

Gabo Island Light Station Reserve



Visitor Guide

Gabo Island is rich in cultural history, significant flora and fauna and stunning landscapes with magnificent views of Croajingolong National Park, including the Cape Howe Wilderness Zone and Tullaberga Island. It covers an area of approximately 154 ha and features the only operating island lighthouse in Victoria. The lighthouse was constructed from 1858 to 1862 using the distinctive pink granite found on the island. Tours of the magnificent 47m high structure are available, with spectacular views from the top.

Location and access

Gabo Island is located approximately 14 km from Mallacoota at the eastern tip of Victoria, close to the border of New South Wales, and 500 metres off the wilderness coast of Croajingolong National Park. Access to and from Gabo Island is by chartered aircraft or boat and is largely weather dependant. Due to airstrip limitations only authorised aircraft are permitted to land.

From early beginnings

The first reported European sighting of Gabo Island was by Captain Cook in 1770. Early Europeans to the island included sealers and whalers who constructed several buildings. Later concerns about shipwrecks led to the construction of the light tower and station in 1862. Gabo Island is highly significant to Indigenous people as a place for ceremony. Past Indigenous occupation is evident through middens containing shells and other deposits.

Things to see and do

Enjoy the clear water of Santa Barbara Bay or just relax on the sandy beach whilst taking in the view of the Howe Range. This harbour area contains an amazing underwater world including marine fish, sea stars and sea anemones.

Explore the pink granite shoreline featuring rock pools and crevices and home to numerous sea creatures. Take a picnic lunch and wander around the island. Visit the World War II ruins that feature the radar station, the Monumental City monument and the old cemetery.

Lighthouse tours are available at specific times for a maximum of eight people. Fees apply and a moderate level of fitness is required due to steep stairs. The views from the top are spectacular with the chance to spot whales, dolphins and seals

from this great vantage point. If you are interested in undertaking a tour of the lighthouse, please book at the Parks Victoria Mallacoota office prior to arrival on the island.

After dark, overnight visitors can quietly watch Little Penguins come ashore and make their way back to their burrows following a day foraging at sea. Please do not approach or handle the birds.

A unique place to stay

Gabo Island offers a unique accommodation experience in the Assistant Light Keeper's residence, featuring three bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, laundry and bathroom with all linen provided. Bookings are required for a minimum of two nights and it caters for up to eight people. All provisions must be taken to the island, so keep in mind weight limitations when travelling by air.

Geology and geomorphology

This rocky, windswept granite island features a unique combination of landscape values, including the contrasting colours and textures of pink granite against the sea and its vegetation. Extensive outcrops of pink granite, wide basalt intrusions, coastal slopes, boulder beaches, cliff top dunes and a sandy beach at Santa Barbara Bay signify the island's uniqueness.

Gabo granite was quarried from two locations on the island. Visit the Western Quarry and see where rock slabs were cut to build the light tower and buildings. Stone from the Northern Quarry was used in several prominent buildings in Sydney and Melbourne.



For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call 13 1963
or visit our website at
www.parks.vic.gov.au

Park Office
Cnr Allan & Buckland Drives
Mallacoota Vic 3892
Phone 13 1963

Park Office
Princes Hwy
Cann River Vic 3890
Phone 13 1963

Caring for the environment

Help us look after Gabo Island by following these guidelines:

All native plants, animals, cultural and historic features are protected

All rubbish must be taken off the island with you

Consider weight and packaging materials, transport food in re-useable containers rather than original packaging. Food scraps can be composted. The nearest tip is located at Mallacoota

