

Lower Kiewa River Nature Trail

It is a privilege to stand on Dhudhuroa - speaking country and pay respect to the Traditional Owners past, present and emerging.

The Murray River and tributaries were the life blood for Aboriginal people throughout South East Australia. They have lived with its constant changes over 30,000 years. The river and floodplains provided a cultural base and sustained life by providing food, water, medicines, shelter, transport, fire and spirituality. The rivers united rather than divided groups and there seems to have been one long river-system, rather than a collection of separate tribal valleys. There was a great deal of exchange along it.

Highlights: Immerse yourself in the natural beauty of the Kiewa River and its floodplains. Bird watching enthusiasts take advantage of the bird hides along the nature trail.

Take care: Keep your dog on a lead during spring and summer when snakes come out of hibernation.

There are some great swimming holes in the summer. However much of the river banks are covered with common reeds, which are important habitat for native birds, fish and snakes.

Take the time: For the more adventurous why not follow the nature trail to the Murray and Kiewa River junction, or further to the junction of the Murray River and Wodonga Creek or walk up to the top of Huon Hill. Refer the Huon Hill Nature Trail notes for some great circuits on foot or hybrid / mountain bike.

Grade:	Easy
Distance:	up to 8km one way
Time:	3 hours
Gradient:	River flats
Surface:	Earthen fire trail

Start / finish / park: at the Kiewa River, Killara. Meander past wetlands along the Kiewa Trail for 0.8km. This is where the Stringybark Trails heads uphill and the wetland trail loops back to Riverside Estate.

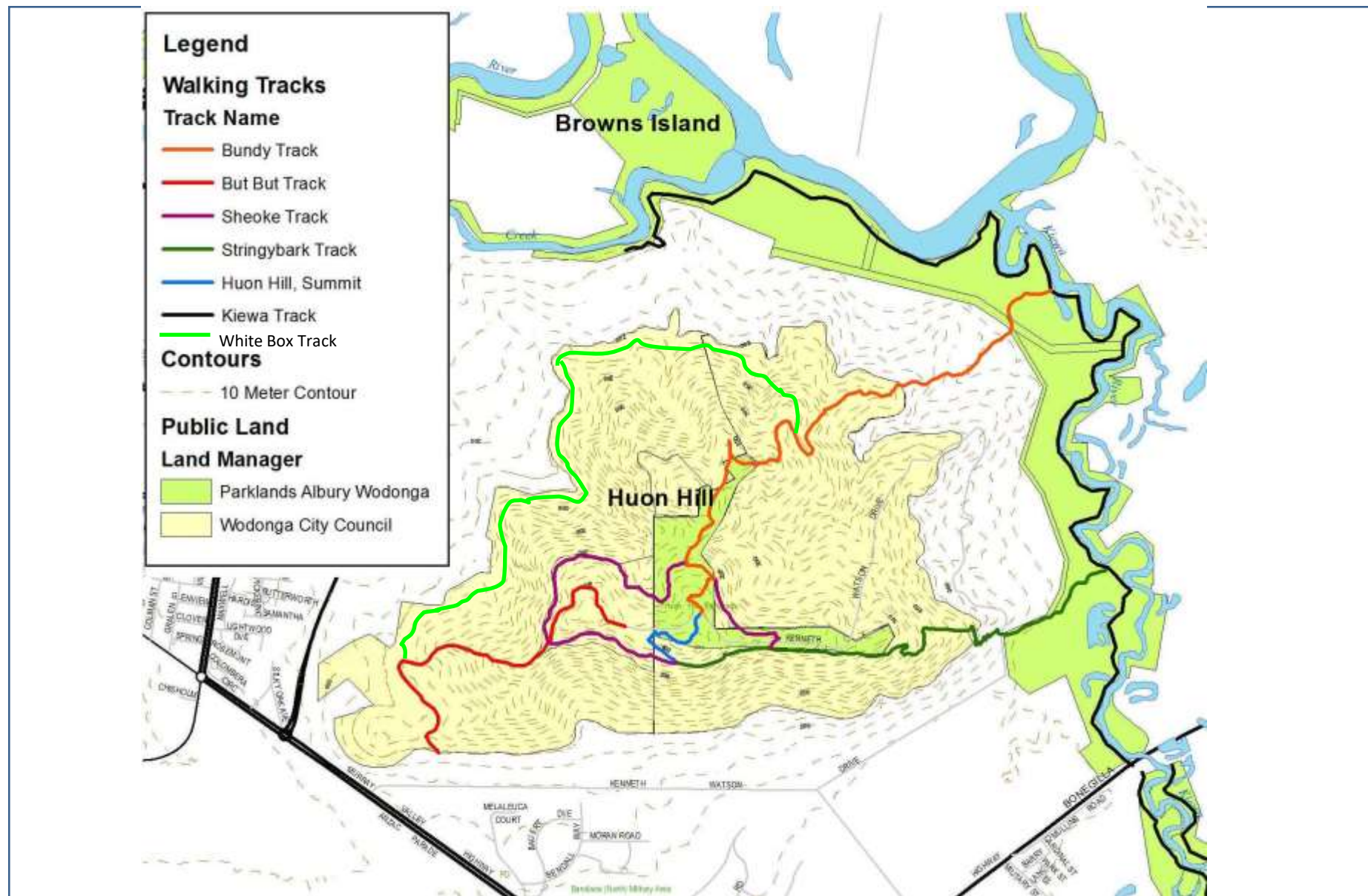
Continue along the meandering river flats immersed in the sights, sounds and smells of nature. As a one way trail, you can turn around whenever you choose.

