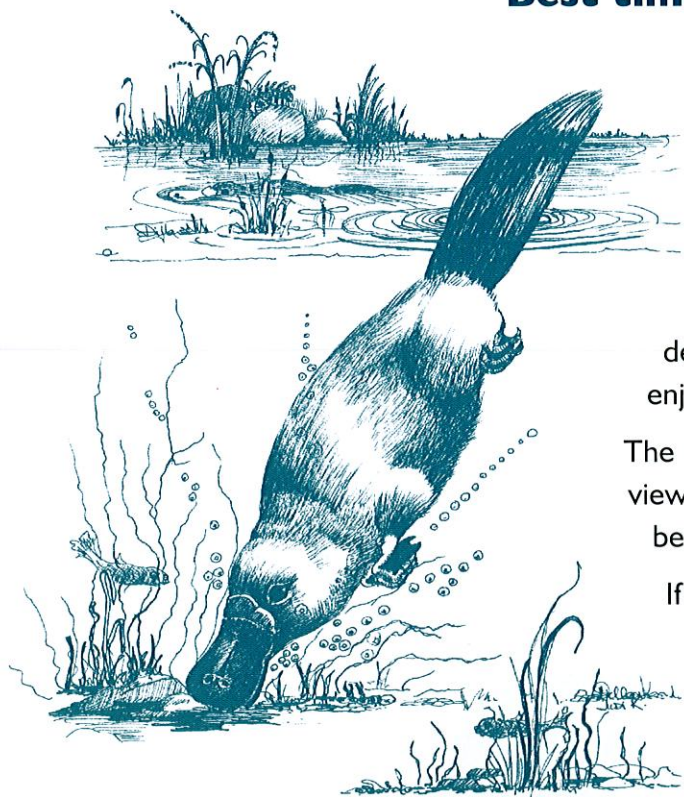
The platypus has fur that is far denser than that of a polar bear and provides the insulating features of a surfer’s wet suit. The tail of the platypus is used to store fat, providing an energy reserve when food is scarce.

Best times to see this curious creature

The best times to see the platypus are either early morning or late afternoon. The Platypus Reserve just a few kilometres west of Bombala is an ideal spot. Simply take the road towards the village of Delegate and follow the signs to the Platypus Reserve. The raised platform makes viewing easy for all age groups. Information boards provide you with comprehensive details about the platypus. The picnic area lets you relax and enjoy your visit to this peaceful haven.

The Bombala River Walk also gives you a good opportunity to view platypus, particularly along the stretch of the walk between the Caravan Park and the Swimming Pool.

If you are in Delegate, then either the Platypus Walk or the River Walk around Bill Jeffreys Park are your best options for platypus watching.



“Platypus Country – enjoy the sights and scents created by community groups...”

Explore the natural beauty

Majestic old growth forests within the South East Forest National Parks surround Bombala. These forests are home to some of Australia’s most iconic fauna – echidnas, wombats, possums, kangaroos, wallabies, wedge tail eagles – and the flora is simply spectacular. Tall straight eucalyptus, tree ferns, wildflowers, mosses, wattles and red and white waratahs.

Both the Myanba Gorge and Nunnock Swamp areas offer visitors the opportunity of enjoying bush walks on well marked trails, the chance to camp out under the starry southern skies in well maintained dedicated camping spots or to experience a night or two in Alexander’s Hut – an authentically restored cattleman’s hut at the Nunnock Swamp precinct. Visitors will take home the unforgettable experience of being totally immersed in the natural beauty of the Southern Monaro.

River Walks at Bombala and Delegate give visitors the opportunity of enjoying quiet strolls along the pristine waterways of either the Bombala or Delegate Rivers. The Walks are easily accessed from either the Bombala or Delegate Caravan Parks and don’t forget to take your camera as you are sure to spot a platypus!

Come spring, thanks to the hard work of the Bombala and District Garden Club, Platypus Country is a blaze of yellow with thousands of daffodil bulbs carpeting public spaces.

Summer, and the air is filled with the heady scent of lavender courtesy of Australia’s oldest lavender association, Monaro Country Lavender Co-Op. A visit to the distillery is a must – tours can be arranged by calling the Platypus Country Visitor Centre.

Autumn sees the colours shift to red, bronze, orange and yellow as the region’s deciduous trees and country gardens begin to prepare for colder months.

Winter sees the frosts forming sparkling crystals on bare branches and clean white snow flakes falling.

