

the Gannawarra

Victoria's *Nature Based* Tourism Destination

Visitor Guide



KERANG COHUNA KOONDROOK MURRABIT
LEITCHVILLE LAKE CHARM MYSTIC PARK QUAMBATOOK

Welcome

Welcome to the Gannawarra - *Victoria's Nature Based Tourism Destination*.

Nestled along the Murray River, just three hours from Melbourne, the Gannawarra is one of Victoria's best-kept secrets for those seeking authentic, nature-based experiences.

Use this guide to plan your visit and discover what the Gannawarra has to offer. Wander the redgum forests of Gunbower Island, paddle the unique ecosystems of the Kerang Lakes or photograph the earthy hues of the Mallee outback.

Whether you're exploring local markets and cafes or unwinding under the stars by the campfire, the Gannawarra's natural features and charming local hospitality will leave you feeling inspired.

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We acknowledge the Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta and Wamba Wamba peoples as the Traditional Owners of the Gannawarra.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge their rich culture and connection to Country.

www.thegannawarra.com.au

FOLLOW US ON



@thegannawarra



GATEWAY TO GANNAWARRA

Visitor Centre

- Visitor information
- Maps and brochures
- Local products and gifts
- FREE mountain bike hire
- FREE fishing rod hire
- Indigenous Artefacts 'Keeping Place'
- Lifestyle and business displays
- Public amenities

Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm.

Weekends and public holidays 10am - 1pm.

Closed on special public holidays.

Contact us

90 King George Street

Cohuna VIC 3568

Phone: 03 5456 2047

Email: gateway@gsc.vic.gov.au

Sir John Gorton Library in Kerang also features a dedicated visitor hub, offering tourist information, maps and brochures.

Find the Library along the Murray Valley Highway in Kerang, just across the road from Atkinson Park.

Open Monday to Friday 10am - 5pm

Saturday 10am - 12pm

Phone 03 5452 1546

2 Shadforth Street, Kerang



GatewayCohuna

OUR TOWNS *Kerang*

Kerang is a picturesque town nestled beside the Loddon River. Stroll through Kerang's beautifully landscaped shopping precinct, where you'll find everything from supermarkets and boutique retailers, to welcoming hotels and cosy cafés. Take time to wander the walking trails of Kerang Regional Park, enjoy a picnic in Atkinson Park, or simply soak up the laid-back local atmosphere.

MUST DO:

- Visit Sir John Gorton Library for visitor information, free Wi-Fi, family history resources and exhibition displays. Return after dark to enjoy the outdoor video projection on the Glasshouse.
- Step back in time at the **Kerang Historical Society and Museum**, where local stories and artefacts bring the region's rich history to life.
- Discover Kerang's past at your own pace with the **Self-Guided Walk or Drive of Historic Kerang** brochure. Along the way, you'll also find artworks showcasing some of the town's notable historic sites including the Karlie McDonald Memorial Clocktower and Council Chambers building.
- Explore **Kerang Regional Park** via the **Loddon River Walk** on the edge of town. The popular riverside walk offers natural wetlands and vibrant birdlife.
- Enjoy a peaceful afternoon fishing for Yellow Belly or kayaking the **Loddon River**. Launch your kayak from the dedicated facility within Kerang Regional Park, with vehicle access available via the western end of Wyndham or North Streets.
- Venture out to the nearby **Kerang Lakes**, popular for water sports, fishing, kayaking and birdwatching. See page 19 of this guide for detailed information.
- Gather with family and friends at **Atkinson Park**, home to a modern all-abilities adventure playground, skate park, free Wi-Fi and barbecue shelter. Fully accessible amenities, including a Changing Places facility, are available at the park. Coffee and snacks are available from Billy the Bean food truck regularly stationed across the road on RSL Drive.
- Cool off at the **Kerang Splash Park and Swimming Pool**, open from November to March. Keep an eye out for special events held over the summer holidays.
- Climb the historic **Lester Smith Lookout Tower** built in 1883 and be greeted with elevated views of the town and Loddon River. Access via the Sir John Gorton Library.
- Join **Kerang parkrun**, meeting at the town levee at the west end of Wyndham Street each Saturday at 8am.

Kerang Sports and Entertainment Venue

Kerang Holiday Park

Atkinson Park

Loddon River

Places to Eat

Central Takeaway
65 Wellington Street

Chicken Supreme
39 Victoria Street

Chino's On Victoria
47 Victoria Street

Classic Fish Shop
55 Wellington Street

Exchange Hotel
62-64 Wellington Street

Gray's Bakery
39 Scoresby Street

Kerang Sports and Entertainment Venue
25 Victoria Street

Kwong Ling Chinese Restaurant
14 Victoria Street

Memos Kebabs
59 Wellington Street

Royal Hotel
60 Victoria Street

Why not Cafe
20 Victoria Street

Woodbox Coffee
24 Victoria Street

Zorba's Pizza Pasta and Ribs
65 Wellington Street

Where to Stay

BIG4 Kerang Riverfront Holiday Park
www.kerangriverfront.com.au

Kerang Holiday Park
www.kerangholidaypark.au

Kerang Motel
www.kerangmotel.com.au

Kerang Valley Resort
www.kerangvalleyresort.com.au

Loddon River Motel Kerang
www.loddonrivermotel.com.au

Places to Eat

Birds Bakery

45 King George Street

Cafe

55 King George Street

Cohuna Pizza and Takeaway

11 Market Street

Cohuna Westend

183 King George Street

Kimmy's Cafe

85b King George Street

Macs Midtown Takeaway

103 King George Street

Shell Roadhouse

6323 Murray Valley Highway

The Big Cohuna Stockyard

105 King George Street

The Bower Tavern

59-61 King George Street

The Hippie Harvest

87 King George Street

Where to Stay

Cohuna Scenic Accommodation

www.cohunascenicaccommodation.com

Cohuna Waterfront Holiday Park

www.cwhp.com.au

Gunbower Cottage

www.gunbower.com.au/cottage

The Convent

donnaanders3568@gmail.com

The Happy Wanderer Cohuna 70s Style

Phone 0492 211 841

Memorial Park Mural



Garden Park



The Hippie Harvest



Cohuna Beach



OUR TOWNS Cohuna

Cohuna is a picturesque town on the banks of Gunbower Creek, offering the perfect blend of nature and relaxation. Wander through red gum forests, explore gentle waterways, stroll scenic walking tracks, relax at Cohuna Beach, and enjoy a treat at one of the town's friendly cafés.

