

Foster Flora Reserves



Visitor Guide

Foster, once a bustling gold mining town known as Stockyard Creek, is one of a few Victorian country towns that have substantial areas of public land within their boundaries. Numerous walking tracks link together to lead you through the surrounding flora reserves. The area features a rich diversity of plants and animals, and pays homage to our gold mining history.

Location and access

Foster is located approximately 160 kilometres south east of Melbourne, and can be reached via the South Gippsland Highway.

Enjoying the reserves: walking

Walking is one of the best ways to explore these reserves. Several tracks meander through the reserves which are ideal for a gentle stroll, cycling and horse riding; many tracks taking you past historic gold mining features. Do the walks separately, or link them together to form a longer walk.

A self guided walk will take you from the centre of town through the richly historical region around the township of Foster. (See map over)

Walks include:

1. **Hayes Walk - 900 metres, 15 minutes return**
Brataualung Walking Track
2. *Cody Gully Walk - 1 km, 20 mins return*
3. *Ophir Hill Walk – 0.9 km, 20 mins return*
4. **Cement Hill Walks and Rides (1hr rtn, 6km)**
5. **New Zealand Hill**

Remnants of history

In 1869, James Northey, in company with James Palmer found a small patch of gold near the mouth of Stockyard Creek. News of the discovery spread quickly with favourable reports in the press sparking a rush of miners. A settlement of tents and makeshift huts quickly sprung up along the banks of Stockyard Creek.

Victory Mine

Victory Mine was the deepest mine in Foster, operating between 1887 and 1908 and producing 26,000 ounces of gold throughout its productive life.

Ophir Mine

The Ophir mine was situated on Ophir Hill, just above Cody Gully (refer map). This claim had a shaft to a depth of 150 feet.

Cement Hill Natural Features Reserve

Cement Hill, Cody Gully and Ophir Hill all got their names from the original mining claims registered for the area.

Cement Hill however had good reefs of gold bearing quartz and was heavily mined from the surface and underground. The use of the Hill for ballast to build a section of the Great Southern railway in the early 1890's is said to have removed up to 8 metres from the top of Cement Hill.

New Zealand Hill Claims

Commercial mining ceased in Foster early last century, however, individuals continued the search for gold for many years. New Zealand Hill heralded another run of gold, with the gold being located in rounded quartz gravel which was not suitable for sinking deep shafts. However with an adequate supply of water available the site was ideal for 'sluicing' or washing. Their exploratory diggings mark this area, with trenches of variable depth that were dug by old and young men alike still hoping to strike it rich.

Plants and wildlife

The flora reserves support lowland forest and swamp scrub. As extensive clearing occurred, the vegetation regrowth is quite young. Lowland forest is dominated by Messmate, Narrow Leaf Peppermint and Mountain Grey Gums, with an understorey of shrubs including Narrow-leaf Wattle, Prickly Mosses, Prickly Tea-tree and Common Heath, and a ground cover of Wire Grass and Bracken. Swamp scrub consists of dense thickets of Swamp Paperbark, with an understorey of Mat Rush,



For further information

Parks Victoria
 Information Centre
Call 13 1963
 or visit the
 Parks Victoria website
www.parks.vic.gov.au

Parks Victoria Foster office
 Cnr Victory Avenue and
 McDonald Street
 Foster Vic 3960
 Prom Country
 Information Centre
 South Gippsland Hwy
 Korumburra Vic 3950
 Phone: 1800 630 704

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park by following these guidelines:

Please take rubbish away with you for recycling & disposal

All native plants & animals are protected by law. Please do not disturb them in any way

Please keep to designated walking tracks to avoid becoming lost

Dredging and gold fossicking are not permitted

Vehicles including trail bikes may only be driven on formed roads open to the public, and must be fully road registered. All drivers and riders must hold a current licence

Horses may only be ridden on formed roads open to the public, and are not permitted on any walking tracks within the reserves

Dogs must be restrained on a lead at all times

Please don't throw this park note away. Keep it, return it for others to use, or recycle it

Healthy Parks Healthy People

Visiting a park can improve your health, mind, body and soul. So, with over four million hectares of parkland available to Victorians, why not escape to a park today!

Bidgee-Widgee, mosses, lichen and Geranium species.

These reserves are home to echidnas, koalas, wombats and ringtail possums. Wallabies,

Pygmy Possums, and the Antechinus (native mouse) also live here. Birdlife to watch for are Grey Fantails, Crimson Rosellas, Pardalotes, wrens, Grey Thrushes and Golden Whistlers.