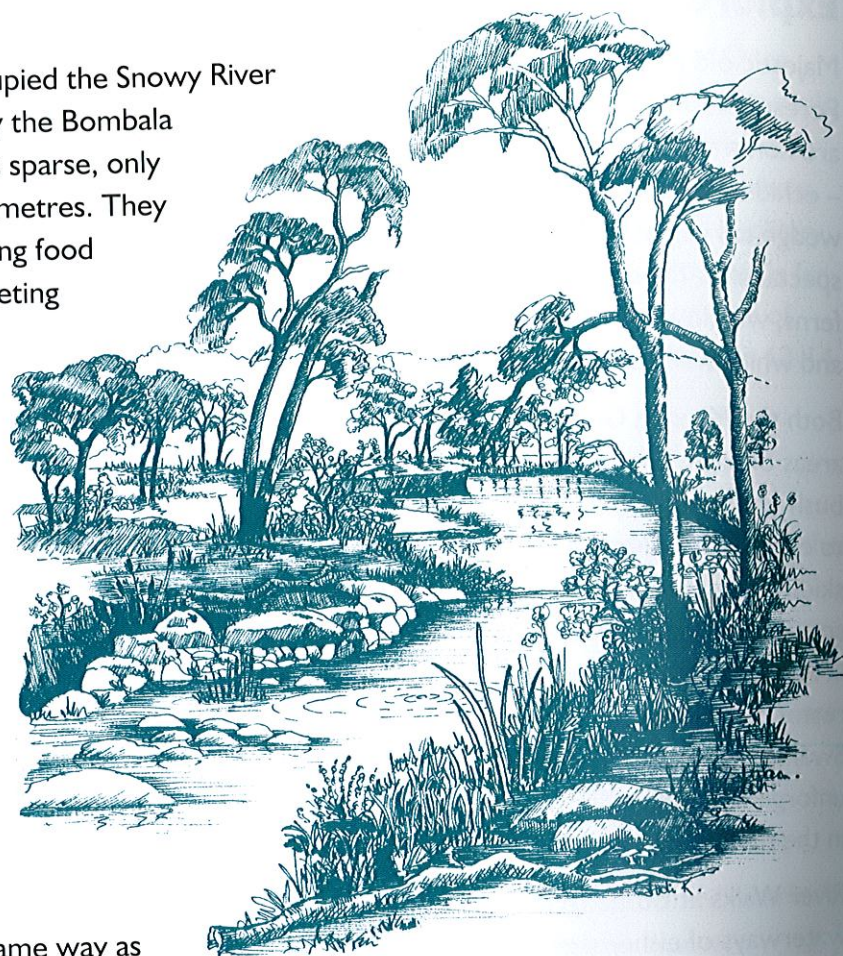


Human Habitation of the Monaro

THE MONARO TRIBES

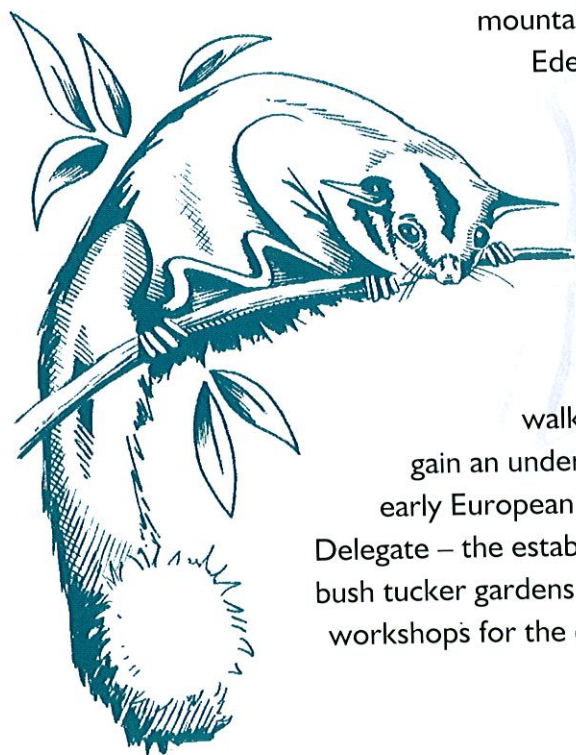
For thousands of years the Ngarigo tribe occupied the Snowy River basin, covering the area now encompassed by the Bombala Shire. The distribution of individual tribes was sparse, only three or four people per hundred square kilometres. They lived in harmony with their environment, eating food that became available seasonally and not depleting the resources of their tribal territory. Food was collected by both hunting and gathering. The annual migration of the bogong moths was cause for a great annual gathering of the tribes to take advantage of this seasonal influx of food.

The relationship between the members of the tribe was of utmost importance, as the distribution of game was strictly controlled by laws based on these relationships. This arrangement ensured that all members of the tribe were fed and cared for, as members did not distinguish between brothers and sisters, a paternal uncle or aunt was regarded in the same way as a father or mother and provided for accordingly.



For thousands of years the tribes regularly travelled from the coast to the mountains. The Bundian Way was one of the pathways used and the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council has now undertaken a survey of this track. The track, which is older than the Silk Road, travels through State Forests, National Parks and along Council roads and is being developed as a major tourism project.

Delegate will be one of two major information points for the Bundian Way. Jigamy Farm at Eden will be the other. The Bundian Way, an Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council project, will offer visitors the chance to walk a track steeped in history, learn about Indigenous culture and gain an understanding of the shared history of the Indigenous tribes and early European explorers and farmers. The project will have many benefits for Delegate – the establishment of the Bundian Way Indigenous Art Gallery, a range of bush tucker gardens planted, educational activities at the Primary School and regular workshops for the community and visitors to join in with.



THE FIRST EUROPEANS

The first Europeans arrived on the Monaro in 1823. Captain Mark Currie, Brigade-Major John Ovens and their guide Constable Joseph Wild were the first white men to set foot on the Monaro in early June 1823.

Hard on their heels followed the squatters, on the black soil plains they spread out, claiming territories for themselves and introducing cattle and sheep to the landscape. Men arrived on horseback and on foot, leading pack horses, driving bullock teams, droving cattle and walking sheep, gradually filtering into the more remote areas. They built slab huts, fences and stockyards and in the early days often subsisted for months on mutton, damper and tea. The squatters flourished, however the Monaro tribes were reduced by diseases such as smallpox, which killed more than half their number. The tribes never recovered, their numbers continuing to diminish under pressure from the ever-expanding pastoral runs.

In 1839, Gunningrah Station, 25 square miles in size, was described by the Commissioner of Crown Lands as six slab huts, one woolshed and one set of stockyards, 4051 sheep, 1244 cattle, 45 horses, twenty acres of wheat and 19 residents. The squatters were followed by the timber getters and sleeper cutters and to this day farming and forestry have remained the two pillars of the local economy.



AND NOW...

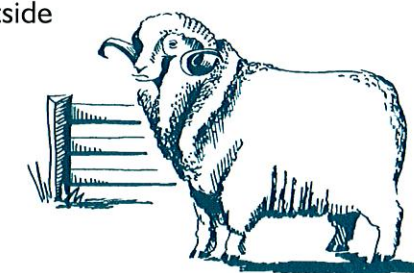
Platypus Country is now home to a diverse and vibrant community. The area has a wealth of historical attractions including the Early Settlers Hut at Delegate which is believed to be the first European dwelling on the Monaro, a great little History Museum at the Delegate School of Arts and Cathcart Collectables at Cathcart which houses an amazing collection of everyday items from the past.

In Bombala the past meets the present at Railway Park. Soak up the history of the area via Bombala Historic Engine and Machinery Society's great displays of beautifully restored engines and the railway memorabilia displayed by The Friends of the Railway. Enjoy the perfumes created at Monaro Country Lavender's essential oil distillery which operates out of the old railway goods shed. Relax in the community gardens. Admire the public art. Visit the Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre which operates out of the old Sisters of St. Joseph convent. Learn about Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop's association with Bombala. Purchase local produce or antiques. Marvel at the memorabilia collected by Bombala's Lions club.