MUST DO:

- Soak up the sun at **Cohuna Beach** in **Apex Park**, where kids can splash in the water or build sandcastles on the sandy shore. The park also features an all-abilities adventure playground, a popular skate park, and modern barbecue facilities.
- Browse specialty stores or dine at local eateries including **The Bower Tavern**, **Kimmy's Cafe**, **The Hippie Harvest** and **The Big Cohuna Stockyard**, each offering their own unique dining experience.
- Discover **Gunbower Island**, a natural playground for fishing, camping, kayaking and outdoor adventure. There are many driving trails to explore including Spences Bridge Forest Drive following the Gunbower Creek, and Gunbower Forest Drive highlighting the Murray River.
- Spend the afternoon at the **Cohuna Ski Run**. Located along Island Road on the Gunbower Creek, the ski run is a popular spot for swimming and watersports.
- Hire a free mountain bike from the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre and ride along the scenic **Gunbower Island Road** past farming properties and bushland along the Gunbower Creek.
- There are many walking trails to explore including the **Cohuna Nature and Historical Walk** starting near the weir and **Creekside Nature Trail** following the Gunbower Creek from Apex Park to the ski run.
- Visit **Cohuna Memorial Park** featuring honour rolls, memorial statues and mural by artist, Tim Bowtell which pays homage to those who represented Australia during conflict.
- Play the home course of Australian professional golfer, Stuart Appleby. The extraordinary fairways and greens of the **Cohuna Golf and Bowls Club** have been carved out of the Gunbower Forest along the Gunbower Creek.
- Featuring a Museum, Archives Centre and Trash and Treasure Hall, the **Cohuna Historical Society** is a treasured resource for locals, visitors and historians alike.
- The **Cohuna Art Gallery** presents a diverse exhibition program each year and houses Rock 'n Roll memorabilia honouring Cohuna as the launching place for many iconic music industry names including John Farnham and the Bee Gees.
- Cool off at the **Cohuna Swimming Pool** and enjoy the waterslide during summer.
- Participate in **Cohuna parkrun**, meeting in Garden Park at 8am each Saturday.

OUR TOWNS *Koondrook*

Koondrook is a historic Murray River village, once bustling with paddlesteamers, now a peaceful haven for tourists. From local heritage and charming hospitality to luxury glamping and authentic nature-based experiences, it's the perfect place to slow down and reconnect.

MUST DO:

- Visit the award-winning **Koondrook Wharf**, built in 2016 to honour the original paddle steamer wharf. At its entrance lies the position of the original tram turntable, reimagined with red gum, slate and basalt by Aboriginal artists Glenn Romanis and Esther Kirby.
- Explore the **Koondrook Waterfront** and see the beautifully restored Goods Shed, informative heritage signs, historic railway station, Spears and Shields installation and all-abilities playground.
- Follow the **Koondrook Barham Redgum Statue River Walk** along the Murray River and discover magnificent red gum sculptures, carved by chainsaw, depicting local identities and native wildlife.
- Step into a world of comfort and tranquility at **Koondrook Glamping Retreat**. Nestled along the banks of Gunbower Creek, the self-contained safari tents offer more than just a place to stay - they provide an immersive nature experience.
- Wander across the red gum footbridge along the **Goanna Walking Track**; a 3.2km walking loop through the Gunbower Forest via **Candidorio's Bridge**.
- Treat yourself to a gourmet lunch at **Long Paddock Food Store**, known for its seasonal menu and local produce. For a laid-back meal or a refreshing drink, head to **Mate's Royal Hotel**. Relax in the outdoor beer garden or soak up the character-filled bar and lounge, uniquely decorated with local memorabilia and taxidermy.
- The working blades of **Arbuthnot Sawmills** have echoed along the river for more than 130 years. Stroll along the walking track that passes through the work yard or make a group booking to view milling operations from an elevated platform.
- Take a scenic drive through **Gunbower Island**, following the Murray River or Gunbower Creek. Discover the heritage-listed Eagle Tree, spot native wildlife, and soak up the beauty of the iconic red gum forest.
- Cool down at the **Koondrook Swimming Pool** over summer.
- Walk across the historic **Barham-Koondrook Bridge**, one of the oldest lift span bridges on the Murray River, built in 1904.
- Discover Koondrook's twin town of **Barham**, just across the Murray River. Stroll the scenic boardwalk, view the vibrant mural, play a round of golf, enjoy dining and entertainment at cluBarham, explore the Border Flywheelers Heritage Museum or walk the Federation Botanic Gardens.
- Hire a kayak from **Barham Adventure Hire** and paddle the scenic Gunbower Island Canoe Trail at Safe's Lagoon. You can also hire bikes, e-bikes, or scooters to explore the twin towns.

Koondrook Barham Bridge, Murray River

Koondrook Wharf

Arbuthnot Sawmills

Koondrook Glamping Retreat

Places to Eat

Form Athletic Smoothie Bar
17 Grigg Road

Koondrook General Store
87 Main Street

Long Paddock Food Store
2/86 Main Street

Mates Royal Hotel
85 Main Street

Where to Stay

Koondrook Caravan Park
www.koondrookcaravanpark.com.au

Koondrook Glamping Retreat
koondrookretreat.au

Murray Waters Motor Inn and Apartments
www.murraywatersmotel.com.au

Old Koondrook Bakery Accommodation
www.oldkoondrookbakery.com.au

River Bend B&B Koondrook
Phone 0459 276 421

*Visitor information is available from
Koondrook General Store
and Koondrook Post Office.*



Murrabit Market

Mural, Paul Oswin

Murrabit Bridge, Murray River

Places to Eat

Murrabit Store and Tavern
1 Gonn Avenue

Where to Stay

Recreation Reserve
Phone 0409 692 630 for Powered RV Sites

OUR TOWNS *Murrabit*

Nestled close to the Murray River, Murrabit is a welcoming country town surrounded by natural bushland. Its peaceful setting is perfect for camping, fishing, or exploring the river by boat.

