

Autumn on Castle Creek Nature Trails

Sometimes the bursting spring wildflowers can divert our attention from other more subtle things in the bush. Autumn it is a great chance to hunt out the not-so-obvious.

By autumn the flowers have been pollinated and we can see the fruits (seed containers) on some plants. Look for fruits of the Burgan, Sticky Everlasting and eucalypts.

Weeping Grass stalks are weeping under the weight of the last of their seeds, and it looks like everything is closing down for winter. However we can already see that the plants are getting ready for spring - see the large buds of Grey Box with their flowers starting to burst out.

Wattle flowers are forming already – tiny now but growing every day. Likewise, you will find the leaves of winter-flowering orchids emerging, almost impossible to identify at this stage of their cycle, but exciting nevertheless to see their emergence from beneath the soil and anticipate those very special flowers.



Spectacular Rustgill *Gymnopus junonius*



Evidence of the Grass-carrying wasp



Scorpionfly *Chorista australis*

Look for these species in Autumn:

- ☑ Fruiting plants: Burgan, Australian Blackthorn, Everlasting daisy, various Eucalypts
- ☑ Flowering plants: Urn Heath, Box Mistletoe, Goodenia, Small St John's Wort
- ☑ Insects: Common brown butterfly, Scorpionfly, Australian Paper wasp, Two-tailed spider, Grass-carrying wasp, Crab spider, European honey bee, Case moth
- ☑ Fungi: Velvet Parachute, Graceful Parasol, Boletes, Field mushroom, Shelf fungi, Common Gilled mushroom, Spectacular Rustgill

Features of this reserve



Nest Boxes

Parrots, kingfishers, possums, gliders, bats and others rely on tree hollows for shelter and raising young. Unfortunately, most of the large old trees from this reserve have been lost to firewood collectors and, as hollows can take at least 100 years to form, many remaining

trees are too young. Nest boxes can provide interim homes for threatened species including the Squirrel glider and Tuan. There are a number of nestboxes here.

Rare seasonal migrants

Regent Honeyeaters and Swift Parrots are seasonal migrants to this reserve, feeding on autumn/winter flowering White Box and planted Mugga Ironbark. Regents will also feed from flowering native shrubs like cultivar Grevilleas in home gardens.



Regent Honeyeater
Image: C Tzaros

Mistletoe provides nectar for birds and insects, food for gliders and possums and is an essential part of this ecosystem. The nectar and fruit provide a vital food for the threatened Painted Honeyeater and common Mistletoe Bird. Mistletoe in this reserve is in balance and does not threaten tree survival.



Grey Mistletoe (*Amyema quandang*)

Larger local

residents such as this Swamp wallaby. There are several large mobs of Kangaroos in the reserve, while Echidna and Lace monitors are also regularly spotted.