Platypus Country is also well known for its agricultural pursuits. Prime lambs and fine wool have always been a mainstay of the local economy. Beef cattle and cropping also play a valuable role in the farming sector. Niche products such as lavender oil and associated lavender based products are gaining in popularity and our local area produces wonderful cakes, jams, honey and a range of organic meats and free range eggs and chickens.

Timber has been and continues to be important in the economic development of the area. The early buildings of Canberra were built from hardwood timber harvested from the area.

Softwood plantations have now taken over the local timber sector and the mill just outside of Bombala is one of the area's largest employers.



“Platypus Country – connected and welcoming...”

Sharing high-country spirit with the locals

The communities of Platypus Country like nothing better than an informal community get together, sharing stories, history, skills and knowledge.

The Full Moon Cob Oven dinners at Delegate are a great introduction into community life. Visitors can join with the locals to cook tasty treats in the wood fired oven and share a tale or two.

If your passion is gardening then why not join in with the regular activities held at the Bombala/Cathcart or Delegate Community gardens? Plant swaps and produce swaps are a feature of these activities as is the sharing of gardening knowledge passed down through the generations.

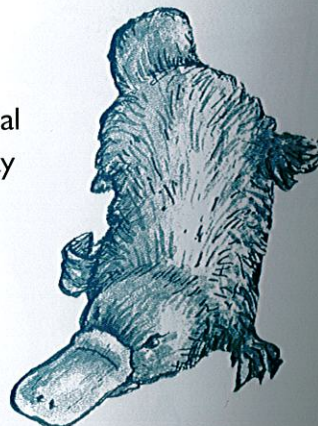
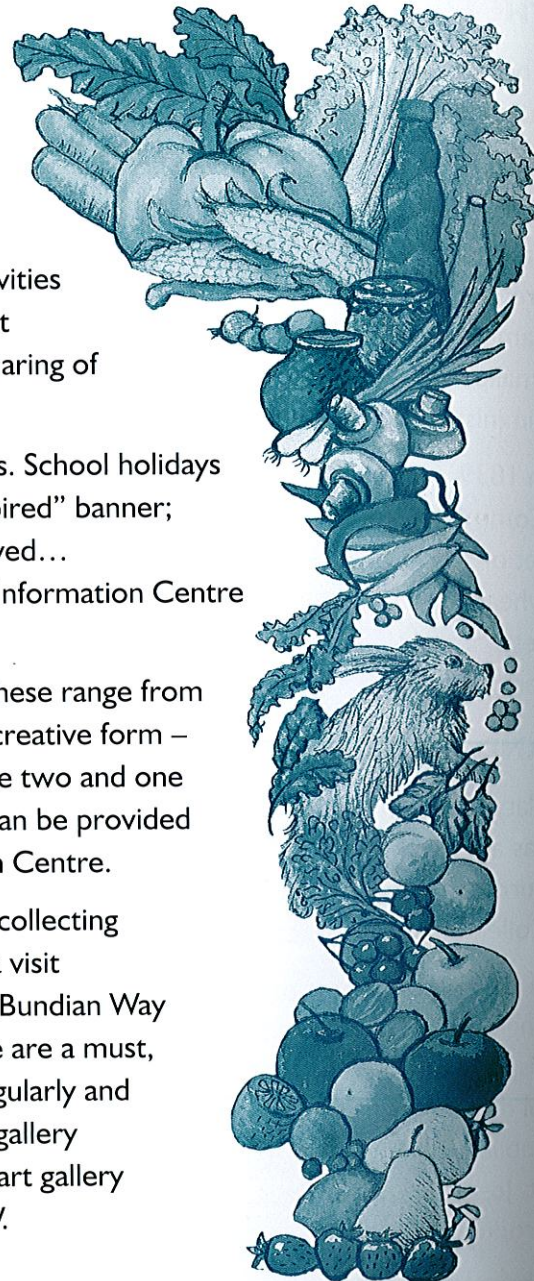
Platypus Country also boasts many talented artists and crafts persons. School holidays sees a range of activities organised under the “Be Involved... Be Inspired” banner; visitors are warmly welcomed to join in the activities. The “Be Involved... Be Inspired” program is available from the Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre two weeks prior to each school break.

Regular creative workshops are held at the Delegate Arts Centre. These range from informal gatherings of locals keen to share their skills in a particular creative form – felting, glass work, jewellery, pottery – to the more formal ArtEscape two and one day workshops. Again visitors are encouraged to join in; full details can be provided by the Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre.

If your passion is more for the collecting of original works then a visit to the Borderline or Bundian Way galleries at Delegate are a must, exhibitions change regularly and the Bundian Way gallery is the only indigenous art gallery in South East NSW.

Platypus Country annual events are the perfect way for visitors to get a taste of our relaxed, informal country lifestyle.

Our two country Shows feature the very best of local produce and celebrate the skills of local farmers; Australia Day celebrations highlight the achievements of the community and local industries; Bombala Race Day is country racing at its best; the country music events showcase the talents of local entertainers; the Bi-annual Engine Rally is a must for those with an interest in engines both small and large, while the Bombala Bike Show is THE bike event of the South East.



“Platypus Country – your Gateway to Australia’s Coastal Wilderness...”

Start your journey with us

The Tourism Australia National Landscape program identifies places of national significance that offer distinctive, unforgettable Australian natural and cultural experiences.

Australia’s Coastal Wilderness with its majestic forests, unique and diverse wildlife, ancient and active Indigenous culture and iconic communities was one of the first chosen National Landscapes.

The welcoming communities of Australia’s Coastal Wilderness offer a host of different experiences and understand the importance of being able to immerse yourself in the beauty of tall forests, lakes, beaches and a culture thousands of years old. They do it all the time.