Pets and firearms are not permitted on Gabo Island

No fires may be lit on the island

Access conditions apply

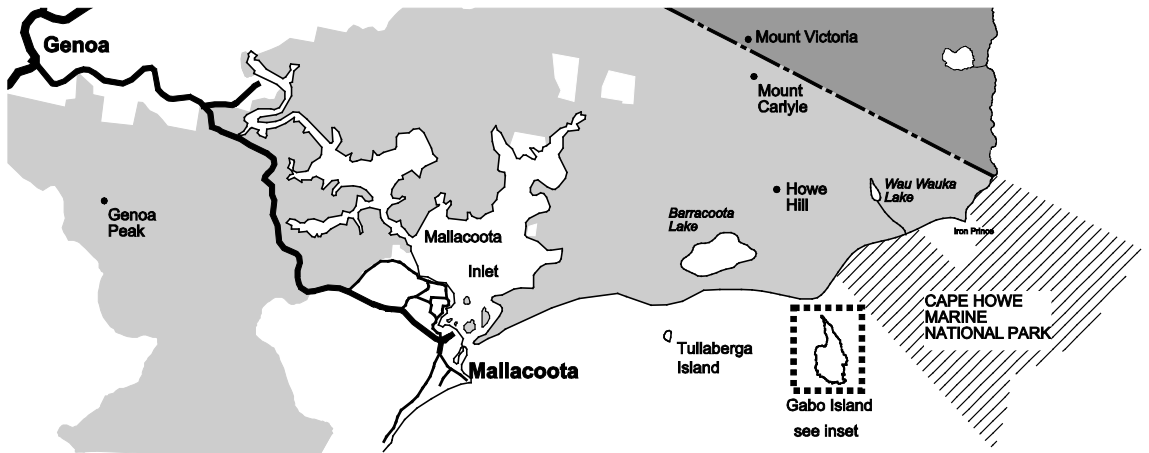
Camping is not permitted

This park is located within the East Gippsland Total Fire Ban District

Please don't throw this park note away. Keep it, return it for others to use, or recycle it

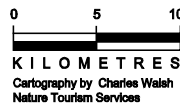
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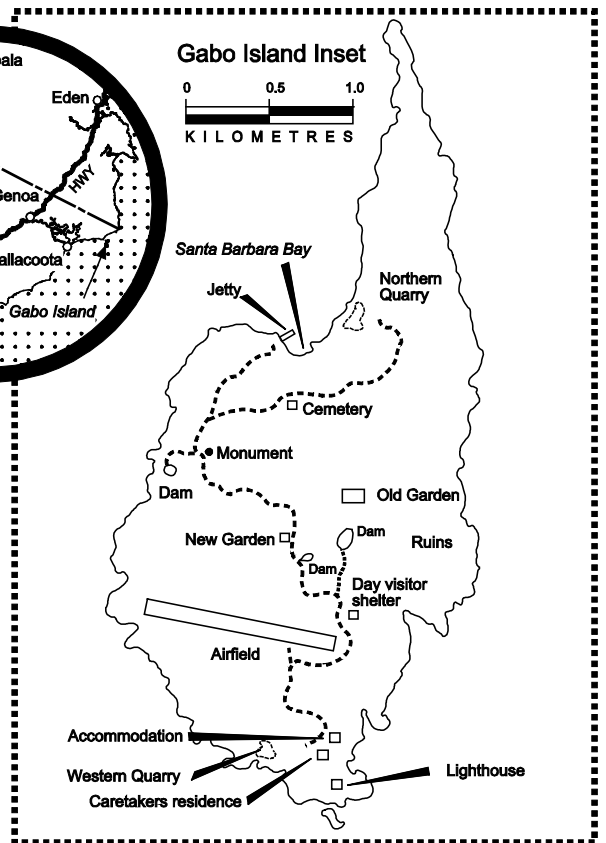
Gabo Island Light Station Reserve

- Highway
- Major road
- Minor road
- Vehicular track
- Croajingolong National Park
- Nadgee Nature Reserve
- Cape Howe Marine National Park



KILOMETRES
Cartography by Charles Walsh
Nature Tourism Services

Gabo Island Inset



A haven for plants and animals

Gabo Island supports 14 plant species that are considered rare or restricted in their distribution. Another interesting aspect of the flora of Gabo Island is that there are no eucalypts present. The dominant vegetation communities occurring on the island include a forest of Saw Banksia and Giant Honey Myrtle in the centre of the island, with a coastal herb land around the shoreline.

A total of 336 fauna species have been recorded on Gabo Island. In addition, the island is considered to be of State zoological significance due to the presence of possibly the largest breeding colony of Little Penguins in the world. Short-tailed Shearwaters also breed on Gabo Island. These large numbers of sea birds provide an important source of food for raptors which hunt on Gabo Island. Raptor species include White-bellied Sea Eagles which are considered rare in Victoria, Whistling Kites, Marsh Harriers and Brown Falcons.

Sea mammals are regularly sighted off Gabo Island. Common species of whale sighted from the island include Southern Right Whales, Humpback Whales and Killer Whales. Whales pass Gabo Island on their annual migration south to feed in Antarctic waters from late winter to early spring and then again during autumn on their northern migration to calve in tropical areas.

Pods of dolphins are also regularly sighted from Gabo Island. Species include Common Dolphins and Bottlenose Dolphins. Australian and New Zealand Fur Seals are also often seen basking on the rocks surrounding the island.

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