

Casterton and Surrounds

THINGS TO SEE AND DO



GLENELG VIC



Casterton Visitor Information Centre

139 Henty Street
(03) 5554 2440

Portland Visitor Information Centre

Lee Breakwater Road.
1800 035 567

Nelson Visitor Information Centre

Leake Street
(08) 8738 4051
nelsonvic@glenelg.vic.gov.au

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Information Centre

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Welcome to Casterton

Nestled amongst the rolling hills and river red gums of the Glenelg River valley, Casterton is roughly halfway between Melbourne and Adelaide and is centrally located to the Great Ocean Road, Grampians, Wimmera and Coonawarra regions.

An ideal overnight stop, Casterton will tempt you to stay longer as you explore the legendary history of the Kelpie and the abundance of native flora and fauna.

Enjoy the town's leafy streets, heritage buildings and friendly country hospitality.

BIRTHPLACE OF THE KELPIE	4
ATTRACTIONS	5
MAPS	6-7
THE STORY OF THE KELPIE	8
THE KELPIE CENTER	10
KELPIE WALKING TRAIL	10
DAY TRIPS	10-13
EXPLORE NEARBY	14

ATTRACTIONS

Mickle Lookout

High above the town centre, Casterton's Mickle Lookout offers a prime photo opportunity with magnificent views looking straight down the main street. The view back to the lookout from the main street, especially at night, when the huge 'Fleur De Lys' (Scout) emblem is illuminated.

Bilston's Tree approx 35km

A sapling in 1200 AD, this River Red Gum is reputed to contain the largest volume of millable timber of the species.

The tree's girth is measured at 7.26 metres and height at 40m. Access to the short walking track and interpretive signboard is via Glenmia Road, 29km along the Casterton-Edenhope Road. Glenmia Road is unsuitable for large or towing vehicles.

Bailey's Rocks approx 50km

Bailey's Rocks are a collection of giant green granite boulders in the Dergholm State Park. Formed 500 million years ago, they are easily accessible by two well defined walking tracks. Camping, picnics, walking, orienteering, scenic and four wheel driving are popular pastimes. Don't forget your camera!

Warrock Homestead approx 30km

Warrock Homestead is renowned as the actual birthplace of the Kelpie breed but is also recognised by Heritage Victoria as undoubtedly the most important pastoral station in Victoria. Established in 1843 by pioneer George Robertson who crafted 30 individual buildings by hand, each with its individual purpose to fulfil the needs of the pastoral station of the era. Located on the Glenelg River, 30km north of Casterton. For groups booking only: info@warrockhomestead.com.au

Parks & Recreation

Ess Lagoon offers a picnic and fishing area and is regularly stocked with trout (Fishing Guide available at Casterton Visitor Information Centre). The Railway Reserve features a railwaythemed playground and shady rotunda.

Apex Park is a popular BBQ stop. Both Bryan Park near the hospital and the Rotary Rest Point, near the Jack Gleeson statue on the riverbank have fun playgrounds. Island Park Recreation Reserve offers a full range of sporting facilities including a Caravan Park, electric BBQ, playground, Olympic swimming pool, bowling club, croquet lawn, tennis courts and sports ovals. A modern Skate Park is located opposite Island Park. Casterton also has an 18 hole golf course, racecourse and indoor sporting facilities.

Flora & Fauna

The Wilkin Flora & Fauna reserve covers 3600 hectares with 4WD and 2WD track access. Mill Swamp is of interest to bird watchers - a bird list is available from the Casterton Visitor Information Centre. Along with birds, spring wildflowers are a beautiful attraction from August to October in the Long Lead Swamp, Tower & Carmichael Track areas.

Red-Tailed Black-Cockatoo

In danger of extinction, the subspecies South Eastern Red-Tailed Black-Cockatoo is only found in South-West Victoria and South East South Australia. These magnificent birds feed on the seeds of Brown Stringybarks and Bulokes and nest in old River Red Gums or Yellow Gums.

BIRTHPLACE OF THE KELPIE

Warrock Homestead, north of Casterton, is the birthplace of the amazingly intelligent Kelpie breed of working Australian cattle and sheep dog.

The original pup known as 'Kelpie' was born in 1871; her parents being a pair of black & tan Collies imported from Scotland by Warrock's owner George Robertson. Robertson had a policy of not selling females from the stock but had given a pup to his nephew.

