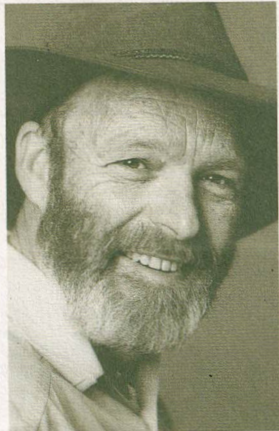


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Port Campbell National Park, Bay of Islands Coastal Park

Visitor Guide

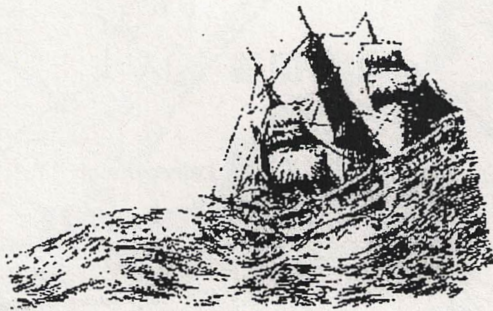
Pounded by wild seas and fierce winds, the coast of Port Campbell National Park and Bay of Islands Coastal Park has been sculpted over millions of years to become one of the most impressive natural sites in Australia. Towering rock stacks loom out of the ocean just off shore from sheer limestone cliffs. Arches, islands and blowholes have also been carved out of the soft cliffs by the wind and sea. Many ships have come to grief on the rocky coastline, earning it the title of the Shipwreck Coast.



Parks Victoria Ranger

"Victoria has a great parks system that protects many of our State's natural environments and their plants, animals and landscapes. Enjoy the parks, and please help us care for them...now and forever."

For more information call the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit our website at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au



"..with fierce storms springing up quickly, this bay [Port Campbell] is the only sheltered refuge between Apollo Bay and Warrnambool" – extract from Discovery Walk sign at Port Campbell National Park

Sculpted by surging seas and southerly storms

There is something for everyone in these parks. As well as the spectacular coastal scenery, there's walking, snorkelling, scenic driving, birdwatching, beachcombing, or just enjoying the views. Parks Victoria welcomes you and hopes that you enjoy your visit.

The limestone formations and sheer cliffs of this sculpted coast are some of the best known landmarks in Australia. First reserved in 1964, **Port Campbell National Park** now covers 1750 hectares of the coastal strip between Princetown and Peterborough in south-western Victoria.

Adjoining this park, **Bay of Islands Coastal Park** preserves and protects 32 kilometres of fragile coastal vegetation, wildlife and rugged features of an area rich with scenic beauty.

Wild seas and rock stacks

This coast's formation began around 10-20 million years ago. Countless millions of tiny marine animal skeletons built up beneath the sea to form limestone. As the ocean retreated, the soft limestone was exposed to the wild seas and winds of the Southern Ocean. The sculpting of rock stacks, gorges, islands, arches and blowholes had begun.

Self-guided walks at Port Campbell, Loch Ard Gorge, Bay of Islands and Bay of Martyrs introduce you to the geology and other features of this coastline.

How to get there

Port Campbell National Park and Bay of Islands Coastal Park lie between Warrnambool, Peterborough and Princetown, just 285 km west of Melbourne via the Great Ocean Road (4 - 5 hours' drive), and 240 km from Melbourne via Colac and Cobden (3 hours).

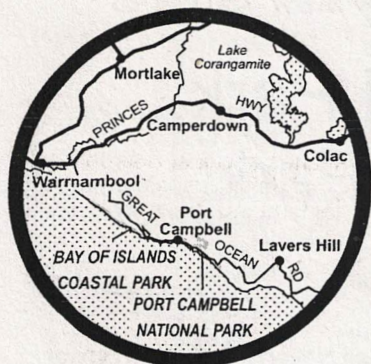
Why not stay for more than a day and take the time to enjoy the stunning scenery of the Great Ocean Road and Otway Ranges.

Use Parkweb to plan your visit

Just a click away - www.parkweb.vic.gov.au
Access and download information about parks, rivers and bays – print parknotes, discover who the local tour guides are.

