



Ben Lomond

NATIONAL PARK

In the north-east of Tasmania, the magnificent massif of Ben Lomond, with its imposing and precipitous cliffs, rises above rural pastures and forestry land. Visible over much of the northern midlands, this alpine plateau is home to a wide variety of alpine plant communities and animals and in seasons of good snowfall is the main focus of downhill skiing in the state. Its highest point, the summit of Legges Tor (1572 m) is the second highest peak in Tasmania.

Highlights

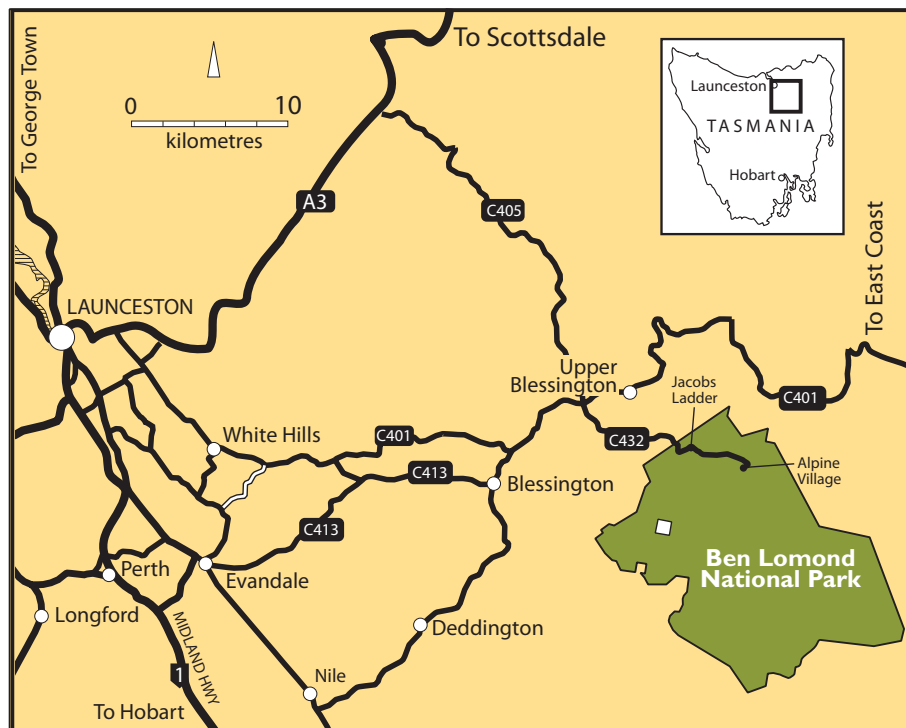
Ben Lomond National Park offers a great contrast to the dry coastal parks in other areas of eastern Tasmania. Rock climbing and walking are just some of the attractions for the more active while those wanting a more relaxed time can enjoy outstanding views, fresh air and birdwatching. In good snow seasons, downhill and cross-country skiing are also popular.

National park fees apply. Parks passes are available at Service Tasmania shops state-wide (Mon-Fri, 9.00 am-5.00pm).

Getting there

The park is situated about 50 km or 1 hour south-east of Launceston. From Launceston take road C401 through White Hills then east toward Upper Blessington. 3.5 km before you reach Upper Blessington turn right into Ben Lomond Road (C432).

From Hobart it is a 3 hour drive north on the Midlands Highway (A1). Turn off to Evandale (B41) and take the partly sealed road C413 to Blessington. Continue on the Blessington Road towards Upper Blessington on roads C420 and C401, taking a right turn into Ben Lomond Road.



It is 8 km from the Ben Lomond Road turn-off to the park boundary and 18 km to the alpine village. The road is unsealed and the final climb up Jacobs Ladder to the plateau is steep. For safety's sake, there is a 30 km speed limit. Vehicles travelling uphill should give way to those descending.

In conditions of snow and ice the road may be closed without notice at the barrier 4.5 km from the alpine village. Wheel chains and anti-freeze must be carried between June and September. During the skiing season a shuttle bus service operates from the snowline.

Maximum size for passenger vehicles is a 22 seat bus and bus drivers must have an alpine licence to travel the Jacobs Ladder section of the road.

Things to do

A beautiful and challenging drive reaches the plateau after a series of spectacular hairpin bends known as Jacobs Ladder. Visitors can enjoy views of the dramatic landscape of dolerite rock columns and scree slopes. The vegetation of Ben Lomond is different to other parts of Tasmania and in summer the alpine wildflowers put on a colourful display.

For experienced rock climbers and abseilers, the dolerite columns of Ben Lomond offer some challenging climbing.

Forested roadside areas on the lower slopes offer good opportunities for birdwatching.

There are short walks with great views, but care should be taken as weather conditions in this area often change rapidly. Clear days with expansive views can change to white-out conditions where it can be difficult to see more than a few metres.

Carr Villa to Alpine Village: 2 hours one way.

This walk climbs steeply up to the plateau and continues along the plateau to the highest point, Legges Tor, then descends to the Ben Lomond Road. Follow the road about 1 km to the alpine village.

Legges Tor Circuit: 1 hour return.

The highest peak can be reached with a gentle climb from the road about 1 km before the alpine village. The track makes a circuit at the top and descends the same way.

All walkers and cross-country skiers should register details of their trip at the alpine village, where there is a registration booth. Make sure to de-register when you return. Log books are only checked if a party is reported overdue, so give details of your plans to someone reliable.

Facilities

A car park and public day shelter are located at the alpine village.

The public day shelter has toilets, and heating but no cooking facilities.

During the snow season, which varies in length each year, a number of facilities are available in the park. In suitable conditions several ski tows may operate on the downhill slopes. Ski hire and instruction as well as sales, services and a kiosk are located at the alpine village. First aid and locker storage facilities are also available.

There is a small camping area 1 km inside the park on the left hand side. There are six un-powered sites suitable for tents or campervans, a toilet, drinking water, shelter and a lookout. These are the only camping facilities in the park. This is also a sheltered location for picnicking.

Remote camping is permitted anywhere in the park provided it is not within 500 m of any road. Campers should use fuel stoves.

The Ben Lomond Creek Inn provides meals and accommodation. There are several lodges in the alpine village area. These are owned either privately or by alpine clubs and usage is generally restricted to members and their guests.

Petrol is not available on Ben Lomond and the nearest fuel station is at St Leonards, 40 minutes away.

What to bring

Warm, water-proof and wind-proof clothing is essential at any time of the year. A hat and sunscreen are recommended. If venturing off-track, a map, compass and navigational skills are essential.

Weather

The weather can change rapidly at any time of the year and low cloud can make it impossible to see more than an arms-length ahead. Never venture away from the marked track unless you have a map and compass, and can navigate in zero visibility. Be prepared and check the weather conditions before setting out. For current weather forecasts contact the Bureau of Meteorology on 1196 or www.bom.gov.au.

Further information

Maps are available at outdoor shops.

Ben Lomond Plateau Ski and Walk Map

1:25 000 map series, Giblin and Stacks map sheets

Parks & Wildlife Service website www.parks.tas.gov.au

Skiing information visit the website www.ski.com.au/snowcams/benlomond

Parks and Wildlife Service, Tamar Field Centre
(03) 6336 5391

Bookings for tourist accommodation, ski season only
(03) 6390 6199