

Walk 07. MT McLEOD, MOUNT BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK

Sunday, Return AWTGS:3 16km 7hrs 300m ascent

This walk takes you along undulating terrain with some quite steep downhill stretches on the walk into the camping area. There are magnificent views across the Ovens Valley and surrounding peaks, climbing Mt McLeod, after leaving packs at the snowplain camping area. At this time of the year there will be a plethora of wildflowers to enjoy. This is a fairly long walk providing access to Mt McLeod, which is on the remote northern end of the Buffalo Plateau overlooking the Ovens Valley. Involves a 300m climb

Notes: walking mostly on a 4WD track with some foottracks and a steep rock scramble to the top of Mt McLeod requiring sturdy footwear. Quite a strenuous walk.

Getting To The Start

Distance: 57kms

Time: 90mins

Parking: Reservoir Road carpark, Mt Buffalo

Caution: Mountainous driving (watch for cyclists) with 3kms unsealed road, suitable for 2WD

Leaving Wangaratta Showgrounds, head South along Green Street to the roundabout. Turn left at the roundabout, heading East down the underpass and through 2 more roundabouts until you arrive at the centre of town traffic lights. At the lights turn left toward Albury. Travel 1.5kms and turn right onto the Great Alpine Road. Drive to Porepunkah and over the bridge you turn right at the large roundabout. Continue to the Entrance of the Mt Buffalo National Park and drive to the top of the mountain. 1km past the signpost on the left to the Chalet, is a Parks Vic. machinery shed on the right. At the shed we will continue on an unsealed road for 3 kms to the Reservoir Road carpark.

WALK NOTES

Most of the walk is on a 4WD track but there are two exceptions. About 300m from the start (at the track junction) there is a foot track to the right that is clearly signposted. It is advisable to take this track because it avoids a climb and a descent of about 140m, and the track is more pleasant walking through open forest.

The foot track trends gently downhill for a bit over a kilometre before rejoining the 4WD track. The 4WD track is gently undulating but gradually gains about 100 m of altitude before it reaches the Mt McLeod walk-in camping area, which is in a nice open grassy area. There is a toilet just past the camp-site.

Up to this point the walk has been through a variety of open forest. In the case of the larger trees, Manna gums and the like, it is hard to see that they were burned in the 2003 fires. The snow gums have obviously been burnt, but they are recovering by shooting from their root-stock so that they look quite good.

From the camping ground there is a climb of about 150m to the trig on Mt McLeod and towards the end it involves rock scrambling. Walkers will need boots with a good grip and at least some tolerance for looking down steep slopes. However, there are no surprises and walkers can simply go as far as they feel comfortable. The views on the way up are nearly as good as those at the top anyway. It is possible to see Myrtleford and Porepunkah from most places, and if you know where to look, Lake Mokoan near Benalla, and the Mt Stanley fire tower near Beechworth.