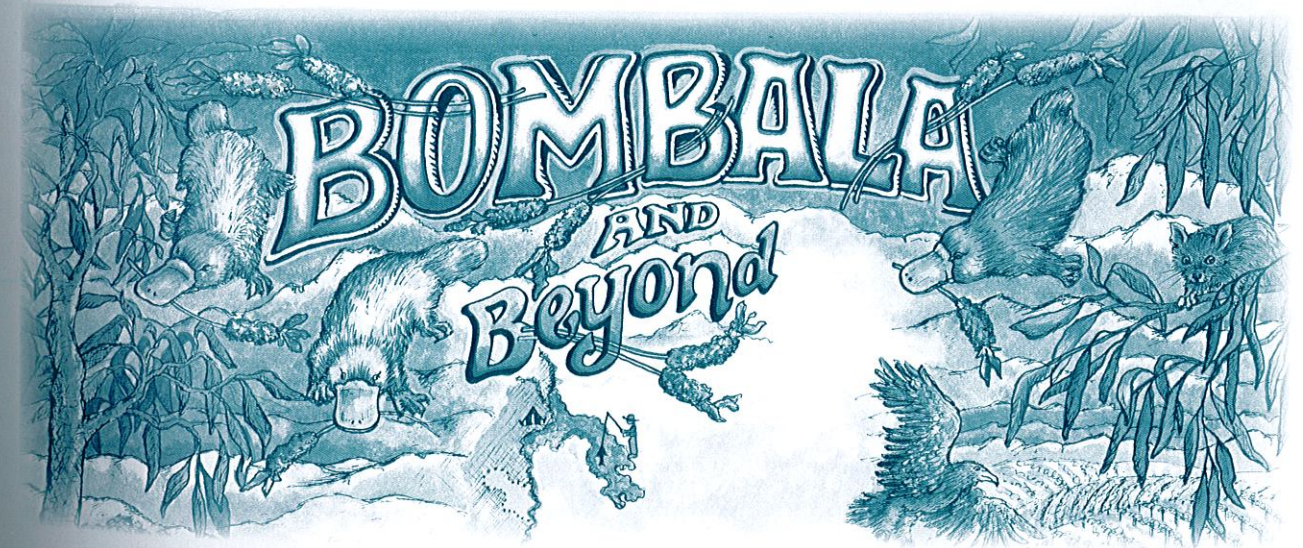
Staff at the Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre can offer advice and information on the best ways to explore this unforgettable landscape, starting off with the sights, sounds and history of Platypus Country.

While in Platypus Country visitors can:

- enjoy the timeless grandeur of the South East Forest National Parks
- try their hand at fly fishing on pristine, secluded waterways
- soak up both the Indigenous history and the shared history of our vibrant rural area
- enjoy country hospitality at its best and, of course,
- spot that most elusive of creatures – the platypus.

Down the “hill,” visitors can:

- enjoy whale watching experiences that will thrill and amaze
- explore over 200km of trails through unspoilt coastline
- stand at the point Captain Cook first viewed the Australian mainland
- experience the world’s largest population of little penguins in all their glory
- learn the history of this ancient land from its original custodians.



“Bombala is a gateway to this National Landscape which stretches from Bermagui to Marlo and inland to Bombala...”

Out 'n' about

On Two or Four Wheels

Enjoy the spectacular scenery and uncluttered roads as you travel around. On two wheels you'll experience no better riding; on four you'll experience no easier driving. Please obey the road rules and always consider other drivers. When on forest roads remember you could be in a working environment.

Mountain Biking

Always carry a spare inner tube and don't cycle alone. Stick to the major trails and carry plenty of water, appropriate clothes and protective gear. Bondi Forest Lodge caters for the mountain biker with accommodation and dedicated trails.

Fly Fishing

Stream fishing at its best, with browns and rainbows unmatched anywhere on the mainland. Local fly patterns include Adams, Black/Red Spinner, Deer Hair Caddis, Humpys, assorted Dun patterns, Royal Wulff, Beetles, Red Tag, March Brown, Tups Indispensable, and Caenid, 4-5 weight, 7-9ft rod, floating line. Please ask property owners before venturing onto private land and remember that all year round fishing is available at Coolumbooka Weir on the outskirts of Bombala. Electric motors only if using a tinny.

Bush Walking and Camping

Camp at Waratah Rd and from there trek to Pheasants Peak and Myanba – it's a bushwalker's dream. Or try the tranquil beauty of the Nunnock Swamp camping site, open forest, tall majestic gums, bird life galore, a carpet of spring wildflowers and frogs by the score. Always let someone know where you are going and when you will be back. Don't walk alone. Carry a compass, protective clothing, food, water and an up-to-date map.

Bird Watching

There are many waterfowl, parrots and birds of prey that inhabit the region. The varied terrain of uninhabited dense escarpment forest, open farmland, pine forest and waterways provide a myriad of opportunities for the birdwatcher. Look for endangered species, such as pink and hooded robins, olive whistlers and powerful owls, which have found a haven in our unspoilt wilderness. Bird hides at the Platypus Reserve will help you view a myriad of waterbirds.

Delegate and Errinundra Rainforest

DRIVE 3: AN HISTORIC DISCOVERY TOUR

Set aside a full day to take it all in and make the most of the flora and fauna that surrounds you.

Drive south to the pioneer village of Delegate, stroll along the Delegate Platypus Walk or the Federation River Walk, soak up the history of the area at the Delegate History Museum, view the beautiful art and craft at the Borderline or Bundian Way Galleries, then on to the Early Settlers Hut to learn how life used to be. Before crossing the border, view the plaque commemorating the proclamation of the Black Allen Line – the border between NSW and Victoria.

Back to Bendoc and a walk around the "Chinese Tunnel", or take a gold pan and try your luck in the waters of the Delegate River. Then finally back to Delegate for afternoon tea and a chance to view platypus, wet a line or soak up some more history.

DRIVE 4: LUSH RAINFOREST TRAILS

Pause to photograph the giant tree ferns, native waratahs and towering native eucalypts before walking the lush trails of beautiful Errinundra Rainforest.

This cool temperate rainforest with its flora from our prehistoric past will calm your senses and relax your mind.