MUST DO:

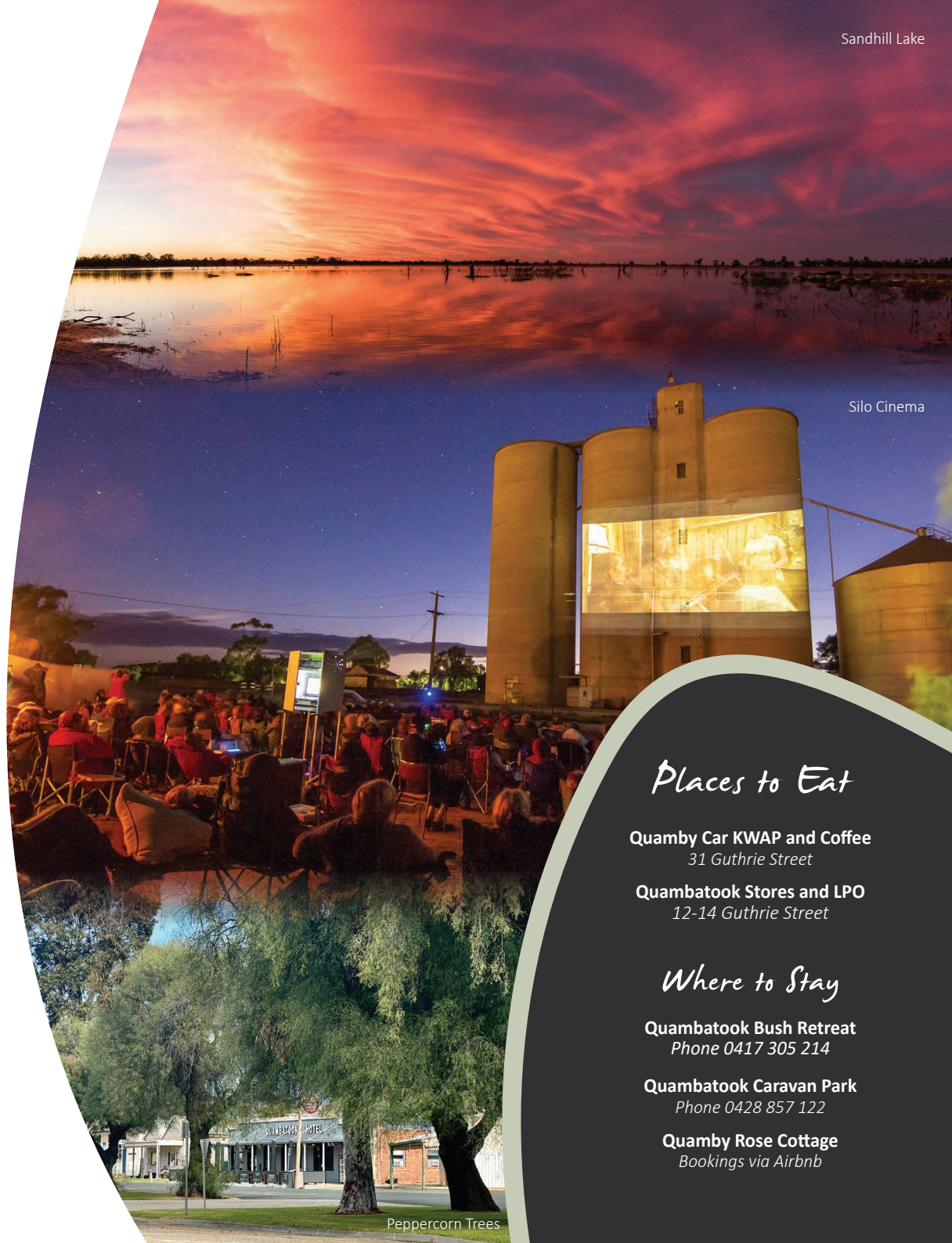
- Join the hundreds of shoppers on the first Saturday of each month at the **Murrabit Country Market**, one of Victoria's longest running markets, operating since 1977.
- See the vibrant **murals** by talented local artist, Paul Oswin at the Murrabit Market site, featuring native wildlife such as the Murray Cod, Kookaburra, and Murray Crayfish.
- Visit the **Murrabit Bridge**, the first all-steel bridge over the Murray River linking New South Wales and Victoria. Built in 1926, it is still in use today, with its lift span raised several times a year to let large vessels and paddlesteamers pass through.
- Enjoy a picnic at **Miss Keats Picnic Park**, a great spot to take in views of the bridge and river. The park honours Miss M.G. Keats MBE, a Murrabit local and the first woman to graduate with a Bachelor of Veterinary Science from the University of Melbourne in 1923.
- The iconic **Murray River** is just 2km from town, and anglers travel up or downstream of the Murrabit Bridge to catch Murray Cod and Yellow Belly. Boats can be launched at the concrete boat ramp just downstream of the Murrabit Bridge.
- Relax among the River Red Gums at **Benwell Camping Area** and spend the night under the stars.
- Find your perfect secluded spot in **Guttrum State Forest** and settle in for a scenic weekend camping, fishing, bushwalking and roasting marshmallows around the campfire.
- Enter the **Murrabit Cod Challenge** fishing competition held in March each year.
- Discover the history of Murrabit and district at the purpose-built **Murrabit Heritage Shelter** in the community park, and enjoy the playground and barbecue facilities.
- Try a round of golf on the 13-hole course with sandscrape greens. The **Murrabit Golf Course** is open through the cooler months and welcomes new players.
- Discover the history of Murrabit along the **Railway Heritage Trail and Walking Track**, which starts in town and follows the former railway line to the Murray River and historic bridge crossing. Wear closed-toed shoes, as track conditions may be uneven.

OUR TOWNS *Quambatook and the Mallee*

The Mallee offers expansive landscapes and star-filled skies, and is known for its rich grain-growing heritage and welcoming outback communities. Tucked within the Mallee lies Quambatook, a charming rural town proud to be the childhood home of Aussie music legends, John Williamson and Molly Meldrum.

MUST DO:

- Capture the striking beauty of the **Mallee outback**. Where vibrant red earth, textured saltbush, golden skies and towering silos create a unique and authentic canvas for photography.
- The **Quambatook Silo Cinema** is a unique, community-run cinema which attracts many visitors to Quambatook. Grain silos positioned in the centre of town become a big screen showcasing great Aussie films. See their Facebook page for events.
- Quambatook has been recognised as the tractor-pulling capital of Australia with the **Australian Tractor Pull Championships** held annually on Easter Saturday since 1976.
- Check out the **Quambatook Heritage Machinery Display** that takes place annually over the Australia Day weekend.
- Stroll along the **Avoca River** and **Quambatook Weir Pool** where a new bridge, fishing jetties, kayak launch and picnic facilities have been installed.
- Enjoy a **picnic** under the well-loved peppercorn trees in the centre of Quambatook.
- Cool down at the **Quambatook Swimming Pool** over summer.
- Seek treasures at the **Quambatook and District Share Shop**, a not-for-profit share shop showcasing antiques, collectables and handmade items from small businesses across the district.
- Visit the **Quambatook Historical Centre** and John Williamson Museum, the gathering place for local history, and a celebration of the town and the people of "Quamby".
- Quambatook is close to many lakes within the **Kerang Lakes District** including **Sandhill Lake** and **Lake Bael Bael** which are peaceful spots for birdwatching and enjoying the natural environment.
- Visit **Lalbert**, positioned in the heart of the Mallee's wheat growing area. Lalbert was named in 1836 by Major Mitchell with the name thought to derive from the Aboriginal name of a creeper that grew on Mallee trees. **Lake Lalbert**, only 2km from town, is a flood-filled lake and an environmental showpiece when in flood.
- Take a 20-minute drive from Quambatook to visit **The Spanner Man Sculpture Garden**, a stunning country garden featuring more than 25 one-of-a-kind sculptures crafted from spanners.