Park Education Program

Students and teachers now have access to a world of environmental education on our new 'Education Program' website - www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/education



Visitor Information Centres

National park and other information is available at these accredited Centres in Port Campbell, Warrnambool, Port Fairy, Colac and Geelong.



Picnic areas are at Port Campbell opposite the hotel, Princetown beside the Gellibrand River, Glenample Historic Homestead, and Peterborough beside Curdies River.



Accommodation outside the park is available in motels, hotels, guesthouses, cabins, B&Bs, and a youth hostel in Port Campbell. Check with the Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre on 5598 6089.



Camping

There is no camping within the park, but private run camping and caravan parks are available in Port Campbell, Peterborough and Princetown.

Sleeping overnight in vehicles in the park or carparks is *not* permitted.

Great Ocean Road Touring Options

Suggested routes from Tourism Victoria's Great Ocean Road Guide (Jigsaw publication). Ask any Tourism Victoria Visitor Information Centre for more information. Routes include:

- Volcanoes Discovery Trail
- Shipwreck Trail
- Great Southern Touring Route

Be sure to visit the nearest Visitor Information Centre to obtain information on the Great Ocean Road, its parks, features and attractions.

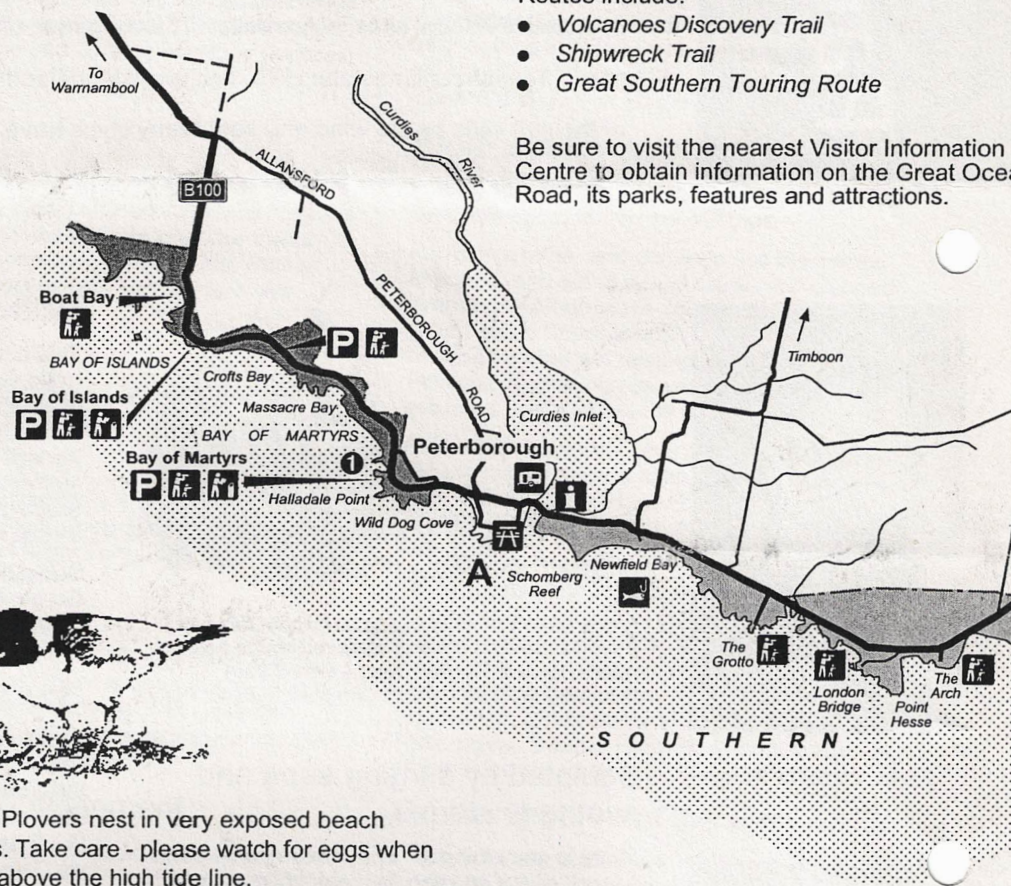
Port Campbell National Park & Bay of Islands Coastal Park