If you're a 4WD enthusiast, you'll find the forest trails offer a unique and challenging experience. Your reward is spectacular views of unspoilt scenery and native animals in their pristine natural habitat.

The Errinundra Plateau, source of seven north, south and east flowing rivers, has links back to the Aboriginal tribes and their ancient trails and meeting places. The more recent European history is evident from derelict old fence lines, machinery and mine shafts.

Frosty Hollow is the only camping area but toilets, picnic facilities, walking tracks and lookouts are scattered throughout the park.



For those with a passion for unusual facts...

- The Ngarigo tribe, the traditional owners, had a reputation for being good singers and good imitators.
- The border between New South Wales and Victoria – the Black Allen Line – was only officially dedicated in 2006 during a ceremony at the Delegate River.
- By 1839, European squatters had 'acquired' properties that ranged in size from 35,000 acres to 80,000 acres.
- One of the first women to be registered as a landowner in her own right in the colony of New South Wales was Sophia Campbell of Delegate Station.
- By 1847 Ben Boyd had imported Kanakas to work as shepherds.
- Gold was discovered in the Bendoc River in 1855.
- Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop stayed in what is now the Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre twice during her life time.
- Bombala, but for a severe snow storm, could have been our nation's capital.
- Cathcart was named after General Cathcart of Crimean War fame.
- The men of the first 'Snowy River Recruitment March' left Delegate 16th January 1916.
- The last train departed Bombala railway station at 12 noon on 26th March 1986.
- In 1995 the platypus was adopted as the official emblem of Bombala.
- In 2001 Bombala adopted the Lavender flower as the floral emblem for the Bombala region.

Annual events to note

Australia Day Celebrations – January

Cathcart Variety Show – February

Country Music Talent Quest – February

Delegate Show – March

Bombala Show – March

Platypus Country Month – October

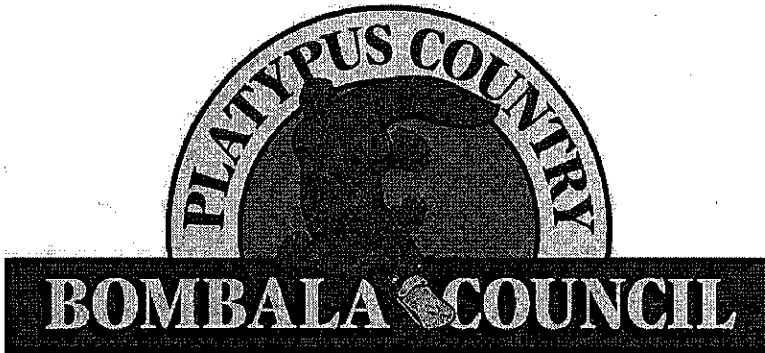
Celebration of Motorcycles – November

Ando Pottery sale – November

Bi-annual Historic Engine Rally – November

Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre	02 6458 4622
Bombala Council	02 6458 3555
NPWS – Bombala	02 6458 4080
State Forests – Bombala	02 6458 3177





**Tourism Activities
And
Overview of the
Operation of the
Platypus Country Visitor
Information Centre**

Prepared by the
Economic Development
Department
October 2013

Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre

Staffing Arrangements

Our Visitor Information Centre is open 6 days a week Monday-Saturday 10am-4pm patronage and enquiries are steadily increasing as are sales of Council purchased promotional products.

Currently the VIC is manned by Council employees 6 days per week this is covered by a mix of Council funds, grant funding, profit on sales, commission on CountryLink ticketing, commission on delivery of information for the Government Access point and a small profit on the coach tours. Local community group Monaro Country Lavender Co Op Ltd. covers staff holidays, sick leave and busy periods when two staff are required. In addition from time to time the Economic Development Officer works out of the Centre.

Council's Economic Development Officer supervises all staff within the Department and oversees all operations at the Visitor Information Centre. In addition the Economic Development Officer develops/oversees and advises on all projects carried out by staff employed within the Economic Development Department and coordinates a number of tourism and community development projects.

Tourism development is seen as crucial to both economic and community development of the area and offers a number of investment opportunities. The tourist dollar is playing an increasingly important role in the turnover of a number of main street businesses. It is vital that our Visitor Information Centre is manned by trained well-informed professional staff. This is not to say the members of the lavender group who man the Centre from time to time don't do a good job, it is just pointing out that the preferred option is to have full time paid staff.

Serious thought needs to be given to opening the Centre 7 days per week. A range of options are currently being explored and a Report will go to Council in the near future.

New Destination Management Plan

Council has finalised a new Destination Management (tourism) Plan for the area. The Destination Management Plan sets out actions to increase tourism to the Bombala Region. The Plan will drive the work undertaken by the staff at the Visitors Centre and support other areas within the Economic Development Department.

Tourism Activities

Current tourism priorities

Bundian Way Project

Our main tourism project is the Bundian Way. Council and John Blay, the Project Officer and Chair of the Advisory Committee, have been working together for a number of years to ensure the long term viability of this Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council project.

The Bundian Way Gallery has been established at the Delegate RTCT Centre. This was opened on 1 December 2012 and continues to work well with the Borderline Gallery. Sales have been made and Delegate has seen an increase in tourism numbers. Council has been working to secure the three year lease of two paintings by respected Aboriginal artist Gloria Tamerre Petyarre and Charlie Tjapangati. It is anticipated that these paintings will arrive shortly.

Australia's Coastal Wilderness

Our other important tourism project is the Australian Tourism National Landscapes Project. Our forests and attractions are ideally suited to the target market and it is anticipated that the promotion surrounding the program will have good spin offs to the local domestic market.

Cultural tourism is the only tourism market currently showing any growth and while strictly speaking the National Landscape Programme is an eco tourism project it does have very strong links to cultural tourism. Cultural tourism has always been one of the target markets for the Bombala area. We have a number of very good attractions that fit this sector like a glove. In addition we have the South East Forests, which are an ideal fit for the eco tourist aspects of the National Landscapes program.

Motorcycle tourism

This sector is very strong for the Bombala region and directly benefits a number of local businesses. It is estimated that each bike rider brings into the local economy a minimum of \$60.00. This figure is more than doubled if an event is occurring and doubled again for each overnight stay.

