



Changing Landscapes Forest Circuit Currawong Bush Park Walk



Suitable for

Active Families	✓
Strollers	
Pleasure Walkers	✓
Super Striders	✓
Circuit	✓
Seating	✓
Dogs	Currawong Bush Park is a protected habitat.
Trail Type	Natural Heritage with Historic Places

Manningham City Council

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Walk Overview

Changing Landscapes is about our changing perspectives towards land use, land management and wildlife. The trail references Indigenous lifestyle, European occupation, the creation of Currawong as a park, management practices that have taken place here and the type of habitat you will be walking through.

Time

1.5 hrs

Distance

3.7 kms

Difficulty

Moderate—there are hills

Accessibility

Medium—unsuitable for wheelchairs



Location

Start and finish at Currawong Bush Park, Reynolds Road, Doncaster East.

Melway Reference

34 H6

Public Transport

Metlink: t 131 638
www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au

Ventura Buses: t 9488 2100
www.venturabus.com.au

Parking

At Currawong Bush Park, Reynolds Road.

This walk moves you through the Currawong Bush Park's Forest Circuit. Sculptural Markers dot the landscape and are places to stop for interpretation.

The paths are generally gravel and easy to navigate, but there can be mud after rains. There are hills to climb, ponds to investigate, trees to study, leaf litter to explore, plants to smell and evidence of wildlife to find.



Facilities

Drinking fountain, toilets, picnic tables, barbecue facilities, camping and function rooms for hire

Contact Council for camping permits and room hire.

Hazards

Muddy and slippery in places
Beware of snakes in warm weather



Be Prepared

Sun protection recommended

Carry a camera—wildlife are frequently seen

Good walking shoes are recommended

Good trail for Nordic Walking sticks.

Days of total fire ban

Currawong Bush Park is closed on days of Total Fire Ban.

Check the fire risk warning before embarking on this walk:
www.cfa.vic.gov.au



Opening Hours

Currawong Bush Park is open during daylight hours

The automated boom gate has a 24-hour timer programmed to open and close at 8.00 am–5.00 pm, and 8.00 am–8.00 pm during daylight savings











If you find yourself in the car park after hours, simply driving up to the boom gate will trigger the opening mechanism.