- Major sealed road
- Sealed road
- Unsealed road
- Vehicle track
- Walking track
- National Park
- Coastal Park
- Other Park
- Water body

Recreational Facilities

- Camping
- Canoeing
- Caravan Park
- Carpark
- Fishing
- Homestead
- Lookout
- Park information
- Picnic table
- Self-guided walk
- Shipwreck view
- Swimming
- Toilets

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KILOMETRES
Cartography by Spatial Vision 2001
M/1544



Hooded Plovers nest in very exposed beach locations. Take care - please watch for eggs when walking above the high tide line.

Walking

1 Bay of Martyrs Walk

Follow the walking track from the eastern end of the car park. This short spectacular walk leads to the site where the *Falls of Halladale* ran aground in 1908.

2 Port Campbell Discovery Walk

Start the walk near Port Campbell beach by crossing the mouth of Port Campbell Creek or by following the signs from the Town Lookout Carpark on the Great Ocean Road, west (Warrnambool side) of Port Campbell.

3 Loch Ard Gorge Area

Three self-guided walks have been developed around the Loch Ard Gorge area. Allow two to three hours to make the most of your visit here.

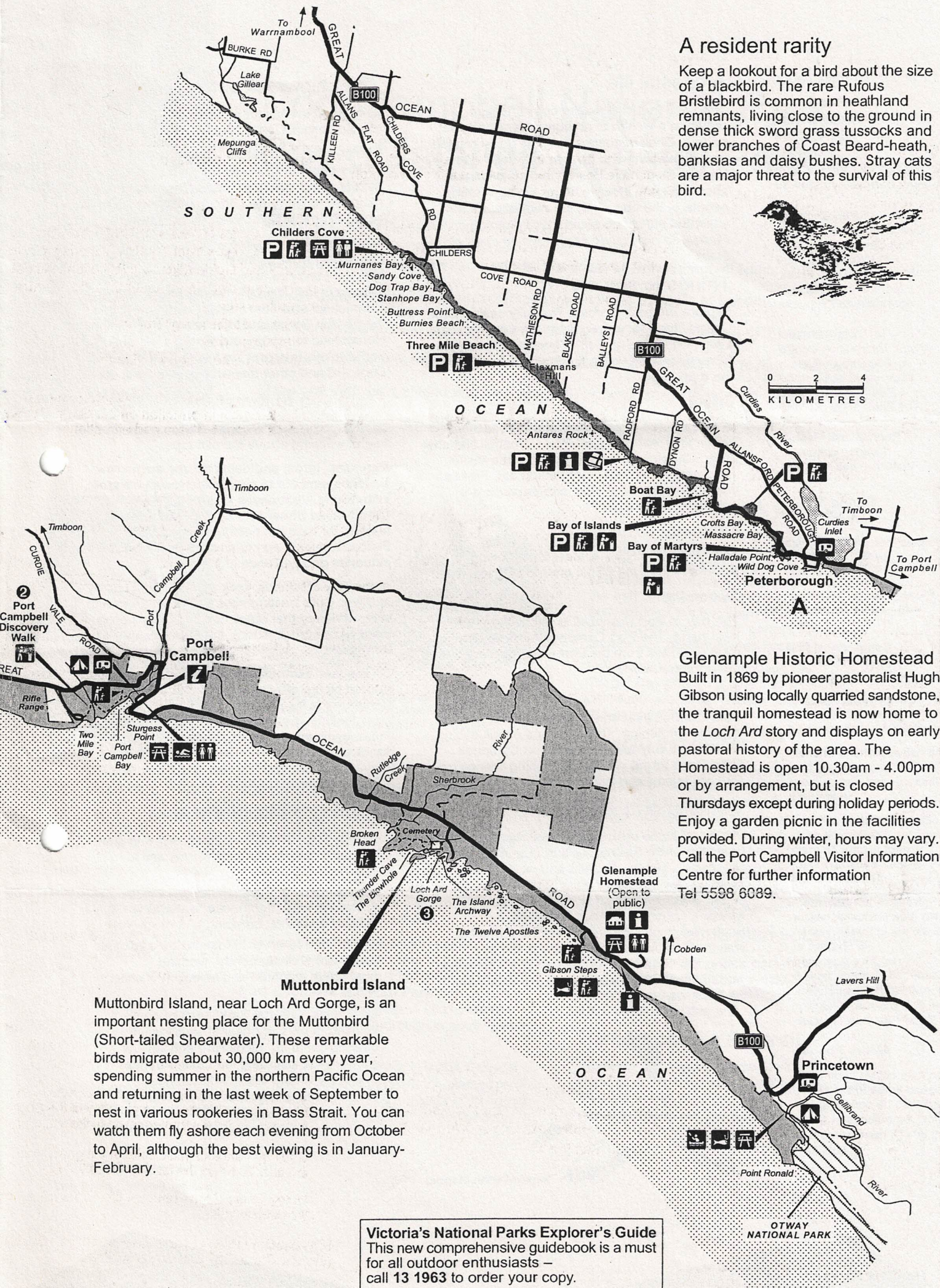
There are 6km of walking tracks available. Each of the following walks cover approx. 1.5 km return and you should allow approx. 1.5 hours to complete.