Silo Cinema

Places to Eat

Quamby Car KWAP and Coffee
31 Guthrie Street

Quambatook Stores and LPO
12-14 Guthrie Street

Where to Stay

Quambatook Bush Retreat
Phone 0417 305 214

Quambatook Caravan Park
Phone 0428 857 122

Quamby Rose Cottage
Bookings via Airbnb

Peppercorn Trees



Mount Hope



Places to Eat

Leitchville Hotel
17 King George Street

Red Gum Bakery
4 King Albert Street

Where to Stay

Travellers Rest RV Free Camp
5 King George Street



Leitchville Hotel



Travellers Rest

OUR TOWNS *Leitchville*

Leitchville is an agricultural community with strong links to the dairy industry, located just off the Murray Valley Highway between Echuca and Cohuna. The town is only a short drive to Kow 'Ghow' Swamp, Gunbower Island and the Murray River.

MUST DO:

- Take a leisurely stroll along the **Leitchville Arts and Nature Trail**, starting at the Leitchville Memorial Hall. Along the way, see metal sculptures of native wildlife and spot the many bird species that call the area their home.
- Enjoy warm country hospitality at the **Leitchville Hotel**, where hearty pub meals, friendly locals, and an inviting atmosphere make you feel right at home.
- Stop by the **Redgum Bakery** for fresh coffee and tasty pastries. Enjoy a tempting selection of breads, pies, and sweet treats.
- Cool off at the **Leitchville Swimming Pool** during the warmer months. Whether you're taking a refreshing dip or relaxing in the sun, it's a great spot for families and friends to unwind during summer.
- Take a short drive to **Gunbower Island**, a great spot for kayaking, fishing and camping on the Murray River or Gunbower Creek.
- Experience **Kow 'Ghow' Swamp**, a large natural wetland located just 2.5km south of Leitchville. The word Kow is derived from an Aboriginal word in the Yorta Yorta language, Ghow, which refers to the white gypsum soil found in the area. Ghow Swamp is culturally significant with scarred trees, earth mounds, shell middens and Aboriginal ancestral remains, clear evidence of early occupation.
- **Lions Park** at Kow 'Ghow' Swamp is a great place for fishing, kayaking and picnicking. Visit late afternoon to experience a magnificent, reflective sunset over the water. As night falls, Lions Park becomes an ideal location for astrophotography, offering clear dark skies.
- Kow 'Ghow' Swamp is an integral part of the Torrumbarry Irrigation System. Visit **Box Bridge Weir** along Leitchville-Pyramid Hill Road, a popular spot with locals for fishing.
- Climb nearby **Mount Hope** and be rewarded with vast views of Kow Swamp, farmland, clear horizons and Mount Hope Station, where explorers Burke and Wills stayed during their 1860 expedition.
- After discovering Leitchville take a short 10-minute drive to neighbouring town, **Gunbower**. Dine at the Gunbower Workshop Cafe, view the mural by renowned artist, Jimmy D'Vate and stroll along Gunbower Creek in Apex Park. For boutique accommodation, book into the Gunbower Butter Factory, and experience a paddock to plate dinner at Gunbower Hotel.

OUR TOWNS *Lake Charm and Mystic Park*

The rural communities of Lake Charm and Mystic Park (Kangaroo Lake) offer a truly unique getaway and are perfect for watersports and a range of outdoor activities. Whether you're water skiing, capturing stunning photos, spotting native birds, or enjoying peaceful walks, these lakeside communities invite you to immerse yourself in the natural surrounds.

MUST DO:

- Both **Kangaroo Lake** and **Lake Charm Foreshores** offer boat ramps, grassy shorelines and are great places to spend the day lakeside with family and friends.
- Kangaroo Lake is the former home of the 19th Australian Prime Minister, Sir John Gorton. Take a drive along scenic **Gorton Drive** along Kangaroo Lake past vineyards owned by the Brown Brothers and Countertop Wines.
- View the 23m native birdlife **mural** by artist, Paul Oswin at Lake Charm General Store.
- Wander the **Lake Charm Loop Track**, an easy 2.7km walk through the rugged landscape starting at Lake Charm General Store. Along the way you'll discover artworks of native wildlife by Paul Oswin and pass by the Lake Charm Foreshore.
- After a day of exploring, unwind at the **Mystic Park Hotel** and enjoy warm hospitality, great food and live entertainment.
- Rest and rejuvenate at **Charm Lodge**. Reconnect with nature, experience farm life, paddle in the lake or laze by the pool. Accommodation options include the enchanting Cozy Dome, a vintage caravan, tiny home, lakeside campsite or home residence.
- Families can choose from a range of tourist park stays, from camping and caravan sites to comfortable cabins. Options include **Pelican Waters Tourist Park**, **Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park**, **Kangaroo Lake C&C Park** and **Lake Charm General Store and Caravan Park**, each offering its own distinctive setting and amenities.
- Fishing is popular at the lakes, with Redfin and Yellow Belly regular catches. In Spring, enter the **Redfin Fishing Classic** at Lake Charm, which attracts hundreds of anglers.
- The RAMSAR-listed **Middle Reedy Lake Ibis Rookery** and hide, is the ideal viewing platform to spot many waterbirds including Ibis, Darters, Spoonbills and Egrets.
- The Kerang Lakes region holds deep cultural significance to the Barapa people. Wander the **Barapa Cultural Walk** starting at the carpark at Middle Reedy Lake and discover indigenous sites of significance along with native flora and fauna.
- Visit nearby **Lake Tutchewop**, Gannawarra's unique salt basin. Experience its vibrant colours and striking reflections in the early morning or evening light. The dry red earth, rustic saltbush textures and diverse birdlife create a captivating setting for photography.
- For those interested in WWII history, take the short drive to **Lake Boga Flying Boat Museum** and view the restored Catalina A24-30, original secret communication bunker and more than 500 artefacts and wartime treasures.