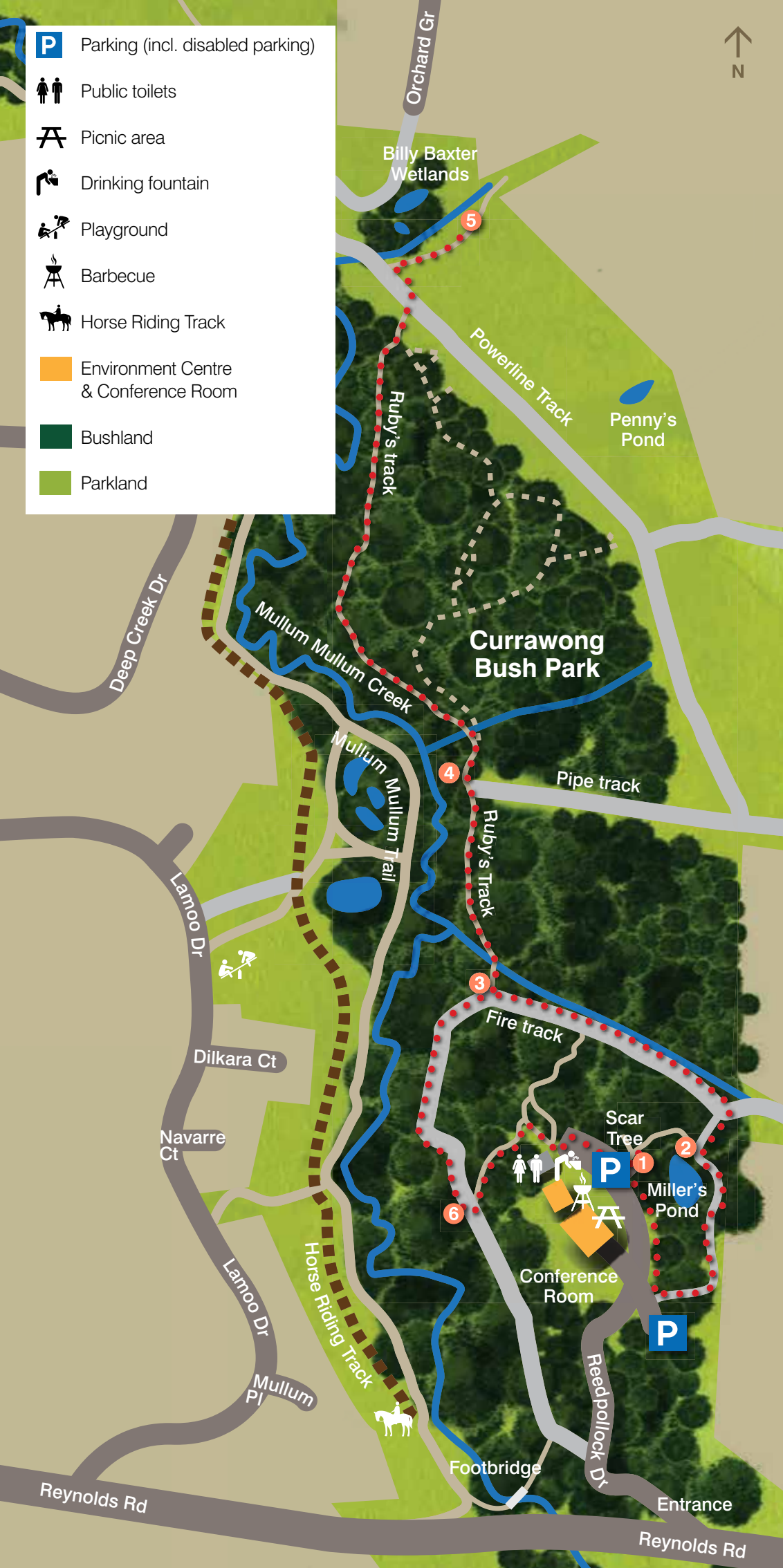


Additional Walks

There are 20 other walks throughout Manningham to choose from, showcasing the city's rich cultural and natural environments and unique heritage.

Copies are available from the Civic Centre or see:
www.manningham.vic.gov.au/walks

-  Parking (incl. disabled parking)
-  Public toilets
-  Picnic area
-  Drinking fountain
-  Playground
-  Barbecue
-  Horse Riding Track
-  Environment Centre & Conference Room
-  Bushland
-  Parkland



Welcome to Currawong Bush Park—the best little wilderness in Melbourne. We acknowledge the *Wurundjeri-wilam* as the traditional owners of this land. The name *Wurundjeri* means ‘Wurun’ the Manna Gum, and ‘djeri’ is the grub that lives under its bark; ‘wilam’ means camp. The language spoken by Wurundjeri people is ‘Woi wurrung’.

If you don't see any wildlife, you will most definitely hear them and see evidence of their existence. Remember, all flora and fauna are protected here. Please take only pictures and leave only footprints.

There are toilets and a drinking fountain to prepare for your walk ahead.

Begin your walk from the picnic area carpark and head downhill to the first sculptural marker.

1 Wurundjeri Wisdom

Masters of survival

With skills and knowledge developed over thousands of years and passed down through generations, the *Wurundjeri-wilam* were (and still are) masters of bush survival.

Look around you. There is plenty here to help you survive.

Red Stringybark (Wayut)—the thick fibrous bark can be used to line shelters and keep off the rain.

Spiny-headed Matt-rush (Burt-burt)—the leaves can be split, soaked and braided into bags, baskets and eel traps. The seeds can be ground into flour, formed into damper cakes and cooked on the fire.

Witchety Grubs (Milarrk-‘grub’)—big fat larvae caterpillars belonging to several species of moths can be found beneath logs, bark and soil and eaten alive or roasted.