- *The wreck of the Loch Ard* - the Loch Ard Shipwreck walk tells the tragic story of the Loch Ard shipwreck from the wreck site to the cemetery.
- *Geology* - another walk looks at the geology of the coastline and the forces that shape it.
- *Living on the Edge* - discover life on the edge of these sheer cliffs.

Fine beach walking at Newfield Bay, Gibson Beach (steps), Crofts Bay and Bay of Martyrs.

A resident rarity

Keep a lookout for a bird about the size of a blackbird. The rare Rufous Bristlebird is common in heathland remnants, living close to the ground in dense thick grass tussocks and lower branches of Coast Beard-heath, banksias and daisy bushes. Stray cats are a major threat to the survival of this bird.



Glenample Historic Homestead
 Built in 1869 by pioneer pastoralist Hugh Gibson using locally quarried sandstone, the tranquil homestead is now home to the *Loch Ard* story and displays on early pastoral history of the area. The Homestead is open 10.30am - 4.00pm or by arrangement, but is closed Thursdays except during holiday periods. Enjoy a garden picnic in the facilities provided. During winter, hours may vary. Call the Port Campbell Visitor Information Centre for further information Tel 5598 6089.

Muttonbird Island

Muttonbird Island, near Loch Ard Gorge, is an important nesting place for the Muttonbird (Short-tailed Shearwater). These remarkable birds migrate about 30,000 km every year, spending summer in the northern Pacific Ocean and returning in the last week of September to nest in various rookeries in Bass Strait. You can watch them fly ashore each evening from October to April, although the best viewing is in January-February.

Victoria's National Parks Explorer's Guide
 This new comprehensive guidebook is a must for all outdoor enthusiasts - call 13 1963 to order your copy.

For further information

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

Port Campbell
Visitor Information Centre
Port Campbell Vic 3220
Tel: (03) 5598 6089
Email:
[portcampbellvisitor@
corangamite.vic.gov.au](mailto:portcampbellvisitor@corangamite.vic.gov.au)

Warrnambool
Visitor Information Centre
600 Raglan Parade
Warrnambool Vic 3280
Tel: (03) 5564 7837
Toll Free: 1800 640 082

Recreational Fishery
Licence enquiries:
Victoria - call 13 6186.

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park
by following these
guidelines:

Please take rubbish away
with you for recycling &
disposal

Camp only at Port
Campbell, Princetown,
Peterborough

Sleeping overnight in
vehicles in the park or
carparks is *not* permitted

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

Dogs and other pets are
not permitted in the park,
except in cars on main
tourist roads and sign-
posted areas

No fires are permitted.

No fires (including gas or
fuel stoves in tents) may be
lit on days of

Total Fire Ban. Port
Campbell National Park &
Bay of Islands Coastal Park
are in the South Western
Total Fire Ban District.