Lake Charm

Mystic Park Hotel

Kangaroo Lake

Places to Eat

Lake Charm General Store
1921 Murray Valley Highway

Mystic Park Hotel
1 Wilson Street

Where to Stay

Charm Lodge
www.charmcollective.com.au

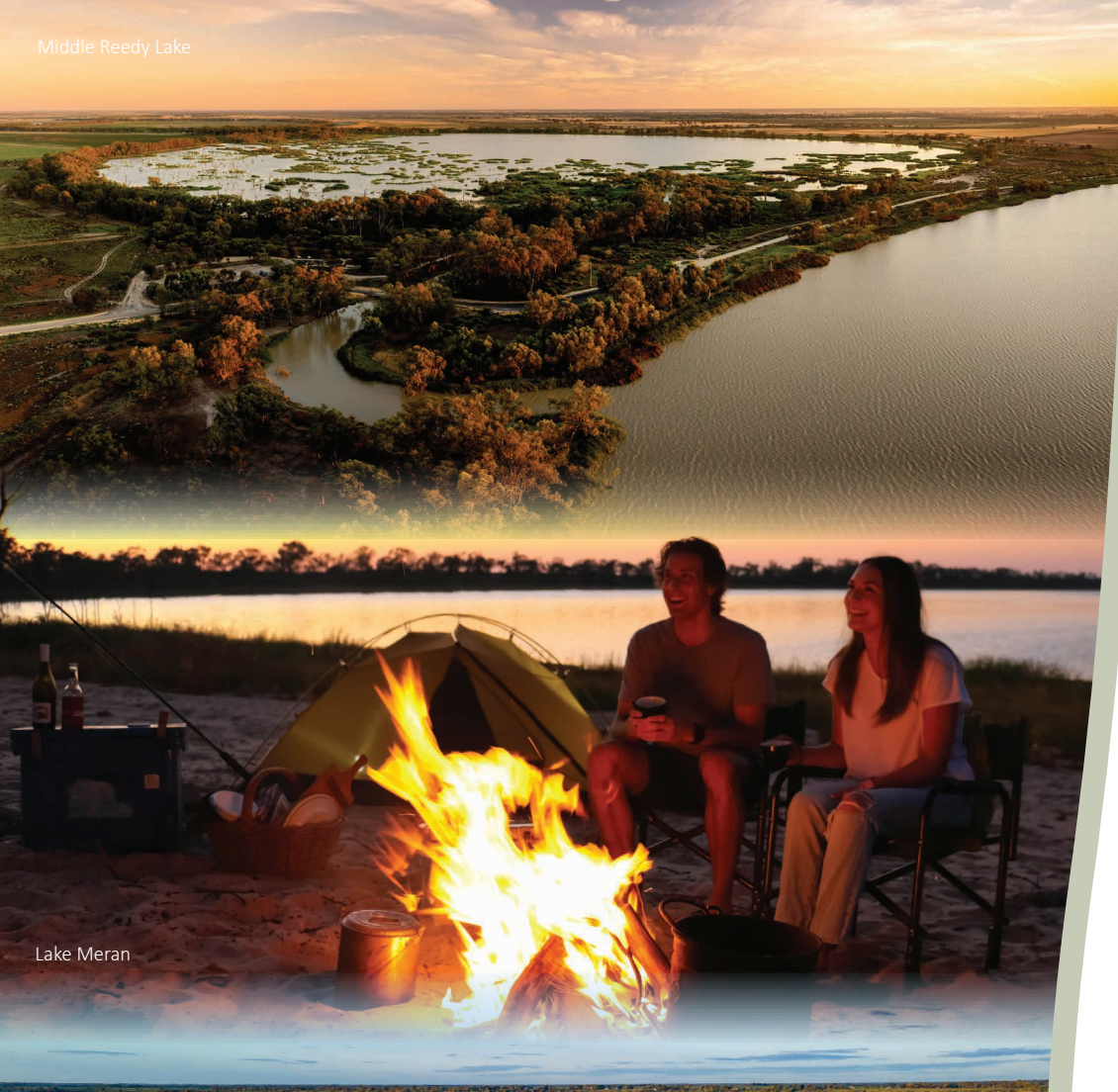
Kangaroo Lake C&C Park
www.kangaroolakeandcpark.com.au

Lake Charm Foreshore Caravan Park
Phone 0437 123 539

Lake Charm General Store and Caravan Park
Phone 0480 218 001

Mystic Park Hotel
www.mysticparkhotel.com.au

Pelican Waters Tourist Park
www.pelicanwaterslakecharm.com.au



Lake Meran



Lake Charm

CLOSE TO NATURE *Kerang Lakes*

The **Kerang Lakes** comprise 23 named lakes, marshes and swamps of varying sizes, depths and salinity spread across the lower reaches of the Avoca and Loddon Rivers and the Pyramid Creek. As part of the Torrumbarry Irrigation System, these wetlands play a vital role in the region's water management. They are also internationally recognised for their ecological value under the Ramsar Convention, and are important feeding and breeding grounds for a large number of local and migratory waterbirds.

The Kerang Lakes region is rich with Aboriginal history with over 400 Aboriginal sites recorded on the Victorian Archaeological Survey Register. This connection is celebrated and recognised on the **Barapa Cultural Walk** at Middle Reedy Lake, highlighting cultural sites including shell midden containing freshwater mussels and a scarred tree.

Lake Charm and **Kangaroo Lake** are key destinations with locals and visitors for powered watersports, swimming, fishing, kayaking and birdwatching. Kangaroo Lake is the deepest lake in the Kerang Lakes system at 8.4 metres.

On the northern edge of Leaghur Forest lies **Lake Meran**, a tranquil freshwater lake subject to seasonal fluctuations. Its white sandy shores invite swimming, fishing and kayaking, while the striking Turtle Sculpture by artist Moz Moresi adds a unique touch to the landscape. When water levels permit, the lake also becomes a popular destination for powered watersports. Bush camping is permitted in the picnic area.

The **Reedy Lakes** are all similar in size and are regulated by connecting channels, with Third Reedy Lake operating in a wetting and drying cycle. **Apex Park**, located at the southern end of **First Reedy Lake**, is a wonderful spot for picnics, swimming and fishing. The free RV camp area provides a great place for a short stay.

The **Ibis Rookery** and bird hide at **Middle Reedy Lake** is an ideal viewing platform to see waterbirds nesting in the shallow waters. Information shelters located at Lake Charm and Middle Reedy Lake provide interesting details on the region's wetlands and birdlife.

Cullens Lake is one of the largest lakes of the Kerang wetlands and is located on the shared floodplains of the Avoca and Loddon rivers. It is valued because of its size and unique environment and is used extensively by waterbirds to nest and forage.