Possum (Walert)—an excellent source of protein (today they are protected). Their furs can be sewn together with sinew from the tail of a kangaroo (Marram) to form a warm cloak.

What skills do you have that might assist surviving without modern luxuries?

Before heading downhill to the next sculptural marker, take the little track to the fallen Aboriginal Scar Tree.

Aboriginal Scar Tree

The Aboriginal Scar Tree here is an example of the Indigenous people's skill in creating tools without destroying the landscape. The tree has since died and fallen, contributing to the ongoing bushland cycle of life.

2 Pond Ponder

From dam to wetland

Millers Pond was built as a dam supplying water for cattle. Given time and native plantings, the natural ecosystem of a wetland has developed. Algae grow here. There are 40 varieties in the park and most are a good source of food and shelter for pond inhabitants.

Insects are prolific here but are largely hidden. The warmer seasons are best to watch damselflies and dragonflies preying on insects that float or live on the water's surface such as the Water Measurers and Water Striders. They, in turn prey on other pond insects such as Water Boatman, Water Scorpions and Backswimmers. Deeper down are the pond worms, water nymphs and snails.

What issues are associated with living in a bushland-urban environment?

Follow the path heading downhill.

3 Gregarious Grasslands

**“Most beautiful sheep pasturage I ever saw in my life.”
John Batman: 1835**

With this seal of approval for grazing our grasslands changed forever and sheep and cattle hungrily devoured the native grasses. However, with continued eating and stomping from hard hooved cattle, the native grasses struggled to survive.

Turn to the hillside next to you. There are a whopping 22 native grass species still found in the park. See if you can identify these two.

Kangaroo Grass, *Themeda triandra*—these produce a long stalk from a clump of leaves with tufted reddish seed flowers in summer that look a bit like kangaroo paws.

Weeping Grass, *Microlaena stipoides*—look for a small graceful green grass with slim, bent stems. They spread by underground rhizomes so expect to find several together.

How many other grass species can you find?

Continue downhill and over the footbridge.

4 Beaut Eucs

A Story of Survival

Currawong, like most urban parkland, is a disturbed environment where what you see today is an amalgamation of old and new.

There are two main forest types here, with many sub-communities.

The Box-Stringybark Woodland community supports Yellow Box, *Eucalyptus melliodora* and Red Stringybark, *Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*. This mixture of Yellow Box and Stringybark is now rare in Melbourne. This forest can be seen on the upper reaches of the hillside where the canopy is more open.

The other main community is the Manna Gum Forest, *Eucalyptus viminalis*. They are the tall white trunked trees with a ‘sock’ at the base formed by the bark falling in ribbons. Manna Gums are important habitat for birds, gliders and possums and are the main source of food for koalas. They form part of a habitat corridor that connects the Mullum Mullum Creek to the Yarra River.

Keep an eye open for hollows.

Continue ahead until you reach the powerline track, turn left walking downhill, turn right at the next track to the last sculptural marker.

5 Wild Wetland

Step aside and let nature do its thing!

The Billy Baxter wetland is an example of natural processes helping to increase the cleanliness of our creeks and waterways. A series of purification ponds were built here as part of the nearby urban development. As water from the streets flows into the ponds a naturally occurring process of toxin exchange filters out physical and chemical pollutants before they can enter the Mullum Mullum Creek.

Retrace your steps back to the Gregarious Grasslands marker and continue ahead on the access track.

6 Riverside Revelry

Changing perspectives

Currawong Bush Park was established in 1976 as a place for conservation and education by Council. Before this, cattle roamed the area and orchards hugged the perimeters. In 1959 the owners, Robert Elder and family, built a home that is now the Conference Centre situated on the hill. This building is of state architectural significance and was designed by Kevin Borland.

Currawong Bush Park now covers 63 hectares of bushland. In the 1980s the open grassy area next to you once enclosed kangaroos and wallabies. The enclosure was removed and the animals released to a free range sanctuary, away from the city.

To complete this walk, make a sharp turn to your left and head up the hill to the picnic area carpark.