Mobile Phones

You may not be in network
range in some areas of the
park. To be connected to
Police, Ambulance or CFA,
key in 112 then press the
YES key

A coastal life

The seas that shaped the coastline also provided a wealth of resources for Aboriginal people. Shell middens along the coast remind us how wealthy and diverse their food and lifestyle must have been. Yielding evidence about diet and lifestyle of the Kirrae-Wurong people of the coastline, the middens are an essential part of an ancient and ongoing culture. *Please do not disturb or remove any part of them.*

Things to see and do

Explore the park by road. The fully sealed Great Ocean Road takes you to the Twelve Apostles, Loch Ard Gorge and other spectacular features, many with short walks for exploring the site. See the map page.

Diving

When the sea is very calm there is excellent wreck and reef diving off Port Campbell National Park. Check with local divers or at the Visitor Information Centre before setting out. *Please remember that all wrecks and artefacts are protected by law.*

Canoeing

The Gellibrand River is ideal for canoeing. Access is from the picnic ground at Princetown.

Swimming

The bay at Port Campbell is relatively safe for swimming. The Port Campbell Surf Life Saving Club operates from the Port Campbell foreshore during the summer.

Fishing

Both Curdies Inlet and Gellibrand River are suitable for fishing. There is good ocean fishing at Newfield Bay and from the Port Campbell jetty. Don't forget you need a fishing licence now for both inland and ocean fishing.

Whaling and settlement

Winds and wild seas shaped not only the coastline of Port Campbell and Bay of Islands but also its history. Sealers and whalers were probably the first Europeans to land along the coast. Port Campbell Bay offered shelter to whaler Captain Alexander Campbell, a Scotsman in charge of the Port Fairy whaling station. Campbell first sheltered in the bay during the 1840s when pastoral runs were being settled. However, it wasn't until the 1870s that the town was established.



Australasian Gannet

The shipwreck coast

Enquire at the Visitor Information Centre about the Shipwreck Coast Touring Route.

The growing colonies of Victoria and New South Wales depended on ships from Europe for supplies and transport. Bass Strait became a major shipping route - and some ships inevitably came to grief in its notoriously wild seas.

A number of ships were wrecked off the coastline bordering these parks. The best known was the *Loch Ard*, wrecked in 1878. Fifty-two lives were lost; the only two survivors, Eva Carmichael and Tom Pearce, were swept into the nearby Gorge and later taken to Glenample Homestead to recuperate. Self-guided walks and displays interpret the tragic story of the *Loch Ard* and other shipwrecks along this coast.

From sea to forest

Look skyward for Peregrine Falcons, sometimes seen swooping above the cliff tops.

Penguins, terns, and dotterels use the narrow beaches, and out to sea, Australasian Gannets, Wandering Albatrosses and Muttonbirds (Short-tailed Shearwaters) fly huge distances hunting for food but nesting in the parks. Pelicans, ducks, egrets and swans inhabit the estuaries and wetlands of the parks.

At the Bay of Islands, rock stacks offer a colony of Silver Gulls nesting sites safe from foxes and cats, while another stack hosts Victoria's only marine cormorant (shag), the rare Black-faced Cormorant.

On exposed clifftops, grasslands and heathlands stunted by the effects of salt-laden winds dominate the fragile soils. Though they are often bleak looking, a surprisingly large range of birds and animals inhabit them. Southern Brown Bandicoots, Southern Emu-wrens, Superb Fairy-wrens, Swamp Harriers and many species of honeyeaters occur here.

Exploring parks of the area

- Melba Gully State Park: rainforest with giant Myrtle Beech trees, glow worms and a self-guided trail.
- Otway National Park: Maits Rest self-guided rainforest walk, lighthouse, waterfall walks, beaches, wildlife, camping and much more.
- Tower Hill Reserve: hidden inside a volcanic crater are a visitor centre, wetland boardwalk, birdhide and selection of short walks.
- Mt. Eccles National Park: centred on a volcano, a park of national significance offering camping, picnicking and several short walks, including the Lake Surprise Crater Rim walk. Self-guided walks, birdwatching and koalas are all features.

December 2001