The **Koorangie (Avoca) Marshes** are a series of interconnecting natural wetlands that receive water when the Avoca River is in flood. **Lake Bael Bael** to the south, is a freshwater lake while **First Marsh** operates as an "occasional lake" with sparse vegetation growing across the wetland bed. **Second** and **Third Marshes** are shallow swamps containing thousands of dry standing red gums. These wetlands fill during flood periods and operate in a wetting and drying cycle.

Lake Tutchewop, whose name is derived from Indigenous Wamba Wamba language is now a salt crusted basin, popular with birdwatchers and sunset photographers.

The Kerang Lakes region is home to many more wetlands, each with its own unique character. Together, they support over 150 species of indigenous flora and more than 100 species of native fauna.

See page 36 of this guide for regional map highlighting the Kerang Lakes.

CLOSE TO NATURE *Gunbower Island*

Bordered by the Murray River, Gunbower Island is considered to be Australia's largest inland island, stretching across 26,400 hectares from Koondrook to the Torrumbarry Weir. Formed by the **Gunbower Creek** branching off the Murray River then re-joining downstream at Koondrook, Gunbower Island consists of two significant forest areas, **Gunbower National Park** and **Gunbower State Forest**.

The forests hold deep cultural significance for the Barapa Barapa and Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners. As you explore, you may come across reminders of this rich heritage, including scarred trees and ancient cooking mounds. These sites are an important part of living culture and history. Please be respectful if you come across them.

Full of life, the Island is home to kangaroos, wallabies, emus and goannas. Don't forget to glance up into the gum trees, you might even spot a koala. On the ground, echidnas often shuffle through the undergrowth, while wedge-tailed eagles soar above.

The island's river red gum and black box forests are alive with diversity, home to more than 170 bird species, 24 reptile species, numerous fish and around 200 native plants. Gunbower Island is also internationally recognised under the Ramsar Convention for its wetlands, which are a vital refuge for birdlife, mammals and amphibians. These wetlands provide sanctuary for vulnerable species including the broad-shelled turtle and platypus.

Whether you're visiting for adventure, wildlife, or simply the peace of the river, Gunbower Island offers plenty of ways to explore:

- Hire a kayak from Barham Adventure Hire and enjoy a relaxing 5km self-guided paddle along the **Gunbower Island Canoe Trail** at Safes Lagoon.
- Discover historical, cultural and ecological sites along the **Koondrook Red Gum Forest Walk**. Don't forget to pack your camera as there are endless opportunities to capture landscapes and native wildlife.
- Take **Spences Bridge Forest Drive** highlighting indigenous culture, timber milling and early settler sites. Free audio commentary is available on SoundCloud.
- Visit two of the Island's most remarkable trees, the **Eagle Tree** (over 1,000 years old) near Koondrook and the **Big Tree** (over 500 years old) located on Chettle Track near Cohuna. Details of both river red gums are recorded on trusttrees.org.au
- Take **Gunbower Island Forest Drive** along the Murray River and see sites such as the Timber Cutter Steps, Graham's Hut, Cemetery Bend and experimental pine nursery.
- Camp by the Murray. **Sandbar Bend** is a favourite with campers, offering a sandy edge perfect for fishing and relaxing by the river.
- Visit **Reedy Lagoon**. Enter via Hudson Track by foot, mountain bike or car and follow the loop past the pine nursery and lagoon. Emus and kangaroos are commonly seen in this area enjoying the open forest.
- Many forest campsites along **Gunbower Creek** feature barbecues and picnic tables, making them the perfect spots to enjoy a picnic surrounded by nature.

Many tracks are accessible in dry weather only. Visitors are encouraged to contact Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre for up-to-date information on forest and track conditions.





CLOSE TO NATURE *Trails*

Take your pick from a range of local tracks and trails that showcase the Gannawarra's diverse landscapes, from historic town walks to scenic waterside paths and shady red gum-lined tracks. Whether you prefer walking, cycling, or mountain biking, you'll find plenty of ways to explore while capturing the region's natural beauty and native wildlife on camera.

POPULAR WALKS AND TRAILS

- The **Koondrook Red Gum Forest Walk** is a leisurely walk through the majestic Gunbower State Forest. Both the Turtle Loop (13.2kms) and Eagle Loop (9.1kms) are marked with signage highlighting historical, cultural and ecological sites.
Trail suited to mountain biking.
- The **Koondrook Barham Redgum Statue Walk** meanders along the banks of the Murray River and features 20 red gum statues of local identities and wildlife, carved by Kevin Guilders and Angela Polglaze and their chainsaws. Visit our website for map.
- The **Goanna Walking Track** is a 3.2km looped track that crosses the Gunbower Creek via the red gum footbridge at Koondrook Glamping Retreat. The track winds through Gunbower Forest before crossing Condidorio's Bridge and looping back into town.
Track suited to mountain biking.
- The **Loddon River Walk** in Kerang Regional Park meanders through the relaxed woodland setting and along the levee. It is common to find birdlife in the wetland area of the park.
Adjacent shared road suited to mountain biking.
- See historic buildings and landmarks on a **Self-Guided Walk or Drive of Historic Kerang**. Pick up a copy of the brochure from the Sir John Gorton Library in Kerang.
Suitable for bikes on roads.
- In Cohuna, take the **Creekside Nature Trail** along Gunbower Creek out to the Ski Run. Walk alongside scenic, Cohuna Lagoon home to waterbirds, turtles, platypus and rakali.
Adjacent Gunbower Island Road suited to cycling.
- Find birdlife, native flora and learn about local history on the leisurely 2.4km **Cohuna Nature and Historical Walk** starting at the Cohuna Weir.
- Follow the **Gilrue Walking Track** along the Gunbower Creek or discover historic buildings on the **Cohuna Town Walk**.
- In Leitchville, take a walk along **Leitchville Arts and Nature Trail** and find metal sculptures of native animals.
- The Kerang Lakes provide many walking opportunities, including the **Kangaroo Lake Walking Track** along Gorton Drive and **Lake Charm Walking Loop** and artwork installation. *Gorton Drive is suitable for on road cycling.*
- Wander along the **Avoca River Levee Walk** in Quambatook.
- Explore Murrabit's past on the **Railway Heritage Trail and Walking Track**, beginning in the heart of town and tracing the old railway line to the Murray River and historic bridge crossing.

CLOSE TO NATURE *Kayaking*

From the open waters of the **Kerang Lakes**, to the discrete natural lagoons of **Gunbower Island**, the Gannawarra offers countless opportunities for kayaking.

One of the most popular experiences is the **Gunbower Island Canoe Trail**, a leisurely 5km paddle through Safe's Lagoon. Glide past towering red gums, listen to bird calls echoing through the forest, and spot turtles swimming through the water. The trail is signposted from Koondrook Track, with a dedicated kayak launch for easy creek access.