Jack Gleeson, a drover working at nearby Dunrobin Homestead, wanted to buy a female pup but could not obtain one from Robertson. The nephew initially refused to sell but was eventually persuaded to swap the pup for a horse which he fancied. Gleeson named the pup 'Kelpie', meaning 'a malignant water sprite haunting the fjords and streams in the shape of a horse'.

Shortly after, Gleeson left the district and Kelpie was mated with working dogs in Ardlethan, NSW. The progeny created the bloodlines of the Kelpie breed, with one of the original litter going on to come equal first in a trial in 1878.



The Story of The Kelpie

In 1860's, Scotsman George Robertson of Warrock Station north of Casterton, imported a pair of Collies from Scotland.

Jack Gleeson a stockman of Irish descent and lover of well-bred sheep dogs, tried to buy a female pup from these Collies from him. Reluctant to share the benefit of his initiative importing the dogs, Robertson refused the sale.

Undeterred and persistent, Gleeson persuaded Robertson's nephew, whom had received a bitch pup, to exchange the pup for a stockhorse. A secret exchange was made in the dead of night on the banks of the Glenelg River.

Gleeson named his pup "Kelpie". Meaning: "a malignant water sprite" said to haunting the fords and streams in the shape of a horse.

Gleeson eventually left the Casterton district to settle on Bolero Station at Ardlethan, NSW. At this time Gleeson was given a young short-haired and prick-eared black dog named "Moss", hailing from Rutherfords, at Yarrowonga. "Kelpie" was twice mated to "Moss" and another short-haired and prick eared dog named "Caesar". From this mating came a black and tan bitch pup, given to Mr CTW King of Woollongough Station.

This pup known as "King's Kelpie" performed exceptionally at dog trials and became so well known that her pups came to be called "Kelpie's Pups" henceforth establishing the Kelpie breed.



Australian Kelpie Centre

Visit Australia's only dog museum...

Discover the surprising history of our national working dog, the courageous Kelpie, the dog that drove Australia from colony to country.

Opened in 2018, this state-of-the-art visitor centre contains

artefacts, information, film, photos and interactives to engage all the family.

Exhibits cover local geological, Aboriginal and colonial history as well as the stirring tale of the Kelpie.

FREE ENTRY. Open 7 days, 9.00am–5.00pm, except Christmas Day.

139 Henty Street, Casterton VIC 3311.



Kelpie Walking Trail

An easy walk around town, the Kelpie Walking Trail links five unique sculptures to reveal the fascinating life and times of the Kelpie. The statues feature interpretive signage and the walker can select from three routes.

Route 1 - Short

Takes you via the main shopping district with its heritage themed streetscape.

Route 2 - Extended





Slightly longer and takes in wonderful River Red-Gums and the historic Railway Precinct.








Route 3 - River

Comprises the River Walking Trail, along the beautiful banks of the Glenelg River.