Tussocky native

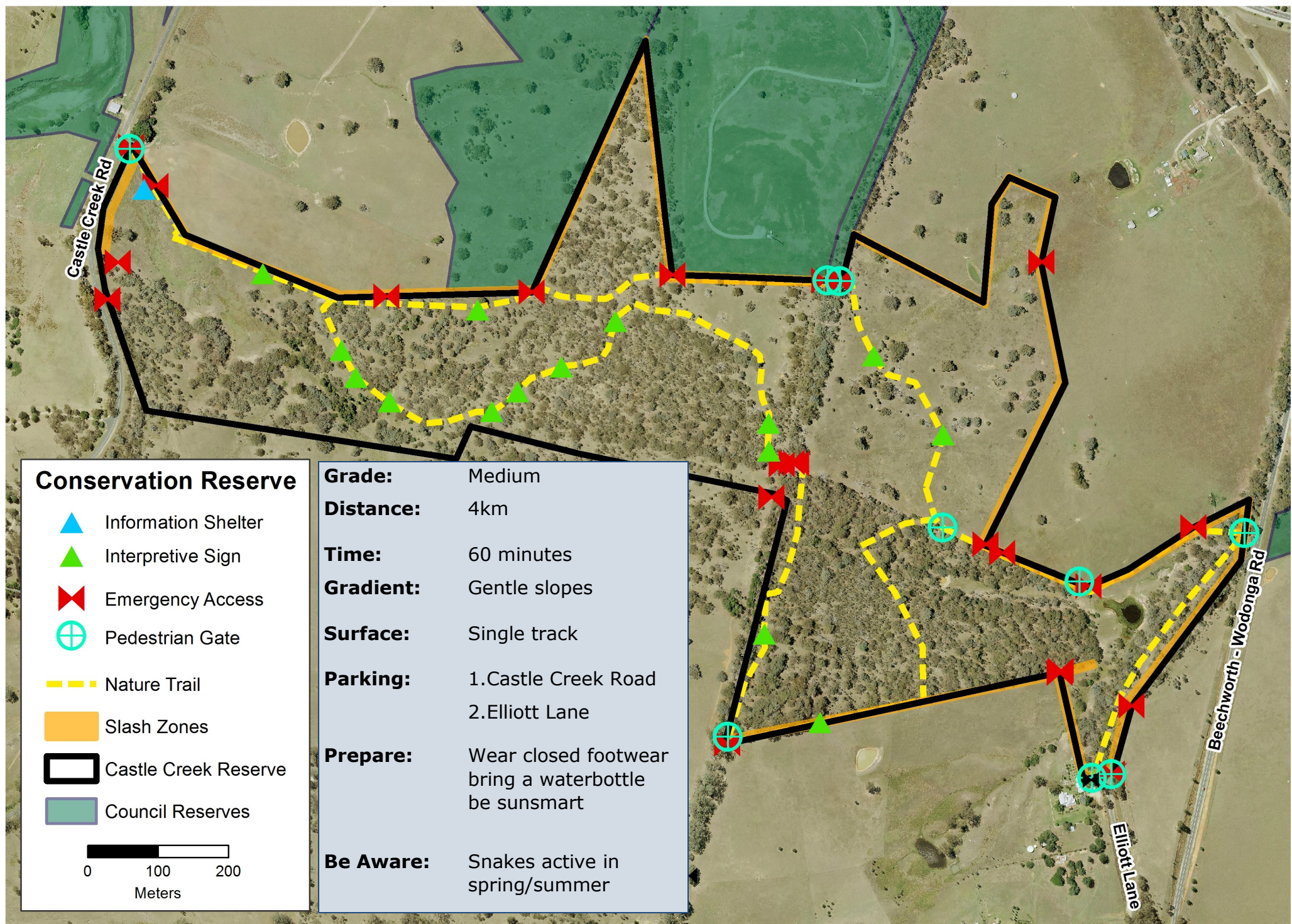
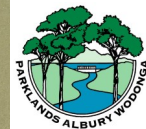
grasses like kangaroo grass (pictured), wallaby grass, poa, spear grass, which leave spaces for wildflowers to come and go throughout the year.



Handy Items for your nature walk

- ✓ A pair of binoculars - spot birds, tall eucalypt and mistletoe flowers and much more
- ✓ A small handheld mirror for identifying fungi - hold the mirror underneath for a good, no-touch view of the gills
- ✓ A magnifying glass to better see insects, fungi etc
- ✓ A notebook and pencil
- ✓ Identification and record making apps such as [iNaturalist](#), [FrogID](#), [Birds of Australia](#)

Castle Creek Nature Trail Notes



Conservation Reserve

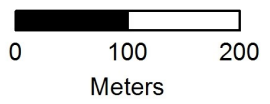
- ▲ Information Shelter
- ▲ Interpretive Sign
- ✕ Emergency Access
- ⊕ Pedestrian Gate

--- Nature Trail

▬ Slash Zones

▭ Castle Creek Reserve

▭ Council Reserves



Grade:	Medium
Distance:	4km
Time:	60 minutes
Gradient:	Gentle slopes
Surface:	Single track
Parking:	1.Castle Creek Road 2.Elliott Lane
Prepare:	Wear closed footwear bring a waterbottle be sunsmart
Be Aware:	Snakes active in spring/summer