Coach tours

Every coach tour organised by the Council brings in from \$1,600-\$2,500 depending on the number of passengers and the group travelling. A fairly standard coach of 40 passengers will bring in \$1,730. This amount benefits up to 6 community based groups, two local businesses and 3 individuals and has direct flow on benefits to a number of local main street businesses and local and regional specialty producers/artists/craftspeople.

Coach numbers are slowly coming back to average. This year Council has set a target of 20 coaches for the year. We are confident that we will reach this target.

Tourism Activities

Current tourism priorities (continued)

Visitor Information Centre

Council is currently working on the extension to the current Visitor Information Centre. The extension will sit alongside the current facility and house the office, a dedicated retail area and tourism displays/ information for both the local area and surrounding council areas.

Once the new Centre is operational, the existing Centre will be refurbished as a cultural museum. This work will enable the Railway Precinct to better meet the needs and expectations of tourists and provide valuable facilities to assist us in interpreting the cultural heritage of our area.

The new Centre and cultural museum will provide visitors the chance to feel, see and touch our history and they will go away with a deeper understanding of the history of our area and also its future.

Caravan Parks

Work will shortly commence on an upgrade to the Bill Jeffreys Caravan Park. This work will include a refurbishment of the existing amenities and undercover areas, minor painting works and replacement of gutters and down pipes.

Bombala Caravan Park will also be upgraded. The camp kitchen area will be refurbished and paving installed outside the onsite cabins.

Work is also being undertaken on sourcing funding to replace the two existing onsite vans.

Figures for the Bombala Caravan Park have been excellent. The two on site cabins are going well and have added to the appeal of the facility.

Signage Projects

Council is in the process of finalising the signage projects for both the Endeavour Reserve and Railway Park. The Endeavour Reserve project is quite straightforward - signage welcoming visitors to the site at both entrances, signage detailing flora and fauna at the existing car park and signage on the viewing area including a map and some historical information.

The Railway Park signage is more complex and links the Railway Land to the River Walking Track. Drafts of this signage will go to the Railway Lands Committee prior to sign off.

Council is also working with a variety of community groups involved with tourism, to produce interpretative signage that both interprets individual sites and links tourism sites across the Council area.

Railway Land

Council has been working on the enhancement of Railway Park for many years. Together with the Friends of the Railway, Council have been working on acquiring some rolling stock and other items to assist with the interpretation of the area. Over the next few months additional pieces of rolling stock will be placed on the rails and the display in the waiting room will be enhanced.

Operations of Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre

Louise Morley has been back with the Economic Development team since April of this year.

Louise's main area of responsibility is the financial management of the Visitor Information Centre.

Louise works up to three days per week at the Visitor Information Centre. Apart from the regular Visitor Information Centre duties, Louise works on:

- ✓ Undertaking all end of month operations
- ✓ Liaising with the coach tour companies and organising their day trips to our area
- ✓ Liaising with community groups involved with the coach tours
- ✓ Purchase of merchandise
- ✓ Updating of Council promotional material
- ✓ Assisting the Economic Development Officer with developing new tours
- ✓ Assisting with specific community and youth development projects eg. ArtEscape program, Spring into Spring community event and the Be Involved...Be Inspired program.

Steve Rickett has been with the Economic Development Department for just over 12 months. Steve is employed up to three days per week at the Visitor Information Centre. Steve's regular duties include assisting with telephone and personal enquiries about the district, Government Access Point enquiries, Country Link ticketing. Steve also undertakes specific projects as required.

In particular over the last six months Steve has:

- ✓ Organised the 100 years celebrations at Burnima and activities to support Heritage Week
- ✓ Liaised with the Friends of the Railway regarding the acquisition of the rolling stock
- ✓ Re-organised the displays at the Visitor Information Centre and produced the initial sketches for the new Visitor Information Centre
- ✓ Organised the 2013 Christmas Street Carnival and the shop local campaign for this year.
- ✓ Assisted the Bombala Bike Show with the organisation of the 2013 event.
- ✓ Assisted with promotion of a variety of events include the Bombala Race Day, the Anglican Garden Day, the Snowy Ride and the Bombala Bike Show
- ✓ Worked on increasing coach tours to the area.
- ✓ Researched the history of the local area, in particular the intrigue around the choice of the nation's capital.

Snapshot of three of our Current Projects

1. Bundian Way Project

Project Coordinator: Karen Cash

GOALS

1. Drive the Bundian Way project to ensure that it meets the objectives of the Eden Local Aboriginal Lands Council in particular improved employment and training opportunities for local Aboriginal youth
2. Grow understanding of the Indigenous culture and the shared history of the area
2. Build opportunities for the local area and in particular opportunities for the Delegate area
3. Build opportunities for Australia's Coastal Wilderness project.

3 focuses to the project-

Education

Employment

Sharing of histories

Achievements to date

- ✓ Village of Delegate will play a major role in the interpretation of the Bundian Way
- ✓ Advisory Committee is working well
- ✓ Survey of the historical route has been completed
- ✓ Planning for significant plantings at Platypus Walk and selected locations within the village of Delegate are well advanced
- ✓ Indigenous Gallery has been established
- ✓ Campsite on Inlay Creek has been established by Forestry Corp NSW
- ✓ Work has commenced on improvements at Bilgalera (Fisheries Beach) and Jigamy Farm
- ✓ Strategic Planning has been undertaken, business planning is underway
- ✓ Route has gained Heritage status
- ✓ Work has commenced on educational initiatives with the first educational program planned for November 2014
- ✓ Full time Project Manager has been funded for a two year period
- ✓ Work has commenced on the first section of the walk between Jigamy Farm and Bilgalera. This section is to be opened late 2013/very early 2014.
- ✓ Planning work on a section of the touring route around Delegate has commenced
- ✓ Work on purchasing a property suitable for an eco retreat is well advanced. This property is at the back of Delegate.