It is 5km to where the Kiewa River flows into the Murray River. Continue down the Murray River for 2km to where Wodonga Creek breaks off from the Murray River. A dozen people can fit inside the trunk of a large River Red gum near here.

When river levels are really low, it is possible to cross to Browns Island, where another 9km's of nature trails can be explored. The banks of Wodonga Creek become increasingly steep as you meander along Wodonga Creek and around two steep gully systems. At a locked gate, it is time to turn around and return. *Please do not trespass as we are working with the neighbours to eventually open this gap.*



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Things to look out for...

A Rich Riparian Zone

The quality of the land immediately adjoining the Kiewa River makes this one of the premier rivers for recreational fishing in Victoria. The vegetation here ranges from aquatic plants to mature trees and understorey vegetation, providing rich habitat for both aquatic and land life. The lower reaches of the river feature the high priority threatened fish species Murray cod and golden perch, and the Murray spiny crayfish, as well as threatened birds including the great eastern egret, azure kingfisher and nankeen night herons.



Common Reed - *Phragmites Australis* is a water loving native that protects the bed and banks of the river from erosion. It provides excellent habitat for native fish, small birds and waterbirds such as the Australian Reed-Warbler.



Cumbungi - *Typha domingensis*, also known as bulrush, is another water loving plant providing excellent habitat for frogs and waterbirds. Traditionally used for food and fibre, many parts are edible at different stages.



Photo: Ed Dunens CC2

River Red Gums — These magnificent trees are a key habitat species along waterways, providing shade and shelter for fish, nesting hollows for many mammals and birds and producing excellent pollen and nectar for insects and birds. They are also very important to Aboriginal people; the thick bark providing canoes and containers, blossoms, sap and seeds providing food and medicine.



Azure Kingfisher — This vibrant small kingfisher is distinctive for its deep azure blue head, neck, and breast sides, and orange body. It plunges from overhanging perches into the water to catch fish, insects, frogs and other prey.



Photo: J J Harrison CC3

Eastern Great Egret - You may find this elegant bird standing like a statue or wading slowly through the shallows looking for smaller aquatic life; crustaceans, fish, frogs and insects. This beautiful bird is endangered in Victoria.



Photo: Bernard Spragg CC3

Kiewa River Wetland Nature Trail

It is a privilege to stand on Dhudhuroa - speaking country and pay respect to the Traditional Owners past, present and emerging.

Wetlands are of high cultural significance to Aboriginal people, many of whom recognise the cultural value of biodiversity and the environment. Wetlands also provide a strong connection to Country, that encompasses culture, knowledge and the natural environment.



Grade:	Easy
Distance:	2.6km circuit
Time:	1 hour
Gradient:	River flats
Surface:	Earthen fire trail then

Start / finish / park: at the Kiewa River, Killara. Meander past wetlands along the Kiewa Trail for 0.8km. This is where the Stringybark Trails heads uphill and the wetland trail loops back to the paved trail along Riverside Estate.

Highlights: This trail features original artworks and place based stories by local First Nations artists, commissioned for a project in 2019.

Be deafened by the sound of frogs and cicadas as you walk this circuit around an ephemeral wetland.

Take care: Keep your dog on a lead during spring and summer when snakes come out of hibernation.