Other favourite kayaking locations include **Cohuna Town Lagoon**, the **Loddon River** within Kerang Regional Park, **Lake Meran**, the **Murray** and **Avoca rivers**, and **Gunbower Creek**. Some spots, like **Reedy Lagoon**, **Black Swamp** and **Yarran Creek** on Gunbower Island, are seasonal gems, accessible only during floods or high rainfall.

For something truly special, head to **Middle Reedy Lake** at sunrise or sunset to watch the water light up while birds gather overhead, an unforgettable experience for birdwatchers. **Kow 'Ghow' Swamp's Lions Park** is another spectacular sunset location.

To plan your paddling adventure, pick up our Kayak and Canoe Brochure featuring maps and kayak launch locations. Kayaks and stand-up paddleboards are available for hire from **Barham Adventure Hire**. For guided experiences, **River Country Adventours** offers fully customised tours, while **Murray River Adventures** runs Kayak Eco Tours during forest watering events, check their Facebook page for updates. Serious paddlers won't want to miss the **Massive Murray Paddle**, a five-day, 415km race event held annually.

CLOSE TO NATURE *Fishing*

Native fish such as Murray Cod, Yellow Belly (Golden Perch) and Bony Bream are commonly caught in the **Murray River**, **Gunbower Creek**, **Loddon River** and **Avoca River**, along with introduced species Redfin and Carp. Anglers can also fish in the **Kerang Lakes** and many channels throughout the region.

Many fishing competitions are held across the Gannawarra including the **Murrabit Cod Challenge**, **Lake Charm Redfin Classic**, **Koondrook Barham Fishing Competition** and **Leitchville Bunyip Sporting Club Cod Closing Competition**. See our website for upcoming events.

Fishing rods can be hired free from the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre in Cohuna, along with handy information on boat ramp locations, where to fish, required licenses and regulations. Please note: You'll need a valid Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) to fish in public waters. The Murray River is classed as New South Wales (NSW) waters, even when fishing from the Victorian bank. This means you'll need an NSW recreational fishing licence to fish in the Murray. You can purchase VIC and NSW fishing licences in store at Loddon Disposals in Kerang, or online through Service Victoria or Service New South Wales.

The Gannawarra supports the "catch and release" of native fish.



Koondrook Wharf

Middle Reedy Lake

CLOSE TO NATURE *Birdwatching*

With over 200 bird species recorded, the Gannawarra is a hotspot for birdwatchers. The region's diverse landscapes, from internationally recognised wetlands and red gum forests to open grasslands and dry mallee shrub, provide vital habitat for a wide range of birdlife.

The **Ibis Rookery at Middle Reedy Lake** is the largest rookery in the Southern Hemisphere, where each spring, thousands of ibis flock to the area to breed. The bird hide is best visited at dawn and dusk and offers the perfect place to watch Straw-necked and White Ibis, along with other birds such as Spoonbills, Pelicans, Darters and Egrets.

Lake Cullen is one of the only intermittent saline wetlands within the Kerang Ramsar site, its value highlighted by the presence of the endangered Australasian Bittern.

Hird Swamp, as a temporary freshwater marsh, provides vital resting, nesting, and feeding habitat for waterbirds including the Royal Spoonbills, Brolga and Baillon's Crake.

Lake Tutchewop is also proving to be an important birdwatching destination, with the arrival of the Long-billed Dowitcher some years back. White-winged Fairywrens and Orange Chats can be spotted in the salt bushes along the lakes edge.

Other wetlands popular for birdwatching in the Kerang Lakes Region include the **Avoca Marshes, Lake Bael Bael, Lake Murphy** and **Johnson Swamp**.

In **Kerang Regional Park** you'll see a variety of waterbirds along the Loddon River. As you explore the trails, look out for Tawny Frogmouths resting in the trees.

As a permanent body of water **Gunbower Creek** and the many lagoons within **Gunbower Island** provide vital habitats for numerous species. Environmental water inflows into **Reedy Lagoon** have provided a special place for birdwatching, as the rich environment provides excellent feeding and breeding opportunities for species including Darters and Egrets.

Over the warmer months, Rainbow Bee-eaters nest in the sandy mounds near Spences Bridge and Sacred Kingfishers return to the area. In the cooler months look for Red-capped Robins dancing in the bushland and Dusky Woodswallows huddling on branches.

The Wedge-tailed Eagle, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Whistling Kite, Azure Kingfisher, Kookaburra, Emu and a variety of parrots can be seen year-round. Diamond Firetails can also be spotted in grassy woodland areas of the forest.

At **Kow 'Ghow' Swamp's** Lions Park, sunset is the perfect time to watch Black Swans, Pelicans, Ibis, and Darters silhouetted against the vibrant evening sky.

Just outside of the Gannawarra to the north you can extend your birdwatching adventure to **Goshen Bushland Reserve**, where the Boobook Owl, Crimson Chat, Red-backed Kingfisher, Greater Bluebonnet and a number of Honeyeater species can be seen.

To the south **Terrick Terrick National Park** is a great place to spot Australian Ringnecks. The surrounding open grasslands are home to the Red-chested Buttonquail and critically endangered Plains-wanderer. Specialist tours are available from nearby Pyramid Hill.

Whether you're an experienced birder, or just simply enjoy being outdoors, the Gannawarra region offers rewarding opportunities to appreciate Australia's avian diversity year-round.

Drop into the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre or Sir John Gorton Library for maps and guides.

Specialised knowledge on Australian birdlife and education programs can be accessed via Birdlife Australia. For recent sightings, search the eBird.org website.

For a unique experience, look out for North Central Catchment Management Authority's 'Breakfast with the birds' event.

RV Free Camping

The Gannawarra warmly welcomes RV travellers, offering a variety of short-term free camping spots across the region. Whether you prefer a peaceful creekside setting, a lakeside escape, or the convenience of being close to town, you'll find a location to suit your journey.

COHUNA

FLORA PARK

Tennis Road, Cohuna

(over the town bridge and turn left)

RV self-contained camping. Some shade available. Walking distance to town centre, Cohuna Beach, fishing, playground and more. Dogs permitted on leash.

Dump Point located on Island Road, opposite Cohuna Waterfront Holiday Park.

KERANG

ALEXANDRA PARK (TURF CLUB)

13 Park Road, Kerang

Caravans, campervans and motorhomes permitted. Toilets and drinking water available. 600 metres to town centre. Dogs permitted on leash.

Dump Point located Markets Road (at the former Saleyards).