2. National Landscapes Project

Project Coordinator: Karen Cash

Goals

1. To attract the overseas experience seeker to the area
2. To build existing tourism businesses
3. To attract additional tourism investment
4. To build regional partnerships

Background to the Project

The National Landscape Program is a partnership between Tourism Australia, Parks Australia and various land management agencies. It does not recognise state or local boundaries or land management boundaries. It builds on networks already established to bring benefits to the whole of the landscape. Overall the program has an eco tourist focus.

To date this project has seen the area stretching from around Marlo to Bermagui and in from the coast to Bombala declared Australia's Coastal Wilderness. A Tourism Destination Strategy has been prepared, a website and tool kit for operators developed and a series of workshops have been held.

Specific targets of the project

1. Provide personalised wilderness experiences including guided, personalised tours in natural areas e.g. National Parks and Marine Parks; Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre (Eden)
2. Embody a sense of freedom from everyday norms e.g. experiencing the vastness of nature and the landscape; Canoe trails
3. Provide opportunities to connect physically and spiritually with the landscape e.g. long hikes through majestic coastal wilderness, away from civilization and crowds; develop an understanding of Indigenous culture via the Bundian Way project
4. Ensure that the environment is unspoiled and pristine e.g. Nunnock Swamp
5. Provide opportunities for discovery e.g. Platypus viewing

Specific spins offs for the Bombala area

1. Assistance/support for funding for improvements to Platypus Reserve
2. Assistance/support for development of South East Forests
3. Assistance/support for development of Bundian Way
4. Building of regional networks particularly between Bombala Council, East Gippsland Shire Council and Bega Valley Shire Council
5. Increase in tourism numbers
6. Increase in tourism investment
7. Enhancement of community development

Snapshot of three of our Current Projects (continued)

3. Railway Land Project

Project Coordinator: Karen Cash

Project Officer: Steve Rickett

Goals

1. To increase day tourism to the area
2. To support the development of tourism attractions
3. To support local community groups
4. To link with National Landscape Project

Focus of the Project

1. To interpret the Railway land in a manner likely to attract additional tourism and appeal to the national landscapes target market
2. To increase opportunities for local groups to hold appropriate events on the Railway land.
3. To foster relationships with the Cooma Monaro Railway group.
4. To provide opportunities to support local producers and enhance their economic sustainability.
6. Enhance the bi annual Historic Engine Rally run the Bombala Historic Engine and Machinery Society.

Achievements to date

This program has:

- ✓ Resulted in the establishment of community gardens, lavender plantings and a sensory garden
- ✓ Seen huge improvements in the maintenance of the area
- ✓ Resulted in successful acquisition of items of rolling stock
- ✓ Supported the work of a number of community groups
- ✓ Developed plans for a new Visitor Information Centre
- ✓ Embarked on a program of enhance of all static displays.

This project has the ability to attract a significant new market to our area. Railway enthusiasts are prepared to venture far and wide to explore railway history. The success of Cooma Monaro Railway is evidence of this.

In addition to the above projects we are working on the following:

- ✓ Reviewing all promotional material
- ✓ Working with a range of stakeholders to increase motorcycle tourism to the area
- ✓ Working with community groups to develop and enhance the existing attractions
- ✓ Exploring funding options to further develop tourism across the Council area
- ✓ Exploring options to increase visitation from the Snowy Mountains now that the Snowy River Way is sealed.
- ✓ Working on projects to foster youth and community development

Within the Economic Development Department two other staff members are employed:

Neil Currie is the Project Coordinator for the Delegate Wood Working Room and he is currently employed for 13 hours per week. His work includes development and coordination of community projects that utilise the resources at the Wood Working Room and responsibility for and supervision of all activities undertaken at the Wood Working Room.

Projects Neil coordinates assist with

- ✓ the ongoing community development of the area with a special focus on youth and families.
- ✓ the ongoing success of the Be Involved... Be Inspired youth workshops.
- ✓ the ongoing upskilling of the community via workshops/sessions designed to support Council's aim of supporting opportunities for income generation.

Dale Halligan who is the resident manager of the Bombala Caravan park. His duties include:

- ✓ Cleaning and maintenance of the Park
- ✓ Collection of all fees and charges
- ✓ Provision of tourist information

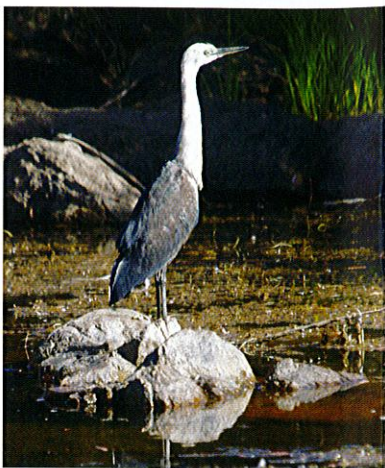
Overnight stays for the year ending 30 June 2013 increased by a staggering 776 nights on the 2011/12 figures. This is an excellent result and Dale is to be congratulated.

In addition Cathy Smith is employed on a contract basis to undertake cleaning and collection of fees at the Delegate Caravan Park.

Birds

you may see at the reserve

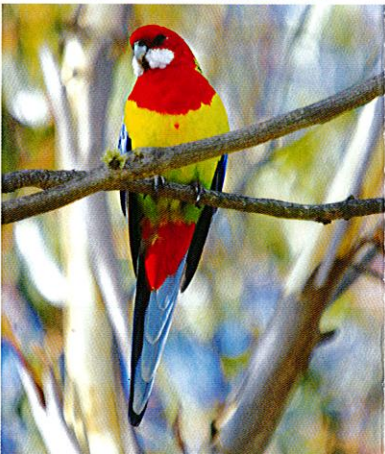
The platform and nearby bird hides offer the chance to spot some of the graceful waterbirds that share the platypus's habitat. Most days you can see cootes diving and ducks gliding on the river. Sometimes you may see other visiting species like the heron, sea eagle and little pied cormorants.



Also keep an eye out for the other feathered friends that inhabit and visit the reserve. You will often see and hear the colourful superb fairy wren busy in the bushes. Honeyeaters can also be seen when the native trees and flowers are in bloom.



Eastern and crimson rosellas are common at the reserve especially in spring where they use the hollows in the old trees like the snow gums for nesting sites.



Platypus Country has a wonderful environment of pristine waterways which provides the ideal habitat for the platypus...