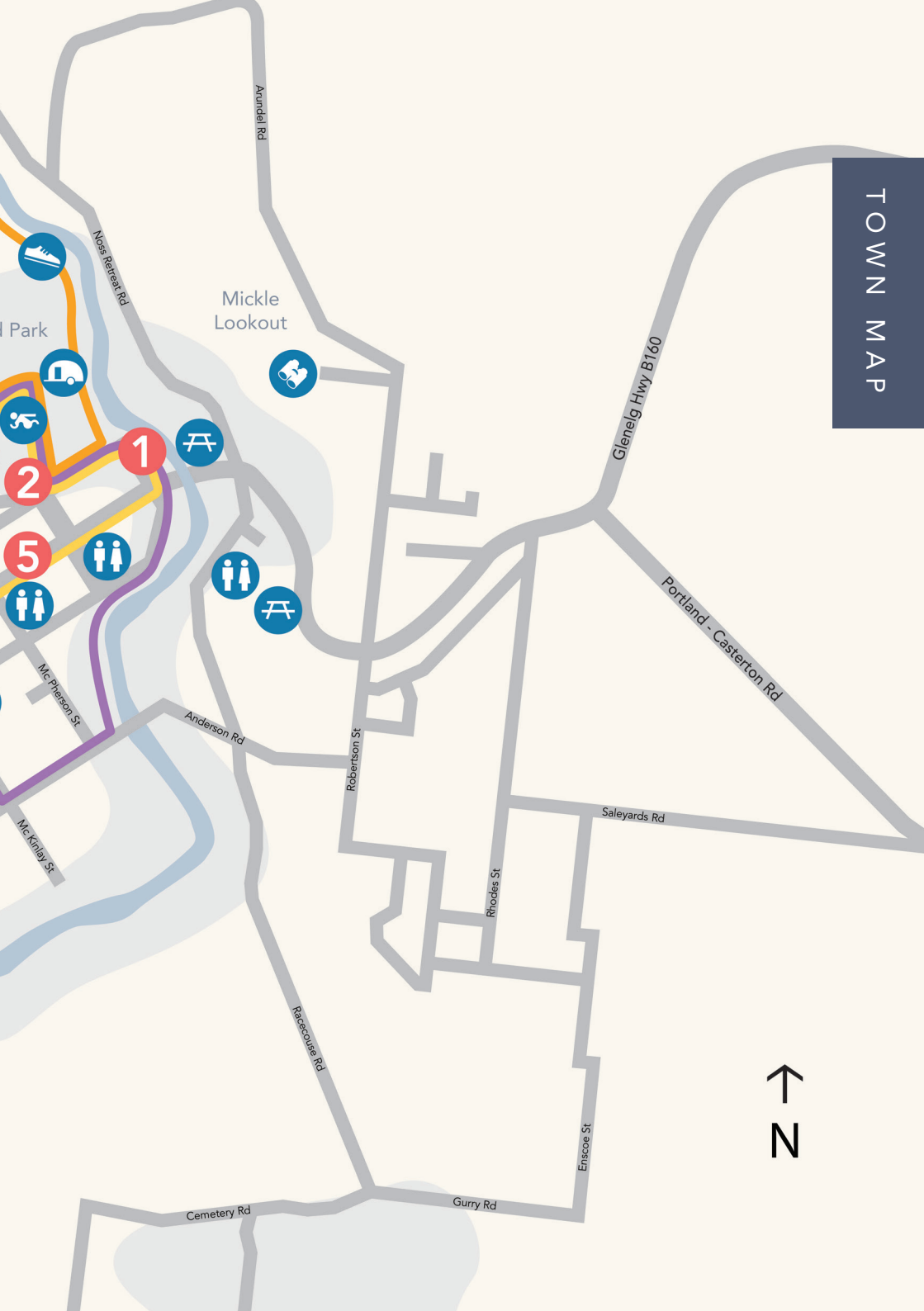
Kelpie Sculpture Trail

-  Sculpture
-  Route 1
-  Route 2
-  Route 3

-  Information Center
-  Picnic Area
-  Toilets
-  Caravan Park
-  Lookout
-  Walking Trails
-  Swimming Pool



TOWN MAP



DAY TRIPS

Casterton is an ideal base from which to explore some of Australia's most iconic tourist destinations.

Casterton info needed

While you're here don't miss out on a trip to...

Donovans approx 1hr

Set on the banks of the Glenelg River where it loops into South Australia, Donovans is 1km from the Victorian border. You will find picnic and BBQ facilities, a children's playground, boat ramp and public landing. No fishing licence is required.

Swan Lake approx 1hr 15min

Can be reached off the Casterton-Dartmoor Road. Camping facilities are available (bookings required), there is a walking track across the dunes to the Ocean Beach and areas of the dunes are set aside for Dune Buggies.

Mount Gambier approx 45min

Mount Gambier is South Australia's second largest city. Home to many geological wonders, it is the perfect day trip location for every age group.

On the way there visit historic Mount Schank, The Piccaninnie Ponds and Ewens Ponds conservation areas and the Kilsby Sinkhole.

Discover the sparkling sapphire waters of the Blue Lake, explore the underground garden of Eden at Umpherston Sinkhole or visit the Englebrecht Cave to explore a natural wonderland.

Portland approx 1hr 15min

The historic seaside city of Portland is an esteemed fishing destination but also caters for those just wishing to spend a leisurely, scenic day by the seaside.

While visiting you can balance your day with a hike through Cape Nelson National Park, a trip on the historic Cable Tram, a lunchtime surf at one of the region's renowned beaches, or simply kick back with a coffee at a beach-side café to watch the whales.

