

Distance

Reserve tracks 3km.
Old Racecourse 1.8km

Time to complete

1 Hour

Relative difficulty

Reserve tracks:

Easy

Old racecourse track:

Very Easy



Options

Alternative: 1.8km very easy old racecourse walk for all abilities

Wheelchair and scooter accessible

Amenities

Parking

Picnic tables (2)

Toilets

Dogs off leash

Restrictions

Dogs to be kept under control and put on leash if near other people

No motor vehicles beyond the carpark

Take your rubbish with you

No camping

No firearms

In case of emergency

For emergency help dial 000.

For emergency information and warnings
[emergency.vic.gov.au](https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)

In case of fire call 000.



Photo by Warwick Paton



Photo by Sean Mathews

Shadforth Reserve Walking Track Violet Town



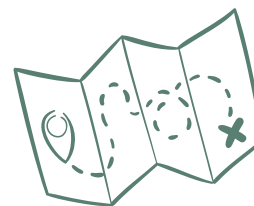
Photo by Sean Mathews

For more information
and interactive maps check out these websites:
www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/tourism/tourism/tracksandtrails
<https://www.victoriawalks.com.au/Strathbogie/>





Location



The Shadforth Reserve entrance is on Shiffner St., Violet Town 3669 off the Dookie-Violet Town Rd.

Track notes

1. Old Racecourse – very easy, mobility device and all abilities access
2. Inside the old Racecourse – dogs off leash if not bothering others
3. Island Pond – a good place for reflection
4. Community Forest – dating back to 2006
5. Wildflowers – this boundary is a good site
6. Three ponds – home to Pobblebonks and Striped Marsh Frogs
7. Heritage Features – fairways and sand scrapes
8. Yellow Gums – majestic specimens
9. Grey-crowned Babbler may be seen – look and listen
10. Revegetation – improvement works continue
11. The Finishing Post – a racecourse remnant
12. Men's Shed – to the east of the old Clubhouse
13. Public Toilets

Set on the edge of town among handsome rural outlooks, Shadforth Reserve presents a fine example of a periurban grassy woodland with a history of community management.

A Brief History

The site was named Shadforth Reserve in the Victorian Govt Gazette 1965.

In the 1880s & 90s, the land accommodated E Company, Victorian Mounted Rifles training. In 1886 the Violet Town Racing Club acquired 141 acres. The first horse race was held in March 1890. Racing continued until at least WW2. Two equestrian and harness events were held in 2016 & 2017.

The site had the Horticultural Show until 1939. In June 1951 it was reserved for public recreation and showgrounds.

Around this time an earth bank cycle velodrome was constructed, but no races were ever held there. A Golf Club started around 1960, which finished in 2012. The golf clubhouse remains, and the tree lined fairways can still be clearly seen. A community forest was planted in 2006.

There has been an eco-synthesis of indigenous and non-indigenous species. There are several ancient indigenous trees including grey box, yellow box, white box and yellow gum. Plantings of spotted gum, sugar gum, red ironbark and many other species have also flourished.

Today

A range of species line old fairways, including some high quality native vegetation, making it a sanctuary for native fauna. The open woodland structure and plantings are useful to woodland birds. Large old trees support wildlife, including threatened birds and arboreal mammals, reptiles and bats. Native grasses provide seed, insect and bird food while planted shrubs are heavily used for food and shelter by small birds. As well as a mob of kangaroos and a few wallabies, wildlife includes antechinus, sugar-gliders, microbats, choughs, honeyeaters, robins, parrots, whistlers, wrens, kookaburras, currawongs, dollarbirds and a small colony of the endangered Grey-crowned Babbler.

The site has several dams and ponds. The heavy clay soils shed water effectively, so the ponds quickly refill after substantial rain. When full you can hear a chorus of frogs, including the Pobblebonk and the Striped Marsh Frog.

An interesting Committee of Management objective is to test the idea that land use values do not have to be isolated from each other. Their Charter provides for “managed community access for multiple complementary benefits including recreation, amenity, habitat, conservation and productive uses.” A range of land uses coexist. Planting of the community forest and thinning, coppice growth and regrowth for cut and re-cut, anticipates wood production. Track maintenance anticipates exercise. Revegetation anticipates conservation and habitat improvement. Old fairways make for substantial grassy avenues. Sand scrapes remain in acknowledgement of prior use. There is a Men's Shed.

Change here is being managed for the better. This is a reserve where the legacy has been re-imagined and spaces re-equipped for a variety of purposes. Whether following tracks, wandering at leisure, immersing yourself in nature, giving the dog a run, or riding a horse, sulky or pushbike, you can enjoy a range of outdoor activities here.