Please help us to keep our waterways clean – don't drop rubbish, take care when fishing and protect river banks.

Other places you may see the Platypus

- > Bombala River Walk
- > Bombala River below the Caravan Park
- > Delegate River below the Caravan park
- > Platypus River Walk in Delegate
- > Coolumbooka Bridge



This brochure was produced with funding from NSW Environmental Trust



Bombala Council

73 Caveat Street, PO Box 105, Bombala NSW 2632

For further information contact:

Platypus Country Visitor Information Centre

Phone: (02) 6458 4622 Fax: (02) 6458 4627

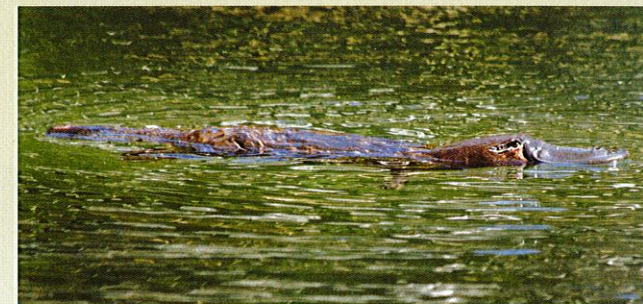
tourism@bombala.nsw.gov.au

PHOTOS BY SALLY-ANN THOMPSON

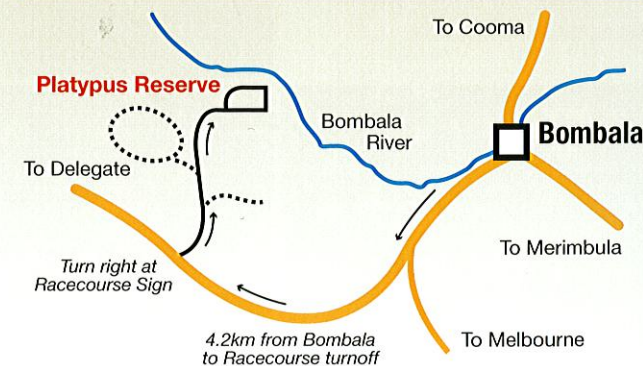
Bombala Platypus Reserve



The Platypus Reserve situated on the beautiful Bombala River is the perfect place to relax and enjoy the Platypus in its natural environment.

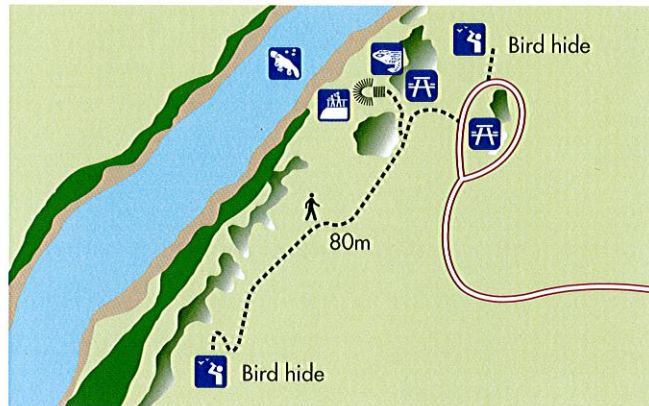


How to get there



Welcome to the Platypus Reserve

Take the time to pause for a moment and enjoy the views and serenity of the reserve. Here you can observe the complexity and diversity of this freshwater ecosystem.



Protecting and maintaining the health of our river systems is a priority here as platypus inhabit most of our waterways. Loss of habitat is a great threat to the platypus and other animals that rely on these aquatic and riparian habitats.

To maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the Platypus Reserve, weed control has been undertaken and endemic native plants have been planted.



Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*)

The best times to see the platypus are either early morning or late afternoon, however they can be seen at other times of the day.

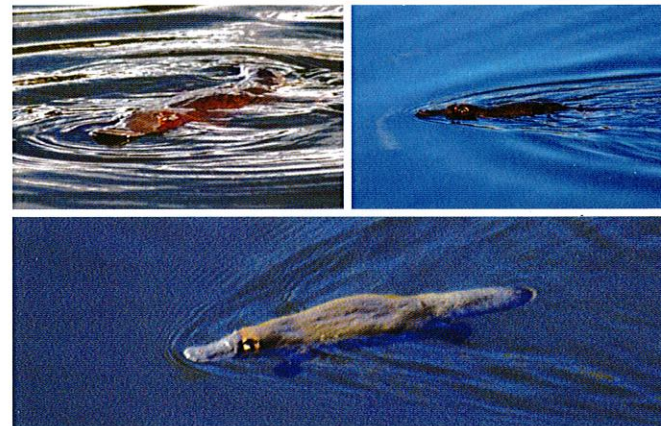
The raised platform at the reserve makes viewing easier for all ages. You need to be patient and quiet when viewing as the platypus can stay under water for up to 14 minutes, but usually they remain under for between 60 to 90 seconds.

Look for a V shape in the water.

When diving the platypus shuts its eyes and ears and uses an electro receptor system located in its bill. Gathered food is temporarily stored in cheek pouches until the platypus reaches the surface where the food is ground up between hard pads inside the bill.

Each day the platypus must eat 15-30% of its bodyweight. Its tail is used to store fat, providing an energy reserve when food is scarce. The platypus has fur that is far denser than that of a surfer's wet suit which allows it to survive in these waters during the chilly winters.

Platypus in the wild can live up to 12-14 years, although the average lifespan is much less.



Other inhabitants of the Reserve

Cunningham Skink (*Egernia Cunninghamsi*)

Found primarily on the east coast of Australia we have a colony located in the limestone rocks here at the reserve. They like to inhabit rocky outcrops, logs or rock crevices.

Generally they live in small colonies or family groups. Ground dwelling, they are active during the day and at dusk in the warmer months. On warm days you will often see them sunning on the rocks near the platform.

Juvenile Cunningham Skinks are carnivorous eating insects, spiders and worms, but as the age they tend to eat a more vegetarian diet of native berries, flowers, soft leaves, and shoots.

They can live up to 30 years old.