Wander streets dotted with beautifully maintained heritage buildings and dine on great pub fare while overlooking the busy harbour; or venture out to explore the many offerings in the city's hinterland, like stunning Bridgewater Bay and the cute hamlets of Narrawong, Bolwarra and Tyrendarra.

Take the kids to pick their own berries at the renowned strawberry farm at Bolwarra, or head out to Narrawong, situated at the mouth of the Surry River. Along with a wonderful river and beach Narrawong offers some amazing gardens and galleries. Lose yourself in a world of wonderful art, find yourself roaming the rows of lavender or just be at one with nature. No matter what you fancy be sure not to miss what this little, yet wonderful town has to offer.

Coleraine: approx 20min

Visit Glenelg Chocolate Factory, and the Peter Francis Point Arboretum (Eucalyptus Discovery Centre).

The round trip from Casterton to Portland and back to Portland is approximately 2.5 hours.

Nelson approx 1hr

Nelson Info needed

Great South West Walk

Victoria's premier 250-kilometre bushwalking trail, located between Portland and Nelson, is ideally set up for shorter day walks. Many walkers choose to break their journey in Nelson, stay a day and catch their breath. Transfers and accommodation are available.

This world-class experience includes four unique walking environments that have been divided up into the Forest Walk, the Glenelg River Gorge walk, the Discovery Bay Beach walk and the Capes and Bays walk.

The trail winds around tall hardwood forests, the pristine Glenelg River, aboriginal cultural sites, the mighty Southern Ocean with vast sand dunes, sandy bays and beaches, rugged cliffs, freshwater lakes, and a diversity of natural fauna and flora. See the large breeding colony of fur seals, lose yourself in the enchanted forest, walk its rugged cliffs, take in its sublime bays, breathe in its tranquil forests and be in awe of the pristine river.

Bailey's Rocks

Dergholm State Park approx 40min
Camp, have a picnic or take the short (330 metre) loop walking track to view and explore the large 500 million year old granite rocks at Baileys Rocks.

You can also take a walk along the Rocky Creek walking track that is five kilometres return. Toilets, water, barbecues and picnic tables are provided.

Dogs are permitted on a lead at Baileys Rocks picnic area. Dogs are not permitted in any other part of the park.

Glenelg / Wannon River Junction

Take a peaceful stroll along the Junction Walking track to the very spot where the Wannon River ends its journey and merges with the Glenelg River.

From its headwaters in the Grampians, the Wannon River winds alongside the town of Dunkeld and through the townships of Cavendish and Wannon. Hamilton, Coleraine and Penshurst also lie within the river basin.

Two waterfalls of note (Wannon Falls and Nigretta Falls) are found on the river approximately 20 kms west of Hamilton. Impressionist painter Louis Buvelot painted many scenes around the falls and the river in the 1880s.

A picnic table and chairs under the shade of magnificent River Red Gums will provide a welcome shady rest area by the Junction, before heading back to your car.



Bilston's Tree approx 25min

It is estimated that "Bilston's Tree" was a seedling about 1200 AD and would have reached very large proportions by the time of the arrival of European Settlers. It was a well known landmark and referred to as "Big Tree" or "The Big Fella" by the middle of the 20th century.

In early June 1962 the Forest Officer, Mr W Flentje, was informed that Pyramid Sawmills had an agreement with Messrs T & J Bilston of Wando Vale to buy and remove red gum from Bilston's property. In the course of these operations arrangements were made to fell the "Big Tree".

Mr Flentje and others, made representations to the sawmillers and Mr T Bilston to have the tree spared. Verbal agreement was reached between the parties to halt the felling.

Representations were then made to the Victorian Government to have the tree reserved. This was achieved on the 13th of August 1963, when land was purchased from the Bilstons and was designated Reserved Forest by the government.

Access to the short walking track and interpretive signboard is via Glenmia Road, 29km along the Casterton-Edenhope Road. Glenmia Road is unsuitable for large or towing vehicles.

A large limb broke off the northern side of the crown in 1973, and from the Eastern side in 2013. This has not affected the health of the tree which remains a tourist attraction for the Casterton District.



EXPLORE NEARBY

Wannon Falls approx 35min

and Nigretta Falls approx 40 min

Impressionist painter Louis Buvelot painted many scenes around the falls and the river in the 1880s. The Division of Wannon, an Australian Electoral Division, held from 1955 until 1983 by former Prime Minister of Australia Malcolm Fraser, is named after the Wannon River.



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