Ballarat Wildlife Park Accessibility Guide

We strive to provide all visitors with the opportunity to encounter the natural world and to understand the significance of conservation action. We commit to equal opportunities and accessibility within our business including visitor information and experience. This is an area of ongoing review and improvement.

1. Getting here

- There are buses from the Ballarat Station (Route 20) which stop directly outside the Ballarat Wildlife Park main entrance. These public buses are wheelchair accessible. Taxis and rideshare vehicles can drop off passengers near the front entrance.

  Public Transport Victoria link - https://transport.vic.gov.au/stop/26620/ballarat-wildlife-parkfussell-st

- Accessible parking is available on-site with 5 reserved accessible parking bays approximately 30-60m from the entrance and ticket office. While it does not meet all requirements for a compliant accessible parking bay, its location and additional width may assist some visitors.

  Some points to note about the parking:

  - The bays have a gravel surface
  - The lower accessible parking bays have a gentle slope



Figure 1 PHOTO: accessible parking bays showing the non-standard layout

2. Entering the park

- Entry tickets can be booked online in advance or purchased at the front entrance ticket window on arrival.
- You may experience queues at the front entrance during busy periods. If waiting in a queue is difficult for you, you're welcome to visit the gift shop for assistance.
- You can ask for a paper Park Map at the front entrance ticket window. A digital copy is available on our website or by sing the QR Code link at the entrance.
- Small bags of kangaroo food are available to purchase at the ticket box or gift shop. You can hand feed the kangaroos within the park.

3. Getting around

- Walking distances between animal habitats are generally quite short.
- The grounds include a moderately steep hill that visitors walk up and down.
- All paths are concrete or gravel. There is some uneven ground. All paths are step free and have a firm surface. There is a moderate slope throughout the park. Some people who use a mobility aid may find it difficult to move around without help.
- Please see our Visitor Map for path gradient information.
- Some areas may become slippery during rainy days.
- Benches, outdoor seating, and shaded areas are located along the outdoor walking paths and are marked on the map.
- Free-roaming kangaroos move around the outdoor open areas. You can hand-feed the free-roaming kangaroos. The special kangaroo food can be purchased at the front entrance.
- Some areas have boundary gates to keep animals inside. You must open and close these gates when passing through.
- There are designated Kangaroo Rest Areas marked by signs. Visitors are not permitted inside these rest areas.
- Most of the animal enclosures have a QR code which link to view a video presentation about the animal.



Figure 2 PHOTO: seating along the route.



Figure 3 PHOTO: pathway surfaces – gravel and concrete.

4. Café

- The café offers hot and cold food and drinks, including some allergen free options.
- You can order in the café or the outside takeaway counter, which are a standard height. You will receive a buzzer to let you know when your order is ready. The buzzer vibrates and has a loud beep. If you ask, staff can bring your order to you.



Figure 4 PHOTO: Cafe entrance ramp.

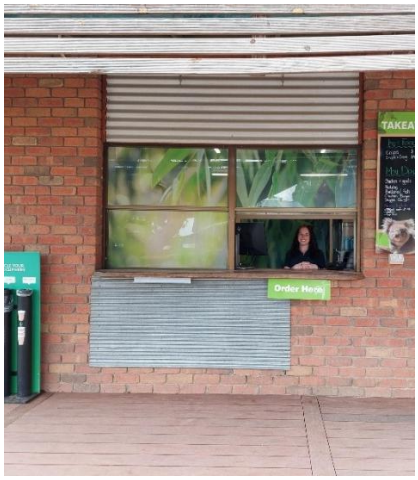


Figure 5 PHOTO: Cafe outdoor counter.

5. Gift Shop / Retail Area

- The Exit from the park is through the Gift Shop, however we can arrange a quieter exit if required. Please advise our staff prior to departure.
- The gift shop can become busy and noisy during peak times. There is limited space to move around when the shop is crowded.
- Staff can help you find and select items if you need assistance.

6. Toilets

- There are two toilet blocks located in the park:
    1. Next to the gift shop at the entrance building.
    2. Outside Crunch's crocodile habitat, adjoining the Billabong auditorium.
- Accessible toilets (Right Hand Rail), Ambulant toilet (Left Hand Rail) and a baby change station are all located at the toilet block near Crunch's crocodile habitat.

7. Sensory environment

- **Noise levels:** Outdoor areas vary in noise. School groups and peak visitor crowds increase noise levels throughout the park.
- **Animal sounds:** Some animals produce loud sounds. These include tigers, dingos, and koalas.
- **Public address speakers:** Park announcements are made over loudspeakers located near the tree kangaroo viewing hut. These occur 5 minutes before presentations as scheduled in the park map.
- **Keeper talks & presentations:** Keeper talks and feeding presentations use microphones and speakers. Large crowds gather at these talks, particularly during the crocodile feed presentation. The schedule of presentations is listed on the front of the Park Map.
- **Indoor audio:** The Reptile House is dimly lit, echoes, and plays continuous nature sound recordings through speakers.
- **Lighting:** Outdoor areas rely on natural sunlight. The Reptile House has low artificial lighting.
- **Scents & Allergens:** Outdoor areas contain native plants and animal scents. Essential oils and candle are sold in the gift shop and you may smell them as you walk through.
- **Temperature:** Outdoor paths and habitats are exposed to weather conditions. The Cafe has a wood heater for colder weather.
- **Quiet space:** There is no dedicated quiet room in the park. Weekdays after 3:00 pm are typically the quietest times to visit. If visitors would like to leave and re-enter to take a break, exit through the gift shop and speak to the staff in the shop as you leave.



Figure 6 PHOTO: The reptile house is quite dark and is fully enclosed

8. Support and service

- Staff and volunteers wear Ballarat Wildlife Park uniforms and name badges.
- Ballarat Wildlife Park is a member of the Hidden Sunflower program and staff can assist you if require.
- We want everyone to have the opportunity to experience the animals. Staff will endeavour to modify some animal encounters and experiences upon request.

  Note that all animal encounters are an additional cost.
- A Sensory Guide is available on our website.
- A limited number of manual wheelchairs are available to borrow from the entrance, free of charge. These can be booked prior to visit or on arrival.
- The big crocodile statue near the gift shop serves as a designated meeting point if you are separated from your group.



Figure 7 PHOTO: Staff members wear a uniform.

9. Assistance animals

- In order to protect the health and wellbeing of the animals in our care, assistance animals are not permitted access into the Park grounds.

- We wish to ensure the safety of the assistance animals and all patrons and this cannot be guaranteed due to our free-roaming kangaroos, alpaca and emus as well as dingoes that are walked daily through the park.

- A position statement from the Zoo Aquarium Association Australia is available on request.

- Holding space for assistance animals is very limited and subject to availability. We therefore recommend guests with assistance animals make alternative housing solutions prior to visiting the Park.

10. Contact

- Feel free to contact us ahead of your visit if you wish to make any special arrangements or if you have any further questions.
- **Address:** 250 Fussell Street, Ballarat East, VIC 3350
- **Phone:** (03) 5333 5933
- **Email:** info@wildlifepark.com.au

11. Feedback

We value your feedback. If you have comments or ideas about accessibility at Ballarat Wildlife Park, please email us at admin@wildlifepark.com.au