KOONDROOK

SID REID PARK

Corner of View and Penglase streets, Koondrook

RV self-contained camping. Picnic tables and barbeque. A short walk to the Murray River or 1.5km to the town centre. Dogs permitted on leash.

Dump Point located in Penglase Street, opposite the RV Free camp entrance.

LEITCHVILLE

TRAVELLERS REST

5 King George Street, Leitchville

Campervans, motorhomes and caravans permitted. Toilets, disabled facilities, hot showers, picnic tables, drinking water, shade and emergency phone available. Dogs permitted on leash.

Dump Point located at Recreation Reserve.

MURRABIT

GONN AVENUE

Gonn Avenue, Murrabit

(Opposite Murrabit Market Site)

Campervans, caravans and motorhomes permitted every day except the first Saturday of the month (market day). All-accessible toilet, children's playground and barbecue facilities.

Dogs permitted on leash.

Dump Point located at Recreation Reserve.

REEDY LAKE

APEX PARK

Apex Park Road, Reedy Lake

Picturesque location overlooking Reedy Lake, 8kms north of Kerang.

CAMPSITES

Secluded campsites can be found across the Gannawarra. Some popular locations include Gunbower Island, Guttrum and Benwell forests and the Koorangie (Avoca) Marshes. Contact the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre for more information on free camping areas.



Flora Park, Cohuna

Travellers Rest, Leitchville



Kerang Show & Shine

Murrabit Rodeo, Koondrook-Barham Bridge Newspaper

Lilo Race, Gannawarra Times

MAJOR *Events*

Throughout the year the Gannawarra hosts a wide variety of community celebrations and events. From open-air cinema screenings to country horse racing, classic car shows and family festivals, there's always something happening to enjoy with locals and visitors alike.

AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

March, Cohuna Show

cohunashow.com.au

October, Kerang Show

kerangshow.com

Experience the charm of our country shows with agricultural displays, crafts, sideshows, kids' activities, and live entertainment.

COHUNA CHILLI FESTIVAL

AFL Grand Final Eve, Cohuna

Food vans, music, drinks and spicy challenges. Family friendly.

Search event on Facebook.

HOME GROWN SOUNDS

March, Cohuna Recreation Reserve

Live music event.

www.homegroundsounds.com.au

KERANG SHOW AND SHINE

April, Kerang

Showcasing a huge collection of cars, motorcycles and model displays.

www.kerangshow.com/car-show-shine

KERANG RACES

Easter Saturday and late December

Kerang Turf Club, Kerang

A great day out of country horse racing.

country.racing.com/kerang

KERANG ROTARY ART SHOW

Good Friday to Easter Sunday

Basketball Stadium, Kerang

A large art display in various mediums.

MASSIVE MURRAY PADDLE

November, Murray River

An amazing 5-day paddling adventure race over 415kms on the Murray River.

www.massivemurraypaddle.org.au

MURRABIT RODEO

March/April, Murrabit

Ripper night of Bucking Bulls, Barrel Racing and a whole lot of country fun!

murrabitrodeo.com.au

NYE CELEBRATIONS

Cohuna Garden Park

Kerang Atkinson Park

Bring in the new year with live music, kids entertainment and fireworks.

QUAMBATOOK SILO CINEMA

Quambatook

Open-air film nights, where classic movies are projected onto towering grain silos.

www.quambatooksilocinema.com.au

QUAMBATOOK TRACTOR PULL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Easter Saturday, Quambatook

The ultimate contest between horsepower and traction, in the heart of the Mallee.

www.quambatook.com.au/tractor-pull

LILLO RACE

Australia Day, Koondrook Barham

Bring your life jacket, tube and inflatables and float down the Murray River.

For more events across the Gannawarra visit www.thegannawarra.com.au/events

LOCAL *Markets*

Our local markets offer a mix of unique treasures, handmade creations, local produce, live music and a welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere.

COHUNA FARMERS AND MAKERS MARKET

The Cohuna Farmers and Makers Market is a boutique market showcasing quality handmade and home-grown produce, craft, food, plants and more. Located in Garden Park next to the picturesque Gunbower Creek, the Cohuna Farmers and Makers Market is the perfect place to enjoy live music and brunch with family and friends.

9am - 1pm on the fourth Sunday of each month plus special events including Easter Sunday and Sunday of Melbourne Cup Long Weekend.
Garden Park, King George Street, Cohuna
www.cohunamarket.com

KERANG COMMUNITY MARKET

The Kerang Community Market has plenty on offer. Whether it is fresh produce, plants, crafts, bric-a-brac, jams, sauces and preserves, there is something available for all tastes.

9am - 12pm on the fourth Saturday of each month, plus special events
Atkinson Park, Wellington Street, Kerang

MURRABIT COUNTRY MARKET

First held in 1977, the Murrabit Country Market has grown into an iconic event for the township. An astonishing transformation takes place each month when up to 80 stalls open for business selling fresh produce, handmade crafts, plants, clothing, tools and more. The aromas of sizzling barbecues and home-baked treats fill the air, while live entertainment and children's activities create a fun, family friendly atmosphere.

8.30am - 12.30pm on the first Saturday of each month, plus Easter Saturday
Gonn Avenue, Murrabit
www.murrabit.com.au/market



GANNAWARRA *Pre-loved*

The Gannawarra has a great range of pre-loved, second hand and opportunity shops. Brimming with items once loved, now re-purposed and ready for a new owner.

Cohuna Anglican Opportunity Shop

1F Cullen Street, Cohuna Ph: 0438 759 318 or 0419 151 192

Trash & Treasure - Cohuna

Cullen Street, Cohuna Ph: 5456 2345

When I Was A Kid Vintage

81 King George Street, Cohuna Ph: 0431 125 020

Bus Stop Recycle Op Shop

69 Bendigo Road, Kerang Ph: 0429 935 036

Vinnies - Kerang

8-10 Victoria Street, Kerang Ph: 5452 2508

Rita Hall Hospital Opportunity Shop

17 Fitzroy Street, Kerang Ph: 5452 1749

Kerang Neighbourhood House Op Shop

44B Victoria Street, Kerang Ph: 03 4403 6640

Kerang Antiques, Collectables and Auctions

23 Victoria Street, Kerang Ph: 03 5452 1778

Quambatook District Share Shop

55-57 Guthrie Street, Quambatook Ph: 0429 571 821

Quambatook Co-operating Church Opportunity Shop

Monica Street, Quambatook Ph: 03 5457 1381

Pick up a copy of the Gannawarra Pre-loved brochure from the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre or Sir John Gorton Library.





www.thegannawarra.com.au

